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*A Thesis Submitted in the Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Translation Studies*

**A Cognitive Study of Positive and Negative Words
Connoting Emotions in the Process of Literary Translation**

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Dedication

To My Dad, Rest in Peace;

To My Mom, Thank You;

To My Brothers and My Sisters, God Speed You.

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The researcher needs to confirm that if there are significant points in this work, they are the fruit of the efforts of all those who mentioned above. On the other hand, the mistakes are the researcher's and he would appreciate re-thinking about the mistakes if the reader emails me at rajabpoor.behnam@gmail.com.

Abstract

Translation is a process that demands translators' constant decision-making. The reason why these decisions change at any moment is to some extent due to the context and context. Such changes are responsible for multiple translations of the same text. In this project, we propose positive and negative words. Originated from psychology, these words have the power of changing the direction of a normal conversation in a positive or negative way. These variables act on the basis of their positive and negative images. We have found the usage of these variable compatible with Levy's (1967/2000) category in offering some types of decisions. Therefore, the goal of the study is to see whether or not positive and negative words (connoting emotions) may motivate translator's decisions. More specifically, the main objective of this interdisciplinary study (in the sense that it involves cognition, psychology and decision-making) is to probe into the question: why do different literary translations of a single text come into being? It is hypothesized that positive and negative words may have some involvement in the production of different products. The data are analyzed according to the questionnaire which includes nine paragraphs selected from Jack London's *White Fang* (1906), and Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* (1881). The data are collected based on the two published translations and the translations of three volunteers. The analysis is conducted in a way that first we find the words with positive and negative images. The next step is to examine whether or not these words might change the translator's decisions. Respectively, we cognitively discuss the potential role of positive and negative words in mind, in translators' decisions and competence and in literary texts. The data analysis leads us to explain the importance of emotions and images in texts which might remind us the importance of competence. We conclude that if a translator notices a word connoting emotion(s) positively or negatively, that word may affect his/her

consequent decisions. The literary criterion, co-text and context have to be maintained in order to motivate the necessary decisions on the part of translators. Quantitatively speaking, the positive words tend to move toward motivated decisions and flexible and different translations (50%) in contrast to negative words which tend to move toward necessary decisions and monotonous and similar translations (66.67%).

Keywords: Cognitive Translation, Decision-making, Translator's Competence, Translation Process, Literary Translation, Positive and Negative Words.

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Abbreviations

TL	target language
SL	source language
ST	source text
TT	target text
L1	first language
L2	second language

“Our emotions, our feelings and our intuition
can also provide us
with valid interpretation and guidelines for living”.
(Bressler, 2011, p. 91)

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Overview

Holmes (1972/2004) directs his focus of translation studies on the process of translation, stating how translators can handle various alternatives in their mind in order to achieve the optimal equivalent in the target text, which is the concern for this study in the process domain. Once the initial choices are made, the translation begins to generate rules of its own, determining further choices (as cited in Gentzler, 2001, p. 96). Based on the Holmes' observation then, the issue of decision-making becomes crucial in any discussion of the translation process. Decision-making is the process of how people make decisions in their routine life also including process of translation. Thus, we need to go for a research method in that regard. The method for the research is offered by Jiří Levy (1967/2000) in the title of *Translation as a Decision Process* in dealing with the selection of the equivalents. He states that the first decision has the certain influence on the next move in the process in its own way (Levy, 1967/2000). Applying this method on the literary texts, we will examine whether the variables affect the process of literary translation or not. The variables are positive and negative words based on the belief that “any word can provoke the soul and mind” (Haghghani, 1386/2007, p. 88) in the proper co-text and context. A positive word may have a positive effect on the audience since it carries a positive image or concept so that a translator unconsciously becomes motivated. In other words, the translator unconsciously finds himself/herself doing translation with a good degree of literariness (because s/he is in a good mood). Quite the opposite, a negative word creates a negative picture (in mind) although it may be used in the positive co-text and context (more in Section 2.2.4). These positive and negative words or images are registered in the “black box” (Hatim, 2001) by means of experiences or presuppositions. To Chomsky (1986), the black box is the part of the brain where the rules, structures and all processes store.

Every individual translator thinks about equivalents to the as-much-as-possible closing to the message of the ST (translation is the work of putting things together); literary translators think about the best of equivalents (in layman's terms, because they feel themselves obliged and committed to their society and culture). What becomes best is a time-space-bound decision. The best of decisions has to be objective (the translator has at least one objective, changing the SL words into TL words) and has to depend on the decisions the translator makes in the translation process. What can motivate each translator's decisions here are psychological matters the translator has unconsciously grasped. The clarification of this issue may become easier if we focus our attention on Levy's four decisions, i.e. the factors that improve choices (more in Part 2.1).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

One of the problems in dealing with translations is to respond to the question why has one source text more than one translated text. This question has triggered this research. The translation of one ST into at least two translations is called differentiation or retranslation under the branch of "pragmatics" in linguistics (Safavi, 1388/2009, p. 39). The re-translations of literary texts may have mostly come into being as unnecessary and seen as not-motivated by means of the context and co-text (not literarily smelled but formally rendered). An emphasis here has to be made that psychologically and cognitively speaking, owing to the variegated nature of human beings differentiation is not going to stop. Reiss (1971/2000) also claims that hardly can any two translations be the same (p. 91). To cope with the problem, there is a feeling that if a translator can think of the images and emotions that words carry in literary texts, because of literary domain's resourceful nature, s/he may produce a target text in a way that the reader can

feel it is a really better translation than before s/he have read. We may, at the end of the research, claim that the differentiations (re-translations) can be allowed whether to be or not to be.

1.2.1. Questions.

The thesis intends to answer the below questions:

- 1) How do the positive and negative words affect the process of literary translation?
- 2) Is there a direct relationship between positive and negative words and translator's necessary, unnecessary, motivated and unmotivated decisions?
- 3) Is there a relationship between neophyte and expert translators' decisions and their competences?

1.2.2. Hypotheses.

The thesis is going to nullify or ratify the below hypotheses:

- 1) Positive or negative words provoke emotions.
- 2) There is a direct relationship between positive and negative words and translator's decisions in choosing an equivalent.
- 3) If we find any relationship between an expert translator's decisions and his/her competence, we will be able to review the significance of the positive and negative words.

The thesis presumes that even though the translation of Mohammad Qazee is a standard translation for assessing the literariness of other translations, it is possible that his translation is backed away because of the possibility for the emergence of a new literary translation that

maintains the characteristics of the positive and negative words in translation (The features will be defined in 1.4.1). It is assumed that one of the many layers in the literary translation is the exploration of positive and negative layer at the word level. This is a central layer and other layers may be culture, society, and so forth.

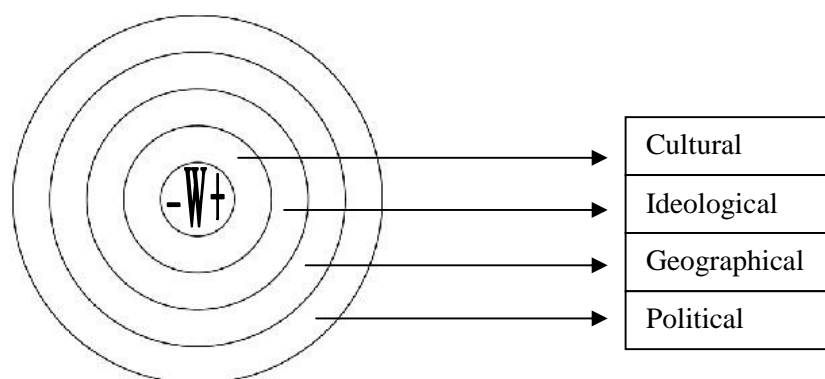


Figure 1: Position of Words in Text.

1.3. Review of the Literature

Because of the many minutiae involved in the domain of the literature which makes literary works productive, there exist a vast number of researches dealing with the aesthetics in the literary genre from the standpoint of cognition directly or indirectly. For instance, the preservation of tone is recognized as of the most useful tools for a translator which helps him/her to avoid falling into traps that distorts the author's intent (Landers, 2001, p. 68). For Landers, tone means conscious and unconscious resonated feeling. The upcoming parts are the cases through which this eclectic research takes its shape. Pym (2010, ch. Postscript) claims that the interdisciplinary manner is "the way translation studies should develop". Interdisciplinary in a way that we use a psychological method of speaking, then use it in cognition domain of