The Effect of Translation Shifts on the level of Readability of Two Persian Translations of Novel "1984" by George Orwell

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Abstract

This paper examined how Catford’s translation shifts affect the level of readability in two Persian translations of novel "1984". The main aim of the study was to rank Catford’s shifts based on their effectiveness on the level of readability of translation. For this purpose, the typology and frequency of the translation shifts were measured. Then the cloze tests of each translation made by the researcher and checked by experts were given to the junior students to answer. By doing so, the level of readability of these translations were measured and compared with each other. After that, the effect of shifts on the level of readability was clarified. And last, Catford's shifts were ranked based on their effectiveness on the level of readability. Comparative descriptive approach of the corpora (English novel and Persian translations counterparts) indicated that one of two translators whose translation is more readable than the other, has used Catford’s shifts in this form: among 476 language chunks, structural shift was the most frequent type of shift (45.16% of whole shifts occurring in examined segments). 30.46% of shifts were class shift, 9.66% intra-system shift, 9.24% unit shift and 0.84% level shift occurred respectively in sub-corpus. The system of using shifts in the other translation is in this form: 31.09% of shifts were structural shift, 22.05% were class shift, 9.45% intra-system shift, 7.77% unit shift and 0.84% level shift. Based on the comparison of the two translations, it was detected that both translators did not apply the same kinds of shift. The frequency of shifts in each translation was measured and discussed. It was also shown that shifts were inevitable in some places in the translation process and this was because of different natures of languages and variations that existed among them, so the translators are forced to deviate from the source text. The reason of doing this research is that readability as one of the most necessary aspects of translation should be considered especially by translators. In this study, it was shown that the level of readability of translation results from the strategies taken by translators. Translation shifts are those strategies, thus showing this relation of readability and shift could be very fruitful.

Keywords: Translation Shifts, Catford’s Model, Category Shift, Level Shift, Readability.
1. Introduction
The Persian language spoken today in Iran is a member of the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European family of languages, and a direct descendant of Old and Middle Persian. For over a millennium, this language has been the primary means of daily discourse as well as the language of the science, art and literature on the Iranian Plateau. Translation into Persian has a long and eventful history; it has played an important part in the evolution of Iranian civilization throughout Western Asia and beyond. Since the middle of the 19th century translation from European languages has been an integral part of various modernization projects, both in Iran and the Persian-speaking areas outside it (Karimi Hakak, 1998).

The term translation can inspire different meaning and connotation. It can refer to the translation of general or technical texts with various themes and genres. It can also refer to the product of the process which is a text or it can be regarded as a term describing a process in a translator’s mind that leads to producing a text on paper (Gentzler, 1993).

The role of the translator should be clear enough in introducing a certain culture or civilization to his readers. Therefore, he has to understand the culture of the people who use the source language so that he can translate it to the target language properly. Basically translation is not just changing words from one to another language. It needs a special skill so that the result of the translation becomes natural and easy to understand. In Newmark’s book (1981, p. 40) entitled "Approaches to translation" he states that translation is how to replace a written message and statement in another language. It means, to have a good quality translation, it must convey the message the writer of the source language wants. It is not necessary to maintain the form of the text as long as the message of the source language can be delivered appropriately to the target language. Catford (1965) defines translation as an operation performed on languages which is a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another. According to him, translation is a process through which the whole components of the text or a part of it are processed. In order to achieve a good translation, translator should have knowledge about source and target languages. It means that the result of translation should not be like a translation, so the readers feel that they are reading an original book. Sometimes the translators find some difficulties and problems in translating texts. So, they cannot avoid changing the form and this formal change takes place in different levels within a text.

1.1. Translation Shifts
The notion of shift is an important concept in translation studies. However, shifts have not yet been dealt with extensively and systematically in corpus linguistics. The investigation of shifts has a long-standing tradition in translation studies. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) working in the field of comparative stylistic developed a system of translation procedures. Some of them are more or less direct or literal, but some of them are oblique and result in various differences between the source and target text. These procedures are called transposition (change in word class), modulation (change in semantics), equivalence (completely different translation, e.g. proverbs), and adaption (change of situation due to cultural differences).

The actual term shift seems to originate in Catford’s (1965) A Linguistic Theory of Translation. He follows the Firthian and Hallidayan linguistic model, which analyses language as
communication, operating functionally in context and on a range of different levels (e.g. phonology, graphology, grammar, lexis) and ranks (sentence, clause, group, word, morpheme, etc.). Catford (1965) makes an important distinction between formal correspondence and textual equivalence. In Catford’s (1965, p. 73) own words translation shifts are "departure from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL to the TL". According to him shifts are of two major types: (1) shift of level (2) shift of category. A level shift would be something which is expressed by grammar in one language and lexis in another. Category shifts are further subdivided in to: structure shift (a change in clause structure), class shift (a change from one part of speech to another), unit shift or rank shift (the translation equivalence in the TL is at different rank to the SL) and intra-system shift (the translation involves selection of a non-corresponding term in the TL system).

1.2. The Level of Readability
One of the important issues related to textbooks which needs attention is readability (educational terminology, 1998). Readability is the ease with which a written text can be understood by a reader. The readability of a particular text depends both on its content (for example, the complexity of its vocabulary and syntax) and on its typography (for example, its font size, line height, and line length). In other words, readability is the quality of written language that makes it easy to read and understand.

2. Statement of the Problem
Since translation is a very complicated task, some of the translators who are involved in this task, create some problems by their awkward translations in our country. To preserve the content of the message, the form must be changed. If all languages differ in form (and this is the essence of their being different languages) then quite naturally the forms must be altered if one is to preserve the content (Nida, 1969). The extent which the form must be changed in order to preserve the meaning, will depend upon the linguistic and cultural distance between languages. As far as the syntactic structures in source and target languages are concerned, there are some types of shift which can occur in the grammar from source to target language (Newmark, 1988). The importance of transferring of message in translation shows the importance of analysis of rendered sentences from English into Persian. Therefore, the translator should pay attention to the role of shift in translation. Today, shift analysis is often conducted in comparative, corpus-based translation studies, in research on machine translation, and whenever equivalence or translatability is the focus of research.

3. Literature Review
Several translation scholars (Baker 1995, 1996, Toury 1980, 1995) have suggested that translated texts tend to deviate from original target language texts in various ways, for example it is possible to identify features which are either exclusive to translation or occur with a higher or lower frequency in translations than in originals. On the one hand, systematic, large-scale, corpus-based research into features common to all translations could lead to the identification of universals of translation. On the other hand, research on a smaller scale, restricted to translations of a specified text type in a given socio-cultural context, and maybe even from a particular
source language, can yield information about translational norms, which have been declared one of the most important objects of investigation within the field (Chesterman 1993; Delabastita 1991; Hermans 1991; Toury 1995).

Among many of the translation studies some whose focuses were on the text alone concentrated on the formal changes rather than meaning e. g. Catford’s shifts, transpositions by Vinay and Darbelnet, etc. Translation as an interlingual practice necessitates moving from the form of the SL to the TL. In other words translation is a change of form (Larson, 1984) and this formal change takes place at different levels within a text.

Studies done in this area had named the phenomenon differently e. g. skewing (Larson, 1984), Transposition (Vinay, 1985, 1997), Shifts (Catford, 1965). From which some were prescriptive and practice- oriented, trying to formulate.

The term shift is used in the literature to refer to changes which occur or may occur in the process of translating. Since translating is a type of language use, the notion of shift belongs to the domain of linguistic performance, as opposed to that of theories of competence. Hence, shifts of translation can be distinguished from the systemic differences which exist between source and target languages and cultures (Baker, 1992). The term shift was introduced by Catford (1965). In Translation Studies, Munday (2001, p. 55) stated that “shift is, small linguistic changes occurring in translation of source text”; and as Catford (1965) states, there are two types of shift, i. e. level shift and category shift. According to him, level shift is something expressed by grammar in one language and lexis in another.

Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) introduce the term “transposition” as one of the four procedures of oblique translation and define it as the following transposition: this is a change of one part of speech for another without changing the sense (Vinay, 1985, 1997).

Although, Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) did not use the term “shift” in their definition of the formal changes, they referred to the same phenomenon in translation as is referred by Catford (1965) who is known as the pioneering theorist of “shifts”. Shifts are defined by Catford as "the departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL to the TL" and are classified as the level shifts and category shifts (Catford, 1965, p. 141).

The most detailed attempt to produce and apply a model of shift analysis has been carried out by Leuven-Zwart (1989) of Amsterdam whose model takes some of the categories proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) and Levy (1976) and applies them to the descriptive analysis of translation, attempting both to systematize comparisons and to build in a discourse framework above the sentence level (Munday, 2001, p. 63). Leuven Zwart’s model (1989) is a comparative-descriptive model too, which divides selected passages into comprehensible textual units.

Translation shift inevitably occurs in the translation process and has been studied in a number of researches (Catford, 1965; Al-Zoubi & Al-Hassnawi, 2001). In his book A Linguistic Theory of Translation, Catford (1965, p. 73) proposes the term shifts and defines it as “departure from formal correspondence in the process of going from SL to TL”. Traditional studies of translational shifts, notably Catford, are made within the framework of formal and contrastive linguistics, therefore being accused of a “static comparative linguistic approach” without considering pragmatic, extra-textual elements (Munday, 2001, p. 6).
Other studies relate translation shifts to extra-linguistic factors, such as text type in Levy (1969), translation style in Popović (1976), and textual, pragmatic and stylistic elements in Al-Zoubi and Al-Hassnawi (2001). These researches, considering either static comparative linguistic or pragmatic extra-textual elements, share one feature: a study of universal features and global models of translation shifts with a theory-oriented, prescriptive approach. However, the researches above lack statistical results to support the variation in translation shifts, so there is a need to conduct an empirical, descriptive study to provide statistical evidence. In addition, in discussing the relevance of translation shifts to linguistic factors, textual functions and relevant others, the researches above suggest a comprehensive translation phenomenon, not concentrating on the translation of one specific linguistic feature. Thus, there is also a need to limit a study on the shifts of the translation of a word class.

4. Methodology
The aim of this part is to elaborate the method and different steps of conducting this research study.

4.1. Model Selection and Design
The model selected for this study was Catford’s translation shifts (1965:73). He defines the translation shifts as "departure from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL to the TL".

The design applied in this study is a corpus-based comparative descriptive approach. The comparative approach is designed for the determination of the most (and the least) readable translation and identification of shifts that occurred through translation act. As a consequence this research is placed within the framework of pure translation studies in Holm's map of translation studies (Munday, 2001) which actually includes descriptive translation studies as one of its major branches.

4.2. Novel Selection
Providing some clues to get to specific results, this study intends to examine some excerpts of an English novel "1984" by George Orwell and its two Persian translations by Hamidreza Balouch and Saleh Hosseini. The reason of selecting this novel as the data collection source was that it is written in English originally. This novel has been translated by some translators but all of them were not successful. These translated texts used in this study are more famous than the others.

4.3. Procedure
The aims of this study, as noted earlier, was to determine the effect of shifts on the level of readability of the Persian texts in two Persian translations of the novel "1984" by "George Orwell" based on Catford's model.

Regarding this, firstly 476 language chunks were chosen from the original texts in order to find the type of shift which was used in their translations.

To categorize the data in a systematic form, they are tabulated alongside their Persian counterparts. Since there existed more than one kind of shift in some samples, due to preventing the repetition of samples, the researcher has tried as far as possible to break them into smaller
segments. So, the units of analysis include phrases, clauses and sentences. The case in which the shifts have been occurred, become underline or bold. The type of shift of each chunk was written in the third column. In the last column the reason which the researcher considered to distinguish the type of shift, were explained.

Afterwards, the frequency of occurrence of each type of shift was counted and presented in a table. In order to illustrate the purposes, some examples of each kind of shift were shown in the next section of this part and others were brought in appendix.

To determine the level of readability, the cloze test made was used by the researcher. The obtained results of this test were illustrated in form of a table in the next parts of this study.

5. Results

Based on the purpose of this study, the first part of the original text "1984" and its two Persian translations by Balouch and Hosseini, were studied and totally 476 language chunks were collected and classified based on Catford's model of shift. The following table represents the frequency of occurrence of each kind of shifts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Translation Shifts</th>
<th>Level Shift</th>
<th>Structural Shift</th>
<th>Class Shift</th>
<th>Intra-system Shift</th>
<th>Unit shift</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balouch's Translation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosseini's Translation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the Table 1 the 476 examples, structural shift enjoyed the highest frequency with 215 cases in Balouch' translation and 148 cases in Hosseini's and level shift the lowest with only 4 incidences in both translations. Class shift has occurred in 145 chunks in Balouch's and 105 cases in Hosseini's, intra-system shift in 46 cases in Balouch's text and 45 in Hosseini's and finally unit shift in 44 examples in Balouch's translation and 37 in Hosseini's translation. In the next step, the researcher calculated the percentage of the occurrence of the above variables which is demonstrated in the table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Translation Shifts</th>
<th>Level Shift</th>
<th>Structural Shift</th>
<th>Class Shift</th>
<th>Intra-system Shift</th>
<th>Unit shift</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balouch's Translation</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>45.16</td>
<td>30.46</td>
<td>9.66</td>
<td>9.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosseini's Translation</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>31.09</td>
<td>22.05</td>
<td>9.45</td>
<td>7.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows the percentage of the occurrence of the shift in two Persian texts separately. In Balouch's translation the structural shift with the highest percentage of 45.16 preceded others.
The second most frequent case was class shift with 30.46 percentage. Next was intra-system shift with percentage of 9.66 followed by unit shift with the percentage of 9.24. In Hosseini's translation the structural shift took the first place with the percentage of 31.09. The second place belonged to class shift with the percentage of 22.05 and intra-system shift took the next place with the percentage of 9.45 followed by unit shift with the percentage of 7.77. Level shift took the last place with the percentage of 0.84 in both translations.

The above data is displayed in figure 1 for easier reference. The figure displays two pie charts which show the percentage of use of each kind of translation shift in Persian texts separately.

![Figure 1 Percentage of Occurrence of Translation Shift]

In order to provide appropriate answers to the questions of this study, the calculated frequency and percentage of the occurred shifts in each translation were compared and shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Variables</th>
<th>Hosseini</th>
<th>Balouch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translation Shift</td>
<td>frequency</td>
<td>percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level shift</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural shift</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>31.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class shift</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>22.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intra-system shift</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>9.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit shift</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to observe the differences between the performance of two translators, the results obtained from the comparison of two translated versions are represented in the below figure.
The results of the process of calculating the level of readability in the translated texts were shown in the table 4.9 below.

Table 4. The Level of Readability of Persian texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translator</th>
<th>The percentage of the level of readability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balouch</td>
<td>58.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosseini</td>
<td>54.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Readability as one of the most necessary aspects of translations should be specially considered by translators. In this study, it is shown that the translation shifts as one of the strategies taken by translators can be an effective factor on the level of readability. The results of the cloze test demonstrated the level of readability of both texts with 58.81 percent in Balouch's translation and 54.03 percent in Hosseini's translation.

6. Summary of Results

Through the analysis of the corpus, the performance of the translators in the application of shifts was not the same in both translations except level shift. The statistics shows that Balouch has used the other kinds of shift more than Hosseini. In Balouch's translation, level shift measured 0.84%, structural shift measured 45.16%, class shift measured 30.46%, intra system shift measured 9.66% and unit shift measured 9.24%. So it can be said that the structural shift with the high percentage than the rest is the most efficient shift in making the translation readable and level shift with the lowest percentage is the least efficient one.

The outcomes of the cloze test demonstrated that the translation done by Balouch is more readable than Hosseini's translation. The level of readability in Balouch's translation equals to 58.81% that is higher than the level of readability in Hosseini's translation which equals to 54.03%.
Based on the analysis of the corpus and the results of the readability test, it was found that category shift, especially structural shift is one of the effective factors on the level of readability. Every language has its own linguistic characteristics and features and to convey a message, it has its own wording system and form. The disagreement between two translators of "1984" in application of shifts has been made due to the style of each translator; that is, Hosseini has intended to be more faithful to the original text and so its translation was ST-oriented. On the other hand, by applying different types of shifts, Balouch has created a TT-oriented translation in which he moved towards the norms of the target text in order to improve or simplify the meaning to the readers.

7. Suggestions for Further Research
The present research addressed the introduction and investigation of the effect of different kinds of shift on the level of readability. Yet, there is great deal of room for research in this area. More than anything the following studies can be suggested:

Further research can be performed to investigate structural shift in the case of literary translation where stylistic changes tend to result in deviations from normal structure.

Another study can be done to evaluate features such as clarity, adequacy, accuracy or sensibility in the translation text that have not worked.

Investigating political ideologies symbols and characters are other subjects of study, because this book dealt with Communism and Marxism ideological a lot.

Also changes can be made in the framework in order to investigate the views of other scholars about translation shifts.
References


