

# AI and Poetry: Navigating the Challenges of Translating Mahmoud Darwish's "The Dice Player"

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## ABSTRACT

As a result of the profound connection that exists between Mahmoud Darwish's poetry and Palestinian identity, history, and cultural legacy, translating his poetry is not only a rich but also a demanding endeavor as poetry seems to be lost in translation. When it comes to comprehending the deep cultural metaphors and historical references that are ingrained in Darwish's work, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has unique challenges. This is despite the fact that AI has made great progress in language translation. The limitations of artificial intelligence in terms of grasping symbolism, emotional resonance, and the complex meanings that distinguish Darwish's style are the primary topic of this research, which investigates the difficulty that AI has in capturing the essential components in Darwish's poetry. The aim of this study is to highlight the common challenges and issues faced while rendering poetry. It tends also to evaluate ChatGPT's rendering quality, the failures and the successes. Despite the fact that artificial intelligence is capable of processing linguistic structures and translating literal meanings, it frequently fails to express the cultural and emotional depth that is necessary for truly understanding Darwish's poetry. Therefore, human insight is crucial for maintaining the cultural depth and metaphorical complexities and the linguistic characteristics inherent in Darwish's work. Ethical implications of depending on AI for culturally sensitive translations are also discussed in this paper.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Among translation subjects, poetry translation is considered the most controversial and the most complicated translation owing to the use of high figurative language and the conflict between form and content in addition to the challenges set by poetry itself. Poetry is seen as an individual world where the feelings and emotions of the poet reside. By using techniques such as the corresponding of meaning, word choice, rhyme, rhythm and the other poetic devices, the poet tends to express his own ideas or experiences that other people had, expressing humane feelings, such as love, friendship, admiration, grief, sorrow, etc. Through history, poetry has always held an important place in the lives of people across cultural and national borders. Poems can be written in different languages, but can be understood universally. Therefore, translation of poetry is the only way to share this human production. But the remaining question lies in whether it is possible or impossible to translate poetry.

### 1.1. Literature Review

#### 1.1.1. Poetry: Translatability or Untranslatability

Many translators have rendered famous poetry and have succeeded in coming up with great outcomes. People's creativity has brought a human legacy, which is poetry to people speaking different languages, through which the world gets more connected and closer to each other. Thus,



communication has been established and knowledge of the components of other cultures has been achieved. It is also seen in many cases as a bridge between two worlds, where communication gets easier. Yet in translating poetry, many problems and challenges may arise and the translator may face difficulties. Especially, when it comes to the fact that translation itself is highly complicated process, which incorporates the transfer of meaning, a source language to a target one.

Nida (1993) claims that "*Translation is probably the most complex type of event in the history of cosmos*" implying that translation could be or is the toughest task a person can perform, and within the field of translation studies translatability or untranslatability of poetic discourse is a hot issue. Robert Frost admits that "poetry is what is lost in translation." (Frost, 1969). Jakobson (1959) takes it for granted that poetry is by definition untranslatable. Although it is possible to translate a poetic discourse in a way acceptable in the target language, it is impossible to convey all the poetic features and subtleties of the original in the translation. For Dinneen (1967) if a full equivalence of the source language message is aimed at in the target language by translation, then translation is not possible by any means. Translation of poetry requires most of the creative efforts. They suggest that the translator should be a poet himself in order to succeed. What is more, every language is bound to a particular culture with its specific notions which are evidently expressed through literature and its own history which changes over the generations.

Verdonk (2010) proposes that the language of poetry is often ambiguous and open to interpretation. It may break conventional grammatical rules, feature a distinctive sound structure, and is typically arranged in metrical lines and stanzas. It also emphasizes patterns in sound, vocabulary, grammar, or syntax and often includes indirect references to other texts making the task of translation difficult. Winter (1968) argues that while the systems of form and meaning in two languages may be similar, they are never identical, making exact translation impossible. This challenge arises from the tension between form and meaning. Similarly, Baker (2001) describes poetry as the most condensed form of writing, where language is more connotative than denotative, and form and content are inseparable. The emphasis, therefore, is on what poetry signifies rather than what it explicitly states.

Connolly (1998) asserts that translating poetry is nearly impossible due to the challenge of conveying the culture and traditions of the source language into the target language. Poems often carry layered meanings—implicit, explicit, denotative, and connotative—that are deeply rooted in their original culture. As a reader, the translator interprets the poem through their own perspective, making a fully accurate translation unattainable without a thorough understanding of the source culture.

While some argue that meaning is always translatable and what is expressed in one language can be conveyed in another, supporting the translatability of poetry, Benjamin (1968) contends that translation does not result in loss but rather in gain. A translated text is not merely a replica of the original but achieves a unique equivalence to the source language. Translating poetry, therefore, requires more than fidelity; it demands an awareness of its artistic essence. Many scholars emphasize that a translator of poetry should also be a poet, deeply attuned to the cultural and poetic dimensions of the work, striving to closely mirror the source text.

Translators create successive versions of a text not to achieve a "perfect translation" but because each version reflects the context and time in which it was produced, as well as the translator's individual interpretation. This implies that any translation of a poetic text is inherently subjective. Bassnett (2002). Throughout history, some scholars have supported the possibility of translating poetry, while others emphasize its difficulty or even impossibility, citing various challenges.

Many scholars argue that translating poetry is akin to translating other types of texts. Nida (1984) asserts that anything expressible in one language can be conveyed in another, provided the form is not a crucial part of the message. Thus, translating poetry, like any text, is possible as long as the form—when essential—is preserved to ensure the message and objectives of the translation are achieved. Baker and Saldanha (2009) emphasize that translating poetry requires attention to its unique nature and language, as well as the type of reading it demands. In this context, the translator must prioritize the target audience and consider their perspective.

Poetic structures, metaphorical phrases, and sounds are among the aesthetic and literary issues that make translating poetry impossible or challenging. These aesthetic qualities don't have a meaning of their own. However, they are closely related to the different kinds of meaning that the text contains. This indicates that the translation completely damages the original poem's word choice, word order, sounds, beauty, and expression. Furthermore, Bassnett (2002) believes that the primary difficulty in translating ancient works is the loss of both the context and the poet. Even the genre itself is out of date in certain situations, such as pastoral poetry, thus accurate reproduction cannot bring it back to prominence.

Translating poetry is a risky endeavour as long as the challenge is in comprehending the original text, which is primarily a text that contains cultural elements of a country, a group of people, or an individual from a particular region. If the translation task is not completed adequately, it could result

in a complete distortion of the translated meaning, which would be detrimental to both the original text and the source culture. In light of this, it may be said that the translator alone has the authority to determine the best course of action when encountering difficulties with translation. According to Landers (2000), most experts believe that translating poetry is impossible due to its extreme difficulty. While Robert Frost (cited in Bassnett & Lefevere, 1998) describe poetry as what gets lost in translation, an implication that it is impossible to transfer the poems' qualities from language to another.

The translatability of poetry has sparked debate among scholars. Some argue that poetry is lost in translation, while others believe its meaning can be translated, though its form is often compromised. Despite challenges posed by differences in language structure, phonology, and vocabulary, poetry is still considered translatable, as evidenced by multiple translations of great works.

### 1.1.2. Mahmoud Darwish Biography

According to Boullata (2009) Mahmoud Darwish was a renowned Palestinian poet, known for his revolutionary poetry and deep connection to his homeland. He played a significant role in modern Arabic poetry, introducing symbolism. Born in Al-Birwa, Galilee, Darwish was displaced during the Nakba in 1948 and lived in Lebanon before secretly returning to Palestine. He became involved in political activism, joining the Israeli Communist Party and editing various publications. He was arrested multiple times for his political views and later moved to the Soviet Union, Cairo, and Lebanon, where he worked with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Darwish also founded the cultural magazine Al-Karmel and resigned from the PLO's Executive Committee in protest against the Oslo Accords. He passed away in 2008 after surgery in the United States. He authored numerous poetry collections, including *Olive Leaves*, *Birds Without Wings*, *The Diaries of a Palestinian Wound*, and *The Wall*.

## 2. METHOD AND RESULTS

The present study aims to analyse the translation of one the most beautiful, significant poem "The Dice Player" by Mahmoud Darwish. The focus will be on the translation provided by ChatGPT of the same poem. This selection will provide a comparative, contrastive analysis between the original and the target version. We will have a look at the approaches adopted to render the phonetic features, syntactic, semantic, figurative speech and symbolic and poetic imagery. And studying these translations will help us identify the distinctive poetical experiment, where the poet uses examples of images taken from Arabic life, religion and tradition through metaphor, symbolism, simile that are also drawn from the Arabic life and culture.

The poem is chosen due to its poetical images and other symbolic methods used in poetry. The aim is to check whether the translation succeeded in transferring the original content in the poem in the right spirit of translation. It seems a significant challenge to translate poetry between two different cultures, especially, when it is a particular type of poetry. Darwish is a special case because his poetry reflects the social life of people who undergo pressure, violence, tyranny, exile, etc. which are part of his own sufferings. Our focus in this study is to check to what extent AI is careful in rendering the linguistic aspects (phonetic, syntactic, semantic, figure of speech and symbolic) from Arabic into English. Any misunderstanding of the tiniest detail may lead to the distortion of the image and thus convey the wrong meaning. We will also shed light on whether AI translations can serve as mediation and tend to bridge the gaps between different cultures. The aim is also to evaluate the procedures used by ChatGPT. Therefore, the following questions are to be answered and discussed:

1. What linguistic challenges faced while translating the Dice player?
2. To what extent equivalence has been achieved?

This study unveils whether the target reader reacts to the translated version in the same way as a native speaker. And also, a look at the creativity aspect of automated machine in finding the linguistic equivalents to express the same ideas and concepts and thus refute of the idea of untranslatability of poetry.

### 2.1. Data Analysis and Discussion

This study analyzes the translated version of Mahmoud Darwish's poem *The Dice Player*, focusing on challenges and failures automated machine translation (ChatGPT). The analysis addresses issues in several categories: figurative language, syntax, phonetics and rhythm, semantics, and symbolism/poetic imagery:

1. *Phonetic/Rhythmic Issues:* In poetry, word arrangement is essential to creating specific effects. There are two key types of arrangements:

TABLE I: PHONETIC/RHYTHMIC ISSUES: SEGMENTAL

| Source text                                                                                                                                                                                | ChatGPT rendering                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| قد نُسَمِّيهِ حَدَّادَ أَقْدَارِنَا<br>أَوْ نُسَمِّيهِ سَاعِي بَرِيدِ السَّمَاءِ<br>نُسَمِّيهِ نَجَّارَ تَحْتَ الْوَلِيدِ وَنَعِشَ الْفَقِيدِ<br>نُسَمِّيهِ خَادِمَ آلِهَةٍ فِي أُسَاطِيرِ | We might call him the blacksmith of our destinies,<br>or name him the postman of the heavens.<br>We call him the carpenter of the newborn's cradle and the<br>deceased's coffin,<br>and we name him the servant of gods in myths. |

TABLE II: PHONETIC/RHYTHMIC ISSUES: ALLITERATION

| Source text                                                                                                                    | ChatGPT translation                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| وَمِنْ حُسْنِ حِظِّي أَنِّي مَا زِلْتُ هَشًّا<br>لَأَدْخُلَ فِي التَّجَرُّبَةِ!<br>يَقُولُ الْمَحَبُّ الْمَجْرَبُ فِي سِرِّهِ: | And luckily for me, I am still fragile enough to step into the<br>experience! Says the seasoned lover to himself in secret |

- *Segmental (sound)*: Focuses on the deliberate arrangement of words according to their sound patterns, such as alliteration, assonance, consonance, repetition, and rhyme (Table I).
- *Alliteration*: is the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words placed near each other, usually on the same adjacent lines (Table II).

In the ChatGPT translation, the rate of alliteration is lower than in the source text. However, there is an effort to preserve this feature by repeating consonant sounds. Notably, the sound /s/ appears frequently, even though it doesn't occur within the same word, as the translation involves two different languages.

Alliteration is applied in the source text, the repetition of consonants sounds, but in the target text, it is more a repetition of words rather than a repetition of consonants sounds. In order to get closer to the source text, an alternative could be as:

Fortunate to be still fragile  
To re-enter the experience  
Experienced lover whispers to himself

- *Rhyme*: This is a common feature that is associated with poetry. Words that have different beginning sounds but whose ending sound alike, including the final vowel sound and everything following it.

وَسُمِّيْتُ بِاسْمِي مُصَادَفَةً  
مُصَادَفَةً، وَانْتَمَيْتُ إِلَى عَائِلَةٍ

and my name was given to me by chance,  
and I belonged to a family by chance."

فَتَأَخَّرْتُ عَنْ مَوْعِدِ الطَّائِرَةِ  
كَانَ يُمْكِنُ أَلَّا أَرَى الشَّامَ وَالْقَاهِرَةَ  
وَلَا مَتَحَفَ الْوُفْرِ، وَالْمَدْنَ السَّاحِرَةَ

"I missed the flight,  
I might not have seen Damascus or Cairo,  
nor the Louvre Museum or the enchanting cities."

فَصَدَّقَهُمُ بَاعَةُ الْخَزَفِ الْجَائِعُونَ  
وَكَذَّبْنَا سَادَةُ الذَّهَبِ الْمَتَخُمُونَ

"The starving sellers of pottery believed them,  
while the gluttonous lords of gold denied us."

- *Assonance*: Repeated vowel sounds in words placed near each other usually on the same adjacent line.

This technique is common in poetry but can be used in most all genre of literature. It is used to grasp the reader's attention and at the same time to help a poem general rhythm. The samples at hand in the source text are what make the poem easy to remember. Assonance is used to accelerate the musical effect in the poem. It develops the internal rhyme that enhances the pleasure of reading. One more thing is when we have no idea what words mean, assonance makes difference.

أَمْشِي / أَهْرُو / أَرْكُضْ / أَصْعُدْ / أَنْزِلْ / أَصْرُخْ /  
 أَنْبُحْ / أَعُو / أَنْادِي / أُولُو / أَسْرِعْ / أَبْطِئْ / أَهْوِي /  
 أَخْفْ / أَجْفْ / أَسِيرْ / أَطِيرْ / أَرِي / لَا أَرِي / أَتَعَزَّرْ /  
 أَصْفُرْ / أَخْضُرْ / أَزْرِقْ / أَنْشُقْ / أَجْهَشْ / أَعْطَشْ /  
 أَتَعَبْ / أَسْغَبْ / أَسْقُطْ / أَنْهَضْ / أَرْكُضْ / أَنْسَى /  
 أَرِي / لَا أَرِي / أَتَذَكَّرْ / أَسْمِعْ / أَبْصُرْ / أَهْذِي /  
 أَهْلُوسْ / أَهْمَسْ / أَصْرُخْ / لَا أَسْتَطِيعْ / أَنْ / أَجَنْ /  
 أَضِلْ / أَقِلْ / وَأَكْثُرْ / أَسْقُطْ / أَعْلُو / وَأَهْبِطْ / أَدْمَى /  
 وَيَغْمَى عَلَيَّ /

Walk / Jog / Run / Ascend / Descend / Scream / Bark / Howl / Call / Wail / Hasten / Slow down / Fall / Become light / Freeze / Move / Fly / See / Not see / Stumble / Turn yellow / Turn green / Turn blue / Split / Sob / Thirst / Tire / Hunger / Fall / Rise / Run / Forget / See / Not see / Remember / Hear / Perceive / Babble / Hallucinate / Whisper / Scream / Cannot / Groan / Go mad / Get lost

- *Consonance*: Repeated consonant sounds at the ending of words placed near each other usually on the same adjacent lines.

كَانَ يُمْكِنُ لَا أَكُونُ  
 كَانَ يُمْكِنُ لَا يَكُونُ أَبِي  
 قَدْ تَزَوَّجَ أُمِّي مُصَادَفَةً  
 أَوْ أَكُونُ

I might not have been.  
 My father might not have been.  
 He might have married my mother by chance—  
 Or I might have been.

In the source text, consonance is used to provide the structure of the poem with a rhyming effect. So, while reading Mahmoud Darwish poem, consonance makes it appealing. The repetition of consonant sounds is more effective than the words themselves. Since Arabic and English are two different languages in terms of many features, this tool cannot be applied in the target text. So, there is no parallelism with the source text. The verse mentioned above has consonance in repeating the sounds /t/. Yet, there is no reason to consider this case a failure from the parts of the poets.

- *Repetition*: It is the reuse of words and phrases for an effect. It is a central part of poetry in many cultures. It is called parallelism, when longer phrases which have different key words are used.

For ages, the use of repetition in poetry has been always a rhetorical strategy. Repetition is used in these samples to produce deeper levels of emphasis, clarity and emotional effects.

- *Anaphora*: is the repetition of the same word or group of words of words at the beginning of successive clauses, sentences, or lines.

وَحَفْتُ كَثِيرًا عَلَى إِخْوَتِي وَأَبِي  
 وَحَفْتُ عَلَى زَمَنِ مِنْ زَجَاجٍ  
 وَحَفْتُ عَلَى قَطَطِي وَعَلَى أَرْنَبِي  
 وَعَلَى قَمَرٍ سَاحِرٍ فَوْقَ مَنَازِلَةِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْعَالِيَةِ  
 وَحَفْتُ عَلَى عَنَبِ الدَّالِيَةِ

And I feared greatly for my brothers and my father,  
 I feared for a time fragile as glass.  
 I feared for my cat and my rabbit,  
 And for a magical moon atop the high minaret of the mosque.  
 I feared for the grapes of the vine.

The translated passage uses *anaphora*, the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses, to emphasize the speaker's pervasive sense of fear and vulnerability.

- *Diacope*: The repetition of a word with one or more between, usually to express deep feeling. The ChatGPT translation has opted for the same strategy to create the same effect that is created by the source text. The sample is:

حرفاً فحرفاً، ونزفاً ونزفاً  
 "Letter by letter, and bleeding by bleeding."

This translation preserves the parallelism and rhythm of the original, emphasizing the deliberate and intense process described in the phrase. Let me know if you'd like adjustments to better fit a specific context!

- *Mesarchiais*: a strategy adopted by Mahmoud Darwish in "The Dice Player" It can be defined as the repetition of the same word or words at the beginning and middle of successive sentences. A quick look at the translated version, it is clear that used this automated translation has used this strategy:

أحبك خضراء. يا أرض خضراء. تُفَاحَةً  
تتموّج في الضوء والماء. خضراء. ليلاً  
أخضر. فجرك أخضر. فلتزرعني برفق...  
برفق. يَد الأم، في حفنة من هواء

"I love you, green. O green land.  
An apple swaying in light and water, green.  
Your night is green. Your dawn is green.  
Plant me gently . . . gently, like a mother's hand,  
in a handful of air."

Interpreting this translation through the lens of *mesarchiais*—the principle of grounding meaning in beginnings or origins—offers a deep appreciation for Mahmoud Darwish's poetic imagery. Darwish's use of "green" as a repeated motif symbolizes not just natural vibrancy but also a return to origins, fertility, and the essence of life. A technique that ChatGPT has preserved.

- *Anadiplosis*: The repetition of the last word in one clause or sentence at the beginning of the next:

لأن به نَفَسَ الله

...والله حظُّ النبي

"Because it carries the breath of God,  
and God is the fortune of the prophet..."

The automated machine has preserved anadiplosis technique.

- *Antistasis*: The repetition of a word in a contrary sense:

تَشْعُ، وقد لا تَشْعُ

"It shines, and it may not shine."

The phrase "It shines, and it may not shine" can be interpreted through the lens of *antistasis*, a rhetorical device that involves the repetition of a word or phrase but with a shift in meaning, emphasis, or tone. This adds depth by portraying not just the act of shining but inviting the reader to embrace the coexistence of opposites.

- *Epistrophe*: ending a series of lines, phrases, clauses or sentences with the same word or words:

إذا ما استطعتَ القراءة. واكتب إذا

ما استطعتَ الكتابة. يقرأ: ماء، وماء، وماء

"If you can read, then read. And write,  
if you can write. He reads: water, and water,  
and water."

2. *Prosodic features*: Concern the auditory qualities of sound, including intonation, rhythm, and stress, which vary across languages and influence how words are grouped in speech.

- *Intonation*: Intonation is the melody of our speech. It is how our voice goes up and down in pitch. These changes in pitch happen on stressed words. Intonation is a key part of our communication. Through it, we express our emotions, our attitudes and intentions. The two most common intonation patterns are falling and rising intonations. Generally, our voice falls at the end of a sentence or any time we wish to express finality and certainty. We often use falling intonation for statements in "wh" questions.

Here are some examples of rising and falling intonation in both source text and the target text (Fig. 1):



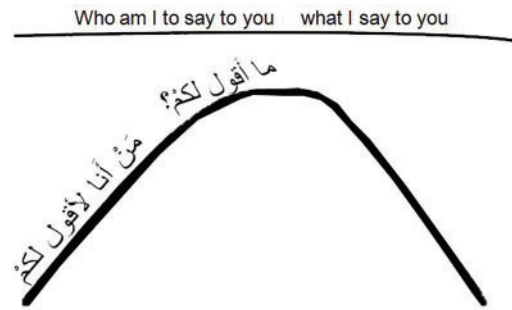


Fig. 1. Source text: rising intonation.

Comparing both source text and target text, we noticed that intonation is rising in the source text but falling in the target one (Fig. 2).

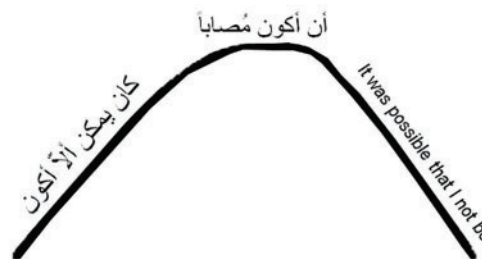


Fig. 2. Falling pitch in the target text.

Again, a rising pitch in the source text but a falling one in the target text (Fig. 3).

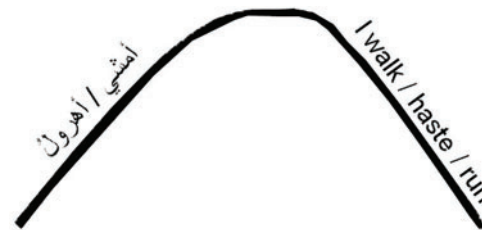


Fig. 3. Source text: rising pitch. Target text: falling.

Source text: rising pitch  
Target text: falling one (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Rising pitch.

In both source text and target text the pitch is rising (Fig. 5).

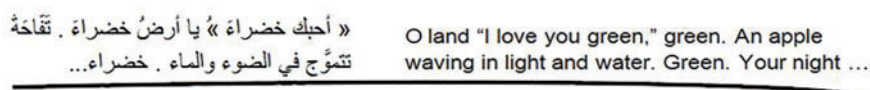


Fig. 5. Same intonation.

In description the translators preserve the same intonation. In narration and description, in most cases the intonation is falling.

TABLE III: SEMANTIC ISSUES

| Source text                                                 | 1 <sup>st</sup> Suggestion                                                             | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Suggestion                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| كان يمكن ألا أكون مُصاباً<br>بجنِّ المَعْلَفَةِ الجاهليَّةِ | It could have been that I was not afflicted by the jinn of the pre-Islamic Mu'allafa." | "It was possible that I might not have been possessed by the jinn of the pre-Islamic hanging odes." |

TABLE IV: CONNOTATION

| Source text                           | Target text                                |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| وأنا لم أكن حجراً صَقَلَتْهُ المِياهُ | "And I was not a stone polished by water." |

TABLE V: DENOTATION

| Source text                | Target text                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| أَنْقَذَنِي نَوْرسٌ آدميٌّ | "A human seagull saved me." |

## 2.2. Syntactic Level

Poetry involves syntax, the language of poetry breaks up into familiar syntactical units, phrases of various kinds, clauses, sentences, and even paragraphs depending on the poem. The words are chosen according to their function in their grammatical roles as parts of speech. In a poem, it is no longer matter of subject, verb and object. Wolosky (2001) indicates that: "A poet may reverse this order in a desire to emphasize, say, the verb departure from the natural order of language is in fact a common way to foreground or draw attention to a particular word." In Poetry, the poet can change in the ordinary procedure in order to draw attention.

The example below shows the use of passive voice in both provided translations.

### Semantic Level

The comparative study deals with two variables of semantic level: connotative (Table IV) and denotative (Table V). Bell (1991:98.99) makes a good distinction between denotative meaning and connotative one: "The first refers to meaning which is referential, objective and cognitive . . . . The second in contrast refers to meaning which is not referential but associational, subjective and affective. This kind of meaning, being personal may or may not be shared by the community at large". Consider the following samples:

The word حجر denotes a thing that belongs to nature. In the Arabic culture, it has a connotation of being a tough person, not emotional. This cultural aspect is difficult to be understood by the target reader. It will be considered as a metaphor and what is being said behind the lines remains uncovered.

Darwish is not implying the denotative meaning of نؤرس, a bird but referring to a human being who was fast in rescuing the person in danger (Table V). The connotation is very meaningful. The ChatGPT rendering has managed to depict the poetic image by preserving the message of the source text.

## 2.3. Symbolism and Imagery

Symbolism is a device of language. it is used to convey feelings and emotions. Understanding symbols in poetry cannot happen unless one has a good knowledge of the cultural background. Chadwick (1971) defines it as " . . . the art of expressing ideas and emotions not by describing them directly, nor by defining through overt comparisons with concrete images, but by suggesting what these ideas and emotions are, by recreating them in the mind of the reader through the use of unexplained symbols." Images are mostly used by poets to make abstract ideas concrete and make communication easier. Greene et al. (2012) in "The Princeton Encyclopedia of poetry and poetics" provide the following definition of imagery (1993): "Imagery refers to images produced in the mind by language, whose words may refer either to experiences which could produce physical perceptions, were the reader to have those experiences or to the sense impressions themselves." In this section, samples of symbols and poetic imagery and their translation is discussed.

The religious symbols mentioned in the source text are places of worship for both Christians and Muslims (church, mosque), and prophets (the cross) (Table VI). They symbolize the land, a symbol of belonging and the cross stands for the sacrifice of Jesus as a saviour. Their translation does not raise any issues of understanding.

Throughout "The Dice Player" poem, there is an excessive use of symbols related to nature. These words are repeated very often for emphasis and for the symbolism and poetic imagery. The symbol of the sea as power and mystery. It is always associated with dangers and unknown destinations. To



TABLE VI: SYMBOLISM AND IMAGERY

|                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| والشجرات الثلاث الوحيدات كالراهبات<br>عند باب الكنيسة                                              | "The three solitary trees are like nuns."<br>At the church door."                                                                                     |
| وعلى قمرٍ ساهرٍ فوق منئذنة المسجد العالية<br>من سوء حظّي أن الصليب<br>هو السلمُ الأزليُّ إلى غدنا! | "And on a wakeful moon above the tall minaret of the mosque."<br><br>How unfortunate for me that the cross<br>is the eternal ladder to our tomorrow!" |

TABLE VII: A SAMPLE OF SYMBOLISM AND POETIC IMAGERY

| Source text                                                                                                                                                                                            | ChatGPT rendring                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| والجدّة — الشجرة<br>ومصادفةً أن أرى قمرًا<br>ولا دور لي في النجاة من البحر<br>لا دور لي في المزاح مع البحر<br>لا تطلُّ على البحر<br>وعلى قمرٍ ساهرٍ فوق منئذنة المسجد العالية<br>فلنحتفل بسوناتا القمر | And the grandmother—the tree.<br>By chance, I see a moon,<br>And I have no role in surviving the sea,<br>No role in jesting with the sea,<br>Do not gaze upon the sea<br>And upon a sleepless moon above the high minaret of the<br>mosque.<br>So let us celebrate the moon sonata. |

understand the message behind, the target reader has to know more about the cultural aspect of the sea. It would be better if footnotes are provided for the target reader.

The moon has always symbolized beauty; fading moon symbolizes a psychological state (sickness, low mood, stress). The moon has always been a description used by the Arab poets.

The tree/my grandmother/is a symbol of identity and belonging (Table VII). The ChatGPT translation seems poetic and helps more the reader to find out the symbolism used by the poet.

The olive trees, the holy land, the mosque, the Church, the rock, are all symbols used by the poet to describe his land. Therefore, to facilitate understanding, footnotes seem a must.

In summary, understanding symbolism and poetic imagery in Mahmoud Darwish's literary work requires an understanding of the Palestinian issue, basically, exile, violence, homelessness, etc. The cultural components are still a hinder towards an accurate translation and any loss is a deviation from the source.

### 3. CONCLUSION

The data under consideration is composed of the original text "The Dice Player" by Mahmoud Darwish and a translated version provided by AI. The method adopted in dealing with this data is a comparative study based on different linguistic levels that include the phonetic, rhythmic, syntactic, figure of speech, semantic and symbolic.

The translated poem is discussed and analysed qualitatively based on these elements. I assume that what is suggested is only one of the few possibilities in which the original poem could be rendered into English. In translation there is always something that can be improved. The findings of this paper could be listed as follows:

ChatGPT has opted for word for word rendering in the process of the translation. This has led to a loss in many cases. Taking into consideration that the target reader is English, this strategy may influence the communicative value as stated by Lefevere (1975) by applying this strategy; the imaginative meaning cannot be transferred. Mahmoud Darwish's poems are full of powerful imaginations; the hidden and abstract meanings of the words may not be recognized by the target reader. That's why footnotes may be suggested to help within understanding. It is also noticed that the ChatGPT translation has not cater for interpretation while translating. If they have opted for that strategy, the result may be more literary and elegant in language.

The translated version does not create the same response and effect as induced by the original poem's reader. Even the tone is not transferred in the same way, one can't feel the spirit of Darwish poems.

As a conclusion, this paper is only an attempt to draw a comparative study of translation and the ChatGPT can be reviewed or a new version using other AI platforms should be tested to improve translation and make Darwish' literary work available for a large audience.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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