

The Teaching of S. Coleridge's Poem *Work Without Hope* Through the Theory of Reading Reception and Translating Poetry Practice

Vassiliki Tsirevelou
(Tutor University, Greece)

Abstract: The didactic scenario has as its primary aim the approach of translated poetry teaching in Secondary Education through interdisciplinarity, interculturalism and the comparative juxtaposition of poems and literary movements. According to reader response theory, the work is open to interpretive versions variety and is shaped by the reader's participation, while in each era it is signified differently. Our attempt is to follow the hermeneutic approach in order to see how modern poetry is connected to contemporary social reality and specifically the issue of labour. At the same time, the second aim is to make comments, with the help of the students, to the translation given and to see the act of translation as an exercise and play process of literature in the target language (Greek), through the comparison of words in the original and the translation text. As an ultimate goal we possess the deepening and better understanding of the literary text, besides the linguistic enrichment of students through translation activities efforts.

Key words: social life, romance, reading response, translation, interculturalism

1. Introduction

The didactic scenario is concerned the social life unit (Modern Greek Educational Programme, 2023) and in particular the thematic area of human rights, actions and initiatives in Modern Greek Literature. More specifically, we analyzed the knowledge students had on Romanticism in literature, its importance and the experiences presented in the poems. We consider, also, as important the meaning of "work" as potential for social adaptation and enjoyment it offers. The didactic proposal has been applied during school teaching in High School "Skado" (Naxos, Greece) in school year 2022–2023. The didactic scenario is carried out in 5–6 didactic periods of time, making use of the school's supervisory resources and the computer class. For the realization of the educational scenario was chosen a cluster of poems, next to Coleridge's poem, which consists the following poems: K. Karyotakis *Graphias* (Karyotakis, 2008) and K. Gogou "There will come a time when they will change things" (Gogou, 2009). Emphasis is placed on the cultivation of opinions and the externalization of children's feelings as concerns the meaning, value of the importance of the choice of "work", relating them to key concepts and explanations points of the poems around the issue. Furthermore, the objective was to understand students the Literary Romantic movement and through translation techniques to delve into the relationship between original and translation and the linguistic possibilities (Holmes, 1988) that the translated poem brings to Greek.

Vassiliki Tsirevelou, Ph.D., Tutor University; research areas/interests: comparative literature, modern Greek literature, translation studies, education teaching methods, teacher secondary education, tutor university. E-mail: tsir.up@hotmail.com.

Translation as a linguistic medium aims at a deeper understanding of the original poem, the meanings it conveys in the original language, while we also concerned 1) finding synonyms, 2) developing vocabulary in the target language (Modern Greek), 3) to detect and understand the characteristics of Romanticism through the poem. In particular the comparison of translations in Modern Greek could be the beginning of a discussion regarding the linguistic choices in Modern Greek, in order to analyze the linguistic depth of Greek language. Besides students can thought how this poem can be translated in modern language, in order to seem contemporary. For this reason, students can make practice using a dictionary to compare the meaning of words, synonyms and choose the appropriate word each time. The problem that arises is whether we follow the translation word for word, or sense for sense (Munday, 2008). Depending on the option we prefer each time, the aesthetic depth, the poetical pleasure is judged. Below are the points that will be given emphasis in the translation and the comparison of translation.

2. Description of the Educational Scenario

The method we have followed focus first on the approach of the poems within teaching the model of the reading reception theory (Holub, 2005; Iser, 1991) to actively engage students with the texts, alongside the utilization of the hermeneutic Circle. Furthermore, it was considered important for the creation of this didactic scenario the application of the Model of the Quadruple Poem reading (Empson, 1930), emphasizing in teaching through the contribution of four points (meaning, emotion, tone, intention). For practice, applied the act of translation to the poem of the English Romantic Coleridge in order to correlate the original with the translation (Bassnett, 1991) and to understand the Romanticism movement. The general aims of the unit on terms of literature are: the literary literacy of the students, the application of experiential learning, the connection between art, life and in particular issues of social life, but also the familiarity with literary ways, the expressive means through the cultivation of literacy and the enjoyment of literary texts. At the same time, the comparison text reading, examination, with the aim to make comparison of their particular features, style, particular conventions, value content.

Furthermore, the critical cultivation of linguistic sense through the exercise of translation and participation in creative writing activities. The specific objectives of the module are: the systematic reading practice and the interconnectedness of the poems. Moreover, the recognition of the literary genre conventions, the connection with interculturalism, the hermeneutic analysis of the poems and the connection with interculturalism, the hermeneutic analysis of the poems and the connection with the themes defined by the new school curriculum. Finally, the interaction of the students with the poems and the problems of the modern age of students and the emphasis on vocabulary enrichment and creative reading and writing.

As expected learning results are defined: the understanding improvement and text interpretative depth (Dalkou, 2013), the students Modern Greek speech improvement (Dalkou, 2013), the translation process and, more broadly, to become familiar with the importance of the translation of an author's translation (Shell-Hornby, 1988). The translation of an original text means the literary metaphor of the author's world, the reading and interpretation that very often the translator attaches to the translation.

The teaching approach starts with listening of Coleridge's poem and a trial to stimulate the interest of students. The teacher's introductory actions start with questions referring to the impressions that they got from listening to poem and what they think is the subject being negotiated. In sequence, we focus on brainstorming technique, trying to trace their pre-existing knowledge about the phenomenon, what we call "Romantic" today,

who is Romantic person, but also what they think are the characteristics of Romanticism. Romanticism privileges the power of imagination, the hypostasitation of nature, the spiritualization of senses. While S. Coleridge achieves as characteristics in this poem, through the veil of Romanticism, the achievement of harmony in Nature. Images depicting the smooth functioning of Nature, personifications of Nature elements ("Nature", "Winter") showing its participation in events, metaphors ("Dream of Spring") depicting the universal harmony and the need for soul unit with the cosmical unity.

We emphasize that painful and stressful situations in life release with Nature. We come in contact with Nature in order to relief all stressful and painful situations. Also, the communication with Nature makes anyone to relieve from suffering, because a person participates with his entirety in nature and becomes partaker. Moreover, releases all positive emotions correspondingly in society (reminds and resembles the kinship of art with the method of psychotherapy). The role of Nature in the poem is to understand its perfection, its balance, resemble it with the state of thought and follow its flow. The Modern element of the poem reveals the inner split of the subject, the division of the subject, while the poetic subject loses the archetypical meaning of life.

We record the answers in a cloud. Next, we divide the students into 3 groups of 6 and ask them to search the internet for 1–2 paintings by romantic artists. The aim is to understand, through intermediality what is romance. For that reason, we choose the paintings of Leon Conier (Fireworks at the Castel Sant' Angelo in Rome), Thomas Cole (Lake of Dead trees), Francesco Ajaccio, (The Kiss) on the Romantic Painters website (Wikipedia, 2023).

Then we hand out in photocopies the poems that can be form a cluster and which are: Samuel Coleridge's *Work Without Hope*, C. Kariotakis's *Graphias* (Karyotakis, 2008) and K. Gogou's *The Time Will Come When They Will Change Things* (Gogou, 2009). Each group is responsible for working out a poem. The teacher assumes the role of a mediator and mentor with the creation of questions and exercises regarding the poems.

(3rd-4th Lesson) 1st activity of the groups is to describe the painting in a paper, using the characteristics of Romanticism. The method we follow is visible art, thinking by art, where it is important to use different types of art and to compare and explore and deepen in each form of art. With this method, we try different artistic forms (poetry, paintings) in order to raise questions about a unit, forms of thinking that focus first on seeing (what someone sees), after thinking. Questions that may be asked are the following: 1) what do you see, 2) what interests you? 3) What feelings does it evoke in you? 4) Are there any symbolisms? Emphasis is placed on the themes chosen by each painter, in style, the forms of the painting. Observing artwork sharpens understanding and perception and enhances creative thinking (Perkins, 1994). The following activities relate to each group separately are presented with a worksheet form. Regarding the first group (Foreign Romantics) the questions asked, based on the hermeneutic (Pentzopoulou-Valala, 1991) and the reading response theory, are the following:

- 1) How is nature depicted to the poem, how is the biological cycle of life connected through nature and work?
- 2) Why is the poetic subject not in the mood?
- 3) How does his psychological state related to Romanticism?
- 4) What are the meanings of 'work' in the poem?
- 5) What is the role of the image in the poem and how is it connected to Romanticism? Choose an image from the poem and render it in paint.

The questions concerning the second group (Greek Romantics) are directed first of all around the title (*Graphias*) to tell us how they understand the meaning of the word and whether it has or if they believe that the word was derogatory. Then we give questions such as the following:

- 1) On how they perceive the work of the poetic subject?
- 2) Did it mark a specific work at the time C. Karyotakis wrote the poem?
- 3) Does the poetic subject seem to be happy with the work he is going?
- 4) What skills are required for an office work?
- 5) What profile does the author present?

Regarding the 3rd poem and the 3rd group (Rebels) we try to clarify first of all, whether it is a real or imaginary conversation of the subject. Then using the quadrum (sense, feeling, tone, intention) close reading model of the poem (Spanos, 2002) we highlight elements and questions related to its meaning. First, what is the subject of the poem and what does it mean to be able to choose his job? How do you understand this phrase? 3) Then, we listen to music¹ and we are trying to understand the emotions of the poetic subject (for example anger, explosion, sadness, defeatism) and what emotions it evokes. 4) The poem has a revolutionary tone? 5) What is the intention of the poem, to point out the ugly social aspects of life or to give us a note of optimism for the future?

First, we hand out photocopies of the original poem by S. Coleridge *Work without hope* (Coleridge, 1997) and with questions we push them to observe the words of the original, alongside the words chosen by the poet in its translation into Greek. We move on semantic differences between the two poems and encourage students to ask themselves about the relationship between the poems and the original meaning of the words and the translation choices. Next, we provide each group with an English-Greek dictionary for consolidation. On groups, we attempt, to translate stanzas of the poem and words, while the teacher goes through each group to see the existing problems or how they move on. Encourage students to note any points that they may make it difficult to see them together. First, we spend time finding the meanings of unknown words, while then proceed reading every stanza discussing difficult points, reading how to choose words. Questions that arise are how does it convey meaning, if there are differences in the meaning of words of the original and the translation. Which choice the translator makes between the different meaning of the words and which is the interpretive version? The exercise concludes with reading of the efforts of the children. At the end we make a final evaluation of the translation process, with questions such as whether they liked it, how they felt during the translation process effort. In groups, we translate verses of the poem and words, we mark words-phrases that are difficult for students. We check together, giving emphasis on differences between meaning of words, nuances of words and their sequence in the original and the translation. In the target-language we look the word similarity, their relevance and the different contexts in which we use them. Furthermore, based on the previous worksheets we prepared and the students' answers we summarize focusing, at the same time, on the poem's connections with Modern Greek language themes (exposure-expression) and questions concerning contemporary social life, such as the work value, the connection between work and potential sociality, workplace racism, the desire to preserve human dignity, unemployment and the effects that such as the tendency to social isolation, the human being evaluation, the personality humiliation.

3. Scientific Approach and Conceptual Analysis — Issues of Theory of Teaching Scenario

The importance of creating the above educational scenario lies in the use of theoretical approaches and translation practice in educational process, as translation is an attractive “game”, an exercise and a way of creative process that contributes to language skills development, the in-depth poems understanding, but also the release of student's creativity. Literature activates the imagination and the creative process, enhancing students' critical

¹ Available online at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkNFbB7fr44>.

thinking skills. We place the poems in the category of *Romantic Modern*, where common characteristics prevail, such as the sense of freedom that feels the poet when he comes in contact with nature. Romantic Philosophy entails and is born from contact with nature, as poet becomes partial and participates in the world, where he acquires empathy and personal self-awareness, at the same time that the poet's imagination is released. Romanticism means the organic development of the poem (Furst, 1977). Modern in the Romanticism means that person has lost the archetypical moment the signification of life as a community of life that gives life, nature becomes participant of life, alongside with the internal division, the disintegration of spirit, mind and body. The poetical romantic subject emphasizes in the preservation of wholeness, the inner purity of the consciousness, the emergence of the internal soul and the spirit division, which is impossible in the fragmented world. Moreover, a key theme that emerges, is the point of melancholy that emerges through the lyrics, where the poetic subject expresses his indifference to work.

The scientific approach, at the same time, it is highlighting through the clarification of the free terms or faithful translation, or the attempt to render the spirit of letter of the original (Bassnett, 1991). At the same time, the connection of the poem with literary movements and interculturalism pushes the connection between the arts, the immersion in literary currents, movements and trends that developed at the same time in the field art, strengthening critical perception and aiming at aesthetic enjoyment.

Translation may be a useful exercise to detect the meaning of the poem, to search the depth of the poem and to understand the meaning of Romanticism. Besides, through the poem translation it is easier for students to analyze and interpret in their own way words about Nature, to express feelings and find some words synonyms. To become familiar with words synonyms with Modern Greek, to understand the poem in depth, to understand what romanticism is, what concepts it contains. Finally, translation comes to enhance the role of creativity in learning and encourage the discovering of the world of translator, as the transfer of a poem into the language of the translator means the recreation of the poem (Vagenas, 1984).

4. Evaluation — Synopsis

Assessment takes place throughout the learning experience. It is mainly aimed at students' literature understanding through the connection with the parallel the path of literary and artistic movements and trends. Furthermore, our goal was to get acquainted with the poetic language and its connection issues and themes of contemporary reality, as poetry and social reality are interrelated in a multimodal relationship. Finally, according to the objectives, the purposes of the didactic scenario, the use of techniques, activities, and questions of the worksheets are aimed at enhancing creative and critical practice, the cultivation of critical thinking, the increase and further deepening issues of Modern Greek Language and literature and social reality. The worksheets aim to consolidation of the preceding activities, the comparative connection of literature with romanticism literary genre and social reality, with ultimate aim in order for the teacher to reflect and self-assess.

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