Abstract

Human beings, throughout history, have made an effort to take advantage of various methods of communication with the intention of utilizing the knowledge of other nations and endeavoring to preserve this knowledge for the coming generations. As the most effective methods of communication, language has been employed to satisfy the very need of communication. The predicament that may emerge as an obstacle in the way of communication seems to be the fact of dissimilarity of languages throughout the world. In today's world of globalization, communication between different nations with different languages is feasible through translation. However, Sheikh Adam Abdullah Al-ilory was a literary icon who left behind a host of publications written in fluent Arabic language on various aspects of life. These publications have become areas of concentration for researchers from after his death till recent times. Despite the exhaustive studies, few had been done on the translation of his prose works, while very little or no attempt had been made to translate his poetic works to the best of the writers of this paper's knowledge. This work is a translation and comment on some work in Al-ilory's Anthology titled: Some Gleanings from Al-ilory's Poems. Nigeria as a multilingual country has adopted English Language as her Lingua Franca and this has won it more population of speakers than the indigenous languages and other foreign languages. Therefore, the Arabic language in which the works of Al-ilory are written, denies the Non-Arabic users in Nigeria and outside the opportunity to share from the didactic lessons taught in the publications. The present researchers therefore conducted a comprehensive translation and comment on part of the anthology, treading the path of the modern poets by placing less emphasis on end rhymes in the bid to break every obstacle that could stand against achieving the intended meaning in the poetic verses. The work reveals that Sheikh Adam, in addition to being a prose writer was also a poet, whose poems contain admonitions, evocations of Allah, eulogies etc. which are worthy to be read by all and sundry. The research will fill the vacuum of the
Translation of Al-ilory’s poems and thus give Non-Arabic users the opportunity to share from the lessons covered within the pages of the anthology.

Translation defined

Since antiquity, translation has everbeen vital in human life to the transmission and exchange of human knowledge and communication among different languages throughout history at all level. Now, translation has become still more vital than before in this age of technology and communication and highly complicated interrelations and interactions among peoples. However, the definition of translation according to Kenny (cited in Adedimeji & Ayuba, 2012 : 235) is "central" but controversial and "differs radically". Translation, as Bell (1991 : 8) asserts, involves the transfer of meaning from a text in one language into a text in another language. Nida (1984:83) points out: "translation consists of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style. V. Komissarov considers that “translation is a complicated and many-sided kind of human activity. Though usually people speak about translation “from one language on another”, actually, it is not simply a replacement of one language with another. The different cultures, people, ways of thinking, literatures epochs, levels of development, traditions and world vies clash with each other in translation”.

According to M. Brandes, “translation is a kind of language mediation where the content of the foreign text (original) is transferred to other language by way of creating a communicatively equivalent text in this language”.

According to Larson (1984 : 15) translation is classified into two main types, namely form-based translation and meaning-based translation. Forms-based translation attempts to follow the form of the source language (SL) and it is known as literal translation, while meaning-based translation makes every effort to communicate the meaning of the SL text in the natural forms of the receptor language. Such translation is called idiomatic translation. A literal translation sounds like nonsense and has little communication value (Larson, 1984 : 15). The literal translation can be understood if the general grammatical form of the two languages is similar. Larson (1984 : 16) says that idiomatic translations use the natural forms of the receptor language both in the grammatical constructions and in the choices of lexical items. A truly idiomatic translation does not sound like translation. It
sounds like it was written originally in the receptor language. Therefore, a good translator will try to translate idiomatically. This is his/her goal.  

**Theoretical framework**

Several theories of translation can be used to examine the possibility of poetry’s translatability. However, to put this discourse in perspective, two related theoretical frameworks namely: Translation ranking and purpose of translation theories, readily provide anchorage for this discussion.

In terms of rank, translation is divided into:

01. Rank-bound translation, it means that the selection of TL text equivalent is limited at only one rank, such as word-for-word equivalence, morpheme-for-morpheme equivalence, etc.

02. Unbounded translation unlike Rank-bound translation, it can move freely up and down the rank-scale.

Based on the purposes of translation, Brislin in Choliludin (2007: 26-30) categorizes translation into four types, namely:

a. Pragmatic translation: it refers to the translation of a message with an interest in accuracy of the information that was meant to be conveyed in the SL form and it is not conveyed with other aspects of the original language version. Example: the translation of the information about repairing a machine.

b. Aesthetic-poetic translation: it refers to translation in which the translator takes into account the affect, emotion, and feeling of an original version, the aesthetic form used by the original author, as well as any information in the message. Example: the translation of sonnet, rhyme, heroic couplet, dramatic dialogue, and novel.

c. Ethnographic translation: its purpose is to explicate the cultural context of the SL and TL versions. Translators have to be sensitive to the way words are used and must know how the word fits into cultures. Example: the use of the word ‘yes’ versus ‘yeah’ in America.

d. Linguistic translation: is concerned with equivalent meanings of the constituent morphemes of the SL and grammatical form. Example: language in a computer program and translation machine.

The researchers used Unbounded translation theory which is aimed to freely moving up and down in translating the work in order to bring about meaning-based translation however, as mentioned above,
the meaning based translation makes every effort to communicate the meaning of the SL text in the natural forms of the receptor language.

On the purposes of translation, the researchers consider all categories propounded by Brislin namely: Pragmatic, Aesthetic-poetic, Ethnographic and Linguistic translation; this will take care the concept pragma-semiotic approach to translation proposed for translation activities from Arabic to English however, it is worth to put on record that Aesthetic-poetic prominently characterized the translation methods adopted because of direct correlation.

**Brief Biography of Shaykh Adam Al-Ilory**

Shayhy Adam was born in 1917 of a Nigerian father, a native of Ilorin from Omada Quarters, Balogun Ajikobi ward. His father, though an indigene of Ilorin, has his root in Oyo-ile, His mother, a princess was a native of Ponde in Wasa province of Dahomey, now Republic of Benin. Shaykh Adam was born in his mother's country in Wasa, a town near Djougou. His father Abdul Baqi travelled far and wide being an itinerant scholar and preacher. It was in the course of his proselytization that he chose to settle in Ponde where he got married, gave birth to Shaykh Adam and also became the chief Imam of the town⁰⁸.

Shaykh Adam started his early Qur'anic education from his father in Wasa. He later studied under different Mallams while sojourning at Ibadan, Lagos and Kano. He later went to Cairo in 1946 where he wonderfully showcased exceptional brilliance at Al-Azhar University and was awarded the institution's certificate in Arabic and Islamic Studies. He also travelled far and wide to different places and this afforded him the opportunity of meeting some Muslim scholars of International repute⁰⁹.

Shaykh Adam was a great teacher. His Markaz at Agege has produced several great scholars of repute who have held and are still holding important post in their places of work¹⁰. Apart from being a teacher, the Shaykh was an Imam of his central mosque located within the premises of his Markaz in Agege. He was an eloquent preacher and exegete whose tafsir class used to be flocked by a large audience drawn from different parts of the country. Upon all, he was a prolific writer whose books covered a wide range of specialties like Islamic jurisprudence, Logic, Tafsir, philosophy, Grammar, history, poetry¹¹ and other topical issues that touch virtually all aspects of human endeavors. These books were taught to his students in the Markaz and other institutions in Nigeria and the West African sub-region¹². Indeed, his works according to R. Ibrahim Adebayo were so popular, educative and
Thanksgiving composed in 1962

I meditated about my past
Then found it so amazing
Nothing is expected of me but to thank my Lord
For some blessings so uncountable.

For I was like a plant on the hills
I survived but with the guard of the guardian
Was made to germinate without water
On a barren land and harsh weather
I was poor and so was ignoble

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Nothing is expected of me but to thank my Lord
I survived but with the guard of the guardian
For some blessings so uncountable.
I was a slave in the land of trouble
I was ignorant as well lazy
I was debased with a mind moody
I had no guardian to rely on
But my Lord took control of the course
The favor of my Lord visited me
One after another stresslessly
This is indeed quite surprising!
I got no knowledge through craftiness
But with the grace of the All-sufficient
I became as wished my Lord
From infancy to maturity
I pity some people of the cunning class
The ill-hearted class and misfortuned
Planning to put off God’s Light
Never will that be possible with a blow of air
Spreading their fans around the lamp
Eventually they were all lost
With the evil of their labour
So many an envious man
So many a grudge bearer
So many a stubborn man
Trying to cause atrocities
The aftermath of their attempts
Was the loss of here and hereafter
As well as accumulation of sins.
To you be the praise
My Lord on your grace
No one hears and answer a call as you
Do not rip me off your favour
As well don’t forsake me
For the heftiness of my sin
And the slyness of my foes.

Thanksgiving

The poem is written by the poet to show his sincere gratitude to Allah
over the inestimable favors that had been done to him. Thus, he took himself
back memory lane and the aftermath of his thought gave rise to this poem.

The simile given by the poet in line 3 is not in any way exaggerating and
not far from the tenable, because weeds grow on mountains without having
any source of water. The only questionable aspect of this simile is how could
the background of the man born of a princess and a renowned business man
and Islamic cleric be so debased to the point of likening it to that of a
mountain-top plant?
مناجة الإلورى التي يبث فيها شكاوى لربه
يا من يبكيّه ولا آراه ** وهو يجنب الضررين
يا خلق الأرض والسماء ** يا رازق الاضطراب والجبن
يا واهب العصر بالحباء ** يا قابض الروح بالنمون
يا خلقي يا راتبي ** اختارني في العالم
لن أقعد بدنيه ** من بين قوم منكريين
أصبحت أعلم في حياني ** لأني من عاصميين
حتى عولت سبعين عاما ** قضيت جملتها لديني
ميتا انقضى أربعون عاما ** في بُث علمي للطالبين
كم من بلايا كم من خزاء ** كم من ريايا كم ما عيين
حَلّت علي من الأعادي ** من كافرين وحاسدين
ومن نصارى وسلمين ** رجوت ربي علّي اليقين
في دفع كّلال بلينة ** وشمنانة من شامتين
فوجدت ربي كما رجوت ** يوني سؤالي كل حكين
كنت جاهلولا صرت فقها ** نكّشف أعلام العالم
كنت ذليلا صرت عزيا ** فبفضل أكرم الأكريمين
كنت فريدًا صرت عيدًا ** بلبات قومي يعّلون
بــأّن ربي أعّزني ** لعلـّمهم يتذكرون
إن نبّنوا كل آية ** فإنهم سوف يـّساؤون
ولم أزل ثم ارجحـي ** زيادة الخير كالـّرصين
من عـّند ربي ذي الجلال ** مفـّيض خير للمرتجين
دعـّوته ودعاه لي ** أهـّل التقى من رجال ديني
بطـّول عمر وصحة ** لنـّفع أبناء المسلمين
وإن عمرت عمرا طويلا ** يسعد مـّليـّـمـون الصالحين
ولم أكن بدعاء ربي ** شقيت يوما كلالـّمجرمين
ما كـاـن ربي يخـبـيب راج ** ولا يستمر السـّانيين
بل كان طـّــــــين جازمـا ** بالله رب العـّـــــلـّـلـمـين
إذـّـهو أرحـّـم الرىـّـمـين ** بل هو نـّـــــــــــنـّــي القائرين
قد ظـّـــال اــدـعـّــوــا استجـّــب ** كذلك نـّـــــــــــنـّــي المؤمنين
Silent Conversation to his Lord on Challenges he faces

O He that sees me but I see not!
And He is who answers the distressed.
O the creator of heaven and earth!
O He who provides for the fetus and birds!
O He who grants ages with life!
O He who takes soul with demise!
My creator! My provider!
Who selected me among the world
To shoulder the spread of His Religion
Amidst those who refuted Islam.
I eventually turned feeble in life
For I’ve been myself and self-made.
Till I grew above seventy years
I spent it all on my religion
Forty from it for knowledge spread
Spreading my knowledge to the seekers.
So much disgrace; so much tribulations
So much catastrophes; so much humiliations
Befell me from my foes
The unbelievers and those who grudge me
Among the Christians and the Muslims too.
In certainty I looked up to my Lord
To save me from every tribulation and schadenfreude
My Lord disappointed me not
He constantly granted my requests.
I was ignorant but became knowledgeable
With an exposure from the Omniscient
I was debased but became honored
With the favor of the most generous.
I was all alone but turned multiple
How I wish my people knew
That my Lord was He who honored me
So that they may remember
That if they deny every sign
Verily, they shall all be asked.
Still I’m hoping for more blessings
Just like the needy in suffering
From my Lord the greatest
Who rains favor on those who hope
I beseeched Him and He was on my behalf beseeched
By the pious men of my religion
For a life so long and health
For the benefit of the Muslims
If I be granted a long life
A million of the do-gooders will be lucky
I never became unfortunate
Like a culprits for supplicating to my Lord
Neither does my Lord disappoints who seeks
Nor does He denies who asks
Rather my thought is positive
Of Allah, the Lord of the world
As He is the most merciful
And also the best truth-sayer
He had said: “call me and I shall answer
As such we save the believer”.
“Optimism is all I demand from a servant
So we reward the do-gooders”
The whole of this is by the grace
Of the gracious and Almighty
How many a person we have seen
Who neither prayed nor even fasted
But at last they were so lucky
And were counted as being righteous
They shall never be forgotten
As long as the clear Qur’an is read
Of them is HabeebNajjar
Who called: oh my people! Follow the messenger
And a man-believer in SuratulGaafir
Silent Conversations.....

It is an evoking and suppling poem written by the poet to evoke the Most High, Allah (SWT). The poem sounds like one of the last, if not the last written by the poet, as it gives the synopsis of all that the poet had gone through during the period of calling to the path of Allah. Lines 5-8 of the Arabic text and lines 8-16 of the translated text.

The supplications in the poem are fortified with an exospheric reference to those who neither bowed for Allah in prayer nor fasted, but by the grace of Allah were counted at last as being righteous. The first of whom (as stated by the poet) is Habeeb bin Mura(7) An-Najjar (the carpenter), who, having learnt the plot of the unbelievers against the three messengers of Allah sent to the people of a village, ran to them and preached as well as pleaded with them to accept the message of the messengers and not kill them. Allah says in his tongue:

وجاء من أقصى المدينة رجل يسمع قال يا قوم اتبعوا المرسلين, اتبعوا من لا يسألكم أجرا

وهم مبتدون(8)

The second is a believer amongst the men of Fir’aon who believed but never disclosed his faith in Allah. He said out of his compassion for the messenger of Allah Musa to Fir’aon when he deemed it fit to kill Musa:

انتقلون رجلا أن يقول ربي الله وقده جاءتكم بالبينات من ريعكم وإن يك كاذبا فعليه كذبه وإن

 بك صادقا يصيبكم بعض الذي يعدكم(9)

The last is the wife of Fir’aon who never had a hand in the oppression and atrocities committed by her spouse.

The presentation made by the poet of these trio sounds like they never did anything to warrant being counted as righteous people or being admitted into Jannah, whereas, the only thing these people never did was Islam, which wasn’t even in vogue during their time, but they had a solid and rigid faith that never was adulterated by the hypocrisy which spread its tentacles during their era.

And the wife of Fir’aon the oppressor
They indeed became among the lucky ones
Who will look at others from pleasant shades
That was but with the favour of my Lord
Without having any valuable in return
Favour me as you have done them
By the grace of your standard authority
O Lord let my dream come to reality
As thou hath done with the fore-beings
And not deny me of the reward
Of my good deeds if I be of the do-gooders.
The porter of the world

The Porter of the world, O God!
O ye who grants gifts, O God!
O ye who prevents from atrocities
Accept my prayers, O God!
Thou are the most majestic, O God!
Thou are the most perfect, O God!
Thou are the most gracious
Thou are the one full of blessings, O God!
Thou are that who sees me, O God!
Thou hear my words, O God!
Thou know my spot
Forget me not, O God!
Protect my shortcomings, O God!
Forgive my sins, O God!
Punish me not; I beseech your favor, O God!
With the poor be merciful, O God!
Assist the defeated, O God!
Free the slaves with your kindliness
O ye! Who answers the supplicants, O God!
Extend peace
To the class of peace
In the home of peace

Some Gleanings from Al-ilory's Poems
presentation, translation and comment
Lord of the creatures

The poem is a free verse as it has no specific end rhyme. The repetition of ‘Allah’ at the end of every line is thus an additive to the poem. Nevertheless, there are internal rhymes in embedded in the poem as can be seen in ‘Baraya’, ‘ataya’, as in line 1 of the Arabic text; ‘uyub’, ‘zunub’, as in line 4 and ‘faqeer’, ‘kaseer’ as in line 5.

The reason behind the violation of the law of end rhyme is the theme of the poem which is supplication and evoking Allah. This theme calls for a free mind and absolute expression of one’s thought without any restriction or hindrance. But still, a completely rhymed poem could still be written for the purpose of supplication as done by the poet in other poems of same theme.

 رب الخلائق
ربنا رب الخلائق ** ربنا رب الخلائق
نجنا من شر الزمان
وأعفنا منك السلامة ** وأعفنا منك السعادة
والرضى مع نيل الأماني(13)

Lord of the Creatures
Our Lord the Lord of the creatures
Save us from the evil of the epoch.
And give us from you security
And give us from you felicity
Be pleased with us and please
Help actualize our dreams.

The Porter of the World

This poem is an all-encompassing and evocative poem as it encapsulates all that a man could desire here on earth and in the hereafter; for him to be saved of the evil of the epoch, granted peace, made to succeed in all of his endeavors, granted all of his desires and aspirations and finally for Allah to be pleased with whatever he does are indeed all that a man needs to survive in life and life after death. This quality has turned the poem to what virtually every Markaziy (an Alumnus or student of Markaz) sings during their individual prayers.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, attempt was made to reproduce Al-ilory's poem in English version. Arabic language in which the works of Al-ilory are written,
denies the Non-Arabic users locally, nationally and internationally the opportunity to share from the didactic lessons taught in his works. The study has shown that al-Iloriy is not only a Historian or Islamist but also an Arabic poet whose poems explore some prominent themes of poetry in Arabic; it was discovered that his poems is of high quality and can compare with the acceptable standard in the Arab world. On the basis of this, we wish to offer the following recommendations:

- The works of Shaykh Adam should be continuing translated to English, Yoruba and other local languages, so that his message could reach the grass-roots.
- The Shaykh's works should be recommended for students of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Colleges of Education and Universities for them to appreciate the vast knowledge of this International scholar of repute.

Notes
05. Ibid.
07. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. The present work is his Anthology (Collection of poems) titled: Some Gleanings from Al-illy’s Poems.