

**THE THEORY OF INTERTEXTUALITY AS A PARADIGM  
AND THE IMPACT OF THIS THEORY ON TRANSLATION****Aziza Mirzaeva Shavkatovna**

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Although intertextuality is a contemporary concept, some theorists trace the phenomenon to the oldest recorded human history, i.e., whenever there were discourses about texts (Alfaro, 1996; also, Hanna and Smith, 2000). However, it is the Bulgarian-French theorist Julia Kristeva who is openly credited for coining the term in her 1966 essay "Word, Dialogue, and Novel" (Orr, 2003, p.1). Working in 1960s France, a time and place inclined for the concept, Kristeva combined Saussure's semiotics (relational non referential signs) and Bakhtin's dialogism (social word) to propose the first theory of intertextuality (Allen, 2011). She proposes that "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. Thus, the notion of intertextuality' replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least double" (her emphasis) (Kristeva, 1986, P. 37). So, while

**ABSTRACT**

*This article is dedicated to introducing the theory of intertextuality as a paradigm for viewing texts and their interrelationships, the impact of this theory on translation theory and practice, and ways scholars and translators propose for approaching intertexts in translation. In translation studies, scholarly research focusses on two aspects when addressing the concept of intertextuality: translation as intertextuality and translation of intertextuality.*

Bakhtin's dialogism emphasizes the human subjects using language in social contexts, (hence, intersubjectivity), Kristeva centers on texts and textuality (hence, intertextuality).

The notion of relational texts originates in Saussure's linguistics (semiotics). Saussure defines the linguistic sign as combining a signifier (sound image) and a signified (concept). Its meaning is not stable, nor is it referential to some object in the real world; rather it is constructed through its relation to other signs in the linguistic system at a certain moment of time. Understanding this relational sign leads to a vast system of relations that make up the synchronic system of signs (language). Speakers choose their signs from this already existing system. This is also true of literary signs. Literary authors also select words, plots, aspects of character, images, narrative styles from



anterior literary texts and traditions which make up the synchronic literary system. The literary author is thus working between two systems, the linguistic and the literary (Allen, 2001).

Bakhtin on the other hand, is more concerned with the social context in which utterances are exchanged. To him, Saussurian linguistics is 'abstract objectivism' that neglects the social aspect of language. An utterance is 'dialogic.' It responds to a previous utterance and provokes other responses. Interpretation thus, is never complete. Further, the meaning of an utterance derives from already established patterns of meaning employed by the addresser and recognizable by the addressee. Bakhtin also stresses notions of double-voicing, heteroglossia, and dialogism in texts to assert that language is never our own. As the Bulgarian-French philosopher Tzvetan Todorov states: "after Adam, there are no nameless objects, nor any unused words" (qtd. in Allen, 2011, p. 27). These Bakhtinian notions are central to the theory of intertextuality....

In her discussion of Bakhtin's work, Julia Kristeva (1986) notes that he views the literary word" as "an intersection of textual surfaces rather than a point (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings: that of the writer, the addressee (or the character) and the contemporary or earlier cultural content" (p.36). Quoting Bakhtin, she states that "Each word (text) is an intersection of words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read". Kristeva inserts the word 'text' in Bakhtin's previous sentence and changes his ideas in a way that makes it possible for the concept of intertextuality to be developed. The text according to Kristeva and Bakhtin is an

inseparable part of the larger social or cultural text from which it's constructed.

Furthermore, the literary word, to Kristeva, has a horizontal axis, subject-addressee, as well as a vertical axis, text-context. To her, a text not only absorbs and transforms anterior texts, it also triggers posterior ones. It only has life through this dialogic contact with other texts. Bakhtin calls those axes 'dialogue' and 'ambivalence. To him, a narrative includes the word of the other, which has a new meaning while it retains the one it already had. It therefore becomes ambivalent (Kristeva, 1986). These notions emphasize the 'plurality' or the 'polyphonic' nature of the novel, and that meaning is constructed through the interaction of, not one, but several consciousnesses: those of the author, the text (or its characters), and the reader. Intertextuality: thus is based on notions of multivoicedness in texts, dialogue in and among texts, and the continuous process of meaning construction whenever a text crosses the intertextual space from one context into another.

Ever since, other theorists and literary critics critiqued and further developed the theory of intertextuality and brought it to its present-time interdisciplinary nature, thus making it possible to talk about the phenomena, but laboriously difficult to provide an overarching definition. Although it originated in twentieth century linguistics, intertextuality has been adopted by a wide range of fields of study. The term intertextuality is even used both by structuralists to locate and fix literary meaning and by post-structuralists to disrupt this very notion. Therefore, Allen (2011) warns that "intertextuality is one of the most commonly used and misused terms in contemporary critical vocabulary".



It is "in danger of meaning nothing more than whatever each particular critic wishes it to mean" (p. 2). Theorists and critics like Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Gérard Genette, and Michael Riffaterre (among others) introduced their own versions of intertextuality. While their views converge on some aspects, they diverge on others. Barthes and Derrida share a more abstract theorizing of Intertextuality. They view the intertextual space as infinitely expanding. The intertexts (i.e., other literary works or types of texts) in a text are themselves intertextual constructs composed of a mosaic of quotations which themselves are intertextual, and so on. Meaning, therefore, is never stable, but is continuously constructed in every individual reading. Genette and Riffaterre on the other hand, apply intertextuality for literary and semiotic analysis by categorizing ways in which texts intersect. They believe in delimiting the intertextual scope of the text. Meaning to them is constructed through interpretation of explicitly stated intertexts in the text, such as quotations and allusions. All theorists, however, converge on the plurality in texts, the impact of texts on other texts, and on dismissing notions of originality, unity, and wholeness of a text.

In his 1967 essay, "The Death of the Author, Roland Barthes links 'the author's death with the birth of the reader, thus asserting the reader's productive role in reading (Barthes, 1977). A text, he asserts, is "a multi dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash... a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centers of culture... the writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original". He views the intertextuality of the text as endlessly expanding. The intertext to

him, whose sources are anonymous, cannot exist outside the infinite text. A text is not a unified authorial consciousness, but a plurality of voices, utterances, and texts: "the already read and the already written," and its meaning resides in its relations to other texts, and in our recognition of those relations. Asserting the reader's role in producing meaning, Barthes distinguishes between two types of readers, "consumers' (who read for stable meaning) and 'productive readers' (who do textual analysis). Textual analysis is "pluralist" as readers become writers of the text.

Jacques Derrida too believes in the limitless intertextual scope of the text and asserts that interrelationships in the hypertext (i.e., word or text that is linked to other words or texts) exist as long as the reader perceives them, thereby emphasizing the reader's productive role in constructing meaning. He introduces the notion of iterability or citationality, which views texts as quoting and quotable (Alfaro, 1996), rejecting textual boundaries and originality, and allowing for multiple readings and meanings each time a hypotext (i.e., an earlier text which serves as the source of a hypertext) travels through the intertextual space. Gérard Genette (1997) also rejects the originality and wholeness of literary works. However, unlike Barthes and Derrida, he delimits the scope of intertextuality to the co-presence of two or more texts in a text in the form of quotation, allusion, and plagiarism. Meaning thus is limited to the relations between those texts. He views intertextuality as one of five elements comprising what he styles 'trans-textuality', by which he means "all that sets the text in a relation, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts". Trans-textuality includes



Intertextuality (the co-presence of two or more texts in a text); Hypertextuality (a relationship uniting text B (the hypertext) and an earlier text A (the hypotext) upon which it's grafted: Architextuality (discourse types and genres); Metatextuality (a text that speaks of another text: commentary, reviews, etc.); and Paratextuality (the relation between a text and other texts within the physical space of a work: titles, prefaces, endnotes, and glosses. Michael Riffaterre opposes the dispersing of meaning presupposed by the unbounded intertextual scope of the text, and shares with Genette the notion of a limited textual scope. Further, he emphasizes that the literary reading, as opposed to naïve reading, depends on the reader's recognition of the text's presupposition of intertexts, which gives the text its structural and semantic unity (*Ibid*). He argues that texts have meaning because of the semiotic structures that link their elements, and not because they are mimetic or referential according to what he calls the referential fallacy' (Allen, 2011. p. 115). As a literary device, writers produce intertextuality by employing a variety of figures or functions, such as allusion, quotation, and parody (Venuti, 2009); Cancogni (1985) adds calque, translation, and pastiche. Furthermore, many theorists propose more or less similar types of intertextuality, depending on the importance of the intertext and the intention of the writer. These include horizontal vs. vertical (Kristeva, 1986), implicit vs. explicit, intentional vs. accidental, marked vs. unmarked (Juvan, 2008), manifest vs. constitutive (Fairclough in Momani et al., 2010). and John Fitzsimmons distinguishes obligatory, optional, and accidental (Pagliwan, 2017).

From these perspectives, the literary text is no longer perceived as a product of an author's original thought, or as a container of meaning, but as a space where a vast number of potential relations and meanings compete. Texts are built from codes and traditions based on previous texts. Therefore, they lack independent meaning. To interpret a text and discover its meaning(s) is to trace and recognize its network of textual relations by moving between texts that comprise it. Meaning thus exists between a text and other texts to which it refers and relates. The text in this sense becomes an intertext (Allen, 2011). 74 Recognition of these relations is therefore, a precondition for the reader's construction of meaning. In translation, as Venuti (2009) notes, not all readers recognize the intertextual relations, partly because of limited knowledge (of source text culture) and partly because of reading for meaning that is supposedly inherent in the ST, which aims at arousing a certain response on the part of the target reader. If communicating intertextual relations in the ST, in addition to its content, is the goal of the translation, it becomes incumbent on the translator to deploy translation strategies that, beyond semantic equivalence, ensure that such relations are relayed. Therefore, since Quranic discourse is commonly viewed as a source of linguistic enhancement and empowerment to MSA (Modern Standard Arabic), the impetus behind this paper is the premise that Quranic intertexts in al-'Utum 's novel *O! My Prison Companions* (2012), a source of linguistic and conceptual enrichment to the novel, pose considerable challenges in translation. Thus, failing to communicate their intertextual relations will result in a great contextual loss.



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