



**The translation of direct and indirect  
oxymoron in Tennyson's poetry into  
Arabic**

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## Abstract

One of the most challenging problems in literary translation .This paper examines oxymoron definition and main challenges faced by translators while translating oxymoron in Tennyson's poetry from English to Arabic as well as , it focus of the types of oxymoron which use in translating Tennyson's poetry.

The current study intends to demonstrate the challenges that translators face translating oxymoron and to highlight these difficulties .

Some poetry samples taken from Tennyson's poet are translated to Arabic and their type of oxymoron located .

### - **statement of the problem**

oxymoron translation is one of the challenges that translators must deal with because of its unique characteristics. When dealing oxymoron , the unique features of it present a considerable number of difficulties for translators.

### - **Aim of the study**

The objectives of the current investigation are as follows:

1. defining oxymoron and its types .
2. showing how oxymoron in Alfred Tennyson's poetry translated into Arabic .
3. how translators adopted translation strategies in translated oxymoron .

### - **Hypothesis of the study**

1. translating poetry need from the translator to be aware of different aspects such as oxymoron .
2. Translator must use the suitable strategy to render the meaning which the original writer intended .
3. Direct and indirect oxymoron are one of the most used strategies in poetry .

### - **Value of the study**

The present study is benefit in general and to the translation of literary texts and poetry text in particular. So, this study confirms the fact that the poetry translation need from the poet to be aware of pragmatic aspects such as oxymoron .It is hoped that this study will be of benefit and valuable cause it shed lights on the difficulties which face the translators in translating poetry . The significance of this study lies in concentrating on cultural bridge connection. Thus, this makes it of value for researchers interested in conducting studies related to literary texts .

## **Introduction : Oxymoron definition**

Morner and Rausch define oxymoron as a linguistic figure of speech that refers to a pair of terms that contradict each other, but are used together to create a specific and special effect." (Morner and Rausch, 2017: 158). Indeed, oxymoron is one of a number of expressions, collectively referred to as terms of contradiction, which intentionally and purposefully combine, juxtapose, or align terms that are known to be contradictory in everyday language. The effect of these terms is to bring attention to an emotional stance, a statement of apparent truth or confession of jumbled beliefs. These terms are "used intentionally, for rhetorical effect, and the contradiction is only apparent, as the combination of terms provides a novel expression of some concept" (Small, 2008:2).

According to the Macmillan English Dictionary (2002: 476), oxymoron is an expression that comprises two words containing opposite meanings juxtaposed together for an expressive effect which results from the semantic dissonance between the two expressions. For instance, "bitter sweet," which is one of the stock examples of oxymoron, derives its punchiness from the act of the successive, though sudden, shift from bitterness to sweetness without qualifications or elaboration. This tendency towards expressive punchiness is present in the very etymology of the term. The term Oxymoron, which was standardized in the English language in the seventeenth century, is derived from the Greek word oxumōron, which is composed of two parts: oxus, meaning "sharp." and moros, meaning "foolish" or "dull".

Intriguingly, then, the etymology of the word oxymoron is oxymoronic. This inherent exemplification that accompanies the name of the term itself highlights the intrinsic existence of opposing ideas in a

single term. No wonder, there, that we encounter the term most frequently in expressive contexts, that is literary writing. However, the effect is also deployed in other forms of writing, as we will see soon. At its core, nonetheless, oxymoron remains a figure of speech that combines two terms that are otherwise regarded as opposites. The figure of speech appears "in a range of contexts, from inadvertent errors such as extremely average and deliberate puns like same different, to literary oxymora that have been carefully crafted to reveal a paradox" (Irene, 2014: 65).

Oxymoron is often confused with another figure of speech, namely, paradox. In fact, the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably, albeit not in technical contexts where accuracy of use is important. In his *Philosophy for Linguists*, Siobhan Chapman explains the difference between the two terms: "While an oxymoron is the combination of two contradictory words in a single sentence, a paradox is an entire phrase/sentence that appears contradictory but, upon further investigation, could be true or plausible" (Chapman, 2000:143). In other words, paradox depends on the initially apparent contradiction between two terms that, after a more thoughtful consideration, turns out to be not contradictory. In the end, the two terms are reconciled as not contradictory. On the other hand, however, the two terms juxtaposed in an oxymoron are often contradictory, and they contradict each other even after thoughtful consideration. The effect of the figure of speech depends on the fact that the two terms remain contradictory.

### Types of Oxymoron

Traditional definitions of oxymoron emphasized its nature, i.e. the fact that the figure of speech brings together two apparently contradictory terms for an added effect. More recently, however, a number of researchers have attempted to classify the types of oxymoron, rather than just provide example of its use of the ways it is formed. At the behest of these studies is *On the Structure and Understanding of Poetic Oxymoron*, an important book that lays out important classifications for oxymoron. Its author, Yeshayaho Shen (2015: 311-313), distinguishes between direct oxymoron and indirect oxymoron. The former is more or less the traditional understanding of oxymoron, i.e. juxtaposing two terms that are otherwise contradictory. For example, "cruel kindness" is a direct oxymoron since cruelty is the opposite of kindness.

On the other hand, indirect oxymoron is a more elaborate and farfetched use of contradiction. The meaning is not immediately apparent because understanding the oxymoron requires more knowledge of the context of one or both terms. For example, the term "war games" is an example of this type of oxymoron since war is a serious and somber issue, whereas games are traditionally light and inconsequential practices. Figuring out this type of oxymoron requires more involvement from the reader, and that is why Lederer (2008: 5) coined the term opinion oxymoron for indirect oxymoron.

### Oxymoron in Literary works

There are a number of ways oxymoron has been used in literary writing. The two overarching concerns of oxymoron, however, are either calling attention to a situation that cannot be named or highlighting the inherent contradiction of a certain emotional or intellectual context. In conservative societies, especially, a number of writers have used the figure of speech to convey powerful messages. In the Russian context, Vishnevsky titled one of his plays "An Optimistic Tragedy," whereas Tolstoy gave the title "A Living Corpse" to one of his works (Richards and Schmidt, 1983: 89). On the other hand, oxymoron has been used to highlight the dual nature of a phenomenon, a concept, or an object. Take, for example, Robert and Kimpur's *Poor Millionaires* which portrays the empty lives of the rich. The title is captivating and, seemingly, unreconcilable but reading the novel would hammer, once and again, the point that the rich people in the novel continue to be poor despite amassing an exorbitant amount of money.

oxymoron as a poetic device can express a range of emotion, and thus using contradictory terms to express deep emotion illustrates how confusing our feelings can be. The use of oxymoron suggests that something can have two qualities at the same time. This concept spurs philosophical thoughts. Likewise, using oxymoron can focus attention on a specific element and make the reader take notice. When an author uses oxymoron to explain or describe a concept, he draws attention to the fact that there is something complex here to be explored. The role of oxymoron in poetry is typically twofold: it is often meant to create a vivid and memorable image or phrase and to make the reader pause a

moment to consider the meaning of what was just read. By combining two words or terms together that are inherently contradictory, the use of an effective oxymoron can create a phrase with lasting resonance and a more immediately evocative sensibility. This powerful phrase can also help make a reader stop for a moment to consider the meaning of an oxymoron in the work, which can be used to control the rhythm of a poem or to punctuate a point.

Some poets have used oxymoron not only as a figure of speech but also as a mechanism to provide more coherence to the structure of the poem itself. Because of the curious nature of the ideas generated by an oxymoron, readers often find themselves stopping to seep in the multiple layers of meaning offered by the term. This pause allows the poet to dictate the rhythmic reading of the poem which corresponds to the highs and lows of the flow of ideas and effects in one poem (Ibid) .

Because of its economy and immediate effect, oxymoron is a staple in a lot of poems that seek to highlight contradictory feelings or express contradictory states of affairs. Literary examples of oxymoron are often cited from William Shakespeare. His Romeo and Juliet, which is ripe in contradictory feelings has a lot of examples of oxymoron. Take, for example, these expressions: "loving hate," "heavy lightness," "feather of lead," "bright smoke," "cold fire," and "sick health" are all examples of oxymoron ( Ibid ) .

## Examples of Translating oxymoron in Tennyson's poetry into Arabic and its types

Oxymoron in Tennyson's	Translation into Arabic	Type of Oxymoron
That's my <u>adult child</u> . Poor thing still can't get herself in real adult world .	هذه طفلاتي الصغيرة البالغة ، لا تستطيع المسكينة ان تتأقلم في عالم البالغين	Direct
If you will the <u>same different</u>	نفس الاختلاف ان شئت	Direct
In their own <u>tinct</u> , and added of her <u>wit</u>	لديه شعر حقيقي و باروكة من شعرها	Indirect
<u>He is all fault who hath no fault at all</u>	لديه اخطاء مع انه لا يخطيء	Indirect

The table show us , that Tennyson's use both types of Oxymoron ( direct and indirect ) in his poet . Translator translated the sentence with little knowledge of Oxymoron , and due to that there are faults in translating aspects of Oxymoron >

## Conclusion

This paper concludes that oxymoron as a poetic device can express a range of emotion, and thus using contradictory terms to express deep emotion illustrates how confusing our feelings can be. The use of oxymoron suggests that something can have two qualities at the same time. This concept spurs philosophical thoughts. Likewise, using oxymoron can focus attention on a specific element and make the reader take notice. When an author uses oxymoron to explain or describe a concept, he draws attention to the fact that there is something complex here to be explored. The role of oxymoron in poetry is typically twofold: it is often meant to create a vivid and memorable image or phrase and to make the reader pause a moment to consider the meaning of what was just read. By combining two words or terms together that are inherently contradictory, the use of an effective oxymoron can create a phrase with lasting resonance and a more immediately evocative sensibility. This powerful phrase can also help make a reader stop for a moment to consider the meaning of an oxymoron in the work, which can be used to control the rhythm of a poem or to punctuate a point.

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