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FACULTY OF PERSIAN LITERATURE

AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of Ph.D. in

English Language Teaching (ELT)

TRANSLATION QUALITY AND AWARENESS OF TRANSLATION THEORIES

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By:

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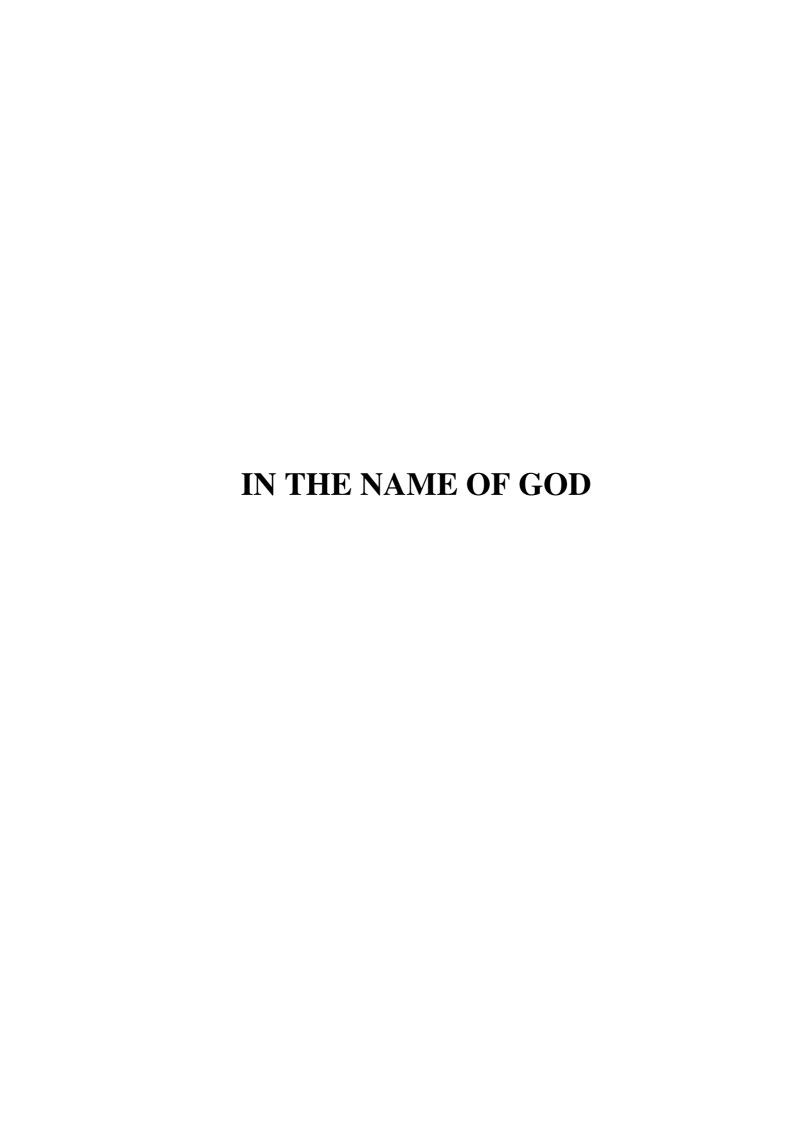برای دریافت درجه دکتری در رشته آموزش زبان انگلیسی

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We hereby recommend that the dissertation by

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entitled

Translation Quality and Awareness of Translation Theories

be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

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Abstract

The major issues in translator training in Iranian universities concern instructional problems, student problems and inappropriate, not to say inefficient, teaching methods. This research reports on an experiment in three different universities in Iran, with undergraduate translator trainees. The experiment was designed to investigate the feasibility of providing an alternative to the rather boring, yet widely practiced teaching technique which Gonzalez Davies (2004) terms "the read-and-translate method". The model is based on an understanding of theories of translation and several types of learner-centered classroom activities designed for translation classes. So the syllabus was designed to both enhance students' knowledge of translation theories and to encourage their active participation in the learning process. To this end, Gonzalez Davies's model (2004) was adapted to the particular situation. The research followed an experimental, pretest-posttest design, with two control groups and three experimental groups in three universities in East Azarbaijan. The control groups were run through the traditional read-and-translate method. The experimental groups were exposed to the tailored syllabus and teaching material which introduced the major translation theories and provided appropriate translation exercises for each. The theories ranged from functional to cultural ones. The exercises and tasks were developed accordingly. The results indicated a higher performance in the experimental groups, as compared to the control groups. The results also suggest that some theories, such as functional theories, seem to be more practicable in classroom situations, and thus more teachable. The suggested framework and the final results are likely to throw light on various aspects of translation pedagogy at undergraduate level in Iranian universities and hopefully in other similar contexts.

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List of Abbreviations

SL   Source Language

ST   Source Text

TL   Target Language

TS   Translation Studies

TT   Target Text

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Translation facilitates the expression of the variety and nuances of the diversity of each language – and of all cultures."

(Matsuura, 2009: Lecture)

1.1.   Introduction

"The languages of individuals as well as of collective groups constantly evolve through a dynamic process" (Shohamy, 2006, p.8); so languages live and grow just as human beings do. Human beings need interaction and communication and so do languages. This interaction is materialized through translating. That's why Levy (1967/2000) considers translating as a "process of communication"(p.148). The importance of translating is more highlighted when we take the new world of information exchange and globalization into consideration. During the recent decades, *Translation Studies* has found its place as a new and independent discipline which requires its own theories, techniques, principles, and approaches. "Gone are the times when translation training only meant Literary Translation Training. The colossal development of cybernetics, electronics, computers and the sciences of information demand that any training should be able to cover most possible types of translation-interpreting" (Gonzalez, 2008, para.27).

Gonzalez Davies (2004) says a lot has been happening in what is now known as Translation Studies since the 80s and we have come a long way from considering translation as a one to one replacement of words between languages. Translation, according to Pym (2003, para.2), is one of the fundamental things that people do with language, alongside speaking, listening, writing and reading. This fact, however, has not been widely recognized yet especially in our country Iran and this is due to the nature of translating. As Federici (2007) maintains: "translation is certainly a highly skilled activity, a first-class art based on a high level of competence not only in the two