**TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OF HOMODEUS**

**Introduction**

Books are the alternative tools of communication. From the invention of writing to the present day people have tried to transmit the information by writing. Thus, papers had become our databases. However, since there are more than one languages, the people had to do something to transmit their information with other nations. So, people had discovered that they can translate the books if they can learn the source or target language. Thus, first waves of translators had created a bridge that connects every nation.

In that assignment, we will analyze Poyzan Nur Taneli’s translation for the book named Homodeus, originally written by Yuval Noah Harari, and the strategies and methods she used regarding to her translate will be explained comprehensively. To analyze her translation, we will make semantic and syntactic comparisons between the passages within the books in English and in Turkish, and we will evaluate the translation process carried out by Poyzan.

Briefly, Homodeus is about the near future of humankind. The book contains lots of historical and religious fragments from the past and present, and our author tries to envision the future of humankind according to these fragments. Basically, that content-rich-book’s translation has to be done naively, thus, readers of the book can catch the meanings that lie beneath the words. Since the book carries almost every aspect of science, therefore the translated version of book should carry the voice of the author. Considering the fact that the book has been really famous in Turkey, we can count that the translated version is really successful. However, the fact that the translated version has never been analyzed before can create question marks in our minds. First of all, the accuracy of hers preferred strategies and methods will be evaluated. Afterwards, these strategies and methods will be explained. And lastly, my personal opinion related to this translation will be added.

Before beginning the analysis process, I have to say that this book is one of the concrete books. Even if our translator has made mistakes, this should be considered as reasonable mistakes, given the weight of the book.

**Comparing the Passages**

I will chose specific parts from the book to evaluate the translation process properly. So, we can truly understand how this process handled in the first place. Our first passage will be from the 24th page of the original book.

“**Success breeds ambition, and our recent achievements are now pushing humankind to set itself even more daring goals. Having secured unprecedented levels of prosperity, health and harmony, and given our past record and our current values, humanity’s next targets are likely to be immortality, happiness and divinity. Having reduced mortality from starvation, disease and violence, we will now aim to overcome old age and even death itself. Having saved people from abject misery, we will now aim to make them positively happy. And having raised humanity above the beastly level of survival struggles, we will now aim to upgrade humans into gods, and turn Homo sapiens into Homo deus.**”

In that passage, we see a foresight about the future of our kind. Semantically, it bears a quite assertive language. Let’s see if there’s a difference in the Turkish version.

“**Başarı, hırsı ve açgözlülüğü beraberinde getirir; yeni başarılarımız bizi daha cüretkar hedefler koymaya yönlendiriyor. Eşi benzeri görülmemiş refah ve sağlık seviyeleriyle uyum içinde yaşamayı garantilediğimize göre, insanlığın yeni hedefi ölümsüzlük, mutluluk ve tanrısallık olacak gibi duruyor. Açlık, hastalık ve şiddetten kaynaklanan ölümleri azalttığımıza göre artık yaşlanmanın, hatta bizatihi ölümün üstesinden gelmeye çalışabiliriz. İnsanları küçük düşürücü sefaletten kurtardığımıza göre artık onları mutlu etmeyi amaçlayabiliriz. İnsanlığı hayatta kalma mücadelesinde yukarılara taşıdık. Şimdi artık insanları tanrı mertebesine yükseltmek için çalışıp Homo sapiens’i, Homo deus’a dönüştürebiliriz.**”

Now, we can see that Poyzan prefers to stay faithful to the source text, however, she changes the flow of sentences and that derives from the syntactic structure of the Turkish language. She, clearly, does not wanted the Turkish translation to be wearying and tedious. So, she preferred a path which lead her to do “free translation”. Tytler’s three general laws of translation says that “1st the translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work, 2nd The style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original, 3rd The translation should have all the ease of the original composition.” And according to these three laws, when we examine the both texts in terms of the semantics, we can say that Poyzan made the right choice by applying for free translation. Now let’s see, briefly, where she has applied for free translation.

“**Success breeds ambition….**”

“**Başarı hırsı ve açgözlülüğü beraberinde getirir….**”

In the English phrase, the word “ambition” means “hırs, ihtiras” in Turkish. But in the complete sentence one can assume that there is a deep meaning lies beneath it. Just because of the fact that, Poyzan adds two words to give the full meaning of what the author aims to say. She definitely tries to echo the author’s voice.

“**Having secured unprecedented levels of prosperity, health and harmony, and given our past record and our current values, humanity’s next targets are likely to be immortality, happiness and divinity.**”

“**Eşi benzeri görülmemiş refah ve sağlık seviyeleriyle uyum içinde yaşamayı garantilediğimize göre, insanlığın yeni hedefi ölümsüzlük, mutluluk ve tanrısallık olacak gibi duruyor.**”

Now, here is the interesting part. Firstly, in the original full sentence there is “…and given our past record and our current values…” part that has not been translated into Turkish. According to Newmark there are three propositions about this situation; “1st the more important the language of a text, the more closely it should be translated. 2nd the less important the language of a text, the less closely it needs to be translated. 3rd the better written a text, the more closely it should be translated, whatever its degree of importance.”

At this point, translators have to establish priorities in selecting which varieties of meaning to transfer in the first place. Poyzan prefers to not transfer the meaning of that missing part since she sees that as less important. So, we can say that she applied for these propositions mentioned above.

Secondly, in the English sentence we see that the flow of the meaning is a little bit different in Turkish translation. This is, again, caused by the structure of the target language. Since Turkish bears a far more different syntactic structure than English and that makes literal translation impossible, this type of changes are likely to occur. That situation can be explained by Vinay and Darbelnet’s Model. In that model there is term called “modulation” which means changing the semantics and point of views of the source language. If we translate the original sentence, without including the missing part, by means of literal translation it would be like:

“Eşi görülmemiş bir refah, sağlık ve ahenk seviyesini güvence altına alan insanlığın bir sonraki hedefi ölümsüzlük, mutluluk ve tanrısallık olacaktır.”

However, though some of the words look alike, Poyzan’s language is quite more different than this literal translation. And when we translate Poyzan’s version into English, in terms of literal translation again, it would be like:

“Since we guarantee to live in harmony with unprecedented levels of well-being and health, humanity's new goal seems to be immortality, happiness and divinity.”

And the rest of the passage goes by the same way…

It is indeed a different level, isn’t it? We can understand that Poyzan did really managed to translate that part properly. Her aim is, indeed, both re-echoing the author’s voice and catching the readers’ minds. But, let’s see if she managed to do the same on the other parts.

Our next example will be from the 166th:

“**Why did the Egyptian peasants and Prussian soldiers act so differently than we would have expected on the basis of Ultimatum Game and the capuchin monkeys experiment? Because large numbers of people behave in a fundamentally different way than do small numbers. What would scientists see if they conducted the Ultimatum Game experiment on two groups of 1 million people each, who had to share $100 billion?**”

And the Turkish version:

“**Peki Mısır köylüleriyle Prusya askerleri neden Ültimatom Oyunu’ndan ya da Kapuçin maymunlarından öğrendiklerimizden sonra oluşan beklentilerimizi boşa çıkaracak şekilde davrandılar? Çünkü kalabalık topluluklar küçük topluluklardan temelde çok daha farklıdır. Bilim insanları bir milyon kişinin 100 milyar doları paylaşmaya çalıştığı bir Ültimatom Oyunu deneyi yapmayı başarabilselerdi, kim bilir nasıl sonuçlar elde edilirdi?**”

In the Turkish version Poyzan wanted to follow free translation, again, but she goes a little bit further than the previous example. She still continues to apply for the modulation method but in a different way. She adds her own words into the translation.

In the last sentence of source text the part “**What would scientists see if they conducted the Ultimatum Game experiment on two groups of 1 million people each, who had to share $100 billion?**” could be translated as literal into Turkish like “Bilim adamları, Ültimatom Oyunu deneyini, her biri 1 milyon kişilik iki gruba uygulasalardı ne görürlerdi, 100 milyar doları kim paylaşmak zorunda olurdu?” As it seen, that sentence is unable to translate by literal translation. The language seem corrupted when we apply for the literal translation. But Poyzan, I guess, since she wanted her translation to be pure and understandable, she added her own perspective into translation. And if we translate her sentence into English we can see that she changed the meaning:

“If scientists were able to make an Ultimatum Game experiment where one million people tried to share $ 100 billion, who knows how the results would be achieved?”

Nevertheless, it seems she really did understood what the author wanted to say. She only uses her imagination to form up a new sentence which carries the ideas of the author. Plus, it seems that she adopted the author’s ideology.

As a different example, we will look to the first lines of the passage. To see where she changed the meaning we will compare the sentences in question:

“**Why did the Egyptian peasants and Prussian soldiers act so differently than we would have expected on the basis of Ultimatum Game and the capuchin monkeys experiment?**”

And the Turkish translation;

“**Peki Mısır köylüleriyle Prusyalı askerlerin neden Ültimatom Oyunu’ndan ya da Kapuçin maymunlarından öğrendiklerimizden sonra oluşan beklentilerimizi boşa çıkaracak şekilde davrandılar?**”

In Turkish translation, Poyzan changes the angle of the sentence, if we translate the original one into Turkish without any additions or omissions it would be like:

“Mısırlı köylüler ve Prusyalı askerler neden Ültimatom Oyunu ve Kapuçin maymunu deneyi temelinde beklediğimizden daha farklı davrandılar?”

That kind of literal translation would be a failure if Poyzan did the translation of the book in that way. She uses a pattern which means “being a total fiasco” where the original one says “…**act so differently than we would have expected**…” and she does not include the part “…**on the basis of**…”

She follows the path of oblique translation. This is a strategy, according to Vinay and Darbelnet that must be used where literal translation is not possible. So, she uses the parameter of servitude. The term servitude refers to obligatory transpositions and modulations due to a difference between the two languages. Even though that translation seems like free, everything is not as it seems.

Our next passage will come from 262nd page of the English book.

“**This partly explains the changing fortunes of the institution of marriage. In the Middle Ages marriage was considered a sacrament ordained by God, and God also authorized a father to marry off his children to his wishes and interests. An extramarital affair was consequently a brazen rebellion against both divine and parental authority. It was a normal sin, no matter what the lovers felt and thought about it. Today people marry for love, and it is their personal feelings that give value to this bond. Hence, if the very same feelings that once drove you into the arms of one man now drive you into the arms of another, what’s wrong with that? If an extramarital affair provides an outlet for emotional and sexual desires that are not satisfied by your spouse of twenty years, and if your new lover is kind, passionate and sensitive to your needs – why not enjoy it?**”

And here is the Turkish one:

“**Evlilik kurumunun makus kaderi de böyle açıklanabilir. Orta çağda evlilik Tanrı’nın emri, kutsal bir tören olarak değerlendirilirdi. Tanrı çocuklarını kendi istediği gibi emirlerine uygun olarak evlendirmesi için bir rahip görevlendirmişti. Evlilik dışı ilişkiler hem ilahi hem de ailevi otoriteye karşı utanmaz bir başkaldırıydı. Sevgililerin duygularından ve düşüncelerinden tamamen bağımsız, ölümcül bir günahtı zina. Bugün insanlar aşk evlilikleri yapıyor ve vaktiyle sizi bir adamın kollarına sürükleyen duygular, bugün de bir başkasının peşinden gitmenize neden olabilir değil mi, ne var bunda? Yirmi yıldır eşiniz tarafından karşılanmayan duygusal ve cinsel tutkularınız evlilik dışı bir ilişkide size sunuluyorsa yeni sevgiliniz kibar, tutkulu ve ihtiyaçlarınıza karşı hassassa neden bu durumun keyfini çıkarmayasınız?**”

So far, we know that Poyzan had applied for both free translation and oblique translation. But that passage carries a little bit literal translation. “**Orta çağda evlilik Tanrı’nın emri, kutsal bir tören olarak değerlendirilirdi. Tanrı çocuklarını kendi istediği gibi emirlerine uygun olarak evlendirmesi için bir rahip görevlendirmişti.**” when we compare this translation with the original one we can see that Poyzan divided that sentence in question into two sentences. Well, it could have been handled in one sentence but the thing is the fluency and the focus on sentence. If one rendered that sentence without dividing it like; “Orta Çağ’da evlilik tanrının emri, kutsal bir tören olarak değerlendirildi ve Tanrı çocuklarını istediği gibi emirlerine uygun olarak evlendirmesi için bir rahip görevlendirirdi.” would change the form of the predicate in that sentence. If we include the same form of predicate, it will be a mistake according to Turkish grammar. To not make mistake, Poyzan preferred to divide that sentence into two. But the shape of the translation directly looks like literal translation. She handled that without corrupting the message.

Let’s look towards another thing. “**An extramarital affair was consequently a brazen rebellion against both divine and parental authority. It was a normal sin, no matter what the lovers felt and thought about it.**” in that sentence Poyzan preferred to do an authentic translation. Her job does not bears the words in the original one, exemplary “**Evlilik dışı ilişkiler hem ilahi hem de ailevi otoriteye karşı utanmaz bir başkaldırıydı. Sevgililerin duygularından ve düşüncelerinden tamamen bağımsız, ölümcül bir günahtı zina.**” when we collate these sentences in terms of semantics we see that our translator wanted to deviate her direction. In the last sentence the part “It was a normal sin, no matter what the lovers felt and thought about it” translated into Turkish as “Sevgililerin duygularından ve düşüncelerinden tamamen bağımsız, ölümcül bir günahtı zina” which means “Adultery is a deadly sin that is completely independent of the feelings and thoughts of lovers” in English. That is a completely different sentence, isn’t it? From every angle, that sentence look completely different in terms of both syntactically and both semantically. It normally can be translated into Turkish as “Sevgililerin hakkında ne hissettiğinin ve düşündüğünün bir önemi olmaksızın, normal bir günahtı”, however, this kind of translation might be misguide the reader. Because, according to her target culture, extramarital affairs are really a bad sin. If she translated that sentence in a literal way that could misguide the reader because in Islam adultery or extramarital affair or however you want to name that is a really important sins which has bad consequences. Since she knows how her target culture is she didn’t wanted to misguide the readers. Her method seems like Venuti’s “value-free translation” which aims to transmitting the norms correctly. As it was mentioned above, a sentence from source language may not bear a bad or important meaning for the native speakers of it, while it can be offensive for the target culture when it comes to translation. So, she had decided to change the pattern of that sentence in order to not offending the target culture.

**Conclusion**

The book Homo Deus was about a brief summary of the future of humankind. Since it bears lots of historical and scientific elements, the translation process should have been done carefully. Such books might contain lots of confusing fragments for the readers, thus, the process of transmitting the ideas from books should carried out by taking account of the readers.

We analyzed the translation process carried by Poyzan Nur Taneli for the book of Yuval Noah Harrari, namely Homo Deus. Three passages from each books have been shown as examples and sentences from them shown to explain the differences, methods and strategies. Her way of translation has seen as both free and oblique translation, because of the intercultural differences and differences between two languages. As one can see, Poyzan Nur Taneli made a great job by translating that book into Turkish. With this translation, Poyzan Nur Taneli has enabled the book to be so famous in Turkey.

The way of her choosing words, patterns are show that she knows how her culture is really shaped. It seems like she has full knowledge of both her source culture and target culture. And she managed to set a bridge between her and the Yuval Noah Harrari by adopting his ideas. She tried to re-echo the author’s sound in Turkish, and I can say that by the famousness of that book in Turkey, she successfully managed to do that.

Each translator has a mission. They are responsible for the transmitting the information to the other cultures. Since their mission is really crucial, each translator has to handle their jobs naively in order to do it properly. There are lots of theories have been asserted, lots of methods and strategies have been brought to the fore and with the guidance of them they are rewriting the books by considering their target languages and cultures. Translation studies might be the very fundamental invention of all humankind. Without it, we could have not developed as much as we now.

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