

The Impact of Translating English Haiku on the Emergence of Haiku in Persian Literature

Fatemeh Parham¹

Meead Jahantigh²

Extended Abstract

Haiku is one of the forms of short Japanese poetry. Historically, this specific genre of Japanese poetry emerged in the sixteenth century. Haiku has distinct rhetorical features, including being a 17-syllable poem arranged in three lines with a five-seven-five pattern, referring to a particular season, and depicting the integration of the poet and nature in the present moment. Today, haiku exists in various languages around the world, is widely recognized, and has influenced many renowned poets globally. The aim of the present article is thus to investigate the translation of the classic features of English haiku into Persian. Additionally, this article aims to explore the impact of haikus composed in Persian on the haikus translated into Persian.

The first question addressed in this study is to what extent the features of English haiku have been preserved in their translation into Persian. To explore this, a corpus of English haikus and their Persian translations was compiled, including three Persian translations – “Haiku (This Other World)” by Mohit, “One Hundred Famous Haikus” by Pashaei, and “Fire on the Mountain” by Fakhraei – and their original English sources – “Haiku: The Last Poetry of Richard Wright” by Wright, “One Hundred Famous Haiku” by Buchanan, and “Fire on the Mountain: The Selected Haiku of a Wandering Zen Monk” by Santoka.

In the next stage, 150 English haikus were randomly selected from the three aforementioned English books, and then the corresponding translations of these 150 English haikus were extracted from the three aforementioned Persian books. To evaluate the translations in terms of preserving the features of English haikus, an integrated evaluation model of haiku features was developed including seven features: 1) the number of lines is three; 2) each line has its own specific order and

¹ Assistant Professor of Translation Studies, Department of English Translation Studies, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran (corresponding author) parham@atu.ac.ir

² MA Graduate of Translation Studies, Department of English Translation Studies, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran, jahantigh.meead@gmail.com

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arrangement; 3) the 5-7-5 syllable pattern is adhered to; 4) punctuation marks are present. 5) there is a seasonal word related to nature; 6) the text is fluent and smooth; and 7) the verb tense is present. During the feature analysis, the frequency of each feature's occurrence was recorded.

The analysis revealed that out of the 150 English haikus examined, 50 haikus completely lacked some of the seven standard features considered essential for haiku. Therefore, these 50 haikus and their corresponding translations were separated from those that had all the standard features. They were categorized into two groups: Group 1 included English haikus with all the standard features (100 haikus), and Group 2 included English haikus lacking all the standard features (50 haikus). Only Group 1 haikus and their corresponding translations were compared according to the integrated model and the results indicated that the three-line format was preserved in all translations. Additionally, the features of fluency and the presence of a seasonal words were observed in 100% of the translations. The likely reason for the complete preservation of seasonal words is their single-word nature was making their retention in translation relatively unchallenging for translators. The present tense of verbs was observed in 96% of the translations. Next in frequency were punctuation marks, which appeared in 94% of the translations. Only six translations omitted the original poem's punctuation marks, and in 27 cases, the punctuation marks were altered in translation. The sixth feature, line order, was preserved in 89% of the translations. The final feature, the 5-7-5 syllable pattern, was not observed in any of the translated haikus. Overall, the results from the first stage indicate that most features were fully preserved in the Persian translations.

Group 2 included 50 English haikus that did not possess all the standard features of haiku and were therefore examined separately. The analysis of these 50 English haikus revealed four distinct features for this category: being two-lined, not adhering to the 5-7-5 syllable pattern, using past tense, and having a personal voice. These features were then examined in the Persian translations of these 50 haikus to determine whether these non-haiku features were preserved or altered in the Persian translations.

The second question posed by this study is whether the composition of haiku in Persian is influenced and modeled after haikus were translated into Persian. To answer this question, a parallel corpus consisting of two sections was prepared: the first section included 100 haikus translated into Persian, and the second section included 100 haikus authored in Persian. For the first section, the 100 translated haikus analyzed in Group 1 of the first stage of the study were used. For selecting haikus for the second section, 100 haikus were randomly chosen from "The Roar of the Deer in the Silent Forest" by Goharin, "Writing Haiku: An Exploration of Haiku and Iranian Haiku" by Nozari, and "The Moon Over Majnun's Head" by Bikordi. Thus, the corpus prepared for the second stage of the study included 200 Persian haikus: 100 translated haikus and 100 authored haikus. To compare these two categories, the same integrated

model of analysis was used. The results of the second stage of analysis also revealed a significant formal and content similarity between Persian authored haikus and Persian translated haikus, which, along with historical evidence, can be seen as an indication of the influence of translated haikus on Persian authored haikus. A category of Persian authored haikus was also identified that appears to innovate freely under the name of haiku and have roots in Iranian culture, suggesting that a different name could be used to distinguish them.

Keywords: Impact of Translation, Iranian Haiku, Translated Haiku, English Haiku

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