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A Stylistic analysis of *A Rose for Emily* by William Faulkner and its Turkish translation

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the short story “A Rose for Emily” by William Faulkner and its Turkish translation placed in “Aşık Katiller Antolojisi” published by Everest Publishing from the stylistic perspective. This short story is a gothic story about the mysterious life of Miss Emily Grierson. It represents the numerous conflicts in the main character's life, illustrating the effect of social change on the individual. The analysis adopts an integrated approach of literature and language. For this study, a modified stylistic model developed by M. Short (1996) will be used for the linguistic analysis of Faulkner's style in *A Rose for Emily* to show how he affects the reader's understanding of the meaning: themes, structure, characters etc. Then, it will be examined whether the translation also affects the target-language readers in the same way or not. The check-list includes: definite and indefinite articles, deixis, and syntactic structure. It can be emphasized that the analysis can provide a better understanding of different narrative features in the text and its translation.

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1. Introduction

Style is generally accepted as the linguistic habit of a writer and Stylistics is accordingly the study of style within a text. In recent years, stylistics has been accepted as a branch of literary studies as a term. Stylistic analyses focuses on the language of a writer in a literary text and these analyses may provide us valuable data for a more objective analysis of the writer and of the text. This paper deals with William Faulkner's style in one of his short stories “A Rose for Emily” and its Turkish translation. The language of the text and its translation present a divergence of stylistic features that could might affect the source/target readers' perceiving of Faulkner's style, themes, characters etc. There have been various models used in stylistic analysis. For this study, a modified check-list which is derived from Short (1996) is adopted.

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1.1. William Cuthbert Faulkner (1897- 1962)

William Faulkner was born in New Albany, Mississippi as the oldest of four sons at the family. His family moved into Oxford in north-central Mississippi while he was a child. Therefore, he lived most of his life in this town. Faulkner wrote novels, short stories, poetry and screenplays. At first, he was busy with writing poetry. Then, he began to write fictions. Starting with *Soldier's Pay* (1925), he produced remarkable novels which brought him a great fame including *The Sound and The Fury* (1929), *As I Lay Dying* (1930), *Light in August* (1932), *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936) and he also was a prolific writer of short stories. His short stories were published in *The Collected Stories of William Faulkner* (1952).

William Faulkner is known for his novels and short stories especially set in the Yoknapatawpha County which is fictional. He is one of the most important writers of the Southern literature. He was awarded the 1949 Nobel Prize for "his powerful and artistically unique contribution to the modern American novel". Moreover, he was awarded two Pulitzer prizes for his novels entitled respectively *A Fable* (1954) and *The Reivers* (1962).

Faulkner became known for his faithful and accurate dictation of the Southern. He also mentioned social issues which are left in the edge by many American writers including slavery and Southern aristocracy. Miller notes that, "Faulkner's fiction draws inspiration from the traditions, myths and historical conflicts of the South (1982: 83).

William Faulkner is accepted as one of the greatest revolutionists in the literary universe.

1.2. "A Rose for Emily"

The story was written in 1930. It is a story about the mysterious life of Miss. Emily Grierson. It reveals the effect of social change on the individual. This story is largely accepted as a masterpiece. The five sections in the story create tension because they have no chronological order. This story is classified as Southern Gothic for use of the Southern milieu. "Resistance to change" is the main theme of the story. Faulkner uses the strategies of flashback and foreshadowing.

Flashback and foreshadowing is two literary devices that are usually used in order to create an anomalous effect. Flashbacks are the events which are occurred before the present time the narration follows. Flashback is used to comprise a background to the present situation in the text. Foreshadowing is another literary device that is used to create expectation which has not yet occurred. In "A Rose for Emily" Faulkner uses both devices. The story is told by the narrator through non-sequential flashback. The narrator flashes back and forth through in the life of Emily Grierson throughout the story. Faulkner uses a figurative language in the story.

The story reveals Miss. Emily's miserable life from the town's people perspective. The third-person narrator could be understood the voice of whole town. The narrator tells us details about the life of Miss. Emily such as her taxes, the old house, the disturbing smell coming from the house, relationships with her father and her lover, keeping father's and lover's corpses in the house.

The story also includes irony of a similar nature. Miss. Emily is a heir of a once great family whose social standing is enough to prevent her from having to pay taxes. She commits crime and loses her mind although she has an upper class of the southern social status. Faulkner uses this irony to criticize the class system in the south in that period.

2. Methodology

A modified model will be used for the analysis of Faulkner's style in *A Rose for Emily* and its Turkish translation by Gökçen Ezber published in *Aşık Katiller Antolojisi* by Everest Publishing. This analysis aims to show how he controls viewpoint by the choice of particular words and how he affects the reader's understanding of the themes, characters, structure. The check-list derived from Short (1996: 286-7) with some changes. It includes definite and indefinite references, deixis and syntactic structure because of the time and space. However, it must be stated that this check-list comprises only a few of the many linguistic indicators.

3. Analysis

3.1. Definite and indefinite references

In English, a definite article shows that its noun is a particular one identifiable to the reader/listener. It can be anything that the speaker has already talked, or it can be anything specified. The definite article in English is ‘the’. It can be used for both singular and plural nouns.

An indefinite article shows that its noun is not a particular one identifiable to the reader/listener. It can be anything that the speaker is talking for the first time or is mentioning a general statement. The indefinite articles in English are a/an. The form an used before the words which begin with a vowel sound, and a before words which begin with a consonant sound.

However, there is no such difference in Turkish language.

For instance, when we analyze the first sentence of the story and its Turkish translation, we see that there is a problem of the translations of definite articles. We cannot see any problem about the translation of indefinite articles.

Source text 1:

“When Miss Emily Grierson died, our whole town went to her funeral: **the** men through **a** sort of respectful affection for **a** fallen monument, **the** women mostly out of curiosity to see the inside of her house, which no one save **an** old man-servant—**a** combined gardener and cook—had seen in at least ten years.”

Target text 1:

“Miss Emily Grierson öldüğünde, cenaze törenine tüm kasaba katılmıştı. Erkekler, düşmüş **bir** anıta gösterilen saygı dolu **bir** sevgi; kadınlar ise daha çok, on yıldan bu yana yaşlı **bir** hizmetlinin-yarı aççı yarı bahçıvan- dışında kimsenin girmedığı **bir** evin içini görme merakıyla doluydular.”

It is a long sentence which constitutes the first paragraph of the story. However, it was translated into Turkish as a two sentences by changing the punctuation. In the source text, “the” refers to town’s men and women but in the target text, it cannot be understood without thinking the context and the first sentence.

Source text 2:

“So she vanquished them, horse and foot, just as she had vanquished their fathers thirty years before about **the** smell.”

Target text 2:

“Böylece onları yenilgiye uğratmıştı, tıpkı otuz yıl önce, **bu koku** içinde babalarını yenilgiye uğrattığı gibi.”

Maybe, it is the most important sentence in the entire story. The use of the definite article in this sentence is telling something to us. It is not a merely “a smell” that raised the attention of the town’s people; it is “the smell”. The narrator is attaching importance to the smell by using the definite article here that the indefinite article “a” would not give. It can be understood that Faulkner implies “the smell” will have an important role with the story. However, again, because lack of the difference between definite and indefinite references in Turkish the target readers cannot fully understand the aim of Faulkner’s. And, this causes a loss for target readers to perceive author’s intention.

3.2. Deixis

In linguistics, deixis is a reference of words and phrases which cannot be completely understood without additional contextual information. Deixis refers generally to all the features of language whose interpretation is relative extra linguistic context of the utterances. These utterances can be: who is speaking, the time and the place of speaking, the gesture of the speaker etc. Deixis is a word originated from Ancient Greek which means “demonstration or reference”.

The most common categories of contextual information referred to by deixis are those of person, place and time. These categories are accepted as the traditional categories of deixis. However, there are also some other types of

deixis used in language though the traditional categories of deixis are obvious. The other types of deixis are discourse deixis and social deixis. For this study, social deixis will be analyzed.

Social deixis refers to relational expressions which address social viewpoint. It is a reference to a social relationship between the speaker and an addressee. Fillmore defines the social deixis as “the study of that aspect of sentences which reflect or establish or are determined by certain realities of the social situation in which the speech act occurs” (1975: 76). Short states that, “It is possible... to view social relations as ‘deictic’. We can feel close or remote to other people in social terms. Someone to whom you refer with ‘title’ and his/her last name would be remote socially, and you would normally refer to those with whom you are close by their first name.....” (1996: 272).

Social deixis has an obvious role in order to understand the social relations in the story for the purposes of this paper. The following table explain how the author has used names and titles of characters to display social interaction and how the translator translates.

Table 1. Example 1

ST	TT
Miss Emily Grierson	Miss Emily Grierson
Negro woman	zenci kadın
niggers	zenciler
sheriff	Polis müdürü

Stylistic effect and evaluations

Miss Emily Grierson: Using complete name and title shows a distant relationship between Miss. Emily and the narrator ‘the town’s people’. In the Turkish translation, this phrase is left unchanged. It creates the same effect for the target readers.

Negro woman: This word is related to slavery and racism. The town’s people use this slang word to refer to slaves and distant relationship. Faulkner uses this word in the text with capital letter. However, in Turkish translation, the translator does not take this detail into consideration.

Niggers: Nigger is also an insulting term referring to black people. Its usage is highly pejorative. This term is translated as “zenci” like Negro. There is no difference between the translations of ‘negro’ and ‘nigger’. In the Turkish translation, these terms lose their importance. Thus, it can be said that there is a semantic loss in the translation.

Sheriff: In modern usage, sheriff is a legal official with responsibility for a county. In the story, the term ‘sheriff’ displays that time is different from the past; the working class takes the place of aristocracy. It is so common especially in the United States. However, it is generally, not always, elected by the population of the county. In its translation ‘polis müdürü’ means police officer in English. In Turkey, police officers are not elected by the county. Again, the target readers face with semantic loss in translation.

3.3. Syntactic structure

This story has many long sentences having complex structures which are the writing style of the Faulkner. At the beginning of the novel, Faulkner uses a long sentence to describe the death of Emily and town’s people reactions to her death. This beginning creates the severe tone of the story.

For instance, in the sentence, “Alive, Miss Emily had been a tradition, a duty, and a care; a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town, dating from that day in 1894 when Colonel Sartoris, the mayor--he who fathered the edict that no Negro woman should appear on the streets without an apron--remitted her taxes, the dispensation

dating from the death of her father on into perpetuity.” This sentence is very long. It is a 63 word-sentence. It sets up a heavy atmosphere and causes the reader difficulty for the reader because of length. When the translation analyzed, it has been seen that the sentence is divided into two sentences. The translation is: “Miss Emily, yaşamı boyunca belediye başkanı olan ve zencilerin sokaklarda önlüksüz dolaşmalarını yasaklayan yasayı ortaya atan Albay Sortoris’in 1984 yılında kendisine vergi affı getirmesinden bu yana, kasabada bir gelenek, bir görev, bir endişe kaynağı ve bir tür kalıtsal zorunluluk olmuştur. Ona sunulan bu ayrıcalık, babasının ölümüyle başlamış ve neredeyse sonsuza kadar devam etmişti.” The translation has not the same effect of the original text. The translator has a source-oriented translation strategy especially for the word choices. However, the translator has not achieved this strategy for the syntax of the sentences.

Besides long and complex sentences, Faulkner also uses short simple sentences particularly in dialogues to make conversation effective and to show the character’s personality in the story. Throughout the story, it has been noticed that all the sentences told by Emily are simple and short. It demonstrates Emily’s reluctance to communicate with others and also her nobility. As an example, the dialogue between Emily and the druggist can be taken.

"I want some poison," she said to the druggist.

"Yes, Miss Emily. What kind? For rats and such? I'd recom--"

"I want the best you have. I don't care what kind."

The druggist named several. "They'll kill anything up to an elephant. But what you want is--"

"Arsenic," Miss Emily said. "Is that a good one?"

"Is . . . arsenic? Yes, ma'am. But what you want--"

"I want arsenic."

In this short dialogue, Emily uses short sentences to make just orders. She interrupts the druggist three times in such a short conversation. All of these show her pride and determination. The translation of this dialogue is:

“Biraz zehir istiyorum,” demişti eczacıya.

“Evet, Miss Emily. Ne tür olsun? Sanırım fareler için olacak. Size önerim...”

“Eczacı birkaç zehir adı saydı. “Bunlar bir fili bile öldürebilir. Fakat sizin istediğiniz...”

“Arsenik,” dedi Miss Emily. “Bu iyi midir?”

“Arsenik mi? Evet, hanımefendi. Fakat sizin istediğiniz...”

“Arsenik istiyorum.”

The translator again follows a source oriented strategy and achieves this in that short dialogue. The translation has also short sentences like the original text. The target readers experience the same effect and feel Emily’s pride through the translation.

4. Conclusion

The stylistic analysis of Faulkner’s style in *A Rose for Emily* and its Turkish translation allows the reader to understand the meaning of characters, themes, structure etc. in an effective way.

It must be highlighted that the model and the analysis cause a better understanding of the narrative features in the text. The analysis of translation aims to show that the narrative features are lost in translation or not. It is nature of translation that there are always losses and gains in the translation. Maybe, in this translation of the Faulkner’s *A Rose for Emily*, there are gains as well as losses. In this translation, generally a source-oriented strategy is followed to protect the Faulkner’s style. It is the norm of the translator. The analysis is expected to be beneficial for the study of the other narratives.

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