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Absurd Tiyatro Çevirisinin Güçlükleri: Harold Pinter'ın "Yok Bir Şey" Oyununu Türkçeye Çevirme Süreci

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Özet

Kuşkusuz her çeviri sürecinde çevirmeni bekleyen zorluklar bulunmaktadır. Erek metnin türüne ilişkin özellikler bunların başında gelmektedir. Bu durumun en çarpıcı örneklerinden biri de absurd tiyatro metinleridir. Bu makalede absurd tiyatro metinlerinin çeviri sürecinde karşılaşılabilecek zorluklar Harold Pinter'in *A Slight Ache* adlı oyununun çeviri süreci üzerinden çeviribilimsel bir bakış açısıyla irdelenmeye çalışılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Absurd tiyatro
Çeviri
Harold Pinter
A Slight Ache

Translation Challenges of Absurd Drama: Harold Pinter's *A Slight Ache* in Turkish

Abstract

It is no doubt that translator faces some challenges in each translation process. The features of target text's genre come first. One of the most striking examples of this case is texts of absurd theatre. In this article, the potential challenges which can be faced during the translation of the absurd are tried to be analyzed through the translation of *A Slight Ache* by Harold Pinter from the perspective of Translation Studies.

Keywords

Absurd drama
Translation
Harold Pinter
A Slight Ache

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INTRODUCTION

Translating Absurd Drama

While translating absurd theatre, one faces with texts including a lot of challenging features from extraordinary use of words and silence to metaphors and semiotic elements. A text analysis based on translation theories can help the translator reconstruct target text. According to Dinda L. Gorlée, a text is not just the combination of code, producer and receiver; “from a wider, general-semiotic perspective, a text must be considered as a complex sign couched in articulated language and functioning as a genuine communicative agency” (2004, 20). This communicative agency may differ from one literary genre to another. Drama translation can be considered one of the most intertwined ones. Absurd drama is undoubtedly the ultimate version of it and requires an interdisciplinary framework. In order to approach it in different ways and create new perspectives, what can Translation Studies do?

As the first stage of translating, text analysis takes a vital role in Translation Studies. What are the components of a text which differ it from other texts? It can be suggested that “a text is not something that is like a sentence, only bigger; it is something that differs from a sentence in kind. A text is best regarded as a semantic unit: a unit not of form but of meaning” (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, 1-2). However, form and meaning cannot be seen apart because they complete each other. To give a certain meaning or message, a specific form can be used on purpose such as the case in absurd drama. It should also be noted that “the scope of the term 'text' has become so expanded that 'text' and 'discourse' are today used well-nigh interchangeably” (ibid., 25).

Whether one calls it 'text' or 'discourse', its analysis is highly interdisciplinary because of including “besides language-related disciplines, such as poetics, rhetorics, stylistics, linguistics, semantic, (pragma)linguistics, speech-act theory, theory of signs, and other humanistic disciplines like philosophy, psychology, sociology, ethnomethodology, as well as other disciplinary research fields, such as translation theory, artificial intelligence research, information theory, and so on.” (Gorlée, 2004, 20). This interdisciplinary nature encourages translators to gain a wider perspective and behave differently. At this point, Gorlée's ideas are striking:

“Translation thus involves a pre-existent text-sign which produces a potentially infinite network of interpretant text-signs which, in the hypothetical long run, are destined to converge, but in real time/space may be thought to either share relevant properties with their primary text-sign, to be radically different from it, or to take an intermediate position and stand in an existential, if not physical, connection to it” (Gorlée, 2004, 107).

Taking this intermediate position is not as easy as it is said and it requires a useful methodology rather than theory. In their book named *Theatre as Sign-System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance*, Elaine Aston and George Savona claims that they search for “not as a theoretical position, but as a methodology: as a way of working, of approaching theatre in order to open new practices and possibilities of 'seeing'” (1991, 1). Because a play focuses on “the immediacy of the impact on the audience”, it differs from literature (Zuber, 1980, 92). There are no footnotes or other explanations. It is a spoken text, it is written both for actors and spectators and readers. Therefore, analysis of text and dialogue “begins with an analysis of how the linguistic sign-system of the dramatic text actively points to the characters and world of the dramatic universe in the 'here and now' and functions as the means of creating action through speech” (Aston & Savona, 1991, 53). It presents us once that drama translation is dependent on acting in a space and time. Translator cannot ignore that this text is going to be staged and pretend the real life. Accordingly, Pavis claims that “we cannot simply translate a text linguistically; rather we confront and communicate heterogeneous cultures and situations of enunciation that are

separated in space and time" (1982, 25).

To translate a drama text, we need new ways of looking into the dialogue and in accordance with our skopos to determine how we translate the components which make this text different. Sirkku Aaltonen says that "[plays]' coming into being is always tied to a particular socio-cultural context. Their translations have the same tie. Once a play is translated/performed, new interpretations become inevitable" (2010, 105). At this point, Translation Studies has a critical role. Analyzing these translations (like the study of performances) can "reveal what indeterminacies different types of translations have revealed, and how these have been supplemented at different times by different agencies and why. It does matter, who is speaking and why is s/he speaking thus" (ibid., 109).

Wellwarth suggests "dramatic translation is a specialized form of translation with its own rules and requirements" (1981, 140). There are similarities between poetic and the dramatic translator. First one is a sense of rhythm. "The dramatic translator [...] must have a sense of rhythm of speech patterns, particularly colloquial ones, as well as the ability to recreate the tension of dramatic situations without falsifying the playwright's intention or losing dramatic credibility within the new context" (ibid.). "Speakability" and "style" are two principal problems of the dramatic translator (ibid.). In absurd theatre, there is "an ultimate link between form and content" and it "does not eliminate the role of linguistic elements but changes their functions by giving them new meanings" thanks to the other semiotic elements (Demirtaş, 2008, 87&92). So, translation of absurd theatre should focus on the performability of the text (ibid., 124).

Fernando Poyatos states that "not only the speaking face and body and total appearance of the characters, which include their explicit or implicit between-the-lines paralanguage and, kinesics, but the eloquent quasiparalinguistic sounds of people and environment, and their silences and stillness, all knitted together" and they will be "amplified by the reader through a sort of sign countermetamorphosis" (1983, 17). Therefore, the translator needs to examine the text and try to find out how the word play functions. As a specific example, Harold Pinter's texts "consists to a conspicuous degree of 'small talk' which undermines the traditional expectation of external action moved forward through speech acts" (Aston & Savona, 1991, 66). Martin Esslin depicts the examples of theatre of the absurd as "prime examples of 'pure theatre'" because "they are living proof that the magic of the stage can persist even outside, and divorced from, any framework of conceptual rationality" (1962, 4). According to him, the spectators of this genre are faced with "a grotesquely heightened picture of their open world: a world without faith, meaning, and genuine freedom of will" (Esslin, 1962, 6).

Pinter's plays –with its peculiar use of language which can be defined as "a meticulously accurate transcription of ordinary speech" (Bernhard, 1965, 185)— focus on problems of "identity, illusion, menace and verification" (Quigley, 1975, 17). He illuminates the failure of communication, the space between words, "the inadequacies of words, the presuppositions of speech, the decay of words" (Esslin, 1962, 252), different ways in which language can carry information, and also language which transports messages without expressing them. Also, his plays show what language is and can do and how it can become a weapon of violence, torture or "a game of social-recognition" (Quigley, 1975, 195). Pinter comments on communication in general with these sentences:

"We communicate only too well in our silence, in what is unsaid, and in what takes place in continual evasion, desperate attempts to keep ourselves to ourselves. Communication is too alarming. To enter into someone else's life is too frightening. To disclose to others the poverty within us is too fearsome a possibility." (1962, 25)

In Pinter's plays, people participate in a conversation, then in this battlefield of

conversation they refuse each other's expectations and the intimacy of the relationship and they try to establish an authority on the others by frequent pauses, long silences, or avoidance of silence such as repetitions, irrelevant details and soliloquies. The goal of the dialogues is generating "a mutual sense of reality" (Quigley, 1975, 18). These dialogues break the expectation of the reader. Cohen describes Pinter's language as "a highly conscious yet articulate poetry" (1961, 21). Pinter also claims that:

"There are two silences. One when no word is spoken. The other when perhaps a torrent of language is being employed. This speech is speaking of a language locked beneath it. That is a continual reference. The speech we hear is an indication of that which we don't hear." (Pinter, 1964, 579; quoted in Raby, 2001, 217)

The features of Pinter's plays make the translation and staging difficult. Pinter's plays need well-educated actors because in case of not emphasizing enough that the words are "smokescreens" and not generating "a subtextual reality to support them" (Esslin, 1962, 252), Pinter's language seems trivial. The actors should grasp the inner context. This makes Pinter plays risky to stage and also difficult to translate because every moment of silence, every single word is carefully designed (see Dinçel, 2011). The words which are not said have significance, too. Moreover, Pinter uses short sentences on purpose, so the translator is to write sentences carrying this effect. If the translator writes a long and explanatory sentence, the play may seem trivial. To sum up, translators or actors of Pinter plays should grasp the core of both absurd theatre and Pinter plays before starting to act or translate. It is one of the reasons that make Pinter translations and acting in Pinter's plays demanding.

Harold Pinter's *A Slight Ache* in Turkish

On *A Slight Ache*

Originally conceived as a radio play, *A Slight Ache* was broadcast on the BBC in July 1959 and then it was staged at the Arts Theatre in 1961 (Deleon, 1993, 29). The play has three characters: Edward, Flora and the matchseller. Edward and Flora is a middle class couple who live in a country house with a large garden. Edward was "a former businessman" and a "self-declared intellectual" (ibid.). Flora is interested in flowers. The matchseller is an old and weird man who has been standing outside their garden for a long time. Flora invites him to the house; however, the old man does not break his silence. Deleon comments that "the silent old man becomes a screen upon which Edward and Flora can reflect their fears and hopes, defining an antagonism born of Edward's inadequacy and Flora's desires" (1993, 30). "At the start, *A Slight Ache* suggests a comedy based on marital bickering, with its mutual irritation, misunderstandings and correction of errors" (Dukore, 1976, 21). Edward has fears about his marriage and two intruders (the wasp in the marmalade in the breakfast and the matchseller) lead him to complete despair and loneliness. It is summer solstice and Flora repeats it during the whole play. She is attracted by the matchseller. "At the end, the marriage dissolves as Edward and the matchseller exchange places" (ibid.). Flora gives the matchseller's tray to Edward and takes the matchseller as her husband.

Flora's cry for love and Edward's ego are outstanding themes of the play. Dreams and desires of Flora are always ignored by Edward. She wants her desires to become fulfilled. The matchseller has a nice, muscular body and she feels attracted by him. She discloses her feelings for the matchseller. Flora actually reveals her intimate problems to the old man. She

mothers him like a baby that she never had. She wants a toy to play with, a person that is close to her and treats her kindly. The name she gives the matchseller, Barnabas (son of consolation), signifies what he represents for her: motherhood and love, which she cannot find in her marriage.

Edward is rude to Flora and he is much more interested with the wasp than his wife's feelings about her flowers or the beautiful day. It can be interpreted that there is a fight inside Edward during the play and the matchseller, who is at first like a mute puppet, then becomes the new Edward and a better one. It can also be observed that Edward's mood changes during the play from anger to despair. Edward talks about this morning as a distant past and his slight ache turns into a cold.

Commentary on Translation Process

Translation is not just a product but also a process. This part of the article is to share my translation process and the reasons of my decisions with the readers. The most significant decisions I want to mention are on the flower names, the word "bullock", and the title of the play. In addition, the reasons of my decisions on the commands of Edward, translation of some specific words and the language of the play will be noted.

In *A Slight Ache*, the names of the flowers have significant gender, especially female body connotations. "Clematis" stands for "clitoris", "convolvulus" for "vulva" and "honeysuckle" for intercourse. The name "Flora" also means flower. Moreover, Edward calls the daughters of the squire "a bouquet of flowers". One of them is called "Fanny" which has again female connotations. This web of flowers and women has a great role in the play. Readers have the possibility of associating/ linking them with the events in the play. To give this possibility to Turkish readers is challenging. "Convolvulus" is called "*çit sarmaşığı*", "clematis" is called "*akasma*", "*filbahar*" or "*fukara otu*" in Turkish. These Turkish names of the flowers are limited for readers' meaning construction. However, "honeysuckle" means "hanımeli" in Turkish, which means "the hand of the lady". This can be open to interpretations. First, I thought some other flower names in Turkish and searched internet sites on flowers. However, I could not find Turkish flower names with female connotations except "orkide", which is too direct. Then, I thought translating them as "klematis" and "volven" to keep the sound. The readers can think that they are foreign names of some flowers. However, I am not satisfied with this solution. After that, I chose "*kızıl iris*", "*güldudak*", "*japon çiçeği*" and "*hanımeli*". "*Güldudak*" and "*kızıl iris*" are my neologisms. Like convolvulus, "*dudak*" refers to parts of female body in Turkish and "iris" is a flower which resembles a type of clematis and also "*kızıl iris*" sounds like "klematis" and "clitoris".

FLORA: Have you noticed the **honeysuckle** this morning?

EDWARD: The what?

FLORA: The **honeysuckle**.

EDWARD: **Honeysuckle**? Where?

FLORA: By the back gate, Edward.

EDWARD: Is that **honeysuckle**? I thought it was... **convolvulus**, or something.

FLORA: But you know it's **honeysuckle**.

EDWARD: I tell you I thought it was **convolvulus**.

[Pause]

FLORA: It's in wonderful flower.

EDWARD: I must look.

FLORA: The whole garden's in flower this morning. The **clematis**. The **convolvulus**. Everthing. I was out at seven. I stood by the pool.

EDWARD: Did you say—that the **convolvulus** was in flower?

FLORA: Yes.

EDWARD: **But good God**, you just denied there was any.

FLORA: I was talking about the **honeysuckle**.

EDWARD: About the what?

FLORA [*calmly*]: Edward—you know that shrub outside the toolshed...

EDWARD: Yes, yes.

FLORA: That's **convolvulus**.

EDWARD: That?

FLORA: Yes.

EDWARD: Oh.

[*Pause.*]

I thought it was **japonica**.

FLORA: **Oh, good Lord no**.

EDWARD: Pass the teapot, **please**. (Pinter, 1962, 1-2)

FLORA: Bu sabah hanımeline gördün mü?

EDWARD: Neyi?

FLORA: Hanımeli.

EDWARD: Hanımeli mi? Nerede?

FLORA: Bahçe kapısının ordaki, Edward.

EDWARD: Hanımeli mi o? Ben de şey sanmıştım... **güldudak** ya da onun gibi bir şey.

FLORA: Ama onun hanımeli olduğunu biliyorsun.

EDWARD: Söyledim ya, ben onu **güldudak** sandım.

[*Duraklama*]

FLORA: Harika çiçek açmış.

EDWARD: Bi' bakmam lazım.

FLORA: Bu sabah bahçe çiçek içinde. **Kızıl iris. Güldudak**. Hepsi açmış. Sabah yedide dışarıdaydım. Havuzun başında durdum.

EDWARD: **Güldudak** açtı mı dedin?

FLORA: Evet.

EDWARD: Ama sen demin hiç **güldudak** yok demedin mi?

FLORA: Ben hanımeliinden bahsediyordum.

EDWARD: Neden neden?

FLORA [*sakin*]: Edward—Aletleri koyduğumuz kulübenin oradaki çiçekliği biliyorsun...

EDWARD: Evet, tabi.

FLORA: İşte o hanımeli.

EDWARD: O mu?

FLORA: Evet.

EDWARD: Hım.

[Duraklama]

Ben onu **Japon çiçeği** sanıyordum.

FLORA: **Daha neler Edward!**

EDWARD: **Çayı uzatsana.**

FLORA: ...That's honeysuckle. And that's convolvulus. There's clematis. And do you see the plant by the conservatory? That's japonica. (Pinter, 1962, 21)

FLORA: Şuradaki çiçek hanımeli. Bu da **güldudak**. **Kızıl iris** de var. Limonluktakini görebiliyor musunuz? O da **Japon çiçeği**.

FLORA: Ah, Barnabas. Everything is ready.

[Pause]

I want to show you my graden, your garden. You must see my japonica, my convolvulus...my honeysuckle, my clematis. (Pinter, 1962, 39)

FLORA: Barnabas. Her şey hazır.

[Duraklama]

Sana bahçemi, senin bahçeni göstereyim. Japon çiçeğimi görmüşsündür, güldudağımı...hanımeli, kızıl iris'imi.

The second challenging point was the word "bullock", which means both "gel, jelly, mess, heap" and also "castrated male cattle". First meaning in Turkish means "yığın, pelte", which sounds awkward in the dialogue and the second one means "hadım edilmiş boğa", which is too long and too marked for the play. Thus, I tried to combine characters' difficulty of defining the matchseller and my problem of how to translate and define it in Turkish:

FLORA: Good Lord, what's that? **Is that a bullock let loose?** No. It's the matchseller! My goodness, you can see him...through the hedge. He looks bigger. Have you been watching him? He looks...like a **bullock**. (Pinter, 1962, 17)

FLORA: Bu da nesi? **İpini koparmış hadım boğalardan** biri mi yine? Yok. Bu bizim kibritçi. burdan görebiliyorsun... çalılıkların arasından. Daha büyük görünüyor. Onu mu izliyordun? Kocaman... pelte gibi...yüzü gözü belli değil...**garabet...**

The third significant issue was the title. "A Slight Ache" in the dialogue between Flora and Edward is not marked but flatly poured out from the mouth. However, in Turkish "İnce(den) Bir Sızı/Ağrı", "Ufak Bir Sızı", "Seyirme" would be marked and sometimes too literary. So, I thought how we answer the question "have you got something in your eyes" when we think it is just a slight ache and I decided on "Yok bir şey". This statement also suits Edward's refusing the reality, the presence of the matchseller and problems of his marriage. Moreover, "yok" can be thought as an adjective. Flora and Edward cannot define the matchseller which seems to them as a "şey".

FLORA: Have you got something in your eyes?

EDWARD: No. Why do you ask?

FLORA: You keep clenching them, blinking them.

EDWARD: I have a slight ache in them.

FLORA: Oh, dear.

EDWARD: Yes, a slight ache. As if I hadn't slept. (Pinter, 1962, 12)

FLORA: Gözüne bir şey mi kaçtı?

EDWARD: Yoo. Niye sordun?

FLORA: Ha bire ovuşturup kırıpıyorsun da.

EDWARD: **Yok bir şey.**

FLORA: Aa, canım.

EDWARD: **Yok bir şey...** Sanki gece uyku tutmamış da...

The fourth issue was the daily speech forms and the peculiarity of the performance arts. Too long and too literary sentences would not fit into the text. The dialogues had to be functional in the context. Also, this is an absurd theatre play and silence is really important in Pinter's plays. I tried to create an inner text from the words not said. So, I omitted/ crossed out as much words as I can from the first drafts of my translation such as "*ama, ben, sen, aman tanrım...*" when their function can be fulfilled by the other words. For instance, I translate Flora's sentence "Oh, Good Lord no" in page 10 as "*Daha neler Edward*". In addition, I always take into consideration Turkish daily speech, so I read loudly while I was translating and editing and also I imagined the performance and sometimes I tried to act them. The following extract is one of the parts I edited again and again in order not to make this part smell translation because of the words "bastard, cursed" and also sentence structure such as "he's not a matchseller at all. The bastard isn't a mathseller at all".

EDWARD: He's sold nothing, all morning. No one passed. Yes. A monk passed. A non-smoker. In a loose garment. It's quite obvious he was a non-smoker but still, the man made no effort. He made no effort to clinch a sale, to rid himself of one of his cursed boxes. His one chance, all morning, and he made no effort.

[Pause]

I haven't wasted my time. I've hit, in fact, upon the truth. He's not a matchseller at all. The bastard isn't a matchseller at all. Curious I never realized that before. He's an imposter. I watch him very closely. He made no move towards the monk. As for he monk, the monk made no move towards him. The monk was moving along the lane. He didn't pause, or halt, or in any way alter his step. As for the matchseller—how ridiculous to go on calling him by that title. What a farce. No, there is something very false about that man. I intend to get to the bottom of it. I'll soon get rid of him. He can go and ply his trade somewhere else. Instead of standing like a bullock...a bullock, outside my back gate. (Pinter, 1962, 19)

EDWARD: Sabahtan beri tek çöp satmadı. Kimsecikler geçmedi. Ha, yok. Bir keşiş geçti salaş elbisesini sürüye sürüye. O da sigara içmez zaten. Sigara içmeyeceği ortadaydı. Yine de şansını bir deneyebilirdi. Dandik kibritlerinden birini satıp üç kuruş kazanmak için çaba göstermedi bile. Tek şansını buydu oysa tüm sabah boyunca. Oralı bile olmadı adam.

[Duraklama]

Anladım ben bu adamın ne mal olduğunu. Değdi doğrusu. Bir kere kibritçi falan değil o p*ç kurusu. Kesinlikle olamaz. Daha önce nasıl fark etmemişim. Sahtekarın teki o. Dikkatlice izledim onu. Keşişe bakmadı bile. Keşiş de kafasını bile çevirmedi. Patikada yürüdü gitti. Duraksamadı, bakmadı, yavaşlamadı. Kibritçi de...gerçi ona "kibritçi" demek komik oluyor artık. Hayır, bu adamda tuhaf bir şeyler daha var. Çözeceğim ama ben. Yakında kurtulacağım ondan. Gidip işini başka yerde yapsın canım. Kapımızın dibinde öyle... şey gibi...yığılıp kalacağına... Garabet...

Another significant part of the language in the play is the commands of Edward, which help the readers understand the mood and personality of Edward and his relation with Flora. He always gives commands to Flora and he uses short and sharp utterances, so I decided to be careful about this function and omitted "and"s and preferred short, sharp sentences.

EDWARD: Cover the marmalade.

FLORA: What?

EDWARD: Cover the pot. There's a wasp. [He puts the paper down on the table.] Don't move. Keep still. What are you doing?

FLORA: Covering the pot.

EDWARD: Don't move. Leave it. Keep still.

[Pause.]

Give me the 'Telegraph'.

FLORA: Don't hit it. It'll bite.

EDWARD: Bite? What do you mean, bite? Keep still.

[Pause.]

It's landing.

FLORA: It's going in the pot.

EDWARD: Give me the lid.

FLORA: It's in.

EDWARD: Give me the lid.

FLORA: I'll do it.

EDWARD: Give it to me! Now...Slowly... (Pinter, 1962, 11)

EDWARD: Reçelin kapağını kapat.

FLORA: Ne?

EDWARD: Kapağını kapat. İçerde bir arı var. [*Gazetesini masaya bırakır.*] Kıpırdama. Öyle dur. Ne yapıyorsun?

FLORA: Kapağı kapıyorum.

EDWARD: Hareket etme. Bırak. Kıpırdama.

[*Duraklama*]

Gazeteyi ver bana.

FLORA: Vurma sakın. Isırır.

EDWARD: Ne ısırması?... Kıpırdama.

[*Duraklama*]

Konacak.

FLORA: Reçelin içine giriyor.

EDWARD: Kapağı ver bana.

FLORA: Girdi bile.

EDWARD: Kapağı ver.

FLORA: Ben hallederim.

EDWARD: Bana ver! Şimdi...Yavaşça...

EDWARD: Rubbish. Take it away from the table.

FLORA: What shall I do with it?

EDWARD: Put it in the sink and drown it. (Pinter, 1962, 12)

EDWARD: Abartma. Reçelliği masadan kaldır.

FLORA: Ne yapayım?

EDWARD: Lavaboaya koy, suyu aç, boşulsun.

EDWARD: Call him in.

FLORA: Me?

EDWARD: Go out and call him in. (p19)

EDWARD: İçeri çağır onu.

FLORA: Ben mi?

EDWARD: Git, onu buraya çağır.

In addition to the commands of Edward which give us clues about his relation with Flora, Edward's addressing to the matchseller is very significant. In the play, Edward always addresses the matchseller with the pronoun "you"; however, in Turkish we do not know whether it is "sen" or "siz". While translating, I instinctively changed the pronoun "siz" with "sen" in the middle of the play, because Edward at that point starts to be rude to the matchseller and his aims and inner feelings become clearer.

EDWARD: [*In a low voice.*] I want to ask you a question. Why do you stand outside my back gate, from dawn till dusk, why do you pretend to sell matches, why...? What is it, damn you. You're shivering. You're sagging. Come here, come here...mind your tray! [*Edward rises and moves behind a chair.*] Come, quick quick. There. Sit here. Sit...sit in this.

The matchseller stumbles and sits. Pause.

Aaaah! You're sat. At last. What a relief. You must be tired. [*Slight pause.*] Chair comfortable? I bought it in a sale. The same sale. When I was a young man. You too, perhaps. (Pinter, 1962, 27)

EDWARD: [*Kısık sesle*] Size bir soru soracağım. Sabahın bir köründen gecenin karanlığına kadar neden bahçe kapımda dikilip duruyorsunuz? Neden kibrit satıyormuş gibi yapıyorsunuz, hı neden? Bu da ne şimdi? Haydaaa...Ne bu titreme? Nöbet mi? Düşeceksiniz. Buraya gel, buraya. Tezgahı al! [*EDWARD kalkar ve bir sandalyenin arkasında durur.*] Gel, çabuk çabuk. Buraya. Otur. Otur dedim.

KİBRİTÇİ tökezler, sonra oturur. Duraklama.

Aaa! Bak sen. Oturdun. Nihayet. Ne mutluluk. Yorulmuşsundur. [*Kısa duraklama*] Rahat mı sandalye? İndirimden almıştım. Bu evdeki tüm mobilyaları indirimden aldım. Aynı indirimden. Gençken. Sen de gençtin herhalde o zaman. Belki de sen de...

In addition to these challenging parts, I had some decisions about some specific words. For instance, “kaz” reminds Turkish readers not a dish but an animal mostly at first glance. So, I thought translating it as “tavuk”. However, in the dialogue it is a special dish for that evening. Thus, we decided on “hindi”.

FLORA:... We have goose for lunch. Do you care for goose? (Pinter, 1962, 20)

FLORA:... Öğle yemeğinde hindi var. Sever miydiniz?

In addition to “goose”, there are some other words such as “marmalade”. I translated it “reçel” not “marmelat” because in the dialogues between Flora and Edward, “marmelat” would sound too marked. As another example, there are both the word “wasp” and “horsefly” in the play. So, when I translated wasp “eşekarısı”, I could not find how to translate “horsefly” and I decided to translate “wasp” as “arı” and “horsefly” as “eşekarısı”. The last example is “squire” which means originally “a young man who aspired to the rank of knighthood and who, as part of his development to that end, served an existing knight as his attendant or shield carrier” (www.wikipedia.com). The present status of the squire is that “he lives at the village manor house, and owns an estate in or comprising the village with the villagers being his tenants” (ibid.). The Turkish translations of the word are “şövalye silahtarı, köy eşrafından kimse, büyük bir adamın uşağı or kavalye” (www.zargan.com). These Turkish descriptions are too long and awkward for the play. So, I chose the word “ağa” even if I am not satisfied with that word too. Following is the part which mentions the squire:

EDWARD: I entertain the villagers annually, as a matter of fact. I’m not the **squire**, but they look upon me with some regard. Don’t believe we’ve got a **squire** here any more, actually. Don’t know what became of him. Nice old man he was. Great chess-player, as I remember...

Another significant issue about this part is the daughters of the squire:

Sit EDWARD: ... Three daughters. *The pride of the country*. Flaming red hair. Alice was the eldest. yourself down, old chap. Eunice I think was the number two. The youngest one was *the best of the bunch*. Sally. No, no, wait a minute, no, it wasn’t Sally, it was... Fanny. *Fanny. A flower*. (Pinter, 1962, 22-3)

EDWARD: ... Üç kız vardı. *Kasabanın gururu çiçek gibi kızlar*. Ateş kızılı saçlar. Alice... en büyüğüdü. Oturunuz beyefendi. Eunice sanırım ortancaydı. *En uşağı çiçeklerin en güzeli: Sally*. Hayır, bi’ dakika, Sally değildi...neydi...Fanny. Evet evet, *Fanny. Çiçek gibi. Kendisi de adı gibi...*

I translated “the best of the bunch” as “çiçeklerin en güzeli” not “demetin/buketin en güzeli” which sounds problematic in Turkish. Also, “Fanny” is a slang word which means vagina again. Thus, I wrote in Turkish “*Fanny. Çiçek gibi. Kendisi de adı gibi...*”. I did not give the exact meaning of the word in the text or as a footnote because it is also indirect in the target text. A curious reader can be suspicious about “*kendisi de adı gibi*” and research it and also all “*çiçek*”s somehow refer to women. In addition to these words, there are several cricket terms in the play, which do not exist in Turkish. Edward mentions his playing cricket in his childhood. I transformed them into football terms.

Another point I want to mention about my translation process is Flora’s this sentence on page 11: “It is the *height* of summer today”. This sentence can again have connotations as Flora repeats the sentence “it is the longest day of the summer” during the entire play. First, I translated “It is the *height* of summer” as “Bugün yazın *doruğu*”, but I found it weird in Turkish, then I changed it into “Bugün güneş ışınlarının en *dik* geldiği gün”. After that, it

seems too long and scientific to me and finally I decided on “*en uzun gün*”.

Last but not least, the word “*balaclava*” also needs thinking. In Turkish, it means “*kar maskesi*”; however, in the dialogue it sounds too marked not fluent. So, at first I thought “*bere*”, but the cloth mentioned in the play is a cloth which slightly hides the face of the matchseller. Then, I searched photos of the play on the internet and I found some photos in which the matchseller wears a “*şapka*”. I also thought that “*şapka*” is an open-ended word, thus the director can choose different “*şapka*”s which can cover the face of the actor, but a “*bere*” generally does not cover the face.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of target text is inevitably a vital determinant for translation process. Drama translation is a challenging genre for translators and especially absurd drama. The skopos of translation is adjusted to the special function of absurd drama caused by the peculiar use of daily language and the style and register of the writer.

In this case, Harold Pinter's *A Slight Ache*, deliberate silence, pauses, repetitions and metaphors need consideration for both text and stage. Moreover, intentionally use of ordinary speech, in other words the speakability of the text should be monitored in detail because they are loaded with subtextual realities. Thus, a professional, goal-oriented analysis of source text precedes translation process. Then, translator faces with a number of decisions in terms of the connotations and the other subtextual elements of the words and structures in target text. Translation criticism can also be proper if only these are taken into consideration.

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