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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Translation Studies

Subject:

An Analysis of Most Frequently-Used Strategies of Translating Metaphor in Children's Literature; A Case Study of Metaphors in Twilight

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ABSTRACT

Metaphors govern humans' conceptual system and regulate their language as well as thought. Since metaphors are culture-specific, they may cause some problems in translation. In other words, transferring a metaphor from one language and culture into another one can be prevented by linguistic and cultural differences. Therefore, translators may choose different strategies to deal with this difficulty. The act of applying a translation strategy is of utmost importance especially in translation of children's literature due to the fact that translation of children's literature should be understandable as well as enjoyable for children. Thus, this research was an attempt to identify strategies applied by Persian translators to translate metaphors from English into Persian in children's literature. To fulfill this aim the data were collected from the best seller book 'Twilight' written by Stephenie Meyer and its parallel translation 'Shafagh' by Iraj Mesal Azar. The data were categorized based on Newmark's (1988b) classification of metaphor. Further, the translation strategies of metaphorical expressions from English into Persian were identified based on both Newmark's (1988a) and Larson's (1984) proposed strategies for translating metaphor. Moreover, the extent to which these scholars' proposed strategies are similar was identified. The results of this study show that the most frequent strategy in translating metaphors applied by the Persian translator is keeping the source language metaphor which was the first strategy proposed by both Larson's (1984) and Newmark (1988a). Moreover, this strategy was the most frequently used strategy in translating different kinds of metaphors.

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Chapter I

Background and Purpose

Prior to the emergence of the children's literature genre, it seems that children's needs were satisfied through adaptation from adults' literature. However, due to developments of psychological and sociological studies, emotional, mental, physical and experimental characteristics of children have been more highlighted. For instance, Smilansky and Shefatya (1990, as cited in J.P Isenberg and M. R. Jalongo (n.d.)) state that children's school success largely depend on their ability to interact positively with their peers and adults. Isenberg and Jalongo (n.d.) stress on the role of play in children's social development in which they practice both verbal and nonverbal communication skills by negotiating roles. In addition, they learn to express and cope with their feelings. Also, Rebecaa Isbell (n.d.) believes that the first eight years of a child life are a critical time of brain development and therefore the early environment where young children live help determine the direction of their brain development. Isbell in her article "An Environment that Positively Impacts Young Children" states that "children who have severely limited opportunities for appropriate experiences will be delayed; this may permanently affect their learning". In contrast, "children who have the

opportunity to develop in an organized and appropriate environment are challenged to think and use materials in new ways" (ibid).

As a result, nowadays childhood is considered as the most crucial time of a person's life and therefore children's needs are more taken into consideration. Consequently, gradually more studies have been done on children's literature. As it is known, children's literature plays an important role in training children to develop their emotions, morality, imagination, initiation and linguistic skills. According to Seung-Yoeun Yoo (1997), children's literature is the best way to provide a range of experience that enables children to develop and discover language and how to live their own stories, based on their own voice and ideas since children in their early childhood begin to connect stories in books with the stories of their lives. Therefore, children's literature can be valuable in many ways for early childhood literacy program.

Further, as Russell (1994, as cited in Seung-Yoeun Yoo, 1997) believes due to the fact that children from Age 4 to 7 change from being self-centered to other-centered, they learn to understand different perspectives from their own. During this time, they not only read fantasy stories but also more realistic stories to develop their relationship with others and to satisfy their curiosity about people and the world.

Similarly, O'Sullivan (2005) believes that children's literature should help to the development of the child. In addition, Oittinen (2000) emphasizes that through reading books children learn many things, "not only the names of flowers and capital cities: children need to be emotionally involved so that they learn to understand other people's feelings in different situations" (p.90). Thus, Lots of morals, norms and advice have been expressed in the most beautiful as well as effective way in children's literature. Therefore, children's literature is the most successful way of teaching children; meanwhile, it provides an easy way for children to learn these without being offensive.

Further, it seems that children's literature is more powerful than any diplomacy and it breaks down all barriers between nations. All adults and all today's children despite their nationality, ethics, color and race have lots of commonalities. It is due to translation of children's literature that all people enjoyed reading or watching "The Pink Panther", written and directed by Blake Edwards (1963), or "The Adventures of Pinocchio", written by Carlo Collodi (1883). By remembering those memories, a sweet smile can be seen on everyone's face. In addition, there are lots of fears that people share related to "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz", written by L. Frank Baum (1900), or "The Snow Queen" by Hans Christian Andersen (1845). These joyful and fearful feelings along with many others became

an integrated part inside each one of them. Lots of today's sweet dreams and desires, resulted from childhood pleasant hopes, are due to the fact that various works of different authors, better to say artists, of different cultures and countries were translated. Therefore, one important reason of this commonality among all people from all around the world is the translation of children's literature which shapes sympathy of today's children and tomorrow's adults.

As a result, translation is a channel for communication of different languages. In other words, through translation, all national, cultural and linguistic boundaries can be crossed. Also, based on Ghesquire (as cited in Coillie & Verschuren, 2006) "translation was and remains a means of sharing creativity, new ideas and literary models" (p.25).

As long as it is the reader of a translation that is of the primary importance, the translators should fully know who their readers are. This is true for the translation of children's literature as well. As it is known, children have their own feelings, interests, likes and dislikes. They also have their own language. Therefore, those translators who work for children should be familiar with that language and more importantly as Oittinen (2000) believes they should consider a child listening to them.

One characteristic of children's literature is its figurative language which consists of different figures of speech. One of them is metaphor. As

Newmark (1988a) believes "the purpose of any translation should be to achieve 'equivalent effect', i.e., to produce the same effect on the readership of the translation as was obtained on the readership of the original" (p.48). Consequently, translators while translating try to preserve the content as well as style of the author and create or recreate the same effect, which is one of the most important issues in the translation of children's literature. In doing so, it is important to know how they deal with metaphors.

Metaphors come from many different areas of human life. According to Baker (1998), metaphors like idioms and puns are culture specific and should be translated functionally. Sometimes, the translation of metaphors may not be easy as it seems. It may cause some difficulties as they are culture-specific. According to Khanjankhani (2005, as cited in Faridzadeh, 2009), "the problem [in translating figures of speech] seems to be rooted in the inevitable culture distance between languages that, consequently, exists in all figures of speech, including metaphor" (p.3). Of course, dealing with culture specific items is the ever-existing problem of translators and as Oittinen (2000) claims "translators need the ability to write and produce a translation in the target language that not only reads naturally, but also fulfils its intended function in the target language-whatever that function may be" (p.160).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

It seems that translating for children is different from translating for adults in that the language of works written for children is different from those of adults' because children have their own specific language. One features of children's literature language, especially fictions, is that it is full of figures of speech.

Metaphor is one figure of speech which is used a lot in all different genres as well as children's literature. It is even used a lot in everyday life. Through metaphors, things that cannot be literally expressed can be communicated. Newmark (1988b) believes that metaphor is "at the center of all problems of translation theory, semantics and linguistics… [And] a re-evaluation of metaphor must precede a new understanding of translation, linguistics and philosophy… to see a world in a grain of sand" (p.96). This explanation highlights the significance of metaphor and its study. In addition, a numerous numbers of children's books in Iran are translated ones. Hence, a close study is required on the translation of these books to identify how they are translated and whether the equivalent effect, which Newmark (1988) talks about, is preserved or not.

As it is known, translators make use of different strategies whenever they face a problematic area in translation. In translating metaphor, they also apply some strategies because they are culture bound and may cause some difficulties. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify which strategies were used most frequently in translation of metaphors in children's literature.

In other words, this research investigated strategies applied by a Persian translator to translate metaphors from English into Persian in children's literature, based on Larson's (1984) and Newmark's (1988a) strategies for translating metaphors. This study was a case study of metaphors in 'Twilight' book written by S. Meyer (2005). Therefore, to investigate this problem and fulfill the purpose of this study the following questions were raised:

1.3. Statement of the Research Questions

1.   Which strategies are applied by the translator to translate metaphor from English into Persian in children's literature?

2.   What are the most frequently-used strategies applied by the translator to translate metaphors from English into Persian in children's literature?

1.4. Definition of Key Terms

In the following the key terms of this study were explained.

Children's Literature

Reiss (1982, as cited in Lathey, 2006) has provided the following definition for children's literature:

"Literature for children and young people is defined not as those books they read, but as literature which has been published for- or mainly for children and young people" (p.7). In the present study the book 'Twilight'written by S. Meyer (2005) and based on Rebecca Murray (n.d.) is the teen vampire romance novel was considered as the corpus of the study.

Figurative Language

Figurative language- language using figures of speech- is language that cannot be taken literally (Perrine, 2005, p.610).

Metaphor

A metaphor means "any figurative expression: the transferred sense of a physical word; the personification of an abstraction; the application of a word or collocation to what it does not literally denote, i.e., to describe one thing in terms of another" (Newmark, 1988b, p.104). Newmark (1988) has classified metaphor as follows:

- Dead Metaphor

- Cliché Metaphor

- Stock or Standard Metaphor

- Adapted Metaphor

- Recent Metaphor

- Original Metaphor

Translation Strategy

Venuti (1998, as cited in Baker, 2008) defines strategies of translation as: "strategies of translation involve the basic tasks of choosing the foreign text to be translated and developing a method to translate it. Both of these tasks are determined by various factors: cultural, economic and political" (p.240).

1.5. Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The present study, like other studies, was developed under certain limitations and delimitations. Limitations of this study were as follows:

First, in selecting the corpus of the study, as the comparison of the source text and the target text was needed just those translated books whose original forms were also available could be examined. Therefore, with this regard, the book 'Twilight' written by Stephenie Meyer (2005)

and its parallel translation 'Shafagh' by Iraj Mesal Azar (2010) were chosen as the corpora of the study.

Second, 'Shafagh' by I. Mesal Azar (2010) was the only available translation of the original book. Consequently, there was no other choice to choose another translation.

Delimitations of the study were also as follows:

First, it is beyond the scope of this study to analyze the translation of all types of figures of speech. Therefore, just metaphor was chosen as the main focus of this study.

Second, it should be mentioned that the Twilight contains four series of stories which provides a large number of data. Due to the time limitation and huge number of metaphors, all data could not be examined so just the first volume of this series, i.e. 'Shafagh', was considered as the sample of this study.

Third, regarding the classification of metaphor, Newmark's (1988b) classification of metaphor was considered as the theoretical framework of the study. In addition, the theoretical framework of the study with respect to translation strategies were Larson's (1984) and Newmark's (1988a) proposed strategies for translating metaphor.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The books written in Persian are not the only available books for the children. A large part of children's books are translations from other languages mainly English. Hejazi (2006) has mentioned that the number of translated books in Iran far exceeds the number of the books that are originally written in Persian for children. This shows the importance of translation which needs special experts, or translators, with special knowledge and abilities. Moreover, translating for children is different from translating for adults. It is due to the social position of children, the status of literature written for them, and the developmental aspect of childhood which make the writing and consequently translating for them unique, imaginative and challenging. Also, as Oittinen (2000) claims, children have sensitive minds and hearts so an unattractive translation may discourage them from reading.

As it is known for examining children's literature translation, since it is a very broad issue, a lot of studies should be done. One problematic aspect which is important to be examined is the translation of metaphors which may be mostly due to cultural differences. Since works written for children have their own specific language which is different from adults', authors use lots of figures of speech which will certainly add to aesthetic

aspect of their works. Metaphor is one of these figures of speech considered as one of the most fundamental form of figurative language. Normally, a writer or speaker may use metaphor to introduce a new concept, offer a more precise meaning, or add a more poetic effect to his/her text or speech. Metaphor, as Newmark (1988b) puts it, is "the application of a word or collocation to what it does not literally denote, i.e., to describe one thing in terms of another" (p.104).

Translating a text needs a close reading to find out what it is about, its intention as well as style. In the process of translation, translator plays a vital role with respect to selecting the lexicon, syntax, figures of speech, neologism, punctuation, name, and other elements. Based on Newmark (1988), translators should try to create the same effect on the audience of the target culture as that of the original text's. Hence, in this regard, understanding and analyzing figures of speech and specifically metaphor is of utmost importance.

As it is known, when translators face a difficulty in translation, they try to find adequate strategies to deal with it. This is also true for translating metaphors. Thus, the focus of this study was to investigate how translators dealt with metaphors in translating children's literature. It also aimed to explore different strategies translators used in translating metaphors in children's literature. Therefore, this study offered some