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An Investigation into Three Persian Translations of Gibran Khalil Gibran's *The Prophet*

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive and comparative study aimed to analyze reframing strategies in the Persian translation of Gibran Khalil Gibran's The Prophet (1923). The study examined the entire book and its three Persian translations: Mostapha Elm (1961), Mahdi Maghsodi (2004), and Hossein Mohyeddin Elahi Ghomshei (2015). Reframing strategies are significant tools used by translators to adapt a text to a different context. To guide this analysis, we applied Baker's (2007) reframing theory, which includes labeling, outer paratext, inner paratext, and textual choices encompassing translational and contextual strategies. The findings revealed that among the three Persian translations of The Prophet, Elahi Ghomshei's version employs a rich array of inner and outer paratextual strategies, often Islamizing the text through frequent theological references to classic Persian poets. His translation is also more heavily commented, interpreted, and reframed compared to those of Maghsodi and Elm. Additionally, Elahi Ghomshei's translation stands out for its temporal and spatial relevance, as it connects the events to the poet's era and the original Islamic context. In contrast, while Maghsodi's and Elm's translations show few signs of such strategies, Elahi Ghomshei's work offers examples where the content of Persian poems closely aligns with the English text.

1. Introduction

According to Wittgenstein (2008), the limits of one's language signify the limits of one's world. Language shapes our understanding of the external reality and influences our consciousness. He further suggests that our use of language, whether spoken or written, reflects not only our knowledge of the world but also our attitudes toward it (2008). In the context of religious language, it is evident that language is deeply intertwined with underlying preconceptions about both humanity and divine beings. Additionally, variations in linguistic expression can have significant and sometimes striking effects. The translation of religious texts is particularly important, as fundamental translation theories in the Western world have often focused on these texts. Keane (1997) argues that in religious discourse, the sources of words, along with the identity, agency, authority, and even the presence of participants in an interaction, can present unique challenges.

It is essential to note that the purpose of translation has evolved over time. Newmark (1988) observed that translation was once expected to be strictly faithful, but later concepts of equivalence and equivalent effect emerged. More specifically, Melis and Albir (2001) identified three contexts for quality assessment in translation: (1) literary or religious texts, (2) professional texts, and (3) pedagogical texts.

In addition to prescriptive translation theories, scholars have proposed descriptive and evaluative models for assessing translations. Baker (2008) posits that the term (re)narration best describes translation today, as texts are often treated as tools serving dominant parties. Baker (2006) defines framing as structures of anticipation—strategic moves consciously initiated to present a narrative in a particular light. He further describes framing as "an active process of signification through which we consciously participate in the construction of reality" (p. 167).

Sociological studies illuminate the schools and movements within society; therefore, researchers analyzing translated works should pay close attention to the strategies employed to guide readers. This makes the study of literary texts and their translations particularly important, as they contribute significantly to the cultural discourse within societies. Given this context, although Gibran Khalil Gibran's works are well-received in Iranian culture, it is noteworthy that he was born into a Catholic Christian family. This study aims to examine how Gibran's seminal work, The Prophet, is reframed by Persian translators. Special emphasis will be placed on the structures and attributes that shape reader ideology through reframing strategies in the translation from English to Persian.

Specifically, this study will scrutinize how reframing strategies adopted by translators influence readers' ideologies and identify the strategies frequently employed to reframe the original text. In other words, the study seeks to reveal and analyze the methods by which translators of Gibran's selected work have reframed their translations to impact their readers. Consequently, this study aims to identify the reframing strategies used in three translations of The Prophet and determine the differences in these strategies among various translators. Based on these considerations, the following research questions are proposed:

RQ1: How does reframing strategies adopted by translators shape the ideology of the reader toward translations of Gibran Khalil Gibran's works?

RQ2: What strategies do translators draw on frequently in order to reframe the original text?

Since this study focuses on the concept of reframing in the translation of religious texts, it aims to contribute novel insights and findings to Translation Studies (TS). Moreover, the study offers several benefits for various language practitioners:

Verification and Expansion of Translation Theories: The findings can expand or corroborate existing translation theories, especially regarding the notion of reframing.

Cultural Translators: Cultural theorists of translation will gain insights into how religious texts are translated across different cultures.

Translation Trainers and Educators: The results and discussions presented here can significantly aid translation trainers and educators by addressing challenging questions in the field.

Interpreters of Religious Texts: Finally, the study may provide valuable contributions to interpreters of religious texts, highlighting how their work differs from that of translators.

2. Literature review

Over the past four decades, linguistics has seen rapid growth in both its theoretical and applied dimensions. As a result, some experts in the field have developed models and frameworks to study translation from a descriptive perspective. Hatim and Mason (1997, p.16) state, "the underlying concepts and relations must also appear to the reader to be mutually relevant and accessible in establishing and maintaining sense constancy or coherence." This definition highlights the importance of preserving meaning as a text expands. Additionally, the concept of "accessibility" underscores the role of prior knowledge in helping the audience understand the text. In discourse studies, this is referred to as "background knowledge" (Bell, 1991; Brown & Yule, 1983; Yule, 2006). Baker (2008) differentiated between the narrative analysis of translation and narratology, as well as linguistic analysis. She viewed narrative as the process through which translators contribute to telling a story rather than merely representing the main event. Baker (2006) defines narrative as follows:

[…] narrative is the principal and inescapable mode by which we experience the world. Narratives are the stories we tell ourselves and other people about the world(s) in which we live. These stories are constructed – not discovered – by us in the course of making sense of reality, and they guide our behavior and our interaction with others. In this sense, the terms 'narrative' and 'story' can be used interchangeably (p. 169).

Pormouzeh (2014) argued that patronage, ideology, and the discourse of power within dominant social groups shape the final outcome of translations. Consequently, an ideology that serves a particular group necessitates a narrative aligned with its interests. In this sense, ideology and narrative are deeply interconnected, influencing each other in a reciprocal relationship. Recognizing the significant role of a translator's ideology, Mirza Suzani (2024) asserted that modifications made to the source text—reflecting the constraints and norms guiding early translators—are not accidental but rather deliberate choices. These changes may stem from various factors, including the translator's personal ideological beliefs,

concerns about failing to meet readers' expectations, or fear of legal repercussions for authors, translators, or publishers.

Simpson and Mayr (2010) note that the term ideology was first coined in the 1800s by French philosopher Destutt de Tracy. It is closely linked to Karl Marx's treatise The German Ideology, which has been translated into multiple languages. Furthermore, Simpson and Mayr (2010) explain that in Marx's original conception, ideology serves as a key mechanism through which dominant social forces—such as royalty, aristocracy, or the bourgeoisie—exercise power over subordinated or oppressed groups, including the industrial and rural proletariat (p. 4). In Baker's (2006) terms, framing refers to the ways in which "translators and interpreters – in collaboration with publishers, editors, and other agents involved in the interaction – accentuate, undermine or modify aspects of the narrative(s) encoded in the source text or utterance" (p. 105).

Darwish (2006) highlighted the role of television and rapid news dissemination networks in framing information. By comparing news coverage on Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, he found that while there were similarities in their reporting, each network framed the news differently. Recognizing the role of translation and interpretation in shaping meaning, Baker (2006) argued that translators and interpreters are not passive recipients of text. Like other social groups, they actively engage in the communication process and bear responsibility for the texts and utterances they produce (p. 105). Since translators are considered active participants, their mediation in the text is both acknowledged and justified.

Framing and reframing are closely related concepts derived from Baker's (2006) narrative theory, which emphasizes the role of narratives in shaping perceptions of reality and facts. According to Baker (2006), framing and reframing function similarly in translation, as translators play a crucial role in reshaping the narrative. Reframing strategies are techniques used either intentionally—to influence readers' perceptions before engaging with the text—or unconsciously, as a result of the translator's involvement in the translation process. These strategies ultimately guide readers in a specific direction. Baker (2006) identifies several reframing strategies, including:

a) Temporal and Spatial Context (Historical Moment),

b) Labeling, Titling, and Naming,

c) Outer Paratexts,

d) Inner Paratexts,

e) Inner Paratexts (Additional Notes), and

f) Textual Choices.

The present study aims to analyze how translators of Khalil Gibran's selected works have employed reframing strategies to shape readers' perceptions. Specifically, it examines three Persian translations of The Prophet (1923) by Elahi Ghomshei (1999), Elm (1962), and Maghsodi (1998). Originally written in 1923, The Prophet is a collection of 26 prose and poetry essays by Khalil Gibran, translated into more than 40 languages. The book explores 26 themes related to life and the human condition. Given this context, the study seeks to identify the reframing strategies used by the translators to shape readers' ideological

interpretations of Gibran's The Prophet and to explore which strategies are most frequently employed in the three Persian translations.

3. Methodology

3.1. Materials

The corpus of this study comprises the entire content of The Prophet by Khalil Gibran (1923) and its three Persian translations. The Prophet consists of 26 prose and poetry essays exploring various aspects of life and the human condition. Originally published in 1923, the book has been translated into more than 40 languages.

The Prophet tells the story of Almustafa, who, after living in the city of Orphalese for twelve years, prepares to return to his homeland. During his time in Orphalese, he earns the deep admiration and love of the people for his wisdom and kindness. As he prepares to depart, the townspeople gather around him, unwilling to let him go, longing to keep him with them forever.

Almitra, a close friend of the Prophet, eagerly asks him about the principles of a good life. In response, the Prophet speaks about love, emphasizing the importance of commitment in truly understanding one's own heart and gaining insight into the essence of life. He asserts that those who fear love should hide and flee, while those who refuse to surrender to love will never experience true fulfillment. The Prophet then shares his wisdom on various aspects of life, including marriage, children, charity, food and drink, work, joy and sorrow, shelter, clothing, commerce, and the treatment of crime and punishment.

In this study, from among the translations of "The Prophet" (1923), three mostly read Persian renditions were selected which included translations by Mostapha Elm (1961), Mahdi Maghsodi (2004), and Hossein Mohyeddin Elahi Ghomshei (2015).

3.2. Framework of the study

The model of narrative theory and reframing strategies of Baker (2006) was the basis of analysis in this study. Different strategies of this model are as follows:

Temporal and Spatial Context (Historical Moment): comprise the search for intertextual references offered by translator inside translation to harmonize his/herself with translation. In Baker's (2006) terms, it refers to "selecting a particular text and embedding it in a temporal and spatial context that accentuates the narrative it depicts and encourages us to establish links between it and current narratives that touch our lives" (p. 112).

Labelling, Titling, and Naming: refer to the use of naming according to ideological considerations. Sometimes it occurs due to differences in ideological thinking by opposing other groups. The use of euphemism, rival system of naming, counter-naming and alignment of the changed titles with names are key conceptual elements for labelling, titling and naming.

Outer Paratexts (cover, blurb): include repositioning paratextual elements within the original book and translations. The cover books, pictures inside the books and general ideas the books may transmit are considered as outer paratexts.

Inner Paratexts: consist of such parts as Introductions/Prefaces that are produced by translators and specify the way of reading the text. Sometimes translators offer information inside the text in introductions or glossaries to offer inner paratextual ideologies.

Inner Paratexts (Additional notes): include Footnotes used as additional notes by translators in the text to show their alignment with the text or justify the ambiguous aspects of the text. Such footnotes are commonly analysed to report the notes which are innovated by the translators.

Textual Choices (within the translation): are considered as selective appreciations including deletions, additions, and censorship in the text. It also includes the choice of words and ideological preferences and similar alternatives by translator in the translation of the text involved.

3.3. Procedures

The aim of this study was to examine how translators of Khalil Gibran's The Prophet have reframed their translations to shape readers' perceptions. To achieve this, the study drew on the closely related concepts of framing and reframing from Baker's (2006) narrative theory, which explores the construction of reality and facts through narratives. Among the various Persian translations of The Prophet, three widely read versions were selected: Mostapha Elm (1961), Mahdi Maghsodi (2004), and Hossein Mohyeddin Elahi Ghomshei (2015). The analysis and discussion in this study were based on Baker's (2006) narrative theory model and reframing strategies.

The analysis was conducted across six categories. For each section, relevant excerpts from the original book and its corresponding translations were provided. The translated text was then examined for similarities, differences, and reframed elements. Drawing on all aspects of Baker's (2006) narrative theory, the factors influencing the translators' renditions were examined. Specifically, these aspects included the ideological or strategic labeling, naming, and titling of terms, as well as the book cover and blurb, the introduction and preface written by the translators, footnotes, and lexical choices. These elements ranged from the book cover to word choice and cultural considerations, all shaped by the translators' selective emphasis on key conceptual elements within the study's framework. In discussing the reframing elements, the additional information introduced in the translations was identified and analyzed according to the reframing strategies employed.

4. Findings

Using the six strategies from Baker's (2006) model to analyze The Prophet and its Persian translations, the following findings were obtained:

4.1. Temporal and spatial context

In analyzing the original book and its translations, three key factors should be considered. The original text is a narrative recounting the life of a prophet, narrated by Khalil Gibran, who lived during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The first Persian translation was done

by Elahi Ghomshei in 1999. The act of narrating in three distinct temporal and spatial contexts places both the original work and the translations into new, evolving situations.

4.1.1. Elahi Ghomshei's translation

Regarding the temporal and spatial context, the following examples are considerable.

1. The sentence "It is not a garment I cast off this day, but a skin that I tear with my own hands" was translated by Elahi Ghomshei's as:

آنچه باید امروز از تن به در آورم جامه نیست بلکه پوستی است که باید با دست های خویش پاره کنم

The original sentence in English and Elahi Ghomshei's rendition in Persian remind us of Sa'di's witty poem:

شراب خورده معنی چو در سماع آید   چه جای جامه که بر خویشتن بدرد پوست

This is a presupposition or intertextual representation of a concept from Sa'di's verse that sets the translation with new conditions of time and place compared to the original, producing a new concept. Therefore, the translation recreated a new temporal and spatial condition.

2. Another intervention of temporal situation is created in the text by similarizing the language of translation to the content of Hafez' poem when Gibran says "when love beckons to you follow him" which is translated by Elahi Ghomshei as " هر زمان که عشق اشارتی به شما کرد در پی او بشتابید" (p. 35). Indeed, in the rendition of this sentence, the translator refers to the following verse of Hafez:

آن دم که دل به عشق دهی خوش دمی بود   درکار خیر حاجت هیچ استخاره نیست

It appears that Elahi Ghomshei has taken advantage of the domestication strategy to convey the words of Islam and Islamic instructions through witty language of the celebrated Persian poets in his renditions. Interestingly, the reader, while reading the translated text, may hardly be able to summon up that Gibran is a Christian poet.

4.1.2. Maghsodi's translation

Maghsodi translated The Prophet into Persian prose in 1997. Unlike Elahi Ghomshei's rendition, Maghsodi's translation is simple, more artistic, and rhythmic. There is little trace of temporal and spatial intertextuality in the translation, and decision making about references to the intertextual content is devolved to the readers. The reader has to understand the hidden allegories and references by doing research or contemplation in the content of the translation. In fact, in Maghsodi's translation, readers are mostly responsible for their understanding of the text and they do not perceive the text from filter of interpretation of the translator or his comments to the significant contents.

4.1.3 Elm's translation

Elm's translation, completed in 1962, predates the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The translated text maintains a clear and simple style, offering semantic translations of the sentences from The Prophet. The only noticeable addition in this version, which introduces spatial elements, is the inclusion of Gibran's paintings between the translated pages. However, these illustrations seem irrelevant to the prose content, as many of the images, particularly those of nude women, conflict with the themes of Gibran's work. Similar to Maghsodi's translation, this version leaves readers to interpret the text on their own, encouraging contemplation. Furthermore, the illustrations do not seem to contribute any additional meaning, as they are neither analyzed nor described in relation to the text.

4.2. Labelling, titling, and naming

Baker (2006) believes that labeling is ideological and suggests that there are four types of labeling, including euphemism, rival system of naming, counter-naming, and alignment of the changed titles. There are some examples of labelling in the translations of The Prophet. In Table 1, the items used for each term are provided.

Table 1. Number of labelling, titling, and naming strategies in the translations of "The Prophet"

English term	Elahi Ghomshei's translation	Maghsodi's translation	Elm's translation
innocent	معصومان	معصومیت مقدس	بی گناهان
veil	حجاب	نقاب	رو بند
farewell	وداع	بدرود	خدانگهدار
wine	شراب	شراب	می

In Elahi Ghomshei's translation, the euphemism strategy is seen abundantly and the rendition has become more domesticated in the Persian language. For instance, the term "حجاب" in Elahi Ghomshei's translation is euphemistically used and labelled for veil and appears to shows the meaning of the term well. The other two translations are not labeled. Also, in the last example, as both bread and wine are considered divine gifted foods in the Christian culture, the term "شراب" is likely to better represent the meaning than the term "می" used in Elm rendition. Indeed, using the term "می" by Elm is an instance of counter-naming. As shown in Table 1, the labeled terms by translators include some instances of euphemism suggested by Elahi Ghomshei and an instance of counter-naming by Elm. Since the book is a religious one and is welcomed by Iranian and Muslims' religious culture because of its proper content, there is no more instances of counter-naming, rival system of naming, and alignment of titles.

4.3. Outer paratexts

Considering the strategies of Baker's (2006) framework, paratext comprises additional information by translators, editors, publishers and so on. Also, the outer paratext refers to the book cover and blurb. In none of the translated books there were blurbs, and hence they are disregarded. However, regarding the covers of the original and translated books the following points are noteworthy.
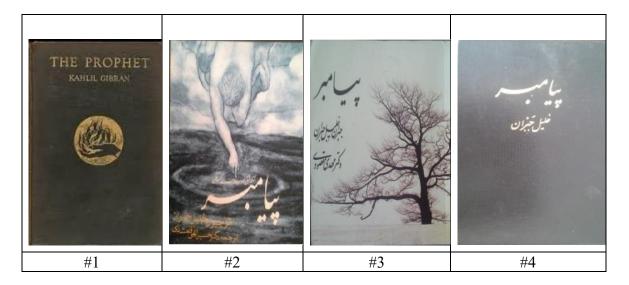
Figure 1. Book covers of Gibran's "The Prophet", First Edition (1923) (#1) and its three Persian translations by Elahi Ghomshei (#2), Maghsodi (#3), and Elm (#4)

4.3.1. Gibran Kahlil's book cover

The original English version of the book features a painting by Gibran himself. Since the book was first published during his lifetime, it is likely that the design of the cover was intentional. At first glance, the image appears to be a hand with flames or blazes of fire. However, upon closer inspection, one might interpret it as the hand of a person in prayer. Even more clearly, figures of angels or people rising from the open hand become visible. It seems that Gibran deliberately chose this image for the book cover to convey a thematic ideology. The image suggests the concept of praying hands seeking elevation toward heaven, with the upward movement of the figures symbolizing a spiritual ascent. The open hands appear to direct or orient the source of guidance.

4.3.2. Elahi Ghomshei's book cover

The book cover of Elahi Ghomshei's translation also features a painting by Gibran Khalil, though it is cropped on the cover. At first glance, the painting is unclear, and it appears to show a person lying on a beach and touching the water. Upon further examination, however, the meaning behind the image becomes more apparent. The painting depicts a person looking downward and touching the water, with ripples spreading outward. The image symbolizes how, through divine inspiration, we can influence the world—starting from a single point and, like a ripple, spreading outward. Good deeds, humanity, and righteousness are akin to touching water, with everyone benefiting from such actions.

The figure on the cover is partially obscured due to nudity, yet both the cover designer and the translator seem to have intended to preserve the original essence of the image. A line by the poet Hafiz, "نقطه عشق نمودم به تو هان سهو مکن" ("I have shown you the point of love; do not make a mistake"), is inscribed on the cover, linking the image to Hafiz's ideology. The author of The Prophet suggests that humans are born without clothing, and that garments are human-made, not divinely given. In this context, the censorship of the nude figure on the translated cover reflects social attitudes toward censorship, which may influence how readers interpret the content, rather than encouraging independent reflection. This approach to translation can be viewed not as a description but as a prescription, guiding readers to interpret the book through the translator's ideological lens.

4.3.3. Maghsodi's book cover

The cover of Maghsodi's translation was designed by Siavash Maghsodi. The image of a leafless tree on this cover is markedly different from the original cover of the English version. This picture appears to have been chosen without a clear purpose or ideological intention, offering minimal insight into the content of the book. It neither guides the reader's interpretation nor aligns with the themes of the text. In fact, its apparent irrelevance could even paradoxically mislead readers, suggesting a disconnect from the original message.

4.3.4. Elm's book cover.

The book cover is black, simple, and somber, displaying only the title and the author's name. There are no images or illustrations, resulting in a cover that offers little thematic or symbolic insight.

4.4. Inner paratexts

Inner paratexts refer to sections such as introductions, prefaces, and glossaries, which are often included to provide additional information or critical commentary on the text. By offering clarifications or interpretations, these inner paratexts can shape readers' perceptions and influence their ideology toward the text. This ideological framing is often guided by the translator, editor, or even the publisher.

4.4.1. Elahi Ghomshei's translation

The book begins with a miniature and a celebrated verse by Ferdowsi, which reads:

به نام خداوند جان و خرد   کزین برتر اندیشه بر نگذرد

The book begins with a miniature and a celebrated verse by Ferdowsi, followed by a preface on the next page. The introduction provides details about the author's birth, birthplace, parents, teachers, and close friends who influenced him. It also mentions that the author moved to the USA at the age of 12. The translator includes three of Gibran's paintings in the preface, followed by a chronological sequence of Gibran's life and works. The introduction notes that the content of The Prophet bears similarities to Nietzsche's Thus Spoke Zarathustra in terms of its storytelling. It also highlights that Gibran was inspired by Persian poets, Sufis, and Christian saints like William Blake. Subsequently, the translator provides summaries for each of the 28 chapters, accompanied by short descriptions for each title, along with poetic reflections from figures like Hafez, Rumi, and others. At the end of the preface, the translator discusses Gibran's other works and offers acknowledgments, thanking those who assisted in comparing the translation to the original text. The inclusion of numerous paintings, pictures, and quotes from Persian poets makes the book feel less like a mere translation and more like a domestic work crafted by the translator himself, rather than Gibran.

4.4.2. Maghsodi's translation

Maghsodi includes two inner paratexts: at the beginning of the book, he presents " گفتاری از مترجم " ("A Speech by the Translator"), and at the end, a section titled "از خلیل جبران" ("From Kahlil Gibran"). In his introduction, the translator describes the original book as a

remarkable work that he chose to translate. He notes that the text is simple and filled with biblical influences, rather than Qur'anic allusions or references to Hafiz's poetry. By providing this introduction, Maghsodi indicates that he selected the book for its specific content, and he emphasizes that he focused on preserving the sense and meaning of the original work rather than being strictly faithful to its form. His goal was to maintain Gibran's thoughts and viewpoints. However, the translator does not explicitly mention any intent to influence the reader, aside from the observation that Gibran was inspired by biblical sources and religious interpretations. At the end of the book, Maghsodi offers additional details about Gibran's birthplace, upbringing, conflicts, and his move to the USA, along with a chronology of his life and works. Many of the details provided here are similar to those found in the introductory section of Elahi Ghomshei's translation.

4.4.3. Elm's translation.

Elm's translation begins with a series of significant speeches by Gibran, emphasizing that while things may seem unclear at first, they will become clear in the end. The book opens with a preface that seeks to portray Gibran as a brilliant and idealistic figure deeply connected to the divine. The preface focuses on his timeline and life, detailing his time in Beirut, his move to the USA, his return to study Arabic literature, his time in France to study painting, and his creative endeavors. It also introduces his works in both Arabic and English, as well as his contributions to English-language newspapers. The translator states that he has made every effort to stay true to the source text, avoiding any changes during the translation process, and has aimed to preserve the writer's style. While no further clarifications or notes are provided, the preface offers a comprehensive biographical account of Kahlil Gibran's life and works.

4.5. Inner paratexts (Additional notes)

Footnotes, as additional notes, are another type of paratext used by translators to clarify the meaning of difficult texts or provide supplementary explanations. Below, the use of footnotes in the three translations is examined.

4.5.1. Elahi Ghomshei's translation

Elahi Ghomshei's translation includes four types of footnotes:

1. When the content of a statement aligns with the message of a Persian poem, the translator provides the relevant Persian verse. This type of footnote appears on nearly every page. For example, consider the content of the following statement in Persian:

<div dir="rtl">

شما از زمان جویباری نقش می‌کنید و سپس بر لب جوی می‌نشینید و در گذر لب می‌نگرید

</div>

For the above statement, the translator uses a similar theme from Hafez's poem, which is as follows:

<div dir="rtl">

بنشین بر لب جوی و گذر عمر ببین   کاین اشارت زجهان گذران ما را بس

</div>

Similarly, poems by Rumi, Sa'di, Hafez, Kharaghani, Nezami, as well as verses from the Holy Qur'an, are also used in other instances.

2. At the beginning of each chapter, there is a quote in the form of a poem by Persian poets that relates thematically to the content of the chapter. These poems address the subject matter of the chapter. For example, in the section on "love," the translator includes a poem by Hafez, which expresses the idea that:

<div dir="rtl">

اِرادتی بنما تا سعادتی ببری   طفیل هستی عشقند آدمی و پری

</div>

4.5.2. Maghsodi's translation

There are no footnotes in Maghsodi's translation, meaning that readers, critics, and researchers are responsible for interpreting the texts on their own.

4.5.3. Elm's translation

Like Maghsodi's translation, Elm's translation also contains no footnotes, requiring readers to interpret the text on their own.

4.6. Textual Choices

Textual choices refer to the strategies used by translators to reframe a translation by highlighting certain parts or terms. These strategies include deletion, addition, and censorship. Based on these principles, the elements of deletion, addition, and censorship were analyzed in the translations of The Prophet. The results are as follows:

4.6.1. Elahi Ghomshei's translation

The content, sentences, and words are the textual choices examined in the translations. The use of deletion, addition, and censorship was analyzed and discussed whenever relevant indicators appeared in the texts. To illustrate, let's consider the following statement and its translation by Elahi Ghomshei:

when you kill a beast, say to him in your heart…

<div dir="rtl">

وقتی حیوانی را ذبح می کنی در دل با او بگو...

</div>

The term "kill" generally refers to the act of slaughtering an animal for food. In contrast, the term "ذبح" (zabah) is specifically an Islamic term used for slaughtering an animal under certain religious conditions, which involves saying prayers, facing the animal toward Mecca, and then cutting its throat. In the example above, it is culturally inappropriate to equate the act of killing animals in the general sense of the English source text with the specific and intentional Persian term used by Elahi Ghomshei. The main reason for this difference is that an additional strategy was employed in the translation.

4.6.2. Maghsodi's translation

There are no instances of textual choices in Maghsodi's translation, as he appears to be fully faithful to both the form and content of the source text. As a result, readers, critics, and researchers are responsible for interpreting the text on their own.

4.6.3. Elm's translation

Similar to Maghsodi's translation, there are no instances of textual choices, as the translator appears to be completely faithful to both the form and content of the source text.

5. Discussion

Out of the many books written by Khalil Gibran, several were originally written in English, some of which have been translated into Persian, though these may not be readily accessible in Iran. In this study, The Prophet in English, along with its three Persian translations, were analyzed using reframing strategies. The adaptation strategies, incorporating reframing techniques in each translator's work, were discussed, and the ways in which they reframed and shaped the readers' ideology were summarized for each strategy and for each translator's translation. Regarding the reframing strategies adopted by the translators to influence the readers' perception of the book, it was found that Elahi Ghomshei's Persian translation of The Prophet is more extensively commented on, interpreted, and reframed compared to the translations by Maghsodi and Elm. Specifically, in terms of temporal and spatial aspects, Elahi Ghomshei's translation stands out, as it references events occurring in the time of poets such as Hafiz and Molana, relating the original content to Islamic themes. It also provides examples where the content of Persian poetry and the English text align. Few such indications of this strategy are present in Maghsodi and Elm's translations.

In the case of labeling, five instances were reported, with Elahi Ghomshei using euphemism in four of these cases, and Elm employing counter-naming in one instance during their translations. Regarding the outer paratext, Elahi Ghomshei's book cover is more relevant to the content of the book, although the removal of part of the cover image makes it harder to fully grasp the meaning of the painting. In contrast, Elm's book cover is simple, while Maghsodi's cover is entirely unrelated to the content. The inner paratext, which includes introductions and prefaces, is present in all three translations but with varying degrees of detail. Elm and Maghsodi provide only biographical and chronological information about the author, whereas Elahi Ghomshei incorporates numerous commentaries, claims, and quotations from Persian poets to support, discuss, and interpret the content before translating the main text. This approach enhances the framing role of Elahi Ghomshei's translation, influencing readers' interpretations.

Regarding the use of footnotes, Elahi Ghomshei's translation is rich in footnotes and related explanations that align with the content of each paragraph. In contrast, Elm's and Maghsodi's translations contain no footnotes whatsoever. Finally, textual choices refer to the selection of specific elements in the translation that distinguish one version from another. In Elahi Ghomshei's translation of The Prophet, two examples of textual choices were identified, both of which reflect Islamic beliefs. Specifically, the term 'ذبح' is used instead of 'kill', and the term 'نفس' is deliberately added to enhance clarity. However, no such textual choices are present in Maghsodi's or Elm's translations.

Considering the strategies frequently applied by translators to reframe the original text, it was revealed that Elahi Ghomshei's Persian translation of The Prophet reinterprets the text more extensively than the renditions by the other two translators. In this process, strategies such as temporal and spatial framing, labeling, outer paratext, inner paratext, and textual choices are incorporated to reframe the original content. Furthermore, Elahi Ghomshei's

translation aligns more closely with Persian literary trends, drawing on Qur'anic themes, Sufism, and sacred writings, in contrast to the original Christian author's biblical content. Regarding the translation of love letters, while no significant changes are observed in the inner paratext, the outer paratext is often reframed. In other words, none of the translators make major alterations to the text, and their use of strategies is generally limited to inner paratext, textual choices, and outer paratext.

This study resonates with existing literature on narrative analysis, particularly concerning the observation of renarration and reframing through narrative and framing strategies. While previous research shares these general findings, the specific approach and scope of this study represent a novel contribution to the field. This is illustrated by examples cited in Baker (2006), which provide a foundation for this analysis. For instance, the Arabic translation of Huntington's The Clash of Civilizations demonstrates reframing through the use of inner paratext, specifically introductions and footnotes. Baker (2006) argues that while Huntington posits conditions for civilizational conflict in the 21st century, the Arabic commentary and introductory material aim to moderate this concept of inevitable conflict, effectively 'purifying' the original text.

6. Conclusion

Translation involves much more than simply finding target-language equivalents for source-language words and phrases; it also encompasses the roles that translation plays within society (Robinson, 2003). When considering ideology in translation, many scholars examine the influence of the translator's ideology and attitudes on their work. In this regard, Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 144) define ideology as "the tacit assumptions, beliefs, and value systems which are shared collectively by social groups". This definition is particularly relevant to the focus of this study, as translators of sacred texts must be acutely aware of the unique characteristics and issues associated with such translations. While translating various types of texts carries its own significance, translating holy texts is even more delicate and significant, as these texts address ideologies and belief systems. Moreover, most translators of sacred scriptures generally aim to preserve the original content of the source language, seeking to remain faithful to its original context.

Based on Baker's (2007) framing theory, framing strategies create conditions that transform the translated text into an adaptation. These strategies align the target text with the original text. In this study, The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran (1923) and its three Persian translations by Mostapha Elm (1961), Mahdi Maghsodi (2004), and Hossein Mohyeddin Elahi Ghomshei (2015) are analyzed through the lens of Baker's (2006) narrative theory, particularly focusing on framing strategies. The first research question explores how adaptation occurs through reframing the translation, while the second examines the strategies that the translators frequently employ to reframe the original text.

Among the three translations, Elahi Ghomshei's rendition has been reframed more extensively than the other two. The reasons for this substantial reframing lie in the application of a variety of reframing strategies. Elahi Ghomshei's translation includes more comments, interpretations, and reframing techniques compared to those of Maghsodi and Elm. According to Baker's (2007) classification of reframing strategies, both temporal (time) and spatial (place) contexts, which are presupposed in the writer's mind, may be incorporated into the source text as part of an intertextual phenomenon. Additionally, during the translation process, a sentence, quote, or anecdote might remind the translator of a past

scene or event, prompting them to retell the source text with elements or meanings associated with that imagined event.

Regarding the temporal and spatial aspects, similarities are found between Elahi Ghomshei's translation and the lines of Hafiz and Rumi's poems, as well as Islamic teachings. This suggests that his translation has been reframed. On the other hand, no evidence of such strategies is found in Maghsodi's and Elm's translations. Additionally, five examples of labeling have been observed, with four instances belonging to Elahi Ghomshei's translation, where euphemism is used. In contrast, only one instance is found in Elm's translation, where counter-naming is employed. The book cover of Elahi Ghomshei's translation is more relevant than those of the other two translators, but the removal of part of the picture reduces the overall clarity. In contrast, the book covers of the other two translators seem to be less relevant to the content.

The application of introductions and prefaces in the three translations is also notable. However, Elm and Maghsodi provide only biographical details about the author, while Ghomshei includes numerous commentaries and quotes from Persian poets to discuss and interpret the content of the book. Additionally, Elahi Ghomshei's translation includes many footnotes, whereas Elm and Maghsodi include very few. Examples of textual choices are also found in Elahi Ghomshei's translation, while there are almost no instances of such choices in the translations by Maghsodi and Elm, as they remained entirely faithful to the form and content of the source text. Studies such as the current one may be valuable for those interested in further research on the translation of sacred texts, helping them select appropriate strategies for handling cultural elements from the source text. This approach could enable translators to make better-informed decisions and produce more effective translations of religious texts in the future. The results of this study also offer valuable insights for translation trainers and educators, as it addresses a complex issue. Furthermore, it can contribute to the work of religious text interpreters by illustrating how their tasks may differ from those of translators.

Considering the findings of this study, further research on other religious texts is needed to obtain complementary results. This will allow for the application of insights gained from this work to similar studies and contribute to the production of more accurate and thoughtful translations of religious content in the future. It should be noted that the present study focused solely on three translations from English to Persian. Had the researcher had more time and fewer restrictions, additional Persian translations could have been analyzed. In this regard, future researchers may explore other language pairs as well. Additionally, researchers can approach the topic from various perspectives and scopes, examining different aspects in their studies. There is also potential for in-depth research on other universally recognized figures, personalities, and widely-known works. Furthermore, studies could be conducted on other variables such as the translator's gender, as well as their religious, (socio)cultural, and ideological background. Finally, researchers may choose to explore different genres and fields in future studies.

In conclusion, working with religious texts that address people's faith and beliefs requires careful attention and precision, as well as the implementation of a comprehensive and broad framework. In other words, the researcher must thoroughly understand all terms and concepts in the source text before analyzing them in the target language(s). This meticulous approach is essential to ensure the best possible outcomes in the study.

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