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Cultural Interaction in Translation based on Critical Discourse Analysis

(A Case Study: *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway)

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In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for the award of higher degree elsewhere.

Dedication

To my husband…

(for his unbelievable, un-waning, and real support)

He who made my dreams come true.

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Abstract

This study attempts to indicate the significance of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in translation to determine how it can be used to indicate the cultural and ideological deviation during translation process. Based on some possible reasons behind translation distortion that occurs when language is transferred from source text (ST) to target text (TT), it tries to indicate the relation of discourse and social structures. In this regard, after defining the key concepts, it elaborates on the works of some prominent critical discourse analyst, and some works related to given study. The reason for doing the research is to indicate the importance of cultural and ideological similarities and differences during translation process, to show the privileges of CDA over the other discourse analyses (DA) i.e., structuralism & functionalism. Having adapted Van Dijk & Huckin's methodology, their theories and key concepts are discussed and elaborated. The translation of the novel "*The Old Man and the Sea*" by Ernest Hemingway, is analyzed based on the mentioned framework with respect to the cultural and ideological standpoints of the translator. It has been observed that the translator's cultural attitudes and social beliefs have been conveyed through translation by adopting domestication method, idiomatic translation, and ideological naturalization (Fairclough's key term) in terms of dominant social function, though the author in his work which is a combination of realism and impressionism has influenced the reader without any interference. Based on common concepts (power and ideology) in translation and CDA, it concludes that CDA can help both analysts and translators understand social and cultural problems during the analysis and process of translation respectively, so it is indispensable for interpreting, describing, and analyzing, social, cultural, and ideological changes in a text.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, culture, cultural transmission, Ernest Hemingway, ideology, social structures, *The Old Man and the Sea*, Van Dijk & Huckin's theory

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Abbreviations

ST   Source text

TT   Target text

TS   Translation Studies

DA   Discourse Analysis

CDA   Critical Discourse Analysis

DETS Descriptive Explanatory Translation Studies

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Statement of Research Problem

For years translations were considered as copies, and translators as mechanical devices replacing linguistic codes from one language into another, and the translator's autonomy was always questioned (Leppihalme, 1997: 19), until recent years when, under the influence of functionalism and poststructuralism, the focus of attention has been shifted to the issue of translator's agency and subjectivity. Bassnett (1996) stresses the need for reassessing the role of the translator by analyzing his/her intervention in the process of linguistic transfer.

In particular it is now understood that translators do not simply say in one language what somebody or some piece of writing has said in another. Whatever translation is in its entirety, it seems to involve semiotics, linguistics, textual, lexical, social, sociological, cultural, and psychological aspects or elements, all of which are being studied nowadays as determining factors in whatever the translator does.

The translation can now be seen as a process in which intervention is crucial (22). Awareness of complexity of translation process and avoidance of the simplistic view of regarding translation as mere process of transferring words from one text to another will result in realizing the importance of the ideology and culture underlying a translation.

This turn in translation studies led to the relatively recent adoption of the term "discourse" by linguistics, especially modern linguistics, in the last two decades, at least partly recognition of the fact that language is very much more than just the sum of linguistic elements that compose it. Discourse is language plus context. The context includes a person's experience, assumptions, ideology, and expectation

(Woods, 2006). Among the discourse theories, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as an interdisciplinary branch for uncovering ideological assumption, and viewing language as a form of social practice, has attracted the great attention (McGregor, 2003: 2). In this regard the given study wants to answer the question that:

How can CDA be used to show the ideological and cultural transmission during translation process?

This issue is going to be tackled in this study.

1.2. An Introduction to the Research

As it was said, as long as individuals have communicated with one another through the mediation of someone else, there has probably been a realization that mediators do something more complex and interesting than simply substitute their own words, one by one for the originals. Since the early 1950s (Nida, 1952); however, there has been an upsurge in serious studies of translation, both in its theoretical, historical, didactic, and professional dimensions, and in its practice at the point when translators do something in response to their own reading of a text, and which leads to the production of a second text (Leo Hicky, 1998: 1).

A thorough study of the history of translation also reveals the fact that translation as a meeting point of different cultures and civilizations has been dynamically involving with the advent of various perspectives on the path of enlightening and awakening notions around the world. This indicates that translation can't be considered as an isolated and solitary mode of writing. As any form of rewriting (see Gentzler, 1993 & Lefever, 1992), translation implies manipulation, ideology, power, value system, and perception of reality, and it is a useful test case for the examining the whole issue of social life (Hatim & Mason: 1990: 1), so translation

studies found the sheer proliferation of linguistics to be inadequate for the analysis of the translation process, and moved toward discursive and critical approaches, to examine the meaning formation and the message of linguistic elements in terms of linguistic and extra linguistic factors.

So, based on the above-mentioned fact, and the determined framework, this study has attempted to tackle the mentioned issue through the chapters that will be introduced as follow:

Chapter One, that is the **Introduction** (the present chapter), focuses on the research problem. Then the related questions and hypotheses will be elaborated, and the significance of doing the research will be stated. After that the research framework and methodology will be determined. It ends up by defining some basic terms and concepts related to Discourse Analysis (DA), and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

Chapter Two deals with the **Review of the Literature**, and also gives due consideration to the background of the research. It draws upon the works of some prominent Critical Discourse Analysts, as well as some researchers whose concern is the same as the given study.

Chapter Three is the **Methodology & procedures**. It deals with the theoretical part, explaining different typology of CDA based on the determined framework and some key terms in the mentioned framework, and the data part, introducing the Case Study, along with some excerpts of ST & TT.

Chapter Four focuses on the **Analysis of the Data & the Results**, by reviewing the questions, and commenting on the obtained results on both micro & macro levels

by detailed and comparative analysis of the source text (ST) and target text (TT) to support the hypotheses, and to answer the questions.

Chapter Five which is the last one is the **Conclusion** of all of the stated subjects, regarding the given research.

1.3. Related Questions & Hypotheses

The research questions are as follow:

1. Can CDA help the translator in dealing with cultural transmission, and the analyst in reflecting the ideological attitude of the translator?

2. What are the privileges of CDA over the other DA (structuralism & functionalism)?

3. Some parts of cultures are in contrast, and some parts are interactive. How can CDA reflect the cultural contrast, and cultural interaction in translation?

The research hypotheses include:

1. CDA can help the translator in dealing with cultural transmission & cultural problems, and the analyst in reflecting the ideological attitude of the translator.

2. CDA has some privileges over structuralism & functionalism in dealing with translation problems.

3. CDA can significantly reflect the cultural contrast, and cultural interaction in translation process.

1.4. The Significance of the Research

Communicating information is not the mere responsibility of the language. Rather, there are more important issues to be done by means of any language, such as establishing and maintaining social identities. In other words, it can provide a detailed theoretical account of the operation of ideology in all aspects of language use. One such aspect is the ideological use of language in translation. Recently, the issue of ideological presence of translator in translations and the effect of ideological translations on the target readership has been discussed a lot. Although such influences, revealed through discourse shifts, are sometimes clear and distinguishable, the whole area requires more and more systematic studies since the issue is not always clear-cut.

CDA can be used as a powerful device for deconstructing the text to come up with the intended ideologies. This methodological approach has proved to be helpful in socio-cultural studies. Also investigating how attitudes and identities can cause socio-linguistic variations in different texts and discourse is of great importance. With regard to the fact that translation represents the relationship between language and culture, CDA tries to analyze the translated texts accurately to see how much of the original writer's ideology is visible in the translation and to what extent cultural values affect this process. Therefore, by the help of CDA, it is possible to have a systematic way of analyzing translations of a source text to unpack the ideologies behind it (Karoubi, 2005).

A few numbers of researches have also focused on the effects of ideology in translation, especially in literary genre such as novels. This area should receive much attention since the investigations of how the translator's ideological stance results in mediation and manipulation of the source text can help the best

interpretation of a text as well as its translations. This is quite implausible without doing a critical discourse analysis of the translation. Since the majority of the scholars agree upon the tendency of translations to deviate from their original texts, it is of great importance to recognize and deal with the possible underlying reasons.

In addition, the investigation of ideological orientations in literary translations can have implications for both teaching methodologies and translational studies. In fact, the ideological bases are different from English to Persian and this should be taken for granted in educational systems and translation due to the following factors:

*Text/discourse need to be understood before they are translated (which requires world knowledge, individual understanding, and inferences being secured by text/discourse analysis).

*Translation implies a transfer from one of at least two cultures, languages, modes, and sign systems to another.

*Text/discourse production in the target culture, language, mode, and sign system requires reformulation according to a set of parameters, (e.g. purpose, norms, ideology, and recipient type), to be specified in the individual behavior (Gerzymisch-Arbogast, 2007:3).

The importance of the above-mentioned facts about translation, indicates the necessity for the analysts in general, and translators in particular, to adopt a framework upon which they can build the theory that enables them to see the way of interaction between language, text, and society, and to lead to the deeper insight into the function and the essence of language use, with regard to the context in which the

utterances are produced and interpreted. This framework can be sought in CDA, which is necessary for describing, interpreting, analyzing, and critiquing social life reflected in a text.

In addition, the knowledge of CDA is indispensable for describing the inherent elements in the text and context, and for identifying the interaction of cultural elements during the communication process.

1.5. Methodology, Research Framework & Aims

The framework of the given study is theoretical, drawing upon the concepts of applied linguistics, focusing and building on the work of some prominent researchers in CDA (the combination of Van Dijk & Huckin's theories that will be elaborated in chapter 3), and some crucial resources, as well as practical, along with a Case Study focusing on the translation of a literary text. (the Case Study will also be introduced in chapter 3).

This study, based on the concept of CDA, indicates the relevance of the rhetorical structures and communicative surfaces of the text with meta-text (society & culture), to help the analyst understand social problems mediated by ideology and power relations during the process of a literary translation, and to explore why a specific word, phrase or structure is chosen rather than the alternative, so its focus is on the significance of discursive approaches and cultural semiology in translation.

So, based on theoretical researches and frameworks, this study tries to show how cultural semiology and ideological power can be analyzed based on the critical discourse theory by focusing on its advantages over the other discourse theories, and it also indicates how culture and critical discourse can be related to the notion of translation respectively.

1.6. Definition of Basic Terms & Concepts

Due to the importance of notions such as culture, ideology, translation, discourse, text, discourse analysis, and their relevance to critical discourse analysis, these notions should be defined clearly, and their relations should be identified:

Culture: The word culture has several related senses: the classical sense and anthropological sense. In the former sense, it is more or less synonymous with civilization as apposed to barbarism. It rests upon the classical conception of what constitutes excellence in art, literature, manners, and social institutions. In the latter sense, culture is employed without any implication of unilinear of human progress from barbarism to civilization, and without any prior value-judgments being made as to the aesthetic or intellectual quality of a particular society's art, literature, institutions, etc. In anthropological sense in which the term has spread from anthropology to the other social sciences, every society has its own culture; and different subgroups within a society may have their own distinctive subculture. Here the word culture was bound up with the interdependence of the language and thought, and with the view that a nation's language and culture were manifestations of its distinctive national spirit of mind (Lyons, 1981: 302).

Culture also can be defined as those human projects endow the raw materials of our world including the stuff of language (Mey, 1998). It is often seen as mere information conveyed by the language. Cultural interaction becomes an objective in itself, separate from language (Cook, 2003: 105). The term culture is one of the most elusive, unclear, and the "tantalizing diffuse" ones in social theory. Often it is employed in rather vague, ambiguous, even contradictory ways, and laden with a host of associative baggage (Karin Zotzmann, 2007: 65).