

## A Comparative Analysis of the Peritextual Features of the English-Urdu Translated Versions of ‘Salome’: Utilizing the Poly-Systemic Approach

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### Abstract

This study employed poly-systemic approach to Urdu-English translated version of the seminal text “*Salome*” where the researcher tried to find out the peri-textual feature in both the versions while comparing them. Furthermore. This study aimed to explore the cultural influence on language spoken within a specific area. The method used in this study was descriptive-qualitative in nature. It used two different versions of the same text. The textual analysis established, while taking into consideration the initial, preliminary and operational norms (taken from the peritexts), that majority of the translators and translation critics aligned with the target-oriented or acceptability paradigm and reflected as well as conformed to the secondary position of translation in literary (poly) systems of Pakistan. However, the study found that people usually share their culture with other while using language. Moreover, the two versions have specific terminologies representing same ideologies or concepts but they have different sentence constructions. The study was significant as it not only offers contextual information about the process of translation provided by the translators and critics but also because of being first of its kind in Pakistan.

### INTRODUCTION

The things that surround and accompany a written text are referred to as peritextual features. They offer further details and context to improve the reader's comprehension and engagement. Titles, subtitles, prefaces, introductions, epigraphs, forewords, dedications, blurbs, indexes, and other components are examples of these characteristics, which can be found in both physical and digital versions. Peritextual elements serve a variety of functions, such as directing readers, establishing the tone or mood, giving context, revealing authorial insights, and persuading readers to read the main text. They are essential in forming the reader's expectations and building the context for understanding and appreciating the main material.

Translation is a piece of writing or speech that has been translated from L1 into L2 or vice versa (Susi Ekalestari&Barus, 2022). The process of translation is intricate and incorporates a

variety of elements, including linguistic, cultural, social, and historical considerations. Any literary work must have peritextual elements since they provide the reader context and help to personalise their reading experience. Terminology has an impact on translation. The issue has been addressed more or less explicitly in research on both LSP translation and terminology work (Achkasov, 2014).

Using a polysystemic method, the current study seeks to perform a comparative analysis of the peritextual elements of the English and Urdu translations of Oscar Wilde's "Salome". Additionally, it has a wealth of peritextual elements, like the title, preface, dedication, and notes, that might shed light on the translation process. The polysystemic approach recognises the interaction between many literary systems, such as the source and target languages, cultures, and literary traditions, making it an ideal methodological framework for this study (Zhang, 2014). Examining how the peritextual elements of the English-Urdu translations of "Salome" affect the reader's comprehension and reception of the text is the main goal of this study.

This study aimed to compare both the translated versions based on the principles of polysystemic theory and explore the cultural influence on the texts in order to get the implied meanings in the texts

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The 'Salome' narrative has been translated into Urdu several times. Mirza Yusuf Ali Baig released the first translation in 1907. Since then, 'Salome' has been translated into Urdu by a number of authors, including AbulKalam Azad, MajnoonGorakhpuri, and MustansirHussainTarar. Numerous viewpoints, including feminist, postcolonial, and psychoanalytic ones, have been used to analyse these translations. However, little research has been done on the peritextual aspects of these translations.

According to (Genette, 1980) peritextual aspects are the components that surround a text and aid in placing it within its literary and cultural context. The introduction, dedication, epigraph, title, subtitle, and cover design are a few examples of these aspects. Peritextual elements serve as identifiers of the source and target texts in the context of translation and aid in locating them within their respective literary and cultural systems.

The Peritextual Literacy Framework (PLF), developed by (Gross, M. & Latham, D, 2012) promotes a skill "that has significance for a variety of other literacies, such as information literacy, media literacy, digital literacy, visual literacy, cyber literacy, and information fluency". The study of translation as a procedure that takes place within a system of literary and cultural creation is a focus of polysystem theory. Itamar Even-Zohar defines a literary system as a complex network of interrelated texts and cultural practises that are always changing.

We must take into account the variations in the literary and cultural systems in which the source and target texts are formed when analysing the peritextual aspects of translated works. The translator could select a different title for the target work because, for instance, the source text's title might not have the same connections or implications in the target culture. Similar to this, the target culture may not find the source text's cover design to be appealing or acceptable, therefore the translator may decide to use a different cover design for the target text.

Having a close examination of the previous studies, the research has found that the translated versions of 'Salome' have been studied by many researchers but these studies lack the comparison of these versions regarding the pretextual features. Based on this gap, the researcher

has tried to find out the similarities and difference in the translated versions of 'Salome' with reference to the proposed theory.

The Norms of Translation by Gideon Toury and Even-Zohar's Polysystem Theory quoted in (Venutti. L, 2004) serve as the foundation for the current work. He put out the idea that translation itself is a system that functions and actively participates within the literary system of the polysystem after realising the significance of translation in the literary system of the target culture. According to Even-Zohar, reported in (Venutti. L, 2004), "I conceive of translation not only as an integral system within any literary polysystem, but as the most active system within it." The way the TL (target language) chooses works for translation and the way "translation norms, behaviour, and policies are influenced by other co-systems" are some of the ways he said that translation functions as a system.

### **The Position of Translation in Poly-system**

The idea of the location of translation in the target literary system is the most important aspect of his theory that has been used in the current study. According to Even-Zohar (quoted in Venuti, 2004), the place that translation occupies inside the polysystem influences its norms, methods, and paradigms. According to him, "Not only is the socio-literary status of translation dependent upon its position within the polysystem, but the very practise of translation is also strongly subordinated to that position". The translation may be either central or peripheral, with central being the dominant location. According to his theory, translation's traditional position in the literary polysystem is secondary. But as he stated, translation can also take the lead in other circumstances (Venutti. L, 2021)

#### **1) Primary position**

##### **a. Causes**

According to Even-Zohar (quoted in Venuti, 2004), the following three situations call for literary translation to take the lead:

- 1) When the local literature is still developing;
- 2) When the local literature is 'peripheral' (within a vast group of associated literature or 'weak' and imports those literary forms that it is lacking. This may occur when a larger nation's culture overtakes that of a smaller one.
- 3) When a literature has crises, turning points, or literary voids.

#### **2) Secondary Position**

Literary translation is a peripheral system inside the polysystem if it has a secondary position Even-Zohar, quoted in (Venutti. L, 2004).

### **METHOD**

The methodology employed in this research utilized a descriptive-qualitative approach with a focus on the polysystemic theory. The study aims to compare the peritextual features of the English and Urdu translated versions of "Salome" by adopting a poly-systemic approach, which considers the interaction between different literary systems, including linguistic, cultural, and literary traditions.

To conduct the comparative analysis, the researchers selected two different versions of the translated text, one in English and the other in Urdu. The peritextual features, such as titles, subtitles, prefaces, introductions, and other relevant elements, were identified and analyzed in both versions. The choice of these versions allows for a comprehensive exploration of how cultural

influences may shape the peritextual elements in the translations. The data collection process involved a detailed examination of the peritexts, considering initial, preliminary, and operational norms.

The researchers conducted a textual analysis, focusing on the peritextual features, to identify similarities and differences between the English and Urdu versions of "Salome." The analysis took into account the translation norms and paradigms, emphasizing the target-oriented or acceptability paradigm prevalent in the literary (poly)systems of Pakistan. By employing a polysystemic approach, the study aimed to understand how the cultural dynamics of the target language influenced the translation choices and peritextual features. The findings were interpreted to provide insights into the implications of cultural influences on language use and the overall translation process, contributing to the existing body of knowledge on the subject.

## **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Analysis of Peritextual Features**

#### **(a) Description**

Tamheed (preface) is one of the book's peritextual features. The translator himself wrote the introduction, which are eight pages long. He has first provided a thorough analysis of the original text, outlining its roots in history, authorship, production, reception, and popularity. He has since given an explanation for his choice of the original material, saying that he decided to convert it into Urdu because it was already being translated into many other languages. He has finally talked about how he approaches translation.

#### **(b) The Selected Peritextual Excerpt(s)**

Now all I have to say at the end is that most of the phrases in this play will appear ridiculous in Urdu and the similes and metaphors translated will sound strange due to being unfamiliar, but during translation, special care has been taken to ensure that none of the Oscar Wilde's literary uniquenesses/peculiarities are overlooked. So, I hope my readers will bear with me.

#### **(c) Discussion of the Selected Peritextual Excerpt**

This sample exemplifies the translator's strategy with relation to the two potential poles of translation and follows the original norm:

- 1) Source-oriented approach (adequacy),
- 2) Target-oriented approach (acceptability).

The translator's remark that he paid special attention to the author's literary quirks, as a result of which the target text can seem unique to readers, suggests that his technique is author-oriented for the source material. Given that his methodology is source text-focused, the target text may be regarded as an appropriate translation (although one that should be viewed with some caution) because no translation is ever really sufficient (Toury, G, 2012).

According to Even-Zohar (quoted in Venuti, 2004), a translator is always a part of a literary environment and is influenced by it, therefore a translator's decision-making processes depend on or are conditioned by the place of translation in the target culture's literary system. His assertion emphasises the central role of translation.

The translation was first completed in 1925, as shown by the translator's signature in the introduction. At that time, the source culture's literary system had influenced the target culture's literary system. According to (Shah Alam & Ahmad Gori, 2021) "More or less up until 1930, Urdu literature flourished under the influence of English literature and was moulded in almost the same pattern". It demonstrates that at that time, literary translation did hold a prominent place in the literary system of the target culture. According to Even-Zohar (quoted in Venuti, 2004), literary translation can take the lead position in a number of circumstances, one of which is when a country is colonised or subjugated by a bigger one. The aforementioned instance is relevant since at the time, the Indian Subcontinent was a British colony.

This might be the reason Majnoon Gorakhpurifavoured strict adherence to the original text and used primarily literal translation in this play's adaptation. Following are a few arbitrary excerpts from the target text that demonstrate his methodology:

### Examples:

- 1) "Dance of the seven veils" translated as "رقص ہفت نقاب"
- 2) "He is chaste as the moon is" (p.13) as  
"وہ چا ندکی دیو یکی طرح آانشوں سے پاک ہے" (صفحہ-13)
- 3) "She is like a silver flower" (p.5) as  
"وہ ایک چاندی کے پھول کی طرح ہے" (صفحہ-13)
- 4) "She is like a narcissus trembling in the wind" (p.5) as  
"وہ اس نرگس کی طرح ہے جو ہوا میں کانپ رہا ہو۔"
- 5) "Whose hair is powdered with blue dust"(p.17) as  
"جس کے بالوں میں نیلمیں افشاں چنی ہوئی ہے" (صفحہ\_4)
- 6) "Shadow of white rose in a mirror of silver" (p.3) as  
"طلانی آنتے میں سفید پھول کا عکس" (صفحہ\_4)

### Discussion

As demonstrated in the aforementioned instances, the translator takes a mostly source text-focused approach. The "Dance of the Seven Veils" has been rendered as "" (Raqs-e-haft-e-niqab) in the first example, which is a fresh phrase the translator contributed to Urdu by rendering it literally. By translating it literally, he kept its foreignness without substituting any of the popular dances from the target culture.

The term moon has been rendered in the second case as (chandkidevi: moon's goddess). The word "moon" is used differently in the source and target languages in terms of grammar. Moon is feminine in the source language of English, yet its equivalent in the target language of Urdu, chand, is masculine. The idea of chastity is typically linked to and emphasised via femininity. Moon was also a goddess in Greek mythology, in addition. In order to emphasise the idea of chastity, the author of the original text may have alluded to the goddess of the moon. Only using chand would have prevented the translation from accurately capturing the context of the original sentence. For this reason, he adopted the word 'Chand kidevi' to convey not just the idea of chastity connected with the goddess moon in the source culture but also the impression of femininity associated with moon in the source language.

The translation of the word "chaste" in the same case is "pure of all impurities" (aalaishon-se-pak). In the original language, the word "chaste" refers to someone who is unmarred, untainted, and who refrains from having sexual intercourse with others. Aalaish, an Urdu term, refers to stains and dirt. The word "aalaishon se pak" was adopted by the translator to express the idea of spotless character. Similar to the target culture, being unchastely indicates a seriously tarnished character. Illegal sexual activity tarnishes a person's reputation and character. In order to express a stainless character free of any impurities, he utilised the phrase "aalaishon se pak." He might have used the word's counterpart, pakdaman or pakbaz, but such words are often used to refer to people. He may have thought that using aalaishon se pak was more appropriate because he was referring to the goddess of the moon, who is pure and without contaminants.

The next examples show that all of the source texts' phrases have been translated literally and faithfully; any deviations are a result of cultural variations and the societies from which each language originated.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a polysystemic examination of the peritextual aspects of the English-Urdu translated versions of "Salome" revealed some noteworthy findings. To begin, peritextual elements such as the title, prologue, and cover design influence the reader's expectations and impressions of the translated content. Second, the study revealed how the peritextual elements of translated versions might differ based on the translator's cultural background and the target audience. Third, by taking into consideration the numerous systems that impact the translation process, the polysystemic approach has produced a more sophisticated view of the translation process. Furthermore, it assists readers in understanding a given culture.

Overall, this work has advanced our knowledge of translation as a complex and dynamic process, emphasising the significance of taking into account the peri-textual characteristics of translated texts. This study also emphasises the need of translators being sensitive to cultural and linguistic distinctions between source and target texts, as well as considering the intended audience when making judgements concerning peri-textual characteristics.

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