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Translation of Idioms and Metaphors in Hasan Erkek's Play *Eşik*: Difficulties and Solutions

Hasan Erkek'in *Eşik* Adlı Oyunundaki Deyim ve Eğretilemelerin Çevirisi: Zorluklar ve Çözüm Önerileri

Araştırma/Research

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a discussion of the strategies adopted to translate the idioms and metaphors from Turkish into English in Hasan Erkek's play *Eşik*. The translation of *Eşik* – translated into English as *Threshold* – provides a great many examples of linguistic devices, which led translators to adopt various translation decisions on the line between closeness to the original and closeness to the target culture. This study focuses on the idiomatic and metaphorical expressions that constituted difficulties in the translation. For the purpose of this study, Baker's (2017) typology of strategies provided a framework for explaining the translation decisions as this typology was specifically developed for the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. In translating a play there are certain factors such as making it performable for actors and making it immediately understandable for the audience. While moving back and forth between target- and source-orientedness, the translation solutions were also required to set the balance between performability and understandability. Thus, rather than opting for a general approach applicable to the whole text, the translators dealt with each specific case in its own right and in its specific context. In this paper, the various strategies used in the translation of the idiomatic and metaphorical expressions in *Eşik* into English were analysed in consideration of Nord's functionality and loyalty principles.

Keywords: drama translation, translating plays, functionality, loyalty, performability.

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada Hasan Erkek'in *Eşik* adlı oyunundaki deyim ve eğretilemelerin Türkçeden İngilizceye çevirisinde kullanılan stratejiler ele alınmaktadır. İngilizceye *Threshold* olarak çevrilen bu oyunda kaynak kültüre yakınlık ve erek kültüre yakınlık arasında farklı çeviri kararları verilmesini gerektiren birçok dilsel öge bulunmaktadır. Bu makalede çeviri açısından zorluk teşkil eden deyim ve

eğretilemeler örneklenmektedir. Çalışmada çeviri kararlarını açıklamak için Baker'ın (2017) özellikle deyimler ve kalıp ifadeler için tanımladığı çeviri stratejileri kullanılmıştır. Oyun çevirisinde bir taraftan oyuncular için sahnelenebilirlik, diğer taraftan izleyiciler için anında anlaşılabilirlik önemlidir. Hedef ve kaynak odaklılık arasında gidip gelen çeviri kararlarının, aynı zamanda, sahnelenebilirlik ve anlaşılabilirlik etkenleri arasında da denge kurması gerekmektedir. Dolayısıyla, bu oyunun çevirisinde de, çevirmenler metnin tamamına uygulanabilir bir çeviri yaklaşımı benimsemektense zorluk teşkil eden her bir unsuru kendi içinde ve bağlamı içinde değerlendirerek ele almışlardır. Bu çalışmada *Eşik*'te yer alan deyim ve eğretilemelerin Türkçeden İngilizceye çevirisinde kullanılan stratejiler Nord'un işlevsellik ve bağlılık ilkeleri çerçevesinde çözümlenmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: tiyatro çevirisi, oyun çevirisi, işlevsellik, bağlılık, sahnelenebilirlik.

1. Introduction

This paper provides a discussion of the solutions used when translating the idiomatic and metaphorical expressions in Hasan Erkek's play *Eşik* (2007) from Turkish into English. The play was translated into English by a collaboration of three translators, who are also translation researchers, namely Jonathan Maurice Ross, Volga Yılmaz-Gümüş, and Alaz Pesen. This English translation has not been published yet. The translation was read by the playwright at some festivals, and a staged reading of the translation was performed as part of The First Stories Festival of the Phoenix Theatre Ensemble in New York on May 20, 2014. The translation of *Eşik* – translated into English as *Threshold* – provides a great many examples of translation choices, which lead the translators to adopt various translation decisions on the line between closeness to the original and closeness to the target culture.

The second play of a trilogy, *Eşik Üçlemesi/The Threshold Trilogy*, *Eşik* offers a representation of the transformation of Turkish culture and society following the increased migration from villages to towns that accelerated in 1980s, and narrates the life of a family that migrated from a village to a town. This is the life of a family that left their increasingly impoverishing rural life to migrate to the town. The family is then relieved of the restricting pressure of small-village traditions and customs, however, it is difficult for them to adapt to urban life. The play is based on the social, cultural, and economic threshold that the family needs to step over in order to get used to urban life. Hasan Erkek brings together three generations of a family to draw attention to the transformation not only in the family unit but also in society. As noted by Yüksel (2007, p. 7), Hasan Erkek elaborates on the family's relationship with the 'past', the 'present' and the 'future' through three generations. The grandparents, representing the past and the traditional way of life, feel nostalgic about their rural past. The parents, in the middle generation, struggle to fulfill the requirements of urban life, going back and forth between the past and the future; how to adapt to urban life and norms is the main question for them. The three children in the family make different choices in urban life to embrace the future.

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Taking the family's migration as its center, *Eşik* addresses issues such as cultural conflict, generation conflict, and moral conflict. All these issues are reflected in the language use of characters in the play, endowing the text with special stylistic and linguistic characteristics. The play, designed and written in the form of tragedy, has a poetic language and folk songs are an integral part of the narrative. Chosen from different parts of Anatolia, the songs assume both a linguistic and a functional role in the play. While giving voice to the sorrows and pains of the family members, they reinforce the text and prepare the audience for the context.[1] In the same vein, metaphors and idioms are linguistic devices that add literary value to the text and strengthen the personality traits of the characters. This paper provides a discussion of the strategies used in the translation of the idiomatic and metaphorical expressions in the text which follows a short discussion on translation of plays, and a brief description of the translation process. Baker's (2017) typology of strategies was used as a framework to evaluate the translation of the linguistic devices. Furthermore, the functionality and loyalty principles defined by Nord (2001) were used to explain the translation decisions.

2. Translation of Plays and Performability

A succinct overview of the position of drama and/or translation shows that, in 1980s and 1990s, theatre translation was seen as a neglected domain in Translation Studies (see Bassnett 1991, 1998). However, there has been accumulating literature in this specific domain in 2000s, appearing also in collective volumes (see for example Upton, 2000; Coelsch-Foisner, & Klein, 2004; Bigliazzi, Kofler, & Ambrosi, 2013a). However, despite the growing literature, "there is no theoretical frame in theatre and literary criticism" (Bigliazzi, Kofler, & Ambrosi, 2013b, p. 3). Discussions on drama and theatre translation mainly concentrate on performability and collaboration with other stakeholders involved in staging a play.

Often included in literary translation, translating plays significantly differs from the translation of other literary genres. Translating for the theatre poses several translation challenges: the ones that are likely to appear in the translation of any literary genre and the ones that are peculiar to translating for being staged. Although almost all (translated) plays are available in the form of a written text, the ultimate aim is generally the staging/performing of the play. Bigliazzi, Kofler, and Ambrosi (2013b, p. 5) primarily refer to the distinction between drama translation and theatre translation where the former is reader-oriented and the latter is stage-oriented. When staging is concerned, performability, though being defined as a problematic concept from the perspective of translation, is a significant element that shapes the translation process. In this respect, Landers (2001, p. 104) argued that "[r]eading a play is in every way different from seeing that same play presented on stage. By and large, the translator's duty is to produce a version that honors the latter without shortchanging the former". Therefore, performability and speakability are the factors that make translating plays for the theatre distinctive from the translation of other fictional genres. "[I]ntended for oral

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[1] For information on the translation of a folk song in this play, see Ross (2018).

delivery and aural reception" (Levý, 2011, p. 129), dialogues need to be speakable by actors and comprehensible to the audience. This, in some cases, causes translators to deter from meaning, fidelity, and even style, for the sake of speakability and naturalness (Landers, 2001, p. 104).

Fernandes (2010, p. 130) defines performability as translating "a play text with a view towards making it speakable to actors and shaping language in a way that entices its audience into the here and now of the performance". When performability is considered, it is important that the text reads naturally and fluently. However, previous studies in this area the literature presents diverse views regarding the performability of play texts. On one hand, there are scholars proposing that, when translating for the stage, it is responsibility of the translator to make a text performable in the target culture (see for example Snell-Hornby, 1997; Johnston, 2004; Fernandes, 2010):

> Translating for the stage does present the translator with real problems in terms of making the target text performable, such as: depiction of location, idiolect, the interplay of verbal and nonverbal signs, extratextual and contextual references, and audience reception, to list just a few. When one translates for the stage, many questions have to be dealt with arising from the materiality of the theatre, especially of course the whole question of the context into which the play is to be translated. In other words, producing a script for performance can and should be discussed as a palpable issue. (Fernandes 2010: 123)

On the other hand, there are scholars such as Bassnett (1991, 1998) arguing that so much gets changed in the process of staging that the translator should be more constructive and offer a text that directors, actors, etc. can build on:

> …whilst the principal problems facing a director and performers involve the transposing of the verbal into the physical, the principal problems facing the translator involve close engagement with the text on page and the need to find solutions for a series of problems that are primarily linguistic ones… I would argue that these considerations should take precedence over an abstract, highly individualistic notion of performability, and that the satisfactory solution of such textual difficulties will result in the creation of a target language text that can be submitted to the pre-performance readings of those who will undertake a performance. (Bassnett, 1991, p. 111)

Although translators are mainly responsible for finding solutions for a serious of primarily linguistic problems that should take precedence over performability, they still need to consider the performance aspect of a play and the audience that need immediate understanding of a staged play. Stage, performance and audience are still significant non-textual factors that govern the translation process and make play translation go beyond semantic and stylistic concerns:

> … the main aim of a stage translation has no longer been seen as having a thorough semantic and stylistic proximity to the source text considered as a literary text, but as an attempt to exceed the semiotic boundaries of verbal art

by indirectly pointing to the multitude of signifying elements involved in the theatrical performance. (Bigliazzi, Kofler, & Ambrosi, 2013b, p. 6).

Another consequence of staging a translated play is related to spectators. Readers of a translated novel or a translated play that need further information about cultural references may enjoy footnotes in translation or have the chance to research these references; however, spectators of a staged play "must grasp immediately the sense of the dialogue" (Zatlin, 2005, p. 13).

The performance aspect is also argued to be important for the criticism of drama translation. Dinçel (2011, p. 99) proposes a theatre translation criticism model that draws upon a shift from page to stage. In this model, comparative textual analysis is preceded by dramaturgical analysis of the play, namely the analysis of features that are relevant to performance. Other actors involved in the staging, especially directors, play a role in this process: "… the staging of the TT; an act, which in certain respects goes very much hand in hand with the act of translation. Hence the translation of the translation through the director's interpretation of the TT on stage in the production" (Dinçel, 2011, p. 99).

Discussions on performability are also related to the target audience and the function of a translated play text, and bring us to collaboration in translation. The *skopos* theory, in most cases, requires the production of a target text in view of the target audience and with a translation brief that includes the required instructions. A play is translated for the purpose of being published or staged, or both. Aaltonen (2010, p. 107) defines three different translations of a play, namely an introductory translation that is published as a book or circulated as a hard or electronic copy without any concrete link to a theatrical production, a gloss translation that "is confined to theatrical institutions which insist on tailor-making their own translations on the basis of a linguistic analysis of the source text", and a performance translation that is produced for being staged. These different types of translations address different types of audience. Hanes Harvey (1998, pp. 27-28, 36) defines six target groups of play texts and play translations: readers, scholars, directors/dramaturges, metteurs-en-scène, actors and finally "lazy directors" that need texts with "all the solutions that were arrived at through the directorial concept and hard work of a specific production team". Taking Performance Studies at the center of the analysis and defining translation itself as performance, Aaltonen (2013) provided a case study describing the actors taking part in theatre translation: the director, the dramaturg and the consultants contributed to the translation process. The dramaturg, for example, assessed "the translation in relation to its source text, making sure that the translator had understood (the implications and the nuances of) the lines where she had either suggested alternatives or had not been sure of her translation" (Aaltonen, 2013, p. 399). The case study is a good example showing the translators' close cooperation with other actors and their contribution to the shaping of the final product. All target groups attribute different functions to the written play text and require collaboration at different levels during translation. The *skopos* in this particular case of translating *Eşik* is discussed in section 3 with reference to functionality and loyalty.

3. Translating Idioms and Metaphors in Eşik into English

There were two major points to consider with regard to the process of translating *Eşik* from Turkish into English. One of them was the collaboration between Turkish-mother-tongue and English-mother-tongue translators, and the other one was starting the translation without a predefined *skopos*.

The translation process of *Eşik* consisted of three stages. The play was first translated into English by Volga Yılmaz-Gümüş, a Turkish-mother-tongue translator and a faculty member in the Department of Translation and Interpreting of Anadolu University. Translation into a non-mother tongue (also second language or foreign language, (for a discussion of these terms see Pavlović, 2007, pp. 3-5) has been one of the most discussed issues in Translation Studies. Particularly with regard to literary translation, translation into a non-mother tongue has traditionally been disapproved of in Translation Studies "in Western cultures with a dominant language" (Pokorn, 2005, p. ix). The translation of a Turkish literary work into English by a non-native speaker of English may certainly pose certain challenges. In texts such as *Eşik*, where the source text abounds with linguistic and cultural elements that require specific interest, i.e. folk songs, nursery rhymes, idioms, proverbs, figures of speech, and the realia, it may be of particular importance to have full and nuanced comprehension of subtleties in the source text. While it is easier for Turkish-mother-tongue translators to comprehend any subtle details in the source text (apprehension and interpretation of the source), it is mostly difficult for them to render the subtleties into English naturally and fluently (re-stylisation of the source).[2] Collaboration was required at this point. Such collaboration was important as "[t]he better the translator's understanding of the work, the more pre-determined is the choice of translation solutions, and the greater the translator's artistic and linguistic talent, the more refined the available means enabling him to arrive at its appropriate interpretation" (Levý, 2011, p. 56). After the play was translated by Volga Yılmaz-Gümüş, it was revised, and in some cases, retranslated, by Jonathan Ross, a faculty member in the Translation and Interpreting Studies Department of Boğaziçi University and also a native speaker of English. This is not an exceptional practice in Turkey, where translation into the second language is quite common. In the case of Turkish-English literary translation, there are a lot of examples of collaboration between Turkish-mother-tongue and English-mother-tongue translators/writers, probably because there are relatively few translators of Turkish origin who are completely bilingual in English and Turkish and feel entirely comfortable translating into English (e.g. Erdağ M. Göknar, Aron Aji, Güneli Gün, Murat Nemat Nejat). Likewise, there are just as few translators of Anglo-American heritage who have learnt Turkish (and Turkish culture) to a level where they are able to translate independently. As acknowledged by Pokorn (2005, p. ix), "literary translation from "minor" into "major" languages has always been carried out by local translators, often working in a pair with a stylistic

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[2] For further information on the three stages of the translator's work, i.e. apprehension of the source, interpretation of the source and re-stylisation of the source, see Levý (2011, p. 31).

advisor for the target language". There are many cases of collaboration, such as Saliha Paker and Mel Kenne (translators of novels by Latife Tekin and of poems by poets such as Enis Batur, Gülten Akın), Randy Blasing and Mutlu Konuk (translation of Nazım Hikmet's poems) and Orhan Pamuk's close involvement in the English translation of his novels. The third stage was the translation of folk songs. Jonathan Ross translated most of these songs, and collaborated with Alaz Pesen for the translation of some songs.

Another concern in the translation process was the *skopos* of the target text. When the translators started translating *Eşik* from Turkish into English, there was no predefined *skopos* for the translation. A digital copy of the translation was required to apply to international festivals. Thus, the target audience of the translation was publishers, directors, and actors from around the world. As argued by Nord (2001, p. 185), translators "have a special responsibility with regard to their partners" in the translation process. Nord's approach to translation requires functionalism and loyalty (not in the sense of faithfulness) for a translation to achieve its communicative effect for target readers. In this sense, functionalism refers to "the aim of making the target text work for target culture receivers" and loyalty is "taking into account the intentions and expectations of *all* partners in the communicative interaction named translation" (Nord, 2001, p. 195).

> Loyalty in the sense of considering the partners' expectations (or subjective theories) is usually not a problem in the translation of texts whose intended function can be clearly derived either from situational clues or from the text itself. But it is an important complementary criterion when the gap between source and target cultures or situations is so large that analogies are hard to detect and when it is impossible that the source-text sender's communicative intentions find a target in the target-culture addressees. In these cases, the translator (or the commissioner, or both, in co-operation or negotiation) has to decide what kind of function the target text can possibly achieve in the target culture. (Nord, 2001, p. 195)

In this particular case of translating *Eşik*, loyalty became a major concern as the translators embarked on the translation commission without a specific function and specific target audience, hence without a specific target culture. Any publisher, English reader, or theatre company that produces plays in English could be the target group of this translation. The English translation has not been published yet. Thus, in Aaltonen's terms, it is an introductory translation that may be circulated as a hard copy or electronically, with the possibility of being staged by a theatre company or being published. Given that translation is a matter of making decisions and choosing from a variety of options, functionalism and loyalty are the main factors that potentially affect the translator's decisions. Difficulties arise, however, when the target audience and target function are not specifically defined. Functionality is achieved if the target text "works" for potential target readers – whether they be ordinary readers, or stage directors and actors. The present study, focusing on the translation of idioms and metaphors, discusses the functionality of translation decisions, considering whether they are comprehensible by potential readers and whether they provide a vivid image of the original scene in the readers' mind. Given that speakability and performability are

important in translating for the theatre (important factors that respond to directors' and actors' needs), they were among the factors that affected the loyalty principle in this particular translation. However, given that the translated text has not been staged yet, in this literary criticism, performability is a concept that has governed the translation process based on the translators' assumptions. Furthermore, as the translators were the only actors that played a role in the translation process, the collaboration aspect of translating for the theatre was not taken into consideration. A final concern about the loyalty is that the attempt to convey the author's stylistic choices to the target text was evaluated as part of this principle.

4. Translation of Idiomatic and Metaphorical Expressions in Eşik

Hasan Erkek's play *Eşik* presents many culture-bound stylistic and linguistic elements, including folk songs, idioms, proverbs, and metaphors. The translation of these elements is of particular importance given that they play a significant role in the construction of the play, in Levý's (2011, p. 99) words, because they are a part of a higher-order whole such as characterization or the author's style. In this particular case, the play itself acknowledges the eloquence of language inspired by the pastoral nature of rural life in the conversation of two neighbors (one living in the town for a longer period of time and the other who has recently moved to the town from a village) (see Act II, Tableau II):

> MEHPARE   Exactly… how nicely you put it. You should have been a poet, İpek... In fact, everyone in your family has a way with words. You all speak so eloquently. Long may that continue (taps gently on a table).

> FERİDE   That's the way we mountain-folk are. Everybody warbles like a nightingale. The language of the animals, from tiny insects to wild wolves, affects the way we speak. When people are talking, it's like you can hear water babbling. It's so beautiful it gives pleasure to both the speaker and the listener.

These stylistic elements are "indivisible lexical units" that "represent a new semantic attribute" requiring "substitution by a similar whole in the target language" (Levý, 2011, p. 99). Such language varieties typically make fictional texts earn a literary value. Translators need "vivid linguistic imagination and inventiveness" to make the most appropriate choice from "a variety of expressive means" (Levý, 2011, p. 55) in literary translation. Given that the translated text is a play, a translator's choices in finding a functional and loyal equivalent may be restricted. Even when the text is not translated for being staged by a specific theatre company, these elements need to be understandable by readers and other receiving groups, as well as being speakable by potential actors. This part of the paper provides an analysis of some idiomatic and metaphorical expressions selected from *Eşik* and sets out to explain the translator's decisions in specific cases.

Idioms and fixed expressions pose two problems in translation: recognizing and interpreting these expressions and conveying their various aspects into the target language (Baker, 2017, p. 71). Idioms are expressions with a figurative meaning that is different from the literal meaning of the individual words that make up the expression. Metaphors are defined as "a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is used in a non-basic sense, this non-basic sense suggesting a likeness or analogy with another more basic sense of the same word or phrase" (Dickins, Hervey, & Higgins, 2002, p. 147). Thus, translators are first required to recognize and interpret the meaning of an idiom or metaphor in the source text. Afterwards, they can adopt various approaches to translation affected by a variety of factors including their creativity and ability to use the target language, the possibilities of the target language, the target audience, the author's style, and the text as a whole. Starting with Vinay and Darbelnet's seminal work *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais* (1958), Translation Studies literature presents a wide range of typologies of translation techniques, strategies, procedures, solutions, etc., with different names, but with more or less the same solution types (see, for example, Newmark, 1988; Levý, 2011; Pym, 2016). For the purpose of this study, using Baker's (2017) typology of translation strategies was more practical as it specifically focuses on the translation of idioms and fixed expressions. Baker (2017, p. 77-86) suggests six strategies for the translation of these lexical items: using an idiom of similar meaning and form, using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, borrowing the source language idiom, translation by paraphrase, translation by omission of a play on idiom, and translation by omission of the entire idiom. This analysis provides examples of the different strategies adopted in the translation into English of the idiomatic and metaphorical expressions in Eşik using Baker's typology and in consideration of Nord's functionality and loyalty principles.

The first example, taken from Act I Tableau I of the play, is related to the translation of the idiom 'yüzünü kara çıkarmak'. In this scene, Kerem, the son of the family that has recently moved from a village to the town, is about to leave home to go to a university in Istanbul since he was accepted into the medical school of this university. As the family is still drowning in conflicts and challenges of life in their town, life in Istanbul, a much larger city, seems terrifying to all family members. Kerem tries to console them especially his mother, Feride.

ST (p. 19-20)

FERİDE	İnşallah bundan sonra her şey gönlünce olur. İnşallah her şey yolunda gider de emeklerin boşa çıkmaz.
KEREM	Tabii iyi olacak ana. Meraklanman boşuna senin. Şimdiye kadar **yüzünü hiç kara çıkardım mı**? Göreceksin, (*Şakayla*) İstanbul'u fethedeceğim. … Bekle İstanbul, bekle geliyorum.

TT

FERİDE	I hope everything will be as you wish from now on. That everything will go well and that none of your work will be in vain, inshallah[3].
KEREM	Of course everything's going to be fine, mum. There's no need to worry. **Have I ever let you down?** You'll see, (*jokingly*) I'm going to conquer Istanbul. I'm on the threshold of conquering Istanbul.

'Yüzünü kara çıkarmak (birinin)' is a frequently used idiom in Turkish. Literally translated as 'turning one's face into black', this idiom is defined as "utanmasını sağlamak, utandırmak ya da utanmasına yol açmak" (Püsküllüoğlu, 1998, p. 835). This means 'embarrassing someone especially by not living up to their expectations'. Translating this idiom literally would have been meaningless (not to mention potentially offensive) to the target audience. It is not always possible to find an idiom with similar or even different lexical items that has the same meaning in the target language. The idiom was translated into the target language as 'Have I ever let you down?', in other words it was translated by paraphrase. The Cambridge Dictionary defines the phrasal verb 'let down someone' as "to cause someone to be disappointed, often because you have failed to do what you promised". Translation by paraphrase is, as noted by Baker (2017, p. 81), "the most common way of translating idioms when a match cannot be found in the target language". In this specific case, the translators used a phrasal verb of similar meaning, but the form is obviously dissimilar, achieving semantic equivalence in the target text. Using a phrasal verb, rather than a more neutral verb such as 'disappoint', helps translators to convey the author's figurative language to a certain degree. It is also of note that this idiom does not pose a significant translation problem (but a translation difficulty) as it has a semantic, though not a formal, equivalent in English.

To sum up, the translators were clearly able to recognize 'yüzünü kara çıkarmak' in the target text as an idiom, and conveyed it in the target culture with a phrase that is semantically equivalent. The translators were able to handle this creative process and make an appropriate translation choice, "imagin[ing] the realities they are expressing, reaching beyond the text to identify the characters, situations and ideas that lie behind it" (Levý, 2011, p. 34). It may therefore be concluded that the translators' choice was functional as it allows target culture receivers to have a vivid picture of the scene in which Kerem tries to relieve his mother's anxiety by promising not to disappoint her because of his choice to live in Istanbul. The translators' choice also meets Nord's

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[3] The word 'inshallah' is included in some English dictionaries now, many native English speakers would still think of this as a foreign word. Borrowing 'inshallah' in the translation does maintain the culture of the original. However, this translation decision may compromise being immediately understandable for the audience when the play is staged. This decision goes beyond the scope of this paper, but needs to be discussed with similar examples in a further study.

loyalty principle given that it responds to the expectations of other partners, as well as target readers or viewers. Although an idiom of similar meaning and form was not used in the target text, rendering the idiom with a phrasal verb with figurative meaning had the intention of recreating the aesthetic effect of the author (Delabastita, 2011, p. 70). Furthermore, this choice will not affect performability or speakability when the play is staged and will thus cater to directors' and actors' expectations.

The second example, a short excerpt from a conversation between parents in the family that has recently moved from village to the town, is rich in idiomatic and metaphorical expressions. Feride, the mother, is worried about their new life and the future of their children, whereas Halil, the father, promises his wife that a bright future is waiting for them. In this conversation, idioms and metaphors are used as literary devices to convey Feride's concerns to readers in a more vivid way, and to make Halil's efforts to console her more persuasively.

ST (p. 22)

FERİDE	Korkuyorum bey... **Bir kaya yerinden yuvarlanınca bin parça olur!** Biz de öyle olacağız diye korkuyorum. Ananla babanı köyde bıraktık... Koyunları sattık... Küheylan'ı şimdi verdin... Kerem gurbete gidecek... Biz burada yabancıyız **Güz gelince yaprakları sararıp dökülen bir ağaç gibiyiz...** Ne olacak bizim sonumuz... (*Ağlamaklı olur*)
HALİL	**Gönlünü ferah tut, bir şey olmaz...** Her şeyin üstesinden geleceğiz **inşallah**... Hele şu dükkana bir ortak olalım... Her şey yoluna girecek o zaman... **Bir elimiz yağda bir elimiz balda olacak...**

TT

FERİDE	I'm worried, Halil, really worried... **When a rock rolls away from where it belongs, it breaks into a thousand pieces!** I'm afraid that the same will happen to us. We left your mother and father back in the village. We sold the sheep. Now you've sold Küheylan. Kerem is off to another city. And we have no one else here, no friends, no family. **We're like a tree whose leaves turn yellow and fall to the ground in the autumn.** What's going to happen to us? (*About to cry.*)
HALİL	**Don't get downhearted.** We'll manage, *inshallah*. And once we become partners in that grocer's, everything will be fine. **We'll live like sultans.**

In this excerpt, the translators resorted to the strategy of using lexical items of similar meaning and similar form for the translation of metaphors. Feride uses the metaphor of a rock breaking down into pieces and a tree that loses all its leaves in the autumn to describe the family's situation after moving from the village. The metaphors

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of tree, sea, and rock used in these sentences are clear to the target audience as well as the source audience. Using metaphors of similar meaning and similar form was an important way of reflecting the language style of the 'village to town' migrant family. Using the same metaphors in the target language makes it possible to convey the author's rustic and poetic style in the target text without any loss in meaning or style. The translators achieved both semantic and stylistic equivalence in this translation.

In the same conversation, 'bir eli yağda, bir eli balda olmak', literally 'having one hand in butter and the other in honey', is defined as "varlık ve bolluk içinde bulunmak, çok rahat yaşamak" (Püsküllüoğlu, 1998, p. 179), which means living in wealth and prosperity and living a comfortable life. This was translated into English as 'living like sultans', adopting the strategy of using an idiom of similar meaning but completely dissimilar form. This strategy refers to the use of different lexical items that are still idiomatic expressions to express the similar idea in the target language. The use of this strategy, which is one of the best ways to achieve the communicative effect of an idiom, relies heavily on the translator's mastery of the target language. An important point to consider is the cultural load of source-language and target-language idioms. In this example, the idiomatic expression is replaced by an expression that is of metaphoric in nature but is more familiar to the target audience. The translators conveyed the idea that the people speaking would be leading a very prosperous life. The translators could have expressed this with a more domesticating idiom like 'living the life of Riley' but chose to Turkify the English idiom 'to live like kings' into 'to live like the sultans', bringing it closer to the target audience but also keeping the source-culture reference with the use of 'sultan'.

In brief, the translators were able to recognize the idiom 'bir eli yağda, bir eli balda olmak' in the source text, and translate it into the target language as 'living like sultans' by using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form. This strategy helped translators not only to achieve semantic equivalence in the target text but also to convey a sort of source-culture flavor to the target culture without any loss of meaning. It may therefore be concluded that the translators' choice was functional as it allows target culture receivers to feel Halil's aspiration to lead a prosperous life after the family moved to the town. The translation decision also fulfills the loyalty principle as it does not disregard the author's stylistic choice and is speakable and performable for potential actors.

In the same excerpt, another idiom 'gönlünü ferah tutmak', literally meaning 'to keep one's heart relieved', exists in another but similar form in the dictionary 'gönlünü serin tutmak', literally meaning 'to keep one's heart cool'. This is defined as "kaygılanmamak, geniş düşünmek, soğukkanlı olmak" (Püsküllüoğlu, 1998, pp. 379-380), meaning 'not to get anxious, to think broadly, to be cool-headed'. This idiom was translated as 'not to get downhearted', i.e. not to feel sad and discouraged. This is another example of translating by using an idiomatic expression of similar meaning but dissimilar form. The translators adopted this strategy to ensure semantic equivalence in

the target text, deferring the author's style. The translation is both functional and loyal as it conveys the sensual reality that the characters experience and the author's message, while also not compromising the performability of the target text.

The third example is from a conversation between the mother, Feride, and her daughter, İpek. After moving to the town, Halil starts a business with a partner. However, it soon becomes obvious that the so-called friendly and honest business partner goes behind Halil's back to make extra profit. In this scene, Feride and İpek are talking about Halil's deceitful business partner.

ST (p. 52-53)

İPEK	Ortağı da ne kadar kötü bir adammış değil mi ana?
FERİDE	Babanın anlattığına göre çok kurnazmış. **Şeytana pabucunu ters giydiren cinstenmiş.** Çıkarı için her şeyi yaparmış.

TT

İPEK	His partner's such a nasty man, isn't he, mum?
FERİDE	From what your dad says, he's really sly. **The kind of man who could even outwit the devil.** He'd do anything just to make a little profit.

Literally meaning 'the kind of man who makes the devil put his shoes on the wrong foot', this idiomatic expression is used to qualify people that achieve their ends by deceit. This expression provides an example of translation by using an idiom of similar meaning, and similar form (in this case, using a similar metaphor) and dissimilar form together. This may also be considered an example of translating by omission of a play in the idiom. The metaphor of devil, almost a universal one, which is used to denote the wicked characteristics of the person mentioned, is kept in the translation. The metaphor of 'putting the shoes on the wrong foot', however, was removed in the translation. The metaphor of devil in the target language is used with a more neutral verb in this idiom, i.e. outwit, which provides a semantic rendering of the idiom in Turkish.

Also in this translation, the translators recognized and interpreted the idiom in the source text, and translated it by using an idiom in the target language, a translation choice that is both functional and loyal. Keeping the metaphor of the devil in the target text enables target readers to picture the business partner as a dishonest person (functionality). By replacing the Turkish idiom with another idiom in the target language, the translators respect the author's style, namely the creation of characters that frequently use figurative and metaphoric expressions which is suggestive of their rural background (functionality and loyalty). What is more, the performability of the text is not at risk due to this choice (loyalty). By using this strategy, despite the tendency towards domestication or the substitution of foreignness, the source-text reference (reference to devil) is not completely renounced but embedded into the translation.

The final example is taken from a conversation between Feride and Halil. Life in the town has become more complicated and difficult for the family as their efforts and hopes to lead a better life disappear one by one. Feride and Halil talk about how dishonest people are in the town, particularly Halil's business partner. Halil was deceived by his partner and could not even figure out how his partner had done it.

ST (p. 54)

FERİDE   Ne kadar çok yorulmuşsun.

HALİL   Her şey mertçe olsaydı, **bana mısın demezdim**. **Saman altında su yürütmelere aklım ermiyor benim.** Ama devir öyle adamların devri. Bugün, ben yokken mal almış. Faturalar yüklüce. Ama içerdeki mal az. Sattı desem kasada para az. Diyorum ki yoksa toptancıyla anlaşıp bir dolap mı çevirdiler. Belki de kasadan para mı alıyor. **Aklım kesmiyor.** Ne vicdansız herifler şu şehirliler.

TT

FERİDE   You really are tired.

HALİL   If everybody played by the book, **I wouldn't let anything bother me**. But **I can't get used to all these tricks**. I'm sorry to say but we're living in the age of rogues. Today, while I was out of the shop, my partner bought some goods. The bill was huge, but there weren't many goods in the packaging. He can't have sold them, because there wasn't much money in the cash register. Maybe he's got some scam going together with the wholesaler. Perhaps they're stealing money from the till. **I just can't get it.** These city people just have no conscience whatsoever.

This is another excerpt that provides several examples of Turkish idioms. The first one, 'bana mısın dememek', is used to describe someone that 'does not care or does not show any reaction', or 'something that does not change despite all efforts'. Here Halil uses this idiom to mention that he would not care what others do, or get worried about business life, if people were honest with each other. This idiom was translated as 'I wouldn't let anything bother me'. The strategy of translation by paraphrase was preferred as a match could not be found in the target language. Halil then uses two idioms in one sentence to complain that he just cannot understand what people do secretly in business: *Saman altından su yürütmelere aklım ermiyor benim*. 'Saman altından su yürütmek', which is used in noun form in this example, literally means 'to make water flow under the straw'. In this context the idiom describes the situations in which people do something secretly to deceive others. In the translation, these situations were defined as 'tricks'. 'Aklı ermemek', which also appears as 'aklı

kesmemek', simply means 'not to understand or comprehend'.[4] These were translated into the target language as 'not to get used to' and 'not to get'. These examples also illustrate the strategy of translation by paraphrase. Unlike many other examples in the English translation of Eşik, the translators chose to sacrifice the idiomatic meaning in these examples and opted for non-figurative language use. The translations may be considered functional to a certain degree as there is no substantial shift in meaning and the author's message is conveyed clearly. The target readers or audience can picture a scene where Halil, a man that had left rural life behind with his family, has given up on his dreams and has become overwhelmed by despair. The translation choices, however, inevitably led to some stylistic and aesthetic losses in this paragraph.

5. Conclusion

Hasan Erkek's play *Eşik*, focusing on the problems of adaptation from rural to urban life, is rich in cultural motifs, which are in most cases reflected in the language use of the characters in the form of folk songs (sound, rhythm and rhyme), idioms, metaphors, and realia. The examples of translating metaphors and idioms provided in this paper raises the question of understandability, in addition to the issue of performability as discussed above. Directors or scriptwriters may make changes to the text to ensure performability, as suggested by Bassnett. However, it is difficult for them to ensure the understandability of a text full of references to the source culture. Here arises the difference between prose translation and drama translation. If the text is translated to be staged (or with the possibility of being staged) for a general audience, then the above elements should be understandable to the audience of the stage play. In literary text translation, translators may prefer to keep source-text references and connotations in order to stay attached to the language use and style preference of the author, and allow the readership to undertake the responsibility to do research about the foreign elements in the target text. However, in theatre translation, there is limited time for the audience to understand the context of the play, and foreign elements pose the risk of hindering understandability. On the other hand, foreignness should also be retained to a certain degree in translation to reflect the cultural context in which the play was created. In this respect, the translators made decisions between the two extremes of what the Israeli translation scholar Gideon Toury terms 'adequacy' and 'acceptability', not by adopting either one of the two approaches for translation decisions throughout the text. The considerations of enabling performability and speakability, while retaining the linguistic and stylistic elements of the source text, lend a certain flavor to the translation of *Eşik*. In order to ensure understandability as well as performability, the translators did not opt to dogmatically conserve the foreignness of the text. However, substitution at the level of adaptation was not preferred either, in order not to ignore the culture from which the play emerged. Without a specified *skopos* of translating either for the page or for the stage, translation decisions were taken peculiar to each

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[4] The definitions of idioms in this excerpt are partly based on the definitions in TDK Atasözleri ve Deyimler Sözlüğü (Turkish Language Association Dictionary of Proverbs and Idioms), retrieved from https://sozluk.gov.tr.

specific case. The translators resorted to the strategy of using an idiom of similar meaning and form where possible. Another strategy they adopted in this particular case was using an idiom of similar meaning but of dissimilar form, in other words an idiom of similar meaning with different lexical items to convey the author's message and to respect his style. They used the strategy of translating by paraphrase when the idiom did not have an equivalent in English, considering both understandability and performability of the text. Where possible, they rendered the idiom with a phrasal verb with figurative meaning with the intention of retaining the aesthetic effect of the source text. There were several cases where the idiomatic language had to be sacrificed, which inescapably led to stylistic losses in the target text. However, all things considered, the translators' decisions were functional and loyal, and responded to the expectations of all (possible) partners of the target text.

Acknowledgement

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