THE RETRANSLATION HYPOTHESIS REVISITED: SHAKESPEARE'S *HAMLET* IN MACEDONIAN[85]

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Abstract

Retranslation has most often been addressed in the field of literary translation in case studies of a single literary text, often described as a 'classic' (Koskinen & Paloposki 2010: 294). According to Paloposki & Koskinen (2004: 28), retranslation can be studied from at least two aspects: the reasons for retranslation and the profiles of retranslations. Questions that can be addressed include: what is the profile of retranslations compared to the profile of first translations in terms of domesticating or foreignising strategies and why are texts retranslated, as well as the context in which retranslations appear.

In this paper I set out to address retranslation as a product in literary translation of classics by conducting a case study of the translations of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* into Macedonian. I analyze the profiles of the translations to test the so called Retranslation Hypothesis. The analysis is based on a comparison between source text and target texts in terms of the number of lexical inventions, i.e. the number of words derived through the processes of conversion and compounding.

Key words: retranslation, Hamlet, conversion, compounding

INTRODUCTION

Retranslation can be viewed from two viewpoints: as a product and as a process. In terms of product, retranslation is a second or subsequent translation

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[85] review scientific paper

of a single source text into the same target language, whereas in terms of process, retranslation is a phenomenon that occurs over a period of time (Koskinen & Paloposki 2010: 294). Retranslation has most often been addressed in the field of literary translation in case studies of a single literary text, often described as a 'classic' (ibid.). According to Paloposki & Koskinen (2004: 28), retranslation can be studied from at least two aspects: the reasons for retranslation and the profiles of retranslations. Questions that can be addressed include: what is the profile of retranslations compared to the profile of first translations in terms of domesticating or foreignising strategies and why are texts retranslated, as well as the context in which retranslations appear. In this paper I set out to address retranslation as a product in literary translation of classics by conducting a case study of the translations of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* into Macedonian. I analyze the profiles of the translations to test the so called Retranslation Hypothesis.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Antoine Berman's theory of retranslation (1990 in Brownlie 2006: 147) successive translations are closer to conveying the essence of the source text than the first translation, t.e. retranslations reveal the truth of the being of the source text much better than the first translation. He goes on to position retranslations in a series of stages where there is one first translation which is a courageous introduction of the source text with no literary ambitions, then another translation which is the first one to have literary pretentions but which is full of flaws, and then follow the retranslations among which a canonical translation may be produced which will stop the cycle of retranslation for a long time (Berman 1995 translated by Brownlie 2006:148). Berman claims that the first introductory translation is literal and followed by the "first" free target-oriented translation(s), which is, in turn, followed by source-oriented translations. In his view, through this progression retranslation introduces improvement.

Bensimon (1990 in Paloposki & Koskinen 2004: 27) also claims that there are differences between first translations and retranslations in that first translations are naturalizing or domesticating, whereas retranslations are foreignising. In addition, he explains why this is the case claiming that the first translation's primary aim is to introduce the foreign text into the new culture. Since the recipient culture may be reluctant to accept the foreign text, the first translation should be adapted to allow for smoother integration. On the other

hand, retranslations step into a world which is already familiar with the foreign text and culture, so they may maintain cultural distance by returning to the original and being more foreignising.

Berman's and Bensimon's theories have come to be known as the Retranslation Hypothesis (RH), which Gambier (1994 in Paloposki & Koskinen 2004: 28) summarises as follows: ""[...] a first translation always tends to be more assimilating, tends to reduce the othernesss in the name of cultural or editorial requirements [...] The retranslation, in this perspective, would mark a *return* to the source-text", emphasis in the text." RH seems appealing as it is in line with the intuitive assumptions about assimilating first translations and closer retranslations and has, in fact, been proven to be true in a number of cases. However, research has also shown that it is not always true and that the relationship between first translations and retranslations is not linear and time-determined only, but that there are other reasons behind retranslation (Paloposki & Koskinen 2010: 32).

PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this paper is to test the Retranslation Hypothesis on a corpus of Macedonian translations. For the purposes of this paper 'closeness' between source text and target text is measured in terms of the number of lexical inventions, i.e. the number of words derived through the processes of conversion and compounding. The corpus consists of 3 translations of Shakespeare's *Hamlet:* Aco Shopov's translation of 1960, Bogomil Gjuzel's translation of 1989 and Dragi Mihajlovski's translation of 2008. 1200 verse lines randomly taken from the first, third and fifth act (400 verse lines from each) are analysed in each book.

In the case of Shakespeare, one of the striking features of his style concerns his lexical inventions. According to Oxford English Dictionary, around 2200 words are used by Shakespeare for the first time (Crystal 2008). In Shakespeare's time, the primary word-formation processes were affixation, conversion and compounding (Nevalainen 2001) and he used them all to a great extent. This study analyses the relationship between Shakepeare's words thought to be derived through the processes of conversion and compounding and their TT counterparts. The analysis focuses on lexical items by identifying and examining all instances of words thought to be coined in the spirit of the time and thought to be representative of Shakespeare's method which are obtained through the word formation processes of conversion and compounding.

At this point it is reasonable to recognize that the first Macedonian translation of *Hamlet* by Shopov is done from a Russian source and is, thus, indirect translation. Indirect translation is inherently more distant from the original due to the complexity of the translation process itself and the fact that it undergoes a double process of decoding and encoding (Jianzhong 2003: 198). Therefore, its present form may be largely attributed to the Russian source rather than the decisions of its Macedonian translator. Having said that, the second translation done by Gjuzel is the first translation from the English original, whereas the third translation by Mihajlovski is the second translation from English and, as such, may be considered to be the first real retranslation.

ANALYSIS

The comparison of the three translations at the lexical level with the coined word as a unit of comparison shows that the translations differ among each other (Chart 1).

Chart 1: Results per type and translation
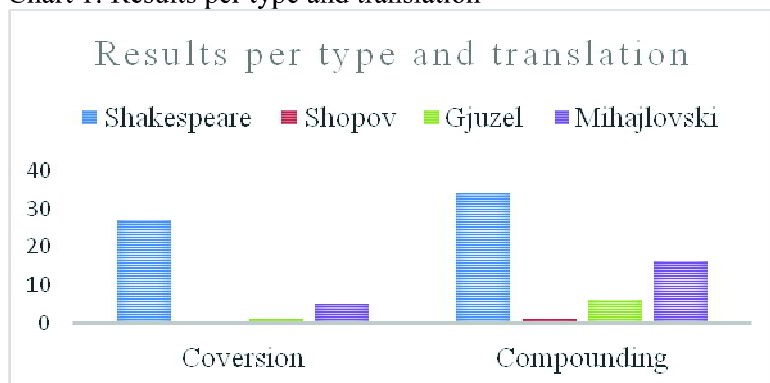
The analysis of words obtained through the process of conversion shows that Shakespeare used 27 such words, whereas Shopov none, Gjuzel 1 and Mihajlovski 5. The analysis of words obtained through the process of compounding demonstrates that where Shakespeare used 34 compounds, Shopov used 1, Gjuzel 6 and Mihajlovski 16. This result already points to the different profile of the translations. It seems that the very first translation does not follow the English original. The second translation is also very distant from the source. The second retranslation from the English original, on the other hand, displays obvious differences from the other two in that it is much more

foreignising following the word formation model of the original. Below are some examples to illustrate the analysis.

(1) "HORATIO: ....Now sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Sharked up a list of landless **resolutes**
For food and diet to some enterprise
That hath a stomack in't;……………………"

(Hamlet I.i.95-100)

Shopov, 1960	Gjuzel, 1989	Mihajlovski, 2008
„ХОРАЦИО Фортинбрас прexecutив, наследникот млад, За кусо време во Норвешка **собра** Цел одред дрски **разбојници**, спремни За леб да тргнат во секаква борба." (Шекспир, 1960: 13)	„ХОРАЦИО ……Но сега Еве ти го младиот Фортинбрас, од сој Непоправлив, а врел и дрзок, **збрал** Од полите на Норвешка, ваму-таму Сè некој џган **одметници** што спремни се За парче леб на сенешто - ...." (Шекспир, 1989: 28)	„ХОРАЦИО ....Но младиот Фортинбрас, господине, со неопитна а зовриена глава, на границите од Норвешка кај одваму кај оттаму **издерикожи** список бескуќни **дрзници** за леб и сол да трнат во поход за кој треба да ти стиска..." (Шекспир, 2008: 452)

In excerpt (1) Shakespeare introduced two coined words derived through the process of conversion, where a noun (*shark*) is used as a verb (*sharked up*) and an adjective (*resolute*) is used as a plural noun (*resolutes*). The analysis of the translations shows that Shopov and Gjuzel have neutralized these lexical inventions, whereas Mihajlovski has followed the original model and coined new words. Shopov uses 'собра' (gathered) and 'разбојници' (bandits), Gjuzel uses 'збрал' (gathered) and 'одметници' (outlaws), whereas Mihajlovski uses 'издерикожи' (a verb derived from the noun *martinet*) and 'дрзници' (a noun derived from the verb *to venture*). Both words coined by Mihajlovski are non-

existent in Macedonian and would be considered foreignising by Macedonian readers.

(2) "HORATIO: And then it started like a guilty thing
                   Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
                   The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,

Doth with his lofty and **shrill-sounding** throat
                   Awake the god of day, and at its warning,
                   whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
                   Th'extravagant and erring spirit hies
   to his confine."

(Hamlet I.i.148-155)

Shopov, 1960	Gjuzel, 1989	Mihajlovski, 2008
„ХОРАЦИО	„ХОРАЦИО	„ХОРАЦИО
Да, тогаш замре ко виновник некој	Се штрекна тогаш како виновник	И потоа се сепна како виновник некој
В суд кога оди. Јас сум слушал често,	Пред суров суд. А петелот, сум чул,	На страшен повик. Сум слушнал дека
Петелот, тој трубач на секоја мугра	Тој трубач утрински, со високо	Петелот, трубата на самото утро,
Со остро грло, со писок го буди	И **остро грло** богот го разбудува	Со своето надмено, **писко-звучно** грло
Дневниот бог.................."	На денот.........................."	Го буди богот денски..."
(Шекспир, 1960: 15)	(Шекспир, 1989: 31)	(Шекспир, 2008: 454)

Example (2) illustrates the use of compounds (shrill-sounding). In this case, too, the three translations provide a different picture. Shopov conveys it with 'со остро грло, со писок' (with a shrill throat, with a shrill), Gjuzel with 'остро грло' (shrill throat), whereas Mihajlovski coins 'писко-звучно' (shrill-sounding). This shows again that the first translations use a neutralizing

descriptive translation strategy, and the retranslation uses a source-text oriented strategy and introduces a compound based on the English source model.

The picture becomes even clearer in the cases where the translations introduce instances of word formation in places where there are none in the original (Chart 2). Both Shopov and Mihajlovski add such features in places where they are not found in the original probably to compensate for the loss in other places. But the figures show that Mihajlovski does this much more than Shopov. Shopov adds 5 words derived through conversion, whereas Mihajlovski adds 24 words derived through conversion and 14 compounds. Gjuzel, on the other hand, has no instances of compensation either in conversion or in compounding.

Chart 2: Instances of compensation
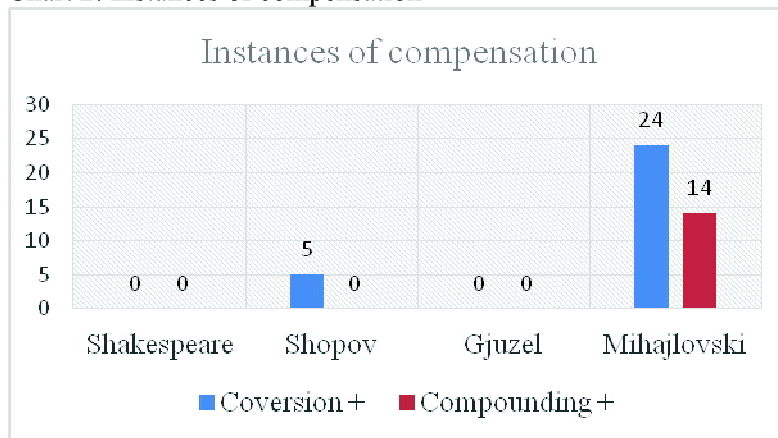
Examples (3) and (4) illustrate this point.

(2) HAMLET ".......Why does he suffer this rude nave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery?...."

Shopov, 1960	Gjuzel, 1989	Mihajlovski, 2008
ХАМЛЕТ „...Зошто ги трпи ударите на овој груб **несмасник** и не го повикува на одговорност за таа навреда?...“ (Шекспир, 1960:159)	/	/

Example (3) shows that Shopov adds a coined word derived through conversion 'несмасник' (a noun derived from an adjective *negligent*) where there is none in the original.

(4) KING: "Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away."

(Hamlet I.ii.128)

Shopov, 1960	Gjuzel, 1989	Mihajlovski, 2008
/	/	КЛАУДИЕ „......... **Пре-глаголувајќи** го земниот гром. Да одиме сега“ (Шекспир 2008: 460)

Examples (4) and (5) demonstrate that Mihajlovski adds coined words derived through conversion ('пре-глаголувајќи' (a verbal adverb derived from a noun *verb*)) and compounding ('болно-плачни' (painfully-crying)), respectively, where there are none in the original.

(5) HAMLET: "......- Within a month
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes
She married......."

(Hamlet I.ii.153-156)

Shopov, 1960	Gjuzel, 1989	Mihajlovski, 2008
/	/	ХАМЛЕТ „................- по само еден, никаков месец Пред дури и солта од најпритворни солзи Да се исуши на нејзините **болно-плачни** очи, Таа мажена........." (Шекспир, 2008: 461)

If the aggregate results (including both those features preserved and those added by the translator as compensation) are compared (Chart 3), it becomes clear that Mihajlovski's translation is very close in style to Shakespeare in that he follows the word formation models. These results indicate that first translations are more distant from the foreign source, whereas retranslations are closer to the foreign source and seem to confirm the Retranslation Hypothesis.

Chart 3: Aggregate results
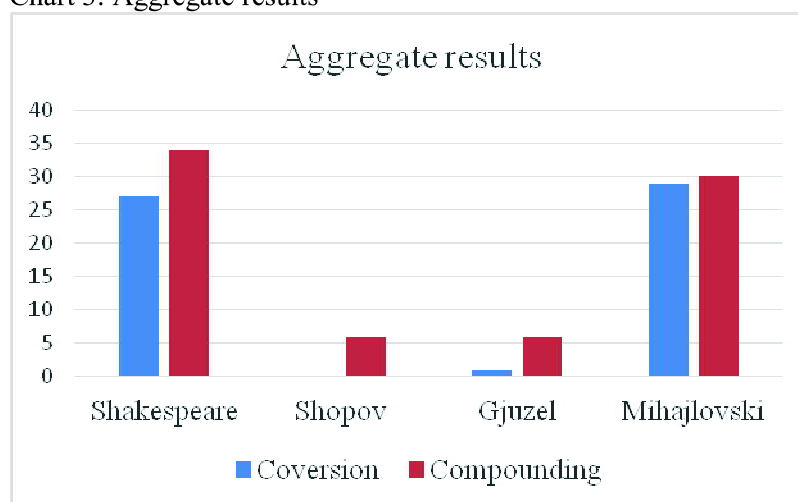
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This paper has set out to identify the profile of the existing translations of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* into Macedonian to test the Retranslation Hypothesis. The analysis has shown that the three translations have different profiles. The very first translation, which is an indirect one, is more target-oriented, the first direct translation is also target-oriented, while the second direct translation is more source-oriented. These results confirm the Retranslation Hypothesis and show that indeed first translations (in this case both Shopov's and Gjuzel's translations may be considered first translations as Shopov's is the first translation of *Hamlet* into Macedonian ever although done through a Russian relay, whereas Gjuzel's is the first translation to be done directly from the English original) are assimilative and lacking and, as such, create a need for a second translation which is closer to the source.

However, there have been studies that have argued that the RH does not account for all retranslations. For example, providing evidence from Finnish translations, Paloposki and Koskinen (2004: 36) conclude that the profile of retranslations is affected by many different factors rather than the order of appearance only. They show that RH may be reverted where it is possible for a retranslation to be more target-oriented and for a first translation to be source-oriented providing at least three possible reasons for the latter. Paloposki & Koskinen (2010: 30) also claim that domesticating translations may be a feature of a certain phase in translated literature rather than a property of all retranslations and that source- and target-orientedness may depend on the observer's viewpoint. In addition, they point out the methodological difficulties in measuring concepts such as closeness or improvement which largely depend on the idiosyncratic view and interpretation of the researcher.

In the light of these considerations, the results of this study should be further tested. Possible lines of research include studying the reasons behind the retranslations or studying retranslation of a larger corpus of Macedonian translations over a period of time. Only by more extensive research can the Retranslation Hypothesis be confirmed or refuted with greater certainty.

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