Stylistic and Pragmatic Appropriateness in Translation of English Metaphorical Phraseological Units into Turkish

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate and identify some existing difficulties in the process of translating metaphorical phraseological units, and to suggest some significant theoretical strategies to deal with complications. Translation is a scientific study in which the translator tries to replace an oral or written statement in the source language to the target language. Because of social, cultural, linguistic and stylistic differences which are very important factors affecting the translation, there might be loss of meaning. Therefore, the translator may encounter various problems through translation. The Phraseological Units (PUs) featuring local characteristics, for example, national colours, have naturally no exact equivalence in the target language. Therefore, the use of PU equivalents in target language is more common in their translation, and explanatory translation is used with descriptive and combined translating. Findings show that there are a number of factors which have to be considered in translating metaphorical phraseological units in the correct way. Depending on the findings, some presented suggestions are proposed to solve the problems arising in translating PUs.

Keywords: Translation, Phraseological Units, Translation of Metaphor, Translation Difficulties and Strategies

İngilizce Metaforik Deyimlerin Türkçeye Çevirisinde Biçem ve Edimsel Uygunluğu

Özet

Bu çalışma, deyimlerin çevirisi sürecinde ortaya çıkan sorunları araştırmaya ve tanımlamaya ve bu tür sorunlarla başa çıkacak bazı önemli kuramsal stratejiler önermeyi hedeflemektedir. Çeviri, çevirmenin kaynak dildeki herhangi bir sözlü veya yazılı ifadeyi hedef dile aktarmaya çalıştığı bilimsel bir çalışmadır. Çevirmen çeviri sürecinde farklı problemlerle karşılaşabilir. Sosyal, kültürel, dilbilimsel ve biçimsel farklılıklardan dolayı çeviride anlam kaybı oluşabilir. Bunlar çeviriyi etkileyen çok önemli etmenlerdir. Yerel özellikleri, özellikle ulusal renkleri taşıyan deyimlerin doğal olarak çevrilen dilde tam karşılıkları yoktur. Bu yüzden hedef dildeki eşdeğerlerinin kullanımı daha yaygındır ve açıklayıcı çeviri betimsel ve kombine çeviri ile birlikte kullanılır. Araştırmalar deyimleri doğru olarak çevirmek için dikkate alınması gereken birkaç etmenin olduğunu göstermektedir. Son olarak deyimlerin çevirisinde ortaya çıkan problemleri çözmek için bazı dikkat çekici öneriler sunulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çeviri, Deyimler, Metafor Çevirisi, Çeviri Zorlukları ve Stratejileri

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Introduction

Throughout human history, every nation, every society grows rich, changes and develops by establishing relationships with others, and receives what it does not possess from others, also transmits what it possesses to others and uses language as a transmission tool.

What is translation?

TDK Büyük Türkçe Sözlük defines translation as; 1. Transferring from one language to another language, interpretation. 2. A writing or a book translated from one language into another language. This shows that translation is both an oral and written transferring process between languages. Nonetheless, we do not come across with culture reality which that is an undeniable and inescapable fact in translation in the preceding definitions.

However, intercultural transfer is one of the most important factors to be dealt with in translation efficiency.

According to The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, translation is the act or process of translating something into a different language. When this definition generalised, translation is a change of form which includes spoken or written words, phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and so on.

Roger (1991: 6) refers to the semantic and stylistic equivalence and says that the translation is the replacement of a representation of a text in one language by a representation of an equivalent in a second one.

As for Larson (1998: 3), she states that translation consists of transferring the meaning of the source language into the receptor language. This is done by going from the form of the first language to the form of a second language by way of semantic structure. It is meaning which is being transferred must be kept constant. Only, its form changes. Translation, then, consists of considering lexicon, grammatical structure, communication situation, and cultural context of the source language text, determining the intended meaning, and then reconstructing the same meaning by using the lexicon and grammatical structure which are appropriate in the receptor language and its cultural context.

Kramsch (1998: 3) defines language as a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value. Speakers identify themselves and others

through their use of language; they view their language as a symbol of their social identity. Therefore, language symbolizes cultural reality.

Language is way of an outlook on life and understanding the World. In other words, a language is a part of culture which represents for the sum of distinguishing features belonging to the group of people or community from others. These two cultures confront in translation (Ateşman, 2001: 29-35). While translating from the source language to the target language, a function introducing the culture of the source language in the target language brings about. Translation can contribute to our mother tongue and our horizons in many ways.

The elements which form the target culture direct the translation, and the translator is required to detect some priorities in his/her approach to the original text. Translation is deemed to be 'adequate' as far as it meets the expectations of the mass to which it addresses in the target language (Aksoy, 2000: 55).

Translation deserves to be studied as an activity which plays a role in the development of national culture, and contributes to the shaping of a culture in language, literature, art, and science. The translator who has remained loyal to the original text for long or is expected to remain so in this activity has gradually stepped up to a distinctive position today. At the same time, concepts as 'being loyal to the original text and creating equivalence' are used in the sense of ensuring the function that is similar in the target text and culture, and in the source text and culture ever after. Therefore, having gone far from the traditional 'loyalty' principle, translation has been heading for both the concept of 'functional equivalence', and the principle of adapting the original text in accordance with its function in the target culture by the translator (Aksoy, 2000: 55-56).

On account of the fact that English and Turkish belong to different language families (Indo-European languages, European group: English, Ural-Altaic languages, Altay group: Turkish), there are lexical, semantical, syntactical, phonological, and structural differences between them. While Turkish is an agglutinative language, English is an isolating language. When the semantic equivalence and differences between source and target languages are not taken into consideration, we may come across some loss of meaning in translation.

Starting from this point of view, this article focuses on determining general (universal) and characteristical (national) similarities and differences in

English and Turkish languages based on the analysis of translation of metaphorical phraseological units selected from various literary works.

Phraseological Units and Metaphor

In this section, we are going to study the definition of phraseological unit (henceforth PU), and its relationship with metaphor by discussing its place and role in translation. When it comes to phraseology, there is a need to state that the terminology, in this field, has always created problems. Although there is no agreed common vocabulary, it is possible to use a single term to refer to a different phenomenon. It would be the combination of 'idiomatic expressions', 'proverbs', and 'clichés' and the like.

Despite the uncertainty, the concept contains delimitation and classification and it has been widely accepted among researchers as Pawley and Syder (1983), Wray (2002), Moon (2003) that fossilized expressions are linguistic properties which are too many in language. And they indicate the difference between lexicalization and efficiency which is a matter of degree. A general but appropriate definition of PU which includes several types of multi-word units has been suggested by Gläser (2001: 125) as follows:

a lexicalised, reproducible bilexemic or polylexemic word group in common use, which has relative syntactic and semantic stability, may be idiomatised, may carry connotations, and may have an emphatic or intensifying function in a text.

Translation of PU is definitely another challenge in parallel with the difficulty of its definition. From this point of view, the problem in translation of PU should be limited with nonequivalence between the source and target languages. Translator may have difficulty in determining PU equivalent and the possible reason of this may be either the translator does not have full command of target language or again he/she does not have enough knowledge about PU.

Actually, there are many languages different in some respects from one another all over the world. Furthermore, it is clear that each society has its own ideology and have different concept of world from the others. And of course ideology and world view have a certain influence on the language. PUs contain cultural characteristics, religious beliefs, superstitions, and of course ideology of the society.

Following a steady growth of scholarly interest and activity over the last thirty years, phraseology has become a major field of pure and applied research. As it happens to many other issues in contemporary linguistic theory, the analysis of phraseology can prove more fruitful when linked to other important phenomena. Thus, when carrying out a study of PUs, it is tempting to adopt a grand, overarching strategy so as to attain sweeping generalizations (Cowie, 2001: 1-2).

PUs are lexically, semantically and structurally fixed phrases and their meaning is not made out from their component parts. Their figurativeness is a must.

PU represents unformed word combination which is connected by semantic unity. Such unity does not appear in the speech, but is reproduced in ready form and functions as a unified part of sentence. Some varieties of the structure of a PU do not influence its main features. PUs change diachronically and instantaneously within a single language, but they also change when they are transferred between languages. Knowing about these changes and about the different forms that PU can take is especially important when trying to translate between languages.

Another close association of considerable interest is between phraseological unit and metaphor, admitted and developed by different authors like Hanks (2004) in English. But it has undoubtedly been Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) work *Metaphors We Live By* which best explains and develops the intended relationship. A substantial amount of research in Cognitive Linguistics over the nearly past thirty years has set to demonstrate that 'metaphor is not merely a figure of speech, but is a specific mental mapping that influences a good deal of how people think, reason and imagine in everyday life' (Gibbs, 1999: 145).

According to Lakoff, in classical theories of language, metaphor was seen as a matter of language, not a thought. Metaphorical expressions were assumed to be mutually exclusive with the realm of ordinary everyday language: everyday language had no metaphor, and metaphor used mechanisms outside the realm of everyday conventional language. The classical theory was taken so much for granted over the centuries that many people did not realize that it was just a theory. The theory was not merely taken to be true, but came to be taken as definitional. The word metaphor was defined as a novel or poetic linguistic expression where one or more words for a concept are used outside of its normal conventional meaning to express a similar concept. Many of the metaphorical expressions discussed in the literature on conventional metaphor are idioms. On classical views, idioms have arbitrary meanings. But within cognitive linguistics, the possibility exists that they are not arbitrary, but rather motivated. That is, they do not arise automatically by productive rules, but they fit one or more patterns present in the conceptual system (Lakoff, 1992: 211).

The study of idiomaticity, for example, failed to acknowledge the metaphorical roots of many idioms because scholars tended to examine only frequently used ones of these conventional phrases, such as *kick the bucket*. As researchers began to examine idioms more broadly, and sought greater generalizations in their linguistic analyses, they found that many idioms were indeed partly analyzable and motivated by enduring conceptual metaphors (Cameron and Low, 1999:30).

PUs are attractive because they are full of variety and linguistic curiosities. Moreover, because of their unpredictable meanings, grammar, collocations and having special connotations they are difficult to comprehend and translate. Academic researches testify that PUs have significant roles in language, especially in expressing a situation in a short and simple way. That is, through few words one may tell a lot of things at a time. And also many linguists as C. Bally, F. De Saussure, C. Sanders, R. Jakobson, A.P. Cowie, O. Jespersen, R. Gläser, A. V. Kunin, V. Vinogradov have contributed to this field a lot. In Turkey D. Aksan, M. N. Özön, V. Hatipoğlu, Ö. A. Aksoy, A. Püsküllüoğlu, M. Hengirmen are important figures in the field.

Difficulties and Solutions in Translation of Metaphorical Phraseological Unit

Understanding the imaginative and meaningful role of a PU, their identification and transfer to another language is not an easy task. There are several tasks to be carried out for the translator: knowledge of the basic issues of the phraseology theory, knowledge of the values of PUs in two languages, and an adequate transfer of their meanings, semantics, expressive and stylistic features in the translation. The practical implementation of these objectives depends on the level of pre-translation analysis and interpretation of a PU by a translator. Even at early stages of pre-translation analysis of PUs, the translator faces many difficulties. The main ones are the following: definition of the PU structure; understanding their textual, contextual and hidden meaning, content, idea; determining their artistic and aesthetic functions; finding the full and appropriate alternatives of PU in the target language; finding the closest alternative of PU in the language of translation; descriptive transfer of the idiomatic values in translation, etc. Each of these tasks corresponds to a certain stage of PU translation (Kozhakanova, 2012: 488).

While making a comparative study of the language systems and their subsystems, in terms of PUs, coherence with development of modern linguistics which is of great significance to be supported. It should be necessary to mention that, nowadays, macro-linguistic concept is dominant in translation based on dynamic interaction which is related to both linguistic and extra linguistic (sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, etc.) factors. Beyond all questions, liveliness of PUs is a good example for the large-scale linguistic factors.

During translation of PUs, comparative phraseology having a great significance in comparative analysis of both translation theory and practice, and PU systems in different languages are thought to be one of the most important issues.

Imagery in PUs

Since it plays a very important role particularly with its connotative aspect in PU meaning and in formation of semantic structure of PU, imagery is one of the major properties of PUs. Because of imagery, PUs have a contentful structure in terms of meaning, description, emotiveness, and expression. It is a generally known fact that imagery system of each language has specific features and characters. In turn, this is explained with various linguistic (internal) and extra-linguistic (outer) factors that have influence on PU. Since imagery system of each language is affected by the history, culture, life style, and ethno-psychological characteristics of a nation speaking that language. Some difficulties emerge in translating the PUs. They and their use have a kind of characteristics reflecting that nation's perspective on life. Starting from this point, to have a better perception, understanding, and correct interpretation of idioms, the translator needs to be equipped with in terms of ethnography and geography belonging to the source or target language.

For instance; in English there is a PU as 'one swallow does not make a summer' which is translated into Turkish word by word 'tek kırlangıç yaz getirmez'. Since there are no metaphorically geographical and ecological equivalents and counterparts, it is not possible to convey the intended meaning. The word 'Summer' in English and Turkish has different connotations. While summer is one of the most charming season in the UK, for Turkey, it is not so pleasing since it may extremely be hot in this period. Thus, word by word translation of PUs does not evoke the same feelings on Turkish readers, and arising out of it, some semantical and methodical differences may occur between the original text and its translation.

Therefore, another phraseological unit should be replaced. In Turkish, '*bir cicekle bahar olmaz*' can represent satisfactorily.

The characteristics of convenience of PUs in original and translated languages, the internal links in language system, the metaphorical differences of PU above, the word groups in original and translated languages, and the influence of subject stand out among the linguistic (internal) factors may prevent translation of English metaphorical PUs into Turkish. Both linguistic and extra-linguistic, that is, the interaction of factors mentioned above plays an important role in selection of desired options.

In the process of PU translation, identification of linguistic difficulties is important. It can be seen clearly that linguistic difficulties can be complex perceptions. These perceptions can be the recognition of PU in original text, the degree of semantical transferability of translated PUs and the protection of image of the original PU.

It's possible to determine the degree of linguistic difficulty in translation of any metaphorical PU. As an example; '*to carry coals to Newcastle*' (word by word translation: "Newcastle'a kömür götürmek")

An example sentence is given below where this PU is used.

'The things she brought became more marvellous every week. But however much she carried coals to Newcastle, or tobacco pouches to those who did not smoke...' (J. Galsworthy, 'Caravan', 'The Grey Angel')(Kunin, 1984: 156).

The closest translation of this PU is given in an example sentence below,

'Edebiyat dünyamız **tereciye tere satmaya** kalkışan sahte şöhretlere, üçkâğıtçılara kısa bir zaman için katlanıyor.' (B. Necatigil, TDK)

The characteristics of this idiom are as follows:

- Difficulty level of the translated PU is maximum, because this PU is completely metaphorical, and it has free syntax origins in modern language.
- Degree of semantical transferability of the translated PU is again maximum, because it has a deep semantic transformation form as well as it is completely metaphorical.

• Difficulty level regarding the preservation of the image of original PU is maximum. Existence of national facts makes the preservation of image of translated PU impossible.

Briefly, PU 'to carry coals to Newcastle' has the maximum degree of difficulty. For a successful implementation of the method presented by the translator, he/she should have naturally enough knowledge of PUs and especially of the subjects that are closely linked to translation difficulties.

The appropriateness of semantic structure of metaphorical PUs in original and translated languages is one of the most important requirements for their appropriate translation.

emotional expressive, Including assessment. and functional-style characteristics, there should be a multifactorial feature in semantical structure of metaphorical PUs. It is known that expressive function also exists in where the imagery occurs. The problem related with emotionalassessment, and functional-style characteristics in metaphorical PUs can be more difficult to solve. The examples below can help to show that the problem of translation of emotional assessment factor in metaphorical PUs generally occurs during the use of phraseological similarities and imitations. Incompatibility of emotional assessment factor in the original and translated languages can lead to mistranslation. When analyzing the original metaphorical PUs and choosing the equivalents in the translated language, the translator faces another problem. The original metaphorical PU and its translation should be in the same stylistic degree.

Compensation to avoid meaningless

Facts show that it's not always possible to ensure the stylistic appropriateness of metaphorical PUs in original and translated languages. To reduce the loss of connotative factors, the translator should think about referring to the compensation method.

The PU '*have a good/long innings*' can be given as an example. It means to have a good innings – to have enjoyed a positive period of time. It's often used to describe someone who has lived a long life.

'The thought passed through his mind: I've had a good long innings – some pretty bitter moments – this is the worst!'(J. Galsworthy, 'to Let', part III, ch. II) (Kunin, 1984: 410)

The British took cricket with them to their colonies thereby introducing the sport to India, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and the Caribbean islands of Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago to name a few. Just as cricket conjures up images of all things English, mentioned PU is very much used in British English and you are not likely to hear them anywhere else. But they are a part of British culture like afternoon tea. Although it is not possible to find an exact equivalent of the mentioned PU in Turkish, a locution '*iyi bir hayat sürmek*' may explain the meaning of the PU in the source language.

Pragmatism

The synonymous translation of metaphorical PUs requires not only semantical and connotative factors but also the consideration of the pragmatic factors. In terms of translation, pragmatism can be read as a feature of affecting the receiver or reader speaking the translated language according to the author's intention. In other words, translation pragmatism can help choose the linguistic tools that create the desired effect by the sender (translator) on the receiver. The translation of pragmatic featured metaphorical PU needs pragmatic adjustment to be as effective as original one. When we mean adjustment of metaphorical PU pragmatically, we need to consider the use of different substituents, adding additional components to the text, elimination of unnecessary components for the readers in translated language and also semantic transformation factors as generalisation and concretization. All of these techniques will give the translator the possibility to translate the original content correctly and help him/her create the necessary communication effect on the receiver in translated language. In other words, pragmatic adjustment helps eliminate the ethnolinguistic barriers and forms a basis for the necessary communication effect of translation on the receiver. The examples analysed on the subject of pragmatic adjustment in this study are closely related to socio-cultural differences between the speakers of original and translated languages, namely extralinguistic factors. We should remind that any kind of reasonable limitations are necessary in pragmatic adjustment, because the pragmatic adjustments that are belabored or underestimated cause to loss of translation.

Another PU is used in the following example;

It's raining pitchforks (cats and dogs) / bardaktan boşalırcasına yağmak-It is raining very hard. However, the phrase "it's raining cats and dogs" has become a popular way to describe a heavy downpour. 'When the ground was dry, he scanned every floating cloud before he descended into the mine at noon and hoped that it might be **raining pitchforks** when he came up again.' (J. Conroy, 'The Disinherited', part I,ch.VIII (Kunin, 1984: 618)

In Turkish the equivalent of this PU can best be given as in the given example below;

'Diyelim yağmura tutuldun bir gün

Bardaktan boşanırcasına yağıyor mübarek

Öbür yanda güneş kendi keyfinde... ' (Yücel, 2009: 15)

In this PU it has also been suggested that cats and dogs were washed from roofs during heavy rain. This is a widely repeated tale. Thatch roofs and thick straw, piled high, with no wood underneath were the only place for the little animals to get warm. So all the pets; dogs, cats and other small animals, mice, rats, bugs, all lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery so sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Thus the saying, 'it's raining cats and dogs.'

Translations of metaphorical PUs, especially, translation of national-cultural components can be hard issue. The PUs which feature national characteristics belong to PU category that reflects the characteristics of life features of the people speaking that language. Translation of PUs containing national facts may become more difficult due to the necessity of having command of extra-linguistic topics. The PUs which feature local characteristics, for example, national colors may have naturally no exact equivalence in translated language. Therefore, the use of PU equivalents is more common in their translation, and explanatory translation should be used with descriptive and combined translation. It can be explained with the following examples more clearly:

set the Thames on fire / mahalleyi ayağa kaldırmak- If you do something remarkable, you set the Thames on fire, though this expression is used in the negative; someone who is dull or undistinguished will never set the Thames on fire.

'With Higgins' physique and temperament Sweet might have set the Thames on fire.' (B.Shaw, 'Pygmalion', 'Preface') (Kunin, 1984: 279).

'Gece yarısı mahalleyi ayağa kaldırmışlardı.' (Özdemir, 2000: 247).

If descriptive translation is not approved because of imagery and emotiveness, expressiveness loss during translation of other PU categories, explanation of facts becomes important in their translation involving national colours. This is a quite clear situation because it emphasizes the relation between metaphorical PUs and facts which are not related to language here. As in the following examples;

a blind pig (It is a special bar where the host sold alcohol illegally during the period when it was prohibited by the Government of the USA.).

a drop in the bucket - A very small proportion of the whole. "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing." (the Bible, Isaiah 40:15 (King James Version).

Stool pigeon - an informer or spy especially for the police during 1820s and 1830s in the USA.

Since it is assumed that the readers speaking translated language are not aware of culture mentioned enough, national-cultural components are not translated during the translation of PUs which have local features. Word by word translation of PUs with national colours causes loss of meaning unity, communicative and functional synonymy vanish, and as a communicative act, the translation cannot reach its goal.

Conclusion

One of the findings of this study is that the concordance of metaphorical PU translation requires a comprehensive understanding involving objective-logical appropriateness, stylistic appropriateness, pragmatic appropriateness, and structural-grammatical appropriateness.

The close examination of the examples of metaphorical PU translated From English to Turkish reveals that imagery was partly presented, or completely removed. This testifies that English and Turkish PU systems, and their national characteristics are significantly different, also the use of metaphorical words and word groups mainly indicate the linguistic and cultural features.

In case of involving the national features or symbols, original PU images are not be used or substituted. However, the state of being imaginary out of use can be accepted in case it clears ethnolinguistic and ethnopsychological obstacles. Finally, PUs are an hard and hot issue to be overcome, thus, translators and linguists have to be ready and equipped with the differences between languages to avoid miscommunication and misunderstandings.

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