Image in Translated Novels from English into Persian

Gholam-Reza Parvizi\textsuperscript{1,*}

\textsuperscript{1}Department of English Language and Literature, Alborz University, Qazvin, I.R. Iran

*Correspondence: Department of English Language and Literature, Alborz University, Qazvin, I.R. Iran. E-mail: dr.reza.parvizii@gmail.com

Received: December 2, 2016       Accepted: December 16, 2016     Online Published: December 27, 2016

doi:10.5430/wjel.v6n4p50           URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v6n4p50

Abstract

The question of image in literary studies and in recent years in Translation Studies is one of the most problematic in nature. In the present study an attempt was made to define the nature of translating linguistic constructions – evoking images in the mind of reader – in English novels and their rendered versions in Persian translations. In this study seven types of images (visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, kinesthetic and organic) in two English novels and their rendered versions in Persian were analyzed based on two theoretical frameworks, the first one is Jiang’s Image-Based Model to Literary Translation (2008) by which the nature of translation of images were examined and the other is Chesterman’s translation strategies (1997) which help to systematize translation strategies adopted by translators in rewriting the images in English novels. The results have shown that in most of the cases the images that are intended by original author have been changed in the translations, and the aesthetic experience of the ST reader is different from that of the TT reader.

Keywords: image; literary image; mental image

1. Introduction

1.1 Nature of Image and Imagination

A quest for describing the essence of ‘image’ will lead us to some philosophical, literary, psychological and even cognitive realms of academic studies. The following pages introduce a brief comment on the nature of ‘image’. Images and imagery devices are among the main characters which make possible the visualization of the atmosphere of a narrative for the audience. Image and imagination are among the very first subjects tackled by ancient philosophers (Aristotle, Plato). They attempted to explain the nature of images experienced mentally by human. For example Aristotle (\textit{De Anima} iii 3) defines imagination as “that in virtue of which an image occurs in us” (in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). Having reflected on the concept of image and mental imagery, Plato (\textit{Philebus}, 39b,c) argues that “visual perception is unreliable, he speaks (metaphorically) of an inner artist painting pictures (of what we think we see) in the soul” (in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

When defining imagery Abrams (1999: 121) argues that, “mental pictures, it is sometimes claimed, are experienced by the reader of a poem, to the totality of the components which make up a poem”. The function of imagery in literature is to generate a vibrant and graphic presentation of a scene that appeals to as many of the reader’s senses as possible.

Turning to literary definitions Lewis (1946: 21) believes that image in its simplest terms, is a picture made out of words, an epithet, a simile may create an image; he also admits that an image may be presented to us in a phrase or passage in a completely descriptive manner, but conveying to our imagination something more than the accurate reflection of an external reality. Probably the most cited definition of literary image is made by the expatriate American poet and theorist of several poetic movements Ezra Pound (1918: 4) defines image as follows: “An ’image’ is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time”. In defining image he adds:

“It is the presentation of such a ‘complex’ instantaneously which gives that the sense of sudden liberation; the sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; the sense of sudden growth, which we experience in the presence of greatest works of art” (ibid).
Richards (1924: 97) elucidating on ‘memory’ in literary criticism argues that memory has apart in every mental activity. Richards (1924: 97-97) continues that:

“..., images, those fugitive elusive copies of sensations with which psychology have been hitherto so much, perhaps too much, concerned”. Visual images are the best known of them, but it is important to recognize that every kind of sensation may have its corresponding image. Visceral, kinesthetic, thermal images can with a little practice be produced, even by people who have never noticed their occurrence. But individual differences as regards imagery are enormous, more in the degree to which images become conscious, however, than in their actual presence or absence on the needful occasion. Those people who, by their own report, are devoid of images, none the less behave in a way which makes it certain that the same processes are at work in them as in producers of the most flamboyant images.

Seruya and Justo (2015: 9) admit that images are sensible side of the concept. Images are a determination of sensibility and a product of the intellectual function, which at the same time has to be seen as a faculty of imagination. Introducing a clear conception of literary image and differentiating it from rhetorical devices like metaphor or simile, Ziolkowski (1977: 8-10) explains that in literary studies “image” usually specifies “at least three separate phenomena”; icons, or “things with a tangible reality in the context of the literary work” (p. 8); rhetorical figures (metaphor, simile, and other tropes); and mental images. He charges that the notions of literary imagery that derive from the second and third senses are problematic for a number of reasons. Citing an objection raised by the German scholar Hermann Pongs, Ziolkowski argues that to identify literary imagery with a rhetorical figure such as metaphor is incorrect, since “‘image’ is hardly a synonym for ‘metaphor’ because a picture is not a comparison; an icon is not an analogy”. Ziolkowski further differentiates metaphor from the image when he asserts (still referring to Pongs’s analysis) that “metaphor attempts to illuminate the essence of things by exposing previously unrecognized analogies, whereas the image aims at rendering visible iconically” (p. 10). Drawing from psychology Stambovsky (1988: 72) in an attempt categorizes mental images to seven subcategories (visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, organic, and kinesthetic). However, other scholars (like Hobbes) before him have done the same attempt and have the same typology. This study enjoys his categorization and the data from novels are drawn according these seven categories.

1.2 The Concept of Image in Translation Studies

Translating is a delicate act of image transferring or remaking, especially in literary texts. Translator on the one hand is the receptor of the so called elusive ‘image’ and on the other is the rewriter of image into TT. Many attempts have been made to describe the nature of image and its translation in Translation Studies in recent years which ranges from studying national images – which itself falls into another area of study: Imagology – to mental imagery and its aesthetic effects in literary translation (Chahat, 2009; Jansen, 2004; Jiang, 2008; Sirakova, 2007; van Doorselaer, 2012). Many other Translation Studies scholars have tried to tackle ‘image’ or what they call ‘scene’ from Frame Semantics point of view which was developed by Fillmore (1977), (Rojo-Lopez, 2002a, 2002b; Snell-Hornby, 1988).

In the journey toward defining the nature of translating image and with the help of Frame Semantics, Snell- Hornby (1988: 79-86) tries to propose model of text analysis according the elusive nature of ‘image’ or ‘scene’. In describing the term ‘scene’ as a part of Scenes-and-Frame semantics Fillmore (1977: 63) argues that:

“I intend to use the word scene — a word I am not completely happy with — in a maximally general sense, to include not only visual scenes but familiar kinds of interpersonal transactions, standard scenarios, familiar layouts, institutional structures, enactive experiences, body image; and in general, any kind of coherent segment, large or small, of human beliefs, actions, experiences, or imaginations”.

Linguistically speaking Snell-Hornby (1988: 79-80) argues that ‘scene’ is the experienced or otherwise meaningful situation that finds expression in linguistic form. As she (1988: 80) continues Scenes-and-Frame approach offers great advantages for text analysis. Fillmore (1977: 61) says “Successful text analysis has got to provide an understanding on the part of the interpreter of an image or scene or picture of the world that gets created and filled out between the beginning and the end of the text interpretation experience”.

Van Doorslaer (2012: 122) admits that “every act of information distribution includes the spread of ‘images’ (in general sense)”. Quoting from Marinetti (2011: 26) van Doorslaer adds that: ‘translation is one of the ways in which works of literature are ‘re-written’, and these re-writings are the primary way in which cultures construct ‘images’ and ‘representations’ of authors, texts and entire periods of history.”

Jansen (2004: 267) confesses that “one of the most valuable features of literature is its way of creating images”, or as the Italian literary scholar Italo Calvino (1988: 92) says it is “power of bringing visions into focus with our eyes shut, of bringing forth forms and colors from the lines of black letters on a white page and in fact of thinking in terms of
image”. Jansen (2004: 267) continues that it is reasonable to say that one of the important tasks of literary translation is to ensure that these images can still be brought into focus in the translated text.

A recent and comprehensive study on image in literary translation is done by Jiang (2008) in which he proposes a model based on gestalt psychology, he believes that: “aesthetic progression in literary translation is a psychological procedure acting on and building representations of what is described in the text. It is applied to denote the intermediary stage in literary translation that is how the image is mentally actualized” (2008: 860). He continues that the practice of image actualization is a cumulative process, the building of meaning upon meaning and experience upon meaning in order to establish finally an idea or an interpretation in the mind of the translator-reader. Jiang (2008: 863) adds that in literary translation, aesthetic properties derive from the dense restructuration of the artistic image presented in the original text. It follows that a translator has the duty of reflecting these qualities by means of a maximal preservation not only of the linguistically relevant information, but also of the image. Of course formal correspondence is also important in any kind of translation.

These brief accounts on image in literary studies and Translation Studies will be elucidating and helpful to conduct this study.

1.3 Objective

This study aims at investigating the relation of target text and its source text renditions from different, rather new aspect – how images in English novels have been translated into Persian.

2. Method

This study is organized on a descriptive comparative manner in order to have clear idea about the nature of translating image.

2.1 Materials

In this study two English novels (For whom the Bells Toll by Ernest Hemingway, 1940; The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck, 1939) and their Persian translations were investigated. Both of the novels are among the greatest masterpieces of literary prose (novel) of twentieth century, and also the translated versions both are among the best selling translated novels. Here the main objective is to have a clear view of the nature of translating ST images into the TT. Conducting this research, first fifty pages of the English versions were analyzed according the following frameworks.

2.2 Framework

In this study two frameworks were chosen with the help of which the nature of translating image in literature (visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, kinesthetic, and organic) can be illustrated. The first framework is Jiang’s proposed model (2008) for translating literary image with a little bit of adjustment in order to fit the objective of this study; basically his model is a didactic model but here it is used as a model for analysis. He (2008: 862) believes that in literary translation the text is not reproduced in the sense of linguistic structure. He continues that linguistic structure (wording and lexical choices) may differ in the target text but evoke the same image in the mind of the reader, the contrary of this situation also occurs. For his model Jiang (2008: 863) defines two main phases as macro model: Phase 1: to translate a written text (source text) into a mental map, Phase 2: to find goal-language (target language) exponents of the overall mental representation obtained in phase 1. He argues that the main reasoning rests on the following assumptions:

A. In literary translation, the translator’s interpretation of the literary text undergoes an aesthetic progression.

B. The aesthetic progression is an image building process from ST to TT organization.

C. Successful literary translation results from image representation apart from text-representation, text in the sense of formal linguistic structure. The linguistic equivalents in the translation are mainly due to similarities in the two languages ST and TT on the one hand, and the psychological tendency of the translator on the other hand.

Based on the textual indications and with the help of Jiang’s model of translation of images the researcher with some adjustment analyzed the extracted data. In accordance with this model for translating ‘images’ several presuppositions occur during translation of an ‘image’:

1. Images translated directly into target text and evoke the same mental image in the mind of TT reader as the ST reader,
2. Images translated directly into the target text but evoke an image other than, one which comes to the mind of ST reader,
3. Images are translated differently in the TT and evoke a totally different image in the mind of TT reader,
4. Images are translated partially into TT, which evoke partial images regarding to ST.
5. Images are omitted in the process of translation
6. The other theoretical framework of this study is the translation strategies which were developed by Chesterman (1997), in order to observe and define strategies adopted by translators for translating the images. Chasterman (1997: 94-109) distinguishes between three procedures in translating each of which includes ten strategies: 1. Syntactic strategies, 2. Semantic strategies, and 3. Pragmatic strategies.

2.3 Analysis
The procedure of this study begins first with the close reading of the source text by which the researcher would be able to identify, select then classify images in source texts (Visual: colors, scene, landscapes; Auditory: voices, sounds, onomatopoeias; Olfactory: odors, scents; Gustatory: tastes, flavors, savors; Tactile: the sense of touch, Kinesthetic: verbs of motions; and Organic: the sense of anger, hate, love, nostalgia). In the next phase the images will be compared with the rendered version in Persian, in the target texts. The unit of analysis of this study as its title conveys, covers the image-reflected linguistic structures of the source text which ranges from a phrase to a paragraph and their translated version of target text. The following analysis will put a light on the nature of the translating of images in the corpus selected for this study. The followings introduce several examples of the analysis of the extracted data:

- **Visual image:**

According to definition that has proposed in the literature in the visual imagery appeals to the sense of sight, and plays the largest role in imagery in literature

**Example 1.**

“He lay flat on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest ...” *(For Whom the Bells Toll).*

بر روی همان چندل جنگل دراز کشیده بود، ...” *(از زنگها یبرای که به صدا در می آید.)*

**Analysis:**

As Chesterman (1977: 94-109) puts forward syntactic and semantic strategies manipulate meaning while pragmatic strategies manipulate message. In the above example the translator has totally omitted “flat” which evokes an image of a care free person in the mind of ST reader which has been omitted in the TT, omission is one of the Chesterman’s pragmatic translation strategies. The other manipulated part is the “brown, pine-needled floor of the forest” which is translated to “چندل جنگل”, in the source text “brown” color of the forest which brings a dim image of the scene into the readers mind, “pine-needled floor” is translated into “چندل” which in turn renders a different image in the TT reader’s mind. In TT the word “کنار” which means “beside” is added to the translation, the overall analysis of the translation of the above sentence regarding transferring the image is that the translator translated the image partially and at some points omitted the image evoked by ST. According to Jiang’s model (2008) the image was not successfully reproduced in the TT.

**Example 2.**

“To the red country and part of the gray country of Oklahoma, the last rains came gently, and they did not cut the scarred earth”. *(The Grapes of Wrath).*

آخرين باران هائي كه تم روي زمین هاي سرخ و پاهای از زمین هاي خاكستری زنگ اكلاهماا

فروریخت، نتوانست زمین ترك خوردرا شیار کند (خوشه های خشم).

**Analysis:**

In the above extracted sentence, translator uses several translation strategies (sentence structure changes as a syntactic strategy and removes the point of stress of the sentence, hyponymy as a semantic strategy – country is translated to زمین). Reading the ST, an image of rural agricultural area comes to the mind, the last part of the sentence “scarred earth” depicts a personified image regarding ‘earth’ which has partially rendered in the TT, the personified is not transferred into TT. Here we can say that the image is directly translated into TT but evokes a partial image in the mind of a TT reader.
• **Auditory Image:**
According to definition auditory images are those images that describe specific sounds that are happening within the atmosphere of an anarrrative.

**Example 1.**
The corn threshed the wind and made a dry, rushing sound. (The Grapes of Wrath).

**Analysis:**
In the above extracted sentence from ST an auditory image is used by the writer (“rushing sound”) that evokes an image of a hissing-like sound, but it is not transferred into the TT, which in turn according to Jiang (2008) influenced the aesthetic experience of the TT reader. In this example the image has partially translated into the TT.

**Example 2.**
“…the wind cried and whimpered over the fallen corn” (The Grapes of Wrath).

**Analysis:**
In this example an auditory image comes to the mind reading the ST. Here according the presuppositions regarding translating image based on Jiang’s model the images translated directly into the target text but evoke an image other than, one which comes to the mind of ST reader.

**Example 3.**
“…the song of the tires dropped in pitch” (The Grapes of Wrath).

**Analysis:**
In the personified auditory image ‘song of the tires’ of above extracted example omitted by hyponymy translation strategy that the translator has adopted which is one of the Chesterman’s semantic translation procedure.

• **Olfactory Image**
Based on the definitions olfactory image describes a particular scent.

**Example 1.**
“The spicy hot smell of the whisky filled the cab” (The Grapes of Wrath).

**Analysis:**
In the above example the translator omitted ‘hot’ but he translated ‘spicy’ which evoke the olfactory image similar the one evoked by reading ST. It can be said that base on the Jiang’s model translator is successful in recreating image in the TT.

• **Kinesthetic Image**
Here by gustatory image we are dealing with the movement or action of objects or people.

**Example 1.**
“Joad uncorked the bottle, took two quick swallows” (The Grapes of Wrath)

**Analysis:**
In the above extracted sentence of the ST an image is depicted that evoke an image of quick motion of an action - ‘swallowing’. In the translated text, translator has transferred the kinesthetic image into the ST but he adds which in turn somehow change the original image and evoke a different image in the mind of the TT reader. In this translation based on the Jiang’s model aesthetic experience of reading ST and TT are different.
Example 2.
“The truck drifted to a stop where a dirt road opened at right angles to the highway” (grapes of wrath)

In the above example an image of motion comes to mind that ‘truck stop with a little glide on the ground, but this image in translation has omitted by translator. The reader of the ST witnessing a mental image, which has undergone a change in the translation and the experience of the reader of TT, is different from ST reader. Here the kinesthetic image has been translated partially.

3. Concluding Remarks
The aim of this study was not to prescribe a model for translating literary work; it was just an attempt to discover the essence and nature of translating ‘image’. However the frameworks and other methodological features of this study need more polishing and enhancing. The results and findings of this study have shown that in the most of cases, the images that are intended by original author have been changed in the translations, and the aesthetic experience of the ST reader is different from the TT. Studying literary image is a less researched field in Translation Studies which poses a need for future investigation in front of the researchers interested in the characteristics of translation literary images.

References