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Similarities and Contrasts of the Culture of Women's "Otherness" in English and Persian Languages: Analysis of Bhutto's *Daughter of the East*

By Mahboubeh Hosseini Daragheh¹ and Vida Rahiminezhad²

Abstract

Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* portrayed how the concepts of Self and Other are being shaped, created or reinforced in a text. The concept of Otherness is portrayed conspicuously in Benazir Bhutto's autobiography entitled *Daughter of the East*. Benazir Bhutto was the first democratically elected female leader of Pakistan and she was assassinated in December 2007. Bhutto talked about her personal life, strength and her political activity in the twentieth century. Alireza Ayari translated this autobiography into Persian in 2009. The purpose of this study is to examine the concept of women's Otherness in *Daughter of the East* (Source Text, "ST") and then to analyze the changes of this concept in its Persian translation (Target Text, "TT"). This is a mixed method study and includes qualitative and quantitative phases. In the qualitative phase, the facts of Otherness in the ST are compared to those in the TT in order to find out to what extent the exact meaning of Otherness in the ST transferred to the TT. The findings show that the translator could transfer the exact strength of meaning of Otherness to the TT in most cases. In the quantitative phase, the TT is examined by the use of manipulation strategies (omission, addition, substitution, attenuation). The investigation shows that out of 30 items under study, the most commonly used strategies by the translator were omission (46.66%) and addition (40%). It can be concluded that the translator may consciously and unconsciously use these two strategies more than others to impose certain conscious or unconscious cultural and linguistic implications in terms of Otherness.

Keywords: women's issues, Self, Others, Persian translation, manipulation strategies

Introduction

Simone de Beauvoir takes an existentialist view on women in *The Second Sex* where she discussed the fact that men and women belong to the same world but with an important difference. In her view, men's world is a self-defined and self-explained world, but the world of women is defined and portrayed for the sake of men (Khan, 2014, p. 114). De Beauvoir's explanation of freedom, power and the Other is shown mainly in *The Second Sex* (1949).

To explain male-dominated culture, de Beauvoir uses Hegel's definition of the Other to represent woman as the Other in relation to man: "In the cultural context of the man-woman binary relation, the Other is a minority, the least favored social group, usually composed of a woman" (de Beauvoir, 1949, p. 33). Based on the binary opposition, man constructs woman to explain his superior position as Self. She is considered "as inessential as opposed to essential, he is the Subject, Self, he is Absolute—she is the Other" (de Beauvoir, 1949, p. 44).

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Nayer (2008) describes the postcolonial subalternization as if “the native was the subaltern in the colonial era, postcolonialism created its own subaltern, women, 'lower castes', and classes, ethnic minority rapidly became the Others within the postcolonial nation state” (as cited in Nazar, 2016, p. 270). This theory is regularly repeated in postcolonial feminist studies as the discursive construction of the third woman, which is viewed as an oppressed category by Mohanty and Nayer. Nazar notes that “Pakistani women are portrayed as meek, passive creatures largely dependent upon their male members for support and protection. They are unable to defend themselves and have to rely upon male counterparts” (2016, p. 277).

Mohammad Hanif has endeavored to capture the life of a postcolonial subaltern in his novel *Our Lady of Alice Bhatti* (2011). He represented the oppressed woman in many ways. Hanif's viewpoint has further strengthened the dichotomy of male/female, Self/Other, strong/weak, and independent/dependent. Women do not have a respectable status and are denied important roles in the society. They are treated as slaves; they are powerless and do not have the freedom to spend their lives independently (Nazar, 2016, p. 277).

Benazir Bhutto was the first and only woman Prime Minister of Pakistan; she was elected twice and served terms from 1988-1990 and 1993-1996. She was assassinated by a suicide bomber in 2007. Her autobiography entitled *Daughter of the East* was published in 1988. It is about her struggle and her “solitary confinement” before her presidency. She declared that her aim of writing her autobiography was “to set down the record of the brutal Martial Law regime of General Zia UL-Haq (p. 374). Hasan Taghizadeh Milani (1989) and Alireza Ayari (2009) translated *Daughter of the East* into Persian. The concern of this study is Ayari's translation (7th ed) since it is said that his translation is the newest, most perfect, and fluent version according to his readers. Furthermore, he has translated another work of Benazir Bhutto, *Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West*, so it can be said that Ayari is the best known translator of Bhutto's works (www.ibna.ir, 2016).

The aim of this article is to examine the concept of women's Otherness in *Daughter of the East* (Source Text, “ST”) and to analyze the changes in the Persian translation (Target Text, “TT”). The method of this study is mixed—qualitative and quantitative. The analyzed units in the qualitative method are “terms” and in the quantitative method the analyzed units are sentences, both relevant to Otherness. In the qualitative method, in order to detect any units of Otherness, the whole ST was examined and all collected units were compared to the TT to find out to what extent the translator could convey the exact meaning of Otherness. The researcher decided to focus on the distortive aspect of manipulation in the translation of *Daughter of the East* based on Dukate's typology (2007), which includes strategies such as “omission,” “addition,” “substitution,” and “attenuation” in the quantitative phase. All collected data were analyzed by the use of descriptive statistics—frequency and mean.

Otherness

The idea of women's oppression in a patriarchal society is the major interest of de Beauvoir. Based on her view, the Otherness of women is not a sign of inferiority because of some biological reason, but rather women are put into the position of being the Other. Bhutto, in her autobiography, states that:

In our male-dominated culture, boys had always been favored over girls and were not only more often given an education, but in extreme instances were given food

first while the mother and daughters waited. In our family, however, there was no discrimination at all. (2007, p. 32)

Simone de Beauvoir uses Hegel's conception of the Other to describe a male-dominated culture that represents and treats women as the Other in relation to man. In the cultural context of the man/woman binary relation, the Other is a minority, the least favored social group usually composed of women (McCann, 2003, p. 33). As Bhutto portrayed in the above paragraph, a woman in Pakistan is considered the one who has to learn from childhood how to put men first and to play second fiddle herself. At the same time, Bhutto makes a contrast between her family and society in terms of treating girls—women's Otherness is not followed by her family.

The Persian translation of the above paragraph from *Daughter of the East* is as follows:

Dar farhange mard salare ma hamvare pesaran ra be dokhtaran tarjih dadeand, va na tanha aghlab az amuzesh bakhordar nabudand balke dar mavarede efrati aval be pesraha ghaza midadand va marda ro dokhtaran montazer mimandand. Ama dar khanevade ma hargez tabeez jayi nadashte ast. (Ayari, 2007, p. 68)

The term "discrimination" in the above paragraph is relevant to the concept of Otherness; this term in the TT is translated as "tabeez". Both terms mean "the practice of treating a person or a group differently from another in an unfair way" in the ST and the TT (L.M.A Dic, 2007, F.M Dic, 2013).

Bhutto in her autobiography talks about codes in Pakistani culture. She said that the code used by Pakistani delegations at the time of a disagreement is "A girl has been born", but when they achieve an agreement, they use the code "A boy has been born" (Bhutto, 2007, p. 65). De Beauvoir noted that "There is a good principle that created order, light, and man and a bad principle that created chaos, darkness, and woman" (de Beauvoir, 1949, p. 114). Bhutto portrays that in the man-oriented culture of Pakistan, a woman is considered as negative and evil:

If there is an agreement, we'll say a boy has been born. If there is no agreement, we'll say a girl has been born. How chauvinistic, I commented, but no one was listening. (2007, p. 65)

The Persian translation of the above paragraph is:

Heiate pakestan kodi ra dar nazar gerefte bud ke afrad ra ghader mikhast yekdigar ra az nahve pishrafte oza motale sazand. «agar tavafoghi hasel shavad , ma miguim ke yek pesar moteveled shode. Agar tavafoghi dar kar nabud, ma miguim ke yek dokhtar be donya amade.» nazar dadam: «cheghadr mard salarane !» Ama hich kas gush nadad. (Ayari, 2007, p. 110-111)

The term "chauvinistic" in the ST is translated to "mardsalarane" in the TT, which both mean "having the belief that your own sex is better, more intelligent, or more important than the other sex, especially if you are a man" (L.M.A Dic, 2007) in English and Persian (F.M Dic, 2013).

The other example of women's Otherness refers to the term "purdah", which means "seclusion of women from public observation" (Merriam-Webster, 2017). The "purdah" is a

masculine tool used to limit the roles of women, keep their status low, and seclude them from the rest of the world (Singh, 2006). Bhutto wrote:

After my mother and father married in 1951, my mother entered purdah with the other Bhutto women, and at first was allowed to leave the compound only once a week to visit her family. (2007, p. 32)

The above paragraph is translated to Persian as:

Pas az inke madar va pedaram dar sale 1951 ezdevaj kardand, madaram mesle digar zanane Bhutto az nazarha penhan shod, dar ebteda ejaze dasht ke hafteyi yek bar an ham baraye didane khanevadeash az khane kharej shaved. (Ayari, 2007, p. 67)

Benda defines woman as not regarded as an autonomous being. She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the absolute- she is the Other (as cited by de Beauvoir in McCann, 2013, p. 41). Tierney notes that “purdah” is a term used in women’s studies that refers to the gender relations based on hierarchical patterns, including strict behavioral rules, seclusion, prohibition, and limitation women against social roles and physical mobility (1999, p. 1173).

The concept of “purdah” portrays how women in Pakistan are treated as inessential, since they are not supposed to participate in social activities, and that they are oppressed by their own custom. This term in the TT turned into “az didha penhan shod”, which means, “nobody could see her”. This sentence cannot convey exactly the definition of “purdah” on its own, but with the help of the other supporting sentences, the definition of “purdah” is conveyed to some extent. Bhutto noted:

Sadly, many still believe that men control the women in their lives and by pressuring the man they will get him to pressure the woman. (2007, p. vi)

Ayari translated this paragraph to:

Moteasefane hanuz besyari az afrade jamee ma bar in tasavor hastand ke mardha bayad bar zendegiye zanan kontrole kamel dashte va ba ijade fesharhayi in masale ra hedayat mikonand. (2009, p. 18)

De Beauvoir describes Bachofen’s hypothesis that women are the Other and there is no reciprocal relation between the sexes: “whether Earth, Mother, or goddess,” she was not ever “a peer for man” (de Beauvoir, 1949, p. 104). De Beauvoir affirmed that “society has always been male, political power has been always in man’s hands.” Lévi-Strauss also maintained that “political authority, or simply social authority, always belong to men” (as cited in de Beauvoir, 2011, p. 82). Bhutto did not ignore such a point, since she notes, “Sadly, many still believe that men control the women in their lives and by pressuring the man they will get him to pressure the woman” (2007, p. vi). Such a point shows how men marginalized women in order to put themselves in the mainstream. Comparing this part to its Persian translation, it becomes clear that the term

"pressure" in English and "feshar" in Persian both mean "to try to make someone do something by making them feel it is their duty to do it" (L.M.A. Dic, 2007). But it becomes clear that the translator did not translate "by pressuring the man, they will get him to pressure the woman."

De Beauvoir argues that the Other who exists for the Self/Subject in an asymmetrical relationship is female, feminized, and occupying a secondary place in both concrete activity and subjective consciousness. The Other is not an equal complement to the Self/Subject, but rather serves as a projection of everything the Self/Subject rejects, such as immanence, passivity, and voicelessness (De Beauvoir, 1949, 1). This is the fact of Otherness in Pakistan society, since Bhutto notes that:

We still have to go the extra mile to prove that we are equal to men. We have to work longer hours and make more sacrifices. And we must emotionally protect ourselves from unfair, often vicious attacks made on us via the male members of our family. (2007, p. vi)

The Persian translation of the above paragraph is as follows:

Hanuz bayad talashhaye ziyadi anjam dahim ta sabet konim ke ba mardan barabar hastim. Ma bayad saate tulani be kar pardakhte va fadakarihayeh ziyadi dar zendegi anjam dahim. Az janbehaye mokhtalefe ehsasi niz ma bayad moraghebe khodeman bashim ta az enteghadat va eterazat va bazi oghat hamalate mardan e khanevadehaye khod dar aman bemanim. (Ayari, 2007, p. 17-18)

Through this passage, Bhutto portrays the position of women and their lack of power in Pakistani society. The above passage shows the worth of women's lives in that patriarchal society and portrays that women are treated as the second sex. Comparison between the ST and the TT shows that the phrase "unfair, often vicious attacks" in the ST was translated to "enteghadat va eterazat vabazi oghat hamalat" in the TT, which literally means "criticizing and protesting and sometimes attacking." The word "unfair" means "not right or fair, especially by not giving an equal opportunity to everyone" (L.M.A Dic, 2007) in English, and "gheire adelane (unjust)" (F.M. Dic, 2013) in Persian. The term "vicious" in the ST means "cruelly and deliberately trying to hurt someone's feelings or make their character seem bad" (L.M.A Dic, 2007) in English, which can be translated to "vahshiyane" (F.M Dic, 2013) in Persian. It can be seen that the misunderstanding of these key words by the translator made the translation weak.

A final example of Otherness in Bhutto's autobiography shows an accurate translation of the concept:

Women were singled out for exclusion in all aspects of society. At some official functions, the guests began to be divided by sex, even the highest ranking woman being separated from their male colleagues. (Bhutto, 2007, p. 312)

The above paragraph is translated to Persian as:

Dast ruye zanan gozashte budand ta anha ra dar hameye bakhshhaye jamee tahrir lonand. Dar barkhi az ziyafathaye shame rasmi, mihmanane zan va mard ra az

yekdigar joda mikardand, hata zanane rade bala ra niz az hamrahane mardeshan joda mikardand. (Ayari, 2007, p. 410)

To analyze the above translation, the present researcher has used de Beauvoir's view that argues that a woman is always Other because the male is the Self; he is the subject and she is the object. Joseph also notes that "the meaning of what it is to be a woman is given by men" (2008, p. 1). A comparison between the ST and the TT shows that the term "singled out", which means "to choose one person or thing from among a group, especially in order to praise them or criticized them" (L.M.A Dic, 2007), in the ST was translated to "dast gozashtand" in the TT, which has the same meaning in Persian.

Dukate's typology of manipulation

To analyze the concept of Otherness quantitatively, Dukate's typology of manipulation (2007) is used. The present researcher decided to focus on the distortive aspects of manipulation in the translation of *Daughter of the East* by the use of following strategies:

- Substitution
- Addition
- Omission
- Attenuation

Dukate defines distortion as the changing of meaning or purpose of something into something else which does not correspond to the truth (2007, p. 75). In the case of translation, it is changing the input information or message of the text in a way that makes it different from the original or may lead to misinterpretation. This can be done in various ways such as adding or omitting parts of the message and changing the tone or meaning of the original.

Normally when the translator encounters values in the original text which are not deemed appropriate to pass on to the target audience, they may be of the opinion that the problematic part of the text should be deleted or changed. It is often the case when cultural elements are embedded in the ST that are not familiar to the target audience (Dukate, 2007, p. 79). Thirty cases of manipulation were studied and through the following examples, the above mentioned manipulation strategies are clarified in the text.

Omission

"Omission" occurs when some ST units are omitted from the translation for different reasons such as differences between source and target culture. The omission can take the form of removing small-scale units such as words, phrases, or sentences; or large-scale omissions like a whole paragraph (Ranjour, 2010). The strategy of omission, with a frequency of 14 cases out of 30, is the most commonly used strategy in this translation. Two examples of omission are as follows:

Table No. 1. Cases of Omission

| No. | ST | TT |
|-----|---|--|
| 1 | With no suitable first or second Bhutto cousins <u>available for marriage</u> , they had been consigned to a life of purdah behind their compound walls in Heydarabad (Bhutto, 2007, p. 161). | Dar nabude pesar amuhaye daraje yek ya doye monaseb <u>////</u> , anan taslime zendegi dar pardeh, poshte chahar divariye khaneshan dar Heydarabad abad shode budand. (Ayari, 2007, p. 228). |
| 2 | <u>That is not a woman. That is Bjorn Borg.</u> (Bhutto, 2007, p. 312) | //// |

As it is shown in the first example in Table No. 1, the "term available for marriage" in the ST was omitted by the translator in the TT, which might have been done either consciously or unconsciously. In the second example, two whole sentences of the ST were totally omitted in the translated version.

Addition

Another strategy of manipulation is "addition", which refers to elements that the translator finds necessary to add to the original text (Ranjour, 2010). The translator manipulated the ST by adding a word or phrase to add a cultural flavor to the TT or to explain something which may not be familiar to the target readers. In comparing the ST and TT of Bhutto's autobiography, 12 out of the 30 cases were defined as added items in the corpus and was the second most frequent strategy discussed by Dukate (2007). Two examples of addition are as follows:

Table No. 2. Cases of Addition

| No. | ST | TT |
|-----|--|---|
| 1 | Sadly, many still believe that men control the women in their lives. (Bhutto, 2007, p. vi) | Moteasefane hanuz besyari azafrade jameeye mabar in tasavor hastand ke mardha bayad bar zendegiye zanan kontrolekameldashte . (Ayari, 2007, p.18) |
| 2 | He and his top army men believed a pregnant woman could not campaign . (Bhutto, 2007, p. vii) | Az nazare oo va sayere hamrazmanash yek zane hamele nemitavanest dar mobarezate entekhabati hozuri moaser va faal dashte bashad . (Ayari, 2007, p.18) |

As it is shown in the first example in Table No. 2, the translator, in order to smooth the flow of speech and make it sound more natural to the target reader, used the addition strategy by

translating the term “many” in the ST to “besyari az afrade jameeye ma” in the TT. For the same reason, the term “control” in the ST was translated to “dar mobarezate entekhabati hozuri moaser va faal dashte bashad” in the TT.

Substitution

Whenever a concept is seen to be unsuitable in a given context, it may be substituted with a more appropriate one (Dukate, 2007). In the Persian translation of *Daughter of the East*, 4 of the 30 cases were found to be “substitution”, making it the third most frequent strategy in the translation. Two examples are as follows:

Table No. 3. Cases of Substitution

| No. | Original Version | Translated Version |
|-----|--|---|
| 1 | My victory in December of 1976 upset what was really an 'old boys' club. (Bhutto, 2007, p. 76) | Piruziye man dar december 1976, mojebe narahatiye <u>anjomane saran</u> shod. (Ayari, 2007, p. 125) |
| 2 | Asking them to <u>desert me</u> . (Bhutto, 2007, p. 403) | Az anan darkhast mikardand ke <u>poshte mara khali konand</u> . (Ayari, 2007, p. 523) |

As it is shown in the first sentence in Table No. 3., the phrase “old boys” in the ST was translated to “anjomane saran” in the TT, meaning “association of leaders”, and the phrase “desert me” in the ST was substituted with the more relevant phrase “poshte mara khali konand in the TT, which means “They did not support me anymore”.

Attenuation

Another strategy applied by translators is “attenuation”, which is to mitigate taboo words or unacceptable behavior due to moral or educational considerations. The translators often modify and change problematic concepts or behaviors by replacing them with other concepts that are less expressive, more neutral and more acceptable in the target culture (Ranjour, 2010).

Benazir Bhutto as the author of the *Daughter of the East* did not use any taboo words or describe any behavior considered unacceptable by the culture of the target language that would require attenuation.

Statistical Analysis of Dukate's Strategies

The statistical analysis of Dukate's proposed manipulative strategies employed in the Persian translation of *Daughter of the East* is summarized in the following table:

Table No. 4. Statistical Analysis of Dukate's Strategies

| No. | Strategy | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| 1 | Omission | 14 | 46.66% |
| 2 | Addition | 12 | 40% |
| 3 | Substitution | 4 | 13.33% |
| 4 | Attenuation | 0 | 0% |
| Total | | 30 | 100% |

As it is demonstrated in Table No. 4, out of the 30 items under study, omission is the strategy most frequently applied by the translator when translating *Daughter of the East*, identified in 14 items. The next most frequent strategy is "addition", identified in 12 cases. The third most frequently applied strategy is "substitution" and finally "attenuation" was not applied to any items based on Iranian norms.

Conclusion

Translations may have a double connection with the source language and culture on the one hand and the target language on the other hand. It seems that in the process of translation, the original version of the text undergoes fundamental changes to the extent that usually the original concept is either lost or reinterpreted. Factors such as the translator's ideological background and the target society's dominant ideology affect the outcome of translating.

Otherness is an essential concept in colonized Women's Studies. Pakistan as a colonized country is constructed of binary oppositions-pairs, which give each one the value that the other has not accessed— male/female, Other/Self, marginal/central. Bhutto in *Daughter of the East* portrays women's Otherness. The changes of this concept in the TT are analyzed in this article— qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative analysis showed that in most cases the translator could convey the concept of Otherness correctly from the ST to the TT. Quantitative analysis indicated that the dominant manipulative strategies used in the Persian translation of *Daughter of the East* are "omission" (46.66%) followed by "addition" (40%), "substitution" (13.33%) and "attenuation" (0%), respectively.

Overall, it can be concluded that every translator has to conform to the governing norms of the target culture and target language. *Daughter of the East*, due to its cultural and social significance as well as its public appeal in the source and target cultures, has undergone certain manipulative actions. The translator may consciously and unconsciously use manipulative strategies to impose certain conscious or subconscious ideological, cultural and linguistic implications. According to the findings, the translator was more inclined to omitting and adding elements than substituting or attenuating.

List of abbreviations

Source Text: ST

Target Text: TT

L.M.A Dic: Longman Advanced American Dictionary

F.M Dic: Farhang Moaser Millennium

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