The Role of Syntactic Strategies in the Representation of Persian Translators' Ideologies in English Socio-Political Texts: CDA Approach

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ABSTRACT

Over the recent decades, a close relationship among linguistics, translation, and ideology has drawn the attention of many linguists and translators. The researches reveal that both source text (ST) and target text (TT) embody hidden ideologies and so it can be mentioned that ideology affects the writer's/translator's linguistic selections. Equipped with specific strategies and using special diction potentially, translators may manipulate words and structures, either intentionally or unintentionally, to reflect their own ideologies or the dominant ideologies of their societies and as a result influence and control the mind of recipients. To uncover the fact, focusing on syntax, the present study attempts to investigate whether syntactic structures/strategies play a role in reflecting Persian translators' dominant or intended ideologies or not. For answering this question, this paper utilized Critical Discourse Analysis framework (CDA) and Van Dijk's model (2004) and it was conducted in two phases. In the first phase of the research, the English socio-political texts and their Persian translations were collected from variant sources considering Iran's regional and international issues during 2014-2015. Then in order to find any ideological syntactic manipulation used by translators (as a syntactic strategy), English texts as a source text and their Persian translations as a target one were closely compared. In the second phase, the percentages of various ideological syntactic structures/strategies were computed and the instances extracted from Persian translations were analyzed using Van Dijk's Ideological Square. Results of the study and analysis of target language instances reveal the salient role the syntactic strategies and manipulation play in representing Persian translators' ideologies mainly deletion and addition through the polarization of Us and Them.

1. Introduction

Studying the history of translation especially the socio-political ones, demonstrates that the process has been a polemic point for cultures and civilizations and as a dynamic factor it used to illuminate nations for centuries (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010). It is believed that language is the

sheer truth and the reflection of realities (Cook, 2003) but this fact should not be ignored that language specifically the socio-political discourse is sometimes used to conceal the truth and conveys the purport the way that affects people and persuade them to accept the untruth. (Schäffner, 2007& 2009). The translator who is responsible to transfer the content that in turn, includes meta-language elements such as culture, history, politics, authority and different ideologies from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL) and by manipulating and altering the linguistic forms of source language, he affects the readers' schools of thoughts and feelings and finally lead them to a certain ideology (Penycook, 2004; Mason, 2010). So it can be said that in a translation process, the translator can convey the source language's content to the target language the way he likes by applying diverse strategies and techniques, consciously or unconsciously (Lefevere, 1992). Consequently, it is asserted that any form of language the translator uses in translation features and carries certain ideologies (Darwish, 2012).

As far as the way a socio-political translator's choice of any of the linguistic forms considerably influences the readers and that we cannot ignore its significant role in transferring ideology to the readers and moreover the strategic management of their minds; Furthermore, the fact that nations' political relationships are based on translation, the research, to augment the precision of translations done by students of English translation and to improve people's critical thinking, from different social classes, aims to find and analyze manipulative syntactic structures/applied syntactic strategies of socio-political texts, the Persian translators use consciously or unconsciously in order to express their ideology or the dominant ideology of their society. In other words, this study is investigating that how macro structure (ideology) is reflected in micro structures (syntactic structure).

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. A review of some studies in the field of CAD

Van Dijk (1993), a well renowned theorist for CDA, recognizes CAD a branch in linguistics which studies the language function in society and politics and its concentration on social problems more specifically the relationships among different discourses and the subjects spoken in society, politics and culture; that is why in his recent article, Fairclough (2013) explains CDA as a branch of Critical Social Analysis (CSA). To Van Dijk's vantage point (2001& 2006) is that CAD is not necessarily considered for discourse but to his opinion (1998 & 2012) this approach can be used to discern anything hidden at the first glance. In other words, by CDA approach one can achieve the underlying hidden layers and goes beyond the language elements and considers ideology, power, dominance, history, culture and so on as meta-language elements for analyzing a text (Fairclough, 1995 & 2001, Wodak, 1989, Van Leeuwen, 1993). Fowler (1991) believes that based on CDA, all the linguistic levels (phonology, syntax, meaning, and pragmatics), can carry ideology. Aghagolzadeh's Ph.D. thesis (2002) is of the earlier researches made on CAD in Iran which later in 2006 became a reference book in this regard. It is worthy to mention that this publication blossomed a new era in translation studies in Iran.

2.2. A review of some studies in the field of socio-political text, translation and CAD

Schäffner (2007) declares, any political discourse have special features and is made to convince, persuade, threat or to be promising. He (2009) believes translation is affected by socio-political conditions so it can be said in brief, the mental process in a translation is actually a socio-political act. He then highlights it's not the structure and form of the origin language text to determine the target language structure but the translator's responsibility to determine by studying the structure, aim, culture and the addresses of the target language, how the translation work to be done. This researcher and Bassnett (2010), in an article, discuss about the translation process and political discourse analysis in media.

Penycook (2004) believes critical orientations such as CAD and critical functional linguistics (CFL), discuss issues about translation process policies and approaches by which translation and its interpretations are related to social class, gender and politics, in general, ideological differences. Li (2013) studied Chinese political content and their translation to English based on CAD in his Ph.D. thesis. In fact, he compares the strategic changes between the translator of the TL and the writer of the SL. Lande (2010) studied the translations of a radio political interview between a Swiss politician and a BBC interviewer. Kua & Nakamura (2005), based on CAD, made efforts on analyzing political interviews and they understood the differences found in translations were not deliberate but they were the result of different ideologies.

2.3. A review of some Iranian studies in the field of socio-political text, translation and CAD

Khosravi Nick and Yarmohammedi (2000) studied ideology based on CAD. They tried to demonstrate language structures that determine yielding and reproducing certain ideology toward political terms. The noticeable point is the tracking of Iran's contemporary political ideology in general in the press and it was then found in newspapers.

Attaran (2007) within CAD parameters studied the translation of political content on Tabnak website and tried to comprehend the ideological-translation patterns used in the website content. He later found out and studied, in addition to language factors supported by CAD theorists, other factors such as the change in concentration, word shift and content influence the political content ideologically. Attai (2007) is another researcher who studied the influence of ideology on novels in a certain political ambience, and later he comprehended the ideology shares an important role in translating novels under different political conditions.

Keshavarz & Alimadadi (2001) and Shojaei & Laheghi (2012), studied the ideological change in the translated political content within CAD views, and found out that political ideologies engender limits in translation and cause some kind of orientations in the content. In their article, Khajeh and Khanmohammad (2009) discussed how ideological and social-cultural limits' influence the political content in accordance to Van Dijk theory (1999); they also explained the representation of the hidden ideological structures in English and Persian political contents. Results showed what strategies were used in the SL to convey the ideology and what ways were used to express it in the TL and how the reader is affected consecutively.

Mahdian & colleagues (2013) and Aslani & Salmani (2014) used CAD points of view to analyze political content and

eventually found that CAD offers techniques to analyze political writings by which in addition to in-lingual issues it pays attention to ex-lingual issues such as power, culture and history as well and that no political news excludes ideological influences.

Other researchers such as Farahzad (2003, 2004, and 2008), Yarmohammadi (2004), Khanjan and others (2013), Eriss & Hashemi (2014) and Aghagolzadeh & Dehghan (2015) also studied the translation processes under critical view.

3. Theoretical Framework

The framework of this paper is based on critical discourse analysis (CDA) and socio-cognitive Van Dijk's approach (2004). His analytical method, suggest two level of analysis: macro structure and micro structure. Macro structure is related to analysis and description of extra linguistic element such as ideology. For investigating this level in this study, "ideological square" defined by Van Dijk (2004) will be used. The concept of this square based on polarization, designate the following dimensions:

1. Emphasizing Our positive actions or properties
2. Mitigating Their positive properties and actions
3. Emphasizing Their negative properties and actions
4. Mitigating Our negative properties and actions

Table 1: Van Dijk's Ideological Square: Polarization of Us and Them

	Us	Them
Emphasizing	Positive actions /properties	Negative action/properties
Mitigating	Negative actions/properties	Positive actions/ properties

Micro structure as another level, is related to the analysis of the text in the terms of linguistic forms such as syntax.

Based on Van Dijk's theory (2004), micro structures can be arranged in six levels i.e. meaning, syntax, argumentation, rhetoric, style and speech act ,but this research focuses on merely syntax and all syntactic strategies and manipulations (deletion, nominalization, addition, topicalization, passivization, modalization and tense shift) which might be applied by translators' in order to represent their ideologies.

4. Materials and Procedures

Among approximately 600 texts collected from different written English socio-political content that were translated to Persian language and were limited to national, international or regional issues related to subjects about Iran, 250 utterances were selected for analyzing. These excerpts had the most obvious syntactic manipulation done by Persian translators. They were taken from written news, interviews, resolutions and the like from different sources such as websites, press and magazines. Also it should be mentioned that besides the researcher, two other persons who were experts in English language and also knew Van Dijk's theory, have contributed in order to confirm the selected data which had the vivid syntactic changes.

These data were used to elicit structures and syntactic strategies (deletion, nominalization, addition, topicalization, passivization, modalization and tense shift) which were applied by Persian translators to reflect and represent their intended or dominant ideologies. Searching all syntactic strategies and manipulations, the Persian translators' ideology were then challenged within CAD framework and Van Dijk's theoretical pattern (2004). In other words, in this study by finding different syntactic strategies and manipulations applied by Persian

translators, the discourses from the English language with the aforementioned content, provided to be translated into Persian language, were being studied and then it was tried to compare and match the socio-political content from the SL to the TL. After that, used Van Dijk's ideological square to analyze the ways in which Our and Their actions and properties were polarized and how they were reflected in translation. It is also studied which syntactic strategy was used to reproduce the same text in the TL (Persian). At the end, the frequency of the applied syntactic strategies and the obtained results, were presented.

5. Findings and Analysis

In this part of the research according to Van Dijk's theoretical pattern (2004), the frequency and percentage of each syntactic strategy including word order, passivization, topicalization, nominalization, addition, deletion, modalization and tense shift which used to manipulate the syntactic structures of English (ST) in order to convey Persian translator's dominant or intended ideology are shown in following chart and will be explained more with examples and analysis.

Figure 1: Frequency of syntactic strategies used by the Persian translators

	delition	addition	word order	topicalization	tense shift	passivization	nominalization	modalization
syntactic manipulation	44%	38%	6%	4%	7%	5%	3%	4%
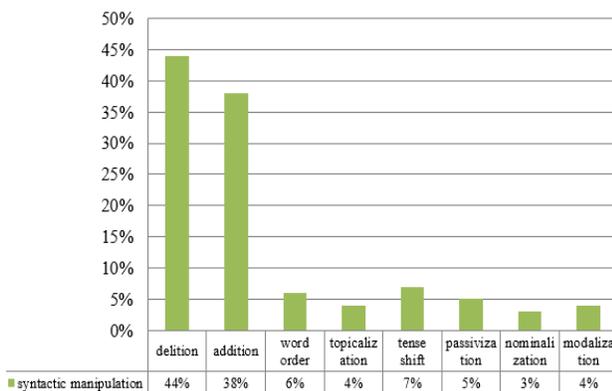
As shown in the chart, among the syntactic strategies applied by the socio-political translators from the SL (English) to the TL (Persian), the mostly used frequency pertains to deletion and the least used

frequency pertains to nominalization. Below you will see examples of socio-political translations from the SL to the TL to clarify, analyze and study the syntactic strategies. Then by undertaking Van Dijk's ideological square (Emphasizing positive things about Us, Emphasizing negative things about Them, mitigating negative things about Us and mitigating positive things about Them) the samples are analyzed and shown how syntactic changes influence the representation of the translator's ideology; in other words, how these changes can, by emphasizing and mitigating the context, represent the ideologies of the Persian translators. It should be mentioned that in analysis part, parenthesis has been utilized for denoting the English equivalents of translated Persian words or phrases and bracket has been used for showing the English meaning of the translated words or phrases in Persian which were not in ST and just given by researcher for clarifying the meaning in English.

Syntactic Strategies: examples and analysis

● Deletion syntactic strategy

Studying the data taken from the socio-political content and the obtained usage frequency show that deletion by %40 is the mostly used strategy applied by Persian translators. By using this strategy, the translator deletes words or phrases to de-emphasize the positive things about Them and mitigate negative things about Us.

Example:

S.T. *Highlighting Iran's regional role, the report pointed to Islamic Republic's "intentions to dampen sectarianism, (1) build responsive partners, and deescalate tensions with (2) Saudi Arabia."*

در گزارش سازمان اطلاعات ملی T.T. آمریکا در توصیف نقش ایران در منطقه اشاره شده است که ایران تلاش کرده است تا فرقه گرایی و تنشهای ای را کاهش دهد منطقه

As it is seen, the translation of "*build responsive partners*" and "*Saudi Arabia*" are eliminated. It seems that by eliminating the phrase "build responsive partners", the translator tried to mitigate positive action of the unfriendly source which is USA (Them) to give a fair report on Iran's multi-aspect efforts in easing international relationships. On the other hand, it can be said, by omitting "Saudi Arabia" the translator exaggerated Iran's influential role as the friendly group (Us); therefore, by adding the word "منطقهای [region]" and deleting the word" Saudi Arabia", the Persian translator tried to exaggerate and show Iran's wide influence (Us) in the world.

● **Addition syntactic strategy**

Following the statistics in the article, among syntactic strategies, addition by %34 is the second mostly applied strategy by translators. According to this strategy, the translator tries to explain the positive things about Us or negative things about Them by augmenting the use of parts of speech like adjectives, adverbs or noun phrases. The example below shows the emphasis of expressing negative things about Them by using an adjective or noun phrase.

Example:

S.T. *She further said police brutality, widespread discrimination against African-American, a crackdown on religious minorities as well as Washington's unconditional support for Israel's crimes are among the numerous cases of human rights violations in the USA,*

which have drawn criticism from major international rights institutions.

وی تصریح کرد: " موارد متعدد نقض T.T. حقوق بشر در آمریکا از جمله رشد پدیده نژادپرستی، تبعیض گسترده علیه آمریکایی های آفریقایی تبار ، افزایش گسترده اسلام ستیزی و مبارزه با اقلیت های مذهبی ، تبعیض علیه مهاجرین، خشونت لجام‌گسیخته پلیس آمریکا علیه شهروندان آمریکایی، حمایت بی‌قید و شرط آمریکا از جنایت های رژیم صهیونیستی در منطقه، اعتراضات نهادهای مختلف بین المللی از جمله شورای حقوق بشرسازمان ملل متحد را بر انگیخته است.

As it is shown in Persian translation above by adding the adjective "لجام گسیخته [unrestrained]" after "خشونت (brutality)", the translator tried to emphasize and indent negative conduct of the American police force. This representation is then highlighted by adding the phrase " علیه شهروندان آمریکایی[against American citizen]" after the phrase خشونت لجام‌گسیخته پلیس"[police unrestrained brutality]" . It seems the Persian translator tried to underline and emphasize the negative things about Them. In other words, the translator implied that they're merciless even to their own people.

● **Tense Shift syntactic strategy**

Tense shift is another syntactic strategy that helps the translator to alter the time something happens. This strategy affects the verb by shifting time chronology in the starting point, duration and the final point either good or bad. Considering the first two major strategies that are applied by translators, time shift strategy with %6 stands in the third place of the effective strategies for Persian translators' ideological representation.

Example:

S.T. *On Friday, Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Marziyeh Afkham slammed the State Department's claims as "repetitive" saying the report was drafted*

at a time when the US sees the highest number of human rights violations against people of color and widespread protests against such abuses, and while Washington's allies <u>are busy committing heinous crimes against their own people.</u>

مرضیه افخم با تکراری خواندن T.T.
ادعاهای مطرح‌شده، عنوان کرد این گزارش در حالی منتشرشده که رئیس‌جمهوری اسلامی ایران، که با مشارکت بیش از 73 درصد مردم این کشور انتخاب شده است، در اجرای تعهدات انتخابی خود منشور حقوق شهروندی را برای حراست از حقوق مردم ایران در معرض نظر و گفتگوی ملی قرار داده و در مقابل آمریکا در سال تهیه این گزارش نه تنها شاهد بیشترین آمار اعتراض و موارد نقص حقوق رنگین‌پوستان در این کشور بوده است، بلکه متحدین منطقه واشینگتن وسیعترین جنایات خود علیه مردم را در همین سال <u>ثبت کرده‌اند.</u>

In this example, by applying time shift strategy, that is changing continuous tense (while committing the crime) to the present perfect tense (completed the crime), the Persian translator tried to emphasize the negative things about Them i.e. the Washington's allies. In other words, applying perfect tense in the lieu of continuous tense implies that the starting point of this criminal act happened in the past but the effects still exist.

● **Word order syntactic strategy**

This strategy helps the translator to affect and manage the readers by changing the word order and their emphasis. This strategy is used for %5.

Example:

S.T. <u>Hezbollah leader Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah</u> said recently that he is very well supplied and has no need (for weapons).

حسن نصرالله رهبر حزب الله نیز به T.T
تازگی گفت که این جنبش به بهترین صورت تجهیز شده و هیچ نیازی ندارد.

As it can be seen, the role and the position of the agent (doer) of the action (Hassan Nasrallah) and his position (Hezbollah leader) are changed in the sentence by Persian translator. The reason of changing the word order can be the result of the translator's language and cultural patterns so the name of the doer and not his social position becomes more salient to mention.

● **Passivization syntactic strategy**

Passivization by %4 is another strategy translators apply in translations. By changing and active form into passive, translators usually follow two goals. First is the emphasis on the object of the active sentence by bringing the object to the beginning of the sentence and the second by replacing the agent of the action from the beginning of the sentence or by its elimination, the translator tries by passivizing the active sentence to de-emphasize and mitigate the agent (doer) of the action.

Example:

S.T. *US Intel.scraps Iran, Hezbollah from terrorist threats list.*

براساس گزارش جامعه اطلاعاتی T.T.
آمریکا نام ایران و حزب الله از فهرست تهدیدهای تروریستی حذف شده است.

As it is mentioned, in the above example by manipulating the place of the agent (subject) and using the passivization structure, the Persian translator wanted to mitigate the positive action of America (Them). In other words, it seems that the translator changed the active sentence to passive one, by omitting US (Them) as an agent of the phrase in order to de-emphasize and mitigate the good action of Them which is omitting Iran and Hezbollah from the list of terrorist and the translator represented the function of America just as a news reference.

● **Topicalization syntactic strategy**

In topicalization strategy by replacing a phrase and adding it to the beginning of the sentence, a translator tries

to highlight the point. Such emphasis may be applied to emphasize the good things about Us or negative things about Them. This strategy attracts translators by %4.

Example:

S.T. *Iranian have staged a protest outside the Saudi the embassy in Tehran, <u>denouncing the</u> <u>Kingdom's airstrikes</u> on Yemen as well as the sexual abuse of two Iranian teenagers by Saudi officers at the Jeddah airport, Press TV reports.*

T.T. به گزارش خبرگزاری مهر، <u>پی اوج</u>. <u>گرفتن جنایات رژیم آل سعود</u> درحمله نظامی به کشور پی حادثه یمن و کشتار مردم بی دفاع این کشور و در اخیر فرودگاه جده و هتک حرمت دو نوجوان عمره توسط مأموران آل سعود، عصر امروز جمعی از تشکلهای دانشجویی دانشگاه تهران در دانشجویان عضو مقابل سفارت عربستان سعودی در خیابان پاسداران تهران تجمع و نسبت به جنایات این رژیم اعتراض کردند.

As it is seen, by replacing the "پی اوج گرفتن جنایات رژیم آل سعود" sentence (denouncing the Kingdom's airstrikes)" to the beginning of the sentence, the Persian translator not only bolded Saudi's brutality, he then foregrounded negative things about Them by adding the phrase جنایات و کشتار [villainy and killing of مردم" بی دفاع undefended people]". Applying topicalization strategy, it engenders replacement of the effect phrase "اعتراض دانشجویان (have staged the protest outside)" and the cause phrase "پی اوج گرفتن جنایات رژیم آل سعود (denouncing the Kingdom's airstrikes)" and eventually bolding Saudi's criminal act (unfriendly group) and the effectiveness of our protest.

● **Modalization syntactic strategy**

This strategy allows the translator by picking on modals such as must, can, should and so on or even by eliminating them, tries to manipulate the purporst. In other words, any changes in this regard cause changes in the meaning. These

changes are made to emphasize positive things about Us or mitigate good thing about Them.

Example:

S.T. *Two Iranian students plan to take the Norwegian government to court after Oslo blocked university access for many Iranian students under the pretext that they <u>might be</u> learning nuclear weapons-related technology, press TV reports.*

T.T. به دنبال اقدام دولت نروژ در ممانعت از تحصیل دانشجویان ایرانی در این کشور به بهانه دستیابی دو دانشجویان آنها به فناوری مرتبط با تسلیحات اتمی، ایرانی در نظر دارند دولت اسلو را به دادگاه بکشند.

In the translation above, the Persian translator has tried to propitiate any claims by the unfriendly group (Them), not only by eliminating "might be" in "they might be learning nuclear weapons-related technology" and changing that into a noun phrase "کشور به بهانه دستیابی آنها به فناوری مرتبط با تسلیحات اتمی" to emphasize unfair and illogical conduct by Norwegian government (Them) but also by replacing the word "دستیابی [access]" with "learning" bolded this idea. In other words, he introduced them a group who deprived Us (Iranian student) from learning with only an accusation.

● **Nominalization syntactic strategy**

When using the nominalization strategy, the translator changes the verb of the sentence with all its properties to an abstract noun. In other words, by undertaking nominalization strategy, the translator tries to pick a certain verb to de-emphasize and mitigate good things about Them and bad things about Us in the sentence. This strategy by %3 is the least applied strategy by translators.

Example:

S.T. *Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu* <u>meets</u> *with Ethiopian Israeli soldier Pakada.*

<div dir="rtl">
دیدار بنیامین نتانیاهو با سرباز اتیوپیایی T.T.
</div>
<div dir="rtl">
تباری که مورد ضرب و شتم قرار گرفته بود
</div>

As shown in the example, the verb "meets" is translated to "دیدار [meet]" as a noun. This change was made to de-emphasize and mitigate the positive act done by the Israeli prime minister (Them) intentionally.

6. Conclusion

The conclusion and the analysis show that the syntactic strategies and manipulations do have effective and salient role in representing Persian translators' ideologies in English written translated socio-political texts through the polarization of Us and Them. In other words, the effectiveness of syntax, manipulations and changes made on syntactic structures and using syntactic strategies based on Van Dijk's theoretical pattern (2004), could considerably echo the Persian translators' ideologies in translated socio-political English discourses. Hence, studying these analyses clearly demonstrates that the major strategies or strategies used for emphasizing and mitigating actions in the content that Van Dijk (2004) explained in his Ideological Square has been significantly effective in justifying syntactic changes and manipulations done by Persian translators. On the other hand, comparing syntactic frequencies, the findings about the mostly applied strategies such as deletion and addition, show that among all such strategies, Persian translators pick the clearest and most direct way to express ideologies and hitherto, they have been trying by adding or deleting words or phrases, affect the meaning and the ideology of the target language indirectly. The findings also prove that language is a strong tool to express translator's ideology and recognize CAD as an appropriate approach to represent dominant and invisible ideologies; therefore, this research can be a motive for teachers and researchers of various majors in human science chiefly with translation and politics sciences and it promotes their critical linguistic knowledge and their critical view in studying translated content. Finally, it must be noted that the current research contains limits. Due to the span of the data, we could not refer to all excerpts such as movie scripts and unofficial/informal conversations about Iran. In fact, critical study of unofficial/informal socio-political translated content like these can be counted as studying different samples of syntactic structures. Another limit is about certain orientations and various interpretations that may exist in CAD so when several researchers and socio-political theorists study the research critically, limits can be controlled. As far as the current research chose to study syntax among different discourse terms, studying other terms such as meaning, argumentation, rhetoric and style and the related strategies can show amore comprehensible picture of changes that represent the efforts translators have made to demonstrate beliefs, principles, personal and social culture through words, structures and ideological meanings.

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