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0. Introduction

This study deals with the problem of translating narratological terminology into Turkish, and more specifically the difficulties encountered in translating Manfred Jahn's online *Narratology: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative* into Turkish (*Anlatıbilim: Anlatı Teorisi El Kitabı*, published by Dergâh Publishing in 2012). As narratology is not yet established in Turkey, there are few specialized texts in the field, and a particular problem is that we don't have any settled narratological terminology in Turkish.

In the first part of my study, I will mention a number of books on narrative theory translated into Turkish in order to show the different perspectives and discrepancies in terms of translation strategies and terminology. In the second and main part, I will confine myself to the terminological difficulties encountered when translating narrative theory into Turkish and try to explain how I dealt with these obstacles in my translation of Jahn's guide to the theory of narrative, which provides both a remarkable introduction to the subject in question and a rich source for terminology.

Modern Turkish is not a well-developed language when it comes to terminology, and as a Turcologist my approach to translating narrative terminology into Turkish is mainly based on the tradition and terminological system of Ottoman Turkish and rhetoric (*belâgat*). Terminology drawn from this system sounds more natural to the Turkish ear than neologisms specially created by translators who lack knowledge and competence in narrative theory and in the history of the Turkish language.

1. Narratology Studies in Turkey

I would like to begin by stating that I am not an expert in translation and that all the translation I have done as a Turcologist serves the purpose of establishing narratology in Turkey, ensuring generalization of narratology and, above all, establishing a sound terminology in this area. Unfortunately, in Turkey the number of studies focusing on narrative theory are few in number. Almost all of these studies are translated works. The following is an incomplete list of books of narratological interest translated into Turkish:

- 1982 Forster, *Roman Sanatı (Aspects of the Novel, 1927)*
- 1982 Wellek and Warren, *Edebiyat Teorisi (Theory of Literature, 1949)*
- 1985 Propp, *Masalın Biçimbilimi (Morphology of the Folktale, 1928)*
- 1988 Barthes, *Anlatıların Yapısal Çözümlemesine Giriş (L'analyse structurale du récit, 1966)*
- 1997 Stanzel, *Roman Biçimleri (Typische Formen des Romans, 1987)*
- 2002 Todorov, *Poetikaya Giriş (Introduction to Poetics, 1981)*
- 2002 Onega and García Landa, *Anlatıbilime Giriş (Narratology, introductory chapter, 1996)*
- 2009 Chatman, *Öykü ve Söylem: Filmede ve Kurmacada Anlatı Yapısı (Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film, 1978)*
- 2011 Genette, *Anlatının Söylemi (Discours du récit. Essai de méthode, 1972)*
- 2012 Booth, *Kurmacanın Retoriği (The Rhetoric of Fiction, 1961)*
- 2012 Jahn, *Anlatıbilim: Anlatı Teorisi El Kitabı (Narratology: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative, 2005)*

Among these books, I would like to mention just three here. The first is the introductory chapter of *Narratology: An Introduction*, edited by Susana Onega and José Ángel García Landa. Here, one might ask why only the introduction of such a comprehensive work, which would be really worthwhile if translated, was translated and published. The Turkish translators of the book explain that this is due to the insufficiency of narratological terms and concepts in Turkey. This small book, translated by two outstanding Turkish translators and published in 2002, was an important step for introducing narratology to the world of Turkish scholarship, but unfortunately it suffers from a number of terminology-related issues, which complicates the understanding of the work. When Turkish equivalents of narratological terms are given in this book, they include neologisms that evoke hardly anything in the minds of Turkish readers. These terms are mostly invented instead of being the more logical and the partially settled Turkish equivalents. For example, rather than a purely Turkish term as an equivalent to Eng. *literary pragmatics*, Tur. *yazın uygulayimbilimi* is proposed. As a term corresponding to Eng. *literary*, the Turkish expression *yazın* is used, derived from the Turkish verb *yazmak* (to write), thus bringing to mind “written works.” It is difficult to understand why the term of Arabic origin, *edebiyat*, is not used, a word which is more familiar to Turkish readers and closer to the English meaning than *yazın*, a term dating from the time of the Turkish language simplification movement. Moreover, preference for Tur. *uygulayimbilim* over Eng. *pragmatics*, which is largely equivalent to *pragmatik* or *edimbilim* in Turkish, makes an already quite distressed reading process even more difficult for readers interested in the subject. It seems there is no compromise, even on the most basic and frequently used terms. Moreover, proposing new equivalents

for settled terms in Turkish confronts readers with something of a riddle. I also think the pure Turkish equivalents proposed by the translators for Genette's "homodiégétique" (Tur. özöyküsel) and "hétérodiégétique" (Tur. yadöyküsel) do not mean much in the minds of Turkish readers. On this point, my preference is to leave Genette's terms as they are and explain their meaning in parentheses or in a footnote.

The second example is the Turkish translation based on the English translation of Gérard Genette's *Discours du récit. Essai de méthode*. This long overdue Turkish translation of Genette's classic study (published in 2011) also suffers from certain terminology related problems although it does have the quality of being translated into clear Turkish. Even so, this is not a piece of light reading for Turkish readers who do not already have a background in narratology. The difficulties with terminology in this translation result mostly from the translator's insufficient knowledge of narratology so that most of the technical terms and expressions are transposed into Turkish without adequate comprehension of the concepts concerned. By translating from the English edition of the book, the proposed equivalent for *narrating act*, easily translated as *anlatılama edimi*, reveals the gravity of the situation. It is not possible to understand why the expression which should have been translated as *anlatma eylemi* is suggested as the equivalent of "anlatılama edimi" instead. In fact, "narrating" here has a clear and distinct equivalent in Turkish: "anlatma." The term *anlatılama* used here is completely invented by the translator and has no usage in Turkish.

In the end, the Turkish reader will need to refer to the original of the book in order to grasp the meaning of this and many other terms. In my opinion, it would be a much more rewarding for the Turkish reader who knows French to read the book in the original or, failing that, to read the English translation.

Wayne Booth's groundbreaking work, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, is another remarkable book which has recently been translated into Turkish. Published in 2012, this book has enjoyed positive feedback in general and is written in more understandable Turkish compared to other translated works relating to the subject. It is to be observed that the translator of the book is rigorous regarding the terminology.

Vüs'at O. Bener'in Yapıtlarına Anlatıbilimsel Bir Yaklaşım (A Narratological Approach to the Works of Vüs'at O. Bener) written by Reyhan Tutumlu, PhD in Turkish Literature, and published in 2010, is the only copyrighted work published in Turkish that employs narratology. Although the title of the book promises an analysis of fictions written by Vüs'at O. Bener, one of the most important writers of modern Turkish Literature, using a narratological approach, the book does not offer much in the way

of narratology. The bibliography mentions only two works in narratology, one by Genette, the other by Todorov, as well as Turkish translations of articles written by Käte Hamburger and Boris Tomaševskij. Moreover, the contents reveal that the analysis is rather thematic and superficial, making little use of narratology. Bener's detailed biography and works are examined one by one. Even though it includes appropriate information regarding the relations between the writer's life and works, the researcher does not fulfill what she promised in the title of the book. As for narratological analysis, there are only superficial identifications such as "internal analepsis is used in x story of the writer"; "in x narrative internal monologue is employed"; "in x novel different narrative techniques are used together." A number of Turkish equivalents proposed by Dr. Tutumlu for some of Genette's terms are not quite appropriate. As an example Tur. *gerileme* is suggested as an equivalent of "analepsis," which risks evoking the wrong connotations. The word *gerileme* means "decline, regression, etc." in Turkish and does not correspond to what is meant by the term of analepsis at all. I believe it is futile to try to find Turkish equivalents for terms such as analepsis, prolepsis, metalepsis, etc.

As can be seen, Turkey has not yet reached the desired level of narratological awareness. A comprehensive study has not been made, and above all there is no generally recognized terminology. Unfortunately, Turcologists, and particularly modern Turkish literature researchers focusing mainly on Turkish literary history and thematic analysis, have yet to integrate this discipline into their methodology. This is due to the fact that few speak a foreign language and most are biased against literary theory generally. Vague language and terminology used in the translations give cause for most of my colleagues to hesitate about narratology. Most of the few Turcologists who speak foreign languages such as English, French, German and other philologists prefer to keep their distance from narratology, since they have access to resources written in foreign languages. But most importantly, they are aware of the difficulties in introducing narratology into Turkish scholarship.

2. Problems with Terminology in Translating Narratological Terms and Concepts into Turkish

After briefly commenting on narratology studies in Turkey, I would like to speak about the source of the problem with terminology, which seems to be the obstacle preventing the translation of narrative theory into Turkish. I will then speak about my approach to overcoming the problem. Finally, I will focus on the terminological difficulties encountered when translating narrative theory into Turkish and try to explain how I dealt with these obstacles in my translation of Jahn's guide to the theory of narrative.

2.1. As is well known, the Turks converted to Islam in the tenth century and started to learn Arabic and Persian and to translate works, mainly of a religious nature, into Turkish. The Ottoman Empire, founded in the thirteenth century, reinforced the influence of Arabic and Persian on the Turkish language, and although Turkish was the common language used in daily life, Arabic was the language of science and Persian the language of literature. Multilingualism was inherent in a multinational empire, and a Turkish language called “Ottoman Turkish,” a mixture of Arabic-Persian-Turkish, emerged by adapting the Arabic alphabet to Turkish. The syntax and verbs in this mixed language were completely Turkish; however, almost every other element was Arabic and Persian. Turkish language and Islam scholars created systematic terminologies: each discipline created its own terminology, just as in the modern West, and the terms had precise definitions.

In short, the Ottomans had a long established scientific tradition based on the Turkish-Islam civilization and a terminology based on this tradition. Now the question is: Why does the Turkish world of science suffer from problems with terminology today? I would like to answer this question briefly.

In the seventeenth century, a period of stagnation and regression started the Ottoman Empire. The Empire was alienated from the scientific thought and could not keep up with the developments of the Western world. Remedies were sought for overcoming this situation of which *Tanzimat*, the Political Reforms in the nineteenth century, were the most important, particularly with regard to terminology. The trend toward abandoning earlier concepts and Westernization resulted in the fragmentation of Turkish terminology and the random use of terms imported from various countries. The trend got even worse with the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. At this time, the language simplification movement got underway as a result of the “Turkism” movement based on the idea of building the “Turkish” nation. The goal was to reintroduce old and outdated words derived from Central Asia, and a number of words and terms were made up. Great admiration of the French language emerged in the Political Reforms era and was also dominant in this period. Ironically, the Turkish language embraced French, Italian and, after the 1950s, English terminologies while the goal was to break free from the lexicon based on Arabic and Persian and to achieve a “pure” Turkish language.

It is a fact that the reformation/simplification of a language is incompatible with creating a terminology in a language. A possible reconciliation of these two opposing trends was prevented back then because of the insufficient knowledge of Turkish intellectuals about the qualities of the language. The Turkish world of science, which had abandoned scientific and rational ideas, suddenly denied its ties with the past,

but also failed to fully adapt to the new trends and was thus caught in the “middle” or on the “threshold,” so to speak, between terminologies with differing backgrounds, an ambiguity that still exists today.¹ The terminology problem stands out particularly in the translations of works in disciplines that have recently emerged in the Western world.

In Turkey today, there are two dominant trends with regard to terminology. The first trend insists that all terms should be Turkish words. The second trend argues that generally accepted Turkish terms should be used as well as Arabic and Persian words which have become integral parts of our language and culture. Turkish intellectuals separated into two groups, one supporting the new and the other supporting the old, and this has caused conflicting tendencies in our scientific and cultural lives. It can be observed that we have not reached on a consensus on grammar terms such as “adjective” or “adverb,” and this confuses the world of education and, above all, students. Although there are never-ending discussions on this subject, we have yet to reach a consensus. The solution would be to set aside emotional and ideologically motivated discussions and to start adopting the principles of lexicology, lexicography and scientifically based terminology along with their wide range of developing sub-branches at an academic level (cf. Filizok 2010).

As for the approach I have adopted for translating narratological terminology, I see no harm in using Arabic and Persian words from traditional Turkish culture. I disagree with those who fear that this would bring back old-fashioned and narrow-minded scholarship failing to meet scientific standards. In this connection I would like to mention certain proposals by Rıza Filizok, Professor of Modern Turkish Literature at Ege University in Izmir, but that have not been taken up by any researchers in Turkey to date. In his research, Professor Filizok argues that there are strong connections between a number of theories and techniques being developed in the Western world in the areas of linguistics, semiotics, semantics, pragmatics, etc. and theories and techniques developed in the Turkish-Islam tradition, disciplines such as logic, Islamic law and rhetoric (cf. Filizok 2010). It can be argued that the rhetorical tradition of the Ottomans bears a number of similarities to contemporary communication theory, enunciation theory and several branches in the area of pragmatics such as speech act theory, the Gricean cooperative principle, relevance theory, etc.²

¹ For a more detailed discussion, see Paker (2002.)

² For details and examples, see Filizok (2010.)

There are two important books to be mentioned in this regard. One is Ahmet Cevdet Paşa's work entitled *Belâgat-ı Osmaniyye* [Ottoman Rhetoric], published in 1881.¹ This work sets out the *belâgat* (rhetoric) rules of Ottoman Turkish based on the classification worked out by the Arab grammarians which is acknowledged, even today, as the first book of Turkish rhetoric. Although Ferrard found this valuable work of Ahmet Cevdet Paşa unsatisfactory and inadequate in many ways in his doctoral thesis, entitled *Ottoman Contributions to Islamic Rhetoric* (Ferrard 1979: 77), remarkable results are obtained when we examine the work in the light of current theories of Western origin. For example, this work presents a model that closely resembles Roman Jakobson's theory of verbal communication, with every component of the model explained and illustrated drawing on examples commented on in great detail. Moreover, speech act theory, which, with its locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, forms one of the basic elements of pragmatics, is explained by Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, accompanied with detailed analyses of examples. The terminology used in the work is based on Arab rhetoric and is extremely systematic while the examples discussed are completely Turkish.

The other important work, by Recaizade Mahmut Ekrem, is *Talim-i Edebiyat* (*Literature Course*), published in 1882.² This theoretical book seeks to blend modern literary criticism with traditional Ottoman rhetoric and represents an important milestone in the development of modern Turkish rhetoric and poetics for a literary terminology.³ As Hakan Sazyek pointed out, the ideas set forth in the epilogue of Ekrem's book are especially notable. Another connection to be made with modern theory is Grice's cooperative principle. Ekrem studies examples in detail in terms that are close to Grice's four maxims. The terminology employed throughout the book brings out even the slightest nuances of expression.

If Turkish intellectuals working in the human sciences were to take these sources into consideration, they would have a better understanding of the principles of modern theories and find a rich pool of ideas for developing such theories. Unfortunately, Turkish philologists, cut off from traditional Turkish culture, acknowledge only Western theories and fail to see this connection. By reassessing the older resources in the light of modern sciences, they could develop a substantially improved methodology, connecting creative scientific studies with internationally acknowledged concepts and standards. Achieving this goal would be facilitated by

¹ The original version of the book employs the Ottoman Turkish alphabet; for the Latin alphabet and modern Turkish version, see Ahmet Cevdet Paşa ([1881] 2000.)

² The original version of the book employs the Ottoman Turkish alphabet; for the Latin alphabet and modern Turkish version, see Recaizade Mahmut Ekrem ([1882] 2012.)

³ For a comprehensive assessment on Recaizade Mahmud Ekrem's *Talim-i Edebiyat* and its contribution to Ottoman literary criticism, see Ferrard (1979.)

the creation of a properly Turkish terminology, making it possible to link modern scientific concepts to established but somewhat forgotten Turkish intellectual traditions (cf. Filizok 2010). It is within the scope of such a development that Turkish narratologists will be able to find a fruitful interface with international research.

2.2. To return now to the question of translating narratological terminology into Turkish, I find it preferable to employ expressions coming from two sources – a lexicon derived from traditional Turkish culture and terms reintroduced during the era of language simplification that do not grate the ears – rather than to make up new words. While translating Manfred Jahn’s online publication *Narratology: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative* into Turkish, I chose to use Turkish pronunciation for certain words that cannot be directly translated into Turkish or that require a minimum of two to three words for translation such as *achrony*, *anachrony*, *figural*, *metalepsis*, *paralepsis*, *paralipsis*, *syllipsis*, etc., giving possible Turkish meanings in parentheses. I especially took into consideration the audience. I sought to preserve the scientific level of the source text while at the same time translating the “meaning” so as to avoid a word-by-word translation and ensure the readability of the text.

The most difficult part arose out of the discrepancies due to the fact that English and Turkish belong to completely different language families. Turkish is a typical example of the so-called agglutinative languages with SOV (Subject-Object-Verb) sentence structure and is characterized by a relatively clear-cut morphology. One of the main features of Turkish is its single-word constructions with as many as fourteen suffixes and postclitics expressing structural meanings which, in English, are usually marked syntactically (cf. Sebüktekin 1971: 18). The “anglocentric textual excerpts” referenced by Manfred Jahn for illustrating narrative techniques and devices were the most problematic parts. For instance, the grammatical determination of the narrator’s gender through the use of masculine or feminine pronouns does not mean much for the Turkish readers for the simple reason there is no masculine-feminine distinction in the Turkish language, a single pronoun being used for both genders. Moreover, the familiarizing function of the article ‘the’, one of the four elements discussed under figural narratives, does not exist in Turkish. As a result, the excerpt from Hemingway’s novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* unfortunately does not make sense for Turkish readers (cf. Jahn 2012: 77). I generally used footnotes to explain this and other such issues I came across during the translation. For other problematic issues I adopted a functional approach and tried to use Turkish expressions giving the intended meaning rather than translating or describing passages word-by-word. Among the other grammatical discrepancies between English and Turkish are the following: complex and compound sentences, which are common in English, are rare in Turkish; the passive voice is used very little; there is

no independent verb in Turkish meaning “to be”; some frequently used coordinate clauses in Indo-European languages are used only rarely in Turkish – all of this and more posing a variety of obstacles for the translator. As a result, I was led at certain points to elucidate the meaning of the source text by providing commentaries in parentheses or in footnotes.

Translation is inevitably characterized by an element of interpretation. Yet when it comes to terminology, interpretation is open to fewer options. This is true especially when concepts in the source language lack corresponding concepts in the target language, thus placing particular restrictions on interpretation. This is the case for example with “narrativehood,” “narrativeness” and “narrativity” – terms that have no appropriate equivalent in Turkish, where there is only one word to serve for all three of those terms: “anlatisallık.” The reason for this is that the Turkish suffix “-lık” must stand in place of the three English suffixes ‘-hood’, ‘-ness’ and ‘-ity’.

The first and most important problem of translating narrative theory into Turkish is finding adequate equivalents for terminology. The second problem is encountered with the translation of literary works used to illustrate theoretical concepts. The grammatical and lexical structures of Turkish differ considerably from those of the Indo-European languages, and this has an inevitable impact on Turkish narrative theory. The best path to ending the confusion of terms or “word schizophrenia” affecting each branch of scholarship in Turkey is to draw on the terminological resources of Turkish-Islamic scholarship extending back nearly a thousand years, and to take this into consideration for the formation of a modern terminology for narratology.

3. Conclusion

Terminology studies require a particular effort by individual scholars, but at the same time it is an area that is dependent on institutional backing and collaborative programs. Work in the area of terminology requires high levels of expertise and should be carried out systematically. Serious work will be necessary to overcome the difficulties encountered in creating a consistent terminology, the biggest obstacle to the development of narratology in Turkey. Translating basic works and dictionaries on narratology into Turkish in order to establish the relevant terminology constitutes a fundamental step toward integrating narrative theory into Turkish scholarship.

In conclusion, I believe that the efforts devoted to establishing a Turkish narratology, illustrated with studies in the Turkish narrative tradition and making use of ancient

Turkish-Islam science, philosophy, logic and terminology, would contribute to narratology as a global discipline.¹

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¹ As Shen states, “narratives in non-Western cultures may have various features closely associated with language peculiarities that defy accommodation to a more or less universal narrative poetics. Revealing these features may help us to see more clearly the characteristics of narrative traditions in different cultures.” (Shen 2011: 17) If narratology is to be established in Turkey, the aspects which are idiosyncratic and different from the narrative traditions of other cultures would come into focus. In this context, Shen’s contribution to narratology in China can serve as an inspiration for Turkish researchers who are interested in the subject.