

ARTICLE

Time Dissolved, Style Transformed: The Albanian Translation of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*

Erinda Papa * , Alda Cicko * 

Department of Foreign Languages, University "Fan S. Noli", Korce 7001, Albania

ABSTRACT

This article examines how Virginia Woolf's modernist style, characterized by stream of consciousness, syntactic fragmentation, and figurative density, is translated into Albanian through Dorjan Kroqi's version of *Mrs Dalloway*. Drawing on the approach of expressive stylistics, the study conducts a comparative textual analysis of three representative fragments, which are examined at four stylistic levels: lexical, syntactic, figurative, and emotional. The approach builds on the theoretical contributions of Galperin, Leech and Short, Munday, Boase-Beier, and Toury. The findings show that the Albanian translation, while preserving narrative coherence and semantic meaning, tends to soften or regulate stylistic discontinuities, emotional layering, and rhythmic fragmentation, essential features of Woolf's literary modernism. This tendency reflects a broader pattern of "translational normalization," — the tendency to adapt stylistic irregularities to the norms of the target language — in accordance with the stylistic norms of Albanian prose. The article argues that the translation of modernist literature into languages with limited traditions of stylistic experimentation requires a high sensitivity to form both as an expressive and interpretive function. Expressive stylistics, in this context, offers a valuable tool for assessing the translatability of aesthetic experience. The study contributes to the field of translation studies by showing how linguistic choices affect the emotional and perceptual depth of the original text in the target language.

Keywords: Virginia Woolf; Literary Translation; Expressive Stylistics; Stylistic Effect; Stream of Consciousness; Modernism; Translatability

*CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Erinda Papa, Department of Foreign Languages, University "Fan S. Noli", Korce 7001, Albania; Email: epapa@unkorce.edu.al

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 11 May 2025 | Revised: 9 June 2025 | Accepted: 11 June 2025 | Published Online: 19 June 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i6.9956>

CITATION

Papa, E., Cicko, A., 2025. Time Dissolved, Style Transformed: The Albanian Translation of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*. Forum for Linguistic Studies. 7(6): 1155–1166. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i6.9956>

COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2025 by the author(s). Published by Bilingual Publishing Group. This is an open access article under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

In the history of modern literature, few authors have represented the complexity of human consciousness with such a sensibility and sensory depth better than Virginia Woolf. She employed a fragmented, introspective, and innovative style. This not only transformed how human experience is narrated in fiction but also challenged conventional reader expectations about literary form. Her style is a complex combination of ordinary language and an inner poetics that imitates the movement of the mind itself. Within this context, the translation of her literary bulk presents a multiple challenge: the translator is forced to deal not only with the semantic content, but also with the aesthetic, affective experience built through rhythm, literary figure, irony, and fragmentation.

The Albanian translation of Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* by Dorjan Kroqi marks an important moment in Albania's engagement with Anglophone modernist literature^[1]. Beyond its literary value, this translation invites us to examine the relationship between the style of the original and the way it is transformed into another language with different syntactic structures, a particular poetic sensibility, and its own challenges in absorbing modernism. The current study centers around the following question: **Is the stylistic expressiveness of Virginia Woolf translatable in Albanian language and how does it affect the aesthetic experience of the readers?**

Specifically, the article aims to address the translatability of a style that is built on disrupted forms of narrative, the use of stream of consciousness, internal rhythms of the phrase, and metaphorical symbols that function not only on a figurative level, but as structures of thought. According to Galperin^[2], expressive means and stylistic devices constitute a system of linguistic tools purposefully employed to convey emotions, subjective experiences, and the aesthetic intensity of a text (pp. 29–31).

Meanwhile, studies by Leech and Short emphasize that literary style should be seen as a deliberate system of language use, where form, figure, syntax, and rhythm are interconnected with the aesthetic function of the text^[3]. From this perspective, translating a literary text is not merely a transfer of content, but a confrontation with style as a carrier of meaning. As Bassnett argues, the translation of modernist literature requires particular sensitivity to rhythm, figurative language,

and narrative structure, since these stylistic elements fundamentally shape the reader's experience^[4]. When an author like Woolf constructs the literary experience through disruptions, silences, repetitions and ambiguity, translation is faced with a series of stylistic choices that are not necessary in a more traditional text. Following the same line of reasoning, Munday argues that the translator plays a central mediating role, not only in preserving lexical meaning but also in interpreting and re-encoding stylistic nuances to maintain the aesthetic and pragmatic impact of the original text^[5].

This article follows a stylistic and comparative approach in the analysis of the Albanian translation of *Mrs Dalloway*, focusing on three key fragments that represent different types of stylistic complexity: Clarissa Dalloway's introspection, Septimus Warren Smith's mental fragmentation, and poetic reflection on time and city. Through a comparative analysis of these fragments, at four levels of stylistics (lexical, syntactic, figurative, and emotional), the article aims to highlight the forms of preservation, transformation or loss of stylistic effects in Albanian translation.

Given that Albanian is a language with a relatively limited tradition of modernist translations, the case of *Mrs Dalloway* helps us reflect more broadly on the relationship between the host language and the translatability of style. In this way, this study aims not only at an analysis of Woolf's work, but also at an intervention in the debate on literary translation as an aesthetic, cultural, and ideological process in languages with limited foundations for the stylistic experience of modernism.

2. Literature Review

Studying the translation of a work like *Mrs Dalloway* requires a theoretical approach that dynamically combines stylistics, modernist narratology, and translation theory. Woolf's style is not only a narrative device, but represents an aesthetic experience in its own right, where form and content interact in constructing the character's consciousness and inner world. For this reason, its translation into another language cannot be treated as a lexical or grammatical transfer, but as an act of aesthetic and stylistic interpretation, which touches the essence of the experience that the text creates.

In this regard, the stylistics of expressiveness, as conceived by Galperin^[2], provides an indispensable tool for the

analysis of how linguistic elements (repetition, metaphor, intonation, rhythm, pause, interruption) function not only to construct meaning, but also to convey emotion, tension, and silence. According to Galperin^[2], any linguistic unit that departs from the norm of neutral communication can acquire expressive value and, as such, be considered a stylistic device or expressive means. These elements are essential to Woolf's modernist style, which operates through the fragmentation of consciousness, the flow of thought, and the shifting narrative voice.

A central component in Woolf's stylistic architecture is what modern stylistics calls *free indirect discourse*, where the character's voice coexists with the narrator's voice, blurring the boundary between them. This mechanism requires from the translator a special sensitivity to the change in tone, point of view, and emotional rhythm of the phrase. Leech and Short identify this as one of the most difficult features to translate, as it requires the reader to sense the presence of the character's consciousness without clear signs of syntactic or narrative transition^[3]. In the Albanian language, where subject structures are clearer and less tolerant of grammatical ambiguity, preserving this effect is not only a linguistic, but also a stylistic and cultural challenge. As Tahiri and Çapriqi demonstrate^[6], syntactic construction in Albanian, especially the use of elliptical sentences and simple structures arranged one after the other, is closely linked to the character's internal perspective. When these features are not reflected in the translation, a shift towards a more formal and present tone of the narrator occurs (p. 210). This confirms that maintaining this stylistic duality in Albanian constitutes both a linguistic and cultural challenge.

These issues become more apparent in literary translation, where the translator's decisions are not neutral. According to Munday^[5], translation involves a process of stylistic evaluation, requiring decisions about which formal elements to preserve in order to maintain the emotional and aesthetic impact of the original. This approach is close to what Boase-Beier calls "cognitive stylistics of translation"^[7], where the translator reconstructs the aesthetic experience and not only the semantics. So, Woolf's translation requires an act of interpretation that attempts to preserve not only the meaning but also the experience of the text in its indeterminate, interrupted, and often ambiguous form.

The importance of this approach is also emphasized

by Umberto Eco^[8], who defines translation as a negotiation between two cultural and stylistic systems, and not as a mathematical translation. The translator must negotiate not only words but also silences, intonation, interruptions, and the musical effect of each phrase. This is especially important in the case of Woolf, where phrases do not only construct the narrative, but constitute a dense network of sensations and ideas that develop through internal rhythm.

The translatability of the modernist style, however, is also influenced by the systemic norms of the target language, such as Albanian. According to Toury, every translation takes place within a normative system where the translator is influenced by the existing practices, expectations and models of the literary system of the language into which he or she translates^[9]. Hermans further emphasizes that translation is always embedded within the literary and institutional system of the target culture^[10], which significantly influences stylistic acceptability. In languages with a late translation history of modernism, such as Albanian, the translator often unconsciously decides to soften fragmentation, flatten a pause, or linearize a phrase for the sake of reader comprehensibility.

This type of intervention is related to what Vinay and Darbelnet identify as "adaptation procedures", where the translator changes the structure to maintain the effect^[11]. But while these procedures may be appropriate in informational texts, they are problematic in literary translation where form is function^[12]. In Woolf's translation, any change in sentence order or the pause in a phrase can affect the feeling it is intended to create — be it false calm, unspoken anxiety, or the concentration of thought on a small detail. Venuti similarly insists that preserving the stylistic foreignness of modernist texts is essential to maintaining their aesthetic distinctiveness in translation^[13].

Furthermore, the translation of poetic or figurative phrases requires special care to preserve what Jakobson calls "creative transposition," where the translation does not necessarily correspond to the word, but to its aesthetic function^[14]. For Woolf, every metaphor, every simile, every repetition, is a form of articulation of the unconscious and the flow of time. Translation must therefore be sensitive to these multiple effects. Baker also notes that translating stylistic effects requires deliberate intervention at the level of figurative language and rhythm, not merely lexical fidelity^[15].

Scholars such as Julia Briggs and Gillian Beer have

emphasized that Virginia Woolf's stylistic choices, particularly the use of metaphors, repetitions, and syntactic rhythm, are not ornamental elements^[16, 17], but essential for the representation of inner consciousness and the fluid perception of time.

This theoretical framework, therefore, is built on the intersection of three pillars: (1) the analysis of the stylistics of expression (Galperin), (2) the assessment of stylistic function and modernist narrative (Leech & Short; Munday), and (3) intercultural negotiation in translation (Eco; Toury). This interweaving aims to explain not only what happens with Woolf's translation into Albanian, but why it happens, and what this tells us about the limits, possibilities, and responsibilities of the translator in retranslating aesthetic experience from one literary system to another. Shamma observes that translators frequently adopt normalizing choices to avoid disrupting the stylistic expectations of the target audience^[18], which can attenuate the experimental nature of modernist prose.

3. Methodology

This study follows an empirically based stylistic-comparative approach, which aims to examine how Virginia Woolf's modernist style is translated into Albanian and what happens to the expressive effects during this process. At the center of the analysis is the translation of the novel *Mrs Dalloway*^[19], one of the most representative works of the Anglophone modernist style, in the translation of Dorjan Kroqi, published by the Scanderbeg publishing house in 2004.

The methodology used consists of three fundamental pillars: (1) the selection of representative fragments; (2) the division of the analysis into related stylistic levels; and (3) the interpretation of the results in light of theories of translation and stylistics of expressiveness. These pillars allow for an in-depth look at the translatability of style while maintaining the connection between the textual analysis and the conceptual framework of the article.

3.1. Selection of Representative Excerpts

Three selected fragments from the novel represent three different forms of stylistic challenges:

(1) Fragment I – focuses on Clarissa's introspection and

her sensitivity to her environment, where rhythm, irony, and metaphor intertwine external and internal experience;

- (2) Fragment II – describes the mental disintegration of Septimus Warren Smith, where interruption, repetition, and stylistic fragmentation convey the experience of psychological trauma;
- (3) Fragment III – connects the flow of time with awareness of the city and the world, bringing a poetic metaphor of sound and philosophical reflection.

These fragments have been selected not only for their thematic importance in the text, but for the fact that they exhibit different forms of stylistic expressiveness that Woolf uses and that present distinct challenges in translation.

The selection of these three fragments was guided by their capacity to represent core stylistic dimensions of Woolf's modernist prose. Fragment I illustrates the interplay between internal consciousness and external sensory experience; Fragment II embodies the linguistic expression of psychological trauma through syntactic fragmentation and repetition; Fragment III foregrounds Woolf's use of metaphor and rhythm to evoke the perception of time. Together, these excerpts form a representative sample of the stylistic challenges faced in the translation of *Mrs Dalloway*, while offering a manageable scope for in-depth comparative analysis.

3.2. Levels of Analysis

The analysis of each fragment is carried out at four interconnected levels, drawing on Leech and Short's stylistic framework and enriched by Galperin's principles on the stylistics of expressiveness:

- Lexical level: word choices, semantic nuances, emotional lexicon and the behavior of key words in translation are examined;
- Syntactic level: sentence construction, interruptions, sequencing, and the uses of pauses and rhythm are analyzed in relation to the original;
- Figurative level: metaphors, similes, personifications and other forms of figuration are evaluated in terms of how they have been preserved or transformed;
- Emotional and pragmatic level: the impact of the phrase, the expressive, ironic or reflective effect, and how this effect is conveyed in the target language are consid-

ered^[2, 3].

Each analysis is based on a comparison of the original English segment and the corresponding Albanian translation, highlighting translation decisions and their stylistic consequences.

3.3. Interpretive Approach

The interpretation of the results is carried out through the theoretical framework previously constructed: translation is seen as an act of stylistic mediation, where the translator deals with the aesthetic function of language and not only with the transfer of words^[5]. The idea of “translational norm” is also used to understand why in some cases the translator avoids or softens more fragmented forms of language or displaces complex metaphors into more common structures in Albanian^[9].

The methodological approach remains hermeneutic and stylistic: the aim is to understand how the translation interacts with the style of the original, what is lost and what is gained during this process, and how this translational intervention affects the aesthetic experience of the Albanian reader. As Stockwell suggests, the translator must aim to preserve not only the narrative flow but also the perceptual construction of time and consciousness, which are central to the aesthetic impact of modernist texts^[20].

While the analysis presented here is based exclusively on textual comparison, the authors acknowledge that future research could benefit from including the translator’s own commentary and reflections on stylistic choices.

4. Data Analysis

The following analysis examines how the Albanian translation of *Mrs Dalloway* interacts with the stylistic structure of the novel in three selected excerpts. Each excerpt illustrates a core aspect of Woolf’s style, sensory and emotional introspection, mental fragmentation and poetic experience of time, and provides a solid basis for observing translation decisions at four levels: lexical, syntactic, figurative and emotional. The approach is functional: attention is not paid solely to the translated words, but to the way in which the translation creates or diminishes the reader’s aesthetic experience in the target language.

4.1. Fragment I – The Translation of Sensitivity and Lyricism of Consciousness

The first fragment, which is located at the opening of the novel, describes the moment when Clarissa Dalloway leaves the house to buy flowers. She feels a wave of emotions that immediately engulf her. The fragment that will be examined is as follows:

The original^[19]:

“What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air.”

The Albanian Translation

“Çfarë hareje! Çfarë zhytnimi! Kështu i kishte ngjarë gjithmonë, që kur, me atë gërvishtjen e lehtë të menteshave, që tani mund ta dëgjonte përsëri, hapte me vrull dritaret franceze dhe futej në ajrin e hapur në Bourton”^[1].

In the English text, ‘What a lark! What a plunge!’ is an emotional outburst, a sudden interruption of the narrative that reflects how memory and present feeling coexist in the character’s consciousness. The use of interjections and repetition creates a fragmented rhythm, characteristic of the stream-of-consciousness technique. This type of syntactic expression is consistent with Galperin’s view that experience can be conveyed not only through lexical selection but also through the structural construction of the sentence^[2].

The Albanian translation preserves superficially the division of the interjections, but the chosen words, “hare” and “zhytnim”, soften the spontaneity of the image. “Hare” lacks the playful nuance of “lark”, which also carries a sense of childish play, while “zhytnim” is a more abstract and static form of “plunge”, which in English has a more dynamic and bodily charge. As Munday argues, the choice of lexicon in translation influences directly the stylistic assessment of the effect, and here the translation shows a tendency towards semantic rather than expressive translatability^[5].

The rest of the fragment describes Clarissa’s memory, which is poetically and sensuously constructed through the details of sound and movement. The words “a little squeak

of the hinges” and “burst open the French windows” have an emotional function; the sound evokes a close and physical memory. In Albanian, “gërvishtja e lëhtë e menteshave” is a technically correct translation, but it lacks the soft intonation of “squeak” and the poetic flavor of the sound that evokes nostalgia. Furthermore, the phrase “hapte me vrull dritaret franceze” replaces “burst open” with a more regular, less unexpected structure. In this way, the actuality of the experience, which in the original is explosive and emotionally ambiguous, is also shifted.

Syntactically, the English sentence is discontinuous, with a broken rhythm that matches the spontaneous flow of thoughts in the character’s consciousness. The use of the past tense (“had burst”, “had always seemed”) is closely intertwined with structures that belong to the sensitivity of the present (“she could hear now”), creating a multiple temporal experience. In the Albanian translation, these elements are stabilized in a more linear construction, which changes the rhythm and diminishes the sensitivity to the syntactic fragmentation through which Woolf evokes the stream of consciousness. As Leech and Short note, in modernist prose, the organization of syntactic patterns often carries a more powerful meaning than the lexical selection itself^[3]. This is a structural nuance that is clearly missing in the Albanian version.

From a figurative point of view, the experience of entering the open air is not simply a physical act: “plunged at Bourton into the open air” is a metaphor for immersion in experience, in life, memory and emotion. In Albanian, “futej në ajrin e hapur” reduces this multi-layered effect to a simple spatial description. In Jakobson’s terms, this represents a loss not only of referential meaning but also of poetic function, where the emotional and stylistic charge of the expression is essential to its meaning^[14]. What is translated is the lexical content, not the aesthetic or sensory force of the phrase.

On an emotional level, this fragment conveys a dual sensibility: the excitement of the present and the call of the past. What Woolf achieves is a fusion of times, memories, and momentary sensations into a continuous image of consciousness. In the Albanian translation, the attempt to preserve grammatical and semantic clarity results in a partial loss of the emotional layering of the original – a layering that stems from the intricate merging of sensory impressions, thoughts, and memories within the same stream of consciousness.

In conclusion, the translation of this fragment demonstrates a constant “tension” between fidelity to meaning and preservation of expressive style^[12]. The translator has preserved the logical structure of the phrase and ensured fluency in Albanian, but this has come at the cost of diminishing emotional tone, syntactic rhythm, and poetic fragmentation. This case illustrates further what Eco defines as a process of negotiation in translation, where the translator is forced to choose between preserving the effect and adapting to the target system^[8].

4.2. Fragment II – Translating the Disorder of Consciousness: Septimus and the Language of Trauma

The second fragment is one of the darkest and most emotionally charged in the novel. It presents the mental experiences of Septimus Warren Smith, a former soldier suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. His stream of consciousness is fragmented, explosive, and at times, even hallucinatory. This interweaving of sensory perceptions, memory, and blurred reality is stylistically constructed through repetition, fragmentation, abrupt shifts in tone, and the interweaving of external and internal voices.

The Original^[19]:

“Leaves were alive; trees were alive. And the leaves being connected by millions of fibres with his own body... There the branches stretched into the sky. He lay back. He lay back. He lay back.”

The Albanian Translation^[1]:

“Gjethet ishin të gjalla; pemët ishin të gjalla. Dhe gjethet ishin të lidhura përmes miliona fijesh me trupin e tij... Ja ku shtriheshin degët drejt qiellit. Ai u shtri. Ai u shtri. Ai u shtri.”

This fragment represents a distorted experience, where every linguistic unit functions as an indicator of a mental crisis. Repetition, simple parallelism (“He lay down.”), and short sentence construction reflect what Galperin describes as syntactic expressive devices, in particular, the use of broken rhythm, ellipsis, and repetition to express psychological distress^[2]. These repetitions are not accidental: they construct a kind of violent rhythm that does not aim for clarity

but rather intensifies the reader's sensory experience and physical involvement.

In translation, preserving the repetition "Ai u shtri. Ai u shtri. Ai u shtri." is one of the translator's most apt decisions, because it preserves the obsessive rhythm and the clear interruption of consciousness. But the rest of the translation, although linguistically accurate, softens intensity and reduces the emotional ambiguity of the original phrase. "Ja ku shtriheshin degët drejt qiellit" is a lyrical phrase, with a linear order, while "There the branches stretched into the sky" in the original is more isolated, colder, with a rhythm that creates an immediate separation between mind and reality. As Boase-Beier points out, stylistic features such as repetition and rhythm are essential for reflecting the internal mechanisms of consciousness, especially in texts that describe psychological trauma^[7]. Berman also warns that the destruction of rhythm and the tendency towards stylistic clarification in translation often strip the original texts of their characteristic tension and psychological darkness^[12]. Munday reinforces this idea by noting that lexical and syntactic choices directly influence the perception of the narrative voice and the emotional impact on the reader, especially in literary texts where form and meaning are inseparable^[5].

The word "connected" in the original marks a hallucinatory perception: the leaves are connected to Septimus's body through "millions of fibres." This is not a metaphor, but a pathological description, which functions stylistically as an indicator of depersonalization and psychic disintegration. The Albanian translation, "gjethet ishin të lidhura përmes miliona fijesh me trupin e tij", is linguistically accurate, but lacks the perceptual unease and sense of violent union with the environment that characterizes the original. Here, the translation preserves the semantic structure but softens the psychological tension. As Leech and Short note, such choices affect the reader's experience: where the original evokes discomfort or uncertainty, the translation can shift the tone toward metaphorical or lyrical expression, thus changing the pragmatic effect of the phrase^[3].

Moreover, Woolf constructs this fragment through a layering of voices, where the presence of the conventional narrator is temporarily withdrawn and the character's disordered perception takes over. He does not describe things objectively; he experiences them through the body. This fits with what Boase-Beier describes as the stylistic representation

of internalized experience^[7], a form of narrative in which language becomes inseparable from sensation and emotion. At this level, the Albanian translation preserves only partially the perceptual absorption of the original. While the text is linguistically clear and structurally fluid, it distances the reader from the character's internal turmoil, making the language more explanatory than disturbing in impact.

From the point of view of the stylistic norm in the target language, this choice is understandable. As Toury suggests, translations usually adapt to the norms of acceptability of the literary system into which they are inserted^[9]. In the case of Albanian, especially in literary publications after the 1990s, there has been observed a trend towards a fluent, linguistically pure, and emotionally controlled translation, often to the detriment of the stylistic fragmentation that characterizes modernist literature. This observation is supported by Tahiri and Çapriqi^[6], who point out that literary translations into Albanian often show "a tendency to modify and clarify figurative language," imposing a more explanatory tone that suppresses the character's internal perspective. This approach reflects what Munday identifies as a general tendency in literary translation to soften stylistic and psychological complexity^[5], maintaining narrative coherence but diluting emotional intensity and rhetorical tension.

This fragment constitutes a clear case where translation confronts the limits of the translatability of psychological experience. While the Albanian translator preserves the rhythm of repetition and some of the syntactic fragmentation, she fails to fully convey the hallucinatory tension and the burden of perceptual disintegration that the original has. Instead of a disturbing and shocking experience, the Albanian reader experiences a stylistically conventional text, which preserves the description, but strips it of the internal fractures that characterize Woolf's style. This case illustrates that the translatability of trauma does not lie in the translation of content, but in the translation of the rhythm of disorder and unease, which requires stylistic decisions that go beyond the semantic order of words.

4.3. Fragment III – Translating Time and the Rhythm of the City: Sound as Aesthetic Experience

The third fragment comes at a moment when time and consciousness merge through the sound of Big Ben. This

sound, which Woolf returns to several times throughout the novel, is one of the most powerful symbols of the passage of time and of modern consciousness itself, which is measured through loud, brief, unstoppable moments. In this fragment, through a stylistically focused structure, Woolf connects the flow of thoughts, linear time, and philosophical reflection.

The Original^[19]:

“There! Out it boomed. First a warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable. The leaden circles dissolved in the air.”

The Albanian Translation^[1]:

“Ja ku ra. Fillimisht një paralajmërim, muzikor; pastaj ora, e pakthyeshme. Rrathët prej plumbi u shkrinë në ajër.”

This fragment is a passage that is focused largely on expressiveness. In its three sentences, it includes: a startling interruption, a division of experience into sounds and sensations, and a complex metaphor that wraps the entire experience in a diffuse image. The short sentences, precise syntactic division, and the use of concrete names for invisible sensations (such as “leaden circles”) create a remarkable stylistic effect.

In Albanian, the translation “Ja ku ra” for “There! Out it boomed.” is linguistically accurate, but it loses the sudden burst of surprise that the exclamation “There!” carries, followed by the dynamic, sonorous, and descriptive power of the phrase “Out it boomed.” The word “ra” as a translation of “boomed” does not carry the same acoustic intensity; it marks an event, not an echoing or resonant phenomenon. This is consistent with what Galperin describes as a reduction in stylistic expressiveness, cases where the functional load of sound and intonation is softened to meet a more naturalized tone in the target language^[2].

The rest of the phrase, “First a warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable.” is structured in a poetically focused manner. The words “warning”, “musical”, “irrevocable” are rich in figurative and philosophical charge. They create a sensual experience of time, which warns and then marks the unchangeable. In the translation: “Fillimisht një paralajmërim, muzikor; pastaj ora, e pakthyeshme.” – we have the preservation of the structure, but a softer emotional tone. The words “warning” and “irrevocable” do not carry the same

linguistic and philosophical gravity of the original. “Irrevocable” is not just a description of an hour that has passed, but a quality of time itself, a formulation of inevitability. Translation at this point shifts the tone from abstract reflection to concrete description, a tendency that, as Munday argues, occurs when the translator privileges comprehensibility over aesthetic function^[5].

The most powerful of the figures is “The leaden circles dissolved in the air.” – a complex, multiple metaphor: “leaden” (heavy as lead), “circles” (circles that mark time, sound, movement) and “dissolved” (dispersion in the air, temporary disappearance). Here we have a metaphor for experiencing time as sound that penetrates and then dissolves. In Albanian: “Rrathët prej plumbi u shkrinë në ajër.” preserves the structure of the figure, but the word “u shkrinë (dissolved)” has a more materialized, more physical connotation. It suggests a chemical or thermal action, not a dispersion of sound. As Jakobson argues, preserving the poetic function in translation requires the reproduction of the sensory and stylistic features of the original^[14]; in this case, the Albanian version replaces acoustic fading with material melting, changing the perceptual and emotional effect of the metaphor.

From a stylistic and philosophical perspective, this phrase can be interpreted as an expression of what Paul Ricoeur calls “narrated time”^[21], the configuration of human experience through narrative form, which mediates between chronological and lived time. The Albanian translation, although semantically accurate, fails to convey the existential quality that the original carries. The danger lies in the fact that the Albanian reader may experience the image of an object melting into thin air, instead of feeling time as an experience that lasts, dissolves, and is absorbed into human consciousness.

The Albanian translation of this fragment meets expectations for lexical accuracy and preserves the basic structural composition of the original sentences. However, it loses some of the stylistic intensity that Woolf builds through form, metaphor, and rhythm of sound. This results in a diluted aesthetic experience, which Boase-Beier describes as the translator’s task of reconstructing not only the meaning but also the felt experience of the text in the target language^[7]. The translator, in this sense, is not only an interpreter but also “a guard” of the aesthetic and emotional character of

the source text. In this case, although the structure remains intact, the “poetic spirit” that makes the fragment memorable is diluted significantly.

5. Discussion

The analysis of three selected fragments from *Mrs Dalloway* in the original and their Albanian translation highlights that the translation of modernist literature is a negotiation with form, not just content. Virginia Woolf’s style is not literary embellishment, but experience: a way of constructing consciousness, of acquiring time, and of structuring reality as a sensory flow. This experience comes through interruptions, pauses, repetitions, unusual metaphors, and sensory connections that do not occur in a linear fashion. Thus, translating her work requires more than lexical accuracy; it demands sensitivity to form as an expression of meaning.

In Fragment I, the translation shows an attempt to preserve the sentence structure and general atmosphere, but loses the spontaneous and playful nuances of Clarissa’s expressions. This suggests a stylistic adaptation in line with the dominant narrative norms in Albanian literary prose. Rather than conveying the emotional fragmentation of the original, the translation reconfigures it as a calm and coherent experience, shifting the tone from fragmented modernism to a more moderate narrative. This phenomenon corresponds to what Toury calls “translational normalization”, as previously discussed^[9].

Fragment II, which describes Septimus’ mental break-

down, introduces a tension of a different kind. The translator retains some elements of the fragmentary rhythm of the original, but the emotional and hallucinatory intensity of the phrase is diminished. In the original, the repetition has an interrupted rhythmic function, reflecting a kind of psychological obsession. While this repetition is preserved in the translation, it is less disturbing. To the Albanian reader, the phrase reads as a gentle and flowing return, whereas in English it is sudden and shocking. This shows that the translation does not fully convey the rhythm of the disintegration of consciousness, an essential element in Woolf’s style of representing mental collapse. As Waugh explains, fragmentation in modernist narrative is not simply a formal choice^[22], but a representation of subjectivity under pressure; its loss in translation often leads to a diminution of experiential depth.

In Fragment III, the analysis revealed that the translation had preserved the semantic structure of the phrases, but had diluted the poetic charge of the metaphor “leaden circles dissolved in the air.” The English words created a sonorous and philosophical experience of time, while the Albanian translation turned this image into a more material description, reducing the sense of time dissolving as an experience. Here, the loss occurred at the figurative and emotional level: what Jakobson describes as a failure to preserve the poetic function, where the aesthetic effect of the original image is lost in favour of lexical accuracy^[14].

Table 1 synthesizes the comparative findings across the lexical, syntactic, figurative, and emotional levels.

Table 1. Summary of Stylistic Shifts in the Albanian Translation of Three Fragments from *Mrs Dalloway*.

Fragment	Lexical Level	Syntactic Level	Figurative Level	Emotional Level
Fragment I (Clarissa)	Loss of playfulness and spontaneity	Rhythm smoothed; spontaneity reduced	Metaphorical lightness lost	Emotional fragmentation softened
Fragment II (Septimus)	Keywords preserved	Hallucinatory rhythm reduced	Obsessive imagery weakened	Disintegration portrayed more calmly
Fragment III (Big Ben)	Semantic accuracy maintained	Syntactic compression of poetic pacing	“Dissolved” rendered more materially	Philosophical intensity of time weakened

These three cases show that Woolf’s translation into Albanian preserves the meaning, but often modifies the rhythm, figure, and sensibility of the phrase. This change is not accidental, but results from the interaction between the stylistic conventions of modernist prose in English and the norms of acceptability in the Albanian literary system. As Boase-Beier argues, translators are not simply conveyors of meaning,

but re-creators of aesthetic experience, and their linguistic choices reflect the level of awareness of the stylistic and emotional functions of the original text^[7].

Translation, then, is a process of negotiation between two modes of feeling and writing. As Eco points out, translation is not a neutral act, but a process of negotiation within a new cultural and semiotic system^[8]. In the case of Woolf’s

Albanian translation, we are dealing with an act that attempts to balance fidelity to the author and acceptability to the Albanian reader, who does not yet have a broad tradition of experimental modernist style. Boase-Beier & Holman stress that such negotiation inevitably involves creative decision-making within the constraints of the target system^[23].

In this sense, the translation of *Mrs Dalloway* into Albanian is not only evidence of Woolf's absorption into another cultural and linguistic context, but also an indicator of the capacity of the Albanian language to express aesthetic modernity. It invites us to reflect not only on what is translated, but on how the translation is experienced by the reader in another linguistic and cultural system. This is precisely where the value of this study lies: in tracing the translation decisions that shape the reader's experience and in examining what is lost, or transformed, in the translation of a style that is, in essence, an experience of thought. Apter further reminds us that the modernist reliance on aspects of untranslatability challenges translators to find ways of evoking equivalent aesthetic effects in the target language^[24].

6. Conclusions

This study analysed the translation of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* into Albanian through a stylistic-empirical approach, with particular attention to the relationship between linguistic form and the aesthetic experience it conveys. By examining three key fragments of the novel, the analysis addressed the way in which translation interacts with the stylistic construction of consciousness, the representation of its fragmentation, and the experience of time as a literary phenomenon.

The findings show that Woolf's translation faces not only lexical or syntactic challenges but a deeper one: preserving the experience of fragmented and expressive consciousness in a language with different rhythms of thought, stylistic habits, and aesthetic expectations. In Dorjan Kroqi's Albanian translation, an attempt was observed to preserve the logical flow and grammatical structure of the text, but also a tendency to soften the more irregular, rhythmic and hallucinatory effects of the original.

In Fragment I, Clarissa's spontaneous sensitivity was translated into words that lost their playful nuances and the sudden dynamics of experience. In Fragment II, Septimus'

mental disintegration, reflected through repetitions and syntactic interruptions, was transformed into a more structured and less destabilizing narrative. In Fragment III, the poetic metaphor of time as sound dissolving in the air lost its sensory and philosophical complexity, being translated into more materialized images.

These cases show a constant tendency to soften poetic expression and emotional rhythm. The translation prioritizes coherence, linearity and clarity, norms of acceptability rooted in the stylistic system of the Albanian literary tradition. However, this choice comes at a cost: the loss of many of the features that make Woolf a distinctive modernist author, fragmentation of consciousness, syntactic ambiguity, a distinctive rhythm of thought, and the meaningful use of silence and pause.

These findings carry several important conclusions:

First, literary translation especially that of modernist texts cannot be treated as a linguistically neutral process. It requires a keen awareness of the aesthetic function of form and what Boase-Beier calls the "stylistics of experience", the way in which style reveals emotional and cognitive dimensions of the text^[7].

Second, the translator of modernist literature is not simply a mediator of meaning, but a co-author of aesthetic experience within a new cultural and linguistic context. To convey faithfully Woolf into Albanian, the translator must dare to experiment with rhythm, fragmentation, and figurative language, even if this confronts the Albanian reader with a less common form of literature.

Third, this study suggests that expressive stylistics provides a powerful critical framework for evaluating literary translation, as it focuses not only on linguistic structure but also on the effect of the text, and places the translated text in direct relation to the emotional and perceptual experience of the reader.

In conclusion, the translation of *Mrs Dalloway* into Albanian represents an important step towards the integration of modernism in Albanian literature. At the same time, it highlights the need for a translation practice more sensitive to form as meaning, style as experience, and the translator as a mediator of aesthetic sensitivity. Studies that combine stylistic analysis with translation practice provide a valuable contribution to the construction of a criticism of translation based on the expressive and aesthetic functions of language,

a pressing need for our literary system and for the academic evaluation of translation as a scientific discipline. As Steiner observes, translating modernist literature is fundamentally an interpretive act, where implied meanings, silences, and narrative rhythm must be recreated with equal subtlety in the target language^[25].

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, E.P.; methodology, E.P. and A.C.; formal analysis, E.P.; investigation, A.C.; resources, E.P.; data curation, A.C.; writing—original draft preparation, E.P.; writing—review and editing, A.C.; supervision, A.C. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding

This work received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement

No new data were created or analyzed in this study. Data sharing does not apply to this article.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express their appreciation for the intellectual environment and scholarly discussions that have informed and inspired the development of this work.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- [1] Woolf, V., 2004. *Mrs Dalloway* [in Albanian]. Trans. Kroqi, D. Skanderbeg Books: Tirana, Albania.
- [2] Galperin, I.R., 1977. *Stylistics*. Higher School Publishing House: Moscow, Russia.
- [3] Leech, G., Short, M., 2007. *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*, 2nd ed. Pearson Longman: London, UK.
- [4] Bassnett, S., 2013. *Translation Studies*, 4th ed. Routledge: London, UK.
- [5] Munday, J., 2012. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*, 3rd ed. Routledge: London, UK.
- [6] Tahiri, L., Çapriqi, S., 2020. Lost in translation: Narrative perspective silenced by the voice of the translator. *Respectus Philologicus*. 38(43), 202–213. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15388/RESPECTUS.2020.38.43.68>
- [7] Boase-Beier, J., 2006. *Stylistic Approaches to Translation*. St. Jerome Publishing: Manchester, UK.
- [8] Eco, U., 2003. *Mouse or Rat? Translation as Negotiation*. Weidenfeld & Nicolson: London, UK.
- [9] Toury, G., 1995. *Descriptive Translation Studies—and beyond*. John Benjamins: Amsterdam, Netherlands.
- [10] Hermans, T., 1999. *Translation in Systems: Descriptive and System-Oriented Approaches Explained*. St. Jerome Publishing: Manchester, UK.
- [11] Vinay, J.P., Darbelnet, J., 1995. *Comparative Stylistics of French and English: A Methodology for Translation*. Trans. Sager, J.C., Hamel, M.J. John Benjamins: Amsterdam, Netherlands.
- [12] Berman, A., 2000. Translation and the trials of the foreign. In: Venuti, L. (ed.). *The Translation Studies Reader*. Routledge: London, UK. pp. 284–297.
- [13] Venuti, L., 2008. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*, 2nd ed. Routledge: London, UK.
- [14] Jakobson, R., 2000. On linguistic aspects of translation. In: Venuti, L. (ed.). *The Translation Studies Reader*. Routledge: London, UK. pp. 113–118.
- [15] Baker, M., 2018. In *Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*, 3rd ed. Routledge: London, UK.
- [16] Briggs, J., 2005. *Virginia Woolf: An Inner Life*. Allen Lane: London, UK.
- [17] Beer, G., 1996. *Virginia Woolf: The Common Ground*. Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh, UK.
- [18] Shamma, T., 2009. *Translation and the Manipulation of Difference: Arabic Literature in Nineteenth-Century England*. St. Jerome Publishing: Manchester, UK.
- [19] Woolf, V., 2020. *Mrs Dalloway*. Hussey, M. (ed.). Penguin Classics: London, UK.
- [20] Stockwell, P., 2002. *Cognitive Poetics: An Introduction*. Routledge: London, UK.
- [21] Ricoeur, P., 1984. *Time and Narrative: Volume 1*. Trans.

- McLaughlin, K., Pellauer, D. University of Chicago Press: Chicago, IL, USA.
- [22] Waugh, P., 2006. *Literary Theory and Criticism: An Oxford Guide*. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.
- [23] Boase-Beier, J., Holman, M. (eds.), 2006. *The Practices of Literary Translation: Constraints and Creativity*. St. Jerome Publishing: Manchester, UK.
- [24] Apter, E., 2013. *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability*. Verso: London, UK.
- [25] Steiner, G., 1998. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, 3rd ed. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.