

An Investigation of Mystic Term on “Conference of The Birds” of Attar on The Basis of Van Doorslaer’s Map

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Abstract : *Considering the mystic terms as one of the main issues in translation of poems, this research pursues the following objectives: Firstly, it is an attempt to find out what strategies have been used to find equivalents for source text mystic. Second, it is hoped that this study of the translations of the mystic terms in Attar’s poems will further address and explore the problems in translating mystic texts, proposed by other Persian poets and suggest instructional points from Davis work for translation education. In order to deal with such a breadth of work, a new conceptual tool was developed, as explained by Van Doorslaer (2007). This study shows that according to Van Doorslaer’s map, the mystic terms can be transferred to the TL with their exact content of the SL, if the translator has a good choice for any term.*

Keywords : *mystic; mysticism; metaphor; strategy; source language (SL); target language (TL)*

I. Introduction

Translation is transferring the meaning from one language into another in the written form. Literary translation has a special position in identifying the culture of a country to other societies. The works of eminent writers and poets are available for other nations by the translation. Most of these figures have become famous through translation. According to comparison theory, the definition of metaphor is an implicit comparison without as or like between two compared items. A metaphor consists of three parts, namely topic, image, and point of similarity. As a figurative item, a metaphor is hard to be translated literally; meanwhile the translation of SL metaphor should be the dynamic equivalence translation. The dynamic equivalence is a quality of translation in which the message of source language text (SLT) has been transported into the target language text (TLT) that the response of the target language (TL) reader would be essentially like that of the source language (SL) reader. This research tries to determine and compare that transferring of meanings, effects and aesthetic aspects of mystical terms of Attar’s poem in “Conference of the birds” with its translation by Dick Davis (2010).

1.1 Background The Problem

Translation of mystic terms or metaphors is very important portion of transferring a text from source language to target language. Some of mystic terms are not exist in the target language and this point makes the translation harder than before. Metaphor, a figurative trope, etymologically originating from the Greek “metaphor”, means “transference of a word to a new sense” [1]. What metaphor does is to add a new sense or meaning to a singular word or concept. A poet uses metaphor more often than other writers with the intention of introducing a new concept, offering more clear-cut meaning or presenting a more poetic effect in his/her poems. Therefore, translation of poetry needs something more than translating other genres of literature because of its special features. It should be noted that the main concern in translating Attar’s poems, in general, and metaphor, in particular, is how best the translators been able to convey the messages and beauties of the poems.

1.2 Review of Literature

Every process of translation involves at least two languages and one message, which can be called form and meaning. In fact, the meaning is the message which is transferred by various features and it is the task of the translator to transfer the meaning of the ST into the TT. However, when it comes to the translation of poetry, this process is more complicated because poetry translation is especially rich with visual and expressive properties as well as different figures of speech. The translator may face different types of problems in translation of poetry such as linguistic, literary, aesthetic, and socio-cultural problems. Translation of metaphorical expression particularly mystical expression has been one of the most controversial topics in translation. And rarely can we find people who have studied and translated mystical terms as metaphorical expression which is the topic of this research.

The academic discipline, which concerns itself with the study of translation, has been known by different names at different times. Some scholars have proposed to refer to it as the 'science of translation' [2], others as 'translatology' – or 'tradutologie' in French [2], but the most widely used designation today is 'translation studies'. In his seminal article 'The Name and Nature of Translation Studies', James Holmes (1992) argued for the adoption of 'translation studies' as the standard term for the discipline as a whole and other scholars have since followed suit. At one time, the term translation studies implied more emphasis on literary translation and less on other forms of translation, including interpreting, as well as a lack of interest in practical issues such as pedagogy, but this is no longer the case. Translation studies is now understood to refer to the academic discipline concerned with the study of translation at large, including literary and non-literary translation, various forms of oral interpreting, as well as Dubbing and Subtitling. The terms translation and translators are used in this generic sense throughout this entry. Translation studies is also understood to cover the whole spectrum of research and pedagogical activities, from developing theoretical frameworks to conducting individual case studies to engaging in practical matters such as training translators and developing criteria for translation assessment [3].

Translation is the process of replacing an original text, known as the source text, with a substitute one, known as target text. The process is usually an interlingual translation in that the message in the source language text rendered as a target text in a different language, and it is in this sense that we have referred to translation so far. However, sometimes the term also used to refer to an intralingual translation, a process whereby a text in one variety of the language reworded into another. This would be the case where the message of a text in, say, Old English is reworked into a text in Modern English, or a text in one dialect or style is reworked into another. In addition, we can speak of 'translation', when the replacement involves not another language but another, non-linguistic, means of expression, in other words a different semiotic system. In this case we can say for instance that a poem is 'translated' into a dance or a picture, a novel into an opera or a film. Such transmutations are examples of intersemiotic translation [4].

What all these three process have in common is that they involve the replacement of one expression of a message or unit of meaningful content by another in a different form [4].

The term 'translation' sometimes used to describe linguistic activities such as summarizing or paraphrasing. Although such activities resemble translation in that they replace a message that already exists, they differ in that they designed not to reproduce the original as a whole but to reduce it to its essential parts, or adapt it for different groups of people with different needs and expectations [4].

1.3 Literary Translation

Translating literary works is, perhaps, always more difficult than translating other types of text because literary works have specific values called the aesthetic and expressive values. The aesthetic function of work shall emphasize the beauty of the words, figurative language, metaphors, etc. while the expressive functions shall put forwards the writer's thought or process of thought, emotion, etc. and the translator should try, to transfer these specific values into the target language (TL). Translation of literary works such as novels, short stories, poem and so forth are considered a literary pursuit in its own right.

Literary translators, in addition to dealing with the difficulties inherent to translations of all fields, must consider the aesthetic aspects of the text, its beauty and style, as well as its marks: lexical, grammatical or phonological, keeping in mind that one language's stylistic marks can be drastically different from another's. The important issue is that the quality of the translation be the same in both languages while also maintaining the integrity of the contents at the same time.

For a translator, the fundamental issue is searching for equivalents that produce the same effects in the translated text as those that the author was seeking for readers of the original text.

When the source and target languages belong to different cultural groups, the first problem faced by the translator is finding terms in his or her own language that express the highest level of faithfulness possible to the meaning of certain words.

1.4 Poetry Translation

As one genre of literature, poetry has something special compared to the others. In a poem, the beauty is not only achieved with the choice of words and figurative language like novels and short stories, but also with the creation of rhythm, rhyme, meter, and specific expression and structures that may not conform the ones of the daily language.

Poetry to begin with, is meant to express the emotions, the feeling and depths of listeners or readers. The poet, therefore, has to be fully aware of the capacity of language to make his message highly effective.

According to Newmark (1998), "poetry presents the thing in order to convey the feeling, in particular, and however concrete the language, each represents something else- a feeling, a behavior, a view of life as well as itself". (p.164). He thinks that all images have universal, cultural, and personal sources so that the translator of poetry cannot transfer the foreign culture to a native equivalent, to help the reader.

Jakobson (cited in Venuti, 1995, p.118) claims that only poetry is untranslatable. He gives the reason that in translating a text, the meaning is kept and the form is changed into the target language; but in poetry the structure or form contributes in construction of the meaning, so it cannot be translated.

Newmark's opinion (1998) about translation of poetry is: "A successfully translated poem is always another poem." (p.165).

According to Savory (1968), many of the experts agree on impossibility of the "adequate translation of a poem". He believes those characteristics which distinguish poetry from prose are not translatable. For example poets pay attention to sounds as well as words in writing poetry, but sounds are often changed in translation. Also translators cannot produce the same aural effect in different languages.

Despite of the opposite opinions about translating poetry, many poems have been translated. Even some writers became famous after translating their works. Shakespeare is one of them as Bassnett (1990) writes:

Until the end of the 18th century Shakespeare not only failed to gain any special fame in England, but was valued less than his contemporary dramatics: Ben Jonson, Fletcher, Beaumont, and others. His fame originated in Germany, and thence was transfused to England [4].

In translating poetry, Newmark (1998) believes that at first the translator chooses a TL poetic form close to that of the source language. The rhyming scheme may be dropped despite of its importance as a part of form. Then he reproduces the figurative meaning. At last the translator works on setting, using the different methods of sound effect to transfer the same impact. "Emotionally, different sounds create different meanings based on the common sounds of the human throat".

Lefevere (cited in Bassnett, 2002) describes seven different strategies for translating poetry:

- 1) Phonemic translation: in this method, the SL sound is produced in the TL as well as producing an appropriate paraphrase of the sense. Lefevere discusses that although this method works well in the translation of onomatopoeia, the result is clumsy and lacks sense.
- 2) Literal translation: emphasis on word- for- word translation causes distortion of the sense and syntax of the original.
- 3) Metrical translation: the reproduction of the SL meters is the main criterion. Lefevere maintains that in this method, the focus is on one aspect of the SL text.
- 4) Poetry into prose: Lefevere declares that this method makes distortion of the sense, communicative value and syntax of the SL text, but not as much as literal or metrical types of translation.
- 5) Rhymed translation: meter and rhyme are reproduced in this strategy; Lefevere believes that the product is a 'caricature' of Catullus.
- 6) Blank verse translation: by choosing the structure, some restrictions are imposed on the translator. But the result involves the greater accuracy and higher degree of literalness.
- 7) Interpretation: Lefevere explains versions where the form is changed, but the substance of the SL text is kept; and he writes about imitations where the translator produces his own poem and retain 'only title and point of departure' of the source text.

1. 4. 1 Metaphorica Expressions

Metaphorical expressions, as the second factor, mean any constructions evoking visual, sounds, touch, and taste images, the traditional metaphors, direct comparisons without the words "like" and "as if", and all figurative languages.

To understand the meaning of metaphor as proposed by Newmark, it is advisable to understand the following terms: object, image, sense, metaphor, and metonym.

Newmark (1998) proposes seven procedures to translate metaphors in general. The first procedure is reproducing the same image in the TL if the image has comparable frequency and currency in the appropriate register, this procedure is usually used for one- word metaphor. The second procedure is replacing images in the SL with a standard TL image within constraints of TL cultures. The next is a metaphor to simile, retaining the image in the SL. This procedure can be used to modify any type of metaphor. And the rest of the procedures, translating

metaphor (or simile) into simile plus sense, conversing metaphor with some metaphors combined with sense, are not considered appropriate for poetry translation.

As it is known, there are two kinds of expressions: universal and culturally- bound expressions. Universal expressions are the ones which consist of words having the same semantic field with that of most cultures in the world.

1. 4. 2 Brief History of Attar

The Conference of the Birds in the best work of Persian poet Fardi ud- Din Attar. He was born and died in Neishabour. his name from his job, he was a perfumer. He wrote almost 45000 poetry and prose. The most famous one is Manteq ot- teyr. It contains stories about Sufism. The story about the birds who are looking for their king (God).

1.5 Research Questions

According to the topic of this study, the researcher decided to compose the following questions:

1. What strategies according to Van Doorslaer's map have been used in translation of mystical terms "Conference of the Birds"? and 2. Do translator can translate mystical terms in a good way?

II. Method

2. 1. Corpus of The Study

This study conducted to find different strategies employed in translation of mystical terms in "Conference of the Birds" and to determine whether or not the translator conveying the mystical message of the original poems successfully. The mystical term chose from seven valleys of Conference of the Birds with Dick Davis translation.

2. 2. Procedure

As mentioned before, the purpose of the study is to explore the differences between mystical items and their translation in the TL. In order to do the research, the researcher followed a systematic procedure. After preparing the book and its translation, the researcher prepared a transcription of the mystical terms and its translation in front of that. As this is a comparative study in the target language (English), mystical terms were studied in two forms. In the first form, the researcher found the meaning of each mystic term in the Moein encyclopedia and another Persian mystic encyclopedia, separately and wrote the exact meaning of the Persian mystic terms in front of them. Again, he found the translation of each mystic term (those which are translated by translator) and found their exact meaning in the American Heritage Dictionary, and wrote their meaning in front of them. Then he compares two meaning to see if they are close to each other or not. After that, the researcher investigated why some differences exist at all. The researcher investigated the strategies of translation based on Van Doorslaer's map, to understand under what condition such strategies used. Another point which investigated during this research was consideration of the both source language and target language cultures. Some differences in translation are because of cultural differences in countries. It is possible some words or sentences be eliminated or changed completely. Then the whole process from collecting data, grouping them, to their analysis was done manually. The unit of the analysis was word. The main source for the applied classification of this method

was Van Doorslaer's map. It needs to be mentioned this study has been limited to evaluating accuracy and naturalness.

2. 3. Data Collection and Recording

As mentioned in the previous section, the data for this study were collected through comparing the mystical terms with their meaning in the different dictionaries and encyclopedias. This helps find the differences and similarities between mystic terms in SL and their translation in TL. The researcher aimed to find if there is any incoherence between the main source and its translation. To achieve this, he applied Van Doorslaer's map.

2. 4. Data Processing

At first, the researcher found the mystic terms in the book of Conference of the Birds by Attar and found their meaning in the Moein encyclopedia and another Persian mystic encyclopedia and wrote in front of each word. Again he found the translation of the mystic word in the book translated by Dick Davis and found the meaning of these translated words in the American Heritage Dictionary and wrote in front of each word. Finally, she investigate how much these two meaning are similar or different.

2. 5. Data Analysis and Evaluation

As previously mentioned, the researcher has adopted Van Doorslaer's map of translation strategies and procedures (2007), then she analyzed the terms according to them.

Van Doorslaer's translation strategies (2007) consist of 11 elements and Van Doorslaer's translation procedures (2007) consist of 24 elements.

From 29 examples, derived from the book "Conference of the Birds" in the part "the Seven Valleys", according to Van Doorslaer's strategies, there are 20 examples of literal translation, 6 examples of naturalization, 1 example for foreignizing, free translation, and expansion. Moreover, according to Van Doorslaer's procedures, there are 21 examples of direct transfer and 7 examples for adaption, and finally one example for borrowing. Following table shows the complete results of these classifications according to Van Doorslaer's strategies.

Table 1- Analysis of the book according to Van Doorslaer's strategies

Van Doorslaer's classification		Frequency	Total number	Percentage
Strategies	Free translation	1	29	3.44 %
	Idiomatic translation	0	29	0.00 %
	Functional translation	0	29	0.00%
	Literal translation	21	29	72.41 %
	Source-oriented translation	0	29	0.00 %
	Target-oriented translation	0	29	0.00 %
	Foreignizing	1	29	3.44 %
	Domestication	0	29	0.00 %
	Exoticizing	0	29	0.00 %
	Naturalization	6	29	20.68 %
	Localization	0	29	0.00 %
Total number		29	29	100 %

In the following chart we can see analysis of the book according to Van Doorslaer's strategies.

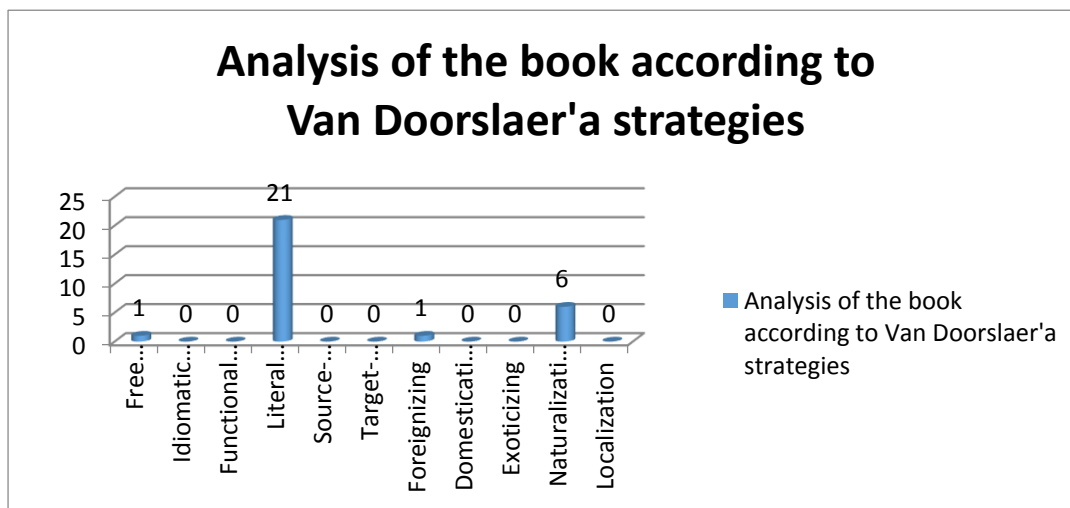


Figure1 - Analysis of the book according to Van Doorslaer's strategies

From 29 examples, derived from the book "Conference of the Birds" in the part "the Seven Valleys", according to Van Doorslaer's procedures, there are 20 examples for direct transfer, 7 examples for adaption, and one example for borrowing and expansion. It is clear that other procedures are nothing in this classification.

Following table shows the complete results of these classifications according to Van Doorslaer's procedures.

Table 2: Analysis of the book according to Van Doorslaer's procedures

Van Doorslaer's classification		Frequency	Total number	Percentage
Procedure	Acculturation	0	29	0.00 %
	Adaption	7	29	24.13 %
	Amplification	0	29	0.00 %
	Borrowing	1	29	3.44 %
	Claque	0	29	0.00 %
	Coinage	0	29	0.00 %
	Compensation	0	29	0.00 %
	Concision	0	29	0.00 %
	Condensation	0	29	0.00 %
	Denominalization	0	29	0.00 %
	Direct transfer	20	29	68.96 %
	Dilution	0	29	0.00 %
	Expansion	1	29	3.44 %
	Implication	0	29	0.00 %
	Interchange	0	29	0.00 %

	Interpretation	0	29	0.00 %
	Modulation	0	29	0.00 %
	Modification	0	29	0.00 %
	Paraphrase	0	29	0.00 %
	Recategorization	0	29	0.00 %
	Reformulation	0	29	0.00 %
	Addition	0	29	0.00 %
	Omission	0	29	0.00 %
	Total number	29	29	100 %

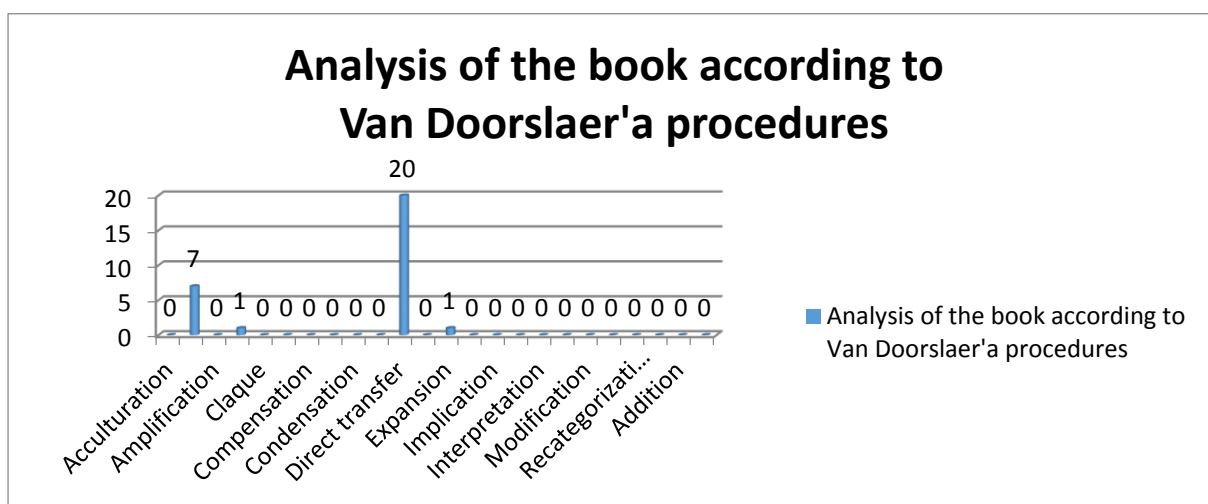


Figure 2: Analysis of the book according to Van Doorslaer's procedures

III. Result

Comparing above – mentioned percentages can conclude that according to strategies of translation, classified by Van Doorslaer, the dominant strategy used in translating this book is literal translation which has 72.41 % of whole percents. After that naturalization is located with 20.68 % of whole percents. And finally, free translation and foreignizing are located with 3.44 % of whole percents. It is interesting that the rest of strategies are nothing.

Again, by comparing above – mentioned percentages can conclude that according to procedures of translation, classified by Van Doorslaer, the dominant procedure in translating this book is direct transfer which has 68.96 % of whole percents. After that, adaption is located with 24.13 % of whole percents. And finally, borrowing and expansion are located with 3.44 % of whole percents.

In here conclusion can be that the mystic terms can be transferred to the TL with their exact content of the SL, if the translator has a good choice for any term, and that is what the translator (Dick Davis) had done successfully by using of literal translation as a dominant strategy of translation and direct transfer as a main procedure of translation (according to Van Doorslaer's map).

IV. Conclusion

Comparison of the original Persian book with its English translation gave rise to interesting results and confirmed researcher's hypotheses. The results show that within the realm of Van Doorslaer's map, literal translation and direct transfer had been used most in translating the poem.

As table 1 and figure 1, according to Van Doorslaer's map, in strategies of translation, the total amount of literal translation enjoys the highest frequency (72.41 %).

As table 2 and figure 2, according to Van Doorslaer's map, in procedures of translation, the total amount of direct transfer enjoys the highest frequency (68.96 %).

As it is clear and worth to noting, according to Van Doorslaer's map, the dominant strategy used in translation of the book (by Dick Davis) is literal translation and the dominant procedure used in translation of the book is direct transfer.

Pedagogical implications:

This research has some implications. Poem translation is not a new field of study but much research can be done in this field. The new technologies and movements of the world also affect translation studies. Therefore, these movements intensify the need to accept and emphasize that poem translation can be studied as a course in translation studies or even other fields at universities. This research can also be used in translation training program. Translators can use the results of the study to do research about mystical translation in other genres, fields and even enjoy the results of this study.

Translators must be aware of the fact that the heart of their tasks is not to translate texts, but to translate cultures. They should know that misinterpretation occurs when they do not consider culture. If they translate the cultural words literally, since the meaning would be distorted, the target language readers or audiences will be culturally shocked.

In the process of this study, the researcher could not easily differentiate between mistranslations and the strategies of domestication and foreignization. In other words, it was very difficult to judge whether the items were deliberately chosen or because of the lack of knowledge.

Besides, each language has unique characteristics and one of the main translation problems is to find possible strategies, and analyze specific translations. Hence, it would be helpful for translators to find the norms that govern the choice of translation strategy. In other words, they would be more successful if they know which strategies are used more and are accepted by competent translators [10].

Besides, from Venuti's point of view, it seems so necessary to make translation students aware of the importance of preserving cultural and linguistic diversities of any language. What is more important is the awareness of the translators in selecting a text, the genre, its author and in adopting a translation method [9].

Suggestions for further research:

This research can pave a way for other researches. In this regard, other researches can be done to:

1. Prove the results of this study,
2. Use other parts of book "the Conference of the Birds" to find similarities and differences between the mystic terms and their translations,

3. Study these strategies (according to Van Doorslaer's map) from a historical perspective or diachronically,
4. Use Van Doorslaer's map to finding similarities and differences of grammatical items during translation a poem.

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