

## The rationale of developing an annotated bilingual glossary of literary terms: A Solution to Literary Stagnation in B.A. Undergraduate/M.A. Graduate Classrooms in Iran

### Abstract

Undergraduate students of English literature in Iran are rarely found at the appropriate level of proficiency to readily embark on the syllabus specifically designed to meet their predestinated objectives. They modestly pass their courses without taking adequate pleasure in the esthetics inherently instilled and deposited in the ridges and furrows of a work of literature. Admittedly, they cannot be left alone by themselves struggling and grappling in vain accompanied with some teachers somehow lacking stamina and occasionally proficiency to recapitulate the level of gain they are expected to acquire. Such a depressing status of stagnation can be referred to a lot of overt or covert reasons left untapped, not working them out for effective solutions. One, at least to mention one, to be seriously blamed, is the way and the procedure the candidates are recruited to major in English literature in the institutes and colleges. Despite all those underachieving, deterrent agents, one has to fight cramming reluctance and come out of the dead-lock of such chaotic restlessness with something that can invigorate the innate gifts, then lowering the victim population in such yawning, snoring venue. Here, the researcher/author can step forward claiming targeting one of the debilitating factors. A project proposed aiming at compiling an annotated bilingual glossary of literary terms is enthusiastically adopted and undertaken, in fact shouldered to daringly tease provoking dormant faculties in roaming students and slushy teachers so as to have them pragmatically actualize a technical touch of expression and interpretation for some resistant, hard to crack type of literary products.

The Iranian university-students majoring in literature due to their low proficiency in English and their rare access to supportive and facilitative books seriously suffer from a deflecting recession of adequately realizing, generously interpreting and sharply criticizing the literary products in the genre of poetry, fiction as well as drama. Teachers of literature themselves, being no exceptions in most cases, are the by-products of somehow such debilitating contexts of learning. They are in fact directly or indirectly the innocent victims of similar unwelcome conditions. They underwent identically the same sad experience of using unhelpful or debilitating glossaries. The glossaries of literary terms that are available to them are identified to be of a word-word category that provides Farsi-English/English-Farsi equivalent pairs. This 'term-equivalent' sort of glossaries are rendered too sterile and barren to help students of literature readily involve themselves in working out successful literary interpretations and preparing developmental commentaries on poems, novels and plays. Students of literature are seen to have been seriously inhibited and deterred to dynamically participate in critical debates in moments of truth and properly respond and punctually attend to classroom assignments.

The glossaries in question as a point of fact suffer from a lot of shortcomings. They contain a lot of competitive pairs like *parody* and *burlesque* or *saga* and *legend* at least to mention some for which Farsi language fails to provide sharp distinctive equivalents so as to help students decisively distinguish groping for the red thin line between them. Those fuzzy, confusable literary terms, when defined tacitly, explicated in detail, and exemplified tactfully are found readily assimilated and pragmatically applied by the students to accomplish even their far-fetched, extravagant objectives. Moreover, one can accordingly find the students exploiting the extended definitions to provide delicate

commentaries on a fictional, poetical or dramatic literary writing. Obviously, students on getting sound ramifications and elaborations on the literary terms in access can accordingly demonstrate sharp dexterity on employing the fine particulars provided in the description, analysis and comparison of literary genre they are dealing with. Students carrying a copy of the annotated bilingual dictionary are justifiably expected to accurately harness the single terms in friendly contexts providing a better technical elucidation as well as elaboration of the nature of the literary text assigned to be inquisitively reviewed.

The annotated bilingual glossary of literary terms besides furnishing elaborate orientation if compared to the word-word equivalent type merits a canon of advantages that can be numerically alluded to as below:

- 1) Students are bilingually introduced to some additional authors and books in the same arena they are inquiring about to competitively pass their intelligent judgments.
- 2) Students can deactivate the congestions created by the seemingly inscrutable terms that inhibit their fluent reading and interpretation.
- 3) Students will encounter more related terms in their communication vessels along with the main literary entry they are struggling with in the midst of their intensive and extensive readings.
- 4) Students will discover some literary products that exclusively stand for a school of thought such as Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (Naturalism) or Zola's *Germinial* (Determinism). They in fact by investing their efforts in vain on a single-word equivalent type of glossary fail to adequately capture the minutes of the literary movements due to unwittingly missing lots of crumby particulars.
- 5) Students depending on such glossaries can efficiently prepare themselves as would-be candidates of graduate studies (M.A. or Ph.D.) for the competitive tests of entrance exams commonly held by the Ministry of Higher Education and the **Iran** Open University Extensions. Most of the students admitted to graduate studies in literature declared happily boasting the privilege of holding a copy of such a reference book.
- 6) Students can beneficially enjoy the sweet pleasure of undergoing a variety of teacherless, attendance free, distance or individualized type of learning by means of which they can boost their spirit of self-reliance as obtaining independence and autonomy.
- 7) Students can score higher in their examination papers compared to those using the word-word type of a glossary and those who were deprived of such a

- privilege. Therefore possessing an annotated copy of such a reference in access will indispensably change the pains and the gains of learning.
- 8) Students can utilize the bilingual/annotated glossary as a guide book of translation. The glossary comprises a vast amount of rich specimen of translation activity. They can engage themselves in translation assignments intelligently extracted from the generous reservoir of detailed bilingual terms.
  - 9) Students can manipulate the instances of English and Persian textual terms alphabetically incorporated in the glossary for the purpose of handling translation tasks from English into Farsi and vice versa.
  - 10) Students can self-correct their translations whether from English into Farsi or vice-versa by comparing them to the original models provided in the glossary.
  - 11) Students can write based on the detailed specifications of literary terms provided in the glossary brainy criticisms, thrilling commentaries, and pragmatic interpretations of literary works that can be authentically and creatively understood by the potential audiences.
  - 12) Students may encounter more competitive literary terms that are somehow overlapping with the focused entry in question. The recurrence of equivalent terms in fact provides them with the chance of storing or retrieving more terms to their previous inventory.
  - 13) Students in case of the English column appears not quite comprehensible at first glance may resort to reading the same in the Farsi column. Such a bilingual reading, of course, can lead to the upgrading of comprehension and the reinforcement of learning by the rubric of quality as well as quantity.
  - 14) Students who are not proficient in English can depend on themselves reading the Farsi version of the term they render problematic.
  - 15) Students can be happy encountering some selected specimen of quoted poetry. It is usually used to exemplify or reinforce the literary term in question. Besides reading the poetry in English, they have in access a creative translation of the original specimen but not exemplifying the technical nature for which it has been selected.
  - 16) Students of English can read the literary terms from the left column and solve the problems they encounter by resorting to the Farsi equivalents they are provided with on the right-hand side column.
  - 17) Students' job is seen to have been facilitated by providing them with the Farsi equivalents of the in-text literary i.e. those manipulated as sub-entries to support an idea or to elaborate on the main entry following the same consecutive order observed in the English column.

- 18) Students majoring in Farsi language or Persian literature are provided with the alternative of reading the definitions of the literary terms in Farsi and when entangled with deterring agents safely refer themselves to the conducive clues in the English text facing the Farsi column.

## **Conclusion**

English literature cannot be esthetically assimilated unless the audience gets hard access to meanings trapped and embedded in such components as the religious bibles, mythological accounts, historical records, literary schools, intellectual minds, intuitive inclinations linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge as well as literary terms.

The preparation of such a type of biblical reference book is expected to undoubtedly revolutionize the domain of teaching and learning literature of not merely English but prospectively all languages of the world. The same annotated bilingual dictionary of Farsi/English category can be functionally manipulated to turn out serving as an annotated bilingual dictionary of Arabic/English type. The same rout can be adopted forming a Farsi/Arabic version. These versions can be somehow exponentially increased to potentially flourish covering the demand of almost all languages of the world. The comparativists in thy arena of literature can vow granting such a book a utilitarian role to provide them with ready-made clues, thus, provoking non-rehearsed research topics on which they can successfully embark. This ambitious scheme is expected to provide the type of learning material that helps taking attendance-free, teacherless, distance education for granted. Such a creative tendency is in fact can be rendered quite convincing, thus maintaining teacher's full authority and granting students benignant autonomy. This new, brave world indispensably requires witnessing genuine initiatives supported by hard facts to have the long awaited dreams and expectations of the third millennium survivals practically get nucleated and crystallized.