



**International Journal of Languages' Education and Teaching**  
**Volume 5, Issue 1, April 2017, p. 170-181**

Received	Reviewed	Published	Doi Number
15.03.2017	30.03.2017	24.04.2017	10.18298/ijlet.1723

**SHAKESPEARE IN THREE LANGUAGES: READING AND ANALYZING  
SONNET 130 AND ITS TRANSLATIONS IN LIGHT OF SEMIOTICS <sup>1</sup>**

*Sündüz ÖZTÜRK KASAR <sup>2</sup> & Didem TUNA<sup>3</sup>*

**ABSTRACT**

Among the literary genres, poetry is the one that resists translation the most. Creating a new and innovative language that breaks the usual rules of the standard language with brand-new uses and meanings is probably one of the most important goals of the poet. Poetry challenges the translator to capture not only original images, exceptional symbolism, and subjective connotations but also its musicality, rhythm, and measure. Faced with this revolutionary use of language, the translator needs a guide so as to not get lost in the labyrinths of the poetic universe. The universe of sound and meaning unique to each language and the incompatibility of these languages with each other makes the duty of the translator seem impossible. At this point, semiotics may function as a guide, opening up the mysteries of the universe built by the poet and giving clues as to how it can be conveyed in the target language. This allows us to suggest the cooperation of semiotics and translation. From this perspective, we aim to present a case study that exemplifies this cooperation. Our corpus comprises Shakespeare's sonnet 130 and its Turkish and French translations. The study treats the translator as the receiver of the source text and the producer of the target text in light of the *Theory of Instances of Enunciation* propounded by Jean-Claude Coquet. Further, through the *Systematics of Designificative Tendencies* propounded by Sündüz Öztürk Kasar, the study compares the translators' creations to the original sonnet to see the extent to which the balance of the original text's meaning and form is preserved in the translations and how skillfully and competently the signs that constitute the universe of meaning are transmitted in the target languages.

**Keywords:** Theory of Instances of Enunciation, Semiotics of Translation, Systematics of Designificative Tendencies, Shakespeare, Sonnet 130

**1. Introduction**

Among the literary genres, poetry is the one that resists translation the most. Creating a new and innovative language that breaks the usual rules of the standard language with brand-new uses and meanings is probably one of the most important goals of the poet. Poetry challenges the translator to capture not only original images, exceptional symbolism, and subjective connotations but also its musicality, rhythm, and measure. Faced with this revolutionary use of language, the translator needs a guide to not get lost in the labyrinths of the poetic universe. The universe of sound and

<sup>1</sup> This study was presented under the title "Translating Poetry in the Light of Semiotics" at the X. European Conference on Social and Behavioral Sciences in Sarajevo, May 19-22, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Dr., Yıldız Technical University, sunduzkasar@gmail.com.

<sup>3</sup> Asst. Prof. Dr., İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University, didem.tuna@yeniyuzuil.edu.tr.

---

meaning unique to each language and the incompatibility of these languages make the duty of the translator seem impossible. At this point, semiotics may function as the guide, opening up the mysteries of the universe built by the poet and giving clues about how it can be conveyed in the target language. This allows us to suggest the cooperation of semiotics and translation.

## 2. Theory, method, and corpus

In this study, we take as a basis the *Theory of Instances of Enunciation* propounded by Jean-Claude Coquet, a French semiotician and one of the founders of the Paris School of Semiotics (Coquet 1997 & 2007). According to the theory, every discourse has a producer and a receiver, but these roles are not fixed. When the producer of the discourse finishes speaking, s/he starts to listen and assumes the role of the receiver of the discourse and vice versa. The production of a discourse is realized through this cooperation, and the signification is shaped by what the producer of the discourse says and what the receiver of the discourse understands from it. In light of this theory, the translator assumes two roles: The receiver of the source text and the producer of the target text. Sometimes, however, because of internal or external factors originated by the translator or other agents, what is said in the source text may not correspond completely to what is produced in the target text.

From this point of view, a case study illustrating the cooperation of semiotics and translation is presented in this article. As 2016 marks Shakespeare's 400th death anniversary, we commemorate this occasion by including in our corpus Shakespeare's Sonnet 130, its French translations by Lafond, Hugo, Guizot, Montégut, Guerne, and Bonnefoy as well as its Turkish translations by Halman, Bozkurt & Bozkurt, Kısakürek, Ovat, and Güngör. The products of these translators are evaluated from the perspective of the semiotics of translation using the *Systematics of Designificative Tendencies* propounded by Sündüz Öztürk Kasar who launched a semiotic approach to translation.

*Systematics of Designificative Tendencies* helps to see how competently the translators achieve to transmit to the target language the signs that constitute the universe of the meaning of the original text and it aims to provide a more objective basis for the process of evaluating translations, which is often rather observational and subjective in nature. As shown below, it illustrates a process of semantic degradation through nine steps, which goes from the fullness of meaning to its total emptiness. This process includes translator tendencies, going from adding to the translation a sign that does not exist in the source text or making explicit an implicit meaning in the original text to making the meaning ambiguous or insufficient; producing connotative, false, opposing or anti-meanings; or meaninglessness and even to non-translation. In this study, the examples of this kind are treated within the framework of *Systematics of Designificative Tendencies* to see the extent to which some meanings of the source texts are transformed and how they are reflected in the target text.

Table 1: Systematics of Designificative Tendencies

	DESIGNIFICATIVE TENDENCIES	OPERATIONS	RESULTS	FIELD OF SIGNIFICATION
1	<b>Over-interpretation of the meaning</b>	Producing an excessive commentary on the meaning of the original text or making explicit a meaning that is implicit in the original text	Excessive translation Excessive meaning	MEANING (Within the field of meaning of the sign)
2	<b>Darkening of the meaning</b>	Making ambiguous or obscure a meaning that is clear in the original text	Ambiguous meaning	
3	<b>Under-interpretation of the meaning</b>	Providing incomplete information, producing insufficient meaning	Incomplete translation Insufficient meaning	
4	<b>Sliding of the meaning</b>	Producing a possible meaning that is potential but not actualized in the context of the original text or creating a connotation not evoked by the original text	Other meaning	PERI-MEANING (At the limits of the field of meaning of the sign)
5	<b>Alteration of the meaning</b>	Producing a false meaning albeit one that is not completely irrelevant to the meaning in the original text	False meaning	
6	<b>Opposition of the meaning</b>	Producing a meaning that is contrary to the meaning in the original text	Opposing meaning	
7	<b>Perversion of the meaning</b>	Producing a meaning that is totally irrelevant to the meaning in the original text	Anti-meaning	MEANINGLESSNESS (Outside the field of meaning of the sign)
8	<b>Destruction of the meaning</b>	Producing an utterance that is devoid of meaning; in this case, meaning is out of the question, but there is some residue of the intended translation material.	Meaninglessness	
9	<b>Wiping out of the meaning</b>	Wiping out of the significative unit. This tendency leads to the absence of translation. This is the complete elimination of the formation of sign and meaning, where no traces of the meaning remain and the sign is completely wiped out.	Non-translation Absence of sign	

*Systematics of Designificative Tendencies*, propounded by Sündüz Öztürk Kasar, was first published in French (Öztürk Kasar 2009, 193). Its updated version was then published in Turkish (Öztürk Kasar, S. & Tuna, D., 2015: 463) and in French (Öztürk Kasar, S. & Tuna, D., 2016: 89-91).

### 3. Analysis of the Original Text and its Translations

Before starting the analysis, it might be useful to indicate the place of Sonnet 130 among the sonnets of Shakespeare. Shakespeare has 154 sonnets, the main theme of which is love and the first 126 of which are addressed to a young man, often called the "fair youth". After that, from Sonnet 127 to Sonnet 152, the addressee is the "Dark Lady," so Sonnet 130 is one of those addressed to the Dark Lady. According to some interpreters, some sonnets including Sonnet 130 were not written by Shakespeare at all. Halman, one of the Turkish translators of the sonnets, is among those who disagree with this opinion. He views this sonnet as a satirical poem and states that there is no doubt that Shakespeare wrote it to mock the poets of his time (Halman 1989, pp. 23–24). In fact, in conventional love poems, the lover's qualities were associated with perfection with the help of exaggerated comparisons, and the lover was presented as a divine being. In this sonnet, Shakespeare makes use of some elements of comparison, but only to show the lover's imperfections. The Dark Lady does not have a supernatural beauty, she is a real woman with some defects, but from the poet's perspective, she is as rare as any woman who is misrepresented with false comparisons.

#### 3.1. The form and the universe of meaning of the original text

Among the literary genres, poetry is perhaps the one in which the form is most distinctively meaningful, and this is the reason why in the analysis of a poem, its form cannot be ignored. A poem is made of all kinds of esthetic qualities like its voice, its measure, and its musicality; all of these are reflected in the poem's universe of meaning in one way or another. Therefore, it is important to conserve these elements in the translation as much as possible to transmit the pleasure that the original text gives and to create the same effect as the original's on the reader of the translated text. A poem comes into being with the combination of the dimension of meaning with that of the form; when translation is in question, to be able to talk about "a poem," the poem has to be successfully reproduced both in terms of form and the universe of meaning. This problem is going to be treated in this study within the framework of our corpus.

##### 3.1.1. Transmission of the poetic qualities of the original text to the translation

Shakespeare's Sonnet 130 is a measured one, reflecting the particularity of the Shakespearian sonnet. All its verses consist of 10 syllables, and the rhyme scheme is a/b, a/b, c/d, c/d, e/f, e/f, g/g. When we look at its translations, we see that the translations of Hugo, Guizot, and Montégut are written in prose form. This situation can be explained by the fact that in the 1800s, it was traditional to translate poetry into prose (Cottegnies, 2004, 2). As a result, François-Victor Hugo, who published the first integral translation of Shakespeare's sonnets in 1859, remained loyal to the tradition. However, one year before Hugo published his translations, another translator, Ernest Lafond, had published a translation of 48 sonnets of Shakespeare, including Sonnet 130 (Shakespeare, 1856). When we have a look at his translation, we see that Lafond translated the sonnet in a different rhyme scheme with 12-syllable verses and as a measured poem. Guerne who translated the sonnet in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and Bonnefoy who translated it at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, on the other hand, used an unmeasured verse form without preserving the rhyme scheme of the original. Except Lafond's translation, all French translations are unrhymed. As to Turkish translations, all of them are in the verse form, but only Halman's translation is measured. Halman composed his translation using 14 syllables in each verse instead of 10, probably because of the agglutinative structure of Turkish. As to the rhyme scheme, Halman, Bozkurt & Bozkurt and Ovat followed the same rhyme scheme, and the rest of the Turkish translations are unrhymed.

### 3.1.2. Analysis of the universe of meaning of the original text

In Sonnet 130, Shakespeare gives an unusual description of the beloved woman. The speaker in the sonnet uses more or less the same elements of comparison as those in the conventional love poems to evaluate his lover's qualities, but the difference is that instead of deifying her, he shows that she is not even an exceptional beauty. She has defects and weaknesses in terms of physical appearance, and she is not fair-haired. From this sonnet we see once again that, as Halman points out, "Shakespeare maintains that darkness excels fairness, although fairness is taught to be real beauty in Elizabethan age" (Halman, 1989, 33).

For a semiotic analysis, one of the first operations is segmentation. "Segmentation is to be considered as the first empirical step, aiming at tentatively dividing the text into entities that can be handled more easily" (Greimas and Courtés, 1982: 270). There is no definite criterion for segmentation. How the text is to be segmented may depend on the particularities of the text and also on the way the person who analyses the text sees it. In any case, "different disjunctions can be recognized: spatial (here/elsewhere), temporal (before/after), thymic (euphoria/dysphoria), topical (same/other), actorial (I/[s]he), etc." (Greimas and Courtés, 1982: 270) From our point of view, Sonnet 130 can be considered in nine segments: line 1/ line 2/ line 3/ line 4/ lines 5 & 6/ lines 7 & 8/ lines 9 & 10/ lines 11 & 12/ lines 13 & 14. The first eight segments reflect the beloved woman's physical features. In these segments, the speaker in the sonnet talks about her eyes, her lips, her skin color, her hair, her cheeks, her breath, her voice, and the way she walks. The image of the woman that is presented in the end is quite surprising because her eyes are not like the sun, her lips are not as red as coral, her skin is not white but dun, her hair is like black wires, the color of her cheeks is not like the color of damasked, red and white roses, her breath is horrid, the sound of music is more pleasing than her voice, and as she walks on the ground, she is not a goddess. It is clear that every description in the sonnet gives voice to a negative quality or a defect. In spite of these disagreeable features, in the last segment, the speaker concludes by that his lover is as rare as any woman who is aggrandized.

### 3.2. Analysis of French and Turkish Translations

In this section, each segment will be treated in succession, and how successfully the signs of the original text are reproduced in the target language will be evaluated.

#### 3.2.1. Analysis of Segment 1

In the first segment where the speaker in the sonnet states that the lover's eyes are nothing like the sun, the sign "mistress" used to refer to the lover in English is translated as "*maitresse*" by all of the French translators, and the semantic content of the sign is reflected completely due to the parallelism between the two languages. The same sign, however, is interpreted and translated into Turkish in different ways: "*sevgilim*" (Halman and Kısakürek), "*sevdiğim*" (Bozkurt & Bozkurt), "*yârim*" (Ovat), and "*gözdem*" (Güngör). Among these options, "*sevgilim*" is frequently used in daily language and does not cause any problems in terms of meaning. Apart from this, "*sevdiğim*" is less frequently used, and it is usually encountered more in poetic language. The word "*yârim*," which belongs to regional language, is also mostly encountered in poetry and folk songs. As what is in question is poetry here, none of these options poses a problem. "*Gözdem*" (my favorite), on the other hand, is a sign that may take us back into the historical dimension of the language. A "*gözde*" was a favorite concubine in the household of the Sultans, a woman chosen by the Sultan himself or one of his sons. From this viewpoint, this "sliding of the meaning" may take us to another historical and cultural meaning, thus to "another meaning."

### 3.2.2. Analysis of Segment 2

In the second segment where the speaker in the sonnet states that coral is far more red than the lover's lips, the sign that is to be evaluated first is the adjective "red" that points out the coral red. This adjective is reflected by the translators into the two target languages in different ways. In French, while Hugo and Guerne translate it as "*rouge*" (red), Montégut over-interprets the meaning by using "*infiniment plus rouge*" (infinitely more red). Although "*rouge*" is the equivalent of "red" in French, if we consider the fact that there are various shades of the color red and that "*vermeille*" is the best correspondant for "coral red," Guizot's choice is the most appropriate one. In Bonnefoy's translation, however, with the use of "*le feu de ses lèvres*" (the fire of her lips), the sign "coral red" of the original text is "wiped out," which causes a serious devastation of meaning. Lafond, on the other hand, "wipes out" the same sign by not translating it at all. Regarding the Turkish translations, Halman, Kısakürek, and Ovat describe the lover's lips as "*kırmızı*" (red) and transmit the meaning without any problems. Bozkurt & Bozkurt and Güngör prefer to use "*kızıl*" for "red," but this is a quite surprising use as in Turkish "*kızıl*" is usually used for the color of the hair. In this case, "*kızıl*" would be an appropriate correspondent for "red" when hair is being described rather than lips. As this is not the case, what is produced here is a possible meaning that is potential, but not actualized in the context of the original text. Therefore, it brings us to "another meaning" and provides an example of "sliding of the meaning".

### 3.2.3. Analysis of Segment 3

In the third segment where the speaker in the sonnet states that the lover's breasts are dun and not white, the signs "breast" and "dun" are interpreted and translated in different ways: Lafond, the first translator of the sonnet, "wipes out" this sign and the related adjective. Although now "*gorge*" (Hugo and Guerne) in French means "throat," during the lifetime of Hugo and Guerne, it also meant "breasts." Today, the word is no longer used with that meaning. The other French translators use the sign "*seins*" (breasts); both options are appropriate. In Turkish, those translators who used the "*göğsü*" (her breast) or "*göğüsleri*" (breasts) also make appropriate choices. In this segment, what causes the real problem is the skin color. "Dun" is a grayish-brown color, which, in fact, would not be used to describe a woman's breasts as it is the color of a horse's coat. This sign, which emphasizes the fact that the lover's breasts do not conform with the classical understanding of beauty, is translated into French in different ways by French translators: "*brune*" (brown) by Hugo, "*noirs*" (black) by Guizot, "*ternes*" (sallow) by Montégut, "*sombre*" (dark) by Guerne, and "*grisâtres*" (grayish) by Bonnefoy. Hugo's "*brune*" is a partly appropriate translation as it gives the idea that the breasts of the lover are not of a light color. However, it is inadequate in that as a standardized skin color, it does not create the same impact as caused by the adjective "dun." Therefore its use results in the "under-interpretation of the meaning." Guizot's translation as "*noirs*" (black), on the other hand, makes one think of a black woman, and therefore causes an "alteration of the meaning." Bonnefoy's use, in this case, seems to be the most appropriate one.

For the same sign, Turkish translators do not seem to have a consensus either. Six translators use five different translations: "*kül rengi*" (ashy) by Halman and Ovat, "*boz renk*" (dun) by Bozkurt & Bozkurt, "*donuk kahverengi, gri arası*" (dull grayish brown) by Kısakürek, and "*buğday*" (wheat colored skin) by Güngör. From these choices, although Kısakürek's "*donuk kahverengi, gri arası*" (dull grayish brown) is not far away from the semantic content, it is rather like a definition and does not conform to the poetic language; as it is too long, it also damages the measure of the poem. "*Buğday*" (wheat colored skin), like in the example of "*brune*" (brown), does not create the same effect as "dun," and its use therefore results in the "under-interpretation of the meaning."

Consequently, the translations that sound most appropriate and are the closest correspondents are “kül rengi” (ashy) and “boz renk” (dun) and also because they contradict with the usual exalted image of the lover.

### 3.2.4. Analysis of Segment 4

The fourth segment where the speaker in the sonnet states that the lover’s hair is like black wires is perceived in different ways by the French and Turkish translators. In the first part of the segment, the speaker in the sonnet defines the hair with a pre-acceptance as “wires.” Hugo, on the other hand, draws an analogy between “hair” and “fils d’or” (golden thread/ linen/line/string/line), and radically changes the image of hair in the sonnet. In French, the word “fil” has many meanings, and when one uses the sign “golden” to describe “hair,” (“golden threads,” for instance) it may make one think of beautiful blonde hair. A similar interpretation might be the case for “cheveux de lin” (linen hair) in Guerne’s translation. Lafond uses “flots” (tassels), Montégut uses “cordes” (ropes), and Bonnefoy uses “crins” (horse hair). These translations are far from reflecting the image created in the original text, and the closest translation seems to be Guizot’s “fils de fer” (metal wires), which is used to convey the meaning in the original text.

The speaker in the sonnet identifies “hairs” in a general sense with “wires” (if hairs be wires), describes the lover’s hair as “black wires” and does not say anything about blonde hair. As Hugo’s “fils d’or” and Guerne’s “cheveux de lin” refer to blonde hair, these choices the translators “over-interpret” Shakespeare’s lines. As the lover’s characteristics are described in a negative way throughout the sonnet, the translators must have thought that the negativity in this line is related to the word “black;” if “black” is used to signify “negativity,” then a positive description would be provided by “blonde” hair, which seems considered as the opposite of “black.” Here, the translators directly reflect their own subjective readings to the target text and describe what is not explicitly mentioned in the original text. Lafond’s “flots” (tassels) and Bonnefoy’s “crins” (horse hair) are examples of a “false meaning” although they are not totally irrelevant to the meaning in the original text. Tassels or horse hair are not nice images to be used for a lady’s hair. Although they give a negative image about the lover’s hair, they are not synonymous with “wires.” In this case, Guizot’s “fils de fer noirs” (black metal wires) and Guerne’s “cordes noires” (black ropes) might be the ones that best reflect the original. Lafond, on the other hand, does not translate the sign “black wires” and provides an example of the “wiping out of the meaning” tendency.

In Turkish translations, Halman, Kısakürek, Ovat and Güngör “over-interpret” the meaning by directly or indirectly talking about “golden hair.” The only translation that does not use this added sign belongs to Bozkurt & Bozkurt who make use of the polysemy of the word “tel” because “tel” means both “wire” and “a hair” in Turkish. Kısakürek’s “tel tel”, on the other hand, is used to tell about each one of hairs separately; therefore, it brings to the mind straight hair that is not messy or unkempt at all. In this sense, it does not carry the negative image intended in Shakespeare’s text. On the other hand, black hair is not perceived as a negative quality in the Turkish perception. In Turkish translations, the negativity about hair is rather provided with the help of the verbs that are used in relation. Halman uses the verb “fişkirmek” (gush out) and Bozkurt & Bozkurt “bitmek” (spring up), both of which refer to a growth without control. By saying “başından kara teller çıkar” (black wires grow on her head) Güngör provides the negativity with “kara teller” (black wires) as in the original.

### 3.2.5. Analysis of Segment 5

In the fifth segment, the speaker in the sonnet talks about having seen damask roses but he says that he has not seen such roses on the cheeks of the lover. These “damask’d” roses are called “*rosa damascene*” in Latin and “*Isparta gülü*” in Turkish. This sign (“roses damask’d”) is translated into French by Hugo and Guerne as “*rose de Damas*” (Damascus rose) and by Bonnefoy as “*roses damassées*” (damask roses), all of which reflect the semantic content of the original text. Montégut’s translation, on the other hand, that talks about “*roses qui se partageaient avec harmonie le blanc et le rouge*” (roses that share white and red with harmony) can be considered as an “over-interpretation of meaning,” as it produces an excessive commentary on the meaning in the original text. Although Lafond’s translation underlines the high quality of the species of the roses by saying “*la rose et de plus d’une espèce*”, it does not tell about their color and which exact species they belong to, and it therefore provides an example for the tendency of “wiping out” the meaning. Apart from this, by translating “cheeks” as “*front*” (forehead), Lafond “alters the meaning” by producing a false meaning that is not completely irrelevant to the meaning in the original text. In the Turkish translations, on the other hand, Halman, describes the roses as “*yarı pembe yarı ak*” (half pink half white) and “wipes out” the sign “red.” Finally, Ovat and Bozkurt & Bozkurt use “pink roses” in addition to the red and white roses of the original text, probably because pink is one of the colors of damasked roses.

### 3.2.6. Analysis of Segment 6

In the sixth segment where the speaker in the sonnet says that the breath of the lover is horrid, the most important sign is the verb “reeks.” Lafond translates this sign by saying “*odeur enchanteresse!*” (enchanted odor!); with the exclamation mark at the end, he probably wants to show that he means the opposite of what he says. In this way, by making ambiguous a meaning that is clear in the original text, he provides an example for the tendency of “darkening of the meaning.” In the other French translations, this sign is totally “wiped out,” and with the absence of translation, the meaning is seriously devastated. As for the Turkish translations, Güngör and Bozkurt & Bozkurt fall into the same error as the French translators. By saying “*berbat kokar*” (smells awful), Kısakürek’s translation renders the same meaning as the original text. Halman under-interprets the meaning by saying “*güzel kokmaz*” (does not smell good). Ovat’s “*nefesindeki buğu*” (the steam in her breath) sounds like an example of a “perversion of the meaning” as it is totally irrelevant to the meaning in the original text.

### 3.2.7. Analysis of Segment 7

In the seventh segment where the speaker in the sonnet says that the voice of the lover is not as pleasing as the sound of music, French translations do not generally seem to have a problem with the correct signification, except in Montégut’s translation where the statement “*la musique a un son tout autrement délicieux*” (the music has a quite differently delicious sound) is an under-interpretation of the meaning as it does not clearly establish the superiority of the sound of music over the voice of the lover. In Turkish translations, Güngör and Bozkurt & Bozkurt reflect the meaning of the original text. Halman’s “*musiki gibi gelir sözleri kulağıma*” (her words sound like music to my ears) can be considered as “over-interpretation of the meaning,” as an excessive commentary on the meaning in the original text is evident. Kısakürek seems to have misinterpreted the lines “I love to hear her speak yet well I know/That music has a more pleasing sound” because she translates it as “*yeniden âşık olurum konuşmasını her duyduğumda*” (I fall in love anew every time I hear her speak). This provides an example for the tendency of “perversion of the meaning.” Ovat over-interprets the meaning by saying “*Her sözünü aşkla dinlerim*” (I listen to her

every word with love). Kısakürek, on the other hand, perceives the “that” in “that music has a more pleasing sound” as a demonstrative adjective and translates it as “*Şu müziğin bile daha hoştur sesi*” (Even that music has a more pleasing sound), therefore producing a “false meaning” by altering the semantic content of the original text.

### 3.2.8. Analysis of Segment 8

In the eighth segment, the speaker in the sonnet emphasizes the fact that unlike a goddess, the lover walks only on the ground. This segment is generally translated without any problems, except Lafond’s translation where the sign “goddess” is totally “wiped out” and Bonnefoy’s translation where “on the ground” is translated as “*c’est bien sur terre*”, with an extra emphasis through the use of the word “bien,” which can be considered as “over-interpretation of the meaning”. A similar “over-interpretation” is in Halman’s translation in which the lover “does not walk to the sky.” Although that meaning might be conveyed implicitly in the original text, it is not explicitly mentioned. Another “over-interpretation” is in Ovat’s translation, where an extra sign is added by saying that the way the lover walks is not godlike.

### 3.2.9. Analysis of Segment 9

In the last and ninth segment, where in spite of the lover’s defects, the speaker says that for him she is as rare as any other woman who is misrepresented by false comparisons, the most important sign seems to be the adjective “rare.” Lafond “wipes it out.” Montégut uses the same adjective in his translation, and other translators interpret it in different ways: Hugo describes the lover as “*gracieuse*” (graceful) in spite of everything, Guizot and Guerne say that she is “*précieuse*” (precious), and Bonnefoy states that “*elle les vaut*” (she is as worthy as the other women). As seen, in these translations, the rareness of the lover is not stated and therefore, these are cases of “alterations of the meaning.” In the Turkish translations, the sign “rare” is translated in three acceptable ways: “*sevğilimin eşi yok*” (my love is unequaled) by Halman, “*sevğilimin eşsizliği*” (peerlessness of my love) by Ovat, and “*nadirdir benim sevğilim*” (my beloved one is rare) by Kısakürek. In Güngör’s translation, what is “rare” is the poet’s love (the feeling of liking), rather than the woman that he loves. The translator here goes to one of the potential meanings of the word that is not actualized in the original text, which is an example of the “sliding of the meaning.” Bozkurt & Bozkurt’s translation that shows the lover as more beautiful than other women by saying “*çok güzel o [...] yersiz yakıştırmalarla donanan kadınlara kıyasla*” (she is very beautiful [...] compared to the women decorated with irrelevant comparisons) seems to be an example of “opposition of the meaning,” as the translation is contrary to the meaning in the original text. Another serious transformation of meaning is in Kısakürek’s translation where “by heaven” is translated as “*cennet benzeri*” (heavenlike), which causes a “perversion of the meaning.” Halman on the other hand, by saying “*ozanların boş lafına karnı tok*” (she doesn’t believe in the poets’ hollow words) “over-interprets” the meaning as in one way he makes Shakespeare’s criticism towards the poets of the time explicit although it is implicit in the original text. In Ovat’s translation, the lover’s peerlessness is described by adding to the text an extra sign, “*payidar*” (permanent), which does not exist in the original text and which, therefore, is an “over-interpretation of the meaning.” In the last verse of the poem, the women who are “belied with false compare” in the original become “*calomniées*” (calumniated) in Hugo, “*qu’on accable*” (overwhelmed) in Guizot, and “*celles dont médit la comparaison fausse*” (those who are spoken ill of by false comparisons) in Guerne. However, what is implied in the original sonnet is women who are in fact glorified; therefore, these translations produce “opposing meanings” that are contrary to the meaning in the original text.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this study, to evaluate Shakespeare's Sonnet 130 with its French and Turkish translations, we first divided the original text into segments that would help us identify the signs that constitute its universe of meaning more easily. After specifying the most important signs that lead to the meaning of each segments, we read its translations to see whether or not these signs are preserved in translations and the extent to which the translators are influenced by the designificative tendencies that function within or over them. As a result, we saw some transformations of meaning in each translation in our corpus in the form of "over-interpretation of the meaning," "darkening of the meaning," "under-interpretation of the meaning," "sliding of the meaning," "alteration of the meaning," "opposition of the meaning," "perversion of the meaning," and "wiping out of the meaning." "Destruction of the meaning," however, was not exemplified in the translations in our corpus.

When we look at the examples of designificative tendencies in the study, we see that even the most experienced translators are somehow influenced by them, either consciously or unwittingly. This can probably be explained by the fact that the studied text is a poem. Furthermore, the poem is written by Shakespeare, a poet who created a new language. Some of the translators wrote about the difficulties they had to endure during the translation process. Halman, for instance, underlines the fact that "translating all of the sonnets into any language in the same form, with the same rhyme scheme is one of the most difficult translation tasks. As a matter of fact, in many languages, not all of the sonnets are translated." (Halman, 1989: 12) Indeed, three of the French translators (Hugo, Guizot, and Montégut) translated the sonnets into prose form, and therefore they had only to deal with translating the semantic content without struggling with the problems of measure and rhyme.

As famous philosopher Paul Ricœur (2016) puts it, a perfect translation is a fantasy (p.5) because "the dream of perfect translation amounts to the wish that translation would gain, gain without losing" (p. 9). According to Ricœur, "it is this very same gain without loss that we must mourn" (p. 16). Accordingly, some of the translators undertook self-criticism and made efforts to ameliorate their translations. Halman says in the foreword of his translation that he thinks he was unable to overcome some of the difficulties in spite of everything, pointing out the fact that poetry is a genre that is difficult to translate. Saadet and Bülent Bozkurt improved their translations continuously and produced three editions, and in the foreword of the third edition, they stated that they significantly changed their translations, taking into account the readers' and the critics' remarks. In the first version, they undertook a self-criticism by stating that they cannot say they were very successful in transmitting or reflecting the mastery based on the particularities of language, especially the rhythm and figures of speech that are based on consonance and similitude. In the second version, they simplified the language and in the third version they tried to reflect the rhyme scheme in the translation (Bozkurt & Bozkurt, 2015). In the same way, Bonnefoy needed to update his translation and produced a second one. In this study, as we aimed to evaluate different translations from different translators, we took in our corpus only the last versions of the translations that were reproduced.

In conclusion, in spite of the hardships and a risk of being imperfect, the translation of poetry is a necessity. According to Ricœur (2016), the translator that mourns the dream of a perfect translation can find his happiness in what can be called "*linguistic hospitality*" (p. 10), and in the "*linguistic hospitality, [...] the pleasure of dwelling in the other's language is balanced by the pleasure of receiving the foreign word at home, in one's own welcoming house*" (p. 16). In fact, we need

translators who will enable us to experience the pleasure of hosting poetry produced in another language in the world of our own language like the brave translators in our corpus, whose creations we studied in this article. Undoubtedly, the prerequisite for the translation of poetry must be talent, and Ricœur agrees with this. He says “only a poet can translate a poet” (p. 38). However, this talent must be further developed so that young translators may improve their abilities in this field of translation. At this point, we think that semiotics, the theory of meaning and signification, might have a modest contribution in helping young translators to identify the signs and reproduce them in the target language. Therefore, it might be useful to place semiotics in the teaching of literary translation to educate poet-translators who are conscious of the fact that poetry is made up of the combination of form and meaning.

## References

- Bonnefoy, Y. *Shakespeare: quatre sonnets sous chacun deux formes suivi de dix-neuf autres sonnets* [Four sonnets in two forms each, followed by nineteen other sonnets]. Retrieved from <http://books.openedition.org/puf/777>.
- Bozkurt, B., & Bozkurt, S. (2015). “Çeviriye İlişkin Açıklamalar”, “İkinci Basım İçin Önsöz”. “Üçüncü Basım İçin Önsöz” [Explanations concerning the translation”, “Foreword for the second edition”, “Foreword for the Third Edition”]. In Shakespeare, W. (2015). *Soneler* [Sonnets]. (B.-S. Bozkurt, Trans.). İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi. s: 17.
- Coquet, J-C. (1997). *La Quête du sens. Le langage en question* [The quest of meaning. The language in question]. Paris, PUF.
- Coquet, J-C. (2007). *Phusis et logos. Une phénoménologie du langage* [Phusis and logos: a phenomenology of language]. Paris: PUV.
- Cottegnies, L. (2004). La version en vers des *Sonnets* de Shakespeare par Ernest Lafond (1856): défense de la poésie à l'âge de la prose [Shakespeare's sonnets in verse form by Ernest Lafond (1856): Defense of poetry in the age of prose]. *Etudes Epistémè*, 6, 1-15. Retrieved from <http://www.etudes-episteme.org/2e/spip.php?article52>
- Greimas, A.J., & Courtès. (1982). *Semiotics and Language: An Analytical Dictionary* (Larry Crist, Daniel Patte James Lee Edward McMahon II, Gary Phillips, Michael Rengstrof, Trans.). Bloomington, Indiana University Press.
- Halman, T.S. (1989) “Genel Bilgiler”, “Önsöz”, “Sonelerin Konuları” [“General information”, “Foreword”, “Sonnets' themes”]. In Shakespeare, W. (1989) *Tüm Soneler*. [All sonnets]. (T.S. Halman, Trans.). İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi. s: 11-35.
- Öztürk Kasar, S. (2009). Un chef d'œuvre très connu: *Le chef d'œuvre inconnu* de Balzac. Commentaires d'une Traduction à l'Autre Laissant des Traces [A very well-known masterpiece: *The unknown masterpiece* by Balzac. Commentaries from one translation to the other leaving traces]. In Magdalena Nowotna (ed). Amir Moghani. *Les traces du traducteur* [Traces left behind by the translator]. (pp 187-211). Paris: Publications de l'INALCO.
- Öztürk Kasar, S., & Tuna, D. (2015). Yaşam, Yazın ve Yazın Çevirisi İçin Gösterge Okuma [Capturing Signs for Life, Literature, and Literary Translation]. *Frankofoni Fransız Dili ve Edebiyatı*

---

*İnceleme ve Araştırmaları Ortak Kitabı*. [Frankofoni- Common book for the study and research of French language and literature]. 27, 457-482.

Öztürk Kasar, S., & Tuna, D. (2016). *Idéologie et abus de texte en turc*. [Ideology and abuse of the text in Turkish]. In Astrid Guillaume (Ed). *Idéologie et Traductologie* [Ideology and traductology]. (pp 87-103). Paris: L'Harmattan.

Ricoeur, P. (2016). *On Translation*. (E.Brennan, Trans.). Routledge: Middletown, DE.

Shakespeare, W. *Œuvres complètes, traduction Guizot, Shakespeare – Didier, 1863, tome 8*. djvu/477 [Complete works, translation by Guizot, Shakespeare – Didier, 1863, volume 8]. Retrieved from [https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:Shakespeare\\_Œuvres\\_compl%C3%A8tes,\\_traduction\\_Guizot,\\_Didier,\\_1863,\\_tome\\_8.djvu/477](https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:Shakespeare_Œuvres_compl%C3%A8tes,_traduction_Guizot,_Didier,_1863,_tome_8.djvu/477).

Shakespeare, W. *Œuvres complètes, traduction Montégut, Hachette, 1873, tome 10*.djvu/347 [Complete works, translation by Montégut, Shakespeare – Hachette, 1873, volume 10]. Retrieved from [https://fr.wikisource.org/w/index.php?title=Page:Shakespeare\\_Œuvres\\_compl%C3%A8tes,traduction\\_Mont%C3%A9gut,\\_Hachette,\\_1873,\\_tome\\_10.djvu/347&action=edit&redlink=](https://fr.wikisource.org/w/index.php?title=Page:Shakespeare_Œuvres_compl%C3%A8tes,traduction_Mont%C3%A9gut,_Hachette,_1873,_tome_10.djvu/347&action=edit&redlink=).

Shakespeare, W. *Sonnets de Shakespeare* [Shakespeare's sonnets]. (F.V. Hugo, Trans.). Retrieved from [https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Sonnets\\_de\\_Shakespeare/130](https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Sonnets_de_Shakespeare/130).

Shakespeare, W. (1856). *Poèmes et Sonnets de William Shakespeare* [William Shakespeare's poems and sonnets]. (E. Lafond; Trans.). Paris: Typographie de Ch. Lahure. Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015082517379;view=1up;seq=109>

Shakespeare, W. (1969). *Les poèmes et les sonnets de William Shakespeare*. [William Shakespeare's poems and sonnets]. (A. Guerne, Trans.). Paris: Editions Rencontre.

Shakespeare, W.(1989) *Tüm Soneler* [All sonnets]. (T. Sait Halman, Trans.). İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi.

Shakespeare, W. (2010). *Soneler* [Sonnets]. (H.S. Kısakürek, Trans.) İstanbul: Oda Yayınları.

Shakespeare, W. (2014). *Soneler & Şiirler* [Sonnets and poems]. (E. Ovat, Trans.). Ankara: İtalik Kitaplar.

Shakespeare, W. (2014). *Soneler* [Sonnets]. (S. Özgür Güngör, Trans.). İstanbul: Sis Yayıncılık.

Shakespeare, W. (2015). *Soneler* [Sonnets]. (B.-S. Bozkurt, Trans.). İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi.