STRATEGIES USED IN TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH IDIOMS INTO TURKISH IN JOHN STEINBECK'S "OF MICE AND MEN" NOVEL·

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze especially the strategies used in translation of English idioms into Turkish in John Steinbeck's "Of Mice And Men" novel. The study covers translation model which consists of four strategies for idiom and provebs that were offered by Mona Baker. This strategies are; 1. Using an idiom of similar meaning and form, 2. Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, 3. Translation by paraphrase, 4. Translation by ommission. Also, in this study it is aimed to research which strategy was the most frequently used, and whether there were any significant changes in their use. And of course it is aimed to study the theories needed in translation of idioms in the languages from different origins, and whether having a good command of elements of both cultures needed in translation of novel is important or not.

Key words: Idiom, translation, translation strategies, novel, culture

JOHN STEINBECK' İN "OF MICE AND MEN" İSİMLİ ROMANINDAKİ İNGİLİZCE DEYİMLERİN TÜRKÇE' YE ÇEVİRİSİNDE KULLANILAN İZLEMLER

Öz

Bu çalışma özellikle John Steinbeck'in "Of Mice And Men" adlı romanında kullanılan İngilizce deyimlerin Türkçeye çevirisinde kullanılan izlemleri analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma Mona Baker'ın Deyimler ve Atasözleri için önerdiği dört izlemden oluşan bir çeviri modelini içermektedir. Bu izlemler; 1. Benzer anlam ve benzer biçimle çeviri, 2. Benzer anlam farklı biçimle çeviri, 3. Açımlama yoluyla çeviri ve 4. Çıkarma yoluyla çeviri. Ayrıca bu çalışmada kullanılan izlemlerin kullanım sıklıkları, kullanımlarında kayda değer değişikliklerin yapılıp yapılmadığının araştırılmasının yanında kökü aynı olmayan dillere ait deyimsel ifadelerin çevirisinde ihtiyaç duyulan çeviri kuramları ve roman çevirisinde gerekli olan her iki kültüre ait ögelere hakimiyetin önemli olup olmadığının irdelenmesi hedeflenmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Deyim, çeviri, çeviri izlemleri, roman, kültür

INTRODUCTION

If natural language had been designed by a logician, idioms would not exist.

Philip Johnson-Laird, 1993

As Professor Laird's thought about idiom above, they do not have logic and they differ from the other fixed expressions here. There is not any discernable relation between their idiomatic meanings and their linguistic meanings. Idioms are usually transparent to native language speakers, but for those who are not native speakers of that language it will be confusing and difficult to understand. For instance, a semantic and syntactic analysis of an idiom such as *kick the bucket* would never connote the meaning to die.

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According to Baker, (1992: 63) flexibility of patterning and transparency of meaning is not possible for idioms. They are frozen patterns of language which allow little or no variation in form and, often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components.

Based on the opinions of Gairns and Redman (1986: 36) we can talk about two main features of idioms. First, the meaning of an idiom can not generally be derived from the individual meanings of the elements that make up the idiom. Because the words forming the idioms are used in a metaphorical sense. For example, the meaning of the English idiom *it's raining cats and dogs* does not arise from the words *rain*, *cats* and *dogs* forming the idiom. The meaning that the idiom expresses has no direct relationship with *rain*, *cats*, or *dogs*. In the idiom, heavy rain is expressed in a very striking narrative language. When mentioned idiom is translated into Turkish word by word, something meaningless will emerge like *cats and dogs are raining*. However, this English idiom, while preserving the idiomatic meaning, may be transfered into Turkish as *bardaktan boşanırcasına yağmur yağıyor.* Another feature of idioms is that they are restricted considering grammar and syntax. For example, we can translate the idiom jump out of frying pan into the fire as *yağmurdan kaçarken doluya tutulmak* in Turkish. If the speaker does not aim to joke or pun deliberately, he /she should not subject to change these idioms as *jump out of the fire into frying pan* or *doludan kaçarken yağmura tutulmak* or *of the fire into frying pan*, *kaçarken yağmura tutulmak* or *jump out of the balcony into the frying pan*, *yağmurdan kaçarken kara tutulmak* under normal conditions.

A native user of a language can decide which structure of an idiom is acceptable in his/her language. As Baker (1992: 64) states a person's competence in actively using the idioms and fixed expressions of a foreing language hardly ever matches that of a native speaker. The majority of translators working into a foreign language cannot hope to achieve the same sensitivity that native speakers seem to have for judging when and how an idiom can be manipulated.

Lawrence Venuti (1995: 17) defines translation as " a process by which the chain of signifiers that constitutes the source-language text is replaced by a chain of signifiers in the target language which the translator provides on the strength of an interpretation."

According to John Cunnison Catford (1965: 20) translation is "the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)". He defines translation as a process, uni-directional: it is always performed from a given source language to a given target language.

Hans Vermeer (1992: 40) thinks that translation involves linguistic as well as cultural phenomena and processes and therefore is a cultural as well as linguistic procedure, and as language, now understood as a specific language, is part of a specific culture, translation is to be understood as a cultural phenomenon dealing with specific cultures: translation is a culture transcending process.

Gideon Toury (2000:200) who considers translation and culture inseparably defines translation as a kind of activity which inevitably involves at least two languages and two cultural traditions.

As for translation, of course, there are definitions of translation made by many scientists. However, in terms of being concerned with the content of this article, the most appropriate one is the definition made by Kuran; Translation is to find what the indicator in source language

expresses and to use the indicator through which it can be expressed in target language (Baykan, 2005:180).

It is not easy to understand and translate the idioms among the languages and cultures of remote origins. Between English and Turkish which we are going to examine in this study, there are many linguistic and cultural differences. Thus, idioms are the kinds of expressions that most makes the translation difficult. It may not always be possible to translate an idiom in source language into target language through a similar way of thinking and approach. In such a case, the translator may have to find different ways of translation in order to convey the meaning of the idiom in source language into target language.

In order to examine and identify the various ways of translation, in this study, it is intended to focus on the translation of idioms which is the most interesting and open to innovation aspect of the translation. The aim of this study is to examine the strategies which can be used in idiom translation between source and target languages through Mona Baker approach.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE IN IDIOM TRANSLATION

Each national-linguistic communitiy has its disposal a series of habits, value judgments, classification systems, etc. which sometimes are clearly different and sometimes overlap. This way, cultures create a variability factor the translator will have to take into account (Aixela, 1996: 53).

And Venuti (1995: 18) clarifies the aim of translation as; to bring back a cultural other as the same, the recognizable, even the familiar; and this aim always risks a wholesale domestication of the foreign text, often in highly self conscious projects, where translation serves an appropriation of foreign cultures for domestic agendas, cultural, economic, and political.

Culture is not a frozen but dynamic system, and it's consistently changing as the individual joins or leaves a given social group. The characteristic of culture has an important consequences on translation act.

Mary Snell-Hornby (2001: 42) who emphasizes the importance of culture states that; If language is an integral part of culture, the translator needs not only proficiency in two languages, he must also be at home in two cultures. In other words, he must be bilingual and bicultural.

The cultural aspect of translation cannot be ignored. Idioms we use in daily life reflect characteristics of the language, the community's way of life and culture. The community's way of life that idioms belong to has an important place in the formation process. Cultural characteristics also play a considerable role in Daily use of linguistic expressions. As long as culture and language are in existence there is always an inevitable interaction between them.

And of course, English and Turkish are spoken by people who are geographically, culturally, and religiously different. And the people speak different languages have different ways of looking on things which, of course, creates cultural differences. Due to the lack of knowledge of cultural differences, we can fail to understand each other in communication activities. Idioms can not be separated from culture.

DIFFICULTIES IN IDIOM TRANSLATION

Translation is a functional interlingual transfer of meaning with the goal of communication. And translator is a mediator that helps individuals in two different language communities make contact with each other on the language platform, too. So a heavy responsibility rests on the translator. Because he/she is expected to transfer the source text message to the target language community as much as possible without distorting.

In particular, the fact that Turkish and English have different lexical and grammar structures makes translation more difficult between these two languages. Each language has its own structure and while translating a message in the source language into the target language, the elements of the source language message may not fully or partially match the elements in the target language because of different rhythms, therefore there may be losses in expression. The more linguistic, cultural and social differences there are between languages, the more inavitable information losses become in translation. Due to the arrangement of meaning of the verbal signs, phrases and sentences we need to know that it is not possible to mention about an equivalence in translation between languages from different origins, and because of that reason loss of meaning is inevitable.

According to Baker (1992: 68), once an idiom has been recognized and interpreted correctly, the next step is to decide how to translate it into the target language. The difficulties involved in translating an idiom are totally different from those involved in interpreting it. Here, the question is not whether a given idiom is transparent, opaque, or misleading. An opaque expression may be easier to translate than a transparent one.

Idioms are not always clear. There are many types of idioms and some of them are easily noticed. It is possible to cite idioms, *bir taşla iki kuş vurmak, dişlerini göstermek,* which can be noticed although they have not a lexical meaning.

The main difficulties faced in translating idioms are identified by Baker (1992: 68-71) as follows:

a) An idiom or fixed expression may have no equivalent in the target language.

b) An idiom or fixed expression may have a similar counterpart in the target language, but its context of use may be different.

c) An idiom may be used in the source text in both its literal and idiomatic senses at the same time. Unless the target language idiom corresponds to the source language idiom both in form and in meaning, the play on idiom cannot be successfully reproduced in the target text.

d) The very convention of using idioms in written discourse, the contexts in which they can be used, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages.

STRATEGIES FOR IDIOM TRANSLATION

The way in which an idiom or a fixed expression can be translated into another language depends on many factors. It is not only a question of whether an idiom with a similar meaning is available in the target language. Other factors include, for example, the significance of the specific lexical items which constitute the idiom, i.e. whether they are manipulated elsewhere in the source language, as well as the appropriateness or inappropriateness of using idiomatic language in a given register in the target language. The acceptability or non-acceptability of using any of the strategies described below will therefore depend on the context in which a given idiom is translated. The first strategy described, that of finding an idiom of similar meaning and similar form in the target language, may seem to offer the ideal solution, but that is not necessarily always the case. Questions of style, register, and rhetorical effect, must also be taken into consideration (Baker, 1992: 71-72).

Baker emphasizes that Fernando and Flavell are correct in warning us against the strong unconscious urge in most translators to search hard for an idiom in the receptor-language, however inappropriate it may be (1992: 72).

Baker (1992: 72-78) suggests the following strategies for translating idioms:

1. Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning and Form

This strategy involves using an idiom in the target language which conveys roughly the same meaning as that of the source-language idiom and, in addition, consists of equivalent lexical items. This kind of match can only occasionally be achieved.

2. Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning But Dissimilar Form

It is often possible to find an idiom or fixed expression in the target language which has a meaning similar to that of the source idiom or expression, but which consists of different lexical items.

3. Translation by Paraphrase

This is by far the most common way of translating idioms when a match cannot be found in the target language or when it seems inappropriate to use idiomatic language in the target text because of differences in stylistic preferences of the source and target languages.

4. Translation by Omission

As with single words, an idiom may sometimes be omitted altogether in the target text. This may be because it has no close match in the target language, its meaning cannot be easily paraphrased, or for stylistic reasons.

DATA AND DISCUSSION

John Steinbeck's *Of Mice And Men* novel and its translation in Turkish *Fareler ve İnsanlar* by Ayşe Ece were selected as the corpus of study for the process of data analysis, and 54 idioms which were found in the book were analyzed. The procedure of analysis was first carried out with separate tables under the strategies used in translation mentioned above. English idioms used in the novel and their Turkish equivalents were listed in each table. Then, the use frequency of each strategy applied during translation into turkish were listed.

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Table 1. Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning and Form

English Idioms	Turkish Translation
be in heat	*kızışmak*
sell someone out	*birini satmak*

Table 2. Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning But Dissimilar Form

English Idioms	Turkish Translation
bust a gut	*canını çıkarmak*
pound someone's tail	*kapısını çalmak*
keep someone in hot water	**başını belaya sokmak**
have a stake in something	*avantası olmak*
give a damn	*gözünün yaşına bakmamak*
pants is full of ants	*siniri tepesinde olmak*
give someone the eye	*yanaşmak*
feel someone out	*birini tartmak*
take the rap	**başını belaya sokmak**
get the eye	*birine iş atmak*
set someone back	*patlamak(mal olmak)*
pass the time	*takılmak*
swing someone for	*gözünü boyamak*
make it stick	*Becermek*
yellow as a frog belly	*süt dökmüş kedi gibi*
lit intil your fren (light into someone)	*sataşmak*
crazy as a wedge	*kaçık*
roll your hoop	*oyuncaklarınla oyna*
put nothing over on me	*yuttuğumu sanma*
ain't worth a greased jack-pin	*beş paralık değerin yok*
eat someone	*canı sıkkın*

Table 3. Translation by Paraphrase

English Idioms	Turkish Translation
jungle-up	*kamp kurmak*
go nuts	*Çıldırmak* **(tepesi atmak)**
work up a stake	*para kazanmak*
blow someone's stake	*para harcamak*
blow in someone's jack	*burnunu viski bardağına sokmak* **(para harcamak)**
live off the fatta the lan	*ihtiyacımız olan her şey kendi toprağımızda olacak* **(bir eli yağda bir eli balda)**

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be burned	*sinirden çıldırmak*
I ain't got the poop no more	*eski halim yok artık*
bum steer	*yanlış bilgi*
poke someone's big ears into someone's business	*koca kulaklarını içeri dikmek*
put something over	*saklamak*
get nosey	*meraklı olmak*
what the hell's he got on his shoulder?	*bu adamın nesi var böyle?*
get licked	*yenilmek*
get canned	*işini kaybetmek*
not to be set up	*havası iyi olmamak*
get the can	*kovulmak*
hit the pocket	*para denkleştirmek*
tangle with	*kavga etmek*
give a damn	*ilgilenmek*
roll up a stake	*para biriktirmek*
kick someone out	*göndermek*
yellow jackets in someone's drawers	*gergin*
pants is crawling with ants	*sinirlenmek*
what's eating on curley?	*niye gelsin ki?(endişelendiren nedir?)*
set on the trigger of the hoosegow	*adamı hapse sokar*
flat busted	*hiç parası yok* **(cebi delik)**
kick off	*Vasiyetname* **(dünyadan göçmek)**
lay off someone	*bir şey sorma*
take a powder	*uzaklara gitmek* **(toz olmak)**
give a hoot	*düşünmek***(takmak)**

Table 4. Translation by Omission

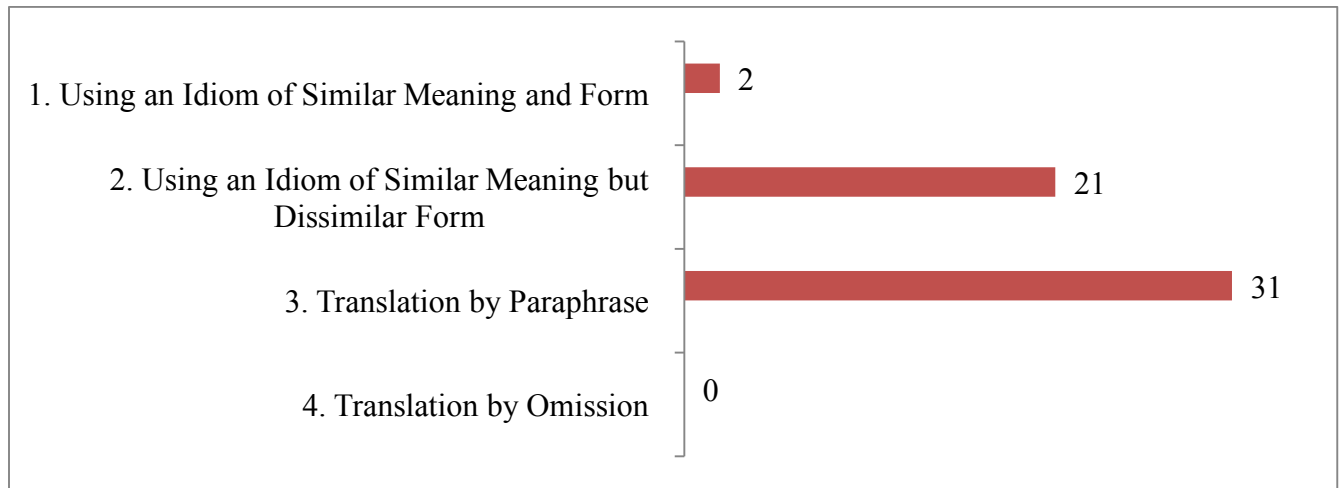| **English Idioms**	**Turkish Translation**
–	–

Table 5. Frequency of Strategies Used in *Of Mice and Men*

Strategies	**Frequency**
Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning and Form	3,7 %
Using an Idiom of Similar Meaning but Dissimilar Form	38,85 %
Translation by Paraphrase	57,35 %

Translation by Omission	0 %
Total	100 %

Figure 1. Percentage of Used Strategies

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from this study that there is a mismatch between two languages which causes one of the important problems in idiom translation. The greater mismatch between source and target languages is, the more difficult transference of a message is. Differences between the source and target languages and variations between the cultures they belong are a great challenge in translation procedure. Cultural featured idioms have to be considered not in the context of source text and culture but target culture.

Translator should interpret the idiom belonging to the source language carefully before transfering it to the target language. When idiom in the source language is similar to idiom in the target language as a form, there is a risk of interpretation.

It was concluded in the study that translation by paraphrasing was the most frequently used strategy among the strategies mentioned. This may be due to the fact that the translator was probably reluctant in finding an equivalent idiom in the target language or he/she did not have a full command of Turkish idioms.

The second most frequently used strategy was using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form. Using an idiom of similar meaning and form was the least referenced strategy since English and Turkish are from different (Indo-European languages, European group: English, Ural-Altaic languages, Altay group: Turkish) language families. Since paraphrasing was the most frequently used strategy, both violation of maxims on translation and failure in keeping the original illocutionary meaning high in the target language novel is inevitable.

Consequently, because of the high frequency of idioms in English and Turkish novels, translators need to do their best to equip themselves with idioms so that the readers in the target language do not sense any abnormality in the text.

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