

LIMERICKS

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A limerick is a kind of a witty, humorous, or nonsense poem, especially one in five-line anapestic or amphibrachic meter with a strict rhyme scheme (aabba). The form can be found in England as of the early years of the 18th century. It was popularized by Edward Lear in the 19th century, although he did not use the term. Limericks are meant to be funny. They often contain hyperbole, onomatopoeia, idioms, puns, and other figurative devices. The last line of a good limerick contains the 'punch line' or 'heart' of the joke. Enough of the technical stuff - LIMERICKS are supposed to be 'fun' rhymes. Enjoy the rhythm as well as the words and as you say the words, clap your hands in time with the rhythm.

The standard form of a limerick is a stanza of five lines, with the first, second and fifth usually rhyming with one another and having three feet of three syllables each; and the shorter third and fourth lines also rhyming with each other, but having only two feet of three syllables. The first line traditionally introduces a person and a place, with the place appearing at the end of the first line and establishing the rhyme scheme for the second and fifth lines. In early limericks, the last line was often essentially a repeat of the first line, although this is no longer customary.

The origin of the name limerick for this type of poem is debated. As of several years ago, its usage was first documented in England in 1898 (New English Dictionary) and in America in 1902, but in recent years several earlier uses have been documented. The name is generally taken to be a reference to the City or County of Limerick in Ireland sometimes particularly to the Maigue Poets, and may derive from an earlier form of nonsense verse parlour game that traditionally included a refrain that included "Will [or won't] you come (up) to Limerick?" The earliest known use of the name "Limerick" for this type of poem is an 1880 reference, in a Saint John, New Brunswick newspaper, to an apparently well-known tune, There was a young rustic named Mallory, who drew but a very small salary. When he went to the show, his purse made him go to a seat in the uppermost gallery.

The limerick form was popularized by Edward Lear in his first Book of Nonsense (1845) and a later work (1872) on the same theme. Lear wrote 212 limericks, mostly nonsense verse. It was customary at the time for limericks to accompany an absurd illustration of the same subject, and for the final line of the limerick to be a kind of conclusion, usually a variant of the first line ending in the same word.

Assumed Translations and the Limerick

For descriptive-explanatory purposes, any text which is assumed to be a translation, on no matter what grounds, will be taken into consideration. This notion of ASSUMED TRANSLATION implies at least three interdependent postulates:

1. There is another text, in another culture/language, which has both chronological and logical priority over it and which can be assumed to have served as its immediate source (The Source-Text (ST) Postulate);
2. The process whereby the assumed translation came into being involved the transference of certain features from the corresponding assumed ST (The Transfer Postulate);

3. There are accountable relationships which tie the assumed translation to its assumed original, an obvious function of the transferred features that the two now share in the context of the differences that exist between them (The Relationship Postulate).

The starting point for any attempt to account for an assumed translation as the translation it assumedly is the assumption that it was designed to fulfil a need of the culture that hosts it, or rather to fulfil what that need was taken to be by the translator. However, individual translators are always products of a given societal group, and therefore they are bound to make their decisions with reference to a culturally-determined normative framework, whether they are fully aware of it or not and whether they wish to enhance or undermine that framework.

Whatever the need, translating satisfies it in a way of its own which is different from any other way of satisfying that need, namely, by introducing into the culture in question a version of something which has already been in existence elsewhere and which is deemed worthy of introduction into it. This worthiness too is established within the receiving culture and in its own terms, even if the status which that something enjoyed in the source culture is being heeded. After all, the decision to take such a status into account can only be made in the culture in and for which the translator is operating.

To sum up, the limerick is always light and humorous. It is sometimes associated with satire or parody. Limericks are not a modern invention. Many of their authors are anonymous. Edward Lear joked about physical deformities. His limericks abound with unfortunate folk who possessed grotesque features and outsize limbs: The was an Old Man with a bear, Who said, "It is just as I feared! – Two owls and a Hen, Four Larks and a Wren, Have all built their nests in my beard!"