

# Translating Similes and Metaphors: A Case Study of Donna Tartt's A Secret History

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**Prevođenje poredbi i metafora: analiza romana "A Secrety  
History" Donne Tartt**  
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Mentor: prof.dr.sc. Marija Omazić  
Sumentor: Romana Čačija, viši lektor

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**Translating Similes and Metaphors: A Case Study of Donna  
Tartt's *A Secret History***  
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### **Prevođenje poredbi i metafora: analiza romana "A Secrety History" Donne Tartt**

Cilj je ovog rada istražiti različite strategije kojima se prevoditelji služe kada se suočavaju s poteškoćama koje poredbe i metafore predstavljaju unutar teksta te dati njihove primjere. S obzirom na višeznačnu prirodu prijevoda, strategije za prevođenje poredbi i metafora zapanjujuće su dobro razvijene. Strategije za prevođenje poredbi i metafora mogu se pronaći u raznim izvorima posvećenim ovoj temi. Stoga prevoditelji mogu odabrati koju strategiju žele koristiti. Ovaj se rad usredotočuje isključivo na to kako su Pierinijeve i Larsonove strategije korištene u prijevodu poredbi i metafora u romanu Tajna povijest, kako u izvornom romanu tako i u hrvatskom prijevodu. Istraživanje koristi induktivne i deskriptivne metode analize kako bi se što šire opisalo kako su te strategije korištene. Analiza se fokusira na 54 usporedbe i 40 metafora odabranih iz prijevoda djela Tajna povijest na hrvatski jezik. Raspravljalo se o razlozima korištenja različitih strategija i analizirala se uspješnost strategija. Naš je cilj istražiti kako i zašto su određene strategije korištene tijekom procesa prevođenja.

**Ključne riječi:** književno prevođenje, poredbe, metafore, strategije za prevođenje

### **Translating Similes and Metaphors: A Case Study of Donna Tartt's *A Secret History***

The aim of this paper is to explore various strategies employed by translators when confronted with the difficulties that similes and metaphors pose within the text and provide their examples. Given the ambiguous nature of translation, the strategies for translating similes and metaphors are astoundingly well developed. Strategies for translating both similes and metaphors can be found in various sources dedicated to this topic. Therefore, the translators can choose which strategy they would like to use. This paper focuses solely on how Pierini's and Larson's strategies in particular were utilized in the translation of similes and metaphors in *A Secret History*, both in the original novel and the Croatian translation. The research uses inductive and descriptive methods of analysis to describe how these strategies were employed as broadly as possible. In the analysis, we focus on 54 similes and 40 metaphors selected from the translation of *A Secret History* into Croatian. The rationale behind the adoption of different strategies were discussed and the success of the strategies was analyzed. Our goal is to explore how and why certain strategies were employed during the translation process.

**Key words:** literary translation, similes, metaphors, translation strategies

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## 1. Introduction

Translation plays a major role in the globalized world that we now live in. Without translation, the globalized marketing strategies of corporation giants would be impossible. Translation makes our world go round. Still, translators are often regarded as lesser-than, and translation is often regarded as a study only a select few want to participate in. Translators are the invisible warriors of this age. Translation as a study began in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, closely following the start of the globalization, however it is still not nearly as developed as certain studies. Especially literary translation. Few are those who venture into the literary translation world ready to study and untangle the intricate patterns and knots woven throughout its history. Without translation, many would not know the joys and sorrows of Shakespeare, the thoughtful discussions and laments of Nietzsche, or even the mathematical findings of Pythagoras.

Every translation possesses certain difficulties that a translator has to be able to overcome. Technical translations are among some of the most difficult to provide due to their inherent specialty. It takes years of practice for a translator to be able to translate such texts with the precision they demand. It takes years of collecting terms into glossaries to be able to provide an accurate translation of such texts because each term is carefully selected in the source text, therefore the selection of the terms in the target text must be the same. There is a slight margin of error a translator can utilize, but other than that, the target text must ring true in much the same way the source text does. It is not infrequent that translators, especially younger and more inexperienced ones, try to stay clear from such text lest they translate the text wrong, seeing as doing that can have dire consequences.

When compared to the translations previously discussed, literary translation is often regarded as easy. It is regarded as the least significant work a translator can do, especially in today's day and age when Google translate and many other translation tools are available to everyone at the tip of their fingers. However, that notion is false. Literary translation might not have as difficult terms as technical translation does, but what it does have is the soul of the author written on one's pages. Literary translators must be equipped to handle such delicate notions. They must put themselves into the author's shoes and evoke the same emotions in the target audience as the author does in theirs. Literary translation might not have many technical terms, but it does have idioms, similes, metaphors, and even the smallest prepositions that need to fit into the context of a language if translation is the goal. Literature also has a cultural impact, which the translator has to be aware of. Similes and metaphors frequently engender lively

discussion among literary translators due to their metaphorical meaning. Moreover, that means that certain strategies, other than literal translation, had to be developed in order for a translation to be successful. Many notable translation theorists, like Newmark, Larson, Pierini, Morneau, Machali, among others, have developed their own strategies that, over time, proved more or less successful in practice. Pierini's and Larson's strategies are by far the most employed strategies in studies such as this one because they are concise, fully developed, and easily comprehensible.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 covers the historical background of the paper, focusing on the history of the translation. Section 3 provides a theoretical background to the paper, explaining different definitions of literary and non-literary translation. Section 4 provides a theoretical background to both similes and metaphors. Section 5 covers the strategies provided for dealing with translating similes and metaphors, focusing on the strategies that provide the foundation for our analysis. Following Section 5, Section 6 and 7 cover the methodology and the tools used for collecting the data from the corpus. Data analysis is presented in Section 8, with each of the two hypotheses analyzed in a different subsection. We summarize and conclude our findings in Section 9.

## **2. The history of translation**

According to Newmark (1981: 3), the first signs of translation can be found as far back as 3000 B.C. Many claim that translation is as old as language itself. In fact, it is the act of translation that lets the readers construct lost civilizations; it is a portal through which the past can be accessed (Bassnett 2007: 15). The older translations typically used the Jerome model, which used the concept of equivalence (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998: 2). It got its name after Saint Jerome (c.331-c.420 AD), whose Vulgate set the acknowledged and unacknowledged foundations for translation in the West until about two hundred years ago (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998: 2). In its simplest form the method comes down to this: there is a text, and that text needs to just be transposed into another language, as faithfully as possible, with the use of dictionaries (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998: 2). Since the relevance of the central piece of literature of this model (that is the Bible) in the West began waning, so did the method itself (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998: 2). That is why only two hundred years ago, when the thinking about translation was able to move away from the increasingly sterile 'faithful' opposition, despite the historical significance of translation, did the studies of the systematic significance

of translation start forming (Bassnett 2013: 16). Even the coining of the term 'translation studies' came in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century by James Holmes in his paper *The Name and Nature of Translation Studies*, which was published in 1972 (Venuti 1995).

The first extended critical account of translation in English is thought to be Alexander Graser Tytler's *Essay on the Principles of Translation*, which appeared in 1791. He expressed the view that a translator needs to possess genius similar to that of the original author for a translation to be successful (Bassnett 2013: 16). In 1813, his contemporary Friedrich Schleiermacher gave his lecture *Methoden des Übersetzens*, which continued its relevancy into the modern theorizing of translation, most notably in the foreignization and domestication debate raised by Venuti (Bassnett 2013: 17). Schleiermacher differentiates between two types of translation, the first being a translator's attempt at making the original author speak as though they had originally written in the translator's language (Venuti 1995). This is what Venuti (1995) describes as acculturation, and what Schleiermacher refutes as a foolish attempt, much like paraphrase or imitation. Schleiermacher (1992: 52, cited in Venuti 1995) went on to say that the translator should instead remind the reader that the world of the original was different, since the purpose of all translation is to give the readers enjoyment of foreign words as unadulterated as possible.

Venuti (1995) went on to say that the terms 'foreignizing' and 'domesticating' do not describe specific verbal choices or discursive strategies used in translation (unlike Schleiermacher, who employed the foreignization as a strategy, and claimed the readers should be able to guess, for example, the Spanish behind a translation from Spanish (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998: 8), but rather the ethical effects of translated texts that depend for their recognition and force on the receiving cultures. Foreignizing translation derives its interpretants from marginal ideologies and resources, which are less readily comprehensible, while domesticating translation derives its interpretants from dominant ideologies and resources, which are then more likely to be immediately familiar and accessible. A translator can combine these two poles, but a highly diversified translation does not make a translation more meaningful, pluralistic, or just. It may actually undermine the ethical impact of the translation (Venuti 1995). As Venuti (1995) says, criticizing Schleiermacher's views, foreignizing translation does not introduce the foreign into the culture as much as use the foreign to confirm and develop a sameness, a cultural narcissism, which is endowed with historical necessity. This method of translation "makes sense and is of value only to a nation that had the definite

inclination to appropriate what is foreign” (Lefevere, 1977: 88, cited in Venuti 1995). Moreover, Shapiro (cited in Venuti 1995) says:

“I see translation as the attempt to produce a text so transparent that it does not seem to be translated. A good translation is like a pane of glass. You only notice that it’s there when there are little imperfections – scratches, bubbles. Ideally, there shouldn’t be any. It should never call attention to itself.”

### **2.1. The “New Paradigm” Literary Theory**

With the increasing interest in translation studies, and the rising interest in differentiating the types of translation, an international group of scholars formed, in the middle of the 1970s, the most interesting approach to literary translation, the “New Paradigm” theory (Alvarez 1993: 483). It began with their attempt to break the deadlock in which the study of literary translation found itself, hence their approach is different in some fundamental respects from most traditional work in the field (Alvarez 1993: 483).

Their aim was quite simple. They wanted to establish a new paradigm system for the study of literary translation on the basis of a comprehensive theory and ongoing practical research (Alvarez 1993: 483). They all viewed literature as a complex and dynamic system, with a conviction that there should be a continual interaction between practical case studies and theoretical models. They also had an approach to literary translation which is descriptive, functional, target oriented and systemic (Alvarez 1993: 483). They had the constraints and norms that govern the reception and production of translation, as well as the role and place of translation both within a given literature and the interactions between literatures (Alvarez 1993: 483). From these shared interests and similarities, the “New Paradigm” theory was born, based on both linguistics (on functional grammar and text linguistics), and literature (the reception and polysystem theories) (Alvarez 1993: 483).

### **3. Defining translation**

Translation, on the surface, is a simple thing, before one attempts to define it. Since antiquity, many have attempted it, varying from one historical period to another, subject to changing ideas about the nature of culture, textuality and language (Venuti 2005: 800). There are numerous theories and definitions described in books, essays, and studies honing in on what translation is. According to Brislin (1976, cited in Akbari 2013: 32) translation is “the general term referring to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language (source) to another (target),

whether the languages are in written or oral form; whether the languages have established orthographies or do not have such standardization or whether one or both languages is based on signs, as with sign languages of the deaf." Newmark (1991: 1) goes on to say that "translation is concerned with moral and factual truth; this truth can be effectively rendered only if it is grasped by the reader, and that is the purpose and the end of translation." Catford (1974: 20) takes on a more simplistic approach to defining translation, saying it is "a replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)." These are some of the many definitions out there that try to explain what translation consists of and what its goal is. Others have tried a different approach, involving a broader attempt, such as classifications of the definitions of translation.

An example of such an attempt can be seen in Sokolovsky's paper *On the Linguistic Definition of Translation* (2010), in which he proposes four different classifications: translation is a process, translation is a process and a result of this process, translation is a communication, and translation is a skill. The classification "translation is a process" defines translation as an activity in which a text in one language (source text, or ST) becomes a text in another language (target text, or TT). Lilova (cited in Sokolovsky 2010: 286) explains it as a specific oral or written activity that aims to recreate an oral or written text existing in one language into a text in another language, while Popovic (cited in Sokolovsky 2010: 286) leans more towards translation as a recording of a linguistic text that is accompanied by the creation of its new linguistic appearance and stylistic shape. "Translation is a process and a result of this process" extends its definition to the final stages of translation. The translation is then not just an activity, in which ST becomes TT, but also the outcome of said activity, as can be seen in Semenov's quote (cited in Sokolovsky 2010: 286): "First of all, translation is the translator's activity of transforming a message in one language into a message with the same meaning in another language; secondly, translation is a result of the translator's activity, i.e. an oral or written language utterance." Vinogradov is of a similar opinion, which is that translation is a process (and a result) caused by the social necessity of information transmitting, expressed in an oral or written form. The classification "translation is a communication" carries a slightly different meaning. It introduces translation as purposeful, as in, it exists for people to be able to understand each other and exchange information. Garbovsky's definition (cited in Sokolovsky 2010: 286) sums up this notion well. He explains that translation is a social function of communicative mediation between different people, who all use a different language system. Sdobnikov and Petrova (cited in Sokolovsky 2010: 286) do not veer far off from Garbovsky's

definition with their own, in which they introduce translation as a way to provide interlingual communication by creating a text in TL, intended to replace the original. Finally, the fourth and final classification presented in Sokolovsky's paper is that "translation is a skill". This classification not only acknowledges the fact that translation is an active process, but it also introduces translation as in need of craftsmanship for the message in one language to properly be established in another. Newmark (cited in Sokolovsky 2010: 287) explains it with the following quote: "Translation is a craft consisting of the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language."

As it can be seen from these classifications, which Sokolovsky (2010: 287) also noticed, there are certain overlaps between these classifications. They all agree that translation is a process which involves a source text in one language being introduced in another language as a target text by means of groups of people being able to communicate, regardless of an existing language barrier, with another group of people. From this we can conclude that translation is a process and a result of this process, that it is a socially oriented interlingual communication which requires a mediator (a complex communication act), and it is an approximation (has a tendency to be identical) of a multilingual communication to a monolingual one (Sokolovsky 2010: 287). Sokolovsky (2010: 287) offers his own definition of translation, based on the previous statements, saying: "The special relationship between the original and translation (i.e. existence of semiotic interconnections) is determined by the ability of translation to approximate a multilingual communication to a monolingual one."

### **3.1. *Literary translation***

The differences in defining literary and any other translation are few and far between. As Hermans (2007: 77) puts it "if there is no agreement on what makes literature distinctive, it may be equally hard to decide on what grounds literary translation should be awarded its own niche." According to Toury (1981: 11, cited in Alvarez 1993: 483) literary translation may be defined as "every literary text in the target literary system (and in the target linguistic system, since every literary text is a linguistic text), which is equivalent to another text in the source language." However, that definition is too broad, and encompasses many other translations. If the word "medical" was inserted in place of "literary" the phrase would still hold true, as it would for the many definitions discussed in the chapter above.

Francis R. Jones (2019: 1) goes a bit more in-depth with his explanation of literary translation, saying: "Literary translation also shows how all translation can make "contradictory

demands on the translator” (ibid.:21), is culturally embedded, and is interpretive rather than mechanical.” While he did describe literary translation, he also included all types of translation, which does not come closer to explaining what literary translation alone is. This poses the question of what exactly differentiates literary translation from others.

The answer may be found in Selver’s four different claims of literary translation (1986, cited in Alvarez 1993: 483). He argues that literary translation is an art that must balance between four different claims: linguistic claim, time claim, cultural claim, and aesthetic claim. The strictly linguistic claim is a problem for translators, and although substantial, it is not the most pressing one. The translator also has to bear in mind the time claim. What was written some time ago requires different treatment than what was created in modern times, i.e., the phrase “passing by coach through a valley” will be translated differently depending on the time the text was written. If it was written a hundred years ago, we cannot translate it as “a bus”, but as “a railway carriage” because it fits the time in which the work was written. Another claim to take into consideration is the cultural claim; it explains that the differences among cultures are not simple and mechanistic (no matter how some people may regard these matters as simple), and are not mere differences in the words by which the identical phenomena are described. That is, the translator needs to take into consideration not just the language into which he is translating, but also the culture in which it resides. The final claim, which Selver (cited in Alvarez 1993: 483) is particularly harsh on (even going so far as claiming that if not done right, nothing else the translator has done can possibly be worthy) is the aesthetic claim. To be true to said claim, the translator needs to reproduce a text in the new language with the peculiar force and strength, and the inner and outer meanings of what the original writer created solely and exclusively for and in a different language and a different culture. This is the claim imposed by metaphorical language.

While the definitions of literary translation are few and scarce, and can be applied to multiple types of translations, there might be room to explain literary translation by the activity involved in the source text-target text process and how the two texts relate to each other (Francis R. Jones 2019: 1). According to Francis R. Jones (2019: 1) the nature of these relations is often scattered along a spectrum, but with four archetypal positions: cribs, literary best-fits, adoptions or versions, and literary works that closely reference foreign-language works. Usually, cribs are semantically literal versions, and they may be intended to allow readers to access the source. Alternatively, target-language dramaturgs or poets may reshape them into viable literary target texts, discussed previously between the initial translator and reshaper (Translators’ Association

2004; Aaltonen 2013; Csokits 1989; Hughes 1989, cited in Francis R. Jones 2019: 2). Reshaping may sometimes be minimal, however, the literal writer's role is often given less credit in publications. Sometimes both translators are equally given credit, but often the reshaper is named as the sole translator (Francis R. Jones 2019: 2). On the other hand, literary best fits try to reflect source semantics and style while functioning as target-language works (Holmes 1988:53-54, cited in Francis R. Jones 2019: 2). While this is the most common approach, reflecting on apparent underlying norms (Holmes 1988:50; Jones 2011:179, cited in Francis R. Jones 2019: 2), balancing the two requirements proved to be notoriously hard in practice. For that reason, many translators choose to prioritize either the reflection of the source semantics and style or the functioning as target-language works, or they choose to prioritize different aspects of the source text at the expense of others (Jones 2011:178-180, cited in Francis R. Jones 2019: 2). Particularly common in drama and poetry, characterized by looser relationships between source and target texts, are adaptations or versions. Given the nature of dramas and poems, target-language dramaturgs and poets give themselves permission to creatively re-interpret source texts since they wish to connect with certain audiences or wish to establish relevance to a contemporary context (Findlay 2004, Brazeau 2001:95, cited in Francis R. Jones 2019: 2). Lastly, literary works that closely reference foreign-language works are up for discussion. Many would not even call this position translation. This is a common creative-writing practice which often overlaps with adaptation and versioning (Collins, 2016, cited in Francis R. Jones 2019: 2). German poet Barbara Köhler's *Niemand's Frau* (Nobody's Wife) reinterpreting Homer's *Odyssey* from its female character's viewpoint (Johnson 2016, cited in Francis R. Jones 2019: 2) is one example of such a position. Although these positions are important to be known and taken into consideration, Francis R. Jones (2019: 2) acknowledges that not all texts fit such labels, and that it is indeed a spectrum with which it is possible, depending on the context, to have one sentence in a novel be crib-translated and the next adapted. As Landers (2001: 5) explains, many gravitate towards literary translation because it lets one consistently share in the creative process, where the translator frequently experiences the aesthetic joys of working with great literature, that would otherwise remain unreachable to many.

#### **4. Similes and metaphors: a theoretical approach**

Similes and metaphors are closely related figures of speech that many people have trouble differentiating between them. However, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, they can be more easily distinguished if we take into account their Latin and Greek roots. Simile comes



from the Latin word “similis”, which means “similar or like”. Metaphor comes from the Greek word “metapherein”, which closely translates to “to transfer”. Following that, the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines similes as “a figure of speech comparing two unlike things that is often introduced by like or as (e.g., cheeks like roses)”. On the other hand, they define metaphors as “a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them (e.g., drowning in money)”. Therefore, similes are figures of speech that denote a likeness of one object to another, while metaphors are figures of speech that replace one object with another object of a similar idea.

Israel, Harding and Tobin (2004, cited in Hazwani, Ramli 2014: 374) all discussed simile as a figure in its own right and as an object of study which is distinct both from metaphorical expression and literal comparison. Therefore, to understand why both similes and metaphors need different strategies for translating them, we need to look at their differences. The first true difference is the difference in their form, as explained by Israel et al. (2004:123). It is a difference that many linguists take into account when examining metaphors and similes. However, while the form is quite different, similes and metaphors are innately different in one other aspect, and that is the explicitness of the relation. While similes are inherently explicit in their relating one object to another, metaphors are implicit. As Israel et al. (2004: 123) put it, “a simile ... simply makes explicit what a metaphor merely implies”. Similes require certain explicitness in their form, an overt reference to source and target entities and an explicit construction connecting them (Israel et al. 2004: 129), while a metaphor is simply a figure of thought. They do not need to be explicitly noted, therefore they have a certain fluidity that similes lack, which makes them easier to incorporate into everyday life, from conventions and practices to even gestures (Israel et al. 2004: 129). Waldau (2010:8, cited in Kendenan 2017: 108) also proposes that metaphors typically transfer the meaning of an expression and use the qualities from one object to describe another, while similes propose transference and show a more visual relationship between the objects.

Knowles & Moon (2006, cited in Kendenan 2017: 108) said that “metaphors are instances of non-literal language that involve some kind of comparison or identification: if interpreted literally, they would be nonsensical, impossible, or untrue.” Similes should be easier to identify, though, because they are introduced by some signaled word such as like, as, compare, resemble, and so on (Kendenan 2017: 108). However, it does not mean that they are an easier problem for the translators. The translation of both metaphors and similes, because of

their explicitness/implicitness, as well as the difficulty of literal interpretation, could be more difficult than other types of translations (Kendenan 2017: 108). If they are not translated correctly, similes and metaphors easily become completely misunderstood (Hilman, Ardiyanti, Pelawi 2013: 50). Larson (184: 250, cited in Hilman et al. 2013: 50) claims that there are a number of reasons why metaphors and similes are hard to understand and cannot be translated literally. Firstly, the image used in the metaphor or simile may be unknown in the target language (Larson 184: 250, cited in Hilman et al. 2013: 50). The fact that the topic of the metaphor or simile is not always explicitly stated may also pose a problem for the reader (Larson 184: 250, cited in Hilman et al. 2013: 50). Sometimes it is a point of similarity that is implicit and hard to identify. One of the more serious problems is the fact that the point of similarity may be understood differently in one culture than another (Larson 184: 251, cited in Hilman et al. 2013: 50). There is also the possibility that the target language does not make comparisons of the type which occur in the source text metaphor or simile (Larson 184: 251, cited in Hilman et al. 2013: 51).

#### **4.1. *The explicit: similes' form***

Many times, metaphors and similes are discussed together. Such is the case with Larson (1984, cited in Hazwani, Ramli 2014: 373), who claims a metaphor or a simile has three parts: 'topic', 'image', and 'point of similarity'. She also divided them into dead and live categories (Hazwani, Ramli 2014: 373). She states that the correct understanding of similes depends on the correct identification of the topic and image (Hilman et al. 2013: 45). To understand similes in TL it is very important to identify the topic and image of the similes in the SL, that is, to discover the meaning of it.

There is always a risk of misinterpretation when it comes to similes, and a challenge for the translator to be able to translate the meaning of similes in SL into their equivalence in the TL (Hilman et al. 2013: 45). Hilman et al. (2013: 47) say that a simile is a figure of speech comparing two different objects which share the same point of similarity. It emphasizes the same characteristics that are shared by the two objects by using a comparison marker (Hilman et al. 2013: 46). A comparison marker makes a simile relatively easy to identify, and Pierini (cited in Hilman et al. 2013: 46) states that there are five categories of such markers: verbs (seem, look like, act like, sound like, resemble, remind), adjectives (similar to, the same as), nouns (a sort of, some kind of), prepositions (in comparative phrases; like, as), conjunctions (in

comparative clauses; as if/though, as when). Pierini (cited in Hilman et al. 2013: 47) adds that a simile's structure has three parts: 'topic', or comparandum (the entity described by the simile); 'vehicle/image', or comparatum (the entity which the topic is compared to), accompanied by a comparison marker; 'similarity feature(s)' (the properties shared by the topic and vehicle/image). In the simile "You're acting like a little boy", 'You' is the topic of the simile, the entity which a simile describes, 'acting' is the similarity feature, that is the property shared by the topic and vehicle/image, and 'a boy' is the vehicle/image of the simile, the entity which the topic is compared to. This sentence describes that the simile compares "you" to "a little boy", that is both the topic and the vehicle/image have a little boy action (Hilman et al. 2013: 48). The comparison marker "like" indicates that what is similar between "you" and "a little boy" is having the same action (Hilman et al. 2013: 48).

As seen above, Larson (1984: 247, cited in Hilman et al. 2013: 48) also has her own explanation of simile's form: According to her (cited in Hilman et al. 2013: 48), as previously mentioned, a simile is divided into three parts: topic, image, and point of similarity. A topic is the topic of the first proposition, the thing that is non-figuratively being talked about. An image is the topic of the second proposition, the thing to which the topic is figuratively being compared. A point of similarity can be found in the comments of both the topic and image (Hilman et al. 2013: 48). To translate the simile correctly, the translator needs to analyze the simile of the SL before it is translated into the TL. This is done by determining the topic, the image, and the point of similarity of the simile in the SL. In other words, the meaning of similes in the SL should be determined first (Hilman et al. 2013: 48).

#### **4.2. *The implicit: metaphors' form***

Metaphors primarily occur in literature, and the main difficulty of translating metaphors is that their form is deep-rooted in a specific language and culture (Alvarez 1993: 482). To quote Hall (1964: 406, cited in Alvarez 1993: 482) "every artist's work is conditioned by the limitations of the medium within which he works, by the cultural background in which he has grown up, and by the demands which his culture makes on him. Hence the literature written in any given language is of course channeled by the structure of the language." Newmark (cited in Alvarez 1993: 481), on the other hand, claims that the purpose of the metaphor is "to describe an entity, event or quality more comprehensively and concisely and in a more complex way than is possible by using literal language" (Newmark, 1981: 84, cited in Alvarez 1993: 481). This is where the complexities of metaphors start to show.

Richards (cited in Alvarez 1993: 481) was the first to unite the two ideas, the Platonist's idea that a metaphor is something useless and the Romantics' idea that metaphor is something strange and mystic, into what he called a tenor and a vehicle. The tenor is "the idea conveyed by the vehicle", and the vehicle is "the idea conveyed by the literal meaning of the words used metaphorically" (Richards, 1936: 96, cited in Alvarez 1993: 481). For example, the sentence "he is a beast" has an object ('a beast', the item described), a vehicle ('he is a beast', that is the idea), and a tenor (evaluative similarity, the idea conveyed by the vehicle) (Alvarez 1993: 481). For Blacks (1962, cited in Alvarez 1993: 481), a metaphor is a different thing. He claims a metaphor is not an isolated item, but a sentence (Alvarez 1993: 481). He calls the metaphorical sentence a frame, and the metaphorically used words a focus or incongruent constituent. The frame, the sentence, imposes the extension of meaning upon the focal words (Blacks, 1962: 39, cited in Alvarez 1993: 481). Booke-Rose (cited in Alvarez 1993: 481) defines metaphors as any identification of one thing with another, where the more usual word or phrase is replaced by another, i.e. "under a sky *fissured* with artificial fire" (Alvarez 1993: 481). *Fissured* is not the usual word in English (Alvarez, ...).

#### 4.2.1. *Types of metaphors*

Types of metaphors can be found with Peter Newmark (1981: 84, cited in Alvarez 1993: 481), who not only stated that the purpose of metaphors is to describe a quality, event, or an entity more concisely and comprehensively and in a more complex way than it is possible by using literal language, he also classified metaphors in five different types: dead metaphors, cliché metaphors, stock metaphors, recent metaphors, and original metaphors.

Dead metaphors are distinguished from others only in degree, they are lexicalized metaphors, i.e. the arm of the chair. Cliché metaphors are metaphors which have already become automatic, their expressiveness is lowered due to the excessive use, i.e. leave no stone unturned. Stock metaphors are somewhere in the middle, they are indeed very common, but they are not yet fossilized (they have still not become a cliché), i.e. a ray of hope. Recent metaphors, unlike the previously mentioned, have not been used in the past, they appear nowadays most frequently in computer language, i.e. hardware, software, etc. The last, but not the least, and the most important according to Newmark (1981: 84, cited in Alvarez 1993: 481), are original metaphors. They are poetic metaphors invented for a specific occasion or expression, i.e. The valley was embroidered with flowers.

Not everybody agrees with such a classification. Most notably, Dagut (1987: 77, cited in Alvarez 1993: 481) claims that the usage of such qualifying epithets as an original metaphor or dead metaphor causes confusion. He implores the necessity to distinguish clearly between metaphor proper (what is to Newmark an original metaphor) and metaphorical derivatives as polysemes, idioms and proverbs (in Newmark's case a dead metaphor) because of its relevance to the translation theory and practice: translating a given English polyseme, proverb or idiom is achieved by the selection of another. A competent translator will only be truly challenged when the TL system does not offer an equivalent to the particular SL item, in which case the translator employs various substitution procedures (rendering the sense, but not the form of the SL item), much like in a case of the metaphor proper (Dagut, 1987: 77, cited in Alvarez 1993: 481).

### **5. Strategies for translating similes and metaphors**

Translating techniques are considered universal and independent of the languages involved in the translation process (Fadaee 2011: 174). As Neubert and Shreve (1992: 52, cited in Fadaee 2011: 175) state, they are the typical courses-of-action taken by professional translators, the standard tools of the trade that offer a solution to various problems encountered during translating. Krings (1986: 263, cited in Fadaee 2011: 175) defines translation strategies as the "translator's potentially conscious plans for solving concrete translation problems in the framework of a concrete translation task". Furthermore, Loescher (1991: 8, cited in Fadaee 2011: 175) defines translation strategies as "a potentially conscious procedure for solving a problem faced in translating a text, or any segment of it". Moreover, Bell (1998, cited in Fadaee 2011: 175) differentiates between local and global strategies and claims that this distinction resulted from various kinds of translation problems. Local strategies concern those that translate text segments, whereas global strategies are meant for dealing with whole texts (Fadaee 2011: 175). It is indicated that translation strategies are composed of tasks with which a foreign text is chosen to be translated and a method with which it is translated (Venuti, 1998: 240, cited in Fadaee 2011: 175). He distinguishes the concepts of domesticating and foreignizing to refer to translation strategies (Fadaee 2011: 175).

Jaaskelainen (2005: 71, cited in Fadaee 2011: 175) claims a strategy is, "a series of competencies, a set of steps or processes that favor the acquisition, storage, and utilization of information". Furthermore, he maintains that strategies are "heuristic and flexible in nature, and their adoption implies a decision influenced by amendments in the translator's objectives" (Jaaskelainen, 2005: 71, cited in Fadaee 2011: 175). Seguinot (1989, cited in Fadaee 2011: 175)

distinguishes at least three global strategies employed by translators: “(1) translating without interruption for as long as possible; (2) correcting surface errors immediately; (3) leaving the monitoring for qualitative or stylistic errors in the text to the revision stage”. Jaaskelainen (2005: 16, cited in Fadaee 2011: 175) divides strategies into product and process-related strategies (these are also further divided into global and local strategies). Product-related strategies involve the basic tasks of choosing the SL text and developing a method of translating it, while process-related strategies are a set of rules with which a translator attempts to reach the goals set by the translating situation (Jaaskelainen, 2005: 16, cited in Fadaee 2011: 175). Process-related strategies are further divided into global and local strategies, wherein the global strategies represent general principles of action and local strategies refer to specific processes in relation to the translator’s solutions to problems he encounters (Jaaskelainen, 2005: 16, cited in Fadaee 2011: 175).

Taking that into consideration, there are several strategies that translators can employ that are specifically made for dealing with a metaphor or a simile (or any type of figure of speech). One of them is Mollanazar’s strategy (2005: 46, cited in Fadaee 2011: 176), which he divided into three following steps: 1. The metaphors and similes should be found in a text, a translator should always be alert to metaphors and similes; 2. The translator should then determine whether the comparison is a live metaphor/simile or a dead figure of speech; and 3. The translator should identify different components of the metaphor or simile. The translator should employ these strategies in order to solve the encountered problems (Hilman et al. 2013: 48). He should also realize that these strategies determine whether his translation is considered to have a good quality or less so (Hilman et al. 2013: 48). Pierini (cited in Hilman et al. 2013: 49) claims that in selecting the appropriate strategies, the translator should have in mind factors such as connotation, rhetorical effect and register, and context of use. This is why, in the next two chapters, the strategies for translating similes and metaphors will be explained separately.

### **5.1. *Strategies for translating similes***

As it was covered in the previous chapters, similes and metaphors have quite different forms. Due to these forms, the strategies that may apply to metaphors do not necessarily apply to similes. Pierini (2007, cited in Shamsaefard, Fumani, Nemati 2013: 164) proposes the following strategy for dealing with translating similes: literal translation (retention of the same vehicle/image); replacement of the image with a different image; reduction of the simile, if idiomatic, to its sense; retention of the same image plus explicitation of similarity feature(s);

replacement of the image with a gloss; and omission of the simile (Pierini 2007, cited in Shamsaeefard et al. 2013: 164).

Literal translation is often used when a simile in the SL has the same meaning in the TL with equivalent lexical items (Newmark, 1981: 88, cited in Hilman et al. 2016: 49). The translator can then reproduce the same image in the TL if the point of similarity is universal. He can translate the simile into the TL directly and produce natural simile translation (Newmark, 1981: 88, cited in Hilman et al. 2016: 49). Larson (1984: 280, cited in Hilman et al. 2016: 49) confirms this by reiterating that the simile can be kept if the receptor language permits (if it sounds natural and is understood correctly by readers).

Replacement of the image with a different image involves the image of the simile not clashing with the TL culture. In that case, the translator can replace the image in the SL with a standard TL image (Newmark, 1981: 88, cited in Hilman et al. 2016: 49). Furthermore, Larson (1984: 253, cited in Hilman et al. 2016: 49) states that the translator should want to substitute a different simile in the SL, one that carries a similar meaning as the one in the SL.

Reducing the simile to its sense is used if the simile is idiomatic. The translator may be inclined to delete it; however, the TL reader will lose the sense of the simile (Newmark, 1981: 88, cited in Hilman et al. 2016: 49). It is a decision a translator must not take lightly, and it can be made only after the translator has weighed what he thinks is more important and less important in the text regarding its intention (Newmark, 1981: 91, cited in Hilman et al. 2016: 49). This strategy can only be justified if the simile's function is being fulfilled somewhere else in the text (Hilman et al. 2016: 49).

Retaining the same image by explicating the similarity features comes from the translator's wish to make the translation understandable to the audience by adding information or making the simile explicit (Hilman et al. 2016: 49). The most common translation strategy is explicitation, where the translator adds components explicitly in the target text which are only implicit in the source text (Chesterman 2000: 108, cited in Hilman et al. 2016: 50). If the translator notices that the simple transfer of simile may not be well understood by the TL readers, he may translate the simile plus sense (Newmark, 1981: 90, cited in Hilman et al. 2016: 50).

Replacing the image with a gloss means that the translator is adding a note or a comment to a piece of writing to explain a different word or phrase. Essentially, to make it more understandable to the target audience (Hilman et al. 2016: 50).

The last strategy is the omission of the simile. It is done by a translator who is trying to avoid an unnatural translation where a simile is omitted or deleted completely from the target text. But the omission retains the meaning of the SL (Hilman et al. 2016: 50).

### **5.2. *Strategies for translating metaphors***

While strategies for exclusively translating similes are scarce (since they are often pinned as the explicit, simpler form), and what works for metaphors will often work for similes, metaphors have a whole array of strategies a translator can use to deal with the challenge of translating them into the target text.

Larson (1984: 254, cited in Kendenan 2017: 109) proposed five ways to translate metaphors (and, by extension, similes): the translator can keep the metaphor in the target text if the TL permits it (if it sounds natural and is correctly understood by the audience); the metaphor can be translated as a simile (by adding like or as); the metaphor (or the simile) can be substituted by a metaphor in the TL which has the same meaning; the metaphor (or simile) can be kept and its meaning explained (the point or topic of similarity can be added so the audience understands it); and the meaning of the metaphor can be translated without keeping the metaphorical imagery.

Morneau (1993, cited in Fadaee 2011: 176) proposes his own five techniques for translating metaphors: translating the metaphor exactly (word-for-word); re-phrasing the metaphor as a simile (this works some of the time, in languages where metaphors are never or rarely used); translating the metaphor into an equivalent metaphor in the TL (i.e. the metaphor 'the ship ravaged through the waves' in the SL translated as 'the ship pushed through the waves like a battering ram' in the TL); translating the metaphor using literal language (this destroys the imagery of the metaphor); and using the metaphor, but providing the necessary referents so that any audience will understand it (that is, explaining the metaphor to those who might not understand it).

Machali (2000, cited in Kendenan 2017: 109) also suggested two strategies for translating metaphors, mainly: using the equivalent metaphorical imagery in the TL or using



functional equivalent, such as in translating idiomatic expressions with semantic or communicative methods.

Newmark (1988, cited in Kendenan 2017: 109) offers his own five techniques as well, and they are: reproducing the same image in the TL; replacing the image in the SL with a standard image in the TL (the one that does not clash with the TL culture); translating metaphor as a simile; translating metaphor as a simile plus sense; reducing the metaphor to sense; combining the same metaphor with sense; and deletion. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, reducing a metaphor or a simile to their sense could be considered a deletion. A case can be made for its deletion, together with its sense, provided the SL text is not authoritative or expressive (it is primarily the writer expressing his own personality). As Alvarez (1993: 488) puts it: “A decision of this nature can be made only after the translator has weighed up what he thinks is more important and what is less important in the text in relation to its intention.”

## 6. Data and methods

The research was conducted comparing the original *A Secret History* book in English and its translation into Croatian *Tajna povijest* by Tina Antonini. We've looked specifically for similes and metaphors, which the book has an abundance of. I will explain the methodology and the analysis of the collected data, as well as conduct the research. But, before we begin with a description of the data collecting process and methods of comparison, a few words about the book itself are in order.

### 6.1. *A Secret History*

Donna Tartt is a critically acclaimed American author born on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1963. She began writing at an early age, and was proclaimed a literary genius. Her debut novel, *A Secret History*, was published by Alfred A. Knopf in September 1992, and it quickly became a bestseller. Her other works include novels *The Little Friend*, and *The Goldfinch*, for which she won the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

Richard Papen is a med student who decides to leave his small hometown named Plano in California to attend a prestigious liberal arts college in Vermont, named Hampden. There, he becomes enthralled with a group of five students who, under the mentorship of Julian Morrow, attend classes of Greek. After a while, Camilla, Charles, Bunny, Francis, and Henry accept Richard in their group and he becomes friends with them, and Julian Morrow's student. Unbeknownst to him, eventually everything will fall apart, and things will take a turn for the worse.

The book begins in retrospect, describing Bunny's murder at the hands of the group, which makes the book an inverted murder mystery novel with readers already knowing who the murderer is. The book keeps the suspense by building tension through the events that happen before Bunny's murder, by showing and resolving conflicts between Bunny and the group as well as within the group itself. While happy to finally be accepted into the group he admired, Richard begins to notice their strange behavior, seemingly always suffering from small injuries, boiling strange plants on the stove, and hiding bloody clothes. Bunny becomes paranoid after the winter break, and his behavior erratic. He becomes rude towards everybody in the group, insulting them and demanding tasks to be performed in his favor. Finally, after Richard became suspicious enough, Henry reveals the horrible truth. He confesses that, with Julian's approval, he, Camilla, Charles, and Francis have performed an ancient Greek ritual called Dionysian bacchanal that resulted in the death of a farmer. Bunny has learned the truth and has been

blackmailing them ever since. Afraid that Bunny will expose them as his mental health deteriorates, Henry hatches a plan. They catch Bunny while hiking, and Henry pushes him off a cliff, killing him instantly.

Richard narrates the horrible events that took place before and after the murder, the good, the bad, and the ugly. He realizes the group is far from the idyllic image they presented themselves as all these months ago in Francis' cabin. As the pressure builds, they start to show the cracks in their facade. Charles becomes abusive towards Camilla and an alcoholic, Francis's hypochondria worsens, Richard becomes addicted to pills, and Henry realizes he has no moral qualms with murder. This ends in yet another gruesome event, when Henry kills himself in hopes of preventing Charles from going to the police. In the end, Richard realizes he is still as unhappy as he was in the beginning of the story, as are all the members of the clique.

The book, while describing devastating events, is filled to the brim with expressive, figurative language that lends well to this type of research. With an abundance of metaphors and similes, we picked and chose those which are a prime example of the type of translation technique we would like to show. In the next chapters we will go over the methodology and analysis of the collected data.

## **7. Methodology**

Our research data was sourced from the original book *A Secret History* by Donna Tartt and its version in Croatian *Tajna povijest*, translated by Tina Antonini. We have collected 54 similes and 40 metaphors from both editions. We have also scoured the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), to determine the frequency of these the similes and metaphors in a broader context. To analyze the collected similes and metaphors, we have employed the translation techniques discussed in the previous chapters. For analyzing similes, the Pierini's technique for translating similes was used, whereas Larson's technique was applied to analyze the translation of metaphors. In the following chapters we will analyze how the similes and metaphors were translated using these specific techniques, which method was used and why.

## **8. Analysis**

### **8.1. Collected data**

Based on the collected data, the percentage of each Larson's and Pierini's strategy can be found below (see table 1 and 2). Pierini's technique includes the following: 1. literal translation; 2. replacement of the image with a different image; 3. reducing the simile to its sense; 4. retaining

the same image by explicating the similarity features; 5. replacing the image with a gloss; and 6. the omission of the simile.

Table 1. Percentage of the strategies used in translating similes

| Strategy  | Frequency (Percentage) |
|---|------------------------|
| <b>1. literal translation</b>   | 33 (62%)               |
| <b>2. replacement of the image with a different image</b>                 | 9 (16%)                |
| <b>3. reducing the simile to its sense</b>                                | 0 (0%)                 |
| <b>4. retaining the same image by explicating the similarity features</b> | 4 (8%)                 |
| <b>5. replacing the image with a gloss</b>                                | 8 (14%)                |
| <b>6. the omission of the simile</b>                                      | 0 (0%)                 |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>54 (100%)</b>       |

Larson's technique for translating metaphors includes the following: 1. the translator can keep the metaphor in the target text if the TL permits it; 2. the metaphor can be translated as a simile; 3. the metaphor can be substituted by a metaphor in the TL which has the same meaning; 4. the metaphor (or simile) can be kept and its meaning explained; and 5. the meaning of the metaphor can be translated without keeping the metaphorical imagery.

Table 2. Percentage of the strategies used in translating metaphors

| Strategy   | Frequency (Percentage) |
|--|------------------------|
| <b>1. the translator can keep the metaphor in the target text if the TL permits it</b>       | 35 (87,5%)             |
| <b>2. the metaphor can be translated as a simile</b>   | 2 (5%)                 |
| <b>3. the metaphor can be substituted by a metaphor in the TL which has the same meaning</b> | 2 (5%)                 |

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| 4. the metaphor (or simile) can be kept and its meaning explained                         | 0 (0%)           |
| 5. the meaning of the metaphor can be translated without keeping the metaphorical imagery | 1 (2,5%)         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>40 (100%)</b> |

### 8.2. *Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)*

While the Corpus of Contemporary American English contains a vast collection of similes collected from various sources over the years, those that we have found in Donna Tartt's book were few and far in between. In fact, from the 54 similes we have collected, we could only identify two within COCA (see example 1-2):

- (1)...the hair was snow white (COCA frequency of 106)
- (2)...blood-warm waters of dream (COCA frequency of 9)

Based on that information we can confidently conclude that Donna Tartt did not borrow the similes and metaphors from other sources, rather, it is highly probable that she authored the majority of them herself.

### 8.3. *Classifying translated similes using Pierini's technique*

As a reminder, the Pierini's technique consists of six approaches for translating similes: literal translation (retention of the same vehicle/image); replacement of the image with a different image; reduction of the simile, if idiomatic, to its sense; retention of the same image plus explicitation of similarity feature(s); replacement of the image with a gloss; and omission of the simile. Arguably the most frequently used strategy in this translation is literal translation. The translator replicated the same image in Croatian as the one in English because the simile retains the same meaning in Croatian as in English. Moreover, the Croatian language allows for faithful representation, ensuring proper comprehension by the target audience (see examples 3-6 below).

#### Example 3

ST: "My years there created for me an expendable past, disposable as a plastic cup."

**Commented [X1]:** Trebam li zadržati samo one primjere koje sam temeljitije objasnila ili da zadržim i one primjere koje nisu objašnjeni?

TT: Od godina koje sam ondje proveo dobio sam prošlost koja se mogla žrtvovati, odbaciti kao plastična čaša.

Example 4

ST: In this swarm of cigarettes and dark sophistication they appeared here and there like figures from an allegory, or long-dead celebrants from some forgotten garden party.

TT: U mnoštvu cigareta i tamne sofisticiranosti izronili bi ponegdje poput alegorijskih likova ili davno umrlih slavjenika s neke zaboravljene vrtne zabave.

Example 5

ST: The whoosh of the flames was like a flock of birds, trapped and beating in a whirlwind near the ceiling.

TT: Fijuk plamenova bio je poput jata ptica koje, uhvaćene u stupicu, silovito mašu krilima pod stropom.

Example 6

ST: it stopped and stared—hair on end, mouth agog in idiotic astonishment—like a comic book character konked on the head with an anvil, chaplet of stars and birdies twittering about the brow.

TT: zastao je i promatrao me – nakostriješene kose, budalasto se iščuđavajući razjapljenih usta – nalik liku iz stripa udarenom nakovnjem po glavi, kojemu oko glave plešu zvjezdice i ptičice.

While not the most exciting approach, literal translation as a strategy proves effective with these similes. The meaning remains the same in Croatian and in English. The audience will have clear understanding of what the author meant without necessitating any alterations in the form during translation. While slight adjustments were made likely due to the translator's own creative difference, the form conveys the meaning perfectly through literal translation. These similes are not standard in either English or Croatian, they are the author's creative expression, so the retention of form is vital for the text and the meaning of the similes. Nevertheless, there are a few clumsy solutions (see examples 5 and 6) that could have been improved, perhaps with the

implementation of a different strategy, particularly in the example 6 where ‘anvil’ was translated literally as ‘nakovanj’. Maybe a more appropriate term would be ‘čekić’, as in ‘hammer’, because it is a more frequently used term in these contexts. Despite this, the translator generally applied the appropriate strategy in handling these similes.

Instances of replacing the image with a different image are also common in this particular translation. As we have learned, this strategy involves replacing a simile in the source language with a standard one in the target language to preserve the same meaning. Several examples of this strategy can be found in the translated text (see 7-9 below).

#### Example 7

ST: I’ll never forget the way he looked, white as talc, beads of sweat on his upper lip and the light bouncing off his glasses

TT: nikad neću zaboraviti kako je izgledao, blijed kao krpa, kapljice znoja na gornjoj usnici i naočale koje mu se cakle...

#### Example 8

ST: His face was as white as chalk.

TT: Bio je blijed kao krpa.

#### Example 9

ST: Charles raised his arm; and quick as a flash, Francis, who was standing closest to him, threw a glass of wine in his face.

TT: Charles je podigao ruku; brz kao strijela, Francis, koji mu je stajao najbliže, zalio ga je čašom vina po licu.

As seen from these examples, the translator was forced to change the imagery of the similes in order to ensure their meaningful rendition in the target language. While Croatian and English may sometimes share similar imagery when it comes to similes, in these instances the target audience might not understand the meaning of the similes if they were translated literally, so the translator had to change the imagery. For instance, let us consider the simile “His face was as white as chalk”, which had to be translated as “Bio je blijed kao krpa” because the Croatian language does not allow “as white as chalk” to be translated literally (bijel kao kreda), as there

is no equivalent simile that allows the translator to keep the imagery of the original simile. The targeted audience will most likely understand it, but even those who do not speak the English language will realize that something is amiss. In contrast, the Croatian simile “blijed kao krpa” (as white as a rag) is a standardized expression that is used within the community, ensuring better comprehension by the target audience. The same applies to other examples used, therefore the translator’s decision to use this strategy for translating similes was justified.

Notably, the strategy of reducing the idiomatic simile to its meaning couldn’t be found in this translation. As discussed previously, this strategy is used when a simile in the source language lacks an equivalent in the target language. In such cases, the translator has no option but to explain the meaning of the idiom, rather than providing a direct translation. One factor that might have contributed to this is the fact that Donna Tartt almost exclusively used her own similes, as established in the previous chapter, rather than drawing from the established similes in the English language and incorporating them into her text. Consequently, since none of her similes were idiomatic, the translator did not need to use this particular strategy to help translate Tartt’s similes.

However, retaining the same image by explicating the similarity features is a strategy that the translator employed in some cases (see examples 10-13 below). This strategy is employed when the translator is unsure whether the target audience is familiar with the literal translation of the source simile. To ensure better comprehension, the translator explicates certain parts of the simile to make it clearer for the target audience.

#### Example 10

ST: They looked very much alike, with heavy dark-blond hair and epicene faces as clear, as cheerful and grave, as a couple of Flemish angels.

TT: Bili su jako slični, guste kose boje žita i androginih lica, vedri, razdragani i ozbiljni kao par anđela sa slika flamanskih majstora.

#### Example 11

ST: Bunny was himself as fond of walks as an old dog.

TT: Bunny je i sam volio izlete poput kakva starog psa mješanca.

#### Example 12



ST: ...white-laced branches dripping rain holes in the crust.

TT: ...gdje je s grana ukrašenih bijelom čipkom kapala kiša i stvarala rupe u snježnoj kori

#### Example 13

ST: ...it clanged unevenly to and fro like a bell at a séance.

TT: ...zvecketalo je neujednačeno poput zvona na nekoj spiritističkoj seansi.

While there are not many examples for this strategy, they are distributed throughout the text enough to be worth discussing. While these similes are understandable enough by the target audience not to warrant a different, more severe, strategy (i.e., a gloss), if translated literally, the target audience would have a problem understanding them. For instance, in example 10, the translator had to explicitate the simile in the translation, because, if the form was kept intact, it might generate some confusion, mainly because of the fact that Flemish is also a name for people, and the target audience might not be familiar enough with the art of that time that they might conclude that the author is comparing the twins with the Flemish angels (real people), not with the paintings of the Flemish artists (angels in the paintings). So, the translator explicitated the simile: kao par anđela sa slika flamanskih majstora (as a couple of angels painted by the Flemish artists). Similarly, in example 12, translating “white-laced” literally would not only be extremely challenging, but could be nearly unintelligible to the target audience. Such similes are rarely seen in Croatian, and translating them into Croatian can pose a great challenge, especially if the structure of the sentence does not permit it. While in the example 3 a literal translation worked because the structure of the sentence was clear and concise (snow-white – snježno bijela), where the adjective describes solely Jullian’s hair, this sentence is not. If translated literally into Croatian (white-laced – čipkasto-bijele), the audience might think that this is describing the branches themselves, not the snow on top of the branches, which would lead to more confusion as to why the branches were dripping holes in the snow. By explicitating the simile, by reconstructing the sentence and adding a verb (gdje je s grana ukrašenih bijelom čipkom – the branches decorated with white lace) the translator successfully avoided potential confusion, preventing a misinterpretation of the simile.

The strategy of replacing the image with a gloss was used precisely eight times throughout this translation. Replacing the image with a gloss is a more drastic strategy than retaining the same image by explicitating the similarity features because the translator is adding

a note or a comment to the translated text to enhance its comprehension for the audience. We will explore 3 of those similes in more detail (see examples 14-16 below).

#### Example 14

ST: ...a black greatcoat that billowed behind him as he walked and made him look like a cross between a student prince and Jack the Ripper.

TT: ...crni ogrtač koji se nadimao za njim dok je hodao, tako da niste bili sigurni slični li studentu kraljeviću ili Jacku Trbosjeku.

Gloss: Romantični lik heidelberškog princa kojega njegov otac šalje da iskuša "stvarni" život, poznat iz opereta i filmova, izvorno iz drame W. M. Foerster.

#### Example 15

ST: ...Henry too erratic and generally strange, a sort of Mycroft Holmes of classical philology.

TT: ...Henry preveliki ekscentrik i općenito čudan, neka vrsta Mycrofta Holmesa klasične filologije.

Gloss: Brat Sherlocka Holmesa, izuzetno inteligentan, obrazovan i pomalo ekscentričan.

#### Example 16

ST: ...like convertibles in some nightmare Rose Parade...

TT: ...poput kabrioleta u nekakvoj sablasnoj Paradi ruža...

Gloss: Svakog 1. siječnja, u Pasadeni se održava povorka velikih vozila s cvijećem, u kojoj sudjeluje i orkestar, konjanici...

As these examples show, the application of the gloss strategy was very much needed in the process of translating these similes. As Donna Tartt is an eccentric herself, some of her similes would not be widely understood by the target audience, especially the simile in the example 14. It is safe to conclude that the majority of the Croatian readers would have just assumed that the student prince in question is a prince who is also a student, remaining unaware that there is a dramatic reference to a student prince. The similar applies to example 16. The target audience could have interpreted the phrase as a general parade of roses, or would have been confused as to why the translator decided to use capitalization. With the added gloss though, the target

audience knows that there is a specific Rose Parade in Pasadena, and will have a clear understanding of what the author meant. However, when it comes to the example 15, opinions might differ regarding the necessity of the gloss. While some argue that Sherlock Holmes is a widely known literary character, and even those who do not know of Mycroft Holmes could safely assume he might be connected to Sherlock Holmes. But we must consider the book's historical context. Originally written in 1992 and translated into Croatian in 2004, the popularity of the book series might not have been that widespread during the early 2000s, especially among younger audiences. Therefore, the translator's choice in using a gloss to explain this particular simile to avoid possible confusion among the younger target audience might be justified. Even if the gloss was unnecessary, those who are familiar with Mycroft Holmes can simply skip over the comment and leave it for those who need it.

Regarding the omissions of the similes in the target text, none have been found. The strategy involves excluding the simile from the target text, while ensuring that the meaning of the source text remains intact. The reason why the translator did not do so might be due to both English and Croatian languages being European languages. Despite their obvious differences, other strategies could be employed to avoid such a severe move on the translator's part. Since this strategy is best avoided and only taken as a last resort, the translator's decision to omit the strategy itself is highly appreciated, and consequently alternative solutions have been found to successfully preserve the essence of the original similes.

#### **8.4. *Classifying translated metaphors using Larson's technique***

While it can be used for translating similes as well, Larson's technique is primarily focused on helping translators solve problems encountered while translating metaphors. The technique consists of five strategies: the translator can keep the metaphor in the target text if the target language permits it (if it sounds natural and is correctly understood by the audience); the metaphor can be translated as a simile (by adding like or as); the metaphor can be substituted by a metaphor in the target language which has the same meaning; the metaphor can be kept and its meaning explained (the point or topic of similarity can be added so the audience understands it); and the meaning of the metaphor can be translated without keeping the metaphorical imagery. As evident with similes, literal translation (keeping the metaphor in the target text) is still the most common strategy used in this translation (see examples 17-19).

Example 17

ST: The months subsequent were an endless dreary battle of paperwork, full of stalemates, fought in trenches.

TT: Sljedećih mjeseci vodila se beskonačna zamorna bitka s administracijom, puna pat pozicija, pravi rovovski rat.

#### Example 18

ST: And the nights, bigger than imagining: black and gusty and enormous, disordered and wild with stars.

TT: I noći, veće od slika mašte: crne, burne i goleme, rastrojene i divlje od zvijezda.

#### Example 19

ST: ...was evidence that rational processes rumbled somewhere in the muddied depths of his consciousness.

TT: ...dokazivali su da racionalni procesi još uvijek životare negdje u zamućenim dubinama njegove svijesti.

The translator, in these instances, skillfully chose the right strategy to deal with the challenges encountered while translating metaphors. The meaning and the imagery was kept the same because the target audience would have no difficulty understanding these metaphors. In fact, the translator was even more successful in translating metaphors than she was in translating similes, because she used expressive language that kept the text alive, while certain similes sometimes fell flat. In examples 18 and 19, the language usage fits perfectly with the meaning the author tried to convey with these metaphors. The usage of words such as “rastrojene” and “životare” was a brilliant solution to the challenges translators face when working with metaphors. While these words may not be the most obvious translation of “disordered” and “rumbled”, they effectively captured the feeling and the meaning of the metaphors, demonstrating the translator’s careful word choice. Perhaps this is because metaphors are implicit and the imagery they hold is more nuanced, allowing the translator room to play around with literal translation without compromising the form or the meaning of the metaphor.

The strategy of translating metaphors as a simile was found a number of times in the text. It is a solution that helps the target audience understand the translated text better by

removing the implicitness of a metaphor, therefore making the target text easier to accept (see examples 20-21).

#### Example 20

ST: He played with relish, sleeves rolled up, smiling at his work, tinkling from the low ranges to the high with the tricky syncopation of a tap dancer going up a Ziegfeld staircase.

TT: Svirao je s užitkom, zavnutih rukava, smiješeći se onome što radi, prelazeći iz niskih tonaliteta u visoke složenim sinkopiranjem poput stepera koji se uspinje Ziegfeldovim stubištem.

#### Example 21

ST: His voice was nasal, garrulous, W. C. Fields with a bad case of Long Island lockjaw.

TT: Imao je nazalan, bučan glas, poput W. C. Fieldsa, s teškim slučajem grča čeljusti tipičnog za govor na Long Islandu.

The example I would like to highlight is the example 21, where the translator not only translated the metaphor as a simile, but she also added a gloss. The reason for this decision might be the vehicle, the idea conveyed by the metaphor. W. C. Fields is not as widely recognized in Croatia as he is in America. Comparing someone's voice to his has no meaning in Croatian, because the majority of the target audience is unfamiliar with him. The implicitness of the metaphor does not allow the meaning to be properly conveyed in the target language. If we were to remove the comparison marker (the word "poput") the meaning would become even more obscure, and the gloss would not exist (metaphor's implicitness does not allow notes or comments to be made). But, by explicating the metaphor, by turning it into a simile and adding a gloss, the meaning becomes more understandable for the audience.

An illustration of the strategy where a metaphor is substituted by a metaphor in the target language with the same meaning can be found at the very beginning of the book. The strategy is used when a metaphor, or certain elements of it, is already so common in the target language that translating it differently would make the translation forced, which is never the goal of translation (see example 22-23)

#### Example 22

ST: Does such a thing as 'the fatal flaw,' that showy dark crack running down the middle of a life, exist outside of literature?

TT: Postoji li ono što nazivamo “kobnom pogreškom”, ona upadljiva tamna napuklina koja se proteže posred nečijeg života, i izvan književnosti?

#### Example 23

ST: Rome was all right but actually it was kind of a sinkhole when you get right down to it.

TT: U Rimu nije bilo lose, ali zapravo je to pomalo žabokrečina kad malo bolje pogledaš.

The changes were necessary because the vehicle has an established and standardized form in the target language. To translate it literally would mean that the translator has no knowledge of the language she is translating into. “The fatal flaw” has been standardized through Shakespeare’s work, but it is not translated in Croatian as a fatal flaw (kobna mana), but as a fatal mistake (kobna pogreška), because that is the translation audience is already familiar with. The same can be applied to example 23. A sinkhole is usually used in metaphors to represent the feelings of depression and sadness. The Croatian language does not have a literal translation to convey these same feelings (vrtača), but a similar meaning can be found in the word backwater (žabokrečina). The translator picked the right strategy to translate these sentences, without losing the meaning of the phrases, and making it understandable for the audience.

I was unable to find examples where the translator retained the metaphor, but provided an explanation of its meaning. Perhaps, due to Tartt’s inclination to coming up with her own metaphors, there were no instances of standardized metaphors that are used frequently in the English language, but have no equivalent in the Croatian language, which would necessitate the translator to retain the metaphor as is and add a comment or a note to clarify its meaning.

I was able to find one example of translating the meaning of the metaphor without keeping the metaphorical imagery, although it might be because of the translator’s oversight (see example 24).

#### Example 24

ST: His eyes were riveted on mine; they were bright with a horrible relish.

TT: Pogled mu je bio prikovan uz moj.

As we can see, the first part of the metaphor was translated literally into the Croatian language (His eyes were riveted on mine – Pogled mu je bio prikovan uz moj). This standard metaphor is used in both English and Croatian to explain that someone looking deeply into someone else's eyes in concentration. However, the second part (they were bright with a horrible relish), also a metaphor, is missing from the translation entirely. The imagery remains intact, but the second part of the metaphor is absent. It is strange because the second part could have also been translated literally (Pogled pun jezovitog užitka bio mu je prikovan uz mok). It could be explained by the translator's mistake in noticing the continuation of the sentence. If her concentration was broken, which naturally happens from time to time, she might have just continued on to the next sentence, without noticing this part of the metaphor. Or perhaps she could not find a solution good or satisfying enough for this part, leading her to omit it altogether.

## 9. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the strategies used in the Croatian translation of similes and metaphors from Donna Tartt's novel *A Secret History*, translated by Tina Antonini. 54 similes and 40 metaphors were extracted from the original novel, which have been deemed appropriate for this research, and their equivalents have been found in the Croatian translation of the novel. An attempt was made to detect instances in the translated text where the translator omitted certain similes and metaphors. The strategies used for analyzing similes and metaphors were Pierini's and Larson's strategies respectively.

In the theoretical part of this study, the history of non-literary and literary translation was explained and numerous definitions for them were provided to lay a foundation for the analysis. The intricacies of both similes and metaphors, their definitions, types, and differences were also explained in depth. Several categories were explained, all providing a necessary theoretical approach to these phraseological units. The strategies for translating both of these phraseological units were explained. Only one strategy (Pierini's strategy) that focuses primarily on similes was found, while others can be applied for both similes and metaphors, and other phraseological units (Larson's strategy).

The analysis section begins with a brief description of Donna Tartt's novel *A Secret History*, the object of our research. Similes and metaphors were analyzed by utilizing Pierini's and Larson's strategies and the following was concluded: the translator appeared to have used almost all strategies offered by Pierini and Larson for translating similes and metaphors. Literal translation turned out to be the predominant technique for both similes (used 33 times, or 62% of the instances) and metaphors (applied 35 times, over 80% of the instances). This prevalence is likely attributed to the fact that both similes and metaphors were Tartt's original creations. Other strategies appeared more or less frequently throughout the target text, where the translator decided that a literal translation would diminish the intended meaning in the target text. The only strategies that were conspicuously absent in the text were reducing the simile to its sense and the omission of simile (Pierini's strategy), and retaining the metaphor while explaining its meaning (Larson's strategy).

From the data collected and analyzed it can safely be concluded that similes and metaphors might be easier to translate from English into Croatian than generally assumed. As demonstrated, similes and metaphors are often literally translated from the source text into the target text, especially if the authors constructed them themselves. Only when there is a risk of



misinterpretation, do the translators use more radical strategies, which oftentimes completely changes the form of these phraseological units. Sometimes, they even omit them entirely. The analysis has revealed that the translator successfully avoided the usage of such radical strategies in favor of literally translating them and capturing the meaning accurately. The use of a gloss proves necessary when the similes and metaphors are imbedded in the culture they originate from (in this case the American culture), but usually translators find a more creative way to translate them. This particular translation is extremely successful in replacing the source text with the target text accurately, while also capturing the essence and the mood interwoven by the author throughout the entire novel.

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