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Mechanism of poetry translation: A case study of versified translation



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ABSTRACT

Translation of poetry has been a subject of scholarly interest for centuries. It poses numerous challenges, including the difficulty of conveying the poet's intended meaning, preserving the poetic form and structure, and retaining the emotional impact of the original work. The primary purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the translation process, particularly when dealing with poetry. By employing Conrad Potter Aiken's analytical approach to translation, this research seeks to shed light on the cognitive aspects involved in the transference of poetic meaning from one language to another. Through a case study of the translation of "When You Are Old" into Azerbaijani Turkish, the study aims to explore the intricate decisions and creative adaptations that the translator had to make while preserving the essence of the original poem. In the second attempt, the translation of "When you are old" is compared with some translations in Azerbaijani Turkish (Sabir's translation of Hafiz), Persian (Nasime- Shomal's translation of Sabir), and English (Fitzgerald's translation of Khayyam) to present a crosslinguistic analysis of poetic translation to study the qualities of successful poetic translations. The results of the paper showed that translators of poetry, to achieve a successful translation, must be successful in transferring both form and content. The conveyance of meaning in poetry translation can be similar to the conveyance of meaning from any text, and if the translator masters both languages, it can be possible. However, to convey the form, the translator must be a poet. The investigations of Turkish, Persian, and English translations showed that mastering the respective prosody is not enough, and the translator must possess poetic wit and he must be a poet himself. This study also showed that the poetic translation can be successful if it looks like a poem in the target language. Moreover, one of the criteria for examining and investigating the translation is referring to the successful translations of that language.

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1. Introduction

Translation of poetry has been a subject of scholarly interest for centuries, and the present study aims to delve into the mechanics of translating poetry. Specifically, this research draws on the analytical framework proposed by [Conrad Potter Aiken \(1917\)](#) to examine the process of translating poetry. The primary focus of this investigation involves the translation of [William Butler Yeats \(1977\)](#)' poem "When You Are Old" into Azerbaijani Turkish. By employing Conrad Potter Aiken's cognitive definition of poetic inspiration, a comprehensive analysis of the translated poem is presented. The final section of this paper engages in a thoughtful discussion and evaluation of the translated poetic composition.

The act of translating poetry presents a unique set of challenges for linguists and scholars. Unlike prose, poetry relies heavily on rhythmic patterns, literary devices, and nuances of language that can be intricate and difficult to convey accurately in another language. Throughout history, poets and translators have grappled with the question of how to preserve the essence and beauty of poetry while transposing it into a different cultural and linguistic context. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by investigating the translation of a specific poem, "When You Are Old" by William Butler Yeats, into Turkish.

Purpose

The primary purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the translation process, particularly when dealing with poetry. By employing Conrad Potter Aiken's analytical approach to translation, this research seeks to shed light on the cognitive aspects involved in the transference of poetic meaning from one

language to another. Through a case study of the translation of "When You Are Old" into Turkish, the study aims to explore the intricate decisions and creative adaptations that the translator had to make while preserving the essence of the original poem.

Statement of the Problem

The translation of poetry poses numerous challenges, including the difficulty of conveying the poet's intended meaning, preserving the poetic form and structure, and retaining the emotional impact of the original work. Moreover, cultural differences and linguistic nuances add further complexity to the translation process. This study seeks to address the following key questions: 1) How does the translation of William Butler Yeats' poem "When You Are Old" into Turkish compare to the original in terms of meaning and emotional impact? 2) What cognitive strategies and creative decisions did the translator employ to convey the poetic essence of the original work effectively? 3) To what extent does Conrad Potter Aiken's analytical framework for translation provide valuable insights into the cognitive processes involved in translating poetry?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the understanding of the intricacies of translating poetry, which is a vital aspect of cross-cultural communication and literary appreciation. By exploring the translation of "When You Are Old" through the lens of Conrad Potter Aiken's cognitive definition, this research can shed light on the strategies and techniques used by translators to bridge linguistic and cultural gaps. Furthermore, the findings of this study can inform future translators, researchers, and literary enthusiasts about the

challenges and possibilities of translating poetry effectively. Ultimately, the study aims to enhance the appreciation and preservation of poetic works across linguistic boundaries, fostering a deeper understanding and connection between diverse cultures.

2. Literature Review

Consulting a cursory look at the literature reveals that a great number of studies have been conducted on translation in Iran. Some researchers call translation as invasion ([Monsefi, et al: 2023](#)). Others consider translation as a social interactor ([Moghaddam Charkari, 2022](#)). Or some experts believe that there is a possibility of phonetic transfer of the source language to the orthography of the target language through translation. ([Farhadnejad, 2020](#)). However, reviewing the literature on the translation of literature reveals that there is a dearth of scholarly works on the translation of poetry, especially on the translation of poetry to poetry. [Zandrahimi, et al \(1399\)](#) dealt with the translation of poetry. Their study concerns the indexes of constancy in the process of translation. It attempts to probe into the translation of Gheysar Aminpour's poems into English by Saeid Saeidpour. Their study reveals that the translator (Saeidpour) has only been successful in word by word translation and has not been able to transfer the poetic meaning and the soul of poetry into English. The critics believe that disregarding the target audience and the multiplicity of meaning in poetry are among the weaknesses of the above translation. [Gholami et al. \(2012\)](#) dealt with the prosody of a poem by Hafiz which had been translated into Russian. This study asserts that disregarding the phonetic structures, music, and prosody of a poem leads to inefficient translation of it which does not convey the full meaning of the poem. In other words, the

message and the concepts in the poem of Hafiz are interwoven with its music, prosody, and its vowels and consonants. The artistic arrangements of vowels and consonants in the poem of Hafiz are closely related to its meaning. In their opinion, the Russian translator has not been able to absorb this technical and artistic rhythmic arrangement of the source poem to convey it to Russian. [Bashiri and Mohamadi \(2018\)](#) dealt with the translation of poetry into Persian and Arabic. Their study, based on Lefevere's seven strategies, deals with the translation of Arabic and Persian. They assert that six strategies of Lefevere's seven strategies are applicable in the translation of poetry across Persian and Arabic. Lefevere's strategies are as follows: Phonetic translation, literal translation, metrical translation, interpretation, blank vers translation, rhymed translation, and prose translation of poetry. Another study dealing with translation of poetry is that of [Javadpour \(2009\)](#). Javadpour believes that a successful translation of poetry is the result of the cooperation between the translator and a poet well-versed in prosody. This study asserts that the prose translation of poetry is the last resort of the translator in success for the translation of poetry. In other words, this study admits the translability of poetry and asserts that prose should be the form of the translation of poetry and it must be the cooperation between the translator and a poet well-versed in prosody. The literature on the rhythmic translation of poetry is scarce and most of the existing literature deals with the discussion stated above. The missing point is the study of the formation of poetic translation and the mechanisms of versified translation. Most of the existing literature deals with translated works and does not deal with the cognitive strategies and creative decisions the

translator employs to convey the poetic essence of the original work.

3. Theoretical Framework

Conrad Potter Aiken, the American poet and critic, in his 1917 paper deals with the mechanism of poetic inspiration. He asserts that according to Freud, “poetry, like the dream, is an outcome of suppression, a release of complexes” (Aiken, 1917: 917). Then, he refers to Kostyleff and states that “the writing of poetry is, like speech itself, a purely cerebral affair”. This insight is in line with this notion that the words in language “like other sensory impressions derived from contact with reality, are stored in the mind, not discretely, but in chains of association, where they become unconscious, and appear to be forgotten; but that upon a given stimulus these chains of associated words begin automatically unravelling, become again conscious” (ibid 918). With this notion of poetic inspiration in mind, Kostyleff approached some French poets and asked them to write about the secret of their poetic inspiration. In the first stance, the responses of the French poets were divergent and different from each other. Some discussed the music of poetry and some discussed its scenes and images. However, there were some similar points, too: The “initial impulse was almost always due to an external stimulus”. Also, it became apparent that the studied French poets themselves were aware of this. Kostyleff investigated and probed into those poems meticulously and concluded that the emotional value of the created poem “far outweighed the emotional value of the original”. In other words, the original impulse acts like a spring, when released, “sets in motion a rather imposing engine” (ibid: 919). The author concludes that the poetic inspiration has two sources: A) Poet’s sensibility, B) Preformed mechanisms of verbal

reactions. Therefore, great poets have both the poetic sensibility and the powerful mastery of the above-mentioned mechanisms. Kostyleff also adds that the poet is his childhood instinctively and in his adulthood intentionally attempts to feed his literary vocabulary and his understanding of prosody by reading literature (ibid: 922). Conrad Potter Aiken believes that there are two great tendencies in poetry, two kinds of poetic value. In one of them, the externals are emphasized. The emphasis is then on form, style, color, texture, with the intention of producing a sensorial effect as brilliant as possible. In the second, the emphasis is on the content, and the style is made secondary (ibid: 923). The author of the present study suggests the theoretical framework proposed by Conrad Potter Aiken as follows.

Poetry Mechanism Model

The Poetry Mechanism Model is a dual-dimensional approach to understanding and creating poetry. It encompasses two fundamental orientations that a poet can adopt to craft an impactful and resonant poem.

1. **Form-Driven Orientation:** This dimension of the Poetry Mechanism Model revolves around the external aspects of poetry, focusing on the visual and sensory elements. Poets who adopt this orientation pay meticulous attention to the following poetic mechanisms:

- **Language Form:** Poets carefully select and arrange words, employing unique combinations, structures, and patterns to give birth to a distinct linguistic fabric. The interplay of literary devices, such as alliteration, rhyme, meter, and metaphors, enriches the poetic experience.

- **Style and Imagery:** Each poet possesses a distinctive style that manifests in their

works. Imagery is meticulously woven into the poem, using vivid descriptions and sensory details, evoking emotions and painting vibrant mental pictures.

- **Colors and Scents:**

Metaphorical and symbolic use of colors and scents transports the reader into a sensorial journey, immersing them in a world of emotions and sensations.

- **Atmosphere and Mood:**

Poets create a specific atmosphere and mood by carefully crafting the tone and ambiance of the poem, engaging the reader's emotions and setting the desired emotional backdrop.

The primary goal of poets adopting the Form-Driven Orientation is to ingeniously provoke sensory and emotional responses through skillful manipulation of language and poetic devices.

2. **Content-Driven Orientation:** The second dimension of the Poetry Mechanism Model places emphasis on the inner core of the poem—the content, ideas, and emotions conveyed by the poet. Key elements of this orientation include:

- **Themes and Subjects:**

Poets delve into various themes, exploring human experiences, societal issues, emotions, and philosophical concepts. These themes serve as the foundation for the poem, conveying deeper meanings and universal truths.

- **Emotional Resonance:**

Words are carefully chosen to evoke powerful emotions, enabling the poem to connect with the reader's heart and soul. The poet's ability to express feelings authentically establishes a profound bond between the reader and the poem.

- **Philosophical Depth:**

Poets often embed philosophical musings and contemplations within their verses, encouraging

readers to ponder existential questions and find profound insights.

- **Personal Voice:** Each poet's unique voice and perspective infuse the poem with authenticity, making it a genuine reflection of their inner thoughts and feelings.

Poets who adopt the Content-Driven Orientation strive to create poems that engage the intellect, stir emotions, and leave a lasting impact on the reader's mind.

Harmonious Synthesis: In the Poetry Mechanism Model, the most powerful and resonant poems emerge when poets strike a harmonious balance between the Form-Driven and Content-Driven Orientations. Integrating the artful use of language, imagery, and ambiance with profound themes, emotional depth, and personal voice results in a poetic masterpiece that captivates the reader's senses, touches their soul, and ignites their imagination.

Successful poets navigate both dimensions, skillfully using poetic mechanisms to create a symphony of words that elevates the reader's poetic experience, leaving an indelible mark on their hearts and minds. The Poetry Mechanism Model serves as a guiding framework for aspiring poets, encouraging them to explore and experiment with diverse approaches to craft unforgettable poetry.

Method

This study, adopting the analytical approach of Conrad Potter Aiken, attempts to highlight the cognitive aspects involved in the transfer of poetic meaning from one language to another. To this end, the Azerbaijani Turkish translation of “When you are old” is investigated by using the mechanism of poetic creation, which is intended to reveal intricate decisions and creative adaptations that the translator makes while

preserving the essence of the original poem. In the second attempt, the translation of “When you are old” is compared with some Persian and Azerbaijani Turkish translations of other poets to present a crosslinguistic analysis of poetic translation to study the qualities of successful poetic translations.

4. Results and Findings

Versified translation of the poem

This poem comprises three stanzas containing four lines. In fact, the poem comprises 12 lines. The first stanza is as follows:

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look

Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

If we translate the title as *Qocalanda* (the time when you get old), the agglutinative feature of Azerbaijani Turkish language will be observed. Finding proper rhyme in Turkish is of great importance while translating this English poem into Turkish. In the explanation of the versified Turkish translation we can assert that three words in this English poem in the first line have a great chance of being rhymed in Turkish, which are old (*goca*), grey (*baş ağarmaq*), and sleep (*yatmaq*). The second point which the translator should have in mind is that the second line in the Turkish translation should be rhymed with the first line in the English poem. Therefore, the candidates for rhyme must be rhymed with one of the candidates of rhyme in the first line. In the second line, three words nodding (*huş aparmaq*), fire (*od/qızınmaq*), and book (*kitab/dəftər/şeyir*) have a great chance of being rhymed in Turkish. What happened to me in the process of translating this poem was as follows: In the choice of three words, *goca*, *baş ağarmaq*, and *yatmaq*, all of a

sudden this poem of Shahriar came into my mind: *Gəlməz tanıram bəxtimi indi ağarar sübh/ Qaş belə ağardıqca daha baş da ağarı* in which the verb *baş ağarmaq* along with *da* (which means in addition to, moreover) has been selected as Radif in the poem. It is interesting to note that in this famous poem by Shahriar with the opening lines “*Ulduz sayaraq gözləmişəm hər gecə yarı/ Gec gəlmədədir yar, yenə olmuş gecə yarı*” the verb *huşlanmaq* has been used as *huş aparı* in another line of the poem: “*Bir quş, ayığan, söyləyərək gahdan ıyıldır/ Gahdan onu da yel diyə lay-lay huş aparı*”. In other words, what we needed for rhyme was provided by Shahriar: *baş ağarmaq* (grey) and *huş aparı* (nodding) ([Şəhriyar, 2005](#)). If we leave aside chance as a factor, we can reason that the mastery of the translator over literature and his poetic wit, have been decisive in the successful translation of this poem. If the translator, being competent in Turkish literature, provides a versified translation of the poem in Turkish relying on the rules of Turkish prosody, his work can be proper. Considering *baş ağarmaq* (grey) and the verbs *qocalmaq* (old) and *çox yatmaq* (full of sleep), the following translation is suggested: *Qocalıb, çox yatacaqsan, baş ağardı* (That time when your hair gets white and you are old and sleepy). In the second line, the condition of getting warm (by the fire) then falling asleep (nodding), along with the rhyme *huş aparmaq* are at the disposal of the translator. Considering these, the following translation is suggested: *Qızıqıb, istidə, hərdən, huş apardı* (You will become warm by the fire and sometimes you will fall asleep slowly). The translation of the third line is suggested as: *Oxu onda asta bu şeyri, yada sal* (Then read this poem slowly and remember). In the fourth line, probably the hardest work is to find a suitable rhyme. One of the parts of the

sentence (eyes which have a soft look and deep shadows) must rhyme with *ağardı* and *apardı* in the first and second line. The verb (had) in Turkish, *vardı*, can be a proper choice which can rhyme with *ağardı* and *apardı*. Based on what is mentioned, the translation of the fourth line can be: *Gözünün naz baxışı, kölgəsi vardı* (your eyes had a soft look and shadow). However, in this line, the word “deep” was not translated. Based on what was stated, the first stanza of the poem is translated as follows:

*Qocalıb, çox yatacaqsan, baş ağardı
Qızıqıb, istidə, hərdən, huş apardı,
Oxu onda asta bu şeiri, yada sal:
Gözünün naz baxışı, kölgəsi vardı*

If we attempt to translate the above Turkish lines into English, we can come up with:

You are old and full of sleep when you are grey,

And nodding by the fire,

Take down this book then and slowly read

And dream of the soft look your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

Some points should be added. First, since Turkish has a different syntactic structure, the translator has to choose his words based on the target language, Turkish. In some instances, the translator is forced to choose the closest structure in Turkish. However, since meaning is of great importance in the above translation, the translator may sometimes violate the order of lines, which might affect the discourse structure. Perhaps, this might explain why we can not have an accurate versified translation of a poem. Nevertheless, the translator should do his best to explain his literary wit, to transfer the meaning and discursal meaning as much as he can. Therefore, the highest concern of the translator in the above lines should be: 1) Doing his best to transfer the

complete meanings of the lines from the source language to the target language, in spite of syntactic differences between the two languages. 2) Maintaining the form of the poem in the target language. 3) Minimizing the additions and deletions in the target language. If the stated needs are met, then, the reader may confront a sonnet or simply a ghazal in the target language which does not look like a translation and he can enjoy the translation as if he is reading a sonnet or ghazal in the target language possessing the cultural aspects of his native language. However, this study does not attempt to deal with the above claim because it is beyond the scope and purpose of the study. Moreover, since the author is himself the translator of the poem, the assessment of this claim must be done by a third person who knows English and Turkish. Now, let's deal with the second stanza:

How many loved your moments of glad grace,

And loved your beauty with love false or true,

But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,

And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

In this stanza, “love” is used four times as a verb and once it is used as a noun. In Turkish, several words are used to denote the same meaning (love). Behzad Behzadi in his dictionary uses several words such as *vurulmaq* (Behzadi, 1389: 1062), *qada almaq*, *çox istəmək*, *sevmək* (ibid: 796) to refer to “love”. Therefore, the verb *qada almaq* can rhyme with the previous lines. As such, for the first two lines of the above stanza, the following is suggested: *Vurulub çoxlu aşiq səndəki nazə/ Qadanı, düz ya yalan, üzdə alardı* (a great number of lovers fell in love with your soft look, true or false, and they seemed to love you). Of course, the word “beauty” in the second line, has not been translated and the word *üzdə* (apparently) has not been directly stated in

the source poem. It is implied in “false or true”. In the third line, the English poem has been completely translated. However, in the last line, the word *qocalmaq* means “getting old” has been considered as equivalent for “changing face” and therefore, the following translation has been suggested: *Təkcə mən sevdim o zəvvar ruhu səndə/ Sevdim o qəmli üzün, çün qocalardı* (only I became the lover of that pilgrim soul of you eyes and I am the lover of your sad face which gets old). The last stanza of the poem is:

And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled

And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

For the last stanza, the following translation is suggested: *Bükülüb od kənarında belə qəmgin/ Sən pıçılda: Necə ki sevgi qaçardı!?* (You are sadly bent by the fire and murmur: How love is fleeing?!). *Görəcəksən ki qaçıb dağlara eşqin/ Gedib ulduzlar ilə gizli baxardı* (and then you notice that your love has run to the mountains and among the stars furtively will look). The two words “glowing” and “overhead” have been omitted in the translation. The following table presents the whole translation of the poem:

Table 1: Versified translation of “When you are old” by William Butler Yeats in Azerbaijani Turkish

When you are old and grey and full of sleep, And nodding by the fire, take down this book, And slowly read, and dream of the soft look Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;		Qocalıb, çox yatacaqsan, baş ağardı Qızıqıb, istidə, hərdən, huş apardı,
		Oxu onda asta bu şeiri, yada sal: Gözünün naz baxışı, kölgəsi vardı
How many loved your moments of glad grace, And loved your beauty with love false or true, But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you, And loved the sorrows of your changing face;		Vurulub çoxlu aşiq səndəki nazə Qadanı, düz ya yalan, üzde alardı
		Təkcə mən sevdim o zəvvar ruhu səndə Sevdim o qəmli üzün, çün qocalardı
And bending down beside the glowing bars, Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled And paced upon the mountains overhead And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.		Bükülüb od kənarında belə qəmgin, Sən pıçılda: Necə ki sevgi qaçardı!?
		Görəcəksən ki qaçıb dağlara eşqin Gedib ulduzlar ilə gizli baxardı

Finding appropriate rhyme plays a key role in versified translation of poetry. If the translator succeeds in finding all or part of the words of his translation based on the words of the source text, he has done a great job. Nevertheless, being

faithful to the original text to a great extent will impede the translator. To clarify the points, similarities and differences of the translation from the main text in terms of rhyme, deletions, and additions are presented in tables 2 and 3:

Table 2: Rhyme choice in Azerbaijani Turkish translation with regard to words and expressions in the English poem

Line	English word/phrase	Qafiya in Azerbaijani Turkish translation	Literal meaning of Azerbaijani Turkish qafiya
1	Grey	Baş ağardı	One's hair gets white
2	Nodding	Huş apardı	Take a nap/ Nod
4	Had	Vardı	Had
6	Love	Qadanı alardı	Loved you
8	Changing face	Qocalardı	Became old
10	Love fled	Sevgi qaçardı	Love fled
12	Hid his face	Gizli baxardı	Furtively look

Table 3: Deletions and additions

Line	Deletions	Additions	English meaning of addition
2	---	Hərdən	Sometimes
4	Once, deep	---	---
5	Moments	---	---
6	Beauty	---	---
9	Glowing	---	---
11	Overhead	Görəcəksən	You will see
12		Gedib	Gone

Analyzing the translation from a cognitive approach

Having mentioned some points about what went on my mind as the translator, I intend to deal with the translation of the poem based on the theoretical framework of the study. As mentioned earlier, Kostyleff in his search for the secrets of poetic inspiration, concluded that the initial impulse was almost always due to an external stimulus and the poet himself is aware of this. The poetic translation of the poem can also follow the same lead. The translator does not translate any poem. For instance, of all Turkish poems of Shariar, only *Heydar Babaya Salam* (Homage to Heydar Baba) was translated into several languages. His other poems were either not translated or were only translated into two or three languages. Therefore, the fame of *Heydar Babaya Salam*, in addition to its literary merits,

created the external stimulus for its translation to several languages. The same holds true for the poem considered in this study. The fame of Yeats and his place in English literature and the literary merits of his poem "When you are old" made the external stimulus for me to translate it.

The second point concerns the literary merits of the poem. According to Conrad Potter Aiken, there are two kinds of poetic value. In one of them, the externals are emphasized and, in the other, the emphasis is on the content. If we accept this claim, we can add that in the translation of a poem, the translator should be conscious of poetic form and concentrate on it. Moreover, in addition to maintaining the poetic form, the translator must attempt to convey the content of the poem as much as possible to the target language. In the translation of non-literary texts, the great effort is on the transfer of the content of the texts rather

than the form. In other words, the translator of poetry has the duty of conveying these two characteristics of the poem; FORM and CONTENT. In conveying the content, the poetry translator's task is similar to that of a non-literary text translator. However, what distinguishes the poetry translator is his/her concern with the form. If we accept the definition of Conrad Potter Aiken of form, then aspects such as style, color, texture, with the intention of producing a sensorial effect as brilliant as possible were the concerns of the translator. Therefore, here, the translator has chosen a prosodic form (Faelaton, faelaton, faelaton, faelaton for example) and has been faithful to this rhythm in all lines of his translation. That is, in the present study, the translator has chosen a six-couplet sonnet (ghazal) of the same rhyme as the FORM of the target language to translate a three-stanza English poem.

Music of the poem and its imagery are two other factors which are important next to the form and content of the poem. It is possible to completely convey the imagery in translation. Whereas, the transfer of music is completely different because the languages change. For instance, in the poem under consideration in this study, the pattern of the rhymes in the English poem is ABBACDDCEFFE, which means that the first line rhymes with the fourth line and the

second line rhymes with the third line and the fifth line rhymes with the eighth line and the sixth line with the seventh and so forth. The translator now faces a dual opinion: either to follow the same pattern of rhyme in the target language, which becomes very strange and uncommon and possibly unacceptable, or he can use one of the models used in the target language, which has the highest resemblance to the source poem. Naturally, ghazal (sonnet) in Turkish has the most resemblance to this pattern. Therefore, the translator has chosen AABACADAFAGA for his translation. Moreover, to maintain the music of the poem, the translator has to follow the rules of ghazal (sonnet) in Turkish, and transfer the imagery in the source poem to the target poem. Of course, if the translator of the poem is a well-known figure in the language, there would be a different matter.

Now, we deal with a few successful translations in this study. Among the famous poets in Persian and Turkish poetry, one can name Mirza Alakbar Sabir and Seyed Ashrafedin Qazvini. Sabir is one of the literary pioneers and the greatest satirists in Iran and the Caucuses. He has left, among his satirical works, a few translations. One of the best instances of his translations is the translation of a beyt (couplet) from Hafiz, which is presented in the following table:

Table 4: A successful translation by Sabir

A poem by Hafiz (source poem)	Sabir's translation of Hafiz (target poem)
<p>پدرم روضه رضوان به دو گندم بفروخت ناخلف باشم اگر من به جوی نفروشم!</p>	<p>Satdı gülzari beheşti iki buğdaya atam Satmasam naxələfəm mən onu bir arapaya!</p>

Sabir is so famous in the era of the Constitution in Iran that many poets and critics of

that era were influenced by him ([Shahiditabar, 2023](#)). One of the poets who was influenced and affected by Sabir is Seyed Ashrafedin Qazvini,

with the pen name Nasim-e Shomal. One of the best translations of Nasim-e Shomal from Sabir is “Taziyanē” (the lash), which is shown in table 5:

Table 5: A successful translation by Nasim-e Shomal

A poem by Sabir (source poem)	Nasim-e Shomal’s translation of Sabir (target poem)
Görmə! Baş üstə, yumaram gözlərim. Dinmə! Mütiəm, kəsərəm sözlərim. Bir söz eşitmə! Qulağım bağlaram. Gülmə! Pəkey, şamu səhər ağlaram. Qanma! Bacarmam! Məni məzur tut, Boyləcə təklifi-məhalı unut!	دست مزن! چشم! بیستم دو دست! راه مرو! چشم! دو پایم شکست! حرف مزن! قطع نمودم سخن! نطق مکن! چشم! بیستم دهن! هیچ نفهم! این سخن عنوان مکن! خواهش نافهمی انسان مکن!

Arianpour considers the above translation as one of the best translations of Ashraf which has been able to convey the characteristics of Sabir’s poetry ([Arianpour, 1372: 70](#)). The reason for this success lies in the fact that Ashraf was a poet and he mastered both Persian and Turkish. The poem has been so artistically translated that if someone does not know Sabir, they can not figure out that

it is a translation. In fact, the poem follows the prosody of Persian poetry that no one can think of it as a translation. While Sabir and Ashraf are both successful translators of Persian and Turkish poetry, Fitzgerald was an English poet who had translated Khayyam. Table 6 presents a quatrain of Khayyam translated by Fitzgerald ([Seyed Gohrab, 2022](#)):

Table 6: A successful translation by Fitzgerald

A poem by Khayyam (source poem)	Fitzgerald’s translation of Khayyam (target poem)
اسرار ازل را نه تو دانی و نه من وین حرف معمارا نه تو خوانی و نه من هست از پس پرده گفت و گوی من و تو چون پرده برافتد، نه تو مانی و نه من	<i>There was the Door to which I found no Key; There was the Veil through which I might not see: Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE There was—and then no more of THEE and ME.</i>

In the Northon Anthology of English literature, the translation of Fitzgerald from Khayyam is listed as a part of English literature. It should be noted that Sabir, Ashraf, and Fitzgerald have all been poets of Turkish, Persian, and English respectively. If a translator is able to get close to these three poets, he/she can be called a successful translator. In other words, translations at this level can be considered as standards of good translations. These three

translations, if not considered as translations, can pass for as successful poems in their respective languages. Therefore, a translation of poetry can be considered a good translation if it can be considered successful in the target language, which, of course, is a very difficult task, though possible.

5. Conclusion

Translators of poetry, to achieve a successful translation, must be successful in transferring

both FORM and CONTENT. The conveyance of meaning in poetry translation can be similar to the conveyance of meaning from any text, and if the translator masters both languages, it can be possible. However, to convey the form, the translator must be a poet. The investigations of Turkish, Persian, and English translations showed that mastering the respective prosody is not enough, and the translator must possess poetic wit and he must be a poet himself. Mastering the literature of the target language is of great importance too. In other words, the poetic translation can be successful if it looks like a poem in the target language. One of the criteria for examining and investigating the translation is referring to the successful translations of that language.

In spite of the great similarities between versified translation and poetry creation, there is a vital difference. The poet in his poetic creation is inspired by an external stimulus, which forces him into composing poetry, to give vent to his feelings. He might be inspired by the sea and stars, by the deer and the street, etc to reveal his feelings. However, the translator is limited to the content and images which exist in the source poem and have been created in the source language. I believe that the poet and the translator must both enter the garden of literature. However, the poet is free to pick up any flower that he likes, but the poetry translator should carefully pick up a handful of flowers which have been previously picked by the poet in the source language. Therefore, he must be connected with the mind of the poet in the source language on the one hand and with his poetic talent in the target language on the other hand. It seems that the translator has a more difficult job.

Considering the above explanations, a question is raised. Is my Turkish translation of Yeats presented in this study a successful translation? To answer this question, two factors are involved: A) The passage of time and observing the reactions of Turkish poetry lovers, and B) Investigation of this translation by a third person.

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