چکیدهٔ مقالهٔ «مشکلات ترجمه»

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ترجمهٔ یک متن، به ویژه یک متن ادبی یا شعری، ممکن است زیباتر از متن اصلی باشد اما هیچگاه برگردان دقیقی از آن نخواهد بود، چراکه در برگردان صورت واژه یا ساختار جمله، برگرداننده ناچار است معنی را فداکند و اگر بخواهد به معنی وفادار باشد صورت برگردانده نمی‌شود، بنابراین در ترجمهٔ شعر موسیقی کلامی از میان خواهد رفت. غیر از این مسائل، عوامل فرهنگی، ساختار دستوری زبانهای منبع و مقصد در ترجمه مشکلاتی ایجاد می‌کنند که ترجمهٔ ادبی را تا حدودی غیرممکن می‌سازند. بنابراین، در ترجمهٔ ادبی بهتر است با وفاداری به زبان، سبک و زمانی که متن آفریده شده «روح» اثر را به زبان دیگر برگردانیم. پیچیدگی آوایی زبان هم مشکل دیگری است که کار ترجمهٔ ادبی را تا حدودی غیرممکن می‌کند و مسأله نهایی انتقال اشارات مذهبی و اساطیری است که امکان دارد در فرهنگ مقصد مفهومی نداشته باشد.

The Problems of Translation

Translation may surpass the original source in exquisiteness, but it may not be an exact replica of that source. This is mainly because of differences in the word order,

vocabulary and sound effects that exist in the different families of languages. Although Persian and English are in some ways similar, because they are both Indo-European languages, they are in no ways identical. Therefore, it is not easy to do a completely exact translation from Persian into English. What a translator can do is to impart an approximation from the source language into the target language. The following quotation from *The Life of Goethe* by G.H. Lewes affirms this:

> ... *In its happiest efforts, translation is but approximation; and its efforts are not often happy. A translation may be good as a translation, but it cannot be an adequate reproduction of the original. It may be a good poem; it may be a good imitation of another poem; it may be better than the original; but it cannot be an adequate reproduction; it cannot be the same thing in another language producing the same effect on the mind...*[1]

Every language is a part and a mechanism of culture. The dependence of meaning upon cultural contexts reflects the interdependence of language and culture. Hence, in translating from one language into another one finds that connotations of words are deeply seated in cultural factors. The non-dictionary meanings of words can cause a great deal of ambiguity. The word "drugstore" can be translated into any language, but no

translation can impart its nonlinguistic connotation which is indigenous to the American culture. These problems are frequent in translating the language of one country into the language of another country whose customs are different. For instance, drinking tea at five o'clock was introduced by the English to the French, whose language had no word for such a meal. It accordingly became known as *le fiveocloque*. Also the terms *le snack-bar* and *le self-service* as well as *le durgstore* have recently been used in France. Therefore, proper translation does not imply matching phrases or sentences word for word. True translation is much more a commentary on the source than a substitute for it. As Eugene A. Nida, Secretary for Translations of the American Bible Society states, "True translating reproduces the closest natural equivalent, first in meaning, and secondly in style."[2] Hence, it is vain to seek an absolute replication of the work of a medieval Persian astronomer-poet in the poetry of a Victorian English poet, for their cultures were so redically different.

It is true that a perfect translation should convey the spirit of the source by being faithful to its diction, style, the time and the special circumstances in which it was written. It is also ture that the translator of poetry or prose must not tamper with the source which he is using, but the transformation of a written

work, especially poetry, from one language into another definitely alters its character. Meaning and form are inseparable in poetry, for words in poetry, unlike those of discursive writing, are harmonious parts of an organic whole. A prose translation of poetry may succeed better in replicating the individual thoughts contained in the source, but its aesthetic value will be diminshed by the switch to a mundane mode of expression. Verse is therefore a preferable vehicle for representing poetry in translation; and certainly, the linguistic limitations force the translator to take liberties. For instance, no one can claim that he can do a successful translation of Poe's "The Raven" into any other language because it is difficult to impart the tone of Poe's poem into the words and rhythm of another language. To express the melancholic tone of his poem, Poe used a musical device, namely the vowel sound "o" in "more," "evermore" and "nevermore". It is highly unlikely that any language will have the same tonal sound effect in the same word.

Who can determine how much liberty a translator may take? The criterion of legitimacy for such liberties is dependent upon the objective of the translator. If he intends to convey the real meaning, the charm and the grace of the expression in the original, his deed is legitimate. If his objective is to alter the meaning, the translation is illegitimate.

Verbatim or crib transposition of words from the source into the larget language causes a great deal of difficulty. The results are not only absurd and misleading, but usually quite unintelligible. Transposition becomes unintelligible when the idioms of one language do not have counterparts in another language. For instance, *Il n'y a pas de quoi* in an exact transposition of words means "He there has not of what", while the Frenchman uses it in place of "you are welcome". The idiomatic expression in Persian for "falling down" is *zamiyn khordan* which in an exact translation means "to eat the ground". Proverbial expressions also may cause problems in translation. *Mit Wölfen muss man heulen* in a verbatim translation means "Among wolves one must howl", while in English we say, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do". Hence, it is vain to seek merely lexical counterparts in translating poetry or prose.

The translation of poetry into poetry requires the transference of metrical language. This is not so easy as it seems, for poetry, unlike prose in which the accents occur haphazardly, is arranged in such a way that the accents occur at regular intervals. The regular arrangement of accented and unaccented syllables produces a rhythm in language which may not necessarily suit that of another language. For instance, the dactylic hexameter of *The Odyssey* is ideal in Greek but is clumsy

in English, and English versions, therefore, use prose or iambic pentameter, which seems more natural in English. As Shelley said, "It is impossible to represent in another language the melody of the versification; even the volatile strength and delicacy of the ideas escape in the crucible of translation".[3]

Rhyme also imposes a constraint upon a translator and limits his diction. According to Theodore Savory, author of **The Art of Translation,** "One can scarcely find a rhymed translation of a lyric which does not contain evidence of this, as shown either by the omission of something that the original author wrote, or the inclusion of something that he did not"[4].

Rhyme and rhythm combined with other sound effects produce the music of poetry. The poet chooses his words for sound as well as meaning. This is done by repetition of sound units which may have no counterparts in another language. These units may be individual vowel and consonant sounds, syllables, words, phrases or lines. Therefore, alliteration, assonance and consonance are the products of the sound system of the language. The poet chooses words carefully for their sound effects, and translation can totally distort it. For instance "Horse and hound" changes to *le cheval et le chien* when translated into French. "The furrow followed free"[5] in "The Ancient Mariner" and "... I am cabined, cribbed, confined ..."[6] in

Macbeth can hardly be translated into any language without sacrificing the same sound effects used in them. Hence, the phonetic complexity of a language, its power to reproduce thousands of different sounds -- the motion of water, the breaking of glass, the howling of the wind -- is indigenous to that particular language and cannot easily be transferred exactly to another language. For instance, it is not so easy to compose a line in Persian poetry which may impart the motion of water by the use of the phoneme[7] / m / as Coleridge wrote, "meandering with a mazy motion".[8]

Thus, the orchestration of words that impart different shades of meaning is one of the most important techniques of poetry. Translation necessitates substitution of one word for another. The substituted word may express the meaning but it may not accurately reproduce the music of the original. Hence, it is obvious that in translation the music of orchestrated words will be lost. It is the actual syllabic texture of the words that makes us experience sensations of touch, taste and smell keenly. The poet may choose words whose sounds suggest their meaning. For instance, he may create a name such as *Volupine* which compresses the idea of carrion eating of the vulture with that of the brutality of the wolf in the English language. Therefore, the arrangement of words on one level and the effects of individual

words on another function according to the nature of each language. The lexemes[9] of one language do not necessarily have counterparts in another. Neither do cognate words have the same meaning in different languages. For instance, *honnête* does not mean "honest" and *joli* does not mean "jolly".

Words are composed of syllables. The phonemes cluster together to form syllables. This does not normally take place haphazardly. The patterns are fairly regular in every language. For instance, one syllable may be a morpheme[10] such as *sing* in the English language. In another case, more than one syllable go together to make up a morpheme such as *single.* It is not always possible to find syllabic counterparts for the morphemes of one language in another. A one-syllable word in Persian may become multi-syllable in English and vice versa. The word *Rubaiyat* is made of four syllables, while the word *quatrains* is made of two syllables.

The hierarchal structure within the grammar of every lnguage is also indigenous to that language. A sentence is not merely a collection of words arranged in a row on the paper. The English language seems to have developed from the inflectional to the word-order stage, that is to say, from a synthetic to an analytic language. Word order, therefore, is crucial in English. For instance in the following sentence:

I bought a beautiful big red Ford car.

the adjectives are arranged in a linear manner. In other words, quality comes first, then size, color and kind. Persian does not require such a strict word order. Therefore, the sentence above can be re-written in as many different ways as possible.

In the case of figurative language, a translator also encounters problems. It may be feasible to translate the concept of "My luve's like a red red rose"[11] in Robert Burns' pome into almost any language because this simile may universally be used, but when Hamlet says that his father compared with his uncle was like "Hyperion to a Satyr", the Persian translator encounters a problem, for only in the western culture is this comparison meaningful. Also the appreciation of beauty varies in different cultures and changes within the same culture at different times. Almost no woman in the western hemisphere wears a red beauty spot on her forehead, but in India it is considered fashionable. No contemporary Persian poet praises his beloved's double chin any more, but some six hundred years ago it was customary. This affects literature and the usage of figurative language. Therefore, metaphors and similes do not necessarily have counterparts in all languages.

پانوشت‌ها:

1. George Henry Lewes, *The Life of Goethe* (2d ed.; London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1864), p. 472.

2. Eugene A. Nida, *Customs and Cultures* (New York: Harper & Row, publishers, Inc., 1954), p. 217.

3. Paul Selever, *The Art of Translating Poetry* (Boston: The Writer, Inc., 1966), p. 34.

4. Theodore Savory, *The Art of Translation* (Boston: The Writer, Inc., 1968), p. 84.

5. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", *The Oxford Book of English Verse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1940), ii.22.

6. William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* III. iv.25.

7. A phoneme is the smallest significant unit of sound.

8. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Kubla Khan", *The Oxford Book of English Verse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1940), 25.

9. A lexeme is the minimum significant lexical element in a language.

10. A morpheme is the minimum significant unit of form.

11. Robert Burns. "A Red, Red Rose", *The Oxford Book of English Verse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1940), 1.