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The Complexity of Metaphor Translation. A Case Study

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Abstract: This paper is a case study of metaphor translation. It focuses on the translation techniques used to render some of the metaphors in Oscar Wilde's "The Picture of Dorian Grey" into Romanian. The actual case study follows after a brief overview of approaches to metaphor in general and to metaphor translation in particular. The conclusion indicates that there is a diversity of translation techniques that have been used, most of them not based on word-for-word equivalences.

Keywords: metaphor theories; metaphor translation; techniques of metaphor translation

1. Introduction. Observations on theoretical approaches to metaphor

As an intrinsic part of human nature, metaphor has accompanied human language – the reflection of human thinking – ever since communication as we know it today occurred. Among the first metaphors recorded in writing there are those used by the Greek orators and philosophers, by the former – in an attempt to impress their auditorium, by the latter – in their pursuit to express high-spiritual realities which did not, at that time, benefit from a dedicated paradigm of notions (Pungă 2016: xiii, apud Nicolae 2015). Once singled out and studied, metaphors became an efficient tool in literary texts, which were adorned with intricate imagery in order to stir the readers' emotions and thus, evolved from being instruments used to explain what was less familiar in terms of what people were more familiar with to becoming a product of imagination, "restaging our perception of the world" (Pungă 2016: xiii, apud Nicolae 2011). Linguistically speaking, metaphors

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– be they used in literature or in everyday or field-specific communication – are products of "deletion, addition, or replacement of one or more semes in the meaning of the tenor" that "renders it semantically deviant" (Pungă 2016: xiii, apud Weinreich 1966, Levin 1977).

In the 20th century, Max Black's interaction view theory on metaphor represented a milestone which placed it at a deeper level, namely at that level where metaphor constitutes a complex process of predication, and so, from being seen as merely an adorning item, metaphor began to be looked at as a means of dealing with communication content (Pungă 2016: xiii, apud Black 1962, 1979).

Seen from the perspective of pragmatics, metaphor occurs when there is a clash between what a speaker says and what s/he actually means by what s/he says. Based on this view, scholars like Sperber and Wilson (1986) formulated the relevance theory of metaphor (Pungă 2016: xiii).

What is considered a major breakthrough in metaphor studies is the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, put forth by scholars like Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1999 etc.), Lakoff (1987, 1990, etc.), Turner (1991), and Kövecses (2000, 2005, 2010, 2015, etc.) (Pungă 2016: xiv). The idea that lies at the basis of this theory is that a target domain, that which is, as said earlier, less familiar to some language users, is represented in terms of (some characteristics) of a source domain via a process of mental, cognitive mapping.

Taking things even further, Fauconnier and Turner (1996, 1998) elaborated the blending theory of metaphor: in their approach, the domain is replaced by the rather psychology-related notion of "mental space", which, they suggest, is of four kinds: "input space" (there are two such spaces: one corresponding to the source and one to the target domain), "generic space", and "shared" or "blend space" (Pungă 2016: xv, apud Grady et al. 1999).

In conclusion to this very brief touching upon some of the ways metaphor has been approached, it becomes obvious that points of view have evolved from considering metaphor a purely linguistic notion to a linguistic-cognitive stance (Pungă 2016: xv). But metaphor "functions beyond language, too (in, for example, painting, music, movies, or theater, etc.) – a fact that, once admitted, has brought it in a new light, in a collection of studies on its either non-linguistic monomodal or multimodal instantiation" (Pungă 2016: xv). Consequently, we, like the greatest majority of scholars, see metaphor as a reality intrinsic to the human nature, a reality that will continue to generate new approaches as long as humanity lasts.

Perceived from a translation-oriented perspective, metaphors may be said to be a case of intralingual translation, as long as they "translate", explain, clarify certain aspects of the surrounding reality in terms of others. However, the focus of our analysis is not placed on metaphors as instances of intralingual translation, but on the difficulties of

translating these specific lexical items from one language into another, in our case, from English into Romanian.

2. Translating metaphors

Metaphor studies and metaphor translation studies have not enjoyed the same amount of attention during the last decades. One could easily notice that, while a large amount of scientific research has been dedicated to metaphor studies, not the same can be said about attention oriented towards metaphor translation. As Dickins (2005: 15) observes:

> While there has been a huge growth in general studies of metaphor over the past twenty-five years, relatively little has been written on metaphor translation.

Perhaps the reduced interest in metaphor translation is partly justified by the fact that quite a number of scholars regard it as untranslatable, mainly because of its "indirectness". However, attempts at discussing metaphor translation have been made and strategies/ procedures to overcome metaphor translation difficulties have been suggested (Manipuspika 2018: 1):

> Metaphor translation is often considered as one of the general problems of "untranslatability". This is due to the fact that metaphor is generally associated with indirectness; therefore, it is hard to translate. It is also often influenced by culture. Thus, the translator has to carefully consider how to translate metaphor. […] there are five procedures applied to translate metaphors, namely: reproducing the same image in the TL, replacing SL image with a standard TL image, translating metaphor by simile, converting the metaphor into sense, and deleting the metaphor. The possible reasons to use the particular procedures are because the SL images are universal images, the SL images have broad definition or quality, the SL images are confusing, the SL images are offensive, and the SL images are religious terms.

The same vision of metaphor as untranslatable may stem from the fact that "metaphors are, by virtue of their nature, unpredictable, hence virtually untranslatable. They put the translator's ability to the test, as metaphor translation involves cultural knowledge and awareness, as well as the ability to make semantic associations, a view with proponents such as Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), Nida (1964), Dagut (1976, 1987), Dagnev and Chervenkova (2020).

Mellower than such a sharp approach, there is the opinion that "metaphors are translatable with a degree of non-equivalence and their translatability depends on the cultural and semantic associations it creates in the source language and on the extent that these can be rendered into the target language" (Dagnev and Chervenkova 2020: 100).

Then, there are scholars who believe that metaphors are "fully translatable […] posing no special problems – a position supported mainly by Kloepfer (1967) and Reiss (2000). A still third group of translation researchers, such as Van den Broeck (1981), Toury (1995) and Newmark (1988), subscribe to the standpoint that metaphor translation is possible, although problematic" (Dagnev and Chervenkova 2020: 101).

The metaphor translation process presents all the difficulties of any other interlingual meaning transfer, which are, however, increased by the very essence of metaphor – the special, sometimes unique mind mapping between the source and the target domains (Dejica 2013). Less governed by strict rules than the translation of ordinary lexical items that have a direct meaning, metaphor translation is actually a process of meaning negotiation both with the sense and intention of the source text and with the translation receptors – possessors of specific knowledge (both linguistic and of the world in general) and anchored in a well-defined socio-cultural context:

> In order to analyze such translations, a complex and bidirectional system of negotiations is necessary: (1) with the source text, in order to determine its meaning, but also its secret of attractiveness; (2) with the receivers, in order to be able to start from their knowledge and from the adjacent presuppositions. For understanding this process, the most appropriate analogy is that with "playing", as suggested by Wittgenstein (1953). The games consist both of rules and tactics, and in translations there are things which mustn't be done, but also of ample spaces for creative tactics and for accomplishing something unexpected. These options cannot be ever formalized in rules, but they constitute the quintessence of what successful communication means." (Nida 2004: 167, o.t.)

While rules are less strict when it comes to metaphor translation, some must still exist, though they are not easy to generalize. By partially agreeing with Nida's opinion, we think too that rules must not become a "straightjacket" (Delisle 2005: 841) into which the target text should be squeezed. We advocate an adaptive approach, one focused on finding the best way of conveying the meaning of the ST, one presupposing a malleable use of the best suited equivalence on each individual translation occasion.

Although they are not considered a "rule", the translator's experience and training are mentioned by almost all translation studies scholars. In the quote below, they are seen as paramount in coping with metaphor translation:

> (…) findings from translation process data suggest that experience and/or training appear to be a main factor in handling conceptual metaphor (…) (Massey, Ehrensberger-Dow 2017: 173)

However, even if one may agree that the translator's expertise matters in his/her job, metaphor translation is sometimes approached as an empirical process, rather than a thoroughly scientific one. For instance:

> Göpferich's (2003) approach reflects a fundamental shift in the study of metaphor translation from initial prescriptive and heuristic approaches to more empirical, descriptive investigations that attempt to consider products together with the assumed strategic cognitive processes that have generated them. (Massey, Ehrensberger-Dow 2017: 176)

Nevertheless, as seen above, attempts have been made at identifying some patterns in metaphor translation, so that scholars have taken into consideration a number of metaphor translation procedures. As exemplified by Massey and Ehrensberger-Dow (2017: 176), some such procedures may be:

> Schäffner (2004, 2005, 2012) has […] attempted […] to develop minimalist typologies for handling metaphor translation. She identifies three recurring procedures: metaphor into same metaphor, metaphor into different metaphor and metaphor into sense, which correspond to van den Broeck's (1981: 78) three modes of *sensu stricto*, substitution and paraphrase. Toury (1995: 82-83; see also Schäffner 2005: 56) had previously proposed the same three categories, but added complete omission ("metaphor into 0") as well as two further "inverted alternatives" at what he refers to as the target pole of translation: "non-metaphor into metaphor" and "0 into metaphor". (Massey, Ehrensberger-Dow 2017: 176)

Newmark (1981: 85-91) suggested a different approach to metaphor translation, one in which he paired up metaphor categories with corresponding translation procedures. He […] distinguished between five types of metaphors: dead, stock, recent, adapted and original, and he listed seven main procedures for their translation:

> 1: Reproducing the same image in the TL
> 2: Replace the image in the SL with a standard TL image
> 3: Translating metaphor by simile, retaining the image
> 4: Translation of metaphor (or simile) by simile plus sense
> 5: Conversion of metaphor to sense
> 6: Deletion
> 7: Same metaphor combined with sense. (Jensen 2005: 184)

Newmark's above mentioned five categories of metaphors are grouped by Dickins (2005) into two classes: lexicalized metaphors (dead, stock and recent) and non-

lexicalized metaphors (adapted and original). This grouping corresponds to what Dickins (2005: 249) calls a "one-dimensional, simplified model" of metaphors, which he extends into a "two-dimensional, full model" as well: in addition to the former, the latter "provides an assessment of the extent to which any kind of metaphor, from dead to original, forms part of a metaphorical schema" (Dickins 2005: 247) and suggests that, based on this kind of assessment, metaphors may be either schematic or non-schematic. Both the simplified and the full model may prove useful, the author says, with a view to shedding light on metaphor correspondence or non-correspondence between various pairs of languages (at the level or individual or text-dimension examples).

A similar view, one that presupposes the association of metaphor types with a specific way of translating them, belongs to Prandi (2010), who distinguishes between "consistent" and "conflictual" metaphors and analyzes some implications which such a distinction may bear. Thus, when the translator deals with a consistent metaphor, s/he translates its meaning (Prandi 2010: 319); in case of a conflictual / "living" metaphor, what is subjected to the translation process is the "metaphor's semantic support", i.e. its conflicting meaning (Prandi 2010: 319). From here, specific difficulties in translating the metaphors arise. In the scholar's view:

> (…) the most difficult metaphors to translate are not creative, conflictual metaphors, rich in content and typically designed for open-ended interpretation, but consistent, conventional metaphors, documented by extended uses of polysemous words and by idiomatic uses of complex expressions. This does not imply that the translation of conflicting metaphors is free of risks. These risks, however, are of a completely different nature.
>
> The difficulties in translating consistent metaphors stem from the different ways lexical structures are organized in different languages, that is, to anisomorphism. Owing to anisomorphism, the distribution of metaphorical meanings in different languages is not the same even when the same metaphorical concepts are active in all of them." (Prandi 2010: 319)

Other researchers talked about translation strategies (instead of procedures), some of which presuppose formal/ philological/ verbatim or functional equivalence. Providing the reader with explanatory notes is yet another strategy for metaphor translation. Suryawinata and Sugeng (2003: 115), as quoted by Madsar (2010: 30-32), go into details and say that, as they see things:

> There are three strategies in translating metaphor, as explained below:
>
> 1. Translating universal metaphor literally.
>
> 2. Translating the metaphor into the target language by using a metaphor that conveys the same meaning as that of the metaphor in the source language. This is

done when the translator finds a metaphor which is bound by culture and not significant to the whole text.

3. Giving additional information for a metaphor which is culturally bound. This is done if there is no equivalent metaphor in the target language.

In the previous section, we have mentioned Conceptual Metaphor Theory as one of the turning points in the evolution of approaches to metaphor. As important as it is, it comes as no surprise that this approach has been connected to translation studies as well, marking a detachment from a linguistic perspective on the translation process to a cognitive one. As Tebbit and Kinder (2016: 406) showed:

> CMT has been applied usefully in translation studies. Christina Schäffner (2004) and Enrico Monti (2009) have both applied a cognitive approach to the translation of metaphor between languages that are genetically related and between which there is quite a high degree of shared cultural background.

The two researchers themselves pushed the boundaries of the connection between Conceptual Metaphor Theory and translation even further when they developed on the notion of "developed conceptual metaphor", regarded from a translation perspective. Thus, according to them:

> The tension between finding a domain that will envelop all the relevant metaphorical expressions on the one hand, and on the other delimiting the domain so that it will not be so broad as to include inappropriate metaphorical expressions will determine the domains of a metaphor. It may be useful to identify the basic conceptual metaphor (e.g. humans are plants), however the developed metaphor will be a much more manageable and relevant delimitation for the purposes of translation.
>
> The theoretical strength of this approach comes from the fact that these developed conceptual metaphors are clearly grounded in the basic conceptual metaphors which we live by. They are not merely some linguistic devices used in order to embellish the text but are deeply rooted in how the human mind in a particular culture experiences one concept in terms of another. While traditional approaches quite arbitrarily defined these metaphorical imageries on no clear theoretical groundings, this approach is clearly grounded in the insights of CMT." (Tebbit and Kinder 2016: 408)

We conclude this section by expressing our hope that, as limited as our review of approaches to matters concerning metaphor translation may have been, it suffices to prove the diversity of these approaches, their interconnectedness or, on the contrary, their divergent character and the existence of strong potential for further research in the area. The applied part of this paper represents an attempt to demonstrate that stones may be still unturned in metaphor translation studies.

3. Metaphor translation. A case study

Based on most of the translation strategies and techniques mentioned so far, as well as on our own comments, this section is dedicated to the analysis of how a number of metaphors (picked up from various parts of the book) in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Grey* have been translated into Romanian by one of the most reputed Romanian translators - Antoaneta Ralian (*Portretul lui Dorian Grey*, ed. Humanitas, București, 2014).

In her *Forward of the Translator*, she confesses that "usually, the translator laments on the stylistic and linguistic difficulties that s/he has to overcome and boasts with the ingenuity of his/her solutions, of the equivalences that s/he has discovered or invented" (2014: 21, our translation). Nevertheless, up to being entitled to do that, the translator has to work hard with the text so as to get its essence. This is what she did, Ralian says, as she managed to grasp the philosophical and ideological background of the writing only when she took up its translation, forty years after she first read the novel. It was then that she better understood Wild's own warning: "S/he who enters beyond façade and symbol does that at his/her own risk". Aware of the translation difficulties, she first "dissected" the book and then followed "the recreation, the reconstitution, namely the process called translation" itself (2014: 21, our translation).

As a general strategy, Ralian explains that she has used adaptation (though she does not call it that directly) at the lexical level. This was prompted by her impression that, upon reading the novel, she was struck by the feeling that the language used by the author would feel outdated for contemporary readers. Consequently, she decided to "ventilate the text, to replace the damp air fragrance with a vague passeist perfume of lavender and old lace, without using archaisms, but, on the contrary, by using, as much as possible, up to date language" (2014: 22, our translation). She thus "recreated [the book] in contemporary intellectual language, one that fits Oscar Wilde's eternally valid myth" (2014: 24, our translation).

One of the metaphors that have drawn some scholars' attention occurs in the very title of the novel. In the *Foreword* of Ralian's Romanian edition, Mihaela Anghelescu Irimia explains this, as, according to her: "there is an onomastic resonance of the main character's identity, with the sublime *Doric* echo of the classical Greek antiquity and the harsh undertone added to the exemplary brightness by the daily *grey*" (2014: 6, our translation). This metaphoric overtone of the title is, unfortunately, not that evident (if at all) for Romanian readers who may not associate the English word "grey" with its Romanian counterpart – "gri".

Further on, in the text of the novel, the following consistent metaphor (Prandi 2010: 305-306), based on a shape association, occurs:

(1) "blue **wreaths of smoke**" / "**colacii de fum** albăstrui" (lit. the curls of bluish smoke)

One could notice that the translator opted to translate a metaphor into another metaphor. Both the source and the target collocations are consistent metaphors and therefore culturally bound. She also resorted to domestication, a solution that she actually often used in her translation of *The Portrait*. Thus, here, the kind of association and the flavour of the original have been preserved in the translation.

The metaphor "bring ruin (upon somebody)" in example (2) may be considered a lexicalized metaphor (Dagnev and Chervenkova 2020: 100-101). It would be reasonable to perceive it as a cliché metaphor (Dickins 2005: 16) as well:

(2) "**bring ruin upon others**" / "**provoacă necazuri altora**" (lit. they cause troubles to others)

While "ruin" is employed here in its metaphorical sense, to conjure up the image of decay, bad/ deplorable state, the Romanian equivalent suggested – "necazuri" (troubles) is used with its direct meaning, that captures that of the source text metaphor. So, the translation solution in this instance is metaphor into 0 / metaphor into sense.

The metaphor in example (3) may be looked at as a structural metaphor, of the orientational/ spatialization type (Lakoff, Johnson 1980: 14, 18-19) - it describes the reflection of the sunrays on the leaves and implies the direction in which it is visible. The translation suggested is a direct, metaphor for metaphor one (with the slight exception of the simple aspect of the English verb, "slipped" having been replaced by a tense with a continuous meaning, the Romanian imperfect – "alunecau"):

(3) "The **sunlight slipped over** the polished leaves." / "**Razele soarelui alunecau** pe frunzele lucioase." (lit. The sunrays were slipping on the glossy leaves.)

In the same area of describing nature, there is the metaphor in example (4), referring to the movement of the flowers. The same metaphorical rendering (one that is anthropomorphizing) is kept in the translation, but the adjective "tremolous" is replaced, via transposition, by the verb "tremurau" (were trembling):

(4) "In the grass, **white daisies were tremulous**." / "Prin iarbă **tremurau margarete albe**." (lit. In the grass white daisies were trembling.)

A somewhat similar metaphor is the one in (5) below – "nervous fingers", in that it too resorts to associations that are uncommon for the subject they are connected to and

more familiar with people. The phrase may be interpreted as a synecdoche as well, as it presupposes the replacement of the person by the person's body parts:

(5) "**nervous fingers**" / "**degete nervoase**" (lit. angry fingers)

Although the translation has been performed based on a metaphor into metaphor solution, one cannot consider it a literal translation at the same time. This is because the false friend character of "nervous" is disregarded in its translation as "nervoase". A verbatim translation would have been "degete agitate" (agitated fingers).

A similar kind of synecdoche is present in example (6):

(6) "Nowadays **a broken heart will run to many editions.**" / "În ziua de azi **o inimă frântă asigură un tiraj mare**." (lit. Today, a broken heart provides for a large print run.)

Here, the broken heart, as the "place" where feelings originate, stands for the person who experiences those feelings. The synecdoche is actually layered in this example, as there is another contiguity relationship: that which runs to many editions is not the person who has a broken heart, but his/her artistic production. The combination of the two synecdoches is of a consistent, lexicalized metaphorical nature. The equivalent of the English metaphorical clause – "a broken heart will run to many editions" is also metaphorical, though not obtained by word-for word translation: "o inimă frântă asigură un tiraj mare".

What in example (7) is a metaphor in the source text – "hollowed turquoise", becomes an epithet only in the target text. The original metaphor is thus suppressed in the Romanian version, the reference to shape is missing in favour of reference to colour only. The translation solution is transposition from noun in the source language to adjective in the target language:

(7) "the **hollowed turquoise of the summer sky**" / "**cerul de vară turcoaz**" (lit. the turquoise summer sky)

The metaphorical character of the original is lost in translation in another example in which nature is described, too. This time, the conflictual / non-lexicalized metaphor (Prandi 2010: 305; Tebbit and Kinder 2016: 408) is turned by the translator into a comparison:

(8) "The sky was **an inverted cup of blue metal.**" / "Cerul arăta **ca o cană de metal albastru răsturnată.**" (lit. The sky looked like an overturned blue metal cup.)

When it comes to translating the idiomatic metaphor (Dickins 2005: 13) in example (9) – "make an ass of one's self", the translator has chosen an idiomatic metaphor in the TL too – "a călca în străchini". Thus, metaphor into a culturally adapted/ domesticated metaphor has been offered as translation solution:

(9) "any one of us **makes an ass of himself**" / "atunci când unul dintre noi **calcă în străchini**" (lit. when one of us steps on dishes)

To refer to people's tendency/ desire to memorize all sorts of unimportant information, Oscar Wilde used what we consider to be a primary conceptual metaphor (Massey, Ehrensberger-Dow 2017: 174-175): in example (10), our minds are pictured as containers that we fill up. In the Romanian translation, however, though the metaphorical dimension is preserved, minds are metaphorized further by being conceptualized as human beings eating up everything they can (note the possibility of interpreting the use of the minds for people who possess them as a synecdoche). A subtle strategy of balancing the effect of the translation as compared to that of the original is evident: "rubbish" is not translated by its direct equivalent "gunoaie", but by the softer "nimicuri" (lit. "trifles"); at the same time, however, the phrasal verb "to fill up" is translated by "a îndopa", with a much stronger negative connotation than the original:

(10) "we **fill our minds** with rubbish and fact" / "**ne îndopăm mințile** cu tot felul de nimicuri și date" (lit. we stuff up our minds with all sorts of trifles and data)

Anthropomorphism is at stake in example (11) as well, in which souls are talked about in human beings terms, both in the original and in the translation. Here again, one can sense the translator's attempt at striking a balance between the connotations in the source text and those in the target text – "starve" is stronger than simply "flămânde" (a closer equivalent would have been "lihnite"), but "naked" is softer than "despuiate":

(11) "But their own **souls starve** and are **naked**." / Dar propriile lor **suflete** sunt **flămânde** şi **despuiate**. (But their own souls are hungry and stripped of their clothes.)

Another consistent, everyday metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 4), one that is so often used that many no longer perceive it as such, is that of "catching" somebody's sight, as one cannot literally catch something that is immaterial. The idiomatic character of the metaphor in English is also the essence of its suggested Romanian equivalent – "a

da cu ochii de cineva" (lit. to set eyes on somebody), so that we may consider that the translation solution is metaphor for metaphor here, though cultural adaptation is applied:

(12) "When he **caught sight of** Lord Henry" / "Când **a dat cu ochii de** Lordul Henry" (lit. When he set eyes on Lord Henry)

A universal metaphor – that picturing the becoming of age as the budding and blooming of a flower – occurs in (13); boyhood is assimilated to a pure, white rose, symbolizing purity, while youth is connected to an intense red rose, the symbol of passion and dynamism:

(13) "**rose-red youth** and your **rose-white boyhood**" / "**tinereţea dumitale înfloritoare** şi **adolescenţa alb-trandafirie**" (lit. your flourishing youth and white-rosy adolescence)

In the Romanian translation, one built on a similar metaphorical association, half of the colour symbolism is lost to a translation variant that renders, however, the same idea (though, perhaps, not with the same intensity): "rose-red youth" becomes "tinereţea dumitale înfloritoare" (lit. your flourishing youth).

Other often employed metaphors are used by the novelist in (14): the character "buries" his face in a bush of flowers whose perfume he "drinks" feverishly (this latter metaphor is a synaesthetic one). The imagery is transferred in the Romanian translation equally metaphorically, with the modulation of "feverishly drinking" as "sorbind cu sete":

(14) "He found Dorian Gray burying his face in the great cool lilac-blossoms, feverishly drinking in their perfume." / "L-a găsit pe Dorian Gray cu faţa îngropată într-o răcoroasă tufă de liliac înflorit, sorbindu-i cu sete parfumul." (lit. He found Dorian Gray with his face buried in a refreshing, blooming lilac bush, thirstily sipping its perfume.)

In example (15), "to have coal" and "to burn wood" are both used metaphorically to refer to taking advantage of a privileged position (and often exploiting others) to live a better life. The former part of the sentence is translated by explicitation: "to have coal" is explained as work in a dirty industry ("această preocupare pentru o industrie murdară"), while the latter is translated (almost) literally, keeping the metaphor of using wood in one's own stoves to mean living a good life. The metaphorical balance upon which the meaning of the whole sentence is built is thus shaken in Romanian and the author's intended meaning becomes unclear in the translation. Metaphor into sense and metaphor

into non-metaphor (as the word for word equivalent of the wood burning metaphor in English is not perceived as a metaphor itself in Romanian) may not have been the most appropriate choices here:

(15) "having coal was that it enabled a gentleman to afford the decency of burning wood on his own hearth" / "această preocupare pentru o industrie murdară îi oferă unui gentleman avantajul de a putea să facă foc de lemne în sobele lui" (lit. this concern for a dirty industry offers a gentleman the advantage of being able to burn wood in his stoves)

4. Conclusion

Our brief analysis of some of the metaphors in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Grey* has proved, we believe, that metaphor translation is a complex process, even if, at first sight, the choice of words in the original does not seem to be problematic from a translation point of view. Difficulties may arise from the impossibility of applying a word-for-word translation solution, from the culture-bound nature of the metaphors or from the translator's inability to grasp some of their connotations. Despite these difficulties, however, we may conclude that various techniques have been used successfully by the Romanian translator in the novel considered in this paper: metaphor into another metaphor (the cultural specificity of both the source and the target metaphorical language have not been, in general, disregarded), metaphor into sense (the original metaphor was actually explained in the target language), metaphor into an epithet or comparison, and metaphor into non-metaphor.

A further avenue to explore may be the translation solutions offered by other Romanian translators to the same metaphors in the English novel.

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