A Critical Discourse Analysis of two Translated Versions of the Novel “Coming up for Air” by George Orwell

Shabnam Karimian Sichani 1*, Bahram Hadian 1

1. Department of Foreign Languages, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran.
* Corresponding Author’s Email: Shabnam.Karimiyan@gmail.com

Abstract – This study attempts to discover the ideological differences between George Orwell’s Coming Up for Air and its two Persian translations. According to Fairclough, Ideology in discourse is encoded in the lexical, grammatical and textual items and changes in these items indicate different ideology. To do this, grammatical structures of the source text and target texts were analyzed based on Halliday Systemic Functional Grammar. The results revealed that there were no ideological differences between the source text and its corresponding translations. However the second translator has used the target language natural structures more frequently in translation of passive structures but in rendering pseudo-cleft, cleft and preposing both translators have adopted similar strategies.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, textual analysis, ideology, translation, Hallidayan systemic functional grammar, syntactic structures

I. INTRODUCTION

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a branch of applied linguistics which studies discourse and language in relation to social and political issues to discover how they affect each other. Fairclough’s model may be considered as the cornerstone of the entire field of CDA, because he was the first to create a theoretical framework, which provided guidelines for future CDA research. His model is based on the assumption that language is an irreducible part of social life. The dialectic relation between language and social reality is realized through social events (texts), social practices (orders of discourse) and social structures (languages) (Fairclough 2003). Taking Fairclough (2001:21-2) into account, description is one of the three stages of his analyzing model. In this stage ten questions and some sub-questions could be investigated by researchers who are interested in textual analysis of the features related to forms. In the present study some of these questions have been investigated and the results have been expressed through tables and graphs.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a branch of applied linguistics which has been rarely applied in translation analysis in Iran. Farahzad (2007) seems to be among the first scholars who have specifically used Fairclough’s CDA theory in the Iranian context. For translation criticism, Farahzad (2007) adopts a two-level procedure: micro-level and macro-level. She states that at both levels, lexical choices, metaphors, grammatical elements, and multimodal elements are checked for ideological implications.
Tinna Puurtinen (2003), in her contribution to Critical Discourse Analysis, discusses the potential ideological effects translations have, especially those produced implicitly by linguistic forms like nominalization, passivization, premodification, etc. In translation ideologically motivated linguistic structures of a source text may be manipulated either unintentionally because of inadequate language and/or translation skills or insufficient knowledge of the relationship between language and ideology, or intentionally owing to translation norms, requirements of the translation commission or the translator own attitudes toward the source text subject.

Sertkan (2007), in his MA thesis, studied five Turkish translations of Oliver Twist to investigate how ideology specially “religious-conservative ideology”, affects lexical choices in translation of children literature by means of Fairclough (1995). He believed intervention of that ideology in Turkish version brings about distortion of the source text” (Sertkan, 2007). He concluded that “therefore ideology plays a significance role in the decision making process undertaken by translators and other individuals, such as publishers who are involved in this process in one way or another” (Sertkan, 2007). Maintained along with critics, reviewers, teachers and translators’ ideology which control the translation process and strategies, patronage that is individuals, groups, religious and political parties, the media or publishers influences translation.

In another study, Shamsali (2007) conducted a study to examine whether ideological differences occur when it comes to trans-journalism (i.e., translations which deal with journalism, such as news, editorials, etc.) and if so, in which media, namely conservative or pro-reform media, such differences are more considerable. To this end, the researchers used 30 trans-journalist texts from the above mentioned media to translate the intended corpus of his research which was chosen from different pieces of news about Israel-Palestine conflict that potentially carried ideological weight. The theoretical framework of this study was adopted from van Dijk’s (1998) CDA model. The results indicated that there were significant differences between conservative and pro-reform media in translating the news. In the conservative media the percentages of political-ideological changes were much higher in comparison to pro-reform ones due to their different political-ideological perspectives and beliefs.

The approach to CDA chosen for this study is that of Norman Fairclough (1995). In order to analyze the text according to Fairclough’s first stage, Description, considering the research questions, the researchers found Halliday’s (1994) Systemic Functional Grammar an adequate framework in this regard. According to SFG we carry out functions through language, i.e. what we intend to do with a piece of language. Clearly, writers have reasons for saying something and for saying it in the way they do. Translators who transfer the messages from one language to another are responsible to take out the hidden intentions of the writer. As given by Fairclough (1995), the first stage in text analysis is description to find out linguistic features such as features of vocabulary, grammar, types of speech act, the directness or indirectness of expression and features to do with the overall structure of interactions. All these features will finally lead to the uncovering of power relations and ideological processes in discourse. In this study the researchers in the stage of text analysis,
S. K. Sichani et al.

took the grammatical elements into account and by considering SFG described the differences and similarities in two translated versions of George Orwell’s novel “Coming up for air”. The purpose of this study was to investigate if there were any ideological differences according to the choice of the translators in rendering specific grammatical structures such as passive structures, cleft, pseudo-clefts and preposing. The researchers decided to study the source text thoroughly in order to find instances of the grammatical structures to answer the following question:

Is the ideology behind the text revealed through the use of certain syntactic structures (e.g. active vs. passive, preposed structures and cleft structures) in the process of translating this English novel into Persian?

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Materials

A complete coverage of “Coming Up for Air” written by Georg Orwell, ST along with its two translated versions Roshanfekr (1390), TT1; and Saeednia (1372), TT2 was done by the researchers in order to have enough samples to analyze. The researchers chose this book because it was amenable to the researchers’ intended framework in narrative genre. The discourse of the book was analyzed within the framework proposed by Fairclough, besides, Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar was a suitable approach for the researchers to find out the strategies used by translators.

To indicate the exact nature of discursive strategies utilized by the writer and the translators, and to compare the discursive characteristics and underlying ideologies of the intended text, the researchers studied the whole source book and extracted some instances with their translations and analyzed them according to the parameters defined by the selected framework. It should be noted that among different grammatical elements, the researchers investigated the passive structure, cleft & pseudo-cleft and preposed structures.

B. Data Collection Procedure

The data for analysis were collected from the source text “Coming up for Air” and two translated versions of the book. To achieve the research objectives the following procedures were followed:

- Studying the theoretical background of Critical Discourse Analysis and relevant review of literature.
- Studying the source book “Coming up for air” and its two translated versions in order to find appropriate examples regarding the research questions.
- Organizing the data collected in different categories.
- Drawing the Diagrams, tables and charts.
- Conducting a Chi-Square test in order to compare the translations and source text.
- Analyzing the data
C. Data Analysis Procedure

After the data were collected from the source and target books, data analysis which was the categorizing the samples according to the applied strategies was performed by the researcher. To this end, particular statistical procedures were followed.

First, in order to investigate the differences between the source text and their translations, classification schemes, ideological contested structures and meaning relations of the book as well as their grammatical differences must be analyzed. To analyze the data, descriptive and inferential statistical procedure were used. For the descriptive part, the researchers utilized percentage and to find out whether there were any significant differences, Chi-square test was used.

III. RESULTS

In order to answer the research question, the data were classified into three main categories namely Passive structures, preposing and cleft & pseudo-cleft structures. By comparing the source text with their corresponding translations frequencies and percentages of basic discursive strategies attributed to the aforementioned grammatical structures in the translated books were analyzed.

A. Strategies Applied to Translate Passive Structures

Considering the following table the researchers categorized the translation strategies into five parts; Inchoative, Impersonal, Active, Passive and Unaccusative.

- An inchoative structure is a structure in which a causative verb is used intransitively where the direct object of the sentence appears in the position of subject and the subject or the cause is not mentioned; e.g. ‘The door opened’ (Levin, 1993; Schafer, 2008).

- An Unaccusative verb is an intransitive verb which applies only one argument which is deep-structurally direct object (or complement) but it appears in the position of subject at the surface level. Nonetheless, it is not the agent or the doer of the act of the verb; e.g. ‘fall’ (Levin & Rappaport Hovav, 1995).

- An impersonal Passive deletes the subject of an intransitive verb. In place of the verb's subject, the construction instead may include a syntactic placeholder, also called a dummy. This placeholder has neither thematic nor referential content

Regarding the ideational meaning Persian passive structure has the same function as the English one which is, demoting the agent and promoting the function of the patient and also changing the presupposition of the structure but considering the textual meaning passive structure is not a commonly used syntactic structure in Persian with the same function.
Table 1: The Frequency & Percentile of the Strategies used by TT1 & TT2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Strategies</th>
<th>Frequency in TT1</th>
<th>Percentile in TT1</th>
<th>Frequency in TT2</th>
<th>Percentile in TT2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inchoative</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.08%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccusative</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.60%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal Passive</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.96%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active voice</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26.05%</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive voice</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35.29%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the results obtained from the presented frequencies and percentile ranks in Table 1, the dominant strategy that has been adopted to translate the passive structures by the first translator is passive voice, on the other hand in TT2 the dominant strategy that has been used by the translator is the unaccusative structure. The conclusion that could be drawn from the results obtained in this part is that the second translator has used a more natural form in rendering the same structure than the first translator. Regarding English and Persian, passivization is not used in Persian as much as in English. Also Persian passive does not include all the communicative features of English passive.

Figure 1: Percentages of Passive Form translation Strategies in TT1

Regarding the pie chart, just 10% of the strategies that have been adopted by the first translator consist of Inchoative structures. The rest 90% have been shared among unaccusative, impersonal forms, active and passive structures. To sum up, passive structure has the highest usages in TT1. The researchers’ interpretation of the obtained results of this study is that in the translation of English passive voice, TT1 results have demonstrated a considerably higher tendency toward passive voice translation compared to other strategies. Moreover, among the applied strategies used by TT2 (figure2), higher tendency is demonstrated for unaccusative structure. This may be due to the structural differences
between Farsi and English, the illumination of which requires further research study to see whether the same findings will be obtained when translation of other types of texts are taken into account. However, the other possible reason for this tendency might be the translators struggle to meet the expectations of the target community, that is, Iranian readers of narrative genre.

Figure 2: Percentages of Passive Forms Translation Strategies in TT2

Taking the pie chart information into account, the dominant strategies that have been chosen by the second translator for rendering passive forms into Persian is unaccusative form. Active and unaccusative have made up the two biggest items. Unaccusative form has 28% and the highest percentage among all. Regarding the chart, inchoative, passive and impersonal forms have made up the smallest amount.

Chart 1: Passive Translation Strategies Frequencies in TT1 & TT2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TT1</th>
<th>TT2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inchoative</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccusative</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By Taking the information and data in this chart into consideration, just in case of unaccusative and passive, translators applied different strategies. Using active and unaccusative structures is more common and also natural in Persian.

B. Strategies Applied to Translate Clefts & Pseudo-Clefts

Clefts have different preferences for coherent relationships with preceding context. As Delin (1989), and Oberlander and Delin (1996) among others have shown, different cleft types relate to context in different ways. Thus, it-clefts, as we saw above, can carry new information as presupposition. By contrast, wh-clefts cannot: the information conveyed in the Wh-clause must either have an antecedent in the discourse, or one must be inferable (Delin, 1989).

The results, as shown in table 2, indicate the researcher’s categorization of the strategies that have been used in translation of the cleft and pseudo-cleft structures; i.e., Preposing, Clefting, Neutral, and Emphasizing word are the main strategies based on the research.

The dominant strategy which has been used more frequently by both translators, is clefting. 45% and 38% of cleft and pseudo-cleft structures have been rendered by TT1 and TT2 respectively into Persian by equivalent Persian cleft structures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies used to Translate Cleft and Pseudo-clefts</th>
<th>TT1 Fre.</th>
<th>TT1 Per.</th>
<th>TT2 Fre.</th>
<th>TT2 Per.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preposing</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clefting</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizing word</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 provides a comparison between TT1 and TT2, emphasizing on the strategies that have been adopted by translators in translation of Cleft and pseudo-cleft structures. As it is presented in this table, 45% of cleft and pseudo-cleft structures have been rendered into Persian using Clefts in TT1. The second translator has used the same strategy in order to translate the cleft and pseudo-cleft structures so 38% of the Cleft & Pseudo-Cleft structures have been translated into Persian by the same strategy.
Analysis of the first translation regarding cleft structure translation in Chart 2 indicates that the translator has dominantly transferred the cleft & Pseudo-cleft using Clefting strategy. She has adopted preposing as the second most frequent form and emphasizing word as the third frequently applied construction in her translation.

T1 translator has selected Clefting as the most frequent form and the preposing structure as the second most frequent form. Analyzing the data, with regard to cleft and pseudo-cleft translations have indicated that Clefting is the most frequent form which has been adopted by both translators.

The graph indicates that there are no sharp differences among the strategies which has been adopted by both translators. Clefting has the highest frequency in both translations. However since Persian enjoys a flexible word order, emphasis on a particular concept in the sentence can be rendered through Preposing rather than more complex structures such as
Clefting and Pseudo-Clefting therefore preposing is considered a more natural equivalent in translation with the same function.

C. Strategies Applied to Translate Preposing

As we use the term, “Preposing is a structure in which a lexically governed phrasal constituent appears to the left of its canonical position, typically sentence-initial position.

Table 3: The Frequency & Percentile of the Strategies Used by TT1 & TT2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies used to Translate Preposing</th>
<th>TT1 Fre.</th>
<th>TT1 Per.</th>
<th>TT2 Fre.</th>
<th>TT2 Per.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preposing</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although Persian has a flexible word order but the configuration of sentence structure in Persian is not always free and information structure imposes some constraints on the configuration of structures. As an example considering table 3, both translators have rendered the preposed structures with similar strategy. As Van Valin (1998) points out, in SOV languages the preverbal position is the unmarked focal position and Rezai and Tayyeb (2006) confirm this claim by investigating Persian evidence. Also Yar Mohammadi (2002) states that in Persian unmarked focus structures the stress falls on the element placed in preverbal position, but the marked focal position occurs in the sentence initial position. Therefore, narrow focus elements can be placed in the initial position as well. Rezai and Tayyeb (2006) mention that in addition to focus elements, other non-focal elements can be influenced by topicalization and occur in the sentence initial position.

Chart 4: A Comparison between TT1&TT2 Regarding Preposing Translation Strategies
The chart compares the frequency of preposing translation strategies that have been adopted by two Translators. Both translators have preferred keeping the same structure of the source text and have rendered about 80% of the selected sentences by preposed structures therefore preposing is the dominant strategy in this part.

IV. DISCUSSION

According to CDA theories, every language use is an ideological act. Ideologies can meddle in translation in various ways, as Fairclough (1995) illustrates these ways in his model at 3 levels textual, paratextual and semiotic levels. The author investigated this novel in syntactic level. The present study aimed to answer how ideological difference could be transferred by certain grammatical choices such as passive, preposing and cleft structures and what strategies are involved in its Persian translation.

The findings of the study indicated that the ideology behind translated text is revealed through the use of certain syntactic structures and there are no ideological differences between the source text and its two translations.

However, the second translator has used the target language natural structures more frequently in translation of passive structures. But in rendering pseudo-cleft, cleft structures and preposing both translators have adopted similar strategies. Moreover, the analysis of the data revealed that, on one hand, the translator should transfer the same metafunctions of source text to the target text and on the other hand, they should use the natural metafunctions. It is important to keep the same metafunctions of the source text in the target text; on the other hand it is necessary to make some appropriate alterations because of the differences between the two languages.

In the same tune with the present study, Hadian, Tavangar-Rizi, and Amouzade (2013) did a comparative analysis of the frequency of the passive structure in the short stories as a narrative register and the scientific articles as an expository register indicates that the occurrence of this structure in scientific articles is relatively frequent and makes up 13% of the whole sentences in the sample, whereas this proportion in the sample of short stories is only 0/5%. Therefore it can be concluded that the type of register and its discourse has a strong influence on the syntactically preferred structures in the text. And specifically in narrative register passive structures is used very rarely so it cannot be considered as a natural structure.

In the same tune with the present study, Hadian (2013) did a comparative analysis of the frequency of the passive structure in the short stories as a narrative register and the scientific articles as an expository register indicates that the occurrence of this structure in scientific articles is relatively frequent and makes up 13% of the whole sentences in the sample, whereas this proportion in the sample of short stories is only 0/5%. Therefore it can be concluded that the type of register and its discourse has a strong influence on the syntactically preferred structures in the text.
V. CONCLUSION

The main aim of this study was to discover the ideological differences between George Orwell’s Coming Up for Air and its two Persian translations, by Roshanfekr (1390) and Saeednia (1372). Taking Fairclough Ideology into consideration, discourse is encoded in the lexical, grammatical and textual items and changes in these items indicate different ideology.

The results revealed that there were no ideological differences between the source text and its two translations. However the second translator has used the target language natural structures more frequently in translation of passive structures but in rendering pseudo-cleft, cleft structures and preposing both translators have adopted similar strategies.

Moreover, the analysis of the data revealed that, on one hand, the translator should transfer the same metafunctions of source text to the target text and on the other hand they should use the natural structures. It is noteworthy to make some appropriate alterations because of the differences between the frequencies of syntactic structures in two languages.

REFERENCES


