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INVESTIGATING MANIPULATION IN LITERARY TRANSLATION: A STUDY ON A PERSIAN TRANSLATION OF HAMLET

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ABSTRACT

Manipulation is one of growing topics in translation studies but it still needs more research to be fully developed and understood. Literary translation is one of the targets of manipulation. This research is an attempt to apply five categories of manipulation (addition, omission, euphemism, nominalization, and stylistic rewriting) to Pazargadi's (2002) Persian translation of *Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark*. In this study, ten of the twenty Scenes of the universally acknowledged play *Hamlet* were randomly selected the five most literature-related manipulation categories were considered. The study followed both quantitative and qualitative purposes. Results of chi-square test showed that there was a statistically significant difference among the categories, emphasizing the role of *addition* as the most effective category. The qualitative evaluation of the choices made by the translator showed that most of the manipulations were made due to linguistic and cultural differences, although there were some manipulations that did not show a specific reason to be applied.

Keywords: Translation Studies, Literary Translation, Manipulation, Hamlet, Re-Writing

INTRODUCTION

Scholars of translation have come to believe that translations are partial representations of the source text. One of the notions that seem to account for the partiality of translation is “manipulation”, which is known as a text-modifying process of translation. Manipulations introduced to a translation can affect any kind of text-type for various reasons such as “ideology, identity and ... gender” (Jones, 2009). One of the text-types which has long been a target of manipulation is literary genre.

The present research seeks to study a Persian translation of one of universally acknowledged masterpieces of Shakespeare *Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark*, to find a number of sources of manipulation in the work. These sources are omission, addition, stylistic re-writing, euphemism, and nominalization. In the review of the literature, it is argued that ideology, norm and literary style are possible causes of manipulation in literature. One of the important aspects of the study is its focus on a classical work in drama, which can further expand the understanding of various realizations of manipulation in literature.

Research Background: Possible Causes of Manipulation

One serious problem of studies on manipulation is the ambiguity of the notion in the present status of TS. No specific entry was allocated to manipulation in Baker and Saldanha's *Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (2009), which further makes the situation ambiguous. Yet, some similar notions may help get a better grasp of manipulation. The basic idea of translation as a “re-writing” was first proposed by Lefevere (1992). In Lefevere's opinion, every translation is a re-written version altered for a specific ideology. Re-writing a text, culturally, politically or ideologically will inevitably involve a process of alteration known as “manipulation” in translation studies. This manipulation can be seen from different perspectives. For instance, Jones (2009) explains various forces behind manipulation in literary translation:

Literary translation also engages with discourses of nation: nineteenth century translations of Irish literature, for example, helped build a sense of Irish nationhood in resistance to British colonial domination. Finally, in terms of the relationship between subject and setting, selection decisions and manipulation of source and target text may reveal literary translation actors' ideology and identity: what they believe in, or who they feel they are (in terms of gender, for instance). Or they may deliberately debate or contest issues of ideology and identity.

Research Article

Clearly, nation, identity, ideology, and gender are among the factors that can influence a translator's work as far as manipulation is concerned. Thus, manipulation can be seen as a kind of distortion and alteration of the original (Hermans, 1985) in line with a specific purpose.

Linguistically speaking, different categorizes of manipulation may be considered. From a micro-structural view, some of the causes are omission, addition and stylistic re-writing. Omission is a strategy in which irrelevant information is removed from the translation (see Schaffner & Wissemann, 2001). Addition involves introducing new information to the translation (ibid.). Another factor can be stylistic re-writing which involves a re-version of the original particularly in the field of literature. Yet, apart from such factors, can one find major causes leading to manipulation in translation? In the following sections, ideology, norm, and stylistic re-writing are briefly reviewed as some possible causes.

Ideology as a Cause of Manipulation in Translation

Ideology, within a broad definition, can be seen as a set of ideas or expectations supported by the dominant class in the society, or it is a way of thinking and judging other things from personal point of view. As can be seen, ideology can occur at different linguistic levels including sociolinguistic contexts or simply an individual's writing including literature.

All of these ideological trends exist within texts (Fairclough, 1999). From the social perspective, ideology can refer to a system of beliefs shared by members of a certain social group who have common interests or world knowledge. The textual aspect of such conceptual entities is usually called *representation* (Van, 2002).

However, for the textual aspect to be fully realized in language or within institutionalized entities, a more observable language dimension would be necessary. Linguists call this aspect "discourse" (Fairclough, 2010). Based on what Fairclough (1989) argues ideology in discourse is concealed in the lexical, grammatical and textual facets and any modification imposed on these items may lead to a defense of a particular system of worldview.

Similarly, translation is a ground for defending or downgrading certain ideologies (Hatim & Muday, 2004). In fact, different lexical, grammatical and textual choices in translations of the same source text are considered *ideological manipulation* in translations. These translational manipulations can occur in the process of text production (translating), while translators are seen as active agents in shaping ideology in the TT (Schäffner, 2003).

So, ideology is embedded within translation, because ideology is often coded in the linguistic expression and active process of transferring ideas across cultures (Toury, 2012). The factors accounting for this are the control, supervision and manipulation operating at the translation process. Linguistically, the translator's decision-making about addition, omission selection, and placement of words is a process composed of historical determinations and the socio-political milieu surrounding him or her (Álvarez & Vidal, 1996; Munday, 2012).

Norm as a Cause of Manipulation in Translation

Although related to ideology, norm is a different concept that may account for manipulation in translation. Ideology, as mentioned earlier, was mainly an abstract concept realized through discourse. Norms, on the other hand, may be more behavioral than ideological. For instance, norms of conduct in an organization are observed by each employee's actual behaviors and if the person in question tries to violate the behaviors, others and even the organization may react to him/her. The notion of norms generally explains the reason for a wide range of manipulations.

Toury (2012) is among the scholars who first investigated norm in TS, recognizing it as an operational tool in his descriptive approach called Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS). Translation norms govern the decision-making process in translating, and hence they determine the type of equivalence that is established between ST and TT. According to Hermans (1985), norms can be basically seen as behavioral. Norms are psychological and social entities, serving as an important factor in the interaction between people and are part of every socialization process.

Norms, then, are a pattern of conscious behavior, regulating expectations concerning both behavior itself and its products (Schäffner, 1999). Toury (1999) defines norm in terms of "the translation of general

Research Article

values or ideas shared by a group- as to what is conventionally right and wrong, adequate and inadequate - into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations”.

As far as decision-making is concerned, Toury (1995) claims that norms govern every level of decision-making in the translation process from choice of text to translate to the final choices of translation strategies of action. Therefore, Toury introduces three kinds of norm: (a) initial norm; (b) preliminary norms; and (c) operational norms. Understanding these types of norm can help define the notion of manipulation.

If translations are against the established norms of the target culture, a cultural clash may follow. To solve this problem, the translator may adopt strategies. According to Toury (2012), operational norms can result in manipulation in translation as they involve a textual-linguistic aspect. Therefore, the translator would rely on such norms to manipulate the text to the extent that it might correspond to the TL conventions.

Causes of Manipulation in Literary Translation

The idea of manipulation should itself be related to another notion to be safely related to literary translation. Scholars of translation have come to believe that translations are partial representations of the source text (Tymoczko, 2003). This idea implies that translations are relatively “re-written” versions of the original. As mentioned above, manipulations introduced to a translation can affect any kind of text-type for various reasons such as “ideology, identity and ... gender” (Jones, 2009). One of the genres which has long been a target of manipulation is literary genre. One reason for this widespread manipulation of literature is maybe the fact that this genre is written to affect the reader’s “emotive” perception of the text. As a result, what we normally read as a literary translation might be the result of the translator’s personal, emotional, ideological and aesthetic reading of the text.

In addition, Jones (2009) explains how literary translations may be manipulated to serve national purposes. As a result, the question of investigating manipulation in literary translation can be highly insightful in translation studies and especially for expanding our knowledge of the status of Persian language and translation. As an instance, Alizadeh and Nemat-Parsa (2012) conducted a study on Mansouri’s translation of *Lolita*, in which they found that “the translator manipulated the translation to a certain extend.” They authors provide textual analyses of the literary text along with the translation. The following are some samples selected from Alizadeh and Nemat-Parsa’s paper (2012) on Mansouri’s translation.

/dær jeki æz kefvær ha:j-e kena:re-e dærja:/
In a principedom by the sea

/pedæræm mærdi æz ætba?-e su:ʔi:s bu:d ke æz læhaze neza:di be fara:nsavi ha:
væ ɔ:trifj ha: nebæt da:ʃt/
My father was a gentle, easy-going person, a salad of racial gene, FOLLOWING PERSIAN WORDS,

Based on the analysis made by the authors, the translator totally omitted the underlined words, without any tendency to provide a translation of them. However, such manipulations are not limited to omission: another type is addition defined as follows: Here is one textual analyses on Mansouri’s translation based on addition:

/mæn dær sa:l-e 1910 mi:la:di dær fæhr-e pa:ris pa:jtaxt-e færa:nse mɔ:tevæled ʃɔ:dæm/
I was born in 1910, in Paris.

As can be seen, in the above example, the translator used words that do not exist in the ST and its reason does not seem to be cohesion. For instance, adding that Paris is the capital of France would not really add anything useful to the translation but simply makes the text highly dull and boring.

Zamani-Sarzenbeh (2012) conducted a political study on manipulation. There are many critical discourse analysis categories in her study including presence, addition, hyperbole, negative lexicalization, topicalization, and so on. Most of these strategies are of course instances of political discourse and cannot be basically related to literature, although *nominalization* and *euphemism* seem to be applicable to literature.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Article

The corpus-based materials under study include the following recourses:

1. Shakespeare's *Hamlet, the prince of Denmark*, as the source text
2. Pazargadi's Persian (2002) translation of *Hamlet, the prince of Denmark*, as the source text

Data Collection

Hamlet is composed of 5 Acts and 20 Scenes.

The data were collected through a randomized selection of 10 Scenes from the play. In other words, 50% of the Scenes in the play was selected through simple random method of data collection. As a result of the sampling procedure, the following Scenes were selected: Act 1, Scene 2; Act 1, Scene 4; Act 1, Scene 5; Act 2, Scene 2; Act 3, Scene 2; Act 3, Scene 4; Act 4, Scene 1; Act 4, Scene 3; Act 4, Scene 6; and Act 5, Scene 2.

Research Questions

The study followed both qualitative and quantitative research designs and the following questions were addressed in the research study:

1. What is the frequency of the manipulation strategies used in the Persian translation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*?
2. Is there any statistically significant difference among the manipulation strategies used by the translator to be found through chi-square test?
3. How can each of the strategies be evaluated from the perspective of manipulation?

As can be seen above, the second question of the study could be stated in terms of a hypothesis to be tested. As a result, a null-hypothesis was proposed and then tested through chi-square:

Null-hypothesis: There is not any statistical significance among the manipulation strategies used by the translator through chi-square test.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed through five manipulation strategies which are mostly related to literary discourse (Alizadeh and Nemati-Parsa, 2012; Zamani-Sarزندeh, 2012):

Addition

Addition is a translation strategy which involves introducing new information to the translation while the information may be existing in the ST or not (Schaffner & Wissemann, 2001).

Euphemism

Euphemism is the technique of replacing offensive words with less offensive ones. This discourse technique may be used for several purpose such as ideological or aesthetic reasons (Zamani-Sarزندeh, 2012).

Nominalization

Nominalization refers to a syntactic shift in which the subject of a sentence is removed and the verb is turned into an abstract nominal mode usually used to hide the agent (Alizadeh and Nemati-Parsa, 2012; Larson, 1998).

Omission

Omission is a strategy in which seemingly irrelevant information is removed from the translation usually to make it simpler or more comprehensible for the TT reader (Schaffner & Wissemann, 2001).

Stylistic Re-writing

Changes in style involve a genre and style re-writing of the original, usually to make it more appropriate according to the conventions of the TL. So, for example an informal style of speech may be turned into a formal one by this strategy (Lefevere, 1992).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Analysis

In this section, some samples are presented for each of the manipulation types investigated in this study.

Textual Analysis

Addition

Source Text

Research Article

Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,-- (Act 1, Scene 2)

Translated Text

/... ?æst be ?estela:h ba: mæ?dzu:ni æz ja:di væ ?ændu:h/

Transcription of Translated Text

... ast be estelah bā ma'juni az shādi va anduh

In the above TT the term “be estelāh” was added to the text, while as can be seen in the ST, there is no sign of this phrase in the ST. This addition may help the Persian reader read the text more easily or without much ambiguity.

Euphemism

Source Text

(Act 1, Scene 4)

Makes us traduced and taxed of other nations.

They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase

Soil our addition; and indeed it takes

Translated Text

/... moʊdʒebe bædna:mi va tæmæsxɔ:r-e kefvær-e ma: dær færq va qærb-e beine melæɫ xa:hæd

fɔ:d væ ma: ra: mæst xa:hænd xa:nd væ ba: ?eba:rat-e zæft færa:fætema:n ra: lægædma:l

xa:hænd kærd/

Transcription of Translated Text

... mowjeb-e badnāmi va tamsxor-e keshvar-e mā dar sharq va qarab-e bynalmelal xāhad shod va mā rā mast xāhand xānd va bā ‘ebārāt-e zesht sherāfatemān rā lagadmāl xāhand kard.

The translation keeps the word “drunkards” by the TT “mast”, but to some extent, used a slight euphemism by using “zesht” for “swinish”, which could be translated by more offensive terms. So the translation seems to have kept such images as far as possible.

Nominalization

Source Text

My lord, I came to see your father's funeral. (Act 1, Scene 2)

Translated Text

/qɔ:rba:n, mæn bæra:je hɔ:zu:r dær tæfji:ʔ dʒena:ze pedæreta:n ?a:mæde ?æm/

Transcription of Translated Text

qorban, man barā-ie hozur dar tashee'-e jenaze pedaretān āmade-am.

As can be seen, the main verb of the above sentence is “to see”, which was turned into “hozur” in the Persian translation, which is an instance of normalization. In fact, the verb was turned into an abstract noun.

Omission

Source Text

And now Laertes, what's the news with you? (Act 1, Scene 2)

Translated Text

Transcription of Translated Text

/xɔ:b la:ʔertze, tɔ: tʃe mi:xa:hi?/

xob lā'ertez, to che mikhahi?

The word “news” was omitted from the TT, which may give a relatively different sense to the question raised in the ST.

Stylistic re-writing

Source Text

(Act 1, Scene 2)

Thou know'st 'tis common, all that lives must die,

Passing through nature to eternity

Translated Text

/tɔ: mi:dani ?i:n ?æmri ?a:di æst: hæme ba:jæd bemi:rænd væ az zendegi be ?æbædijæt ræhsepa:r

Research Article

ŷævænd/

Transcription of Translated Text

Tow midāni in ‘āmr ‘ādi ast: hame bāyad bemirand va az zendegi be ‘badyyat rahsepār shavand.

There three words in the English text with a poetry sounding old style: “Thou”, “know’st” and “’tis”. The equivalents in the TT are “tow”, “midāni”, “in ‘amr”, respectively. If we look at the differences in style of the original and target words, we can simply see that they do not belong to the same stylistic nature. The Persian translation has used modern Persian style to translate the English words.

Research Questions Results

Answering First Research Question

The first question of the research asked about the frequency of the manipulation strategies used in the Persian translation of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. This is one of the quantitative questions of this research. This question was answered after all of the respective representations of each strategy were counted and represented as in Table 4.1.

Table 1: Statistical Frequency of Manipulation Strategies

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Addition	41	37.6%
Euphemism	3	2.8%
Nominalization	9	8.3%
Omission	27	24.8%
Stylistic re-writing	29	26.6%
Total	109	100%

Table 1 shows in terms of percentage the share of each of the strategies used. It is very obvious that addition topped the list as it covered about 37.6% of the whole manipulation cases. Following that, there is stylistic re-writing with 26.6%, and the next category is omission with 24.8%. The minimum percentages of the strategies used were observed for nominalization and euphemism, with 8.3% and 2.8%, respectively.

Answering Second Research Question

This question was restated as a null hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis: There is not any statistical significance among the manipulation strategies used by the translator through chi-square test.

Table 2: Chi-square test on the frequency of the strategies

Pearson's chi-square test	df	Sig.
436.000 ^a	16	0.000

As the chi-square test results clearly show, at 16 degrees of freedom, the difference among the strategies was found to be significant. As a result, the null-hypothesis is rejected and there must be a difference in the manipulation strategies used by Pazargadi in his Persian translation of *Hamlet*. One can come to the conclusion that the translator used so many additions that significantly manipulated the text more than all other strategies.

Answering Third Research Question

The third question is “how can each of the strategies be evaluated from the perspective of manipulation? In fact, this question aims at evaluating the samples of manipulation to see how much they are necessary in the text. The first one is addition, which was used very widely in the study. There are actually some cases totally acceptable in the translation. The next strategy is euphemism that covered only 3 cases. There are numerous words in the ST that could be expressed more politely in the TT, although the TT mostly tried to keep the ST equivalents. In fact, not using much euphemism is a strategy to keep the

Research Article

original discourse even for offensive terms. In case of nominalization, syntactic and semantic differences may account for such modifications, while meaning is kept. Generally, the strategies used can be found acceptable and due to some linguistic reasons. In case of omission, although generally the translations were justified, there were some instances in which omitting the words could relatively damage meaning. The last strategy is stylistic-rewriting (26.6%), which is very important in literature. The analysis showed that the TT did not follow the word style of most of the cases: “Thou”, “know'st” and “'tis”, for instance, were translated as “tow”, “midāni”, “in ‘amr”, respectively, which are not old Persian words.

Discussion

As mentioned in the review, ideology can be accounted as a cause of manipulation. Because this study was most basically concentrated on classical literary translation, it would be very challenging to assign socio-political forces to the translation. Such notions of manipulation can validly apply to political texts translation (Zamani-Sarzende, 2012). The study, however, showed that most of the manipulations were due to linguistic, cultural and stylistic differences. For instance, in some cases where the translator found a heavy load of words in TT, he simplified them in the translation, which resulted in an omission of some words. Of course, the ideology of the translator in some cases of in the present study could be revealed. The very low percentage of euphemism showed that Pazargadi mostly tried to recreate the content of the *Hamlet*, and not tried to turn the words politer.

Another cause of manipulation can be norms. Translational norms govern the decision-making process in translating, and hence they determine the choices established between ST and TT. One of the manifestations of norms in Pazargadi's translation is his use of stylistic re-writing. As the analysis showed, Pazargadi in many cases used old Persian words for neutral English words, which seems to be a strategy that in line with classical literature expectations of Persian readers. Because norms are regulatory behaviors, the audience expects to experience a classical text within the framework of an older type of writing. Apparently, Pazargadi's translation closely took into account this norm of writing in his classical translation.

Following mostly theoretical aspects of manipulation, now some applied works are compared to the findings of the present study. In a closely comparable study, Alizadeh and Nemati-Parsa (2012) confirmed that Mansuri, the translator of *Lolita*, had manipulated the text in translation. The researchers relied on preliminary data, macro-level, and micro-level. According to their analysis, such strategies as *addition*, *omission*, and *language level* were accounted as micro-level manipulations in the text. In the present study, too, it was found that Pazargadi had manipulated the TT version of *Hamlet* to a certain degree. Although in both studies, addition and omission were taken into account, Alizadeh and Nemati-Parsa (2012) did not provide any numerical statistical data. As a result, it is not possible to statistically compare the findings of the present study to the researchers' findings. However, the presence of manipulation at such levels and the high percentage of addition and omission in the present study suggested that these two strategies might be among the basic manipulation strategies.

Lefever (1992) has been one of the major theorists in the formation of the notion of re-writing in TS. As already mentioned, manipulation has close relations with re-writing, although Lefever's primary concern was poetics. His notions made it possible to study manipulation in literary texts. One of the very important matters of literary translation has been style. The minimal unit of stylistic analysis can start from word style. It was generally believed, especially in linguistic theories of TS, that a translation should keep a very close style to the ST, even at word level. Lefever's (1992) theory of poetics, however, clarified that literary products are re-writings of the original and are finally affected by the target language and translator's personal style. The findings of the present study exactly confirmed the idea of stylistic re-writing and showed many samples in which the ST and TT had different styles.

One of the universals of translation is known to be *explicitation* (Munday, 2012; Pym, 2010). Based on this notion, translations are always clearer, more expanded, and longer than the original (*ibid.*). Scholars of translation accept that more research is needed to establish a reality for translation universals. Addition in manipulation studies could be seen the same as or one type of explicitation. Considering the idea that

Research Article

explicitation may occur frequently in every translation, the present study, which was conducted on a classical English drama, showed with statistical instruments the dominance of addition (37.6%).

Conclusion

The present study focused on manifestations of manipulation in a Persian translation of Hamlet. After reviewing the possible causes of manipulation, the researchers analyzed the text based on five literature-related categories. Quantitative results showed that there was a significant difference among the categories with an emphasis on addition. Also, qualitative evaluation showed that in most cases the manipulations were justified although some omitted parts could affect meaning. The study implied that the manipulations were not all choices of the translator and in many cases he had to manipulate the text because of linguistic and cultural variations. The same method used here can apply to other genres with different samples for future related studies.

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Research Article

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