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TRANSFORMATION IN LITERATURE: GERARD GENETTE AND HYPERTEXTUALITY

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ABSTRACT
This article examines the literary concept of transformation through the theoretical framework developed by Gérard Genette, with particular emphasis on his notion of hypertextuality. It explores how texts derive from, modify, or reconfigure earlier works, situating these practices within Genette's taxonomy of transtextual relationships. The discussion highlights key hypertextual operations—including transposition, translation, versification, adaptation, and other modes of textual reworking—to demonstrate how they generate new meanings while maintaining a dialogic relationship with their hypotexts. By outlining the mechanisms through which a text becomes a transformation of another, the article illuminates both the creative and critical implications of hypertextuality for literary studies. Ultimately, it argues that transformation functions not merely as a derivative process but as a central engine of literary innovation, reshaping the boundaries of authorship, genre, and interpretation.

KEYWORDS: *Transformation, Literature, Transposition, Hypotext, Hypertextuality, Gerard Genette, Translation, Versification, Reduction.*

INTRODUCTION

According to Cambridge Dictionary, a transformation is a complete change of something or someone's appearance or personality, particularly to make them better [2]. This term can be used in different fields such as Mathematics, Genetics, Linguistics, Biology and Theater. It can express different processes while keeping the main feature – a change. For example, in Genetics transformation means the process by which a cell absorbs and integrates foreign DNA, altering its genetic composition or in Theater it means a dramatic or abrupt shift in the setting or the appearance of an actor. But the important field of study here is Literature and the place of transformation in it. In this article, the theory and explanation of the term "transformation" in Literature will be discussed.

The concept of transformation was first used in science by the American linguist Noam Chomsky. In his work "Syntactic Structures", he defined transformation as "rules that transfer the deep structure of a sentence to the surface structure". That is, he meant the expansion of sentences consisting of "Subject + Verb" or "Verb" itself by changing the form, sentence type or voice according to the purpose of expression. For example, changing a sentence of the form "They arrive" to sentences such as "They can arrive" or "They have arrived" is interpreted as transformational rules in English grammar [4, 2002, pp. 61-63]. Later, in his work "Aspects of the Theory of Syntax" [3, 1965], Chomsky further developed this idea and created a complete theory of transformational-generative grammar. According to him, the "deep structure" of each sentence determines its substantive and semantic basis, while the "surface structure" emerges through grammatical changes. Transformation is interpreted as a system of formal rules that transform this deep structure into a surface form. Chomsky tried to explain the creative linguistic ability of the human mind through this process. He substantiates with examples the formation of structures such as active voice, passive voice, interrogative, negation, and subordination using transformations. At the same time, he emphasizes that the deep structure is semantically general, while the surface structure depends on the morphosyntactic properties of the language. As a result, the theory of transformation is put forward as the main tool for analyzing the internal mechanism of language.

As a result of developments in semiotics and structuralism in the 1960s and 1970s, the term transformation began to be used in literary studies to describe processes such as "intertextual change, genre change, and plot modification." Roman Jacobson and Juri Lotman made significant contributions to this process. In particular, Roman Jakobson used linguistic transformations in his articles to explain poetic function. The scientist views transformation primarily as a phenomenon that occurs during the translation process. For example, in his article "Linguistic Aspects of Translation," he divides translation into three types: intralingual, interlingual, and intersemiotic [7, 1959, p.3]. In this, he equates translation with transformation. In his opinion, any translation is not a direct equivalent, but a recoding, that is, a transformation.

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According to Jacobson, the types of translation are explained as follows:
Intralingual (translation within a language) – expressing a text in the same language in other words, paraphrase. In this case, transformation is involved in the process of semantic restructuring of the sentence. Example: interpreting the word "early morning" as "dawn".

Interlingual (interlingual translation) – transferring a text in one language to another language. In this case, through transformation, the translator adapts the text in one language to the second language syntactically and lexically. Example: translating "Boburnoma" into English.

Intersemiotic (translation between sign systems) – transferring a text to another semiotic system (text → film, music, painting). In this case, transformation changes cultural and semiotic codes. Example: converting the plot of "Boburnoma" into a novel or film.

The introduction of the transformation process into literature is associated with the research of Juri Lotman. In his treatise "The Structure of the Artistic Text" [8, 1970], he considers this term as "the transition of text elements to another context, that is, the reworking of the system of plot and images." An example of this is the re-creation of mythological images and plots in new artistic forms. Continuing this idea, Lotman in his later works put forward the idea that rhythmic and syntactic changes in a poetic text are called "transformation" (9, 1972) and that transformation is associated with the transition and exchange of cultural codes (10, 1984).

MAIN PART

The French literary theorist Gerard Genette fully formulated the concept of transformation as a separate category in literary studies, taking as a basis the processes associated with "transtextuality." His treatise "Palimpsest: Literature in the second degree," published in 1997, can be recognized as one of the main sources for analyzing transformational processes and their place in world literary masterpieces.

In his work, Genette, describing the process of transformation, specifically focuses on the types of intertextual communication and emphasizes that these connections are closely interconnected. They are the following:
1. Intertextuality
2. Paratextuality
3. Metatextuality
4. Hypertextuality
5. Architextuality

The scientist gives a separate definition for each of them:
1. Intertextuality is a term introduced into science by the Russian scientist Julia Kristeva, which denotes the reflection of one text in the structure of another text. It can be expressed in the form of a quotation, without quotation marks, and even in the form of a plagiarism...
2. Paratextuality - includes secondary details such as the title of the work, headings within the text, section and chapter names, introduction, conclusion, epigraphs, notes, images, book cover...
3. Metatextuality - thinking about the main text, giving comments, explanations to it.
4. Hypertextuality - the creation of text "B" based on text "A" with certain changes.
5. Architextuality - the process of thinking about which literary genre the text belongs to.

Among the processes described above, there is a similarity between the phenomena of metatextuality and hypertextuality, which creates a certain confusion. It is necessary to distinguish these two processes from each other. Although both terms express intertextual relations, they differ in the form of expression. That is, metatext is text "B" that talks about text "A", analyzes it and gives it an explanation. Hypertext, on the other hand, although it is based on the main ideas of text "A", does not talk about it, but creates a new work based on it, giving it a new perspective. For example, "Baburnama" is written by Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur and is the first autobiographic work of Central Asia. It was an important source for British Empire during nineteenth century. That is why, British scientists, scholars and even writers have studied it and have written scientific and fictional works. One of them was a novel "King-errent" written by Flora Annie Steel based on "Baburnama". In this context, the connection between "King-errant" and "Baburnama" is hypertextuality.

The phenomenon of hypertextuality arises as a result of the process of intertextual transformation. That is, based on text "A", a new text "B" is created. According to G. Genette, all works are hypertextual and any connection that connects two texts is hypertextual, because in literature each work serves as an impetus for the creation of another work. From this point of view, hypertextuality can serve as the basis for many works of art.

At this point, it is necessary to dwell on the elements of hypertext. There are two of them:
1. **Hypotext** - the primary source that forms the basis of a new text.

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2. **Hypertext** - a new text created on the basis of an old source, that is, a text taken from a pre-existing text, derived from it.

In this case, the author of a new work studies the text of an existing work and creates a new work based on its main characters or plot. In the process of creating this new work, the writer can change various aspects of the old source. In particular, he can modify the motive, psychology of the characters, the development of events, places and even the era to suit his ideological purpose. The changes made to this work of art are called the process of transformation. G. Genette defines transformation as follows:
… the process of the emergence of text "B" that originates from text "A", is based on it, but does not talk about it, does not emphasize it [5, 1997, p. 5].

First of all, the transformation process has one main formal form, which is called "text-based hypertextuality." On the basis of hypertextuality, works in many genres can be created. The types of these genres are determined by what form of transformation or to what extent it is used. For example, if the author, without changing the plot of the work, partially changes its genre, style, or psychology of the characters, this is called a "simple transformation process," and as a result, genres such as a novel, a film/cartoon based on a novel or a story/fairy tale, a children's book, parody, and travesty are created. The use of imitation, which is a deeper, more complex form of transformation, is the basis for the creation of works in satirical genres such as pastiche and caricature.

The following are considered hypertextual practices by G.Genette:
Transposition is a serious form of transformation, which involves the creation of a new text by transferring the main idea, plot, and characters of a primary text to a second text. Transposition differs from other practices of transformation in its textual variability, the breadth of its aesthetic and ideological goals, and the ability to give works the opportunity for extensive growth and expansion. G. Genette noted two categories of transposition:
a) Formal – as in the obvious case of translation (which is linguistic transposition), only unintentionally or perversely alters meaning.
b) Thematic – the alteration of meaning is an explicit and official part of the objective.

Translation is one of the forms of transposition and the most widespread, and it happens by transposing a text from one language into another [5, 1997, p. 214]. For example, "Baburnama" is originally written in Chagatai Turkic language and was translated into different languages including English. G.Genette mentions that "… no translation can be absolutely faithful, and every act of translation affects the meaning of the translated text" [5, 1997, p. 214].

Versification is an act of changing the form of the text from prose into verse. It occurs in two reasons:
a) Some writers prefer writing their work in prose and change it into verse due to the interest of audience. For example, Antoine Houdar de la Motte was a neoclassicist, wrote his "Discourse on Tragedy" in prose and versified it into tragedy.
b) Some masterpieces are translated into other languages and sometimes translators prefer versify them due to interest or linguistic features. For example, Socrates versified some of the Aesop's fables in his last days or Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur translated Xoja Ahror Valiy's "Volidiyya" from Persian prose into Chagatai-Turkic verse.

Prosification refers to a reverse process of **versification**, as it means substituting a verse into prose. It emerged from the preference of readers choosing a prose to read because of its easiness. According to G.Genette, prosification happened for Homeric epic in the fourth century A.D. [5, 1997,p. 220]. It was the Latin translation of Homer's "Odyssey" by Lucius Septimus. This epic at first was translated from Phoenician into Greek and then from Greek into Latin in prose.

Transmetrification is one of the transpositional exercises and occurs while transposing the meter of a poem from one metric system into another. For example, Jean Prevost transposed Baudelaire's "L'Invitation au voyage" from alexandrines into octosyllabic lines. This practice belongs to the quantitative transformation and might cause the loss of poetic charm of original work.

Transstylization is the process of rewriting a work by the means of new style. It may come with other transpositional exercises such as transmetrification, augmentation or reduction to enhance the style and literariness of a work. One can transstylize a work without processes mentioned above. For example, writer may not intend to change the meter of the work or the hypotext could be in prose. It usually aims to correct the style of the hypotext. If the author of the hypotext attempts to rewrite his/her work in a new style, then it is called self-transstylization.

There are some types of transformation which are purely based on quantity of a text such as *reduction* and *augmentation*. These practices are formal and do not include any thematic incidence. To produce a hypertext from hypotext by reducing or augmenting a length of the text requires some alterations in the structure.

Reduction is a practice of abridging the length of a text and it has different types such as *excision*, *concision*, *condensation*.

a) **Excision** means the act of cutting "useless and noxious" parts of the text to improve its value. It derives from the preference of the readers for which part of the text they want to read. For example, there are many editions of "Robinson Crusoe" for children that include only the shipwreck and the desert experiences and leave out the adventures before and after the island,

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which are told in the original version. Because even in the original version many readers quickly pass over these parts. There is *self-excision* occurs when authors want to adopt their work into stage or screen. *Expurgation* is a type of excision and its function is to reduce the parts which might "shock or trouble" the innocence of the young readers. These parts include information that we want to withhold for a while, and children do not need to know until certain times.

b) **Concision** is shortening a text without removing any of its meaningful thematic elements; instead, it is rewriting the material in a briefer manner. This process results in a new version of the text — one that, if required, may not retain a single word from the original.

c) **Condensation** is a process guided by a mental operation not found in the other two methods (excision and concision): an independent synthesis, so to speak, generated from memory and applied to the text itself. In this case, every detail — and thus every sentence — must be forgotten, allowing only the overall meaning or the movement of the text to remain, which becomes the sole focus of the reduced version. As a result *digest, abridgement,* and *summary (sometimes called resume)* will be produced. They are commonly equal terms, but there are slight nuances which should be described.

1. **Digest** is a digest is a concise, ordered collection of content that is often classified under specific themes to aid in information retrieval. Its goal is to organize enormous amounts of data for easy access, akin to a reference guide or legal summary.
2. **Abridgement** is a condensed form of the original work, where key sections like descriptions, subplots, and dialogue are removed, but the core storyline and style are preserved. The goal is to make a lengthy book more accessible, particularly for a broader or younger audience, while still delivering the full story in a more concise format.
3. **Summary** is the most common practice of condensation "its purpose is to refresh reader's memory, bu in general it serves as a commentary of the literary work" [6, 1973, pp. 41-42] Summary can be used for different purposes. For example, in encyclopedias summaries are devoted to each featured work and they are informative and descriptive or adapting a play or a novel to the screen (but it is not theoretically possible) [5, 1997, p. 239] or metaliterary summary (academic theses or newspaper reviews).

Augmentation is the practice of extending a text and it can occur in three types:

a) **Extension** is the direct contrast to reduction through extensive trimming; it involves expanding by adding substantial new content.

b) **Expansion** is the antithesis of concision and proceeds through stylistic dilation. It involves increasing the length of each sentence in the original, often doubling or tripling its size.

c) **Amplification** is the process of expanding on a word or phrase to provide clarification, emphasize a point, or add more detail. By repeating or elaborating on specific terms, it can highlight their significance, convey urgency, or evoke emotional responses. This technique is often used in persuasion and argumentation to strengthen a message. Additionally, amplification enriches narratives by adding depth and detail, helping to craft a more vivid and immersive experience for the reader.

CONCLUSION

Transformation is not a mere change in the form of a text, it is an act of creating and producing new literary work. This process occurs by using different transformational procedures such as transposition, translation, versification, prosification, and etc. These practices can happen in one work at the same time, because they function as one of the essential parts of a single procedure. Transformational practices were studied by French theorist Gerard Genette in his book: "Palimpsest: Literature in the Second Degree". This book was written originally in French, and translated into English by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky. In this book, Genette gives detailed explanations of all hypertextual processes which may not be included in this article, also provides examples for them. In this article, explanatory summaries of some of these practices are given.

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