THE TRANSMISSION OF CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS IN THE LANGUAGE OF TRANSLATION WITH THE SAME SEMANTIC VALUE IN A LITERARY TEXT:

**Study case: Translation from Albanian language to English language
from the book “Palace of Dreams” of Ismail Kadare**

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Abstract: *One of the purposes of translation is to produce texts of various kinds, such as religious, literary, scientific and philosophical texts from one language to another, in order to offer readers information with different interests. However, the process of translation involves not only word by word translation, but there many aspects to be taken into consideration. If language were a community of universal concepts, it would be easier to translate from the source language to the target one; moreover, the process of learning another language would be easier than it actually is. Among the most problematic factors involved in literary translation such as meaning, form, style, proverbs, idioms and many other elements, specific cultural concepts are another important point, for which the translator must follow certain procedures and strategies in order to obtain a translation as original as possible with the original text. Thus, this paper presents different thoughts and theories regarding the transmission of idioms, proverbs and phraselological units from the source language to the language of translation, and it tries to analyze the source cultural expressions, which are conveyed in the translated text with the same semantic value from Albanian to English, and all the examples are taken by the book “Palace of Dreams” written by Albanian writer, Ismail Kadare.*

Keywords: *idiomatic phrases; literary translation; cultural concepts; proverbs; semantic equivalents.*

DOI: 10.53373 / REDS.2021.52.3.031

1. Introduction

Languages display their peculiarities in two main aspects, which are word order, grammatical and lexical categories. The latter relates directly to their experience and reality. Within the lexical field the most marked difference is made in the solid units, which are classified as phraseological units, proverbs, or other differences related to connotations that display proper nouns, which take a special role in the language of translation. Understanding the culture of the translation language during the translation process is essential, especially in translations of literary texts, which requires a great deal of effort on the part of the translator to preserve cultural information, and mainly the figurative language of the source text in the target text. As mentioned above, the

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inclusion of cultural elements in the text makes translation even more challenging for translators. These texts contain the translation of linguistic structures as part of culture, where the translator considers not only semantic equivalence, but also examines the higher levels of content, context, semantics, and pragmatics. Therefore, through this paper it is intended to analyze the source cultural expressions, which are conveyed in the translated text with the same semantic value from Albanian to English. As for the cases when the equivalent in the translated text has the same semantic value as in the source text, it is easy for the translator to convey the meaning, as it also exists in the translated language. In cases where cultural semantic losses, reductions of various kinds in idiomatic words or expressions from Albanian to English occur, then 'cultural losses' are present in the literary translation process. In this respect, Culler (2008) believes that the concepts of a language differ radically from one another, as each language organizes its own world differently. As for translation, Culler claims that one of the concerns about translation is the disagreement between languages. The larger the gap between the source and the incoming language, the more difficult it becomes to convey the message from one language to another. The differences between the two languages and the variations in their respective cultures make the translation process a real challenge.

Cultural losses form their hierarchy of losses which are divided into four main categories: 1) explicit losses (loss of cultural meaning of the source text in the deep and surface plane at the same time); 2) implicit loss (loss of hidden cultural information); 3) modified losses (changes in the realities of the source text seen from the point of view of the source reader); and 4) complete loss (deletion of cultural features that are unique to the source language).

As it is pointed out in the introduction part, the discussion on cultural expressions focuses primarily on the analysis of literary figures, such as idiomatic expressions, proverbs, phraseological units, presenting them as representative of the source culture and showing how these movements affect product and process of translation. I think it would be appropriate to briefly state some thoughts about the figurative expressions, since the examples taken from the source text relate to the latter. Thus, in the following part different opinions about the transmission of idioms, proverbs and phraseological units from the source language to the language of translation are presented.

As it is above- mentioned, the translator constantly faces many problems and dilemmas when passing the translation from the source language to the translation, to which he tries to give a solution by making the right choice for certain contexts. What the translator tries to achieve in the translation of a work is the suitability of the linguistic structures of two different systems, thus conveying the intended message of the original author in the language of translation as natural and original as possible, but at the same time preserving the style of authorship and fidelity to the original text.

In the following, we also put forward that literary translation is not simply the conveyance of one text from one language to another, as the process in question relates to a set of criteria e challenges related to the meaning of the original text,

fidelity to the form and aesthetic effect. Therefore, it is often said that in literary translation it is essential to three basic things to be achieved:

1. The complete transcript of the ideas and feelings of the original passage.
2. Maintaining the "style".
3. Maintaining the flow and comprehensibility of the text original.

The aesthetic effect is another significant aspect of figurative literary language in literary translation, which must be preserved during the translation process, so that readers obtain the same sense of beauty that they have received from the source material also source language readers. Thus, I shed light on the main element for which literary work is valued: hence for aesthetic value. This means, as mentioned above, that the essence in literary works lies in their literary artistic nature. Aesthetic character of the literary work should be preserved to the maximum, when translated from the source language into the target one. Thus, it can be said that all contemporary translation studies are focused to the cultural elements of the language and the translator plays a key role in this regard, as a very negotiator of important between the source and the target language. In this context, you can we say that in addition to the role of language transmission, the main challenge in translation nowadays, it is definitely the transmission of culture, the preservation of its elements, as close to the original as possible. Only in this way, we can talk about a good translation and correctly respecting the language and culture of the source text.

2. Idioms

It is generally accepted in the English language literature that an idiom is a combination of words with different meanings from that of each single word, when they stand on their own. The way they are put together is often strange, illogical, and sometimes even grammatically incorrect. These are special qualities of some idioms. Other idioms are completely regular, logical both in terms of grammar and the words that make them up. Since English is very rich in idiomatic expressions, in fact, it is difficult to speak and write in English without using them. Often it can never be explained at all why a particular idiom has developed an unusual order (structuring) or a given choice of words. Idioms have been fixed for a long time, as it is seen, many times in explanatory or bilingual dictionaries. Many English scholars, seeing its grammatical structure as an analytical language with synthetic elements, have also introduced the linguistic concept of expressions of the regularly spoken language related to the order (remember that English is an embedded language) of the parts in the sentence. This phenomenon, in English terminology, has acquired its own special linguistic name, known as the term "collocation". Idioms are expressions constructed of words, which, when used in combination with each other, display different meanings. Robert Trask (1999) states that an idiom is defined as an expression with special construction, meaning that its meaning cannot be decomposed by the constituent words of its body. Way (1991), meanwhile, notes the connection between

idioms and metaphors and states that "*idioms, like metaphors, do not always mean what they say directly*".

Pedersen, on the other hand, states that "*phrases and idioms represent one of the areas of language where grammar and lexicon overlap*". He speaks of limited phrases, namely, semi-idioms and full idioms, where the latter are immutable, unlike figurative idioms which are variable because they accept substitution with other words. Mona Baker, another translation theorist, is of the opinion that idioms are solid parts of language, which allow little or no change in form, and carry meanings that you cannot distinguish from their constituents. Baker goes on to say that the main problems that idiomatic expressions create in translation are related to two main areas that are: the ability to recognize and interpret an idiom correctly and the difficulties associated with translating aspects different meaning that an idiom conveys in the language of translation.

The following are some suggestions made by Baker regarding the translation of idioms from the source language into the translation language:

1. *Using the idiom with the same meaning and form.* This strategy encourages the use of an idiom in the translation language, through which the meaning of the idiom in the source language is communicated, including at the same time the same lexical components. What is worth mentioning here is that, the more the two cultures are similar to each other, the more cases of equivalence there will be. Whereas, in the case when the two cultures are not close to each other and the cultural differences are visible and large, then, the possibility of having equivalence for idiomatic expressions is very low. Venuti (1995) suggests that, in those cases where the source language and the target language are similar to each other, there is a process of "domestication", which means that the idioms in the source language become part of the target language without any difficulty, because both languages share the same idiom and ideology.

2. *Using the idiom with the same meaning, but with a different form.* These are the most likely cases to be used in translation, as it is easier to find in the language of translation an idiom which has the same meaning as that in the source language, but with different lexical components. This means that the lexical components of the source idiom are not stored in the target idiom, but what is given is a semantic equivalence of the idiom.

3. *Idiom paraphrasing is one of the most used strategies, in cases where an idiomatic fit is not found in the translated text.* This means that the lexical components of the source idiom are not stored in the target idiom, but what is given is a semantic equivalence of the idiom.

4. *Translation using "removal" as a strategy.* By this we mean that, the idiom is completely removed in the target language, because it is not found a close connection and this idiom is not paraphrased for stylistic reasons, or other. This strategy mainly occurs at sentence and paragraph level. The reason for this phenomenon is that the moment the idiomatic expression is removed; we always encounter loss of meaning.

In order to compensate for the loss, the translator must submit additional words in some parts of the sentence or paragraph where the loss occurred.

3. Proverbs

According to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary, a proverb is defined as: "*a short and precise statement that has a general use, by which a truth or advice is expressed*". To be a proverb, it must be mastered by ordinary people, and a proverb to be popular must be wise, and to remain popular it must contain "enduring wisdom". For example, "*a cat may look at a king*" means that all human beings are equal and have equal rights with each other, regardless of the status they may hold in society. Thus, if we were to literally translate this proverb into Albanian it would be: "*A cat can look at a king*", but since this proverb is not part of the culture of our country, then we would have to adapt it, by given a meaning similar to the original: "A glance does not kill you" or another possible translation could be "We are the sons of one God". Riddout and Witting (1967) provide explanations for different origins of proverbs, such as from the Bible or various literary works, arguing that proverbial expressions should be distinguished from proverbs. If we take another proverb in English, such as: "*an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth*", it would be easy to translate it into Albanian, because we have the same proverb in Albanian and it is: "*Eye for eye and tooth for tooth*", or this proverb "*kill two birds with one stone*", which we find with the same semantic value in Albanian and its equivalent is: "with one stone kills two birds.

Baker (1992), on the other hand, claims that proverbs are similar to idioms in that they may accept little or no change in form. However, unlike idioms, proverbs have more distinct meanings. They can be closely related to the culture and history of a country and as a result it is difficult to find a direct equivalent in the language of translation, only in those cases where it exists in the language of translation, such as: "*make hay while the sun shines*" is a proverb, the origin of which is from farm work, and every farmer knew the value of this saying. In Albanian we would express this proverb with another proverb like: "*Iron is beaten while it is hot*". Regarding proverbs, Brown et. al (1998) define them as "short sentences, generally known to men, which contain in themselves wisdom, truth, morality, and traditional views, and which are passed down orally from one generation to the next". Bakalla (1984) adds to the above definition, that "proverbs are used in informal language and are often presented to us as metaphors and in the form of rhyme". According to him, proverbs can be seen as explanations or illustrations of the context and not as separate representations of the context. In other words, he claims that proverbs are not limited to one context in the source language, but they are widely used in different contexts, because of the morality they convey, or because of the "popular ingenuity" as described by anthropologists.

4. Phraseological units

Phraseology, whether in Albanian or English, is a great and very valuable treasure not only linguistically, but also in the field of richness of national values in material cultures. It includes all those short, powerful and beautiful expressions, with figurative meaning that have been formed in time in the mouth of the people, that have been conveyed through the centuries, being polished carefully, skillfully and with taste. In today's Albanian Dictionary, we find this definition for Phraseological Units: *stable phrases, sayings or expressions of a language, which are lexically inseparable, have a complete, unified, self-contained and always figurative meaning, are reproduced in discourse as ready-made units and perform the function of a word or a sentence only "discourse as ready units and perform the function of a single word or a single sentence"*.

Moreover, in English there is evidence to show that in phraseological units the process of transformation also takes place passing to a higher degree of generalization. Hundreds and thousands of phraseological units in this language have become idioms, which are of a higher degree of transformation and solidification, and which have disconnected the ties with the free phrases and the responsible phrases. Spoken language is generally richer in phraseology and an inherent part of them is being strongly absorbed by written language and is being standardized very quickly. Many of constituent units are constructed with words that indicate objects, animals, birds, and plants, parts of the human body, which are directly related to human life and the environment where the Albanian appears materially, mentally, spiritually or aesthetically. Therefore, in order to use the phraseological units correctly, it is necessary to know well all their features and values: content, form, lexical-grammatical category, stylistic-emotional values, source, skills for syntagmatic connection, etc. Since the Albanian language consists of phraseological units with a popular source, they appear the national feature of the language, the history of its development, as well as ethno-culture, mentality and popular psychology. Thus, phraseology contains powerful stylistic tools, which make the discourse beautiful, figurative, and compelling. These tools have not only been skillfully and spiritually created, but have also been perfected for a long time to perfection. These values of phraseology appear in colloquial discourse, in everyday speech, even in cases when there is no artistic goal, but they are used extensively in artistic literature, in journalistic writings, especially in literary journalism, in satirical writings, etc.

5. Transmission of idiomatic expressions with the same semantic value from Albanian to English

This part will present some cases when the transmission of semantic values of idiomatic expressions in the language of translation comes the same as in the source language. In cases where the semantic value of the cultural language may be equal

from one language to another, it greatly helps the translator in the translation process, without creating problems and difficulties in finding them.

All the examples are taken by the roman "Palace of dreams" of Ismail Kadare in the Albanian language and are compared to the English version of this book.

Albanian	English
1. Çdo njeri, që ka dy para mend, e kupton menjëherë se pa ne, pa Seleksionimin, Interpretimi mbetet si mulliri pa ujë. (P. Ë., f.53)	Anyone with the least gumption can see that without us here in Selection, Interpretation would be like a mill without any wheat. (P. D., p.24)

In the above expression "*interpretation remains like a mill without water*" we note that it is transmitted in English as "*interpretation would be like a mill without any wheat*" (interpretation would be like a mill without wheat), give us the same semantic value as in the source text. In this case, the translator found it easy to convey what the source author wants to give in the context in which the expression is used, as a similar expression is found in English. As can be seen, the semantic value of the expression in the translation language is equal to the source language, and the translation reader manages to fully understand the situation, but one difference in the idiom expression is the change of the word "water" to "wheat". In the Albanian language, we have the expression with the word water, so we say, "like a mill without water", while in English it is expressed with the word wheat as "mill without wheat". Notwithstanding this lexical change, the expression conveys the same semantic value as in the original.

2. Spastrimi i parë i vërtetë fillon këtu. Ashtu siç ndahet gruri nga egjra, ashtu ndahen këtu ëndrrat me vlerë nga ato pa vlerë. (P. Ë., f.54)	The real selection begins here. Just as the farmer separates the wheat from the chaff, so we separate the dreams that contain something of interest from those that do not. (P. D., p. 25)
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The above example is another case which proves best that we again have equal semantic value between idiomatic expressions from the source language to the language of translation. The expression "*as wheat is separated from the chaff*" is expressed in English with the idiomatic expression "*separate the wheat from the chaff*", which expresses the same meaning as in the original. In our context, the translation reader, manages to clearly understand the situation described, as what the author means by this expression is that selection is one of the most important branches of the palace, where the purification of dreams begins here. At this stage the valuable dreams are separated from the worthless ones, and this idea is expressed by the source author by giving as a comparison the idiomatic expression, which the translator has translated giving the same expression to better understand the context.

3. Pse të mos qeshnin mendoj, për ato mendjet e tyre firifiu bota ishte shesh me lule. (P. Ë., f.148)	For frivolous fellows like you the world is a bed of roses. (P. D., P.112)
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In the example above, the idiomatic phrase "*the world was a bed of roses*" is rendered in English as "*the world is a bed of roses*". This is another case, which best proves that the semantic value is the same as in the source and translation language. The expression comes with the same meaning and value as in the original. In Albanian the above-mentioned expression has a wide use and is used to show that in some circumstances life for some can be very easy, where everything they want to achieve without worries, or is often used in the sense that many people they take things very lightly and do not worry about anything that might happen to them and in this sense this expression finds use as well.

4.Të mos ju vijë çudi aspak, – tha korrieri i vjetër. Nuk thonë kot, qeveria e zë lepurin me qerre. (P. Ë., f. 140)	Don't sound so surprised, said the old man. The government can catch a hare with an ox-cart! (P. D., p.104)
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In the above example, we notice that with the expression "*the government catches the rabbit with the cart*", the source author with this expression, wants to show that the government, no matter how slow it may seem in its actions, the one with the power it has achieves the goal set after a while and in our context, this expression finds use in connection with the arrival of dreams in the palace from distant lands. In English, this expression translates as "*the government can catch a hare with an ox-cart*". In this case, we do not have an idiomatic expression in the translation language, which can replace the expression in Albanian, but the translator has done the translation literally which conveys the idea and meaning of the source expression. Thus, again, we can say that even in this example, the semantic value between the expressions in both languages is equal and the translator reader clearly understands what the source author is talking about in this case.

5. Mirëpo edhe drejtorit ia kishte ënda, me sa duket, të luante me të si macja me miun. (P. Ë., f.222)	But apparently the Director enjoyed playing cat and mouse with him. (P. D., P.181)
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The phraseological expression, "*playing with him like a cat with a mouse*" is followed in English by phraseological expressions such as "*playing cat and mouse with him*", giving the same semantic value to the context. In the Albanian language, this phraseology is often used in everyday language, and means that when one person is more powerful than the other, he starts to make fun of him and make fun of him like a cat plays with a mouse. Since the same expression exists in English, the translator has found it easy to translate it into English, finding the right equivalent for the context as it is in the source language.

Natyrisht, natyrisht, por sidoqoftë ishin rreziqe ëndrrash, një botë ëndrrash, më kupton, si ka thënë i vjetri kur u gjet pisk: bëje, o Zot, ëndërr! (P. Ë., f.86)	Yes, of course there were risks, but they were of dreams -the very world the Ancients used to wish to be transported to when they were in trouble and cried, "Oh God, let it be only a dream!" (P. D., p54)
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In the example above, we note that the expression "*Oh God, let it be only a dream!*" in the source context, is used in the sense that the first dream remains a dream and does not occur in reality, in order to create further problems or concerns, but to it remains merely a dream. Thus, the ancients used the expression in these situations and to find salvation they turned to the god for the realization of this desire. On the other hand, in English, we find this expression translated with a sentence like "*Oh God, let it be only a dream*", which gives the same meaning and its transmission is clear to the reader and we say that the value meaning comes complete as in the source language.

Conclusion

To conclude, the process of translation, especially literary translation, involves not only the translation of words or sentences, but also many other aspects must be taken into consideration. Thus, this paper presents different theories regarding the transmission of idioms, proverbs and phraselogical units from the source language to the language of translation, and the given examples show that they are conveyed in the translated text with the same semantic value from Albanian to English in the book "*Palace of Dreams*" written by Ismail Kadare.

Moreover, it can be said that all contemporary translation studies are focused to the cultural elements of the language and the translator plays a key role in this regard, as a very negotiator of important between the source and the target language. In this context, the main challenge in literary translation nowadays, it is definitely the transmission of culture, the preservation of its elements, as close to the original as possible. Only in this way, we can talk about a good translation and correctly respecting the language and culture of the source text.

Therefore, this paper intended to analyze the source cultural expressions, which are conveyed in the translated text with the same semantic value from Albanian to English version of the book, and it shows that there are cases when the equivalent in the translated text has the same semantic value as in the source text. Unlike cases when, the translator has difficulty in finding the equivalent, the given examples show that it is easy for the translator to convey the meaning, as it also exists in the translated language.

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