

## Translation Of Metaphor And Simile In The Poem Asyhadu An La Imra'ata illa Anti By Nizar Qabbani

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### Abstract

A translation of poetry is needed to introduce the culture of the country where the poem was written. Research related to poetry translation is required to evaluate and control translated works that develop in the community. This descriptive qualitative research study examines the forms of metaphor and simile and the translation shift. The data source in this research is the poem Asyhadu an La Imraata Illa Anti and its translation translated by Musyfiqur Rahman under the title I Testify There is No Woman but You. The result of this study shows that the translator translates metaphor into metaphorical form, shifting form only found 1 case and shifting form and meaning only occurred 1 case. In simile translation, the researcher found no shift in both form and meaning aspects. This shows the translator's competence so that the form and meaning of the poem in the source language can be transferred well into the target language. It can help Arabic language and translation teachers understand the types of metaphors and how to translate them.

**Keywords:** Metaphor; Simile; Translation; Arabic Poetry

### INTRODUCTION

Translation can simply be defined as the process of transferring a message from one language to another (Newmark 2001:7). The message is the most crucial thing in translation, so a translator as a mediator between the first author and the target language reader must always be honest in conveying the message intended by the author. Besides message, another thing that a translator should strive for is form. In this regard, Nida and Taber (1982:12) argue that translation is the process of reproducing the most natural and close equivalent of the source language into the target language, first in terms of meaning, second in terms of style.

The second aspect is the most demanding, especially when it comes to translating poetry, as one of the literary works. It is no wonder, then, if it is said that poetry translation is the toughest translation, because of the aesthetic value in poetry, both in terms of diction, style, metaphor that in the aspect of ambiguity of meaning must be transferred to a different language while maintaining the form (Hariyanto 2012).

However, despite the difficulty of translating poetry, the fact is that poetry translation continues to be done. On the one hand, poetry translation, like the translation of literary works in general, is needed as a medium to introduce foreign cultures. This is because poetry is considered as a means to represent the social, political and cultural aspects of the place where it was created. In reality, however, there may be shifts in both form and meaning that may distort the purpose for which the poem was written. Therefore, research on poetry translation is conducted as an evaluation of translated works

that have been circulating in the community. This evaluation should be done by people who are competent in the field of translation and of course understand the source and target languages and their cultures.

Based on this, this paper aims to be a small part of the evaluation by focusing on the translation of metaphor and simile as a language style that is often found in poetry, especially Arabic poetry. More specifically, this paper will answer two basic problems in poetry translation: first, what are the forms of metaphor and simile in the poem *Asyhadu an La Imra'ata illa Anti* by Nizar Qabbani and its translation? Second, is there a shift in meaning in the translation of these metaphors?

Many studies on Arabic poetry have been conducted with various approaches, including linguistics, literature, sociology, politics, religion and so on. As a science that specifically studies poetry, Arudh science is often chosen as a knife to analyse poetry, for example in research written by (Nabila 2022; Panambunan, Badaruddin, and Kuswarini 2022; Ramadhani 2022; Suryaningsih 2019). Through Arudh Science, poetry is dissected and studied from the aspect of its form only. This means how the patterns that form the rhythm in the poem, how the rhythm sounds, what are the mistakes made by the poet in building the form of the poem.

Arabic poetry has also been studied using literary approaches, such as Riffaterre's Semiotic theory (Annas 2022; Yaqin 2022). Through these studies, poetry is analysed using heuristic and hermeneutic readings as the analyses used in Riffaterre's theory. In addition, Arabic poetry is also often studied using stylistics as in research (Fathoni 2012; Firmansyah 2019; Mahliatussikah 2019).

These studies form a chain of research that shows there is an empty chain that has not been studied much, namely the aspect of translation in Arabic poetry. But even so, researchers do not deny the existence of research related to this theme, for example research conducted by (Azzu 2022; Buana 2013; Darmawan 2011; Hafizh 2018). The majority of these studies examine classical poetry such as *mutanabbi*, *jahiliyah* poetry and *ta'lim al-muta'allim* poetry. So that research related to modern poetry is still wide open to fill the empty chain in research. Especially if the approach used is an interdisciplinary approach such as translation studies and semantics, as will be done in this study which focuses on the translation of metaphors.

The translation of metaphors in Arabic poetry has been conducted by (Hafizh 2018), the study focused on the use of adaptation translation techniques in translating metaphors in Nizar Qabbani's poem entitled *Asyar Kharijah al-Qanun*. The study also leaves a lot of room for research, including other techniques that can be used in translating metaphors, other than adaptation. Similes in Arabic poetry are usually studied using the *tasybih* approach (Iman, Hidayat, and Supianudin 2019; Istiqomah 2016; Naf'an 2016; Umar 2015). This study does not use *tasybih* because the classification in *tasybih* is usually based on form only, not on meaning.

## METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative research in the field of translation and semantics. This research is called descriptive research because it aims to understand, explain and describe linguistic phenomena (Santosa 2021), especially metaphors in the poem *Asyhadu an La Imra'ata Illa Anti* by Nizar Qabbani and its translation entitled *There is No Woman but You* translated by Musyfiqur Rahman.

Data collection in this study uses the listening method, which is a method used to listen to the use of language in the research location. This method is not only associated with the use of spoken language, but also the use of written language. This technique is realized with the basic technique of tapping, and continued with the technique of free tapping and recording, because the researcher is not directly involved in the dialogue with the informant (Mahsun 2007: 92-94).

The design of this research is a designed research, because the researcher determines the focus and purpose of the research from the beginning. The population of this study is the poem *Asyhadu an La Imra'ata Illa Anti* and its translation entitled *There is No Woman but You*.

The poem is part of an anthology of poems with the same title. The poem consists of 10 sections of poetry with a total of 9 pages, published in 1983 and translated by Musyfiqur Rahman.

The data source in this study is metaphor in the level of words, phrases and sentences. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, which is the determination of samples with certain considerations (Sugiyono 2017). This is because the purpose of this research is clear from the beginning, so the research sample is in accordance with the focus of the research. The approach used in this research is the concept of translation developed by Nida and Taber (1982); metaphor developed by Stefen Ullman (2014); simile developed by Gorys Keraf (1984).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Metaphor in Arabic Poetry

Poetry is the identity and culture of the Arabs. Since ancient times, Arabs have had a high competence in poetry that was born naturally. As Ibn Khaldun (via Adonis 1989:15) states that poetry is an oral tradition of the Arabs born naturally according to their nature.

The expertise of the Arabs in poetry seems to be born from a tradition that has been ingrained even in the days before Islam came. This is evidenced by the poetry competitions that were usually held in the *ukaz pasra* and the winning poems were exhibited at the Kaaba (called *muallaqat* poetry) (Yunus 2015). This is a matter of pride for Arabs, so that until now, *muallaqat* poems are referred to as the standard of good poetry, used as a reference in writing Arabic poetry theories (called *arudh wa al-qawafi* science). In terms of form, poetry has many aesthetic values including metaphor and simile which are the focus of this research.

#### Metaphor in Poetry

Metaphor is one of the important elements in poetry that generally distinguishes it from prose is the use of figurative language and poetic devices. One of these is metaphor. Metaphors are often defined differently. However, here, in simple terms, metaphor can be understood as the use of figurative language that implies a direct comparison between two things in a shorter form. There are four types of metaphors developed by Ullmann (2014:267)

1. Anthropomorphic metaphor is naming human body parts with animals or inanimate objects (Ullmann 2014). In this poem, the researcher found one word that is not a metaphor and is translated using anthropomorphic metaphor, namely the word 'نهـد' which lexically means breast which is translated into 'breasts' following is the stanza of the poem (Qabbani 1983, 2018):

أشهد أن لا امرأة

توقّف الزمان عند نهدها الأيمن إلا أنت

وقامت الثورات من سفوح نهدها الأيسر

إلا أنت

(I testify that there is no woman

On whose **right breast** the age stands still but you

On whose **left breast** the revolution is broken

Other than you)

The metaphorical use of the word in the target language culture shows a more poetic meaning than the direct translation of 'breast'. Although, it seems that the use of the word 'breast' is more 'polite' as it is the name of a body part that is also commonly used

2. Animal metaphors; this type of metaphor can go in two directions, it can be the use of animal names or lifeless objects as in the examples of aloe vera or elephant ears, monkey guava and so on. The use of animals can also be used to refer to humans for humorous, ironic, pejorative and fantastical connotations. (Ullmann 2014:268). The researcher did not find this type of metaphor in the poem, there are only similes that are likened to animals in medical terms.
3. Metaphor from concrete to abstract; this metaphor is defined as an abstract metaphorical expression of a concrete thing. For example, the phrase spotlight, the word highlight, dim, etc (Ullmann 2014). This form of metaphor occupies the largest percentage in this study. An example of concrete to abstract metaphor is the word 'تَمَنَّدَ' which translates to 'stalling' in the following stanza of the poem (Qabbani 1983, 2018).

أشهد أن لا امرأة

قد جعلت طفولتي

تمتدّ للخمسين إلا أنت

I testify that there is no woman

Who **has stretched** my childhood to half a century, other than you.

The word 'تمنَّدَ' or 'stretched' in the above stanza of the poem is a metaphor with a concrete to abstract form, because the word is a verb that is actually concrete, its form can be seen. The word stalling, as in the KBBI has the meaning of releasing a rope so that it is long, extending or stretching (Language Centre). As in the sentence; "I stretched the horse's halter"

The word 'stretched' in the sentence is obvious, unlike the word stretched in the stanza above. No one can see someone who is stalling for childhood. The use of the word stalling in the example above is a metaphor translated from the source language with the same meaning and form. Therefore, there is no shift in meaning or form in the translation aspect. The metaphorical form is translated into the metaphorical form as well. Another example of metaphorical form is in the following stanza (Qabbani 1983, 2018).

أشهد أن لا امرأة

تجتاحني في لحظات العشق كالزّلال

...تحرّقني...تغرقني

تشعلني...تطفئني

تكسّرني كالهلال

I testify that there is no woman

Who assailed me, in moments of longing

Like disaster **igniting me, drowns me, lights my fire, extinguishes the fire**, breaks me into two parts like the hilal.

The words in bold above are concrete verbs, because they are verbs that refer to directly observable behaviour, and they are used figuratively to refer to abstract verbs. This is because longing can cause a hot effect like a fire or like lighting a fire, it can make a person helpless so that they can drown in their helplessness.

The metaphorical translation in the stanza is translated into metaphor without any shift in either form or meaning. Another example of concrete to abstract metaphor translation is in the following stanza (Qabbani 1983, 2018).

أشهد أن لا امرأة

تحتلّ نفسي أطوال احتلال

وأسعد احتلال

تزرعني

وردا دمسقيا

ونعناعا

وبرتقالا

I testify that there is no woman

Who **occupied** my soul for so long

So very beautiful

**Planted me** the rose of Damascus

Mint

And orange

The bolded word above is an example of a metaphor in the form of concrete to abstract because occupying, planting are concrete things which are then pulled into abstract meaning, because anyone certainly cannot see the form of occupying the soul and planting someone with roses, mint and Damascus oranges. The metaphor shows that the woman referred to by the poet is a special woman who has been in his heart for a long time and gives beautiful colours in the poet's life. The translation of the metaphor in the stanza is translated into metaphor without any shift in both form and meaning.

The last example of concrete to abstract metaphor is as follows (Qabbani 1983, 2018).

يا امرأة

أترك تحت شعرها أسئلي  
ولم تجب يوما على سؤالي  
يا امرأة هي اللغات كلها  
لكتِّها  
تلمس بالدهن ولا تقال

O woman  
Whom I let my questions **hang in** her hair  
While my one question she did not answer  
O woman  
All language  
But raging in the mind and unspoken

The word 'أترك' in the above stanza is a form of metaphor which if translated lexically means 'I leave', in this case the translator chooses to use another word which seems more appropriate than its lexical meaning, but both refer to the same meaning, so from the aspect of metaphorical translation there is no shift in form or meaning. The word is a metaphor in form and meaning.

4. Synaesthetic metaphors; these metaphors transfer from one sense to another (Ullmann 2014). For example, from the sense of hearing to the sense of sight, or from the sense of hearing to taste, for example the sentence; her speech is so sweet. The metaphorical word with a synaesthetic form in the poem is the word 'يلمس' which translates to 'touch', as in the following stanza (Qabbani 1983, 2018).

يا امرأة  
أترك تحت شعرها أسئلي  
ولم تجب يوما على سؤالي  
يا امرأة هي اللغات كلها  
لكتِّها  
تلمس بالدهن ولا تقال

O woman  
Whom I let my questions **hang in** her hair  
While my one question she did not answer  
O woman  
All language  
But **raging** in the mind and unspoken

The example above shows a shift in the form of the type of metaphor that was originally a synaesthetic metaphor, if translated into 'touching the heart' as the original meaning of the word 'يلمس'. The verb to touch belongs to the sense of touch because it is usually done by the hand, but in this example, the translator replaced it with the word 'raging' which in the kbbi means to penetrate violently (fiercely). Thus, the

researcher sees that there is a shift in the form and meaning of metaphor in the translation of the phrase.

### Simile In Poetry

Simile is an explicit comparison, using words; like, the same, as, like, like, like, and so on. Gorys Keraf divides similes into two parts, firstly closed similes, which are similes in which the similarities are explicitly written, in contrast to open similes in which the similarities are not explicitly written. open is when the writer or speaker does not mention the similarities (Keraf 1984: 138).

1. Closed simile; this form of simile is found in the following stanza (Qabbani 1983, 2018).

أشهد أن لا امرأة  
كانت معي كريمة كالبحر  
راقبة كالشعر

I testify that there is no woman  
Who is as generous to me **as the ocean**  
Clear as poetry

The simile in the stanza "كالبحر" which translates to "like the ocean" the phrase shows a closed simile because the simile is written explicitly which is very generous. In Arabic culture, the sea is often used as a metaphor for one's generosity. This is because the ocean symbolises something that is rich and provides many benefits. The translation of the simile in the stanza has not shifted either in terms of form or meaning.

Another example of closed simile is in the following stanza (Qabbani 1983, 2018).

أشهد أن لا امرأة  
تشبني كصورة زيتية  
في الفكر والسلوك إلا أنت  
والممل السريع  
والتعلق السريع  
إلا أنت

I testify that there is no woman  
Who resembles me **like an oil painting**  
in thought and action, but you  
in sanity and madness, other than you  
in the swiftness of boredom  
and the ache of engagement  
other than you

The bolded phrase above is an example of a closed simile, as the likeness is described in the next stanza. In this case, the poet likens his woman to a painting that is similar to the poet in various ways including thoughts, actions, sanity, madness and

so on. With the mention of this trait, the researcher's interpretation is limited, because the poet has explicitly mentioned the aspects of similarity.

2. Open simile; this form of simile is much more widely used than closed similes. For example, in the following stanza (Qabbani 1983, 2018).

أشهد أن لا امرأة  
تخرج من سحب الدخان... إن دخنت  
تطير كالحمامة البيضاء في فكري... إذا فكرت

I testify that there is no woman

That comes out of the smoke when I smoke

Flies **like a white dove** in my mind, when I think of her

The white dove is used as a metaphor in the stanza because the white dove is a beautiful bird that symbolizes love and loyalty.

Another example of simile is in the following stanza (Qabbani 1983, 2018).

أشهد أن لا امرأة  
مارست الحب معي بمنتهى الحضارة  
وأخرجتني من غبار العالم الثالث إلا أنت  
وحاورته مثلما تحاور القيثارة

I testify that there is no woman

Who made love to me at the pinnacle of civilization

Who brought me out of the dust of the third world

Other than you

Who talks to me like talking to a guitar

In this stanza, the poet likens women to guitars because for people who enjoy music, the guitar is one of the most enjoyable musical instruments, so it does not get bored to play and can accompany lonely times and can give birth to beautiful tones and melodies. The poet is flattering the woman he is referring to in his poem by likening her to a guitar perhaps because of the aspects as described.

The climax of the simile in this poem is found at the end of the poem, where the word 'love' is paralleled to 'prayer' as in the following stanza (Qabbani 1983, 2018);

أشهد أن لا امرأة  
تمكنت أن ترفع الحب إلى مرتبة الصلاة  
إلا أنت... إلا أنت  
إلا أنت

I testify that there is no woman

Who can elevate love to **the level of prayer**

Other than you... other than you...

Apart from you

Besides you... besides you...

Apart from you



Love and prayer that are equated in the poem are the culmination of similes in Nizar Qabbani's poem. Love and prayer are aligned because there are several things that are similar, among which are both psychologically calming, pleasant, soothing, providing positive energy. The metaphor becomes a climax in the poem because prayer for Muslims is the implementation of a form of love for a servant. If read more deeply, the presence of the word prayer at the end of this poem is also related to the shahada, whose pronunciation is almost similar to the title of this poem. *Asyhadu an la ilaha illa Allah*, which means there is no god but Allah, while in this poem *asyhadu an la imraata illa anti*, which means there is no woman but you, this concept in Arabic studies is known as *iqtibas*. That is, making sentences or words that are almost the same pattern as the Qur'an and hadith. *Shahadat* is a symbol of monotheism or the oneness of God, as the title of the poem is a symbol of one's loyalty to one's lover.

The translation of similes as described above is translated into similes as well. This shows that the translator preserves and transfers the form and meaning of the metaphor from the source language to the target language, so that the beauty of the poem in terms of form and meaning can be enjoyed by readers in the target language.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research is that the form of metaphor in the poem *Asyhadu An La Imraata Illa Anti* has many forms of metaphor. Based on the division of metaphors classified by Ullmann, the poem is dominated by concrete to abstract metaphors, and no animal metaphors are found. In the aspect of simile translation, the researcher did not find any simile shift in either form or meaning. The translator's behavior pattern in translating the metaphorical and simile forms of the poem as a whole is to translate them into metaphorical and simile forms as well. Thus, the beauty of the poem in the target language can still be enjoyed. On the other hand, it also shows the translator's high competence, because he tries to transfer the message and meaning in the poem. Not just the meaning.

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