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ÖMER SEYFETTİN'İN HERKESİN İÇTİĞİ SU ÖYKÜSÜ ÖRNEĞİNDE TÜRKÇEDEN İNGİLİZCEYE DEYİM ÇEVİRİSİ STRATEJİLERİ

*Mesut KULELİ**

ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Ömer Seyfettin'in *Herkesin İçtiği Su* başlıklı öyküsünde kullanılan deyimleri saptamak ve Türkçe deyimlerin İngilizce hedef metne çevrilmesinde kullanılan deyim çevirisi stratejilerini bulmaktır. Öyküde, 11 söylemde toplam 12 deyim saptanmıştır. Çeviri değerlendirmesinde, Baker (1992) tarafından öne sürülen deyim çevirisi stratejileri kullanılmıştır. Çeviri değerlendirmesi sonucunda, çevirmenin kaynak metindeki Türkçe deyimleri hedef metin dili olan İngilizceye çevirirken beş söylemde (%41.67) 'açıklama' stratejisi; üç söylemde (%25) 'benzer anlamda bir deyim kullanma' stratejisi; iki söylemde (%16.67) 'benzer anlamda ancak farklı yapıda deyim kullanma' stratejisi; bir söylemde (%8.33) ise 'çıkarma yoluyla çevirme' stratejisi kullandığı bulunmuştur. Saptanan 12 deyimden bir tanesinin çevirisi ise herhangi bir stratejiye dahil edilememiştir çünkü çevirmen bu deyimden geçtiği söylemi tamamen erek metinden çıkarmıştır. Bu durum, 'çıkarma yoluyla çeviri' olarak düşünülmemektedir çünkü sadece deyim değil, tüm anlam birimi erek metinden çıkarılmıştır. Bu çalışmada elde edilen bulgular, ilişkili alanyazındaki diğer çalışmaların bulguları ile karşılaştırılmış ve çalışmamızın bulgularının diğer çalışmalar tarafından desteklendiği görülmüştür. Bir yazın çevirmeni, deyim çevirisi stratejilerinin bilincinde olduğunda, zaten söz oyunları ve deyimler gibi kültüre özgü ifadelerle bürünmüş olan bir edebi metnin çevirisinde çaresiz hissetmeyecek ve bir deyim erekin dilin kültürüne nasıl çevirebileceği konusunda bilinçli kararlar alabilecektir. Böylece bu stratejiler, yazın çevirmenleri için önemli zorluklardan birini aşmada yararlı araçlar olarak işlev görecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Deyim çevirisi, Yazın çevirisi, Deyim çevirisi stratejileri, Ömer Seyfettin, Öykü.

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STRATEGIES IN TRANSLATION OF IDIOMS FROM TURKISH TO ENGLISH: THE CASE OF SHORT STORY TITLED *THE WATER THAT EVERYBODY DRINKS* BY ÖMER SEYFETTİN

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to find out the idioms used in the short story *Herkesin İçtiği Su* (*The Water That Everybody Drinks*) by Ömer Seyfettin determine the strategies used in translation of idioms from Turkish into English in the target text. 11 contexts were found to include a total of 12 idioms in the short story. The strategies put forward by Baker (1992) for translation of idioms were used in translation evaluation. As a result of translation evaluation, it was found that the translator used the strategy of 'translation by paraphrase' in five contexts (41.67%); the strategy of 'using an idiom of similar meaning' in three contexts (25%); the strategy of 'using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form' in two contexts (16.67%); and the strategy of 'translation by omission' in one context (8.33%). In translation of one idiom, no strategy was found as the context including the idiom was totally omitted in the target text, which cannot be considered 'translation by omission' since there is no translation of the context. The findings in this study were supported by studies in relevant literature. It was concluded that awareness of the strategies suggested for translation of idioms could allow a literary translator to make conscious decisions on how to translate an idiom into the target language.

STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

□ Introduction

In this study, the short story *Herkesin İçtiği Su* by Ömer Seyfettin was analyzed to find out the idioms used in this story. As a result of the analysis, 11 contexts were found to include a total of 12 idioms in Turkish. However, it should be noted that rather than the basic forms of idioms, they were manipulated for subject-verb agreement and tense agreement. This is in line with Aksoy's (1988) proposition that "the tense of the verb can be played on and subject-verb agreement inflections could be changed in idioms" (p. 144). On the other hand, "the sentence structure and the words making up that idiom [were] kept the same" as added by Aksoy (1988: 144). Afterwards, an English translation of the short story titled *The Water That Everyone Drinks* was analyzed with a comparison of idioms in the source text to translations in the target text. It is important to note that the translator of the text is a native speaker of Turkish and of Turkish nationality. Translation analysis of idioms was conducted based on Baker's (1992) strategies for translation of idioms.

□ Theoretical Framework and Method

Baker (1992) suggests four strategies in translation of idioms. The first one is "using an idiom of similar meaning" in which the target language includes an idiom that has almost the same meaning as the idiom in the source language with lexical items that are equivalent to the ones in the source text, too (Baker, 1992: 72). However, warns Baker

(1992), this may not occur frequently and the frequency of such an incidence is low. The second strategy for translation of idioms is “using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form” in which the meaning of a source language idiom is somehow preserved and achieved in the target language but the individual words (lexical items) forming this idiom are different (Baker, 1992: 74). Therefore, almost the same effect is created in target language reader with an equivalent idiom meaning-wise, but this effect is produced with different words coming together to make up an idiom in the target language. The third strategy is “translation by paraphrase” in which no match can be found in the target language for a source language idiom or using an idiom might not be proper considering the difference between ‘stylistics preferences’ of the source text and the target text, and therefore the literary translator expands on the meaning of the source language idiom through paraphrase in natural flow of the target language (Baker, 1992: 74). The last strategy suggested for translation of idioms is “translation by omission” in which the literary translator omits the source text idiom altogether in the target text since there might not be any match; paraphrasing the idiom might not be convenient; or stylistic preferences might not allow the use of the source text idiom in the target text (Baker, 1992: 77). While also mentioning ‘compensation strategy’, Baker (1992) refrains from coining it as a strategy solely for translation of idioms since that strategy can be used in all levels of translation.

□ Findings and Discussion

As a result of the translation analysis, it was found that the translator used the strategy of ‘translation by paraphrase’ in five contexts (41.67%); the strategy of ‘using an idiom of similar meaning’ in three contexts (25%); the strategy of ‘using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form’ in two contexts (16.67%); and the strategy of ‘translation by omission’ in one context (8.33%). In translation of one idiom, no strategy was found as the context including the idiom was totally omitted in the target text, which cannot be considered ‘translation by omission’ since there is no translation of the context. Therefore, the most commonly used strategy in translation of idioms turned out to be ‘translation by paraphrase’. The findings of this study were compared to other studies in relevant literature and it was discovered that these findings are almost perfectly compatible with the findings of previous studies on strategies for translation of idioms in literary texts.

□ Conclusion

Literary texts might be full of traps in the sense of meaning and loaded with culture specific expressions like idioms as investigated in this study, so what falls to a literary translator is to analyze the source text for such obstacles prior to the act of translation. An awareness of the strategies suggested for translation of idioms could enable a translator to decide how to translate an idiom into the target language. Therefore, literary translators are not helpless in trying to overcome the challenges posed by idioms in the source language, but they possess important devices to mediate between the source language and target language in translation of idioms.

Keywords: Translation of idioms, Literary translation, Strategies for translation of idioms, Ömer Seyfettin, Short story.

Introduction

Idioms and idiomatic expressions are, without doubt, among the most important manifestations of cultural load in a language. Since they have been in popular use in any language for quite some time considering the rise of language among human beings, it is no wonder that they keep their popularity and use to date. Idioms are the cultural expressions that have been handed down through generations.

Idioms have peculiar characteristics. “The individual words making up an idiom cannot be replaced with other words even if they might have closely similar meanings” (Aksoy, 1988: 140). Therefore, idioms, established as a result of social agreement, are not subject to change either in the short run or in the long run. While an idiom or idiomatic expression might not bear much meaning when used in isolation, it is through the interaction of an idiom with the surrounding signs or the particular condition it was uttered in, in short ‘the context’, that an idiom can manifest its meaning. Put simply, the term ‘idiom’ refers to “a group of words whose meaning is different from the meanings of the individual words” (www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com, 2019). In this definition of the term, it can be seen that idioms are composed of more than one word or sign, and it is through this combination that this group of words takes on a new meaning that cannot be compared to the meanings of the individual words making up that idiom. This notion of unpredictability of meaning from individual words holds true to some extent, however this may not be the case all the time. Another definition of idioms is “conventional and fixed expressions that – by no means a norm – mostly bear a meaning different from the core meanings of its parts and have a grammatical structure besides an attractive narration structure” (Aksoy, 1988: 148). According to Aksoy (1988: 143), the idioms in the form of expressions might take on a totally new meaning while it is also the case that they might preserve the meaning brought by the individual words making up that idiomatic expression, and these idioms cannot be translated into another language with the target language equivalences of those individual words or with the same grammatical structure, but rather they could be rendered into another language in their holistic meaning. However, there is another group of idioms that “bear exactly the same meaning as the individual words making up that idiom, but used in a metaphorical sense” (Aksoy, 1988: 143-144), and these idioms render themselves possible to translate into another language at more ease than those that lose the meaning of the individual words. It is also important to note that “while idioms are fixed structures, the tense of the verb can be played on and subject-verb agreement inflections could be changed on condition that the sentence structure and the words making up that idiom are kept the same” (Aksoy, 1988: 144). As an example, the idiomatic expression ‘curiosity killed the cat’ could also be seen and used in another tense like ‘curiosity kills the cat’.

Translation of idioms might pose certain difficulties in literary texts. As idioms are mostly culture-specific and used in line with their connotative meanings rather than denotative meanings, their translation into another culture might be possible; however, this can be achieved with certain transformations in meaning due to their associations with the cultural norms of the language they are used in. “Idiomatic translation reproduces the ‘message’ of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring idioms where these do not exist in the original” (Newmark, 1988: 41). Therefore, no matter how close the source text idiom is translated into target text, some sort of discrepancy is sure to occur between those two idioms. On translation of idioms, Gottlieb (1997: 318) states that while some opt for paraphrase of a source text idiom in the target text, others have a tendency to use “idiom-to-idiom strategy, aiming at formal correspondence...sometimes, the search for a target language idiom may be all in vain”. We can understand from this suggestion that it is not a norm to translate a source text idiom to target text with an idiom in the target language. “A person’s competence in actively using the idioms ... of a foreign language hardly ever matches that of a native speaker” (Baker, 1992: 64). While equivalence in word level is achieved hard in literary translation, that equivalence above word level must be even harder to achieve. Therefore, adds Baker (1992: 64), “the majority of [literary] translators working into a foreign language cannot hope to achieve the same sensitivity [as] native

speakers [on] how an idiom can be manipulated". However, the 'manipulation' in this sense cannot go to extremes as suggested by Baker (1992):

"It goes without saying that words rarely occur on their own; they almost always occur in the company of other words. But words are not strung together at random in any language; there are always restrictions on the way they can be combined to convey meaning." (Baker, 1992: 46).

Baker (1992) seems to support Aksoy's (1988) suggestion that groups of words, idioms in this study, are fixed expressions and the words forming idioms cannot be changed with other words in the natural way the idioms were created. Considering idioms frozen structures, Baker (1992) states that is not possible to "change the order of words, delete a word, add a word, replace a word with another, [and] change grammatical structure" (Baker, 1992: 63) in idioms. With such a rigid nature of idioms, literary translators must be careful in recognizing those expressions and also pay particular attention to their use in contexts. Baker (1992) further adds that "the main problems that idiomatic expressions pose in translation relate to two main areas: the ability to recognize and interpret an idiom correctly; and the difficulties in rendering various aspects of meaning that an idiom conveys into the target language" (p. 65). The first difficulty in this argument concerns literary translators rendering a text from their foreign language to mother tongue since almost every translator can recognize an idiom in mother tongue; however, it might not be so easy to recognize an idiom in a foreign language. It is even possible that the literary translator might not feel the idiomatic value of an expression. As idioms are the literally attractive expressions of conveying a thought or feeling, the extent to which a source text reader enjoys a particular literary text might not be the case for a target text reader unless the translator recognizes or interprets those cultural-specific expressions in the source text. The second difficulty put forward in Baker's argument concerns the tension created by the gap between the cultures of two distinct languages. While it might be possible to render a source text idiom into the target text in its natural flow, some aspects of that idiom could also be lost in the act of translation. Baker (1992) also puts forward the underlying reasons for misinterpretation of idioms in translation stating that "some idioms are 'misleading'; they seem transparent because they offer a reasonable literal interpretation and their idiomatic meanings are not necessarily signaled in the surrounding text" (Baker, 1992: 66). As an example to such incidences, Baker (1992: 66) gives the example of the idiom 'take someone for a ride' which can easily be interpreted as a physical meaning when there are no contextual cues while it means 'deceiving a person' as an idiom that loses its holistic meaning compared to the individual words forming it. According to Baker (1992), another reason for misinterpretation of idioms is that: "an idiom in the source language may have a very close counterpart in the target language which looks similar on the surface but has a totally or partially different meaning" (p. 66). This could be the case particularly between the languages that belong to the same language family or whose speakers share physically or historically similar backgrounds, resulting in cultures that share some common points. However, as no two cultures could be the same and idioms are the products of cultural aspects of all languages, no matter how close their meanings are, two superficially equivalent idioms in two different languages are most likely to possess certain differences. This could be a trick for literary translators, as well.

With such tricky and challenging nature of idioms for translation into another language, Baker (1992) suggests four strategies in translation of idioms. The first one is "using an idiom of similar meaning" in which the target language includes an idiom that has almost the same meaning as the idiom in the source language with lexical items that are equivalent to the ones in the source text, too (Baker, 1992: 72). However, warns Baker (1992), that this may not occur frequently and the frequency of such an incidence is low. The second strategy for translation of idioms is "using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form" in which the meaning of a source language idiom is somehow preserved and achieved in the target language but the individual words (lexical items) forming this idiom are different (Baker, 1992: 74). Therefore, almost the same effect is created in target language reader with an

equivalent idiom meaning-wise, but this effect is produced with different words coming together to make up an idiom in the target language. The third strategy is “translation by paraphrase” in which no match can be found in the target language for a source language idiom or using an idiom might not be proper considering the difference between ‘stylistics preferences’ of the source text and the target text, and therefore the literary translator expands on the meaning of the source language idiom through paraphrase in natural flow of the target language (Baker, 1992: 74). The last strategy suggested for the translation of idioms is “translation by omission” in which the literary translator omits the source text idiom altogether in the target text since there might not be any match; paraphrasing the idiom might not be convenient; or stylistic preferences might not allow the use of the source text idiom in the target text (Baker, 1992: 77). While also mentioning ‘compensation strategy’, Baker (1992) refrains from coining it as a strategy solely for translation of idioms since that strategy can be used in all levels of translation.

In this study, the short story *Herkesin İçtiği Su* (*The Water That Everybody Drinks*) by Ömer Seyfettin was analyzed to find out the idioms in this story. After finding the idioms in the source text, their translation into English was analyzed based on the strategies for translation of idioms by Baker (1992).

Ömer Seyfettin and *Herkesin İçtiği Su* (*The Water That Everybody Drinks*)

Ömer Seyfettin was born in Gönen, Balıkesir in 1884 where he spent his childhood and died in 1920. He earned his life mostly through teaching and writing. He also served for the military in critical wars and incidences. He is mostly thought as a writer dedicated to Turkish nationalism and Pan-turanism. This was reflected in many short stories by that author. His views on nationalism could be gathered from his article titled ‘Yeni Lisan’ (New Language) on the journal of *Genç Kalemler* (*Young Pens*) in 1911. In this article, Ömer Seyfettin suggested that “Ottoman Turkish, our old language, is full of lexical items from Arabic and Persian, which affected Turkish badly, and so Turkish must be refined and purified. We don’t have a national literature freed from Persian or French effects yet” (Seyfettin, 2008: 9-10). It is clear from these arguments that Ömer Seyfettin was in favor of a plain and pure Turkish purified from the negative effects of Arabic, Persian or French. For him, a pure Turkish literature depends on an equally pure Turkish language. “The notion of nationality characterizes the viewpoint of Ömer Seyfettin’s short stories. All his short stories with social and historical focus are concentrated around the major theme of Turkish nationalism, which is conveyed to the reader implicitly or explicitly” (Seyfettin, 2008: 13). Therefore, Ömer Seyfettin’s short stories, written in a plain and pure Turkish that can be understood by all native speakers of Turkish, could be interpreted with this notion of nationalism and Pan-turanism in mind. Among the many short stories that could be read from this perspective is *Herkesin İçtiği Su* (*The Water That Everybody Drinks*).

The short story *Herkesin İçtiği Su* (*The Water That Everybody Drinks*) is about the Chinese emperor Ling Yu, a wise man who gives much importance to advancement and wants his people to put an end to their relationship with the past. He allows the cultivation of hashish and poppy for the joy of his people. One day, a soothsayer comes over to give the bad news that a terrible event is approaching. Though Ling Yu does not believe initially, he is later convinced that rain will come and it will last too long. There will be catastrophe due to this rain and whoever drinks from the water of this rain will go mad. Therefore, all cisterns, earthenware jars and vases are filled with clean water around the palace. That day comes and terrible rain starts, which does not stop for a long time as prophesized by the soothsayer. Whoever drinks the water from this rain really goes mad and most of the public becomes unmanageable. Those living in the palace and staying safe and sound thanks to drinking clean water become the minority in the country, being mocked for their sound behaviors by those who go mad. Then, Ling Yu decides that the wise men including himself should also drink that rain water because intelligence and soundness do not count when everyone else is mad. All agree and they go mad drinking that rain water with the emperor going first. Whoever recovers from madness and turns into intelligent beings is put into insane asylums. While this looks like a short story about Chinese people on the surface,

interpreting it from Ömer Seyfettin's nationalism and Pan-turanism point of view, it seems to imply that breaking with the past leads to catastrophe and collapse of the society as a whole. Ömer Seyfettin was in favor of advancement based on the past. Therefore, his satirical nature of some short stories can be seen in this short story.

This short story was chosen for analysis of idioms in the source text. While the plot is centered around a catastrophe in Chinese Empire, it would be interesting to see how Ömer Seyfettin builds this event on pure Turkish language. The source text is rich in idioms in Turkish. Therefore, the focus of this study is on those idioms in Turkish and the strategies for translation of those idioms into English.

Idioms in the Short Story and Strategies for Translation of Idioms

The source text was analyzed to find out idioms. As a result of this analysis, 11 contexts in the text were found to include a total of 12 idioms in Turkish. The English translation of the short story *The Water That Everybody Drinks* (1999) was compared to the source text to find out which strategies were used in translation of those idioms as suggested by Baker (1992).

Context 1 with an idiom:

"Fakat bir sabah imparatorun afyonu patladı" (Seyfettin, 2005: 51).

"But one morning the emperor woke up from this sleep" (Seyfettin, 1999: 112).

In the source text, the expression "afyonu patladı" is an idiom in Turkish. According to Online Dictionary of Idioms of Turkish Language Association, 'afyonu patlamak' means 'coming round' (TDK, sozluk.gov.tr, 2019) after a long time of rest and peace. In this context, it refers to the new era for the emperor after a long time of joy for himself and his people. This long time of joy is considered a sleep with a nice dream by the author and this idiom warns the source text reader that things are changing from that moment on. This idea was all given with an idiom in a more attractive way in the source text. This idiom was translated as "woke up from this sleep" in the target text. 'Waking up from the sleep' does not bear an idiomatic sense in English, but rather the idiom in the source text was paraphrased by the translator to convey this meaning to the target text reader. This translation strategy could be considered 'translation by paraphrase' in Baker's (1992) strategies for translation of idioms.

Context 2 with an idiom:

"Huzuruna bir soylu girdi. Secdeye kapandı:" (Seyfettin, 2005: 51).

"A servant came and prostrated himself before the emperor" (Seyfettin, 1999: 112).

In Context 2, the expression "secdeye kapandı" is another idiom used in Turkish. Together with its variations like 'secdeye varmak or secde etmek' this idiom metaphorically means 'showing respect' (TDK, sozluk.gov.tr, 2019) with knees on the floor in front of somebody. This is especially the case in front of an emperor and has been in common use in Turkish for a long time. It was translated as "prostrated himself before..." in the target text. 'Prostrate oneself before somebody or something' is an idiom in English used to refer to "lie down in a supplicatory position of obedience, submission, respect, or fealty to someone or something" (idioms.thefreedictionary.com, 2019). Therefore, an idiom in the source text was translated with an idiom into the target language. As the lexical items forming the idiom in the target language are equivalent to the lexical items in the source text rendering roughly the same meaning in both languages, this strategy could be thought 'using an idiom of similar meaning'.

Context 3 with an idiom:

"İmparator düşündü. İşler tıkrındaydı. Öyle mühim bir şeyin olabileceği yoktu" (Seyfettin, 2005: 52).

"The emperor thought. Everything was fine. It was not possible that something important would occur" (Seyfettin, 1999: 113).

In context 3, the expression “işler tıkırındaydı” is an idiom in Turkish used when ‘everything goes as desired or planned’ (TDK, sozluk.gov.tr, 2019). The long period of joy for the public and accordingly for the emperor is conveyed through this idiom in the source text. In the target text, this idiom was translated as “everything was fine”. This expression is not among the idioms used in English, but rather the translator expanded on the meaning of the idiom to convey the meaning in the target language. This strategy could be thought as ‘translation by paraphrase’.

Context 4 with an idiom:

“Badem gözlerini süzerek: - Yanılıyorsun, dedi” (Seyfettin, 2005: 52).

“He looked attentively through half closed eyes” (Seyfettin, 1999: 113).

In the source text, the expression “gözlerini süzerek” is used as an idiom in Turkish. This idiom refers to ‘looking in a meaningful way but in sheep’s eyes’ (TDK, sozluk.gov.tr, 2019). It is a commonly used idiom in Turkish. This idiom was translated as “looked attentively” into the target language. This expression cannot be regarded an idiom in English, but it is a strategy used by the translator to expand on the meaning of the idiom through paraphrasing in the target text. Therefore, this strategy could be regarded as ‘translation by paraphrase’.

Context 5 with an idiom:

“Korkusundan tir tir titriyordu” (Seyfettin, 2005: 53).

“He was shaking all over” (Seyfettin, 1999: 114).

In this context, the expression “tir tir titriyordu” is used as an idiom in Turkish to refer to ‘feeling too cold’ in physical sense and ‘feeling too scared’ (TDK, sozluk.gov.tr, 2019) in the metaphorical sense. From the sign ‘korku’ (fear) in the source text, it is clear that this idiom was used to show the extent of fear. In the target text, it was translated as “shaking all over”. This expression cannot be counted an idiom in English. The translator seems to have expanded on the meaning of the Turkish idiom and conveyed it to the target text reader in a comprehensible way. Therefore, the strategy in translation of this idiom could be thought as ‘translation by paraphrase’.

Context 6 with an idiom:

“Bardaktan boşanırcasına yağdı durdu” (Seyfettin, 2005: 53).

“It was really pouring down” (Seyfettin, 1999: 116).

The expression “bardaktan boşanırcasına yağdı” is an idiom in Turkish to refer to the rain that falls intensely for quite some time. In English, it was translated as “pouring down”. ‘Pour down’ is an idiom in English to refer to ‘rain[ing] or fall[ing] down in a shower (on someone or something)’ (idioms.thefreedictionary.com, 2019). While the meaning of both idioms (in the source text and target text) is quite close to each other and conveys almost the same phenomenon in either language, this equivalence in meaning was achieved with different lexical items. Therefore, the strategy in translation of this idiom could be regarded ‘using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form’.

Context 7 with an idiom:

“Umumiyetle deliren halk, işi öyle azıttılar ki artık soylular, hakimler ne saraydan sokağa çıkabiliyorlar ne de içeriden dışarıya meram anlatabiliyorlardı” (Seyfettin, 2005: 54).

“People became so unmanageable that neither the soothsayers nor the doctors dared to leave the court” (Seyfettin, 1999: 116).

In this context, there are two idioms in the source text. The first idiom is “iş azıttılar”. It means ‘deviating into inappropriate and extreme manners that cannot be approved’ (TDK, sozluk.gov.tr, 2019). This idiom was used to show how the people drinking the rain water lost the control and went mad to

the extreme levels. This idiom was translated as “became unmanageable” into the target language. While ‘becoming unmanageable’ is not an idiom in English, it still conveys the meaning of the idiom in the source language with expansion of meaning on the idiom. This strategy could be thought as ‘translation by paraphrase’.

The other Turkish idiom in this context is “meram anlatabiliyorlardı”. It means ‘being able to talk and tell about one’s desires or problems to others’ in common use in Turkish. This idiom was used to convey to source text readers that the people in the palace were not able to make themselves heard or understood by the general public who went mad. In the target text, there is no reference to this idiom either as an idiom or as paraphrase in natural flow of English. The translator seems to have omitted this idiom in the target text. This strategy could be considered ‘translation by omission’ by Baker’s (1992) terms.

Context 8 with an idiom:

“İmparatoru o zaman bir düşünce aldı” (Seyfettin, 2005: 54).

“The emperor began to give a deep thought to the situation” (Seyfettin, 1999: 116).

The expression “bir düşünce aldı” is an idiom in Turkish to mean ‘trying to find a solution to a worrying situation’ (TDK, sozluk.gov.tr, 2019). This idiom was used to show that the emperor was really worried about the public who went mad due to drinking rain water and he was trying to find a solution to this problem of madness. In the target text, it was translated as “give thought to”. This expression is also an idiom in English meaning ‘considering, reflecting upon, or thinking hard about something’ (idioms.thefreedictionary.com, 2019). The equivalence of meaning was achieved with different lexical items in either language (as in almak [take] just the opposite of give though düşünce and thought are equivalent lexical items). Therefore the strategy for translation of this idiom could be considered ‘using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form’.

Context 9 with an idiom:

“Delilere bakın, yuha, yuha... diye yedek sulardan içip akıllı kalanlara dillerini çıkıyorlardı” (Seyfettin, 2005: 54).

“They stuck out their tongues to the wise ones who drank the clear water, saying ‘Boo! Look at the mad’” (Seyfettin, 1999: 117).

In context 9, the expression “dillerini çıkıyorlardı” is an idiom in Turkish meaning ‘mocking somebody, making fun of them’. This idiom was really appropriately used by the author as generally children or people without reason tend to do this. This is not a common phenomenon or behavior among grown-ups or people with reasoning ability. As the public went mad in this short story, they consider the wise ones as abnormal beings and make fun of them with this inappropriate behavior. This idiom was translated into English with an idiom “stuck out their tongues”. This idiom means ‘protrud[ing] one’s tongue out of one’s mouth; often done in a childishly mocking, contemptuous, or defiant manner’ and ‘do[ing] something that openly mocks, flouts, or shows contempt for someone or something’ (idioms.thefreedictionary.com, 2019). It is important to note that in either language, this behavior refers to ‘mocking somebody, therefore equivalence was achieved in the target text for this idiom not only in meaning but also in the equivalent lexical items. The strategy in translation of this idiom could be considered ‘using an idiom of similar meaning’.

Context 10 with an idiom:

“Milyonlarca delinin maskarası oldular” (Seyfettin, 2005: 54).

“They became the laughing stock of millions of mad men” (Seyfettin, 1999: 117).

The expression “maskarası oldular”, as an idiom in Turkish, means ‘being made fun of, being mocked by others’ (TDK, sozluk.gov.tr, 2019). As mad people in China became the norm and the new social order, those wise men who did not drink the rain water kept their mental health, and as a result they were considered out of the standards in the short story. Therefore, they were mocked by the majority (mad people) who made fun of them in different ways. In the target text, this idiom was translated as “became the laughing stock of”, an idiom in English which refers to ‘a person who is the subject of mockery after a blunder’ (idioms.thefreedictionary.com, 2019). Besides meaning, equivalence was also achieved with roughly the same lexical items as in the source text. Therefore, the strategy in translation of this idiom could be considered ‘using an idiom of similar meaning’.

Context 11 with an idiom:

“Gel zaman, git zaman bu umumi curcunanın adı ‘sosyal düzen’ oldu” (Seyfettin, 2005: 55).

The expression “gel zaman, git zaman” is used as an idiom in Turkish to mean ‘after a long time’. This idiom shows that madness did not immediately become the norm in China, but it took a long time. The author might have chosen to use this idiom because it is commonly used in tales. As this short story looks like a tale on the surface, the author might have aimed to arouse this feeling in source text reader. In target text, this sentence, together with the idiom, was totally omitted and there is no translation for this sentence in the target text. This cannot be categorized under any strategy by Baker (1992), and not even ‘translation by omission’, since it is not the idiom that was omitted, but rather the whole sentence including the idiom was omitted.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, an intensive reading was conducted on the short story *Herkesin İçtiği Su* by Ömer Seyfettin to find out the idioms used in this story. 11 contexts were found to include a total of 12 idioms in Turkish. However, it should be noted that rather than the basic forms of idioms, they were manipulated for subject-verb agreement and tense agreement. This is in line with Aksoy’s (1988) proposition that “the tense of the verb can be played on and subject-verb agreement inflections could be changed in idioms” (p. 144). On the other hand, “the sentence structure and the words making up that idiom [were] kept the same” as added by Aksoy (1988: 144). Afterwards, an English translation of the short story titled *The Water That Everyone Drinks* was analyzed with a comparison of idioms in the source text to translations in the target text. It is important to note that the translator of the text is a native speaker of Turkish and of Turkish nationality. Translation analysis of idioms was conducted based on Baker’s (1992) strategies for translation of idioms. As a result of the translation analysis, it was found that the translator used the strategy of ‘translation by paraphrase’ in five contexts (41.67%); the strategy of ‘using an idiom of similar meaning’ in three contexts (25%); the strategy of ‘using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form’ in two contexts (16.67%); and the strategy of ‘translation by omission’ in one context (8.33%). In translation of one idiom, no strategy was found as the context including the idiom was totally omitted in the target text, which cannot be considered ‘translation by omission’ since there is no translation of the context. Therefore, the most commonly used strategy in translation of idioms turned out to be ‘translation by paraphrase’. However, it is also important to note that ‘translation by paraphrase’ strategy led to dramatic transformation in meaning in the target text when compared to the meaning of the context with idioms in the source text. This is not only about the structural transformation in the context like removing an idiom, but also about transformation in meaning due to the associations of the idiom with the culture in which it was created.

Studying on the strategies for translation of idioms, Adelnia and Dastjerdi (2011) compared the translation of idioms between Persian and English, and found examples for all strategies as suggested by Baker (1992), supporting the findings of this study. It was further concluded that “[a translator should] investigate the classification to which [a] particular idiom belongs and select the suitable strategy for his translation. During this process, the translator should be careful of the naturalness and

readability of his text” (Adelnia and Dastjerdi, 2011: 882). Therefore, there is emphasis on the translator’s preference of suitable strategy for translation of idioms. Another supporting finding to this study comes from Wang and Wang (2013) who attribute the challenge in translating idioms between English and Chinese to cultural differences between those two languages. It was stated that “by the analysis of culture differences on idioms, it is clear that there are different strategies to take and different principles to follow in idiom translation, but there is no certain formula and absolutely correct definition about this” (Wang and Wang, 2013: 1696). It was also concluded that “only by using proper strategies, following suitable principles and proficiency in understanding general situation and features of idioms, could translators maintain the original characteristics of the idioms and express their meaning clearly and correctly” (Wang and Wang, 2013: 1696). The emphasis on idiom translation is one more time put on following the appropriate strategies. Studying on translation of idioms between Arabic and English, Abu-Ssaydeh (2004) found that the most common strategy applied turned out to be paraphrasing, which was followed by literal translations and semantic equivalence, after which the strategies of omission and compensation can be counted. Abu-Ssaydeh (2004) also concluded that literal translation of idioms between two languages was the case when the translator could not decipher the meaning of an idiom. Using Baker’s (1992) four strategies in translation of English idioms into Persian in two novels, Khosravi and Khatib (2012) found that while ‘paraphrase’ was the most commonly used strategy, supporting the findings in this study, ‘using an idiom of similar meaning’ was the least commonly used strategy. Strakšienė (2009: 13), analyzing the translation of idioms from English to Lithuanian in two literary texts came up with the findings that “the most prevailing translation strategy turned out to be paraphrasing both stylistic and explanatory; also there were examples of an idiom with the same meaning and form, idiom with the similar meaning but different form and omission”. The findings of that study are in perfect match with the findings of the present study. Veisbergs (2014: 163-171) states that there are various strategies in overcoming the difficulty of translating idioms like “compensation, omission or metalingual comment” to name a few as different from Baker’s (1992) strategies. Chen (2009) talks about six strategies in translation of idioms and states that “each [strategy] should be reasonably employed in the process of translating, so as to keep the flavor of the original idioms” (p. 164). These findings all point to the fact that literary translators have several strategies for translation of idioms and they can use those strategies during the act of literary translation. It is through this variety of strategies in translation of idioms that literary translators can overcome significant challenges.

As literary texts might be full of meaning traps and loaded with culture specific expressions like idioms as investigated in this study, what falls to a literary translator is to analyze the source text for such obstacles prior to the act of translation. An awareness of the strategies suggested for translation of idioms could enable a translator to decide how to translate an idiom into the target language. A plausible implication for training translation studies students willing to make a career move in literary translation could arise from this conclusion with trainers raising awareness in their students of the difficulties in translation of idioms but also presenting them with the strategies that will help them when faced with that task. Though it is an implicit conception in each literary translator’s mind that translation of idioms would pose difficulties, an explicit instruction of strategies in idiom translation with examples from such studies on strategies in translation of idioms could help them greatly in their act of literary translation. As a result, literary translators are not helpless in trying to overcome the challenges posed by idioms in the source language since they possess important devices to mediate between the source language and target language in translation of idioms.

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