A Comparison of the English and Vietnamese Translation of *Romeo and Juliet* in Terms of Rhythm and Speech Patterns

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ABSTRACT

Translation is the bridge connecting languages, cultures, and people around the world throughout history, from past to present, in time and space. The quality of translation affects the closeness and tightness of those connections. A translation can cause misconceptions, contort tone, and misinterpret cultural references, while a translation can also bring a positive impression to foreign readers not only of the text, but also of the country, people, and culture of origin. In Translation Studies, *faithfulness* is the central concern of philological theories that focus on literary genres, stylistics, and rhetoric between the Source Language (SL) and Target Language (TL). Translating literary and dramatic texts for stage performance, especially Shakespeare's plays, always requires specific criteria to convey the original meanings as well as the performability, in which the poetic feature is the most difficult task for any translator. This study, based on this fundamental principle, compares and contrasts the original text of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* with its Vietnamese translation by Dang The Binh to examine how much the translator has done to maintain the rhythmic and speech patterns. It is concluded that the Vietnamese translation was unable to maintain the Iambic Pentameter of the Source Text (ST) while other rhythmic syllables were conveyed randomly.

1. Introduction

A translation often has flaws, errors or mistakes that can be on the surface or hidden in the text (Hansen, 2010). A translation, therefore, should be considered in the context of a certain period of time because it only reflects and suits the level of education, idealism, and culture of society in that period (Horton, 2013; Steward, 2009). Steiner (1975) suggested that the original work should be translated several times by different contemporary and subsequent translators, who in turn introduce alternative versions with reciprocal, accumulative correction and criticism. In other words, evaluation in general and criticism in particular are really necessary to produce a good translation. Iambic Pentameter is the trademark and specialty of Shakespeare whenever mentioning about his Sonnets and plays. Different approaches in the translation process have different explanations when translating Iambic Pentameter. Language differences in terms of structure, grammar and syllables, however, prevent the translator from maintaining that poetic feature in the translation. While English is multi-syllabic, Vietnamese is mono-syllabic. To keep both the message and the form of Iambic Pentameter into Vietnamese is such a challenge. By comparing every single line of both the English and Vietnamese text with more than 63.030 words, this study aims to signify the characteristics of Iambic Pentameter in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and how to translate this poetic form into Vietnamese. As originated from a play for stage performance, this study brings the ambition to set up a framework to translate Iambic Pentameter into Vietnamese, and call for a campaign in Vietnam to re-translate not only Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* but also other plays of this talented playwright. The following discussion will seek the answer for the following question: How were the rhythm and speech patterns in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* translated into Vietnamese?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Philological theories

Rooted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe, the philological theories have been focusing on the feature of *faithfulness*, where the translator brings the text to the reader or brings the reader to the text. According to Nida (1991), the philological approach to translation is contributed to by Luther (1530), Dolet (1540), Cowley (1656), Dryden (1680), and Pope (1715). Among these scholars, the influence of Luther is the ''greatest'' (Nida, 1964, p.20). The greatest German philosopher Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768-1834) contributes his theories of hermeneutics (interpretation) and translation with high influences to the practice of Translation Studies (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2002). This philological perspective continues receiving the concern and contribution of more modern translation specialists, such as Cary and Jumpelt (1963), Steiner (1975), and Felstiner (1980).

According to the definition in the Oxford English Dictionary, philology means a fondness of words and love of literature, which deals with the historical, linguistic, interpretive, the historical study of the phonology and morphology of languages, and critical aspects of literature. Following this nature, philological theories in translation are mostly concerned with literary works, with the aim of ''conveying the most exact information possible […] achieved by a literal translation'' (Nabokov, 1973, p.81). Studies in this manner are mainly concerned with the development of language and the literary research. In other words, philological theories compare the functional correspondence, literary genres, stylistics,

and rhetoric between the SL and TL. Nida (1976) stated that the fundamental of philological theories is the ''philological approach to literary analysis'' with higher level of treatment of ''all kinds of stylistic features and rhetorical devices''. (pp.67-68).

2.2 Literary Translation

Literary translation, in its general meaning, is the transfer of a literary text, such as a novel, poem, play, or drama which asks for a much stricter and more careful choice of words and expressions than everyday speech (Snell-Hornby & Pohl, 1989), from one language to another language in the requirement of maintaining feelings, cultural nuances, humour and other subtle elements of a piece of work. Besides, traditional problems in finding equivalents are not confined to lexis, syntax or concepts, but also the searching for other features, such as style, genre, figurative language, historical stylistic dimensions, polyvalence and connotations, as well as denotations, cultural items and culture-specific concepts and values (Ketkar, n.d.). In the translation process, the translator examines the TL to see which equivalent is suitable for the SL pun, whether the tone in the Source Text (ST) should be kept, whilst taking account of slang, nicknames, colloquialisms, proverbs and references to popular culture (Landers, 2001).

The term *literary translation* has been used in *systematic ambiguity* because of referring to two different things (Toury, 1995, p.168):

➤ The translation of texts which are regarded as literary in the Source Culture (SC).

➤ The translation of a text (in principle, at least, any text, of any type whatever) in such a way that the product is acceptable as literary to the recipient culture.

To translators, literary texts are really the challenges of how to keep the original context which is the foremost importance in literary translation; literal or free; faithful to the original or linked to the Target Culture (TC) audience. Riffaterre (1985, p.243) introduced his approach to literary translation by separating literary and non-literary use of language with three main characteristics:

a) Literature semioticises the discursive features e.g. lexical selection is made morphophonemically as well as semantically,

b) Literature substitutes semiosis for mimesis which gives literary language its indirection,

c) Literature has "the textuality" that integrates semantic components of the verbal sequence (the ones open to linear decoding) - a theoretically open-ended sequence-into one closed, finite semiotic, system that is , the parts of a literary texts are vitally linked to the whole of the text and the text is more or less self-contained.

A particularly difficult task, that translators are forced to overcome in literary translation, is that their decisions influence the writer and his work because they could be raised up to a high appreciation or put to death. It means that translators could result in the writer's death (Landers, 2001). As a type of translation in general, literary translation is distinguished by its imaginative, intellectual, intuitive factors, and especially its aesthetics. According to Hassan (2001, p.20), some typical characteristics of literary translation could be found as follows:

- Expressive
- Connotative
- Symbolic
- Focus on both form and content
- Subjective
- Allow multiple interpretations
- Timeless and universal
-Use special devices to 'heighten' communicative effects

- Tendency to deviate from the language norms.

In conclusion, borrowing the words of Professor Rainer Schulte (ALTA, n.d.):

> Literary translation bridges the delicate emotional connections between cultures and languages and furthers the understanding of human beings across national borders. In the act of literary translation the soul of another culture becomes transparent, and the translator recreates the refined sensibilities of foreign countries and their people through the linguistic, musical, rhythmic, and visual possibilities of the new language.

It is shown that the mission of translators in literary translation is to connect emotion which stretches through countries and cultures without any borders. Furthermore, the nature of cultures needs to be conveyed so that literary translations are able to bring readers of Source Culture (SC) and Target Culture (TC) together.

2.3 Dramatic Text Translation

Translation of dramatic texts seems to be the most neglected field because of the limitation of researches into the translation problems. Different from other kinds of text, dramatic works are written for stage performance with specific characteristics. This is the central concern of translators, whether to convey purely the literary text or to translate by focusing on the function of language. For example, the translator of a dramatic text often pays attention to choosing easily pronounced and comprehensible words as the equivalents to the ST. In a close relationship between the writer and the translator of literary text, despite having his/her own writing styles and expressions, the translator is considered as the subordinate of the author who wrote his/her work for theatre and stage performance.

Differing from prose, which narrates and depicts actions or situations, the way people meet or make acquaintance, dialogues in dramatic text form and illustrate how characters act and communicate with each other. In the same manner, sentences in dialogues in dramatic texts are unsophiticated, practically linked without conjunctions. Therefore, unfinished sentences appear frequently which makes the language of dramatic text become more specific and peculiar (Ferenčík, 1982). In terms of artistic genre, by comparing with other types such as poetry or prose, drama has different and specific quintessence which is the way of transferring events via speech, along with facial expressions, gestures, stag space, or gesticulation of characters, the whole content then is expressed in dialogues (Ubersfeld, 1977). Dramatic text's dialogues use direct speech with the intention of a direct audio-visual impact.

There is also an argument about which translation approaches to use: semantic or communicative to transfer a dramatic text. Like literal translation, a semantic approach brings the close and clear implications of the author, while a communicative approach makes the dialogues easily spoken. The purpose of translating a play can be for public reading enjoyment, for studies of scholars or for stage performance; therefore, the primary duty of the translator is to clarify his main purpose for acting or reading. A translated play is no longer a translation but an adaptation by the translator, who emphasises the cultural metaphors, allusions, or proper names instead of replacing them with the sense.

Ferenčík (1982), a famous Slovak linguistic theorist, discussed the characteristics of a dramatic text in comparison to other genres of translation. According to Ferenčík, a dramatic text has both written form if it is considered as a text, and non-written form due to its social realization. This theorist also talks about the relationship between author, translator, director, and audience of a dramatic text:

The communicative successiveness of translation of a drama, unlike another translational text, is following: Author–Translator (Interpreter 1) - Dramatic adviser and Director (Interpreters 2)–another involved originator: Scenographer, Composer, Actor (Interpreters 3)–Spectator, Listener (Interpreter 4). This chain of communication represents the time sequence of creation of a text and its social realization. (1982, p.72)

Cohesion of dialogue also plays an important part in dramatic text translation. According Newmark (1988a), ignoring this kind of connection is a particular mistake in the translation of all kinds of text, especially dramatic text. Besides, during the translation process, shifts always happen, much or little, in meaning or style between the ST and the TT. 'Language shift' is one of the changes in order to keep the translation, as well as the characters, a long life in TC audience by using modern language (Newmark, 1988a, p.172). Over the last decades, translators of dramatic texts have developed *drama translation,* covering not only the linguistic factors as well as the role of TC audience in the entire process, but also examining different points of view of individual reader. To sum up, according to Mounin (1976, p.171), the following words describe the complex nature of dramatic text translation:

La vraie traduction théâtrale restera toujours cette espèce de traduction-adaptation difficile [...] Yves Florenne avait raison, lors du débat sur la traduction de Shakespeare, de soutenir que la traduction d'une grande oeuvre théâtrale doit être refaite tous les cinquante ans: non seulement pour profiter de toutes les découvertes et de tous les perfectionnements des éditions critiques - mais surtout pour mettre l'oeuvre au diapason d'une pensée, d'une sensibilité, d'une société, d'une langue qui, entre-temps, ont évolué, ont changé.

(My translation: True drama translation will always be this difficult type of translation – adaptation […] Yves Florenne was right, during the debate on the translation of Shakespeare, to argue that the translation of a great theatrical work must be redone every fifty years not only to take advantage of all the discoveries and improvements of critical editions - but especially to work in tune with a thought, a sensibility, a corporation, a language which, over time, have evolved, have changed).

2.4 Performability

Performability has become the most concerned aspect in product-oriented analysis of drama translation. While a variety of definitions of the term *performability* have been suggested, this paper will summarise the definitions first suggested by Wellwarth (1981), Ubersfeld (1996), Elam (1980), Helbo (1987), Bassnett (1980), Moravkova (1993), Aaltonen (2000), and Upton (2000) who see it as to express the ability of a dramatic text that could be performed on stage. In order to direct the text to be performable, a series of acquired features is needed, such as enunciability and comprehensibility, as well as the different structural features. Roughly speaking, functioning as a critical quality of a dramatic text and its translated theatrical product, as a criterion of its subsequent judgment, performability requires the creation of a significant strategy of practice-oriented translation.

On the theory of performability, there could be named some typical scholars in this field, such as Ubersfeld, Pavis, and Bassnett who study into the traditional nature and functions of dramatic texts. Taking performability as the starting point of view, in a dramatic text, it is possible to presuppose that the following features should be considered as the preeminence: comprehensibility, enunciability, inherent gestural patterns, and incompleteness of text. Besides, despite not using the term 'performability', other translation scholars

like Levy and Aaltonen contribute valuable practical summaries. For instance, Levy (2011) introduced the criteria: enunciability and stylization of speech to assess dramatic text translation, which considers the multiple semiotic and semantic layers of each line in dramatic dialogues as the main studied points. Elsewhere, Aaltonen (1993) paid attention to the pragmatic aspect of theatrical translation and introduces the classification based on the possibility of spatial and temporal socio-cultural frame for theatre text.

It is true that performability as a typical translation-oriented strategy in dramatic translation cannot be withdrawn from the traditional general theory of translation. The new task for translators of dramatic text is finding the methods to use flexibly in order to clarify existing special features of performable text tending to improve the total effect of a translation for stage performance. The debate between two notions *performability* and *readability* gets most attention in the article *Performability versus Readability* of Nikolarea (2002), the Greek-Canadian translation scholar, introduced the ''theoretical polarization'' in theatrical translation (p.13). By setting the scene for this argument, this scholar takes Pavis as the father of performability and Susan Bassnett as the advocate of readability, (despite the fact that these two authors do not make use of those two terms in their books), and based on the writing of Ubersfeld (1977), who is considered as one of the first theorists applying semiotics in analyzing theatre translation. She has carried on investigating the context of the perspective which Ubersfeld (1996) stated that the nature of a dramatic text is 'incomplete' because it could only achieve perfection in performance.

Actually, the close connection between a play and its incarnation on stage reveals that the text and its performance are indissoluble, and any divisions between them are just artificial. According to Nikolarea (2002), the separation between text of play and performance leads the performance to be the subordinate to the written text. She continues that a stage performance is the mere translation, not the representative of the ST. In fact, in my opinion, performance is positively a translation of a play text because it could improve the values of the original. By agreeing that the play and performance have a close relationship, it is better to distinguish the two texts (text of original and text of translation) separately because this connection is not completely indissoluble. For example, the audience enjoying the performance of *Hamlet* in Vietnam does not necessary have to look back the ST to check the content or characters details when they really have a good translation of that play, which means the performance could stand independently. The final purpose of a human being when inventing any kinds of signals is to communicate. Therefore, the final purpose of a play is to make its performance the best for the audience's observation on stage. While a written text (including plays) comes to readers by language, a performed text reaches its audience by the combination of thirteen different aspects (Kowzan, 1975). For this Polish semiotician (1975, p.212), the first group includes two features based on the utterance of actors: 1. words; 2. tone. The second system is about bodily expression, including: 3. mine; 4. gesture; 5. movement. The third category mentions the external appearance of the actor with: 6. make-up; 7. hair-style; 8. costume. The fourth section comes with the stage's appearance: 9. props; 10. stage scenery; 11. lighting. The last group is the existing auditive supports which are termed as 'inarticulate sounds': 12. music; and 13. sound effects. This main contribution of Kowzan confirms the link between the auditive and the visual for a theatre text.

Susan Bassnett, one of the first pioneer scholars in studying drama translation, discussed the term performability as ''the indescribable, the supposedly existent concealed gestic text within the written'' (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1991, p.102). In the same stream of thought about excluding the term 'performability' altogether, some years later Bassnett added that ''it seems to me a term that has no credibility, because it is resistant to any form of definition'' (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1998, p.95). She ignored the two important elements in drama translation: general context and situational context. Bassnett, however, declared that all types of theatre depend on the cultural conventions which determine that facts influencing the performability (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1991, p.109). For example, focusing on this aspect, theatre analyst and translator Melrose said that ''gestus is cultural-bound and cannot be perceived as universal''. She continued in another research that ''the gestic response to written text depends entirely on the cultural formation of the individual performer, affected by a variety of factors, including theatre convention, narrative convention, gender, age, behavioral patterns, etc.''. (as cited in Bassnett & Lefevere, 1991, p.110). For example, the scarcity of Vietnamese play scripts are usually lacked of conflicts, which encourages domestic stages to choose foreign plays as safer solutions with literary features, philosophy, and bold content to verify their performances and attract a greater audience. In terms of conflict, Western play scripts do not describe small conflicts, or repeated quarrels between characters. In contrast, Vietnamese ones (play scripts) are often concentrated on surface and daily living conflicts, and do not mention the conflicts of era.

The highlighted notion of 'performability' suggested by Bassnett has encouraged later scholars to dig deeper into the practice of this feature. For example, Espasa (2000) expressed the opposite opinion to Bassnett, considering 'performability' in terms of textual, theatrical, and ideological perspectives. She added that 'from a textual point of view, performability is often equated with speakability or breathability, i.e. the ability to produce fluid texts which performers may utter without difficulties' (Espasa, 2000, p.49). She also confirmed that performability could be similar and synonymous to theatricality, playability, actability, and theatre specificity (Espasa, 2000, pp.49-50). Espasa agreed that textual and theatrical practices are the primary factors which firstly condition the performability. Consequently, Pavis shared his definition of theatricality which is interestingly used to refer to performability:

> Theatricality does not manifest itself [...] as a quality or an essence which is inherent to a text or situation, but as a pragmatic use of the scenic instrument, so that the components of the performance manifest the fragment the linearity of the text and of the word (Espasa, 2000, p.52).

It can be seen that, while Bassnett & Lefevere (1991, p.99) considered performability as the ''gestic dimension embedded in the text, waiting to be realised in performance'', in contrast, Pavis and Espasa only thought about ''the scenic instrument''. Furthermore, Bassnett & Lefevere (1991, p.102) declared that ''if a set of criteria ever could be established to determine the 'performability' of a theatre text, then those criteria would constantly vary, from culture to culture, from period to period, and from text type to text type'', which becomes the important characteristics taking careful considerations of drama translators. Studying insights into the heart of performability, Espasa (2000) asserted that power negotiation and theatre ideology are

involved. According to her, the drama translator or theatrical director could be the person who has the right to decide which is performable or unperformable in the text to be translated. With a play text, lacking performability is like a body without soul. This idea is suggested by Butake (1988), a Cameroonian playwright and scholar, that ''the ultimate aim of writing a play is usually to see it performed even though it is not always that a play script which is even published finds its way on stage for a number of reasons'' (p.87). In addition, Makon (1988) asserted that a theatrical text is itself whenever it is performed in public. Sharing the same thought, Totzeva (1999) took the semiotic perspective as the starting point in studying the theatrical potential in the relationships between verbal, non-verbal and structures in the performance of a dramatic text. The text of a play which requires of being performed consists of different dimensions, such as visual, gestural, aural, and linguistic factors. All of those materials could make more sense when being spoken out to the audience (Brater, 1994). The duty of the drama translator is to find out and keep the quality characteristics of performability in the translation which is affected by the different levels of interpretation of director, actor, and designer, etc.

In summary, the performability is the precise element of any dramatic text that needs the careful attention of the drama translator in their translating process to make the translated play performable.

3. Methodology

This study is carried out with a considerable concentration on mixed methodologies, including qualitative method, descriptive method and contrastive method.

Qualitative method, according to Silverman (2001), can present the insights behind the numbers and facts to clarify different layers of meaning conveyed by the speaker. In linguistics, applying qualitative method tends to be the most appropriate choice of language researchers, who use it as the tool to encounter the multiple meanings as well as the value patterns that quantitative method cannot express (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The qualitative method in this study is expressed in examining the quality of the Vietnamese translation in terms of rhythmic and speech patterns, from which the effects on audiences' understanding is also discussed.

Qualitative method always goes with descriptive method that is neutrally used when comparing the ST and the translated text (Toury, 1995). The descriptive method in the study is firstly used to describe the semantic features of English and Vietnamese translation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. In other words, this method is applied to describe the meaning and sound effects when translating from Iambic Pentameter into a Vietnamese poetic form.

According to Johansson and Hofland (1994), contrastive analysis is objectively used together with qualitative method and descriptive method when comparing two or more languages. The contrastive method in this study is expressed in comparing the similarities and differences of the effects on the ST audiences and TT audiences in terms of semantic and poetic features of between the English and Vietnamese translation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

4. Analysis and Discussion

The translator Dang The Binh introduced the unique full Vietnamese translation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* in 1963. This translation, despite having been used for more than fifty years in schools and stages, has many difficulties for readers and audiences. After the whole text analysis with a comparison of more than 63.030 words, the study has found the following significant

points relating to Rhythmic and speech patterns.

Romeo and Juliet, like other Shakespearean plays, was written in the most speech-like of English sonnets called the Iambic pentameter which reached its high points in Shakespearean times. Meter is the term used to refer to the patterns of syllables from a stressed syllable to an unstressed one, or vice versa, in a line of poem. Depending on the stresses in a line, there could be two or three syllables at a time, which is called a Foot. The combination of one stressed syllable + one unstressed syllable in a Foot is named an Iamb. Penta means 5, so pentameter is set for the 5 meters (Mabillard, 2000). In an Iambic pentameter, there are 5 feet of iambs which is illustrated as below:

Shall **I**/ com**PARE**/ thee **TO** /a **SUM-**/mer's **DAY**
ti TUM/ ti TUM / ti TUM/ ti TUM/ ti   TUM

Every sonnet of Shakespeare is structured in 14 lines, with 10 syllables per line in which the ending syllables follow this form: ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. The opening of *Romeo and Juliet* is in the form of a sonnet which is analyzed as follows:

Two households, both alike in dignity	A
(In fair Verona, where we lay our scene),	B
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,	A
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.	B
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes	C
A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life,	D
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows	C
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.	D
The fearful passage of their death-marked love	E
And the continuance of their parents' rage,	F
Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,	E
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage	F
The which, if you with patient ears attend,	G
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.	G

The difference between languages in terms of structure, challenges the translator to maintain all the original linguistic features of the ST in the Target Text (TT) (Baker, 2000). In this case, Vietnamese language cannot keep the iambic pentameter with ten syllables in each line as well as store exactly the

rhythm form ABAB CDCD EFEF GG because firstly, English is poly-syllabic while Vietnamese is mono-syllabic; secondly, words in English can have many different meanings while Vietnamese words are rarely used in such multi-level of meanings (Nguyen, 1970). According to Johnson (n.d., p.3), the rhythm in Shakespeare's writings expresses the social class of characters, because ''often lower class or comic characters speak prose while the more socially or morally elevated characters speak in verse''. The translation of *Romeo and Juliet*, therefore, should at least maintain the poetic rhythm and rhyme. One of the greatest difficulties in translating *Romeo and Juliet* is how to maintain the rhythmic melody that Shakespeare uses in his Iambic pentameter throughout the text. In terms of rhythm, of course, the differences between languages (Vietnamese and English) challenge the translator to choose the equivalent iambic rhyme. One typical example about rhythm in the Prologue is the 'eye-rhymes' between *love* and *remove*. These two words appear with the same ending *ove* but have different pronunciations in Modern English; but Barber (2006, p.136) explained that *love* was normally developed in period of Old English to Middle English with pronunciation /lʌv/ then got its variant /luːv/ in Early Modern English. The latter form was popularly used by poets since it helps to match the rhyme with some words like *remove, prove, move,* and *approve*. In terms of phonological rhymes, Crystal (2005) analysed that the form *ove* appears quite often in the Shakespeare's sonnets. Crystal agrees on the variants of dialects between regions in English in the Elizabethan period. Besides, Crystal illustrated his explanations by using recordings on his website *pronoucingshakespeare.com* with separated line by line oral readings to help actors gauge

the original pronunciation. With the two words *love* and *remove*, instead of pronouncing *love* as */lu:v/*, he still keeps */lʌv/* and changes *remove /remu:v/* to */remʌv/*. It can be seen that particularly in the ST, to translate from a written text to an oral performance requires deep understanding about the language. To keep the feature of the Iambic pentameter in the TT, therefore, is nearly impossible. The translator, nevertheless, compensates the loss of the Iambic pentameter by making the TT rhythmic in Vietnamese poetic forms. For example, the poetic feature of the Prologue in the TT is preserved in Vietnamese. It is written as follows:

Ngày xưa, ở thành Vêrôna tươi đẹp,
Có hai nhà thuộc dòng thế phiệt trâm anh
Mối thù xưa bỗng gây cảnh bất bình
Máu lương thiện, tay người lành nhuộm đỏ.
Số phận éo le, thâm thù hai họ
Lại khéo xui sinh hạ đôi tình nhân,
Mối tình ai thê thảm muôn phần
Chôn cừu hận, chỉ còn đành một thác.
Tình lửa đôi thảm thương tan nát
Trên xác con cha mẹ mới quên thù.
Chuyện thương lắm, trình diễn đôi giờ,
Xin quý vị kiên tâm chiếu cố
Sức mọn tài hèn, chúng tôi xin gắng trổ.

In terms of rhyme, the Vietnamese translation is rhythmic in poetic form with relevant ending sounds, such as: *anh/ bình*; đỏ/ họ; nh*ân/ phần*; th*ác/ nát*; th*ù/giờ/cố/ trổ*. It can be summarised that the translation of this prologue is rhymed in the following form: AA BB CC DD FFFF. Although this is not a common poetic form in Vietnam, the equivalent effect (Nida, 1964) is maintained the same as the ST. In comparison to the discussion of Ladouceur (1995) who clarified the features such as culture, time, space, style, or action to distinguish a translated text and an adaptation, the relevance of rhythm in the TT confirms that it is a translation, not an adaptation. In addition, the TT in this case is shortened with thirteen lines with an unequal number of syllables in each line while the ST has fourteen lines with exactly ten syllables in each line. It can be seen that the translator is aware of the poetic form in the ST and intentionally tries to preserve that poetic feature in his translation. In the same manner, the translator keeps the rhythmic feature in the Prologue of Act 2. The translation is also in rhythmic poetic form with matched ending syllables as follows: th*iết*/m*iết*; ng*ùi*/l*ui*; c*ố*/kh*ổ*; and n*ao*/l*ao*. In contrast with the translation of the Prologue in Act 1, the translator translates fourteen equal lines as in the ST, although the iambic pentameter with ten syllables in each line is not maintained. The translations of the two Prologues guarantee the *readability* as well as the *performability* (Nikolarea, 2002) of the TT. Among the thirteen different aspects that Kowzan (1975) suggested to make a translation performable, word is the first criterion. In this case, the translation preserves short language and rhyme, which makes the actors' sound and voice poetic and rhythmic as in the ST (Bassnett, 1981).

Now old desire doth in his deathbed lie,	Tình cũ giờ nay đã tắt
And young affection gapes to be his heir.	Say sưa duyên mới vừa nhen
That fair for which love groaned for and would die	Người đẹp xưa khiến chàng mê mệt, héo hon
With tender Juliet matched, is now not fair.	Sánh với Juliet chẳng còn là người đẹp.
Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,	Rômêô yêu, và được yêu tha thiết
Alike bewitchèd by the charm of looks,	Đôi mắt cùng nhìn, đôi lòng cùng mải miết
But to his foe supposed he must complain,	Nhưng tưởng đâu yêu đương gặp cừu hận
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks.	Mùi ái ân pha trăm nỗi ngậm ngùi
Being held a foe, he may not have access	Là người thù, chàng chẳng thể tới lui
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear.	Để hẹn biển thề non như tình nhân từ vạn cổ
And she as much in love, her means much less	Nàng Juliet yêu đương trong đau khổ
To meet her new beloved anywhere.	Gặp bạn tình, biết tìm đến nơi nao?
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,	Song tình yêu, thời gian, giúp họ vượt gian lao
Tempering extremities with extreme sweet.	Qua khổ ải tới niềm vui ngày ngất.

While the rhymes in the TT of the Prologues flow in a free poetic form, the translator is more successful with the translation of the following line in which

he uses the form of a Vietnamese poem named *Luc Bat* (*Luc* means Six; *Bat* means Eight) in which the ending syllable of six-syllable line *ình* matches the sixth syllable of the eight-syllable line *ành* whose the eighth ending syllable *ao* again matches the ending of six-syllable line *ao*.

JULIET	JULIET
(aside) My only love sprung from my only hate!	Một mối thù sinh một mối tình,
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!	Vội chi sớm gặp, biết đành muộn sao!
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,	Tình đầu trắc trở gian lao
That I must love a loathèd enemy.	Hận thù mà hóa khát khao ân tình!

Hudson (1916) revealed that there are 486 rhyming lines in *Romeo and Juliet*. Besides the Prologue, some dialogues in *Romeo and Juliet* are completely Shakespearean sonnets while some other parts such as Act I, scene ii, Act V, scene iii, and the Prince's speech at the end of the play are in a six-line stanza or sestet whose rhyming is A B A B C C. Most of the sayings of the Nurse, Peter, Benvolio, and other servants are in single sentences or prose, but in some cases, these people make their speech rhythmic when speaking to their lords. For example, in the following lines, Benvolio speaks in iambic pentameter with ten syllables in each line and the ending syllables are matched *aside - denied* while the translation of these two lines is just the paraphrase:

BENVOLIO	BENVÔLIÔ
See, where he comes. So please you, step aside.	Anh ấy tới đây rồi. Xin hai bác hãy lui gót. Một là cháu được biết vì sao
I'll know his grievance or be much denied.	anh ấy âu sầu buồn bã, hai là sẽ bị nhiều lần từ chối đây.

Or the following saying of the Nurse: *say – away*

NURSE	NHŨ MẪU
Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say,	Anh người nhà của công tử có kín đáo không đấy? Công tử chẳng thường nghe
"Two may keep counsel, putting one away"?	nói: muốn giữ được bí mật, chẳng nên cô... đến người thứ ba.

In many cases, these servants try to speak in rhythmic speech but actually their sayings are not rhythmic they even use poetic language, line by line which seems close to iambic pentameter. This is the irony of Shakespeare because the ways the servants speak show their education and social level. For example, in act 2 – scene 5, the Nurse tries to make her speech rhythmic but the rhythm only falls at *about* and *down*, and *delight* and *night* in the following lines:

NURSE	NHŨ MẪU
Lord, how my head aches! What a head have I! It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces. My back a' t' other side. Ah, my back, my back! Beshrew your heart for sending me about, To catch my death with jaunting up and down!	Trời đất ơi, nhức đầu quá! Đầu ơi là đầu! Nó đập thình thịch như muốn vỡ ra từng mảnh. Lại còn cái lưng nữa! Ôi trời, lưng ơi là lưng! Có gọi là lòng lim dạ sắt mới bắt tôi chạy khắp nơi thế này để cho tôi chóng xuống mà!

NURSE	NHŨ MẪU
Then hie you hence to Friar Lawrence's cell. There stays a husband to make you a wife. Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks. They'll be in scarlet straight at any news. Hie you to church. I must another way To fetch a ladder, by the which your love Must climb a bird's nest soon when it is dark. I am the drudge and toil in your delight, But you shall bear the burden soon at night. Go. I'll to dinner. Hie you to the cell.	Thế thì mau mau đến tu phòng của tu sĩ Lôrân đi, ở đó có người chờ, để mà nên vợ nên chồng.Kìa, máu đã dồn lên má rồi kìa! Rồi đây, cứ có tin gì thì hai má lại đỏ dừ lên cho mà xem. Mau chân đến Nhà thờ đi; ta còn phải đi nẻo khác, đi kiếm cái thang cho người yêu của em tối nay trèo lên tổ chim. Phải,tôi phải nai lưng ra cho cô vui thú đây, nhưng chỉ đêm nay thôi là gánh nặng của cô thì cô gánh lấy. Thôi, ta đi ăn trưa đây, còn em thì hãy ba chân bốn cẳng mà đến tu viện.

To translate the speeches of these servants, the translator uses narrative form to convey the expressive meaning (Nida, 1964) of the text. This method, on the one hand, allows one to bring the expression close to the ST because the translation has more words to describe; on the other hand, it cannot maintain the original stylistics. While the ST is short and rhythmic, the TT, with more words, blocks the performability (Kowzan, 1975) as well as the actors' sound and voice

(Bassnett, 1981). Poems in general and sonnets with iambic pentameters in particular are the places for the poets to express their point of view by choosing the language to make words stay in line with rhythmic syllables, imaginative images, and metaphorical messages (Homem & Hoenselaars, 2004). Those mentioned features express the talent of the writers. A translation of any poem, especially of Shakespearean sonnets, therefore, should maintain the poetic stylistics. With different target audience, the translation of a Shakespearean play like *Romeo and Juliet* can be expressed in different ways (Hoenselaars, 2004). For teenagers and school students, a full translation, keeping most of original characteristics of the ST, is out of ordinary for their present culture and level of understanding, while a paraphrased translation with summaries and narrative form is not suitable for adults who are experienced and educated. In terms of the closeness to the ST, translations are able to be classified into different levels. In this way, the translator always tries to introduce the target audience the most suitable translation. In other words, the audience's level of perspective in turn decides how close to the original the translation can be translated. Returning to the Vietnamese translation of *Romeo and Juliet,* which was introduced in 1963 when the country was at war with the French, the social conditions did not allow the translator to choose what type of audience he was going to translate this play for. Most of the poetic features with rhythmic iambic pentameters were lost, even though this translation is the only one in Vietnam up till now (because it has been the unique translation for more than fifty years). A translation is just for a certain number of audiences at a certain level of education and perspective. With the Vietnamese translation of *Romeo and Juliet*, therefore, used for both

teaching at schools and stage performance, for all kind of readers and audiences, this is an important matter to consider.

5. Conclusion

In terms of rhythm and speech patterns, whenever mentioning Shakespeare the prominent aspect that people often think about is the Iambic pentameter in his sonnets and other writings. The Iambic pentameter has become a specialty of the English language, poetry and literature, which has no equal in the world. Translating this kind of poetic structure is impossible if the translator wants to keep exactly the Iambic pentameter in the TL. The Vietnamese translation of *Romeo and Juliet*, has tried to preserve the poetic features of the ST, especially the two Prologues. While the Iambic pentameter rhymes following the formula ABAB CDCD EFEF GG, the linguistic differences between the English and the Vietnamese prevent the translator from translating exactly the same Vietnamese iambic pentameter. The poetic aspect of the ST is maintained by two solutions: firstly, the use of Vietnamese poetic form 6-8, and secondly matching the ending syllables of each line. The typical weak point of the translation when dealing with rhythm and speech patterns, is the failure of giving an equivalence of Iambic pentameter in regards to linguistic formula. While each line of an Iambic Pentameter poem contains exactly ten syllables matching the rhythm Ti-TUM Ti-TUM Ti-TUM Ti-TUM Ti-TUM, with five unstressed-stressed couplets, the translation still has many words in each line (See the two Prologues). In some cases, while the ST was written with poetic form, the translation is just paraphrased, which reduces the quality of the ST in the feeling and perception of the TT audiences.

This study has opened up possibilities for further research into the intricacies of translating the poetic features of the Iambic Pentameter in Shakespeare's plays and

sonnets from English into Vietnamese. It also encourages Vietnamese translators to re-translate not only *Romeo and Juliet* but also other plays of Shakespeare for stage performance in Vietnam.

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