An Investigation into Farsi Translation of Children's Poetry of Shel Silverstein According to Nida's Theory

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Abstract

This study was carried out to investigate the use of Nida's Formal and Dynamic equivalence on Persian translation of children's poetry. The present study aimed to investigate which of these approaches are the main focuses of translators in the translation of children's poetry. For evaluating the Formal and Dynamic equivalence in Children's poetry, 30 children's poems of Shel Silverstein with two Persian translations rendered by Mehdi Afshar and the second one by Razi Hirmandi and Mehrnoush Parsanejad, were collected. After comparing original poems with two Persian translations and analysis by Spss 21th edition. To test the hypotheses, use was made of parametric (t-tests) or non-parametric tests (Wilcoxon, Mann-Whitney). Parametric tests are more precise, but they require normal distribution for variables the results indicated that two translators were different in using Formal and Dynamic equivalence during the translation. Most of Afshar's translations were according to Formal equivalence and most of Hirmandi's and parsanejad's translation were according to Dynamic equivalence.

Keywords: translation, children's poetry, Nida's theory, equivalence, formal equivalence, dynamic equivalence

INTRODUCTION

Translation is communication between two different languages that transfer meaning from source language to target language. Hatim and Mason (1990) stated as the translation is communication between two languages so translators have to take into account thematic structures of the original text to keep the intentions and implications of text procedures. Toury (1978) considered that translation comprise of two languages and two cultural traditions and also two levels: first, reproducing natural equivalent of SL message and second, producing it in term of style. According to Larson (1984, p. 12), "language involves words, phrases, clauses, sentences and paragraphs that all of them change during the translation". According to Louis Bogan (1979) the words "poem" and "poetry" derive from the Greek poiema that means "to make" and poieo that means "to

create ". Also the poem is a made thing: a creation; an artifact. There are so many views about translation of poetry that it is not impossible because there are so many translated poetries to different languages but it doesn't mean that all aspects of a poem are preserved, because something is lost.

Translation of poetry is a type of literary translation that began many years ago. Poetry's features can be sound-based, syntactic or structural or pragmatic in nature (Jones, 2011). Poetry translation usually aims to publicize a poet or poets. In translation of poetry we should notice multiplicity of meaning, integration of content and form in poetic course, rhythm, rhyme and musicality of poetic language and also the aesthetic of source poetry should be maintained in the target language. According to Samuel and Frank (2002), translation of poetry is more delicate matter and translator should pay attention to both source and target language and also have knowledge of the field of poetry. Poetry translators should translate the poem in a way that is enjoyable for the target readers. Translators of poem should have the ability to create rhyme or rhythm in target language as in the source language.

Sometimes translator renders the poem, word-for-word and indicates the meaning and the structure of the translated poem like original poem but we are not sure that in target language it has rhyme or rhythm. Other translators use sense-for-sense method, the meaning convert completely and translator has latitude to creates the structure that the words have rhyme. In translation of poetry finding the equivalent with the suitable rhyme is very important. Equivalent in language involves morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, idioms and proverbs. So equivalence is the most difficult stage in translation. Although it is not necessary that the translator finds all equivalents in two languages when two different languages carry different function it's so difficult for translators to find an appropriate equivalent. There were some theorist such as Vinay and Darbelnet, Jakobson, Nida and Taber, Catford, House and Baker studied equivalence in translation process.

In 1943, Nida began his career as a linguist with the American Bible Society and developed the theory of translation when he was translating and organizing the translation of the Bible. Nida has been a pioneer in the fields of translation theory and linguistics. According to Nida's (1964) theory, there are two types of equivalence: formal or word-for-word and dynamic or sense-for sense. In formal equivalence translator focuses attention on message itself, in both form and content or we can say in conveys sentence to sentence, poetry to poetry, concept to concept. The aim of Nida in dynamic equivalence is naturalness. His most notable contribution to translation theory is Dynamic equivalence, also known as Functional Equivalence. In this type of equivalence, translators notice the meaning and structure of target language. So the poem that translated according to dynamic equivalence is according to target structure.

During the poetry translation, there are some problems such as linguistic problems that include collocation and obscured syntactic structure. Collocation refers to words, word groups that consist of words belonging to the same semantic field or be semantic opposite and may be the same for several languages. Obscured refers to expressive

function of the text. Other problems like literary and aesthetic are related with structure, metaphorical expression like ideas, ecology, behavior and product (Hariyanto, 2010).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In spite of all these problems, the researcher tries to work on translation of children poetry and analyze them according to Nida's model of Formal and Dynamic equivalence, and The following Questions are dealt with in this study:

1) Are there any differences between English children's poems of Shel Silverstein and their Farsi translation according to Nida's theory?
2) Which translation is closer to the original poem?
3) How could the translators be ranked based on the degree to which they have observed the aesthetic face of poetry?

Accordingly, the following hypotheses were also introduced;

H1: There are not any differences between English children's poems and their Farsi translation.
H2: All translations are based on Formal equivalence of Nida's classification.
H3: All translators observe the aesthetic face to the same degree.

METHOD

Data Collection Procedure

In this study first 30 children poetry of Shel Silverstein an American poet, singer, songwriter, cartoonist, screenwriter, and author of children's books was selected randomly. Many translators translated his poem. The researcher chose one English book that included children's poems of Shel Silverstein with two types of Farsi translation. One Persian translator is Mehdi Afshar and the other is Razi Hirmandi that was translated by his wife "Mehrnoush Parsanejad". Each poem came with two farsi translation and after comparing them the researcher determined which type of Nida's model was used in each farsi translation. At the end the researcher put them in the table and analyzed them by using Spss 21th edition.

Data

The data that used in this study were 30 children's poetry of Shel Silverstein. Shel Silverstein was an American poet, singer, songwriter, musician, composer, cartoonist, screenwriter and author of children's poems. The researcher selected his poetry because he had delighted tens of millions of readers around the world and one of the most popular and best-loved children's authors of all time. He had a very unique and interesting writing style and wrote more for children. His poems were not realistic and he wrote about absurd things that would never happen. The researcher selected two books. One of them by the name of "Mistake" included both English poems that composed by Shel Silverstein and Farsi translations that rendered by Mehdi Afshar. The

other one "Everything on It" that only included Farsi translations by Razi Hirmandi and his wife Mehrnoush Parsanejad.

Procedure of the Study

First an English poem with two Farsi translations was written. In front of each poem, two Farsi translations were given. For formal equivalence the researcher put 1 and for dynamic equivalence put 2 in front of each verse. Then, the numbers of formal and dynamic equivalence of each translator for analyzing were collected. In following two poems with two Farsi translations are given. All 30 poems are in appendices.

RESULTS

The sample consisted of 30 items translated by two translators. Formal and dynamic equivalence of translations were assessed and statistics depicted in table 1.

Table 1. Statistics for formal and dynamic equivalence in two translations

Variable	Translation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Minimum	Maximum
Formal equivalence	Afshar	30	4.83	1.967	0.220	-0.160	1	9
	Hirmandi and Parsanejad	30	2.03	1.903	0.883	-0.157	0	6
	Total	60	3.43	2.382	0.311	-0.699	0	9
Dynamic equivalence	Afshar	30	1.03	1.426	1.849	4.083	0	6
	Hirmandi and Parsanejad	30	3.83	2.167	0.426	-0.497	0	8
	Total	60	2.43	2.302	0.843	-0.107	0	8

Results show that formal equivalence mean was 4.83 in Afshar's translation and 2.03 in Hirmandi's and Parsanejad's translation. The dynamic equivalence mean was 1.03 in Afshar's translation and 3.83 in Hirmandi's and Parsanejad's translation.

The Skewness and Kurtosis of dynamic equivalence in Afshar's translation were out of the accepted range (between -1 and 1). Therefore there might be deviation from normal distribution for dynamic equivalence in Afshar's translation. The normality is checked by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test in the following section.

To test the hypotheses, use was made of parametric (t-tests) or non-parametric tests (Wilcoxon, Mann-Whitney). Parametric tests are more precise, but they require normal distribution for variables. Thus, before getting to the hypotheses of the study, normality was checked by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test (Table 2).

Table 2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of normality for WTC and EI components

Translation	Formal		Dynamic	
	Z	Sig.	Z	Sig.
Afshar	1.264	0.082	1.455	0.029
Hirmandi and Parsanejad	1.131	0.155	1.003	0.267

The above table shows results for Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. Since p –values were greater than 0.05 (Sig>0.05) for formal variable in both translations, the statistics were not significant which means that the distributions were normal. In following sections, each research questions will be analyzed separately.

Analysis of research questions 1

Q1: Are there any differences between English children's poems of Shel Silverstein and their Farsi translation according to Nida's theory?

Hypothesis 1: There are not any differences between English children's poems and their

Farsi translation

Table 3. The Wilcoxon test for comparing formal and dynamic equivalences in Afshar's translation

Variable	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Sig.
Dynamic > Formal	4	3.50	14.00		
Dynamic < Formal	26	17.35	451.00	-4.509	0.000
Dynamic = Formal	0				
Total	30				

Results of the Wilcoxon test show that the statistics Z=-4.509 was significant (Sig<0.05) which means that the mean ranks of two variables were significantly different in Afshar's translation. Comparing mean ranks shows that Formal equivalence was used more frequently than Dynamic by Afshar's translation.

Table 4. The paired t-test for comparing formal and dynamic equivalence in Hirmandi's and Parsanejad's translations

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Mean Difference	T	df	Sig.
Dynamic	30	3.83	2.167	0.396	1.800	2.721	29	0.011
Formal	30	2.03	1.903	0.347				

Results of table 4 show that formal and dynamic equivalences differed significantly in the Hirmandi's translation (Sig<0.05). Comparing means shows that dynamic equivalence was used more than Formal in Hirmandi's and Parsanejad's translations.

Analysis of research questions 2

Q2:Which translation is closer to the original poem?

Hypothesis 2: All translations are based on Formal equivalence of Nida's classification.

Table 5. The independent t-test for comparing formal equivalence between two translations

Translation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Mean Difference	T	df	Sig.
Afshar	30	4.83	1.967	0.359	2.800	5.605	58	0.001
Hirmandi and Parsanejad	30	2.03	1.903	0.347				

Results of table 5 show that there was a significant difference between two translations (Sig<0.05). This indicates that Afshar's translation and Hirmandi's and Parsanejad's translations were significantly different in using formal equivalence. Comparing means reveals that formal equivalence was used more by Afshar than Hirmandi and Parsanejad.

Analysis of research questions 3

Q3: How could the translators be ranked based on the degree to which they have observed the aesthetic face of poetry?

Hypothesis 3: All translators observe the aesthetic face to the same degree.

Table 6. The Mann-Whitney test for comparing dynamic equivalence between two translations

Translation	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Sig.
Afshar	30	19.27	578.00		
Hirmandi and Parsanejad	30	41.73	1252.00	-5.064	0.000
Total	60				

Results of the Mann-Whitney test in table 6 indicate that the statistics Z=-5.064 was significant (Sig<0.05) which means that the dynamic equivalence was significantly used differently between two translations. Comparing mean ranks shows that it was used more frequently by Hirmandi's and Parsanejad's translation than Afshar's.

DISCUSSION

In this section, each research question will be restated and all the relevant discussions pertaining to that research question will be provided under it. For ease of discussion, each research question will be discussed separately:

For the first research question of the study was, "Are there any differences between English children's poems of Shel Silverstein and their Farsi translation according to Nida's theory?" the researcher used Wilcoxon test and compared formal and dynamic equivalence in Afshar's translation. According to Table 3, the means ranks of two variables were significantly different in Afshar's translation. Formal equivalence was used more in his translation. For comparing formal and dynamic equivalence in Hirmandi's translation, the researcher used paired t-test. According to Table 4, formal and dynamic equivalence differed significantly in Hirmandi's and Parsanejad's translation. Dynamic equivalence was used more in translation.

Regarding the second research question of the study, "Which translation is closer to the original poem?" For answering this question the researcher should determine which translator followed formal equivalence more in his translation. The researcher used independent t-test and compared formal equivalence between two translators. According to Table 5, there was a significant difference between two translation. Translators were significantly different in using formal equivalence. Formal equivalence was used more in Afshar's translations than Hirmandi's and Parsanejad's translation.

According to third question of the study, "How could the translators be ranked based on the degree to which they have observed the aesthetic face of poetry?" The researcher used Mann-Whitney test and compared between two translators. By following dynamic equivalence the translator is freer to make rhyme words. According to Table 6, using dynamic equivalence was significantly different between the translators. Hirmandi and Parsanejad used more dynamic equivalence than Afshar in their translation.

Afshar's translation is more in line with the studies done by Moghtadi and Tajalli (2014) in which they considered formal and dynamic equivalence in translating some English imperatives in English movie script and the result showed that translators follow formalism more than dymanism. Hirmandi's and Parsanejad's translation is similar to Davoudi (2012) that investigated ambiguity in Quran and translators used dynamic equivalence more than formal equivalence.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of Formal and Dynamic equivalence in two Farsi translation of children poetry of Shel Silverstein done by Afshar, Hirmandi and Parsanejad showed that they translated differently. According to the first hypothesis there were not any difference between English children poems and their Farsi translations. But according to Tables 3, researcher could state that the mean ranks of two variables (Formal and Dynamic) were significantly different in Afshar's translation. Also the researcher could state that the mean ranks of two variables (formal and dynamic) were significantly different in Hirmandi's and Parsanejad's translation. According to the second hypothesis all translations were similar to the original poem. By following formal equivalence of Nida's (1964) model, the structure of translated text was similar to original text. , the researcher could state that Afshar's translation and Hirmandi's and Parsanejad's translation were significantly different in using Formal equivalence and means revealed

that Formal equivalence was used more by Afshar than Hirmandi and Parsanejad so the translation of Afshar was closer to original poem. According to the third hypothesis all translators observed the aesthetic face to the same degree. According to Dynamic equivalence of Nida, the translators who follow this type of equivalence are freer to use the words with similar rhyme and rhythm. By using Mann-Whitney test, the result showed that dynamic equivalence was used more by Hirmandi and Parsanejad than Afshar.

This study delimited to only one English book with two Farsi translations. There are 4 or 5 translators that translated Children's poems of Shel Silverstein to Farsi, but researcher could only find two translators that translated at least 50 similar poetries. If there were 3 or more types of Farsi translations the researcher achieved better results.

Further researches can describe and explore examples of Formal and Dynamic equivalence in translation of literature text. The researchers can also compare Persian poetry or Novels with English translation according to Nida's model. Interested researcher can investigate different genres such as scientific, political or economic writings. Also they can find translations which belong to many years ago and compare them with recent one. Researchers can also compare the works of professional translators with those of armature translators.

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