

**THE LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF TRANSLATED TEXT OF QUATRAINS  
OF KHAYYAM BASED ON CDA  
(THREE TRANSLATIONS IN FOCUS)**

**MARZIYEH KHALILIZADEH GANJALIKHANI**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**HIGHER EDUCATION COMPLEX OF**

**BAM BAM, IRAN**

**ANAHITA AMIRSHOJAI**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**HIGHER EDUCATION COMPLEX OF**

**BAM BAM, IRAN**

**Abstract**

*Poetry translation has been a debatable subject from the very beginning of translation history. Jakobson believes that poetry translation is an impossible act and is only possible through creative transposition. Since there are different schools of thoughts toward this issue there are different models which have been proposed. The present research attempts to investigate three translations of the Robaiyyat of Khayyam based on the Yarmohammadi's Model on translation of poetry, exclusively Quatrains of Khayyam. Yarmohammadi's model is a discourse analysis of Fitzgerald's translation of Khayyam's Quatrains and he believes that Fitzgerald discourse throughout his collection is kept the same as Khayyam's. The presented research has revisited the model by applying it on other translations of Khayyam's work. These translations are from Edward Fitzgerald, E.H. Whinfield and Abbas Ariyanpur and Mansour Ariyanpur. These Translations are from the same quatrains. 3 quatrains have been chosen as the samples of this research. The result of this investigation is the addition of some elements to Yarmohammadi's model the ideal translation according to this proposed and tentative model.*

**Keywords:** *discourse analysis, poetry translation, quatrain*

## **THE LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF TRANSLATED TEXT OF QUATRAINS OF KHAYYAM BASED ON CDA**

**-MARZIYEH KHALILIZADEH GANJALIKHANI**

**-ANAHITA AMIRSHOJAI**

ctionIntrodu

Soon after FitzGerald published his translation in 1859, and despite its worldwide recognition as a masterpiece of English literature, questions were raised with regards to the reliability and truthfulness of his translation and the authenticity of the quatrains. The Russian professor V.A. Zhukovski was the first who tried to establish which quatrains were genuine but discovered that 82 of the 464 verses from Nicolas' translation (1867) also appeared in the divans of other poets. The number of these 'wandering' quatrains was increased by investigations by the British orientalist Denison Ross, the Danish scholar Arthur Christensen and the German scholar Christian Rempis. Also the German translator Friedrich Rosen and, more recently, Iranian scholars as Sadegh Hedayat, Ali Dashti, Mohammed Ali Furughi and Qasim Ghani have tried to find a method to determine which quatrains may, with some degree of certainty, be ascribed to Khayyam. In a recently published study, *The Wine of Wisdom* (2005), Mehdi Aminrazavi reviews the major studies until this day and concludes that it is impossible to determine the number of Omar Khayyam's Quatrains. Another ongoing dispute concerns the question how Khayyam's poetry should be interpreted. Was he a mystic, a sufi, or was he the hedonist that western translators hold him for? Edward FitzGerald and Omar Khayyam are often treated as an inseparable couple. Most people only know Khayyam from FitzGerald's translation and it is this translation that has been reprinted in thousands of editions worldwide. However, there are hundreds of other translations in approximately 85 languages, sometimes literally translated directly from the Persian. Some of the more important translations are by J.B. Nicolas (1867), E.H. Whinfield, (1882), J. Payne (1898), F. Rosen (1909), and more recently by Rempis (1935), Fouladvand (1960 and 1965), Saidi (1991).

## 2. Review of Literature

### 2.1. Khayyam's Quatrain

Khayyam's Quatrains are simple, clear, eloquent, and with deep meaning. He is serious and firm in his poems, and does not refer to any persons and does not jest, praise, or lampoon. Many others imitated his style and meaning, and wrote Quatrains which are sometimes mistakenly attributed to him. His genuine Quatrains are believed to number less than 100. Researchers have used many techniques to weed out Quatrains not likely written by him. They include Iranian literary experts like Forooghi, Ghani, Nafisi, as well as non-Iranians like Valentine Zhukofsky (Russian), Frederich Rosen (German), Arthur Christiansen (Danish), and Edward Fitzgerald (British)

### 2.2. Messages in Quatrains

Khayyam packs a lot of wisdom and advice in his Quatrains. They are told in the language of wine, love, flowers, and nature. There are several recurring concepts/messages in his Quatrains:

\_ Mystery of life

Khayyam has fundamental philosophical questions about the meaning of life, why we are born, and why we must die.

\_ The inevitability of death

\_ He suggests to seize the moment; no return after death: Khayyam reminds one to enjoy life while it lasts; don't wait for Paradise; once you're gone there's no return.

\_ Drinking wine

\_ Nothing is pre-ordained

Khayyam does not believe in "pre-ordained" matters.

Some attribute Khayyam's poetry to Sufism. Although some of his thoughts, such as drinking wine may coincide with Sufi thoughts, but Sufis embrace death while Khayyam laments about death.

## 2.3. The Discoursal and Textual Structure of the Quatrains of Khayyam and of Fitzgerald's Translation.

According to Yarmohammadi (1995) Fitzgerald's success is because of the discourse and textual features which are shared between the original and the translated text. Yarmohammadi has done a discourse and textual analysis. What he believes important in understanding a text are "background knowledge" and "schemata" which are shared between the speaker/hearer and author/reader. These schemata are of two kinds: formal and contextual. For example a love story differs from a horror story (content). It is true in the field of poetry as well. For example, an Ode is used to describe and admire "the greatness" of something; therefore, the form the Ode also long. But in the case of Quatrains the topic is the shortness of life, or enjoying the life; therefore the form is also short which represents this shortness.

There are three important features about Khayyam's Quatrains which must be mentioned:

1- description (of nature) 2- suggestion (an advice given to the readers) 3- adjustment (justifying the suggestion)

These three elements may be present explicitly altogether or not.

In discourse analysis 3 factors are important:

1- Themmatization strategies, 2- structure information, 3- cohesive devices

What Fitzgerald has done according to Yarmohammadi (1995), is that, he made a collection consisted of 101 stanzas; in different stanzas the three basic elements of Quatrains ( description, suggestion, adjustment) are shown. For example, in the first 3 stanzas he has described the Dawn, etc. In fact Fitzgerald has created a collection and has used different images of different poems or even poets in his translations since he wanted to have the same discourse over the entire collection as Yarmohammadi points this out. The tentative proposed model by the researcher is based on Yarmohammadi's interpretation of Khayyam's Quatrains and discoursal elements.

## 3. Data analysis and discussion

In this section 10 quatrains were analyzed but in this paper we only mentioned one of them. The first translation belongs to Fitzgerald, the second to Whinfeild and the third to Ariyanpur.

این کوزه چو من عاشق زاری بوده است

در بند سر زلف نگاری بوده است

این دسته که بر گردن او می بینی

دستی است که بر گردن یاری بوده است

### **Fitzgerald's Translation**

I think the vessel, that with fugitive

Articulation answered once did live,

And drink; and ah the passive lip I kiss'd,

How many kisses might it take- and give!

### **Whinfeild's Translation**

This jug did once, like me, love's sorrows taste,

And bonds of beauty's tresses once embraced,

This handle which you see upon its side,

Has many a time twined round a slender waist!

### **Ariyanpur 's Translation**

Like me this jug did once his love profess,

Ensnared in the locks of a beauty's tress

The handle you see on its neck was once

A hand caressing the neck of a mistress.

It seems that this Quatrain is purely a description of something. Someone while drinking wine (drinking is implied and one might be inferred), is looking at the jug at same time and the jug reminds him of the people before him who might have been in love with someone. Then the image of putting the arm around the neck of the beloved and playing with her hair matches the handle of the jug. But at the same

time if one goes one level deeper it seems that it is a suggestion and adjustment as well, since it is telling the reader to drink (suggestion), because life is too short and very soon we turn into clay (adjustment).

There are some keywords that make the discourse of the original quatrain: Kuza', Aa'sheq-e- zaa'r, Band, Zulf-e-negaa'r, Yaa'r, Dasteh, Gardan. The discourse of Fitzgerald's translation is made of, vessel, fugitive articulation, live, drink, passive lip, kiss'd. Fitzgerald's words are not the same as what Khayyam has used in original quatrain, but they are related to the total discourse and the two poems are close in terms of discourse. But the most essential word, Kuza, is translated to "vessel" which has a very general meaning: a container ( cask, kettle, bottle, cup, bowl) for holding something ( Webster, 2003). Aa'sheq-e- zaa'r ( someone who is deeply in love and is so depressed) which is another important word is not translated at all, as a result Thematisation strategies are different in the two poems. Therefore, it can be said that the discourse of the translation differs from the original.

In the Fitzgerald's translation act of drinking wine is described explicitly (... live and drink), and another image is made. As it was mentioned before the hand and playing with the hair of beloved exists in the description but in Fitzgerald's translation lip and kissing the beloved is described. In other words when he is drinking wine his lip touches the jug and he thinks of the lip of the people who touched the lip of their beloveds. It can be said that Fitzgerald has gone deeper in the description because when a lovers hand is around the neck of his beloved and he is playing with her hair it is not far- fetched that he might have kissed her as well just like the drinker that after looking at the jug of wine will drink the wine, too! In other words he puts his lip on the mouth of the jug and that can be the representation of kissing. According to Yarmohammadi it can be said that maybe the image of putting lips on the mouth the jug is taken from another Quatrain of Khayyam.

لب بر لب کوزه بردم از غایت آرز

تا زو طلبم واسطه ی عمر دراز

با من به زبان حال میگفت این راز

عمری چو تو بوده ام دمی با من ساز

Then to this earthen Bowl did I adjourn

My lip the secret Well of life to learn:

And lip to lip it murmur'd- "while you live

Drink!- for once dead you never shall return."



It is crystal clear that the meaning of these two Quatrain is so related, both are saying that life is too short (adjustment) but there are two different images.

At the first glance it seems that the original Quatrain is description only and to understand the suggestion and adjustment, one should pay more attention since they are implied. It can be said that adjustment is implied in Fitzgerald translation as well, but suggestion is explicit somehow because Fitzgerald has mentioned the act of drinking in his translation.

In the second translation (Whinfeild's translation) the words Kuza', Aa'sheq-e- zaa'r, Band, Zulf-e-negaa'r, Yaa'r, Dasteh, Gardan, are translated into "jug"," love's sorrows taste", "bonds of beauty's tresses", "embraced", "handle", "slender waist". These words are more or less the same as the original. Therefore the created discourse is very close to the original one. Kuza is translated into jug which means: earthenware or glass container with a narrow mouth and a handle (Webster, 2003). Aa'sheq-e-zaa'r is translated into "This jug did once, like me, love's sorrows taste," which is a kind of description for a lover's state. Therefore the two essential components which create thematization strategy are translated very closely to the original text.

The description of the arm around the neck of the beloved is changed to the arm around the beloved's slender waist, but playing with the hair is kept (and bonds of beauty's tresses once embraced,). It must be mentioned that when the "handle of a jug" is said to native Farsi speakers it is not necessary to explain that this handle is round since they have seen the handle of the jug and it is redundant for them to explain the circular shape of the handle, therefore this circular shape matches the circular shape of a hand when it is put around someone's neck easily (bar garden-e- yaa'ri bud east).

The word "bar" has two meanings in Persian, "on, upon" and "around" which both of them are used in this Quatrain. As it was said before it is not necessary to explain this roundness for Farsi speakers explicitly. But in the case of native English speakers since they had not have kuza in their culture its handle might have any shape; therefore, "Twined round a slender waist" is used to show this circular shape both for the handle of the jug and for the hand of the man. Whinfeild has used "waist" instead of neck because in English when one twines his hand around someone's neck it seems that he wants to strangle the person! So a kind of compensation has occurred: to create the roundness he had to change the word "neck" into "waist".

The implied suggestion and adjustment of the original Quatrain are implied in the translated version as well.

In the third translation (Ariyanpur) the key words are translated into "...once his love profess", "Ensnared", "locks of a beauty's tress", handle, "caressing", "mistress" the words that Ariyanpur has used are more or less the same as the original. The first line of the quatrain is describing that someone has been in love only. There is nothing to indicate the woeful state of the lover (A'sheq-e za'r). Therefore a part of the image is lost. The thematization strategy of the original poem is made of Aa'shq-e- zaa'r (the lover) and the jug (Kuza) and it has been observed in the translation as well.

The word "ensnared" which is used for (dar band) means to take in or as if in snare (Webster, 2003) seems an appropriate equivalence. Lock means a. a tress or ringlet of hair b. pl: the hair of the head (Webster, 2003). Tress means a long lock of hair; esp: long unbound of a woman. Lock is used in its plural form which means the hair of the head, besides in its single form it is a synonym for tress, as a result having both of them creates redundancy. "Nega'r" is translated as "beauty" and "Ya'r" into "mistress" which are good choices. Opposite to whinfeild, Ariyanpur has not made the roundness of this image explicit for the reader and has used the word caressing which means to touch or stroke lightly in a loving or endearing manner (Webster, 2003). This kind of description does not necessarily bring that circular shape into the reader's mind; moreover, it seems that the beloved is sitting in front of the lover rather than sitting beside him. In the original poem it said "in dasteh ke bar garden-e- ou mibini" / "dasti ast keh bar dardan-e yaa'ri budeh ast" since the handle of the jug, which is beside it, reminds the poet of the hand of a lover therefore, the same image to be created, the beloved should be sitting beside him rather than in front of him!

The implied suggestion and adjustment are kept implied as well.

#### 4. Results

The findings of the research are shown on different charts. Firstly a general model is drawn to present a general view on what has been done. Then four charts, for each Quatrain, are presented to show the differences between the original and its translations. The different parts of the translations are written in *italic* form.

In each chart the short forms are written. They are as follows:

D= Description

S= Suggestion

A= Adjustment

T= Thematization strategy



C.D= Cohesive devices

S.I= Structure information

L.C= Lexical cohesion

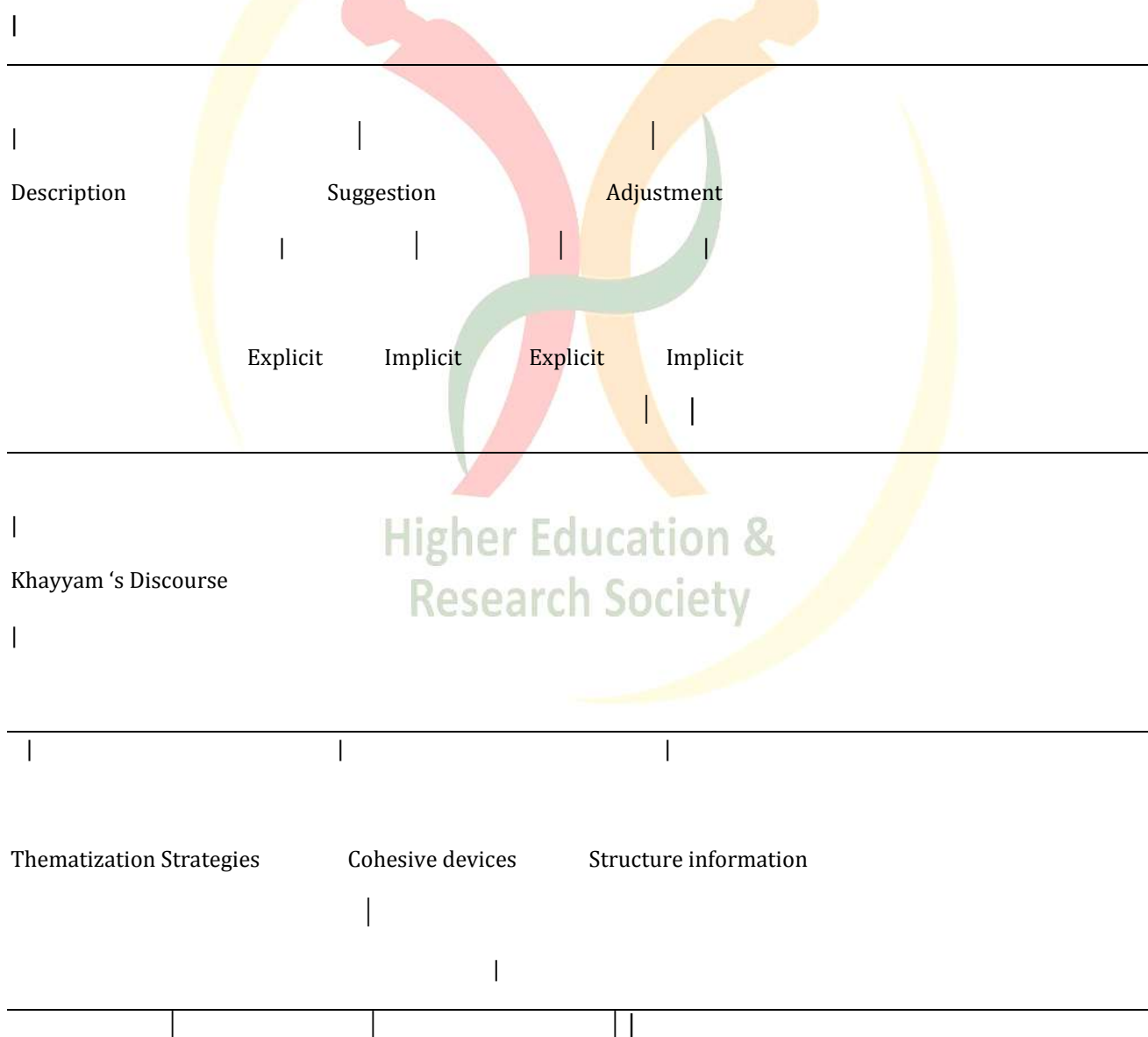
I= Image

MA.I= Major image

MI.I= Minor image

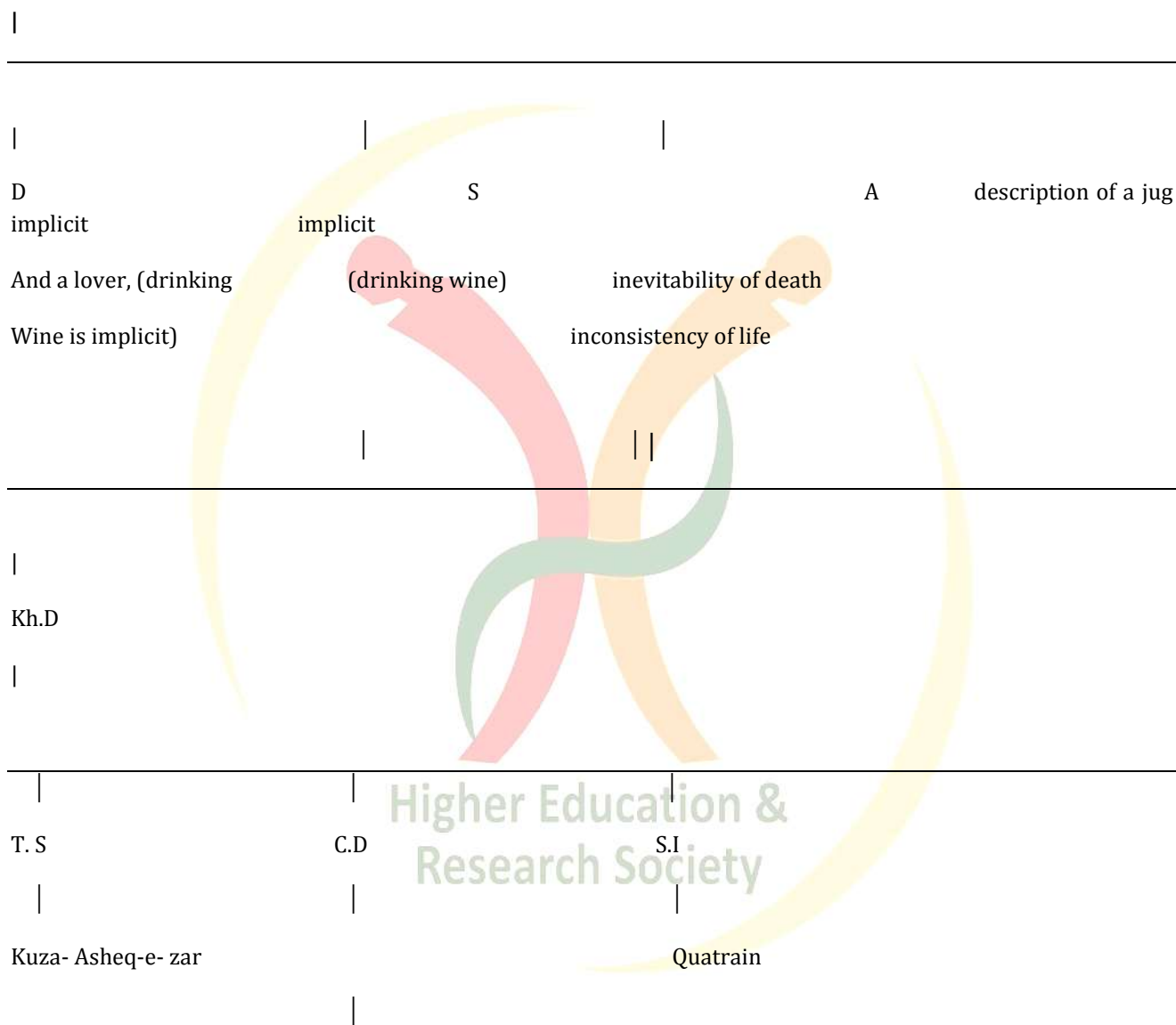
Kh.D= Khayyam's discourse

Khayyam's Quatrain



Omission	Substitution	Lexical cohesion	Refrence
	Major image	Minor image	

Quatrain's chart



Kuza-	Asheq-e-zar-	Zulf-e-negar	Yar	Dasteh	Gardan

MA.I

MI.I

||

A lover sitting beside his someone drinking wine

Beloved and his arm is around with a jug

A beloved's neck and plays with

Her hair

Fitzgerald's translation

|

|

D

|

S

|

A

|

||

description of a jug

Explicit

implicit

And a lover, (*drinking*

(*drinking wine*)

inevitability of death

*Wine is implicit*)

inconsistency of life

|

||

Higher Education &  
Research Society

|

Kh.D

|

T. S

C.D

S.I

|

|

|

Same

Quatrain

Kissed Vessel Figurative articulation Live Drink Passive lips

|

|

MA.I

MI.I

||

A lover is kissing her beloved

someone drinking wine a

vessel

Whinfeild's translation

|

|

|

|

D

S

A

|

||

description of a jug

implicit

implicit

And a lover,

|

||

|

Kh.D

|

Higher Education &  
Research Society

T.S

C.D

S.I

|

|

|

Same

Quatrain

|

Jug Love's sorrow taste handle slender waist

|

|

MA.I

MI.I

||

A lover is sitting beside his beloved

someone is drinking

And his hand around *her waist*

wine with a jug

Ariyanpur's translation

|

D

S

A

|

||

describtion of a jug

implicit

implicit

And a lover,

|

||

|

Kh.D

|

Higher Education &  
Research Society

T. S

C.D

S.I

|

|

|

Same

Quatrain

|

Did Once his love profess      *Locks of beauty's* handle      *caressing* mistress

MA.I

MI.I

A lover is sitting in front of his beloved

someone is drinking

Wine with jug

## 5. Conclusion

The analysis section of this research revealed that Fitzgerald's translation of the Quatrains of Khayyam is just a recreation of Khayyam's Ideology, and he has both manipulated the images through the same setting or he has changed the total settings. He has westernized the poem and it seems the reason of his success. e.g: "and ah the passive lip I kiss'd". However it is a fact the readers must approve something in order to be considered a good work but it is important for the translators to represent at least the ideology of the original work. On the whole the major problem of Fitzgerald's translation as it was mention before is, firstly, the oblique translation of the overall Quatrains; it is not clear that which translation belongs to which Quatrain. e.g:

یک چند به کودکی به استاد شدیم

یک چند ز استادی خود شاد شدیم

پایان سخن شنو که ما را چه رسید

از خاک در آمدیم و بر باد شدیم

Higher Education &  
Research Society

With them the seed of wisdom did I sow,

And with my own hand wrought to make it grow;

And this was all the harvest that I reap'd

I came like water, and like wind I go."



Secondly, the repetition of same images through different Quatrains. e.g: “and ah the passive lip I kiss'd” . and “And lip to lip it murmur'd” these two verses belong to two different translated Quatrains but this image exist only in one of them.

Thirdly, Fitzgerald has used another elements of the same setting. e.g: “Fox” and “Roe” are translated as “Lion” and “Lizard”.

Fourthly, Fitzgerald translation serves for the taste of the readers rather than the Writer.

Whinfeild's translation seems to be more loyal to Khayyam's ideology. He has not changed the elements of the Quatrain unless where it is necessary. In other words when there has been a possibility of misunderstanding for the target readers he has changed the element. (Refer to the discussion section, page 14). However it can be said that there are the cases of undertranslation in his work as well. e.g: Jamshid is not translated in a Quatrain and this may affect the semantics of the poem.

Ariyanpur's translation is very close to the original poem, but there are some cases of mistranslation in his work which causes misunderstanding for the readers, Moreover he is so concerned with the original text and does not pay attention to the target readers. (Refer to discussion section, page 15).

It seems that Fitzgerald's translation has giant problems, since it is in opposition with the original poem. But Whinfeild's and Ariyanpur's translations are in vacillate state. In some cases Whinfeild's translation is superior and in some other cases Ariyanpur's translation seems more appropriate. To have a better and more precise judgment another research should be carried out on these two translations. It seems that this model (discourse analysis) is appropriate for Macro-level analysis of the text and Mico-level model is needed for other elements of the text such as rhyme, assonance, consonance, etc.

## English References:

Ariyanpur,A. Ariyanpur, M. (1971).*The Robaiyyat of Omar Khayyam*. Tehran, Iran:

Padideh Publishing.

Fitzgerald, E. (1976) *Robaiyyat of Omar Khayyam*.

Manser,M.H. (2000) *Synonyms and Antonyms*, England:Clay Ltd, St Ives plc

*Merriam Webster's Collegite Dictionary*,(2002).Massachusetts, England Merriyam-Incorporated.

Monday, J. (2001). *Introducing Translation studies*. U.S.A: Routledge.

## Persian References:

یار محمدی، لطف الله. (1383). *گفتمان شناسی رایج و انتقادی*. تهران.

یار محمدی، لطف الله. ( 1374). *پانزده مقاله در زبان شناسی مقابله ای و ساخت زبان فارسی: دستور، متن، گفتمان*. تهران: انتشارات رهنما.

