

# On the Translation of Poetry: A Look at Sohrab Sepehri's *Traveler*

Leila Niknasab

Elham Pishbin

## *Abstract*

*Every act of translation is mingled with some problems and challenges. Poetry translation may be more challenging than other types of translation due to the importance of both form and content in the type of interpretation and response evoked in the audience. In poetry translation one of the most essential issues to be addressed by the translator is whether to prefer the form over the content or vice versa. In this study presenting an analysis of a Persian piece of poetry, The Traveler, by the contemporary Persian Poet, Sohrab Sepehri, at both linguistic and extra linguistic levels based on Vahid's (2000) proposed model for poetry appreciation and translation process (see appendix) is aimed. It is tried to show that how linguistic and extra-linguistic features of the original poem has been dealt with in the translation process.*

**Keywords:** *poetry, textual analysis, extra-textual analysis, translation strategies for poetry*

## 1. Introduction

Talking about understanding poetry, we must be aware of the central two-fold approach to the rendering of poetry: it is necessary to know the literal sense as well as the symbolic or the meaning supposed to be understood by readers. Diction of poems should be considered seriously. Poets select words that completely express their feeling, thought and what they wish readers' response be (Deedari, 2004, et al).

The first problem one encounters in attempting to translate poetry is the importance of both its meaning and form in the response created by it in the audience. Hence, the translator should make decision whether sacrifice the form for the meaning or vice versa. According to Nida & Taber (1964, p. 126) "the conflict between the dictates of form and content becomes especially important where the form of the message is highly specialized" as it is in poetry. Poetry is a means of expressing one nation's feelings and attitudes. Translation acts as a bridging tool through which different cultures can get closer to each other. Despite the difficulties which accompanies poetry translation, excellent and acceptable translations of masterpieces of world poetry have been presented by a number of translators for example translation of Sa'di's *The Gulistan* by Rehatsek(1964), or Hafz by Arberry. These translators have attempted to preserve both form and content as far as possible in order to transfer all aesthetic aspects of the source text to the target text. The aim of the present study is analyzing

a Persian piece of poetry, *The Traveler*, by the contemporary Persian Poet, Sohrab Sepehry, at both linguistic and extra linguistic levels based on Vahid's (2000) proposed model for poetry appreciation and translation process (see appendix). First of all, some theoretical aspects related to poetry and translation will be presented. At the next step, the linguistic and extra linguistic analysis of the poetry will be offered.

## **2. Theoretical Preliminaries**

### **2.1. Definition of Poetry**

For New Critics poetry is considered as a means of resisting commodification and superficiality. Harmony is created out of contradictions and tension in a poem and finally a central alternative is shown. All of these are due to the internal organization or formal structure of a poem (Bertens, 1995, p.21). According Neoplatonic philosophers poetry was the most estimable form of imitation because it 'copied' not nature but a divine archetype (in Cudden, p.672).

Poem is defined by Cudden in the following manner: it is a work of art, a composition, a work of verse, which may be in rhyme or may be blank verse or a combination of the two. Or it may depend on having a fixed number of syllables (p.678).

Random House Unabridged Dictionary (2006) defines it as "the art of rhythmical composition, written or spoken, for exciting pleasure by beautiful imaginative or elevated thoughts". Frost (1969, p. 9) calls poetry memorable speech which is lost in translation. Poetry is the expression of feelings experienced by a poet. Nair (1991, p.93) believes that "poetry is an imaginative rendering of a poet's feelings and experiences."

### **2.2. Features of Poetry**

Many a great efforts have been done to determine what makes poetry distinctive from prose which resulted in the development of poetics—the study of the aesthetics of poetry.

Stating the difference between poem and prose, Cudden (1976) asserts that:

“what makes a poem different from any other kind of composition is a species of magic, the secret to which lies in the way the words lean upon each other, are linked and interlocked in sense and rhythm, and thus elicit from each other's syllables a kind of tune whose beat and melody varies subtly and which is different from that of prose” (ibid). Poetry is also defined by him mentioned below: poetry is a general term encompassing all kinds of metrical composition. It is often used with reservation and the opposite of verse (ibid).

On the other hand it is worth mentioning that some forms of poetry are specific to particular cultures and genres, responding to the characteristics of the language in which the poet writes. In this case translation of poetry preserving both form and content becomes harder than before.

Discussion about the concepts of translatability and untranslatability has an old history. One of the prominent scholars who have elaborated on the concept of untranslatability is Catford. He distinguishes two types of untranslatability, which he terms linguistic and cultural. On the linguistic level, untranslatability occurs when there is no lexical or syntactical substitute in the TL for an SL item. Catford's category of linguistic

untranslatability, which is also proposed by Popovič, is straightforward, but his second category is more problematic. Linguistic untranslatability, he argues, is due to differences in the SL and the TL, whereas cultural untranslatability is due to the absence in the TL culture of a relevant situational feature for the SL text. But once again it is Popovič who has attempted to define untranslatability without making a separation between the linguistic and the cultural. Popovič also distinguishes two types. The first is defined as a situation in which the linguistic elements of the original cannot be replaced adequately in structural, linear, functional or semantic terms in consequence of a lack of denotation or connotation. The second type goes beyond the purely linguistic: A situation where the relation of expressing the meaning, i.e. the relation between the creative subject and its linguistic expression in the original does not find an adequate linguistic expression in the translation (in Bassnett, 1988, p. 39).

The first type may be seen as parallel to Catford's category of linguistic untranslatability as has already been suggested; it is clearly the task of the translator to find a solution to even the most daunting of problems. Such solutions may vary enormously; the translator's decision as to what constitutes invariant information with respect to a given system of reference is in itself a creative act. Levý, as cited in Bassnet (1988, p. 39), stresses the intuitive element in translating:

As in all semiotic processes, translation has its pragmatic dimension as well. Translation theory tends to be normative, to instruct translators on the optimal solution; actual translation work, however, is pragmatic; the translator resolves for that one of the possible solutions which promises a maximum of effect with a minimum of effort. That is to say, he intuitively resolves for the so-called minimax strategy.

Steiner (1984, p. 136) there were some people who believed in untranslatability of some texts merely because of their belief about the sacredness of some texts:

Many people in ancient religious world were incredulous of the validity of translating as they believed that language was sacred and mystic, in which was hidden the will and order of God. Based on understanding the nature of the language, they used to regard translation or any kind of contrived conversation of a divine message from one language into another as no less than profanity and vice.

On the whole, untranslatability becomes more evident in poetry translation where we deal with formal features of language such as rhyme, rhythm, pun etc. In poetry these features play an important role. So it can be said that in poetry in addition to cultural cases of untranslatability, a lot of cases of linguistic untranslatability can also be found. According to Nida (1984, p. 104) "anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, unless the form is an essential element of the message".

Similarly, there are different views regarding the possibility of poetry translation. There are some scholars who believe translating poetry is impossible. For example Landers (2000, p. 97) argues:

Translating poetry well is so difficult as to be called impossible by most experts, the late John Ciardi referred to translation as "the art of failure" and yet we go on trying, sometimes with remarkably reduced degree of non-success. If literary translation is itself a leap of faith, poetic translation puts that faith to the severest of all tests.

"Translation of a literary work is as tasteless as a stewed strawberry". (Harry de Forest Smith, 1959, p.173 in Miremadi, 1995, p.33).

"Poetry cannot be translated." (Samuel Johnson, 18<sup>th</sup> century, in Miremadi, 1991, p. 34)

On the other hand, there are some who don't accept the impossibility of poetry translation. For example Bashevis, as cited in Miremadi, talks about the necessity of literary (including poetry) translation as he states "translation undresses a literary work, shows it in its true nakedness. An author can fool himself in his own language, but many of his shortcomings become clear to him in another language. Translation tells the bitter truth. It unveils all masks" (1995, p.35). Generally speaking, it is not justifiable to refrain from poetry translation, since poetry is the means of expression of one nation's feelings and attitudes toward world affairs. In this case translation can act as a bridging tool bringing closer different nations of the world. Dryden emphasized that poetry is translatable. He believed that to render a poem, the translator should be a thorough poet (in Miremadi, 1995, p. 85). In fact he used to pay much attention to the style, or formal features of the original poetry.

### **2.3. Strategies for Translating Poetry**

According to Rose (1981) "The translator of poetry must be fluent in and sensitive to the source language; he must know the source language's cultural matrices, its etymologies, syntax, and grammar, as well as its poetic tradition. He must culturally and politically identify himself wholeheartedly with the original poet. He must penetrate the exteriority of the original text and lose himself in its intertextuality. To make the translation become a poem, the translator must also meet successfully the expectations and sensibilities of the poetic tradition of the target language. Thus, the most successful translators of poetry are frequently those who happen to be bilingual and bicultural and, above all, poets in the target Language" (p. 136).

As it is evident translating poetry is a matter of relativity i.e. all aesthetic aspects of the original poem cannot be transferred into the TL version. We can find excellent translations of masterpieces of the world poetry. This shows that although translating poetry is more demanding than other types of texts, it doesn't mean impossibility of translation of poetry. In the researchers' opinion, translators of literary texts, especially poetry, should at least possess some degree of artistic genius. There are different types of strategies which translators adopt for translating poetry. These strategies will be elaborated on below:

### **2.3.1. Free vs. Literal Translation**

These two main strategies are too familiar to the translators. In literal translation poetry is rendered to either poetry or verse. The main characteristic of literal prose translation is the preference of the meaning over the form. In this case the translator's main concern is the meaning or content of the poetry, while in verse translation of poetry both form and content are of importance to the translator. As Frost (1969, p. 19) puts it "a prose translation of poetry, however deft its workmanship, cannot convey the effect which verse produces; if it could, why do poets take the trouble to write verse?". This statement is somehow challenge of justifiable, since all the aesthetic features and poetic effect of the original poem is contained in its form. If the translator renders a piece of poetry into verse, its affective function will be lost. It also noteworthy that the degree to which components of the form of the original poem is to be reproduced in the TL version depends on the nature of the TL language. Some languages have different structures which in such a way that all aesthetic aspects.

Abbasi and Manafi Anari (2007, pp. 67-68) in their article on strategies of poetry translation have mentioned that literal verse translation itself can be subdivided into several categories. They are presented below:

#### **2.3.1.1. Different Types of Literal Verse Translation**

##### **2.3.1.2. Phonemic translation**

This type of translation which is more literal and faithful type of translation each phoneme is rendered to a phoneme in the target language. This strategy is applied in languages which have similar phonemic systems such as English and French, so it is very rare.

##### **2.3.1.3. Stanza Imitation**

In this strategy translator presents a literal rendering of the original poem and at the same time he/she imitates the stanza pattern or the structure of the source poem. In other words translator tries to be faithful to the original content and also reproduce something of the form.

##### **2.3.1.4. Meter Imitation**

Translator in this strategy tries to give a literal verse rendering of the content of the original poem and at the same time reproducing the metrical pattern of it.

##### **2.3.1.5. Imitation of the Rhyme Scheme**

In this strategy the translator imitates the rhyming pattern of the original and produces a verse translation.

### **2.3.1.6. Literal Blank Verse Translation**

Poetry translator tries to give the literal translation of the content of the original poem in blank verse. Using this strategy the translator is not forced to follow the rhyming pattern or structure of the original poem. His only concern will be to render the meaning of the poem in a fluent way.

### **2.3.2. Types of Free Translation Strategies**

Abbasi and Manafi Anari (2007) also divided free translation strategy into some categories. They are as follow:

#### **2.3.2.1. Rhymed Translation**

Based on this strategy translates poetry into rhymed verse regardless of the structure of the original text. In this strategy meaning is sacrificed for the formal beauty. The translator tries to produce a text which is based on the norms and conventions of the target culture.

#### **2.3.2.2. Blank verse translation**

In free blank verse translation the content is of primarily importance to the translator. If a translator uses this strategy, there is no need to be concern about formal features of such as rhyme, rhythm and etc.

#### **2.3.2.3. Interpretation**

Interpretation is the freest type of translation strategy for translating poetry. Applying this strategy, the translator extracts the main concepts of the original poem and recreates it based on his/her style. The other name of this strategy is imitation. Generally speaking some of the Roman poets like Horace imitated Greek poets.

## **3. Methodology**

This poetry is analyzed on both textual and extra textual levels according to Vahid's model. The materials involve *Sepehri's Divane Kamel va Jame'e Sohrabe Sepehri* by Abbas Kermani (1386), *Mosafer: Ma hich ma negah* translated by Zahedi (1379), and *Raze Gole Sorkh: Naghd va Gozideye She'rhaye Sohrab* by Masoomi (1375). This study is a descriptive-analytical one; the original text with its two English translations was comparatively analyzed as in the following steps:

1. Studying the text exactly and isolating the items under study
2. Gathering the data and analyzing it on the basis of the proposed model
3. Representing conclusions

## 4. Analysis and Discussion of Data

In the next section the analysis of the poetry *Traveler* by Sohrab Sepehri (1379) will be represented.

### 4.1. Textual analysis:

In this kind of analysis we are going to study and analyze the "form", "sound", "image", "tone" and "content" of the poem. As seen in figure 1, form consists of rhymes, rhythms, stanzas, structural patterns, punctuation and kind of the poem. Since the poem supposed to be studied in this research is a modern one or blank verse there is no focus on rhyme and rhythm (they are non-existent). Hence, we ignore talking about form when analyzing this poem.

#### 4.1.1. Sound

In this part, alliteration (assonance and consonance) and rhymes are considered in Persian poetry and its English translation.

##### 4.1.1.2. Alliteration and Rhyme

Because of not having a great bulk of data only all other elements are going to be studied stanza by stanza.

**First Stanza:** This poem is a blank verse; hence, there is no rhythm neither in Persian nor in its English translation. Regarding music, in the first stanza one can find some cases of alliteration.

Consonance: /sh/ in /posht/, /shaneh/, / angosht/, and/ roushan

/s/ in /basaan/, /sam/, / Haadese/, /sar/

Assonance is seen in the following examples:/aa/ in /shaaneh/, /maar/, /angoshthaa/, /vaay/, /govaraa/,/kenaar/,/haadeseh/

In English translation of this stanza there is one case of consonance./steps/, /death/, /arms/, /it's/, /shoulders/, /incidence/, /warmth/, /its/,/tasty/. All these words have the consonance of /s/. There is no rhyme in Persian. But arms/warmth are rhymed.

#### Second Stanza

Consonance in Persian: /t/ in words such as /yaadat/, /hast/,/toreyeh/, /tekan/, /toraa/, /tekaani/

Assonance in Persian: /aa/ in words like /aan/, /mojaadele/, /zangdaar/, /aab/, /tekaan/, /ghaayegh/, /toraay/, /tekaani/

Consonance in English: In English translation /rattling/, /quarrel/, /water/, and /earth/ are alliterated because of having /r/ sound in common. Other cases of consonance are as follow:

/z/ is found in /was/, /visible/, /prism/; /sh/ is seen in words /shaking/ and /shook/; /k/ in /quiet/ and /candy/;

Assonance in English: In the translated version there is only one case of assonance which is /e/ in words like /quarrel/, /water/ and /earth/.

No rhyme is found in Persian but quarrel/water are rhymed.

### **Third Stanza**

Consonance in Persian: /t/ in /aadat/, /payvasteh/, / tamashast/, /surat/, / talaee/;

/k/ in /keh/, /paak/(which is repeated twice in "Persian verse)

The assonance is seen in the following words: /ghobaar/, /aadat/, /tamaashaa/, /taazeh/, /raah/, /baayad/, /paak/ (twice), /talaaei/

In English alliteration is as follows:

/z/ in /haze/, /always/, /covers/, /ways/, /observation/

/s/ in /dust/, /face/, /death/

No pairs with the same sound are seen in the Persian poem but in English Always/ways/haze and breath/death reproduce the same sound.

### **Fourth Stanza:**

Consonance in Persian: /s/ in /kojast/, /sang/, /ronus/, /post/, /dasthaye/, /saadeh/, /asar/

/t/ in /poost/, /dast/, /ghorbat/, /neveshtam/, /khati/, /deltangi/.

Assonance in Persian: /aa/ in /mojaaverat/, /miaayam/, /aan/, /dastan/, /saadeh/

Consonance in English: /r/ in /where/, /Ronus/, /rock/

/s/ in /vicinity/, /nostalgia/, /Ronous/

No same sound is seen in the Persian or English version.

### **Fifth stanza:**

Consonance in Persian: /sh/ in /sharaab/, /shetaab/, /nooshdaroo/

/s/ in /mesle/, /siahat/, /hamaaseh/, /sohrab/, /ghesseh/

Assonance in Persian: /aa/ in /shraab/, /raa/, /shetaab/, /baayad, /siyahat/, /hamaaseh/, /miaayam/, /aab/, /tamaam/, /sohraab/, /nooshdaroo/, /ravaan/

Consonance in English: /s/ in /pass/, /haste/, /Sohrab/

In Persian words shetaab/sharaab constitute a rhymed pair but in English rhyme is present in no case.

### **Sixth Stanza:**

Consonance in Persian: /b/ in /be/, /baagh/, /bord/, /begirad/, /baaz/

/s/ in /sifar/, /saalegi/, /istadam/, /sedaa/

/h/ in /hojoom/, /haghighat/

Assonance in Persian: /aa/ in /maraa/, /baagh/, /saalegi/, /istaadam/, /gharaar/, /sedaa/, /baaz/, /khaak/, /oftaadam/

Consonance in English: /t/ in /took/, /gate/, /to/, /stopped/, /rest/, /something/,  
/fluttering/

/ch/ in /childhood/, /orchard/

Assonance in English: /i/ in /journey/, /me/, /something/, /fluttering/

/o/ in /orchard/, /door/, /opened/

/eI/ in /take/, /gate/

/u/ in /onrush/, /truth/

/e/ in /heard/, /orchard/, /then/, /when/

Rhyme is zero in both Persian and English versions.

### **Seventh stanza:**

Consonance in Persian: /r/ in /baar/, /digar/, /dar/, /zir/, /mazaamir/, /sifar/, /roodkhaaneh/, /barbat/

/z/ in /zir/, /mazaamir/

/s/ in /aasmaan/, /sifar/

/sh/ in /hoosh/, /khaamoosh/

	/b/	in /baar/, /lab/, /baabel/, /be/, /barbat/, /bood/
Assonance in Persian:	/aa/	in /baar/, /aasmaan/, /mazaamir/, /aan/, /roodkhaaneh/, /baabel/, /aamad/, /navaa/, /khaamoosh/
Consonance in English:	/s/	in /once/, /sky/, /psalms/, /banks/
Assonance in English:	/ɑ/	in /once/, /under/, /on/
	/i/	in /river/, /melody/, /lyre/

Khaamoosh/ hoosh make the same sound in Persian , in English no pair with the same sound is found.

### **Eighth stanza:**

Consonance in Persian:	/b/	in /khoob/, /barbat/, /bitaab/, /be/, /bid/, /taab/
	/t/	in /bitaab/, /tar/, /taab/
	/r/	in /geryeh/, /barbat/, /tar/, /mikhordam/, /dar/, /safar/, /raaheban/, /Armia/, /eshaareh/, /mikardam/, /route/, /journey/, /Christian/
	/kh/	in /khoob/, /shaakkeh/, /mikhordam/
	/s/	in /masir/, /safar/, /masihi/, /samt/
	/sh/	in /khaamoosh/, / eshaareh/, /shaakkeh/
Assonance in Persian:	/aa/	in /daadam/, /sedaa/, /aamad/, /bitaab/, /shaakkeh/, /taab/
Consonance in English:	/v/	in /weeping/, /willow/, /someone/, /wet/, /were/
	/s/	in /pious/, /Christian/, /monks/, /towards/
Assonance in English:	/u/	in /carefully/, /could/, /few/, /route/
	/i/	in /weeping/, /lyres/, /swinging/, /willow/, /journey/

Rhyme exists in Persian (bitaab/taab) while in English it is non-existent.

**4.1.1.3. Tropes:** The most challenging words, phrases and sentences in a literary work are tropes or figurative features. This literary work we are working on, a modern poetry by Sohrab Sepehry, has been decorated by such literary devices as metaphor, simile, allusion, synesthesia, etc. on the whole, the poet has represented what he desires to through figurative language. Translating a piece of poetry, literary translator should keep in mind various techniques and devices to translate the poet's message with simple and fluent diction.

### **First stanza**

These following devices are found in the first stanza:

Simile: "as gently as the steps of death"

Personification: "putting its arms round our shoulder" (it is the death that puts its arms round our shoulder).

synesthesia: "bright fingers", two words are collocated with each other whose collocation seems strange; a combination of our touch sensation with an adjective belonging to another sensation.

Simile: "the warmth of its bright fingers like a tasty poison".

Oxymoron: "tasty Poison" collocation of two opposite words.

### **Second stanza**

Personification: "rattling quarrel of water and earth" (water and earth are arguing like men).

### **Third stanza**

Metaphor: "the haze of habit"; its connotative meaning is that Sohrab has a defamiliarized vision; he believes that our viewpoint towards life has been imprisoned by our routine and fixed life.

Metaphor: "the golden face of death".

Again we encounter literal meaning of words in English translation

### **Fourth stanza**

Personification: "hands of nostalgia"

Literary allusion: "In the memory of a nostalgic feeling" (this piece has been taken from another literary work).

### **Fifth stanza**

Proverb: "Mesl aab .....ravanam" means "as easy as abc"

Mythological allusion: "the legend Sohrab and antidote".

### **Sixth stanza**

Metaphor: "childhood orchard"

Onomatopoeia: "sedaye perper"

Metaphor: the onrush of Truth

### **Seventh -ninth stanzas**

Metaphor: "The sky of Psalms"

Religious allusion: "Psalms", "the prophet Jeremiah"; All these lines allude to "Adam" (peace be upon him) and the beginning of human civilization. The poet like "Adam" goes from Babylon to Mazamir and from there to the land of Jeremiah, the Prophet.

**Comment:** Though the words seem clear and simple on the surface, they have some connotative meanings. All words have been translated literally and the denotative meaning of them employed without any attention to the connotation. The readers do not get what is going to be transferred through these words and the meaning supposed by the poet. It is suggested that the translator add some extra explanation to each stanza in the form of footnotes or at the end of the whole poem in order to avoid the loss of meaning due to the cultural differences. Imagery is an important device in all stanzas. Words seem simple on the surface but their collocation with each other makes no sense. Even in Persian readers need some explanations to understand what is going in the poet's mind. Thus we have some kind of defamiliarization, that is, words are not used in their usual meaning. In Most of the stanzas very usual words are used which are not merely belonged to the poetic language. Of course, it is also the case in the Persian poem. Therefore, it can be said that regarding lexicon words are overall simple and familiar (like fingers, death, incidence, etc.) and mostly abstract.

### **4.2. Extra textual level analysis**

Literary translation is often exempt from the second type of control, which is the real world. All sentences are used figuratively, it is the connotation of words which has the highest importance, language is idiolect, synonyms are distinguished, all sounds are alive and their meaning might be in conflict with the sense (Newmark, 1998, p.68). All cultures are unique and different, cultural translation is a difficult but not impossible task. As Venuti (1995) asserts "A translation strategy based on an aesthetic of discontinuity can best preserve that difference, that otherness, by reminding the reader of the gains and losses in the translation process and the unbridgeable gaps between cultures" (in Rubel & Rosman, 2003, p.11).

In this level we go beyond what is understood from the surface of a literary work. Here analysis is done while cultural elements come into focus, so in this part this piece of poem's translation is interpreted on the level of coherence and implication. Pragmatics of the source and target texts is emphasized. We are going to study that whether this translation is as

meaningful as the original text for readers and can transfer the cultural concepts of SL to TL or not.

Line 169: "Besides the incident": connotation of "incident" is life. The poet wants to express the clear connection of his mind with his internal disposition. He in his mind tries to find a solution to problems mentioned in previous lines. Human beings live in this world, death suddenly comes and they should inevitably accept it. Death is like "poison" for them because they have not purified their mind and soul; on the whole it is tasty for it transfers us from this world to the afterlife.

Line 172: "Rattling quarrel of water and earth"

This phrase symbolically shows intellectual involvement of the poet. Water is a symbol for "illumination" and earth is a symbol for "reason". This phrase refers to the continuous quarrel between "reason" and "illumination". All these terms have been extracted from oriental "mysticism".

Line 173: "Beyond the prism ": prism refers to life. The poet wants to show daily boring life.

Line 174: "Shaking boat": it shows the traveler's fear since he is moving towards death. All of life is repeated and the key for changing anyone's life is in his own hands, he should mobilize all his thoughts to achieve his goal. A "fresh breath" means "having a defamiliarized life".

Line 181: "From the vicinity of a tree": The poet alludes to one tree in "India" reminding him from the time when he was learning besides "Krishna Murthy" (this tree reminds him of the time when he was under his teaching in India).

Line 185: "Wine": mystic inebriety. In domain of divine love and mysticism a wayfarer should haste.

Line 189: The legend of Sohrab and Antidote: a mythological allusion mentioned in Ferdosi's Shahnameh. To know this myth requires knowing Persian culture and literature.

Line 193: "Something was fluttering" and "I fell on the ground by the onrush of the truth": the former refers to the internal fear and vigilant conscience of the poet, the latter is interpreted in this manner; onrush of the truth refers to the truth of human being's existence. Human being is a mysterious entity; no one can recognize this truth but God. Man has a soul filled with love, knowledge, and pure mysticism. People of all religions, whether in church or mosque, etc. seek the myths of ancient times, go through many religious ceremony,.....to understand this love the best.

According to the above-mentioned this translation is a literal-semantic one and lacks perfect coherence (in the sense incorporating the TL readers' knowledge of the SL culture) at the

extra textual level, each stanza needs more interpretation to be understood completely due to the use of elements related to another culture and religion.

## **5. Conclusion**

The aim of this study was presenting a textual and extra textual analysis of a piece of poetry by Sohrab Sepehry based on Vahid's model. The results of the study show that the translator has been successful in the textual level to some degree. However, at the extra textual level this is not the case. This poem is full of culture-bound terms. Finding the correct and appropriate equivalences for these terms is one important task of the translator. It can be said that the translated poem will not create the same response and effect as evoked by the original text in the audience and the translated version leads to vagueness. Almost all literary devices were translated literally. Like the original poem the translated one is was without rhyme and rhythm (except for some few cases).

The tone of the poem was serious, realistic, admonitory and to some degree mystical. The message of the poem is to aware readers from the truth of life and death as well as the routine affairs which avoid them from deep thought and real attitude toward life. Regarding extra-level analysis this poem is mainly author –oriented so, no perfect coherence is found at this level. A lot of extra information is needed in order to preserve the pragmatics of the text, i.e. coherence and implicature: the former is related to the knowledge the readers get from linguistic elements and cultural background while the latter refers to the meaning not mentioned explicitly.

## Appendix

165. به نرمی قدم مرگ می رسد از پشت

و روی شانه ما دست می گذارد  
و ما حرارت انگشتهای روشن او را  
بسان سم گوارایی  
کنار حادثه سر می کشیم.

\*\*\*

170. "ونیز" یادت هست ،

و روی ترعه آرام؟  
در آن مجادله زنگدار آب و زمین  
که وقت از پس منشور دیده می شد  
تکان قایق ذهن ترا تکانی داد:

\*\*\*

175. غبار عادت پیوسته در مسیر تماشاست .

همیشه با نفس تازه راه باید رفت  
و فوت باید کرد  
که پاک پاک شود صورت طلایی مرگ

\*\*\*

180. کجاست سنگ رنوس؟

من از مجاورت یک درخت می آیم  
که روی پوست آن دست های ساده غربت  
اثر گذاشته بود:

"به یادگار نوشتم خطی ز دلتنگی"

\*\*\*

185. شراب را بدهید.

شتاب باید کرد:

من از سیاحت در یک حماسه می آیم

و مثل آب

تمام قصه سهراب و نوشدارو را

روانم

\*\*\*

190. سفر مرا به در باغ چند سالگی ام برد

و ایستادم تا

دلم قرار بگیرد،

صدای پرپری آمد

و در که باز شد

من از هجوم حقیقت به خاک افتادم.

\*\*\*

195. و بار دیگر، در زیر آسمان "مزامیر"

در آن سفر که لبرودخانه "بابل"

به هوش امدم،

نوای بربط خاموش بود

\*\*\*

200. و خوب گوش که دادم، صدای گریه می آمد

و چند بربط بی تاب

به شاخه های تربید تاب می خوردند.

\*\*\*

205. و در مسیر سفر راهبان پاک مسیحی

به سمت پرده خاموش "ارمیای نبی"

اشاره می کردند.

"سهراب سپهری"

## English Version

### *"The Traveler"* by Sohrab Sepehry

165. Coming from behind as gently as the steps of death  
Putting its arms round our shoulders  
And beside the incident, we drink up the warmth of its  
Bright fingers like a tasty poison.

\*\*\*

170. Do you remember Venice?  
And on the quiet canal?  
In that rattling quarrel of water and earth  
In which Time was visible beyond the prism  
The shaking boat shook your mind

\*\*\*

175. The haze of habit always covers the ways of observation  
One should always walk with a fresh breath  
And one should blow  
To wipe dust off the golden face of death

\*\*\*

180. Where is the Ronus Rock?  
I come from the vicinity of a tree  
On whose bark the plain hands of nostalgia  
Had engraved  
"in the memory of a nostalgic feeling."

\*\*\*

185. Pass the wine around.

One should haste:

I come from journey in an epic

And I Know

By heart

All the legend of "**Sohrab and the Antitode**".

\*\*\*

190. The journey took me to the gate of my childhood orchard.

I stopped to take a rest.

Then I heard something fluttering.

When the door opened

\*\*\*

195. I fell on the ground by the onrush of Truth.

And once, under the sky of "Psalms"

On the journey at the banks of Babylon River

When I came to

There was no melody of the "lyre"

\*\*\*

200. When I listened carefully, I could hear someone weeping

And few impatient lyres

Were swinging on the wet boughs of the weeping willow.

\*\*\*

205. On the route of the journey, the pious Christian monks

Pointed towards

The silent canvas of  
"The Prophet Jeremiah"

"Abbas Zahedi"

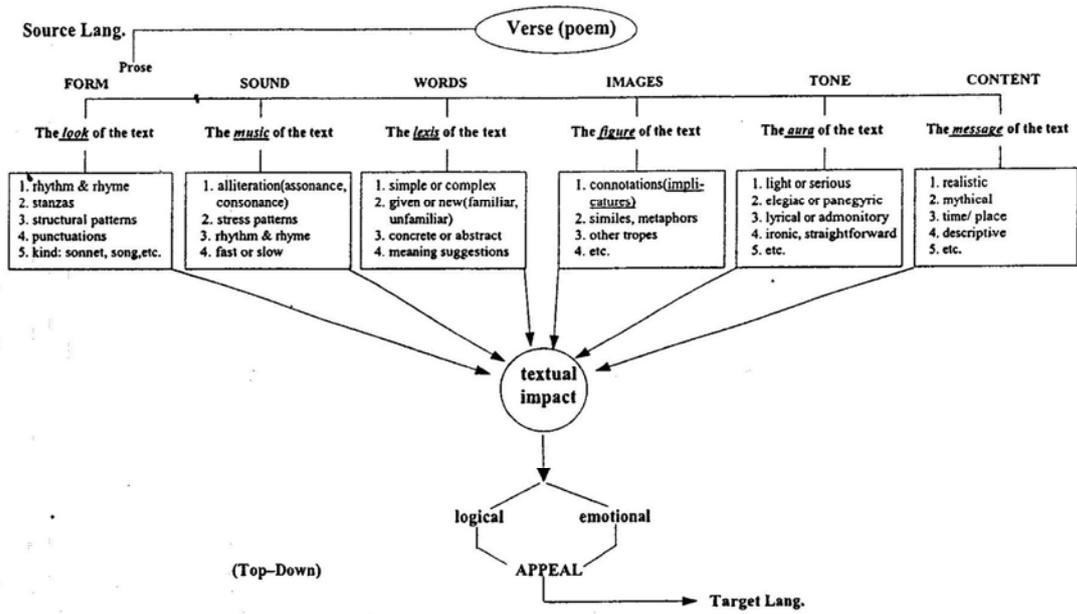


Figure 1. A Tentative Model of Poetic Translation Analysis and Assessment: Textual Level

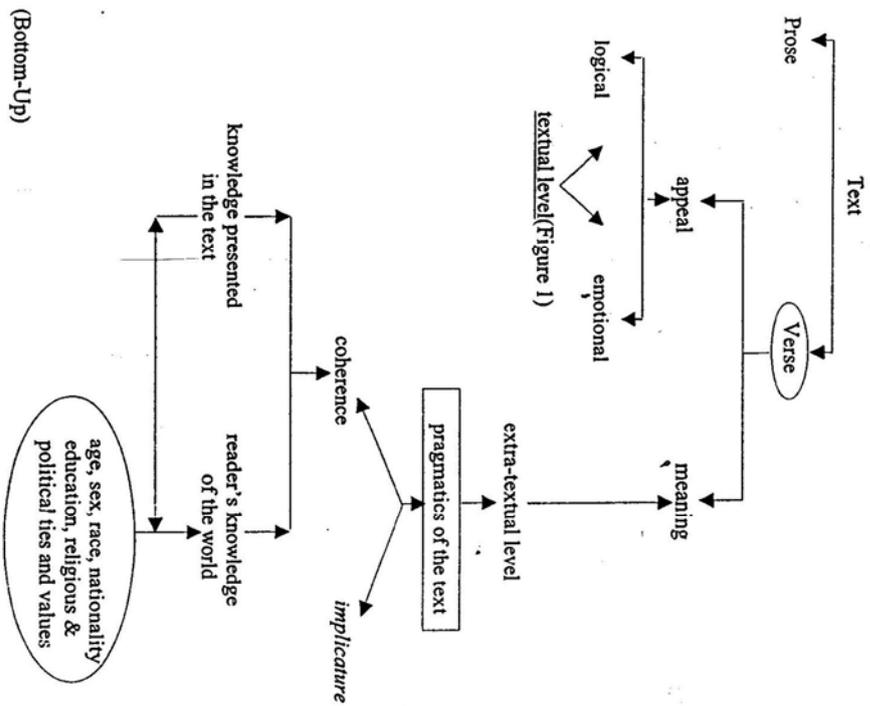


Figure 2. A Tentative Model of Poetic Translation Analysis and Assessment: extra-textual Level

## References

- {1} Abbasi, J. & Manafi A. (2004). "Strategies of Poetry Translation: Reconstructing Content and Form". *Translation Studies*, Vol. 1.
- {2} Bassnett, S. (1988). *Translation Studies*. London: Routledge.
- {3} Cuddon, J.A. (1976). *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. England: Penguin Reference.
- {4} Deedari, R. & M. Mansouri. (2004). *Understanding Poetry*. Tehran: Rahnama.
- {5} Frost, W. (1969). *Dryden and the Art of Translation*. Yale: University Press.
- {6} Landers, C. E. (2000). *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*. London: New Jersey City University Press.
- {7} Miremadi, A. (1995). *Theories of Translation and Interpretation*. Tehran: SAMT
- {8} Nair, S. K. (1991). 'Translating Poetry: Some Basic Problems'. *International Journal of Translation*.
- {9} Newmark, P. (1998). *More Paragraphs on Translation*. UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- {10} Nida, E. A. & Taber, C. R. (1969). *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden:
- {11} Rose, M. G. (1981). *Translation Spectrum: Essays in Theory and Practice*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- {12} Ruber, p. & A. Rosman. (2003). *Translating Culture: Perspective on Translation and Anthropology*. Oxford, New York: BERG.
- {13} Steiner, P. (1984). *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*. London: Oxford University press.

{14} سپهری، سهراب. (1379). *مسافر/ ما هیچ، ما نگاه*. عباس زاهدی (مترجم). تهران: انتشارات زبانکده.

{15} کرمانی، عباس. (1386). *دیوان کامل و جامع سهراب سپهری*. تهران: نشر آسیم.

{16} معصومی، سحر. (1375). *راز گل سرخ: نقد و گزیده شعرهای سهراب*. تهران: انتشارات به نگار.

In *SKASE Journal of Translation and Interpretation* [online]. 2011, vol. 5, no. 1 [cit. 2011-03-28].  
Available on web page <[http://www.skase.sk/Volumes/JTI05/pdf\\_doc/01.pdf](http://www.skase.sk/Volumes/JTI05/pdf_doc/01.pdf)>. ISSN 1336-7811.