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INTEGRATING THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL DIMENSIONS OF POETIC TRANSLATION IN THE EFL CLASSROOM



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Abstract

The article explores how bringing theory and practice together can enrich the teaching of poetic translation in the EFL classroom. Drawing on insights from translation studies, stylistics, and language pedagogy, it explores how concepts such as rhythm, imagery, equivalence, and cultural transfer can be meaningfully introduced through guided translation activities. Using classroom-based examples, the work shows how students engage with poetic form and meaning while developing linguistic awareness and interpretive confidence. It argues that a balanced integration of analytical reflection and creative practice encourages deeper literary engagement, supports learner autonomy, ultimately strengthening both language proficiency and aesthetic sensitivity.

Keywords: *creative learning, cultural transfer, equivalence, intercultural competence, literary education, poetic translation, rhythm, translation studies*

"Poetry is what gets lost in translation" (R. Frost).

Introduction

Poetry may be understood as a self-contained textual universe, whose deliberately crafted ambiguities undeniably invite interpretation and imaginative engagement. While this idea may seem familiar, it becomes considerably more complex when poetry is approached through translation, particularly in the EFL class-

room. The complexity might be explained by the fact that even minor linguistic choices, such as shifting from a definite to an indefinite article, moving from the general to the particular, or changing a verb into a noun, can alter poetic implications in subtle ways. Furthermore, although these shifts may result in losses, they can also lead to creative solutions that compensate for them. For the learners of English, such moments highlight the delicate balance between language accuracy and poetic effect, revealing translation not just as simple transfer but as a process of thoughtful negotiation.

To explore this balance, the present study focuses on a short poem written by Marin Sorescu (1936–1996), one of Romania's most original and widely read poets, known for his wit, irony, and understated philosophical depth. Sorescu's poems often appear deceptively plain, yet they engage with complex aspects of the human condition through precise and economical language. *Perseverență* ("Perseverance") is a perfect example of this approach as, through the image of evergreen grass, wandering clouds and eternal flames, the poem conveys both emotional restraint and existential reflection. Its brevity and clarity accounts for its accessibility for EFL students, while its layered meaning makes it particularly suitable for translation work.

Thus, translating *Perseverență* raises a question that lies at the heart of poetic translation and is especially relevant in a pedagogical context: how can a translation remain faithful to the original while still functioning as a poem in the target language? Obviously, poetry resists purely literal solutions and it demands attention to rhythm, tone, imagery, and cultural nuance, all of which must be reconsidered in the act of translation. In the classroom, this process encourages students to engage with two complementary dimensions of translation theory: fidelity, understood as respect for the source text, and creativity, regarded as the ability to recreate meaning and effect in a new linguistic and cultural setting. That is, this article explores how poetic translation can function not only as a linguistic exercise, but also as a powerful pedagogical tool that bridges theory, language learning and cultural interpretation. Bringing together theoretical reflection and practical classroom application the article argues that translating poetry in the EFL university classroom is stimulating as it integrates language learning, cultural exploration, creativity and critical thinking in a highly engaging and intellectually rich way.

Though poetry represents one of the most linguistically dense and culturally loaded forms of discourse, youth has lost interest in reading poems. Contemplating on the necessity of employing poetry translation in an EFL university class, we have undertaken a survey to identify the attitude of contemporary students to poetry. 72% of the survey participants claim they like poetry, while more than 23% are not sure, and 5% dislike it. Responding to the question "Why did you read poetry?", more than a half replied it was requested by the teacher, with only 23% indicating it was their own choice. When asked if they ever learnt a poem by heart, 32.6% recognised they had never memorised a poem.

Hence, these findings support the urgent necessity to incorporate poetry translation activities into the EFL university classroom, as they offer a meaningful way

to move students beyond passive or compulsory engagement with poetry toward a more active, reflective and personally relevant interaction with literary texts. Either avoided or treated superficially in many EFL contexts, translation, however, offers a way to access poetry thoughtfully by engaging learners in close reading, interpretation, and linguistic problem solving.

Although translation theory has developed extensively, its didactic implementation, especially in relation to poetry, remains limited. Frequently, translation tasks are reduced to vocabulary substitution or accuracy checks, which creates a gap between the richness of theoretical models and actual pedagogical practice, thus necessitating the need to better connect theoretical insights from translation studies with practical classroom applications.

Literature Review

Since the mid-twentieth century, poetic translation has occupied a privileged, yet problematic, position within translation studies, serving as a testing ground for broader theoretical claims about equivalence, meaning, and cultural mediation. The works of Roman Jakobson (1959), Jiří Levý (1963), Anton Popovič (1975), André Lefèvre (1975), Itamar Even-Zohar (1978), Susan Bassnett and André Lefèvre (1992), Gideon Toury (1995), Umberto Eco (2003), Christiane Nord (2005), Lawrence Venuti (2012), and James W. Underhill (2016) collectively articulate a field marked by tension between formal constraints, systemic pressures, and interpretive agency. Despite significant methodological differences, these theorists share a rejection of naïve word-for-word equivalence and converge in their understanding of poetic translation as a constrained yet creative practice.

Early structurally oriented approaches foreground the inseparability of poetic meaning from form. Roman Jakobson's influential essay "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" argues that poetry is "by definition untranslatable" as its meaning is embedded in the specific organization of linguistic signs (Jakobson, 1959, p. 238). For Jakobson, translation can only proceed through "creative transposition," a formulation that shifts attention from semantic transfer to functional and structural correspondence. Although often cited as pessimistic, Jakobson's claim establishes a crucial premise: poetic meaning cannot be abstracted from its verbal embodiment without loss.

Jiří Levý develops this insight into a more operational model by conceptualizing translation as a teleological decision-making process. In *Umění překladu*, Levý demonstrates that verse translation involves continuous choices among competing priorities, governed by aesthetic norms and linguistic constraints (Levý, 2011, pp. 155–196). His analyses of rhythm and syllabic structure, particularly in such essays as "Isochronism of Facts and Isosyllabism as Factors of the Poetic Rhythm" and "Verse Rhythm as a Means of Dramatic Interpretation", prove that meter and rhythm are not ornamental but constitutive of semantic and dramatic effect. Unlike Jakobson's more categorical stance, Levý offers a pragmatic framework in which loss is inevitable but manageable through informed choice, thereby linking scientific analysis and artistic creativity.

Anton Popovič extends this line of thinking by inserting poetic translation into a semiotic and communicative framework. In *Teória umeleckého prekladu*, he intro-

duces concepts such as "prototext" and "metatext", "shift", and "translationality", redefining deviations from the source text as meaningful transformations rather than failures (Popovič, 1975, pp. 17–52, 85–112). Translation is conceived as metacommunication, a process in which the translated poem simultaneously signals its derivative status and asserts autonomy in the target culture. While Levý focuses on the translator's internal decision-making process, Popovič foregrounds the semiotic visibility of translation and the cultural implications of formal and semantic shifts.

A decisive expansion of perspective occurs with the systemic turn represented by Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury. Even-Zohar's polysystem theory relocates translation from isolated textual comparison to the dynamics of literary systems, arguing that translated literature, and poetry in particular, occupies shifting positions in the target culture depending on historical and institutional conditions (Even-Zohar, 1990, pp. 45–51). From this viewpoint, formal choices in poetic translation are not merely aesthetic decisions but responses to dominant or peripheral norms within a literary system. Toury builds on this insight by proposing a descriptive methodology that investigates how translations actually function under normative constraints. In "Descriptive Translation Studies - and Beyond" he rejects prescriptive judgements in favour of empirical analysis, examining how poetic translations conform to or diverge from target-culture expectations regarding meter, rhyme, and voice (Toury, 1995, pp. 53–69, 199–211). Whereas Levý and Jakobson theorize what poetry translation entails in principle, Toury demonstrates how those principles are negotiated in practice.

The ideological implications of these negotiations are made explicit in André Lefevere's and Susan Bassnett's works. Lefevere's "Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint" offers a typology of practical methods: phonemic, metrical, rhymed, free verse, prose, each involving deliberate sacrifice of certain poetic features (Lefèvre, 1975, pp. 19–63). In his later collaboration with Bassnett, translation is redefined as rewriting, shaped by ideological agendas, institutional gatekeeping, and canon formation (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1992, pp. 1–13, 86–100). From this perspective, poetic translation becomes a site of cultural power, influencing not only texts but also literary reputations and traditions.

Lawrence Venuti's work extends this approach by foregrounding the ethical and ideological positioning of the translator. Although not focused exclusively on poetry, his discussions of domestication, foreignization, and translator visibility are frequently applied to poetic translation, where stylistic deviation and cultural difference are especially noticeable (Venuti, 2012, pp. 14–33, 182–201). This way, Venuti reframes poetic form as an ethical choice, not merely an aesthetic one.

In contrast to systemic and ideological models that risk marginalizing form, James W. Underhill reasserts the centrality of voice, meter, and sound. In "Voice and Versification in Translating Poems", he argues that poetic meaning emerges from sonic and rhythmic structures, and that neglecting these dimensions undermines semantic interpretation itself (Underhill, 2016, pp. 1–22, 93–118). Underhill's work can be read as a corrective to functionalist and descriptive approaches that prioritize norms and purposes over formal embodiment.

Functionalism is most clearly articulated in Christiane Nord's "Text Analysis in Translation", which proposes that translation strategies should be guided by communicative purpose and text type and not formal equivalence alone (Nord, 2005, pp. 34–58, 170–178). Applied to poetry, this model legitimizes departures from formal structure when required by the intended effect, though it has been criticized for potentially underestimating the constitutive role of form.

Umberto Eco's "Mouse or Rat?: Translation as Negotiation" offers a mediating perspective that synthesizes many of these tensions. Eco characterizes poetic translation as a process of constant negotiation between literal accuracy and poetic vitality, acknowledging that every gain entails a loss (Eco, 2003, pp. 67–92). Fidelity, for Eco, does not reside in verbal sameness but in the recreation of a text's "deep sense" and aesthetic intention. His model resonates with Levý's decision-making framework while explicitly thematizing compromise as an ethical and interpretive necessity.

Taken together, these theories reveal a historical movement from linguistically grounded formalism toward cultural, systemic, and ideological analysis, followed by a renewed insistence on poetic form as a bearer of meaning. Their differences: form-focused versus systemic, prescriptive versus descriptive, functional versus negotiative do not constitute mutually exclusive positions but complementary perspectives on a complex practice. The prevailing consensus is not a unified method for translating poetry, yet an acknowledgment of its irreducible complexity. Poetic translation emerges as a creative act shaped simultaneously by linguistic structure, aesthetic form, cultural norms, institutional power, and translator agency. It is precisely this multiplicity of constraints that makes poetic translation both theoretically productive and artistically consequential.

Undeniably, poetic translation is a relatively challenging task that cannot be reduced only to literal meaning transfer; it involves negotiating sound, rhythm, imagery, and cultural connotations. Therefore, translation becomes not a mechanical but an interpretive and creative act. To comprehend poetic translation pedagogically, we draw on three major theoretical traditions: linguistic, functionalist, and cultural–cognitive approaches, each offering distinct insights and limitations.

Linguistic approaches focus on structure, form, and equivalence. R. Jakobson emphasizes the poetic function of language, implying that the message might be adorned with rhetorical figures of speech or "flowery" language. J. C. Catford (1965), in turn, debates formal correspondence, discussing the "poetic function" indirectly through the focus on translation shifts, particularly when translating literary texts where form, sound, rhythm, and cultural nuance must be preserved, not just meaning. In fact, these models are useful analytically, but are often insufficient for capturing aesthetic and cultural dimensions.

Functionalist theories shift attention from equivalence to purpose interpreting it as the main factor guiding the translation process. In the classroom, this empowers students to justify translation choices based on both correctness and communicative goals.

Within the cultural-cognitive approach, Gideon Toury's concept of norms is central to descriptive translation studies, offering a framework to understand how

translations are actually made, not just how they should be made. It highlights how translations are shaped by cultural norms and cognitive processing, helping learners to understand why multiple translations can coexist and why meaning is negotiated, not fixed.

Cognitive poetics is another approach to literary analysis that combines insights from cognitive science (how the mind works) with the study of literature. It looks at how readers mentally process, interpret, and emotionally engage with texts. The central idea is that literature does not exist in isolation; meaning emerges in the interaction between text and mind, encompassing mental schemas and frames (which implies that readers rely on prior knowledge, mental frameworks, and expectations when understanding a text, e.g., cultural or genre knowledge shapes how a poem or story is interpreted), textual cues and imagination (i.e. writers use imagery, narrative structure, and figurative language to guide readers' mental simulations; cognitive poetics studies how these cues evoke mental imagery or emotional responses), reader response connection (while cognitive poetics is grounded in psychology and cognition, it overlaps with reader response theory, which emphasizes that meaning is co-created by the reader; both acknowledging that different readers may experience the same text differently) and applications (which helps to explain why some metaphors or narrative techniques resonate more strongly, why ambiguity engages readers, and why literary devices create emotional or aesthetic effects).

Cultural mediation in translation goes beyond simply converting words from one language to another focusing on transmitting culture, context, and meaning across linguistic boundaries. Translation is perceived as a negotiation between the source and target cultures rather than a literal word-for-word process. It implies: transcending literal translation (i.e. some words, idioms, or cultural references do not have direct equivalents, with translators acting as mediators, finding strategies that maintain meaning while being comprehensible to the target audience); cultural context (i.e. understanding that the social, historical, and literary context of the source text is crucial and being aware that humour, gestures, or historical references may need adaptation); domestication (adapting the text to make it familiar to the target culture) and foreignization (retaining elements of the source culture to preserve authenticity); reader-oriented approach (i.e., like cognitive poetics, cultural mediation recognizes the active role of the reader as well as translators' commitment to consider how target readers will interpret and respond to the text); and ethical dimension (i.e., translators may navigate cultural sensitivities, avoiding misrepresentation while respecting the source text's intent).

Both cognitive poetics and cultural mediation highlight the active role of the reader or audience in creating meaning. Cognitive poetics focuses on mental processing and interpretation, while cultural mediation emphasizes contextual and cultural understanding in translation. Together, they show that meaning is never fixed, i.e., it is co-constructed by text, mind, and culture.

In EFL settings, poetic translation fosters awareness of language choices and cultural meaning, concurrently encouraging learners to reflect on how form and

meaning interact across languages. The inherent attribute of poetry to engage students emotionally and cognitively often increases motivation and deepens interpretive skills, making poetry a powerful pedagogical resource. Yet, despite its evident benefits, poetic translation presents challenges, including linguistic difficulty and learners' limited exposure to literary discourse, which requires careful scaffolding.

Linking Theory and Practice

Intertwining theory and practice involves designing tasks that explicitly draw on theoretical principles while remaining accessible to learners through guided support:

- *Theory-informed task design* refers to creating learning or translation activities that are grounded in established educational, linguistic, or literary theories. The goal is to make tasks not just practical exercises, but pedagogically meaningful ones, ensuring that they support cognitive, linguistic, and literary development. Guided by learning theories, such tasks are designed based on constructivism (learning as active construction of knowledge), sociocultural theory (learning through interaction and social context), or cognitive linguistics (how mental processes shape language understanding). Further, in alignment with the set objectives, each activity has a clear purpose: developing comprehension, translation skills, cultural understanding or literary analysis. Regarding authenticity as their pivotal feature, these tasks often mimic real-life situations, such as translating poetry for an audience, to make learning meaningful and motivating. Additionally, theory-informed task design considers learner differences—prior knowledge, language proficiency, cognitive load—and adjusts the task complexity accordingly, simultaneously allowing reflection, self-assessment, and feedback based on theory-driven criteria, e.g., accuracy, creativity and cultural appropriateness. Correspondingly, a translation exercise based on cognitive poetics might ask learners to focus on how metaphors evoke mental imagery, encouraging them to preserve not only the literal meaning but also the mental simulation in the target language.
- *Scaffolded activities* are structured to provide supportive steps that gradually guide learners from simpler to more complex tasks, building up skills step-by-step. In poetry translation, scaffolding aids learners to manage the cognitive and creative challenges of rendering poetry in another language under (1) stepwise supervision (comprehension, i.e., understanding the meaning, imagery, and emotional tone of the poem; challenges identification, that is, highlighting untranslatable words, cultural references, or complex structures; experiment with translation – i.e., attempting literal, adaptive and creative strategies; peer review and feedback – i.e., learning from discussion and alternative interpretations), (2) supported by diverse linguistic tools (glossaries, cultural notes, parallel texts, or translation frameworks) while (3) focusing on multiple competences (i.e., developing linguistic accuracy, literary sensitivity,

and cultural mediation simultaneously) as well as (4) enduring gradual release of responsibility, with teachers initially providing heavy support, then gradually permitting learners more independence as confidence and skills grow. Therefore, the initial translation of simple imagery in a haiku progresses to complex metaphors in a sonnet, encouraging discussion of cultural nuances and stylistic choices.

- *Reflection and metalinguistic awareness* involve thinking about language itself, not just using it. In translation and literary studies, this process urges learners to understand how language works, how meaning is constructed, and how translation choices affect interpretation. While reflecting, learners are encouraged to consider a number of consequential questions (e.g., Why did I choose this word or structure? /How does this translation affect meaning, tone, or imagery? /What cultural or linguistic challenges arose?) and to perceive language as a system and a tool (including syntax, semantics, pragmatics and stylistics as well as figurative language, idioms and genre-specific conventions), thus enhancing metalinguistic awareness. The employment of journals, reflective essays, peer discussions, and commentary on translation choices augments critical thinking and self-monitoring, improves translation quality by making learners aware of trade-offs and develops autonomy, enabling students to make informed linguistic and cultural decisions. In particular, after translating a metaphor-rich poem, students write a reflection analysing why they preserved or adapted certain images, considering both semantic meaning and emotional impact on the target audience.

Overall, theory-informed task design provides the foundation, ensuring activities are purposeful and pedagogically sound. That is, while scaffolded poetry translation activities serve as the structured pathway, guiding learners step by step, reflection and metalinguistic awareness consolidate learning, helping students to think critically about language, culture, and translation choices. Conjointly, these approaches form a comprehensive, research-based framework for teaching poetry translation effectively.

Practical Application

A typical lesson sequence begins with contextualization (pre-translation activities), followed by guided translation tasks, and concludes with post-translation reflection and discussion to consolidate learning. Logically, the choice of a poem depends on the students' proficiency level. Primarily, at the initial stage, students compare different translations of the same poem, analysing how meaning, tone, and style change, which develops their critical awareness of translation strategies. Further, learners create their own translations, focusing on specific poetic features while constructive peer feedback encourages reflection and justification of translation decisions. Hence, students' explicit application of a theoretical framework makes abstract concepts operational and meaningful. Additionally, the proper

employment of diverse assessment strategies (process-oriented assessment, reflective commentaries and integrating linguistic and interpretive criteria) emphasizes process over product, valuing reflection, justification and strategic awareness more than linguistic perfection.

Through this approach, learners, timely sustained by the teacher (acting as a mediator who supports exploration, guides theoretical understanding and encourages critical and creative engagement) not only master language skills but also improve linguistic awareness, enhance cultural competence and sensitivity and develop critical literacy and interpretive abilities.

The case study examines a classroom activity conducted during the Difficulties of Translation course with first-year university students specializing in English and German translation. The activity aimed to familiarize students with the particular complexities of poetry translation and to encourage the development of analytical and creative translation skills at an early stage of their academic training.

The text selected for this activity was Marin Sorescu's poem *Perseverență*, a concise yet semantically rich literary work characterized both by apparent simplicity and underlying intellectual sophistication. The choice of the poem was also motivated by its international visibility, as it was included in the "Poems on the Underground" project seeking to promote poetry among a broad audience by exhibiting selected poems in the London Underground. Sorescu's *Perseverență* was displayed as part of this initiative, thereby contributing to the poem's wider recognition beyond Romanian literary circles.

The instructional process began with a contextual introduction to Marin Sorescu's literary profile, followed by a discussion of the poem's thematic and stylistic characteristics. Students were then required to produce translation variants in English, working both individually and collaboratively, not being permitted to employ any digital translation tools. The task revealed several challenges typically associated with poetry translation, including the preservation of rhythm, the transfer of figurative language, and the recreation of stylistic and tonal nuances.

Although displaying certain lexical or/and stylistic inconsistencies, ascribed to the participants' limited experience in literary translation, these versions provide valuable insight into the initial stages of translator training and illustrate the decision-making processes involved in negotiating meaning between languages. Furthermore, the activity integrally fostered student engagement and encouraged reflective thinking about the diversity of translation approaches and strategies. Overall, the assignment demonstrated the pedagogical effectiveness of incorporating poetry translation into introductory translation courses, highlighting both its difficulties and its potential to enhance linguistic sensitivity and interpretative competence.

Perseverenţă de *Marin Sorescu*	**Perseverance**[49] *by Marin Sorescu*
Voi privi la iarbă Până voi obţine titlul De doctor în iarbă.	I shall look at the grass Till I obtain the degree Of Doctor of Grass.
Voi privi la nori Până voi ajunge Laureat Al norilor.	I shall look at the clouds Till I become a Master Of clouds.
Voi trece pe lângă fum Până când fumul, de ruşine Va deveni iar flacără De la început.	I shall walk beside the smoke Till out of shame The smoke returns to the flame Of its beginning.
Voi trece pe lângă toate lucrurile Până când ele Vor veni să mă cunoască.	I shall walk beside all things Till all things Come to know me.

Table 1. *The original poem and its acknowledged translation*

Perseverance	**Perseverance**	**Step by Step**
I will look at the grass Until I earn the title Of Doctor in Grass.	I will gaze at the grass Until I earn the name Of Doctor of Grass.	I will look at the grass Until I get the title Of Doctor of grass.
I will look at the clouds Until I become a Laureate Of the Clouds.	I will watch the clouds Until I am named A Laureate of Clouds.	I will look at the clouds Until I become a Laureate Of the clouds
I will pass by the smoke Until the smoke, out of shame, Turns back into the flame It once was.	I will pass by the smoke Until the smoke, out of shame, Turns back into the flame From the beginning.	I will walk past the smoke Until the smoke, from shame, Becomes fire again From the beginning
I will pass by all things Until they Come to know me.	I will pass through all things near, Until they know and hold me dear.	I will walk past all things Until all things Will know me
Perseverance	**Perseverance**	**Perseverance**
I will look at the grass, until I become a Doctor of Grass.	I will watch the grass, Until I earn the title Of a doctor in grass.	I will watch the grass, Till the Doctor's name I know.

[49] Translated by D.J. Enright (1920–2002), a British poet, novelist, translator, and literary critic.

I will look at the clouds, until I become laureate of the clouds. I will pass by the smoke, until the smoke, in shame, until it turns back into flame, as it was in the beginning. I will pass by all things, Until they come to know me.	I will watch the clouds, Until I become A laureate of the skies. I'll walk through smoke Until, in shame, It turns again Into its firstborn flame. I will pass by all things, Until all things Come to know me.	I'll watch the clouds up high Till I touch them rising by. I will walk through smoke so thin, Till it turns to fire again, Burning bright, without a trace, Like it did in its first place. I will walk past all I see, Till the world remembers me.
Perseverance I will watch the grass until I receive the solemn title: Doctor of the Greening Blade. I will study drifting clouds Till the sky confers on me its Laureate in Shifting Forms. I will walk through clinging smoke Till embarrassment ignites it - makes it remember fire, makes it flame anew. I will move among all things until their hidden voices whisper: "We have known you always."	**Perseverance** I'll be looking at the nature Until I receive the name Of Master of Nature I'll be looking at the heavens Until I receive the wisdom of Heavens. I'll be walking through the smoke Until smoke, with shame, Comes back to its beginning. I'll be walking through all states Until this world Will come to know me.	**Perseverance** I will gaze at grass so long, Till I earn the lofty crown "Doctor of Grass" before the sun. I will watch the drifting cloud, Till the sky, in honour bowed, Names me laureate aloud. I will pass by smoke's dim trail, Till—ashamed to be so pale— It bursts to flame, bright and hale, Anew, unbound, without fail. I will walk past all that grows, Till the world, at last, just knows— Knows my name, my face, my trace.

Table 2. *Students' poetic translation solutions*

While analysing the ideas of Jakobson, Lefevere, and Eco in parallel, a clear picture emerges: fidelity and creativity in poetry translation are not adversaries, they are more like two ends of a living, shifting spectrum. Traditional ideas of fidelity tend to focus on literal accuracy, keeping the original words, structure, and images

intact, whereas modern thinking regards that true fidelity often means re-creation. In fact, it is not enough to know what a poem says; we have to understand how it works: its rhythms, textures, cultural shades, and only then rebuild that effect in a new language. We consider that *Perseverență* particularly exemplifies why this balance matters. The poem's meaning is not just in its words; it lives in the gentle rhythm, the deliberate repetition, and the understated humour. In case those elements are removed, the reader is left with something that has the same basic but none of the life. Commitment to Sorescu's voice might mean changing word order, swapping in different vocabulary, or even adding small touches of imagery, all in service of keeping the poem's emotional impact intact.

In other words, poetic translation is positioned as an act of interpretive creativity grounded in ethical responsibility**.** Jakobson, Lefevere, and Eco offer complementary perspectives that help us to understand translation not as a mechanical act, but as a deeply human, culturally embedded practice. In translating a poem like *Perseverență*, fidelity and creativity must work together: fidelity to the spirit and intention of the original, and creativity to ensure that spirit finds a voice in a new language. The task of the translator is not to mirror, but to echo, with all the resonance and nuance that poetry demands.

Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that translating poetry in the EFL classroom can serve as a meaningful and intellectually demanding pedagogical practice. Primarily, poetry, by its nature, is often condensed, stylistically marked, and open to multiple interpretations. While translating such texts, students are required to move beyond surface comprehension and engage closely with lexical choice, syntax, tone, and nuance. This process appears to heighten their awareness of how language functions at both structural and expressive levels. Additionally, poetry translation inherently involves interpretation. Since poetic meaning is rarely fixed, learners must make informed decisions about metaphor, symbolism, rhythm, and emotional resonance. In doing so, they engage in analytical reasoning and critical reflection. Interpretive work encourages students to justify their linguistic choices and to consider alternative readings, thereby deepening their engagement with the text.

Another important dimension concerns cultural understanding. Poems are implanted in particular cultural and historical contexts, and translating them often brings culturally specific references and perspectives to the foreground. Students become aware that translation is not simply a matter of replacing words from one language with those of another, but an act of mediation between cultural frameworks. This awareness may contribute to the development of intercultural sensitivity. Furthermore, the openness of poetic translation allows for students' multiple creative solutions. Unlike more constrained language exercises, this task gives learners space to experiment with phrasing and stylistic variation. Such flexibility appears to foster a sense of agency, as students recognize themselves as active language users and meaning-makers.

Finally, the contrastive nature of translation encourages students' reflection on both the source and the target languages. By comparing and contrasting grammat-

ical structures, idiomatic expressions, and stylistic resources across languages, they develop a more profound understanding of how form and meaning interact in poetic texts. Taken together, poetry translation can function as an integrative pedagogical practice that combines linguistic analysis, cultural reflection, and creative engagement.

Conclusion

In closing, translating poetry can be seen as a delicate act of reconstruction, which inevitably calls for creativity. The translator must interpret, choose, and sometimes reinvent, constantly balancing between staying faithful to the original and allowing the poem to "breathe naturally" in its new form. In this sense, poetic translation is not secondary to poetic creation; it is a different, but equally demanding, artistic act. Hence, future research should empirically test theoretical dimensions of poetic translation across contexts and proficiency levels, thus enriching EFL pedagogy.

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