



Application of Vinay and Darbelnet's Model to the Translations of the Poems of a 20th Century Poetess from the Middle East: An Appraisal of the Translations of Parvin Etesami's Poems

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Abstract

The works of Parvin Etesami, the 20th century Persian poetess, are translated into English by a number of insiders and outsiders. This study investigated the English translations of selected poems of Parvin Etesami by Alaeddin Pazargadi, a native Persian speaker, from the book A Collection of Parvin Etesami's Poems, and the translation from the book A Nightingale's Lament by Heshmat Moayyad and Margaret Arent Madelung, a joint work by a native and a non-native Persian speaker. The theoretical framework to analyze the translations was the translation model proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet which includes two primary strategies for translation: the direct and the oblique (which take after literal versus free taxonomies, respectively) along with seven concrete procedures. Effort was made to examine the frequency of strategies and procedures employed by either translation. The results revealed that literal was the most frequent procedure utilized in both translations with a considerable difference compared to other procedures implying that both translators adopted a word-for-word approach rather than the free method of translation. However, Pazargadi, as a Persian native speaker, employed the literal procedure slightly more than the non-native translator, Margaret Arent Madelung.

Keywords: Parvin Etesami, Vinay and Darbelnet's translation model, direct translation, oblique translation, literal translation.

Introduction

Parvin Etesami (1907 - 1941) is a well-known contemporary Iranian poetess whose poems are widely read and cherished by many who appreciate Persian poetry. Parvin's introduction to the English-speaking world can be well justified by her important place in the contemporary Persian literature. Parvin presents us with a colorful world of objects and natural creatures that reveal a wealth and diversity of thought which is unique in the post-classical poetry of Iran¹.

This study scrutinized two different English translations of Parvin Etesami's selected poems. One is the translation by Alaeddin Pazargadi, an Iranian author and translator, a native Persian speaker who published his translation in 2002 in the book A Collection of Parvin Etesami's Poems, which, as he phrases, "intended to make the reader familiar with the poems of a young Iranian woman who began life a few years before the First World War and died at the beginning of the Second World War, and during this short span of her life, she won a great name as a poetess in Iran"². The second translation is a joint effort by a native Persian translator, Heshmat Moayyad, and a non-native translator, Margaret Arent Madelung, published in the book A Nightingale's Lament published in 1985.

According to the translators, "this combination allowed for accuracy in the translation through native knowledge of the original Persian and for a re-phrasing and idiomatic rendering in poetic form that would meet the requirements of English"¹. Moayyad and Madelung assert that their translation is faithful and do not impose stylistic characteristics of a foreign literature on the structure of English language and idea¹. In their introduction to the translation of Parvin's poems, Moayyad and Madelung contend that Parvin's poems "express the old spiritual and intellectual qualities, moral values, and social commitment with a new dedication, rare sincerity, and touching sensitivity"¹.

So far, several major models of translation analysis have been introduced by different theorists. Theorists have different approaches toward these two key notions. Nida³ refers to them as "two basic orientations" and uses the terms *formal equivalence* and *dynamic equivalence* for literal versus free translations, respectively, where "formal equivalence focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content," while dynamic equivalence is "the principle of equivalent effect". The term communicative translation used by Newmark⁴ takes after Nida's dynamic equivalence, while semantic translation has resemblances to Nida's formal equivalence.

In a similar vein, Schleiermacher⁵ distinguishes two methods for translation, namely alienating as opposed to naturalizing, which stand for literal and free translations, respectively. Literal and free approach are then developed by Vinay and Darbelnet⁶ as direct and oblique strategies, respectively.

As per the researchers' knowledge, scanty research has been conducted to analyze the English translations of Parvin's poems; however, studies have been conducted on the original work of Parvin studying it from different angles. For instance, Mosharraf⁷ considered the concept of modernity and the neoclassic approach in Parvin Etesami's poetry collection. Zou Alfaghari and Mirzaei⁸ delved into gender and class discriminations from Parvin's point of view. Ibnorrasool and Mohammadi Fesharaki⁹ focused on the influence of an Egyptian advocate of women's liberty's writings on the poems of Parvin. Sharifpour and Marjzadeh¹⁰ examined various moods on Parvin's moral advices. Nooraie and Azizi¹¹ evaluated the grammar of narrative in didactic literature in Parvin's debates.

Gerami Gilan¹² conducted a research on the different types of nostalgia in Parvin Etesami's poems. Furthermore, Vinay and Darbelnet's⁶ translation model has been used as the theoretical framework to analyze Persian-English pairs of texts comprising studies on literary texts including the analyses by Delzendehrooy and Karimnia¹³, Shahbaiki and Yousefi¹⁴, Yarahmadzahi, Beikian, and Nadri¹⁵, Iranmanesh and Azadmanesh¹⁶, Behtash and Moghadam¹⁷, Sharei¹⁸, and Shabani, Emadi and Daftari¹⁹. Besides, not only Vinay and Darbelnet's⁶ translation model was applied to the literary writings, but also studies were conducted on non-literary texts including Shakernia²⁰, Lotfollahi and Moinzadeh²¹, and Khatibzadeh and Sameri²².

Review on the Works and Life of Parvin Etesami

Parvin Etesami was born in Tabriz in 1907 and was brought to Tehran early in her life by her family. Her father, Yussef Etesami, who was friends with some great poets of the time, was an author and translator who familiarized his only daughter with the classical Persian literature. In her childhood, Parvin attended the weekly meetings of the literary circles in their house, occasionally presenting her own poems. In fact, her poetic gift emerged upon his father's encouragement when she was only about seven or eight years of age. Parvin was greatly concerned about her country and the difficulties of people's lives such as poverty, injustice, and the Iranian women's plight at that time, frequently mentioned in her poems. In 1934, she married a cousin of her father which apparently turned into the most disappointing event in her life. She lived only two months with her husband in Kermanshah, west of Iran. Parvin died in 1941, about three years after the demise of her father. She is buried in Qom in Iran, next to her father in their family vault.

Parvin composed 158 poems that were published in the first edition of her *divan* (poetry collection).

The second edition of her *divan*, posthumously published by her brother, included an additional 53 poems. Parvin wrote Persian verses in the traditional forms of *ghazal*, *qaside*, *masnavi* and *qet'e*, which are the names of different formats of Persian poems with their peculiar rhyme order and meter. The most noticeable technique used by Parvin is that of *monazere* (debate) between different persons or objects through which, Parvin presents two opposing viewpoints and tries to set out her own judgment about some critical questions particularly regarding the individual and social life. According to Moayyad and Madelung¹, "between her and Forough Farrokhzad (1934-1967), an influential Iranian poetess who rules the arena of the Persian literary world a few years later, stands a difference in thought equal to centuries".

Theoretical Framework: This study examined selected poems of Parvin Etesami. The theoretical framework was Vinay and Darbelnet's⁶ model. Originally, they conducted a comparative analysis between English and French to form their theory. However, their model is currently used to compare source texts with target texts in any given pair. What follows explains the two strategies and seven procedures proposed by these theorists.

Direct Translation: Borrowing: this procedure is implemented when the target language lacks an equivalent for the word or when the translator chooses to "add local color" to the target text²².

Calque: "a special kind of borrowing" in which the constituent words or the lexical components of an expression in the source language are transferred literally to the target language²³.

Literal translation: "word-for-word" translation. It is usual between those languages that are similar in terms of root and culture. It is "the authors' prescription for good translation"²³. Deviation from this type of translation is allowed only when the translation resulting from it is unacceptable²³.

Oblique Translation

Parvin Transposition: when one part of speech is changed by another while the meaning remains the same.

Modulation: change of "point of view". This procedure is used when a literal translation that is correct in terms of grammar, results in an "unsuitable, unidiomatic or awkward" translation²³.

Equivalence: this procedure is used when two languages practice different "stylistic or structural means" to describe an identical situation²³. One example for this procedure is when an idiom in the source language is translated to an idiom in the target language.

Adaptation: "changing the cultural reference when a situation in the source culture does not exist in the target culture"²³.

The modulation procedure is subdivided into the following categories according to Vinay and Darbelnet⁶: i. Abstract for concrete: using concrete instead of abstract words or vice versa. ii. Explicative modulation: giving the cause for the effect. iii. The part for the whole: using a specific rather than a general term. iv. One part for another: translating one part of something for another part. v. Reversal of terms: utilizing a reversed term that makes the language sound natural. vi. Negation of the opposite: employing a positive for a negative term or vice versa. vii. Active to passive: exercising passive sentences for an active one, or vice versa. viii. Space for time: implementing a term signifying space for a term representing time. ix. Exchange of intervals for limits: using a limit indication for an interval phrase. x. Change of symbol: applying different symbols in the source and target text.

Methodology

Table-1 demonstrates the corpus of this study, including seven poems of Parvin using two English translations by Alaeddin Pazargadi based on the book *A Collection of Parvin Etesami's Poems*² and Heshmat Moayyad accompanied by Margaret Arent Madelung using the book *A Nightingale's Lament*¹. In order to enhance the reliability of the data, two experts (M.A. in translation studies) analyzed each poem independently line by line and identified the strategies and procedures, and then compared the obtained results at the end of their analysis. The cases of disagreement between the two analysts were given to a third expert who had been kept uninformed of the decisions of the other two analysts. After receiving the results from the third analysis, the two (out of three) similar analyses were selected to be included in the study. As a result, inter-analyst reliability was estimated to identify the degree of agreement among the raters. The disagreement cases were 20 and 15 out of 224 and 141 cases from the translations by Moayyad and Madelung, and Pazargadi, respectively, denoting an agreement of 91.1% in Moayyad and Madelung's translation and 89.4% in Pazargadi's translation between the first two analysts.

Table-1: List of Selected Poems.

By Moayyad	By Pazargadi	Poem Title
The Orphan	Fatherless	بی پدر
My Epitaph	Elegy Written on my Tombstone	این قطعه را برای سنگ مزار خود سروده ام
An Orphan's Tear	The Orphan's Tears	اشک یتیم
Wishes	Aspirations	آرزوها
To My Father	An Elegy for My Father	این قطعه را در تعزیت پدر بزرگوار خود سروده ام
Cat and Mouse	The Deceit of Conciliation	فریب آشتی
The Garlic and the onion	Inopportune Reproach	نکوهش بیجا

Afterward, the data were placed under the relevant procedures defined by Vinay and Darbelnet⁶ so as to count the frequency of each applied procedure. In order to better display the employed procedures by the translators, Table-2 was provided that includes the number and percentage of each procedure utilized by the translators. Also, Figure-1 and Figure-2 were presented to clarify the percentage of each strategy employed by the translators.

Results and discussion

After applying Vinay and Darbelnet's⁶ strategies and procedures to the selected poems of Parvin Etesami using two English translations, one by Pazargadi and the other by Moayyad and Madelung, the following results were obtained. Table-2 indicates the number of cases that each procedure was employed by the translators, as well as the percentage of its frequency. As it is revealed, the most commonly used procedure by each translator is literal, 50.9% and 51.8% by Moayyad and Madelung, and Pazargadi, respectively. Moayyad and Madelung then frequently used transposition followed by the part for the whole, abstract for concrete, change of symbol, reversal of terms and explicative modulation. Then, equivalence, active to passive, and negation of the opposite were utilized by Moayyad and Madelung equally with 2.2% of the cases each. However, the least employed procedures were borrowing and exchange of intervals for limits with 0.4% (one case each). Ultimately, Moayyad and Madelung had not used calque, adaptation, one part for another and space for time. On the other hand, after the literal method, the following procedures were implemented by Pazargadi respectively: change of symbol, the part for the whole and abstract for concrete (equally), transposition, and explicative modulation. Pazargadi used adaptation and equivalence equally with 2.8%. Similarly, negation of the opposite, one part for another, and reversal of terms were used 1.4% each. The infrequent procedure used by Pazargadi was active to passive (one case only). Finally, Pazargadi used borrowing, calque, and exchange of intervals for limits on no occasion. Moreover, as illustrated in Figure-1 and Figure-2, both translators generally used the direct strategy, yet, Pazargadi's use of the direct method was slightly more than Moayyad and Madelung's.

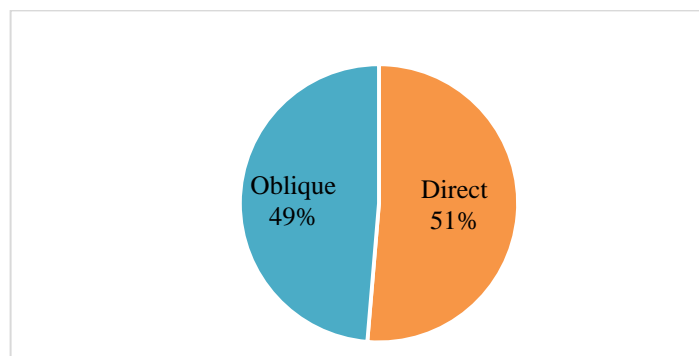


Figure-1: Percentage of each strategy employed by Moayyad & Madelung.

Table-2: Number and percentage of each procedure employed by each translator.

	Procedure	Moayyad & Madelung	Moayyad & Madelung %	Pazargadi	Pazargadi %
Direct	Borrowing	1	0.4%	0	0.0%
	Calque	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Literal	114	50.9%	73	51.8%
Oblique	Transposition	27	12.1%	10	7.1%
	Adaptation	0	0.0%	4	2.8%
	Equivalence	5	2.2%	4	2.8%
	The Part for the Whole	20	8.9%	12	8.5%
	Change of Symbol	13	5.8%	14	9.9%
	Abstract for Concrete	14	6.3%	12	8.5%
	Active to Passive	5	2.2%	1	0.7%
	Negation of the Opposite	5	2.2%	2	1.4%
	One Part for Another	0	0.0%	2	1.4%
	Explicative Modulation	9	4.0%	5	3.5%
	Reversal of Terms	10	4.5%	2	1.4%
	Exchange of Intervals for Limits	1	0.4%	0	0.0%
	Space for Time	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

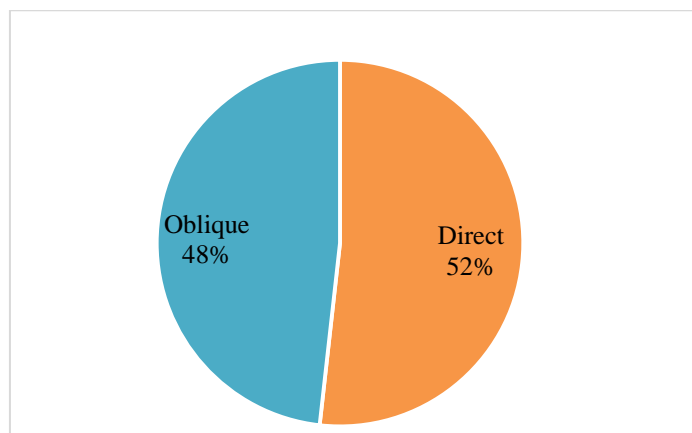


Figure-2: Percentage of each strategy employed by Pazargadi.

As previously mentioned, both translators had a similar trend in using Vinay and Darbelnet's⁶ procedures when translating the selected poems of Parvin. The following instances indicate resemblance in Pazargadi and Moayyad's translation process. However, due to the alterations available in these two

translations, examples of different procedures applied to a particular line are also provided. The line below is an example in which the translators used different translation strategies. Pazargadi, as a Persian native speaker used word for word translation (literal procedure) while Moayyad and Madelung, a native and a non-native translator, utilized an idiomatic expression as *heeding* that means *take notice of*, for the word گوش دادن (which means *listening*).

اگر که گوش به پند تو حیل ساز کنیم

Pazargadi if I listen to the advice of you tricky one (p.274) Literal

Moayyad if I *heeded* the advice of a trickster like you (p.136) Equivalence

Also, in the following line, Pazargadi translated the Persian passive sentence to an English passive sentence using a literal method; however, this line is changed by Moayyad and Madelung to an active sentence.

یوسف نام نهاند و به گرگت دادند

Pazargadi	You were named Joseph and were given to the wolf (p.387)	Literal
Moayyad	Your name was Yussef; they delivered him up to the wolf (p.198)	Passive to active

On the other hand, in the following examples, both translators had a similar trend. In the line below, literal procedure is applied by both translators. *د* implies *affliction* and *suffering*, but it is translated word for word as *hearth's blood*.

این اشک دیده من و خون دل شماست

Pazargadi	This is the tear of my eyes, and the blood of your heart (p.119)	Literal
Moayyad	That's my eye's tear and your heart's blood," said she (p.22)	

The word *نگری* is a verb which stands for *looking*, but the translators used a noun instead. The words *look* and *glance* are used by Moayyad and Madelung, and Pazargadi, respectively. This procedure is called transposition by Vinay and Darbelnet⁶.

در خود، آن به که نیکتر نگری

Pazargadi	You should throw a deeper <i>glance</i> at yourself (noun) (p.371)	Transposition
Moayyad	Take a closer <i>look</i> at yourself and your own faults (noun) (p.186)	

Explicative modulation is the presence of cause and effect in a translation. The literal translation of the word *صاحب* is *the owner*, however, both Pazargadi, and Moayyad and Madelung, brought the cause of being *the owner*, meaning that if you are *the composer* or *the poetess* (used by Pazargadi and Moayyad, respectively), then you are the owner of the utterance.

صاحب آنهمه گفتار امروز

Pazargadi	<i>The composer</i> of all these song (p.388)
Moayyad	<i>Poetess</i> of those verses today prays (p.200)

The word *ده* which represents *the village*, is rendered by both of the translators as *land*, thus the part for the whole procedure is applied in the below line.

آن پارسا که ده خرد و ملک، رهزن است

Pazargadi	That devout fellow who buys <i>land</i> and field is really a robber (p.119)	The part for the whole
Moayyad	An ascetic who buys <i>land</i> and property is a highwayman (p.22)	

Two procedures were employed by both translators for the below line. *د گرفتن* (denotatively meaning *taking a hand*) is an idiom that signifies *helping others* for which the translators used an equivalent English expression with the same connotation as *offering a hand*.

Furthermore, reversal of terms procedure is also applied, as *taking a hand* is a reversed term for *offering a hand*.

لیک روزی نگرقتندش دست

Pazargadi	Yet they never <i>offered a hand</i> to raise him (p.146)	Reversal of terms/Equivalence
Moayyad	Yet no helping hand was <i>offered</i> (p.47)	

The word *خاک* in the ST literally means *the soil*. However, it purports the symbol of *a grave* or *a tomb* which are used by Moayyad and Madelung, and Pazargadi, respectively.

به سر خاک پدر، دخترکی

Pazargadi	A little girl was sitting by her father's <i>tomb</i> (p.145)	Change of symbol
Moayyad	At the <i>grave</i> of her father a little girl (p.47)	

Discussion on Previous Studies: As per the researchers' knowledge, no study has been conducted using Vinay and Darbelnet's⁶ translation model on Parvin's poems, yet, a good number of researchers have used their model for comparative English-Persian studies. However, a few investigate the mentioned model on Persian poetry including Delzendehrooy and Karimnia¹³ who investigated modulation in the works of Khayyam. They did not consider other categories of the oblique and the direct strategies. According to their results, the most utilized subcategory of modulation was the part for the whole which was also frequently used by Moayyad and Madelung, and Pazargadi. Similarly, Shabani et al.¹⁹ investigated Persian poetry (selected poems of Forough Farrokhzad) according to Vinay and Darbelnet's⁶ translation model. They found that the non-native Persian speaker favours oblique strategy (free translation). The findings of the current study also discovered that the non-native Persian speaker had more tendencies towards free translation.

Explicative modulation, and Azadmanesh¹⁶ in their study on the collocations from English into Persian in the novel "Great Gatsby" found that the translator commonly utilized literal followed by modulation procedures. Similar results were found in the present study, as both translators used literal translation as the main trend followed by modulation. Shahbaiki and Yousefi¹⁴ analyzed "Jane Eyre" as the ST using Vinay and Darbelnet's⁶ model, and two of its Persian translations. They concluded that literal translation was the procedure chosen by one of the translators, while equivalence being selected by the other. However, equivalence was seldom used by both translators in this study.

Yarahmadzahi et al.¹⁵ investigated the translations of phrasal verbs in "Harry Potter" and discovered that equivalence was the major tendency by the translator. Similarly, equivalence was the procedure generally applied by the translator in the study conducted by Behtash and Moghadam¹⁷ who studied hundred and ten sentences of an English text.

In Sharei's¹⁸ investigation on "The Old Man and the Sea", one translator used the oblique and the other utilized the direct strategy, contrary to the present study in which both translators' predominant strategy was the direct one. Khatibzadeh and Sameri²² found that in the analysis of the political speeches and reports, as an English non-literary text, literal translation was used in general. Lotfollahi and Moinzadeh²¹, in their study on selected movie titles, revealed that literal was largely applied to the translations. Finally, Shakernia²⁰ worked on the historical and romantic comedy movie subtitles and ended with the conclusion that in case of historical drama, the translator used the direct strategy, while for the comedy movies, the oblique strategy was used more often by the translator. Consequently, in the cases of literary texts, the common strategy for translators is the oblique. On the other hand, the direct strategy is more frequent in non-literary texts. In the case of the present study, though, it was revealed that both translators opted for literal or word for word rendering, despite the fact that the writings were literary.

Conclusion

The findings showed that Alaeddin Pazargadi and Heshmat Moayyad (accompanied by Margaret Arent Madelung) have chosen word for word rendering in the process of their translation of selected poems of Parvin Etesami. This type of translation obtains dependable fidelity whereby the source language message is transposed part by part into the target language. This process is called literal translation by Vinay and Darbelnet⁶ and is one of the subcategories of their direct strategy. As a result, the foremost utilized strategy by both translators was the direct. It is worth mentioning that modulation, a procedure of the oblique strategy, was the second most used procedure by both translators. However, to some extent, Pazargadi, as a native Persian speaker made use of the direct strategy more than Moayyad who received assistance from the non-native translator, Margaret Arent Madelung. Despite the scarcity of research on this subject, taking the comparable investigations into account, the literal procedure is frequently used in non-literary texts, while in most of the literary writings, one of the procedures of oblique strategy was usually exercised. This comparative Persian-English study may be beneficial to those who are interested to implement research on poetry translation using this or other translation models. Further investigation on this is required and thereby highly encouraged.

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