

Spatial Imagery in Translation: The Case of Rose Garden of Sa'di

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Abstract

This study investigates the way spatial situations are coded in the Persian Masterpiece "Rose Garden" written by Sa'di. In addition, as the manner in which they are adopted in translation is crucial for retaining the original spatial focus of meaning, this study concentrates on one of the English translations done by Edward Rehatsek (2000). In order to fulfill the purpose, spatial prepositions as smallest segments which could evoke the spatial point of view without requiring any other spatial-notion participants were detected in data and their spatial specifications were analyzed on the basis of their occurrence environment in Rose Garden. Lexicalization patterns of movement verbs as largest constituents that delineate spatial dimensions were extracted as well. Then, their translation counterparts were studied in order to determine in what forms the original spatial concepts were displayed in translation. Findings revealed that spatial prepositions in Rose Garden, in most cases, were alternatively used so as to convey more than one spatial meaning, so did English prepositions replaced in translation. Three lexicalization patterns designed for movement verbs were grouped under three categories as well on the basis of their demanding requirements including intransitive motion verbs, spatial prepositional phrases and transitive motion verbs. Same Patterns were replaced in translation, however with some degree of distinction.

Keywords: Figure, ground, spatial preposition (SP), lexicalization pattern (LP)

1. Introduction

Literary authors deploy and manipulate linguistic devices in a manner and as much as that it suffices to achieve their ambition. One of properties observed in literary works is applying grammar for *imposing and symbolizing particular ways of construing conceptual content* (Langacker, 1999:46). Of cases in which syntactic structures are designed to code a cognitive concept are linguistic patterns *evoking spatial imagery* (Jansen, 2007: 281) i.e. *the way in which relations between entities surrounding us are captured in terms of distance, proximity, horizontality, verticality, inclusion, exclusion, trajectories etc.*

Linguistic structures and categories describing spatial dimensions have been studied by many scholars. Categorization of languages under verb-framed and satellite-framed languages (Talmy 2000 & Kopecka, 2007), spatial conceptualization in children's and adults' language (Van Peer and Graph, 2002), spatial prepositions (Stosic, 2007) and lexicalization patterns of movement verbs (Slobin, 1999 and 2006, Cappelle & Declerck, 2004, Jansen 2007) have been discussed in detail. Nevertheless, Persian spatial structures remained unstudied. Supposing that Persian utilizes similar linguistic properties as those of languages studied before to make spatial situations conceived, study in this regard is still required. It is because each language establishes different extent to which each linguistic pattern and device is assigned to encode the spatial specification.

Since this would be more challenging if literary masterpieces are taken into account, the present study focuses on one of Persian Masterpieces i.e. Rose Garden written by Sa'di, in which spatial structures are seen frequently amidst its stories in order to make moral advice as much palpable as possible. Accordingly, spatial prepositions (SPs) as smallest segments which could serve as spatial indication without requiring any other spatial participant are examined, along with lexicalization patterns of movement verbs (LPMV) as largest constituents in spatial constructions. Furthermore, as the manner in which spatial notions are communicated in the target text is significant to retain focus of spatial meaning as much accurate as possible, the same is studied in the English translation done by Rehatsek (2000).

2. Methodology

In order to accomplish the objective of this study, prepositions having spatial sense were taken from Rose Garden and their meaning components were detected in compliance with their occurrence environment in the original. Furthermore, in order to group LP of movement verbs used in the original, three below categories were designed;

Category 1: the LP of movement verbs that contained intransitive movement verbs and noun phrases functioning concurrently as action doer and figure (i.e. moving entity)

Category 2: the construction that consisted of copular verb and spatial prepositional phrases

Category 3: the LP of movement verbs that included transitive movement verb, the noun phrase functioning as action doer, noun phrase regarded as figure/moving entity and other spatial prepositional phrases designating place of movement.

Then counterparts offered in translation were compared and contrasted with the original in terms of the extent to which they displayed spatial specifications and in terms of whether same or different linguistic categories were used to transfer the meaning concerned.

3. Results & Discussion

In the present section, Rose Garden and the English translation are analyzed in compliance with the method specified above and the results for each characteristic of Persian and English counterparts are discussed.

3.1. Semantic specificity of the SPs:

3.1.1. Towards sb/sth:

Alternative prepositions were assigned to denote moving toward somebody or something. They could be distinguished from each other in relation to their participants or, in other words, their objects;

- a. 'نزد' 'to': It referred to the fact that a person with so-called lower-social status or lower age went to a higher social status person. It also showed that a person went to another to ask for something or to complain about something.
- b. 'پیش' 'to': It meant a person went to another person. Social status or age was not brought into focus.
- c. 'به' 'to': It attributed to the fact that a person went to a place.
- d. 'بر' 'on': It denoted that somebody or something moved harshly toward something or somebody else.

In translation, the spatial construction was omitted or was neutralized. Such options did not cause any serious loss as to transference of meaning in general because necessary indications were given by adjacent sentences. However, the spatial imagery was wiped out. In some cases, also, alternative prepositions *to*, *before*, *into* and *among* were used in order to transfer the meaning concerned and to act in compliance with the way English SPs were deployed in the original English spatial constructions.

3.1.2. Over a surface:

The prepositions 'بر' 'on' and 'در' 'in' communicated the meaning of *being located over the surface of an object*. As the former was collocated with different objects, it was rendered by alternative options *in*, *on* and *upon* in order to fit with coming nouns. The latter was translated by *upon* and *under*, of which the second was exactly opposite to the original intended meaning. In some cases, the preposition 'سور' 'on' also did so but with a focus on a curved surface. In translation, the prepositional phrase "on top of" was preferred over SP as in (1), retaining the spatial consideration.

Sentence & transcription	Translation
(1) <i>سور کوهی نشستند بودند...</i>	- Have taken up their position on the top of a mountain
... sat on the mountain	

3.1.3. Tip point of and handle of an object:

The handle as well as the tip point of something was indicated by the same preposition i.e. 'سر' 'on'. It was replaced with "the point of" and "the tip of", of which the former delineated a different meaning from that of original. As sentence (2) shows, 'سر' 'on' has the sense of the handle of the object i.e. sword. But, the translation option displayed the point of sword;

Sentence & Transcription	Translation
(2) دست بگیرد سر شمشیر تیز	- The hand grasps <u>the point of</u> the sharp sword
-He hold in his hand the handle of the sharp sword	

In translation of (3), a different option was put into force i.e. the original preposition and its object were conflated¹ into the noun phrase "wrist". This communicated the spatial meaning concerned, despite that the form in which it was rendered differed from that of the original;

Sentence & Transcription	Translation
(3) به بازوان توانا و فتوت سر دست	- With a powerful arm and the strength of <u>the wrist</u>
-With a powerful arm and the strength of tip of hand	

3.1.4. Around the object:

The preposition 'سر' 'on' delineated, in addition to meanings described above, *the position in which somebody was located around the object or at a place as much near that he could touch its edge*. It was omitted in order to fulfill the collocation-related requirement, rendered by the preposition *near* or changed into the prepositional phrase. The preposition "near", among these counterparts, did not necessarily contain the meaning of "as much near as to touch the edge of the object or place concerned".

3.1.5. Inside an object/ a place:

SPs 'در' 'in' and 'اندرون' 'inside' contained the meaning of *being located at a place*. The former was replaced with *in* and *into*, transferring spatial sense of the original. Or, it was avoided in translation as in (4) in which the syntactic structure reordered so that no equivalent was required for 'در' 'in'. This modulation² changed the spatial point of view although the general meaning was provided.

Sentence & transcription	Translation
(4) به مجلس او در کتاب شاهنامه همی خوانند	- The Shanamah ☉ was read in his assembly
-In his assembly, in the book of Shahnamah they were reading	

¹a general cognitive process at work in language whereby an event that under a more analytic conceptualization would be understood as complex and represented by a multi-clause syntactic structure can be alternatively conceptualized as simplex and represented by a single clause (Talmy 1999:3)

² As shifting the original active sentence into the passive shows a variation through the change of viewpoint (Newmark, 1988:88), it is considered modulation.

And the latter, which was distributed more in verse than prose lines of Rose Garden, was translated by *in, into, amidst* and *among*. These options were in compliance with the original meaning and the consideration of English over use of SPs.

3.1.6. The point from which an action starts:

The point from which the action concerned begins was realized by the preposition ' *از* 'from'. It was rendered by *from*. However, in (5) the preposition along with its object was conflated in the phrasal verb *divest of*. This conflation made a shift of meaning as regards the spatial focus, however to a small extent.

The sentence & transcription	Translation
(5) سلاح از تن بگشادند	[They] divested themselves of their arms
They took their arms from their body	

3.1.7. Instrument to make a motion& harshness of motion:

The preposition ' *به* 'to' attributed to the harshness of motion as well as to the instrument required for a motion. In translation, the meanings detected were retained by prepositions *by* and *with* respectively.

3.1.8. The purpose of motion:

The purpose for which a motion is done was coded by the preposition ' *به* 'to'. The meaning considered was rendered by the preposition *for*. Or, the whole spatial construction was neutralized as in (6). Such treatment made the original spatial indication out of focus.

Sentence&Transcription	Translation
(6) روستازادگان دانشمند به وزیر پادشاه رفتند	Learned sons of peasants became the viziers of padshahs ☹
-Learned sons of farmers went to become viziers of the king	

3.1.9. The foot of a place/an object

The SP ' *پای* 'foot of' applied to signify *the lower part of objects* such as *tree* and *throne* placed on the floor by one or more legs. The meaning was realized by "at the foot of" and "near", of which the latter seemed to change meaning because it assigned a meaning of distance, even if near, from the foot of the object considered.

3.1.10. Behind an object/in pursuit of something/somebody:

The preposition ' *تفا* 'behind' contained two meanings in Rose Garden: the back side of an object (e.g. paper) and the movement behind the entity concerned. In order to transfer these meanings, the translator used "on the back of" and "behind" respectively. Such options acted as what was spatially concerned in the original. However, the modulation applied in the rendition of (7) shows some variation as regards spatial perspectives;

Sentence & Transcription	Translation
(7) سگهان در قفای وی افتادند	-He was attacked from behind by dogs.
-Dogs were running behind him	

The other preposition attributed to *movement behind the entity concerned* was ' *پس* 'following'. It was rendered by "near", "in the rear of" and the verb "chase". The first option did not necessarily contain the meaning of *behind*. In other words, *near* conveyed the meaning of nearness in any side not just behind, hence causing some shift of meaning. The

second option denoted *the position at the back of entity considered*, being in compliance with the original. The third contained the meaning of moving behind the entity concerned. However, as it had the sense of moving behind the entity *to catch him*, it was not considered accurate as to the occurrence environment indicated in the original i.e. a slave was running behind the king to be at his service;

Sentence & transcription	Translation
(8) غلامی در پی دوان	- A slave was just chasing him.
A slave was running behind	

3.1.11. Under a surface:

The preposition 'زیر' 'under' had the sense of *the position under surface of the object* concerned. "Under" taken in the translation could show the same spatial focus of meaning as that of the original.

3.1.12. A higher position:

The higher position was realized through the preposition 'بالا' 'up'. It was replaced with "up" in translation. In translation of (9), "to", however, was used which did not transfer the meaning of the original. But, as the occurrence environment evoked the imagery that the person concerned went from a lower position (i.e. from boat) to an upper position (i.e. pillar), lack of "up" in translation did not cause any obvious lack of meaning.

Sentence & Transcription	Translation
(9) او به بالای ستون رفت	He went <u>to</u> the pillar.
He went up the pillar	

3.2. LPs of movement verbs:

3.2.1. Subject Intransitive Verb (prepositional phrase) (Adverb of Motion):

Sentences structured on the basis of this LP delineate spatial structure as follows: the action doer moves as a moving entity from a source across a path to the ground/endpoint. The main requirements here are subjects functioning as ground and motion verbs. Prepositional phrases and adverb of motions are augmented to the structure, where necessary. They were rendered by structures in which such indications were given. However, some subtle shift of meaning was observed. The sentence (10), for instance, means that *the arrow is passing across the bow*. But, in translation, *the bow* was considered a source from which the arrow started its movement.

The sentence & Transcription	Translation
(10) ... تیر از [میان] کمان همی گذرد	... The arrow is shot from the bow
The arrow is passing through the bow	

In (11), adverbs of motion 'خرامان' 'moving gently' and 'همی' 'continuously' display on their behalf the considered spatial scene. Such meanings were conflated into the verb *strut* in translation. As mentioned before, the conflation made the original spatial meaning changed because the form by which the meaning was actualized was distinct to that of the original.

The sentence & Transcription	Translation
(11) [او] خرامان همی رفت	[He] strutted about ...
-He went gently and continuously	

In (12), the adverb of motion 'همی' 'continuously' is again deployed. Moreover, the prepositional phrase 'در رکاب' 'in strap' implied that a walking person had followed a riding person. This spatial scene was replaced with a general one, making the original indication blurred.

The sentence & Transcription	Translation
(12) [او] در رکاب سلطانه می رفت	He accompanied the king
-He went continuously behind kings horse	

Some other participants were also in collaboration with intransitive verbs. For example, in (13), the infix '-در-' 'and the noun 'پنجه' 'finger' are augmented to the verb 'افکندن' 'to throw'. This combination means to fight with fingers against somebody else. It was rendered by the verb 'wrestle'. Despite that such an option retained the meaning in general, the focus on 'پنجه' 'finger' was blurred;

The sentence & Transcription	Translation
(13) [من] با شیر ژیان پنجه در افکنم	[I] ... to wrestle with a furious lion
- I throw claw at a strong lion	

This was realized by the prepositional phrase *with his fist* in translation of (14);

The sentence & Transcription	Translation
(14) هر که با پولاد بازو پنجه کرد	Who grasps with his fist one who has an arm of steel.
whoever throw finger at an steel arm	

The modification made to the subject could also perform some function as to spatial conceptualization. In (15), for example, the noun 'پای رفتنم' 'my foot of going' (a combination of noun, infinitive verb and the subject determiner 'م') attributes to "not be able to walk", despite that a construction such as "I could not walk anymore" could be used instead. The sentence provided in translation delineated the meaning intended. However, the translation applied made the intended meaning coded by the verb rather than subject.

The sentence & Transcription	Translation
(15) در بیابان مکه پای رفتنم نماند	In the desert of Mekkah I was unable to walk
-In desert of Mekkah my feet of going did not remain	

In (16), the figure 'ریش و گریبان' 'beard and collar' comes first and the ground 'دست' 'hand' appears second. The modulation happened in translation created a re-ordered spatial structure i.e. *hand* was regarded as figure and *beard* as ground, thus changing the spatial viewpoint concerned. However, the general meaning was retained i.e. the young man took beard and collar.

The sentence & Transcription	Translation
(16) ریش و گریبان به دست جوان افتاد	The young man's hand could reach the beard
Beard and collar fell into youth hand	

3.2.2. Subject am/is/are/was/were subject predicative/prepositional phrases:

Sentences formed with regard to this LP decoded the place where the entity considered was. Such a focus of meaning was rendered by similar counterparts as those of original i.e. subject plus copula verbs and prepositional phrases. The same construction was utilized in some cases to denote a general meaning of motion. The sentence (17) illustrated below is characterized as such. The spatial description was retained in translation;

The sentence & Transcription	Translation
(17) آسیا سنگ زیرین متحرک نیست	The nether millstone is immovable
-The lower millstone is not movable.	

Conversely, in (18), the subject predicate ' *ناخن درنده تیز* ' a tearing sharp nail' reached a maximum of harshness of motion and the same was rendered in the target sentence.

The sentence & Transcription	Translation
(18) چون نداری ناخن درنده تیز	If thou hast not <u>a tearing sharp nail</u>
If you has not a tearing sharp nail	

Two motions are described by the subject in (19) i.e. to attack the lion with fingers and to strike with fist at sword. They were deployed as examples in order to emphasize that intelligent men did not do unwise actions. The target options were in compliance with this intention;

The sentence & Transcription	Translation
(19) <i>بینه بر شیر زدن و مشت بر شمشیر کار خردمندان نیست</i>	To strike one's fist on a lion and to grasp edge with the hand is not the part of an intelligent man
- To attack the lion with fingers and to punch at the sword is not the action done by the intelligent men.	

3.2.3. SubjectVerb object (prepositional phrase) (Adverb of Motion)

Unlike LPs examined in 3.2.1, transitive verbs in this LP provide the action doer and the figure together. In (20), for instance, '*گمترین اوج*' 'the smallest wave' and '*آسیا سنگ*' 'the millstone' act respectively as the action doer and the figure. The same were considered in translation.

Sentence & Transcription	Translation
(20) گمترین اوج آسیا سنگ از کنارش در ربود	The smallest wave would whirl off a millstone from its bank
The smallest wave moved the millstone quickly from its side	

In (21), '*آنها*' 'they' functions as the action doer and '*غلام سیاه و کنیز*' 'black slave and female slave' as the figure. The occurred modulation in translation caused a change in spatial focus i.e. the active-to-passive shift and the omission of the action doer. In addition, "by their hands and feet" was added, which was not explicated in the original sentence;

Sentence & Transcription	Translation
(21) آنها... غلام سیاه را با کنیز محکم ببندند	... The negro and the girl to be firmly tied together <i>by their hands and feet</i>
... To tie the black slave firmly to the girl	

Another modulation applied to (22). '*گنجی*' 'a treasure' and '*تو*' 'you' constitute the action doer and the figure respectively. Reordering the syntactic structure decreased spatial focus to the minimum extent or more precisely neutralized it.

Sentence & Transcription	Translation
(22) گرد آید تو را ... گنجی	Thou mayest accumulate ... a treasure
The treasure gather around you	

4. Conclusion

This study attempted to evaluate properties of spatial constructions in Rose Garden and their equivalents in the English translation. Findings could be summarized as follows:

1. Since two or more SPs were often utilized in Rose Garden to carry same spatial meaning, they were not preferred over each other in terms of the spatial specification, except for the preposition '*پای*' 'at the foot of',

- 'زیر' under' and 'بالا' 'up'. English counterparts displayed a similar behavior i.e. they were alternatively used in translation in order to communicate more than one spatial meaning.
2. Depending on whether the spatial description or the spatial interaction between entities was intended, LPs were constructed in Rose Garden. Spatial descriptions were decoded by following LPs:
 - a. Subject Intransitive Verb (prepositional phrase)(adverbs of motion)
 - b. Subject am/is/are/was/were subject predicative/ prepositional phrasesIf the interaction between entities was aimed, the construction was formulated as follows;
 - c. Verb object (prepositional phrases) (adverbs of motion)

The basic structure for the case (c) was subject (action doer), verb (motion) and direct object (figure). Where necessary, other participants i.e. prepositional phrases and adverbs of motion were augmented to the basic structure.

As regards translations of structures a, b, c, similar translation counterparts were often used. However, subtle shift of meaning was observed within target LPs in terms of the way smaller lexemes were treated. Some obvious distinctions happened also in translation, resulting from neutralization of the whole spatial construction and use of general spatial constructions. Despite that the translation of adjacent clauses or other neighboring linguistic patterns could compensate for any loss of meaning in general, these options were regarded inaccurate as to the spatial perspective. In some cases, conflation was performed, which changed spatial emphasis as two or more spatial notions were expressed by a single linguistic category. Modulations as well caused the largest degree of spatially-inaccurate transference as they shifted spatial notions such as action doer to figure or vice versa.

It was, furthermore, demonstrated that small linguistic categories other than SPs were used in Rose Garden too. For instance, the adverb of motion 'همی' 'continuously' denoted a continuously slow movement. The other adverb used was 'تحرمان' 'moving gently' attributed to the gentle motion. The former was rendered by continuous form of verb or was avoided and the latter was conflated in the target sentences. As indicated above, the omission and the conflation attenuated spatial significations.

Moreover, verb prefixes were deployed to designate some spatial notions. For instance, the prefix 'فراز' 'above' in 'فراز آمدن' 'to come above' was used to display that the action doer sat or stood so as he was observed in a higher position than the other entity. The prefix 'در' 'in' in 'در آویختن' 'grapple with' and 'در افکندن' 'throw at' denoted that the entities approached each other as much near as they were stick to and grappled with each other. In translation, the meanings introduced were either neutralized or realized by prepositional phrases.

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