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Challenges of Korean Novel Translation: the Case Study of Love in the Big City

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Abstract

This study explores the challenges of translating Korean literary fiction for international audiences, focusing on Park Sang-young's *Love in the Big City* and Anton Hur's English translation of the novel. While K-pop and K-dramas have become global cultural phenomena, Korean novels have not reached the same level of recognition, often due to the complexities of cultural translation. This research examines how translation choices shape the way English-speaking readers experience Korean fiction and how emotion, culture, and society are mediated across languages. It also considers accessibility in screen adaptations, understood here as the relative ease with which audiences from other countries may access, comprehend, and relate to the story on an emotional and cultural level, showing how the same stories travel differently in different languages and media. The study combines a close reading of the English translation of *Love in the Big City* with qualitative methods, including interviews and secondary sources. Insights from LTI Korea and translator Anton Hur are used alongside an analysis of online reviews to understand the novel's reception. By bringing these perspectives together, the paper highlights how translation decisions influence accessibility and cultural nuance, while adaptations function as interventions that provoke new interpretations of the text and give light to the broader dynamics of Korean literature's global circulation.

Keywords: Accessibility; Hallyu; Korean Literature; Literary Translation; Multimodality