Research Article

Investigate and Compare the Type and Frequency of Translation Strategies Used by the Translators for Translating News in Two Iranian Consecutive Governments

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Abstract: The aim of the present study was to investigate and compare the type and frequency of translation strategies used by the translators for translating news in two Iranian consecutive governments. To this end, the corpus of the study was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. It means that 24 pieces of news transmitted by Associated Press and Reuters and its Persian counterpart from IRNA between 2011 and 2013 (the time of the previous government) and 24 pieces of news transmitted and translated by the same news agencies between 2013 and 2015 (the time of the present government) were collected, analyzed, and compared. The translation strategies were identified in the corpus based on Loescher's (1991) translation categories. A checklist was used as an instrument to record data. At the end, SPSS software was used to run chi-square test. The results suggested that first, in both governments all type of translation strategies were used. Second, there was a significant difference between the frequencies of translation strategies used in two governments. The present government used more general words, neutral words, paraphrasing using related words, and illustration strategies compared to the previous government. However, the previous government used cultural substitution, using loan words, paraphrasing using unrelated words, and omission of words strategies significantly more than the present government.

Keywords: translation, translation strategies, news, governments, Iran

1. Introduction

Nowadays, due to globalization and global news media, news translation has gained importance. Without translation, it is not possible to transmit a vast amount of information from a continent to another (Darwish, 2006). However, translating news is not a simple process because it involves connotations and unknown perspectives. It is not a matter of replacing words and expressions of the source language by their synonyms in the target language (Schaffner & Bassnett, 2010). Translating news has to be a quick process with high quality. News translation has to do with a specific kind of texts, namely journalistic texts. Journalistic translation from English into different languages is of great importance because it is considered as a powerful force that affects various aspects of the target language media (Sharifabad, Yaqubi, & Mahadi, 2013). It is worth noting that because translation is a type of communication, for different communicative functions, different translation strategies are required. Translation strategies are the procedures used by translators when transferring the meaning from the source language into the target language The use of translation strategies is highly individual and leads to optimal translation (Kearns, 2009).

Being equipped with translation strategies is necessary for each news translator because translations take place in a variety of the situations where the translator need to deal with the changes in cultural, ideological, and temporal viewpoints. These interaction of variables have effect on the translator's cognitive behavior, responses, and attitudes to both source language and target language realities (Darwish, 2006). The factors also affect the translator's cognitive and affective responses to the source text and product which in turn influence the nature and focus of the translated news. In fact, for translating news, translators can be limited in their translations by sociocultural and political constrains which include factors such as rules and norms of the time, the dominant institution and ideology, and the public for whom the translation is intended (Alvarez & Vidal, 1996). These factors that can affect the choice of translation strategies by the translators are usually determined and changed by the socio-political changes in societies. That is to say, every political party or a ruling system attempts to establish a set of norms and conventions for the rest of the society. It is not surprising that the translators, as the members of a society are expected to work in accordance with the accepted conventions (Fahim & Mazaheri, 2013). For translators, one way to cope with such demands may be using translation strategies.

To investigate this issue, the present study aims to examine the translation strategies for translating news in two consecutive governments in Iran. Since every government has its own policy, norms, and ruling system, the translation strategies used by news translators may be affected.

2. Methods

Research Design

This study was carried out by analyzing data quantitatively and qualitatively. The reason is that the aim of this study was to determine the type of translation strategies used in translating English news and to pay attention to the frequency of each translation strategy. While for the former qualitative method was used, for the latter more quantitative analysis was required. In addition, on the basis of the aim of this study and the nature of the research

question, it can be said that this study was of cross-sectional descriptive type. Descriptive studies describe the patterns of occurrence of some variables and cross-sectional studies are the ones that provide information about the variables at any given time (Degu & Yigzaw, 2006, p. 26, 28).

Research Corpus

The corpus of this study included English news broadcasted by Associated Press and Reuters as appeared on their website and the Persian translation of this news obtained from IRNA. Because the use of translation strategies for translating news in two consecutive governments was required, the news transmitted by Associated Press and Reuters and its Persian counterpart from IRNA were considered between 2011 and 2015. From this four-year period, half of it (2011-2013) was in the time of the previous government of Iran and the other half (2013-2015) was related to the present Iranian government. However, the archive of four years was still large as the sample of the study. Therefore, news related to these four years had to be randomly selected. To reach this purpose, one piece of news accompanied by its translation from each month was selected randomly. In this way, totally 24 pieces of news and their translations belonged to previous government and 24 pieces of news and their translations in the time of the present government were included in the research sample.

Theoretical Basis

Loescher's (1991) eight translation categories were used for identifying translation strategies in news. The categories include the use of superordinate, the use of a neutral word, cultural substitution, use of loan word, paraphrasing using related words, paraphrase using unrelated words, omission, and illustration. Use of superordinate or more general words is related to propositional meaning of the words and sentences. Using neutral words or less expressive words is about the differences in expressive meaning between the source and target languages. Translation by cultural substitution is replacing a culture-specific item in a source language with an item that does not have the same propositional meaning in the target language. However, the item should have a similar effect on the readers. Use of loan words is also related to the culture-specific items. Modern loan words and explanations can be used in translation. Paraphrasing using a related word is used when a concept expressed by a source item is lexicalized in the target language, but in a different form. On the other hand, paraphrasing using an unrelated word is employed when a concept is the source language is not lexicalized in the target language. Omission strategy can be employed when a word is not vital for understanding a text. Finally, illustration is used when a source work does not have an equivalent in the target language.

Instrumentation

To take record of the type and frequency of the translation strategies used for translating news, a checklist was prepared (Appendix A). This checklist included eight types of translation strategies and their frequencies that should be recorded. For using this checklist, first, the type of translation strategy was recognized and its frequency in a piece of news was recorded in front of each strategy. For each piece of news, one checklist was filled. On the top of each checklist, the date of news was also recorded to help us differentiate between the news translation done in the previous and the present governments.

Data collection Procedures

For collecting data, first the corpus of the study (Associated Press and Reuter's news and its Persian translation from IRNA between 2011 and 2015) was searched and found. Then, from the corpus, one piece of news accompanied by its Persian translation from each month were selected randomly. The identification of the strategies was based on Loescher's (1991) eight translation categories. In fact, for each piece of news, one checklist prepared in accordance with Loescher's (1991) categories was filled. The identified translation strategies and their frequencies in a piece of news were recorded in the checklist. After doing the same procedure for all pieces of news, all the checklists were gathered. The checklists belonged to the previous government (2011 to 2013) and the present government (2013-2015) were separated and the type and frequency of translation strategies were reported.

It should be noted that the first part of the procedure which included using Loescher's categories to identify translation strategies was considered as the qualitative part. The second part of the procedure involving obtaining the frequency of translation strategies and investigating any significant difference between the frequency of translation strategies in the previous and the present Iranian government was considered as the quantitative part of the study.

The procedures of data collection can be illustrated in the Figure 1.

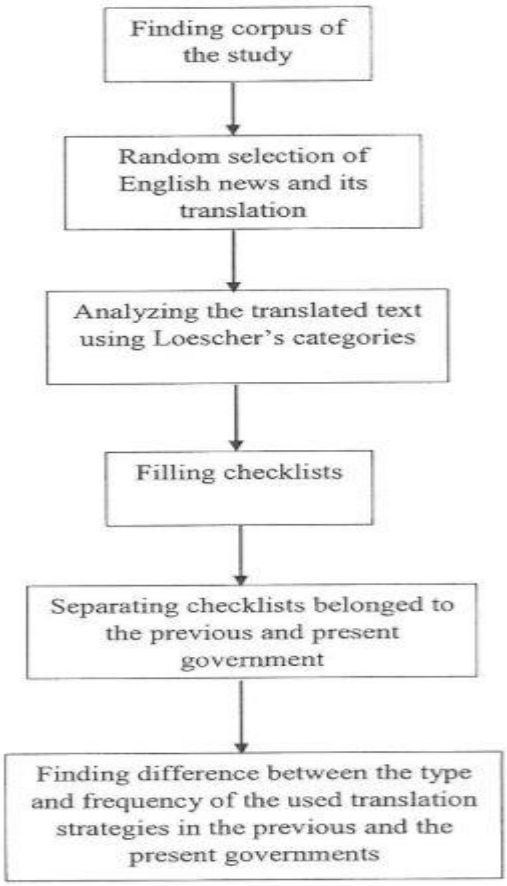

Figure 1. Procedures of the study.

Data Analysis

After the required data was collected, two types of statistical analysis were carried out using SPSS software. First, descriptive statistics was done to report the frequency of translation strategies and presenting them in charts and tables. Then, inferential statistics was conducted to recognize any different between the frequencies of translation strategies in two consecutive governments.

3. Results

Descriptive statistics

Data collected from 48 news texts in two consecutive governments were analyzed. In the Table 1, the mean and standard deviation of strategies used in the news translation by the previous government has been estimated. Therefore, the mean of the using more general words strategy in news texts is 16.25 ± 2.06, the mean of the using neutral words strategy is 13.66 ± 1.94, the mean of the cultural substitution strategy is 31.25 ± 4.40, the mean of the using loan words strategy is 27.04 ± 3.67, the mean of the paraphrasing using related words strategy is 19.54 ± 3.98, the mean of the paraphrasing using unrelated words strategy is 31.87 ± 4.70, the mean of the omission of words strategy is 29.62 ± 4.67 and the mean of the illustration strategy is 24.08 ± 5.76. Therefore, the previous government used cultural substitution, use of loan words, paraphrase using unrelated words and omission of words strategies more than other strategies. The most frequent strategy used in the previous government for translating news was cultural substitution. The least frequent strategies were using more general words and using neutral words.

Table 1. Estimation of central indices and dispersion and frequency of the previous government's news translation strategies

		Mean	Standard deviation	Frequency
Translation strategies	Using more general words	16.25	2.06	30
	Using neutral words	13.66	1.94	29

	Cultural substitution	31.25	4.40	66
	Using loan words	27.04	3.67	53
	Paraphrasing using related words	19.45	3.98	42
	Paraphrasing using unrelated words	31.87	4.70	64
	Omission of words	29.62	4.67	61
	Illustration	24.08	5.76	48

In the Table 2, the mean and standard deviation of strategies used in the news translation by the present government has been estimated. Therefore, the mean of the using more general words strategy in news texts is 25.91 ± 3.83, the mean of the using neutral words strategy is 27.70 ± 5.14, the mean of the cultural substitution strategy is 25.91 ± 3.83, the mean of the using loan words strategy is 21.25 ± 3.56, the mean of the paraphrasing using related words strategy is 30.62 ± 3.77, the mean of the paraphrasing using unrelated words strategy is 22.20 ± 5.08, the mean of the omission of words strategy is 29.75 ± 4.17 and the mean of the illustration strategy is 32.29 ± 2.98. Therefore, the present government used more general words, use of neutral words, paraphrase using related words and illustration strategies more than other strategies. The most frequent strategy used in the present government for translating news was illustration. The least frequent strategies was cultural substitution. This is greatly in opposition of the translation strategy use in the previous government. While in the previous government the most frequent strategy was cultural substitution, in the present government the same strategy is the least frequent one. In addition, based on the Table 1 and Table 2, it can be said that the frequency of use of translation strategies is relatively higher in the present government than the previous one. By only looking at the tables, it can be seen that the number of strategies whose frequencies were above 50 are five in the present government and four in the previous government.

Table 2. Estimation of central indices and dispersion and frequency of the present government's news translation strategies

		Mean	Standard deviation	Frequency
Translation strategies	Using more general words	25.91	3.82	51
	Using neutral words	27.70	5.14	55
	Cultural substitution	15.75	3.02	29
	Using loan words	21.52	3.56	44
	Paraphrasing using related words	30.65	3.77	62
	Paraphrasing using unrelated words	22.20	5.08	43
	Omission of words	26.75	4.17	58
	Illustration	32.29	2.98	68

Inferential Statistics

Hypothesis: There is a significant difference between the frequencies of the strategies used for translating The Associated Press and Reuter's news in the former government, and the frequencies of those used for translating The Associated Press and Reuter's news in the current government of Iran.

H0: There is no significant difference between the frequencies of the strategies used for translating The Associated Press and Reuter's news in the former government, and the frequencies of those used for translating The Associated Press and Reuter's news in the current government of Iran.

H1: There is a significant difference between the frequencies of the strategies used for translating The Associated Press and Reuter's news in the former government, and the frequencies of those used for translating The Associated Press and Reuter's news in the current government of Iran. To determine the difference between the translation strategies used in the former and the current governments of Iran, the frequencies of the strategies used in two aforementioned governments were compared using chi-square test.

Table 3. Chi-square test

The type of the translation strategy	Comparison between the frequencies of the translation strategies used in the former government and the frequencies of those used in the current governments					
		Low	Average	High	X2 statistic	Sig
	The former government	23	1	0	44.182	0.000

The use of general words	The current government	0	21	3		
The use of neutral words	The former government	24	0	0	44.160	0.000
	The current government	1	17	6		
Cultural substitution	The former government	0	10	14	41.333	0.000
	The current government	22	2	0		
The use of loan words	The former government	0	21	3	13.000	0.002
	The current government	9	15	0		
Paraphrasing using related words	The former government	13	11	0	26.000	0.000
	The current government	0	11	13		
Paraphrasing using unrelated words	The former government	0	6	18	24.379	0.000
	The current government	9	13	2		
Word omission	The former government	1	12	11	6.992	0.030
	The current government	6	14	4		
Illustration	The former government	8	13	3	19.600	0.000
	The current government	0	7	17		

To be able to compare the frequency of the strategies in the present and the previous government, the use of strategies were categorized into three groups of low, average, and high frequency. Then, based on the categories, the comparison was made. X2 statistic value is significant (Sig<0.05). In other words, there is a significant difference between the frequencies of the translation strategies used in both the former and the frequencies of the strategies used in the current government of Iran. Considering the frequencies of the translation strategies, it can be said that compared to the former government of Iran, strategies including the use of general words, the use of neutral words, paraphrasing using related words and illustration are significantly used more in the current government. Furthermore, compared to the current government of Iran, strategies including the use of cultural substitution, the use of loan words, paraphrasing using unrelated words and word omission has been significantly used more in the former government. In one occasion, an opposite trend was identified in the strategy use by the present and the previous government. In the previous government, illustration was the least frequent strategy for translating news. However, in the present government it has been the most frequent one.

4. Discussion

It is not surprising that the two consecutive governments used different types of translation strategies for translating news. First of all, the previous government that was the representative of the conservative population of the country had a more negative attitude toward the foreign countries in general and western countries in particular. Therefore, news translators in the previous government were attempting to work in accordance with the government's policy and used specific types of translation strategies for translating news. On the other hand, the present Iranian government has a more positive attitude toward the foreign countries and attempts to reach a compromise with them. This government is the representative of the reformist population of the country and believes in interaction between the nations and the governments all around the world. This view of world and foreign policy are reflected in news translation by the translators. Accordingly, news translators in this government use specific types of translation strategies to reflect the government ideology. These are in line with Van Dijk's views on CDA and relations of power and their effect on language in general and translation in this particular case.

The findings of the study are comparable with the results of other research in this area such as Fahim and Mazaheri's study (2013), Keshavarz and Zonoozi (2011), and Vossoughi and Etemad (2013). This comparison may be helpful to judge the findings and reach deeper understanding about the use of translation strategies employed for translating news. However, before making comparison, it should be noted that previous studies have not addressed the use of translation strategies for translation news in Iranian governments. Due to this reason, it can be said that the present study was successful in providing evidence that was unique in the field and was able to fill that gap in

the literature. In spite to the marked difference between the focus of this study and other previous research, it is still possible to make comparison between the findings that can be considered similar. For instance, Fahim and Mazaheri (2013) investigated the use of translation strategies for translating culture specific items in novels before and after the Islamic revolution of Iran. They mentioned that most translators before the revolution attempted to differentiate between domesticated and foreign cultures. They used to apply conservation strategies to keep the original characteristics and specific cultural forms. Nevertheless, after the revolution, the translators' attempted to unify foreign cultural elements into local, symbolic, and universal forms which highlight the importance of the local culture over foreign ones. Although in Fahim and Mazaheri's study (2013) the focus was on translation strategies for translating novels that is different from translating news, their conclusions can be compared with the results of the present study. In Fahim and Mazaheri's study, the findings indicated that by the ideological and political change, the use of translation strategies may undergo some changes. The findings of the present study are in line with this conclusion because in the present study, it was revealed that the frequency of the used translation strategies in the two consecutive governments are different.

This issue was also advocated by Keshavarz and Zonoozi (2011) who investigating the manipulation of ideology in translation through the use of strategies. They found that Persian translators uses specific grammatical and lexical strategies in favor of their own ideological. It can be said that this finding is congruent with the results of our study.

Another comparable study was carried out by Vossoughi and Etemad (2013) who compared the translation of novels before and after the Islamic revolution. Their focused on the translation strategies used for translating taboo words and mentioned that the Persian translators tried to translate in accordance with the target language norms and made ideological decisions. They used indirect translation and changed taboo words and concepts to fit them to the target language beliefs. Although they did not take into account the translation strategies that were considered in the present study, the same as the present study, they emphasized the impact of change of environment on the use of translation strategies.

All in all, it seems that the findings of the present study can be considered to be in line with previous findings and no study that reported the contradictory results was found. It should be mentioned that no previous study has used the categorization of translation strategies used in the present study and due to this reason, only the overall result of the study can be compared with the findings of previous research.

Implications of the study

The results of the study can have some implications for translators and education system. Translators who are not sufficiently experienced in translation may need to be aware of what other translators do specially when they translation sensitive text such as news or texts related to ideological and political beliefs. They need to know what translation strategies are used to manipulate the text in accordance with the specific norms that keep changing by the change of government. Furthermore, education system that is responsible for training and education translation students can take into account the findings of this study and make translation students aware of the translation strategies that are used for specific purposes. Education system can train translation students to match the social and political atmosphere of the society in which they need to translate. Translation students can also take advantages of the results of this study. If they find their professional training insufficient for working as good translators and need to search for ways of being professional translators, they can pay attention to what the experienced translators do. Therefore, they can consider the results of the studies of this type to gain knowledge of the use of translation strategies.

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