A Review on Translation Strategies of 'Little Prince' by Ahmad Shamlou and Abolhasan Najafi

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ABSTRACT

Translation is defined as converting source text into target text and transferring exactly the meaning carried by source text. Based on this definition, the current study tried to investigate the most frequently used Malone translation strategies in the translation of "Little Prince" from English into Persian and identify if two translators investigated in this study differ in the application of these strategies. Therefore, the researcher selected translations done by Najafi and Shamlou as two popular translators of this masterpiece and best sellers. The materials of this research were sentences and phrases from the English text of the book. Sentences and phrases of English text were compared and contrasted against its two translations and the strategies suggested by Malone were identified and extracted. After analyzing the data, the results showed that the most frequently used strategies were amplification and reduction. Diffusion was also found as the least frequently used strategy. Moreover, the results showed that Najafi used written language for transferring the meaning whereas Shamlou used spoken language. The study revealed that Shamlou, who concerns about making good contact with the readers through narrating the story, used the strategies more frequently which may lead to more fluent and understandable translated text.

1. Introduction

Oxford dictionary explains translation as "the process of changing something that is written or spoken into another language" (2003, pp 1382). Translation must be done in an organized way that is translator must know what to do when facing a problem in the process of translation. These procedures and techniques which are conveyed by different scholars are called translation strategies. Different translation strategies are used for different problems in the process of translation. Any scholar has his/her own strategies which can be the topic of a research. Chesterman (1998) believes that

translation strategies have specific features; for example, they are goal-oriented and problem-centered; moreover, they require making coordinate decisions while they are potentially conscious.

Translation strategies are either global or local. Global strategies are translator's general principles and preferred mode of action whereas local strategies are specific activities in relation to the translator's problem-solving and decision-making. Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) believe that local strategies are translation techniques. Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) categorize translation strategies as follows: a) *Borrowing* that is borrowing word or expression from source text; b) *Calque* that is a kind of borrowing in which structure of the original word or phrase is mentioned but its morphemes are replaced by those of target language; c) *Literal translation*; d) *Transposition* that is changing the word class or grammatical structure without changing the meaning of the message; e) *Modulation* that is changing point of view or cognitive category in relation to the source text; f) *Equivalence*; g) *Adaption* that is a shift in cultural reference when the type of situation being referred to by the source text is unknown in the target culture.

Gerloff (1988) categorized translation strategies to different groups such as problem identification, linguistic analysis, storage and retrieval, general search and selection, interfering and reasoning strategies, text contextualization, editing and task monitoring. Another scholar, Venuti (1995), believes that translation strategies involve the basic tasks of choosing the foreign text to be translated and developing a method to translate it while Jaaskelainen (1993) believes in strategy as a series of competencies, a set of steps, that favor acquisition, storage and utilization of information. Jaaskelainen

believes that some strategies are related to what happens to the texts while other types of strategies are related to what happens in the process.

Since translation is an important job which is done in any field, it is very important to give the right meaning; therefore, the translator's job must be on basis of the source text and give the nearest sense to the source text. In Iran, there are some problems in translating a text such as misunderstanding of a text by reader. Such problem comes from misunderstanding of the translator or either not using the proper strategy for translating the source text or special part of a text. It sometimes would make serious problem for the reader. Sometimes this misunderstanding is due to the word by word translation by the translator who cannot transfer the meaning as source text.

1.1. Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research is to find out translation strategies used most and least frequently by Shamlou (2012) and Najafi (2012) in translation of "The Little Prince". Moreover, it tried to identify if two translators differ significantly in applying translation strategies proposed by Malone (1988).

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the above-mentioned objectives, the following research questions are raised.

a) What are translation strategies used most and least frequently in Persian translation of "Little Prince" by Shamlou and Najafi?

b) Do Shamlou and Najafi differ significantly in using the translation strategies?

1.3 Theoretical Framework of the Study

This research was done based on translation strategies classification system suggested by Malone (1988). These

strategies consist of equation, substitution, divergence, convergence, amplification, reduction, diffusion, condensation and reordering. Other scholars also have other categories for translation strategies; for example, Newmark (1988) is one of the scholars whose classification for strategies has been the basis of many similar researches. However, Malone's classification system which is one of the most comprehensive classification systems was selected for the current study.

1.4 Significance of the study

The translation which is read by the people is very important. If the translator transfers the wrong meaning, it may be misleading and sometimes it may be dangerous; hence, this is very important to find the ways which may lead to better translation. One of these ways is the application of the translation strategies. The outstanding point of this research which may make it newer in comparison with other similar studies is that the phrases and sentences and also words are reviewed in order to find out which strategy is used not just analyzing the text in word level or sentence level.

This research can help translators and teachers who teach translation courses. Teachers of translation can decide which one of translation strategies needs more practice; hence, teacher can focus on them in teaching and practicing at classrooms. Moreover, translators are made aware of translation strategies which may lead them to use more strategies in their translation; consequently, it may come up with higher quality and easy to understand translation.

2. Literature Review

Thumb rules of translation are the rules which are given to translators to solve translation problems. Nida and Taber (1974) conveys translation procedures as follows: a) "analyzing source language and target language; b) studying on the source language text before trying to translate it; c) judging the semantic and syntactic approximations" (pp241-245). As Newmark (1988) states in his book "a text book of translation", translation procedures are methods applied by translators when they formulate an equivalence for the purpose of transferring elements of meaning from the source text to the target text. In translation, all of the sources and vocabularies of the target language should be used. Sometimes the words from the source language might be kept in original form so that it provides the feeling of the foreign setting. This form is not acceptable for legal and also technical translation. Sometimes the translator faces too many words or synonymy for a word in source language. In such situations, the translator must choose the best action/strategy according to the text in order to transfer the meaning in the best way to produce a text which is understandable for its audience.

There are different translation strategies classification systems proposed by different researchers such as Newmark (1988), Woodhouseles (1791), Pinchuk (1977), and Malone (1988). Since the classification suggested by Malone (1988) is the base of current study, it will be explained in more detail.

2.1 Malone's translation strategies

Malone (1988) has introduced nine translation strategies including Equation and Substitution, Divergence and Convergence, Amplification and Reduction, Diffusion and Condensation, and Reordering. Eight of these strategies are paired because they are mirror images of one another. These strategies are useful for translator for justifying and adjusting the form and meaning of the text as follows:

Diffusion: the source text gives information expanded and it does not give

extra information; for example, a phrase in the source text means a sentence in target text. *Condensation:* this procedure is exactly unlike diffusion. It means that a phrase in source text gives the sense of one word in target text. *Equation:* It is one-to-one meaning. One word in source text is equal to one word in target language. *Substitution:* If there is not one equivalence for the word in target text, it should be replaced by the nearest word with the nearest grammatical point or meaning. *Reduction:* Some elements may be omitted or taken away for better understanding. *Reordering:* As the grammatical structures in different languages are different from each other, the elements of sentences might be reordered to have a translation comprehensible for reader. *Divergence:* It is choosing a suitable replacement for a potential range of alternatives. These terms may have limited alternatives or a wide range of alternatives. This strategy can be illustrated by bilingual dictionaries. Divergence is not restricted to special class of words such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. Furthermore, Translator always tries to make the right choice in any occasion. *Convergence:* it is the opposite of divergence. Malone (1988) conveys that a range of words in source language might have one equivalence in target language. This means that a sentence in source language might mean a word in target language.

The last strategy is *amplification.* Here, the translator adds some elements to the source language in order to produce more comprehensibility. The most obvious example of amplification is the note at the end of a text or footnote which translator might use at the bottom of a page or the brackets in which he/she adds the explanation needed for that part. Actually by doing this, the translator is trying to fill

the gap between two languages and finally to make translation more comprehensible. This strategy is also used when some cultural semantic or linguistic elements are taken for granted. A word may be added to the source text for better comprehensibility or because of the need for cultural context.

2.2 Related Studies

One of the translation reviews is the review of colonization effect in post-colonization frame work by Hoseini and Molanazar (2010). The subject of their study was Haji baba Isfahani by James Morieh and its translation by Mirza Habib Isfahani for colonization era translation and Mehdi afshar's translation for post-colonization era (after Iran Islamic revolution in 1978). Comparison of these two translation shows that social factors affect translation. Translators and writers showed reaction to social and political issues of the society. It led them to make impressive change in adding words and reducing and choosing them in translation process. It can be understood from this research that social factors may encourage people of the society to change their type of writing and even speaking as a result of changes in their way of thinking.

Another work which was done in this range is a review on translation of color metaphors in two English translation of Shahnameh Ferdosi by Shabani (2008). The aim of this research was to determine the translation of a metaphor with respect to its two English translations. The frame work of this study was 7 ways suggested by Newmark for translating metaphors. In addition to determination of the used strategies, the other goal of this research was assessing new strategies for translating color metaphors. Results of this study showed that Warner used 5 out of 7 strategies and Davis used all 7 strategies proposed by Newmark. The strategies

applied by translators in translating the subjects showed that Warner had more tendency to use Newmark's strategy which caused literal translation whereas Davis used 6 strategies which ended in simplified, detected, and reader-centered translation.

A review on translation of Hafez sonnets by Rastgoo (2014) shows that faithfulness to the source text is the priority of translator. The translations have rarely been reviewed from the aspect of history; however, having a brief look from this point of view shows that the historian era had an important role in translation because social and political changes had great effect on people of that era, on the way they talked, the way they taught, and even the way they wore clothes so we can see that translators have also been affected by the changes in the society. These changes can be seen by a brief comparison of the changes in translations before an event in society and after that event.

3. Methodology

This research investigates two Persian translations of "the little prince" in order to find out which one of the strategies suggested by Malone have been used most and least frequently by translators. There are too many translations of the book "Little Prince" in Persian language by different translators; however, for this research the translations by Shamlou and Najafi have been chosen.

"The Little Prince" has been written in 1943 by Antoine De-saint Exupery, around 73 years ago. The book had a great success in selling about six million volumes in France and about twenty-five million volumes around the world. This book has been written in such a manner that the reader might draw different conclusions. This is the reason why this book has different translations in different languages by different translators all over the world.

Moreover, this book has such a great impact that it has been translated several times by different translators. This masterpiece has been translated to Persian language sixteen times while these translations have been done by translators such as Andishe (2005), Rahmandoost (2006), Ghazi (2006), Najafi (2005) and also Shamlou (2004) as cited in Sadeghian (2010). However, this study investigated the translations done by Shamlou and Najafi as they were published several times and were the best sellers.

The materials of this research were sentences and phrases from the English texts of the book. the material covers words, phrases, and sentences. The whole book was reviewed with its two translations. the English text was compared and contrasted against its two translations and the strategies suggested by Malone were identified and extracted. There might be some strategies in this text that does not exist in the Malone translation strategies classification system. Therefore, such kinds of strategies were not considered in this research. Then the overall strategies applied by each one of the translators along with the frequency of each one of nine available strategies were identified in Shamlou's and Jafari's translation.

The objectives of this study were to find out the strategies which were used most and least frequently in these two translations according to Malone strategies. To achieve this goal, the original text and its translations were examined and the used strategies were extracted and tabulated. After that, descriptive statistics (mean and frequency) as well as inferential statistics (chi-square) were used to analyze data.

4. Results

To answer the first research question "what are the most frequently used strategies by Shamlou and Najafi in translation of "the little prince?", the

researcher listed the strategies which were found in two Persian translations according to Malone translation strategies. The strategies are tabulated in table: 1 below.

Table: 1 Frequency of Malone translation strategies in Persian translations of "The Little Prince" by Najafi and Shamlou

Strategies	Shamlou	Najafi	Total
Divergence	30	35	65
Convergence	10	35	45
Diffusion	15	10	25
Condensation	20	25	45
Equation	175	200	375
Substitution	45	55	100
Amplification	435	185	620
Reduction	220	200	420
Reordering	80	75	155
Total	1030	820	1850

What appeared in Table: 1 can be shown visually in the following figure.

Figure 1: Frequency of Malone's translation strategies in Persian translations of "The Little Prince" by Najafi and Shamlou

Applied Translation Strategies
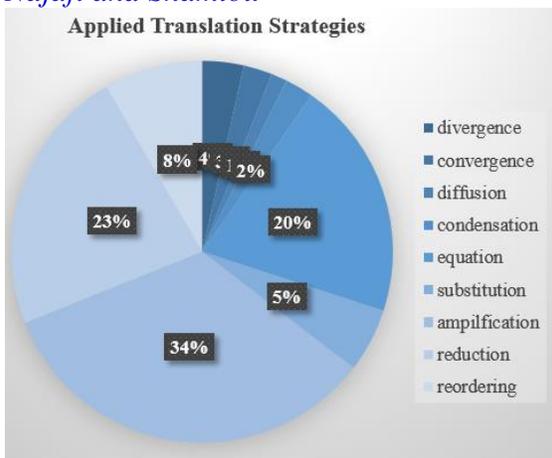
As seen in the table and figure, the strategy "amplification" and after that "reduction", "equation", "reordering", "substitution", "divergence", "convergence" and "condensation" with the same frequency, and "diffusion" were in use in these two translations respectively. The results show that the most frequently used strategy was amplification (with 620 cases of use equal to 34%). After that reduction (with 420 cases of use which is equal to 23%) followed by equation (with 375 cases of use equal to 20%), reordering (with 155 cases of the use equal to 8%), substitution (with 100 cases of uses equal to 5%), divergence (with 65 cases of use equal to 4%), convergence and divergence with the same use (45 cases of use for each of strategies which is equal to 2% for each one of strategies) whereas the least frequently used strategy was diffusion (with 25 cases of use equal to 1%). By considering the results, the researcher believes that phrases which were taken out of the text were translated by employing the amplification strategy in Persian language and the translators attempted to translate as natural as Persian language culture that is they both tried to use phrases which were more tangible in Persian language.

To answer the second research question and to find out if the difference in the application of translation strategies between two translators is important, the researcher resorted to chi-square. The chi-square test was done for each one of the strategies separately as shown below:

Table: 2 Total application of translation strategies by each one of the translators

Translator	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Shamlou	1030	925.5	105.0
Najafi	820	925.5	-105.0
Total	1850		

Figure: 2 Observed and expected frequency of strategies use by each one of the translators
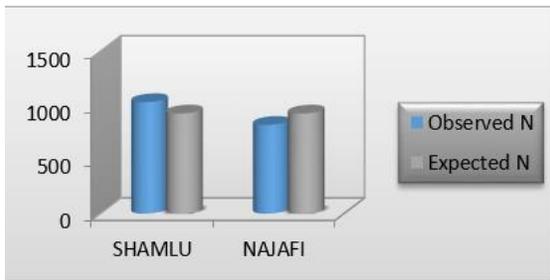
As depicted in Table 2 and Figure: 2, Shamlou applied 1030 translation strategies in general whereas Najafi applied 820 cases of translation strategies. To ensure if it can be concluded that Shamlou used more strategies in his translation in comparison with Najafi, the researcher ran chi-square test. The results reflected in Table: 3 showed this difference as significant (P< 0.05). Therefore, it can be stated that Shamlou used strategies more frequently than Najafi in general.

Table: 3 Chi-square test for differences between two translators in application of strategies

	Correlation Criteria
Chi-square	23.838[a]
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	0.000
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 925.0	

4.1. Discussion

The results showed that the most frequently used strategy is amplification. This research is somehow similar to studies done by Sadeghian (2010), mousavi (2011) and Gashmardi and Rezanavaz (2013). Almost all of these researches talk about different translations of "the little prince" and have a critic view on several translations by different translators. The most frequently used strategy was amplification which implies that most of the sentences are needed to be expanded for better understanding of the text and keeping the naturalness according to the Persian sentence structure. This finding is in line with the results found by Sadeghian (2010).

Diffusion which was the least frequently used strategy is the kind of strategy which gives expanded information and it does not need to have expansion in target language. These kinds of sentences and phrases do not need to be expanded or shortened as other sentences and phrases. Moreover, this strategy is less frequently used in comparison with other strategies. According to the tables, diagrams and statistics, amplification and reduction have been used more frequently than other strategies. This shows that sentences and phrases which are used in English would be longer or shorter in Persian language that is some of them are omitted to be more understandable and become more natural according to Persian language structure. This finding is congruent with the results of another study conducted by Mousavi (2011). He also emphasized that it is Persian language structure that leads the translators to decide if the translated text should be shorter or longer than the original text so it cannot be generalized to all translators without considering the type of text translated, the purpose behind the translation, and the audience targeted by the translator. Equation which is the next frequently used strategy refers to the strategy in which the translator actually tries to find the exact equivalent word in order to be able to transfer the writer's concept in the best way.

When analyzing the text, it was found out that Najafi used written language for transferring the meaning. If sentence structure of his translation is investigated, it can be seen that he used all sentence elements in its correct place in written Persian as the verb is used at the end of the

sentence and place of the sentence components such as subject, object, and other components have been observed in wording by Najafi whereas the other translator (Shamlou) has used spoken language which people use in their daily speaking. Unlike Najafi, he did not use the structure which is used in Persian language because the place of sentence components in his writings is not consistent with written Persian; for example, the verbs are not in the last part of the sentence and in some sentences it is in the middle of sentence and sometimes it is at the end of sentence. Furthermore, some of the expressions which were used by Shamlou are not in use in today's spoken language because Shamlou's translation is a little bit older from the aspect of tune of writing. Shamlou tries to address and speak with his readers in his translated book. Considering this point and the intimacy that can be seen in his way of narrating the story, it can be concluded that it is very important for Shamlou to make a good contact with the reader. This way of translating is completely related to the writer's own taste because both translators have almost the same age but Shamlou has passed away almost 18 years ago.

5. Conclusion

This research can be useful for translators and also teachers of translation. This could help translators to know which kind of strategies is more useful in translation and how these strategies work in translation. Translation teachers also can benefit this research by knowing what strategies are mostly in use and which one of them has been ignored or used less frequently, thus teachers can focus on those strategies which may need more practice to make the students aware of those strategies. Moreover, the strategies which are routinely and commonly used by the translators will need less time to work on in the classroom.

Translation has a wide area to be talked about. The researcher just focused on strategies which were reflected in Malone translation strategies classification system; however, there may be some other types of strategies not considered in this categorization. Moreover, two specific translation of the original text were selected as two popular translations of "little prince" whereas there are several different published translations which may reveal different results if investigated. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to all translated versions of "Little Prince".

This study was done by considering the translation strategies which were suggested by Malone. This kind of study could also be done on other strategies suggested by other scholars. Moreover, the book "the little prince" also has several different translations in Persian language which can be suggested for further studies.

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