

Translation Quality Assessment in Medical Texts from Persian into English on the Basis of Baker's Taxonomy of Grammar and Vocabulary within the Scientific Text Model

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Abstract: Translation quality assessment is one of the areas that need more attention on the part of the assessor. Since, it needs both theory of translation on the one hand, and proficiency and competency as a translator, on the other hand, on the part of the translation assessor. Translation within the fields of medical sciences has not got its proper focus of attention. The nature of medical texts demands transfer of information. However, from vocabulary and grammatical prospects, sometimes great pitfalls are seen. The present study tries to investigate the general knowledge of language in medical texts translation. The present study has applied Baker's (1988) Taxonomy of grammar and vocabulary model within the medical texts to show the ability and art of the translator in compare with the translation of medicine.

Keywords: assessment, medicinal text, translator, word choosing, grammatical rule

1. Introduction

Nowadays, unfortunately all the people feel that they have the ability of translation with passing some short period of time in language institutes. Especially, it can be seen among the educated people such as doctors, professor of universities and etc. which make them to be known as pretentious groups. They think that they can do whatever they want especially in translation art. From many years ago, human tries to find a way for assessing the quality of products and this leads that this view become a step in recognizing and defining standards for assessment. Based on this need, many scientists, philosophers and theorists have found ways to answer to the human needs for assessment by inventing new methods, tools and models. So, researchers of the human science especially linguistic scholars try to find models in order to assess the quality and quantity of the translated texts which is called in some texts as "critics" and sometimes "assessment". This study has applied the Baker's Taxonomy of grammar and vocabulary model within the medicinal texts to show the ability of the translator as well as his/her pitfalls and shortcomings.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Translation within the fields of medical sciences has not got its proper focus of attention. The nature of medical texts demands transfer of information. However, from vocabulary and grammatical prospects, sometimes great pitfalls are seen. The present study tries to investigate the general knowledge of language in medical texts translation.

1.3. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to show the word choosing and applying grammatical rules in translation by educated translator and non- educated (semi-translator) in order to prove whether there is a significant difference between an educated translator and non-educated one.

1.4. Purpose and Theoretical Framework of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to show failure or success of educated translator compared with the non-educated

semi-translator.

2. Definition of Key Terms

2.1. Translation

Toury (1980: 17) believes that translation is communication in translated messages within a certain cultural-linguistic system, with all relevant consequences for the decomposition of the source message, the establishment of the invariant, its transfer across the cultural-linguistic border and the recomposition of the target message. (quoted in Venuti 2000:484)

2.2. Translation assessment

Translation assessment arises from equivalence in the two or more languages. Equivalence starts from the smallest unit of the sentences (morphemes) to the largest units (sentence) and from the apparent units (alphabets) to unseen units (effect). According to House's pragmatic-textual approach (1981: 28-9), translation operates not with sentences but with utterances. Equivalence, therefore, is sought at the pragmatic level even if it overrides semantic meaning. In other words, the primary interest of translation is units of discourse characterized by their use-value in communication. Carroll (1966: 55-66) measured the quality of a translation by the rate of informativeness and intelligibility. Yet, he was mainly concerned with scientific texts where style and figures of speech play a minimal role. Reiss (1971:356) called for determining function and type of source text before any quality assessment. But she stopped short from defining any objectively measurable norm to apply her approach.

3. Review of related literature

Many definitions have been proposed for the simple concept termed 'translation'. Nida (1964:164) defines translation as a process of finding the closest natural equivalent of source language in the target language in terms of message and style. Catford (1965:87-89) believes that translation is the replacement of the source language textual elements by the target language textual elements (cited in Nida (1964:174). Toury (1978 cited in Lefevere (1992:89-95), holds the view that translation is a kind of activity which inevitably involves at least two languages and two cultural traditions whereby an original text is rewritten by the translator into a different language. Newmark (1988) considers translation as a craft in which the translator tries to replace a written message in one language by the same message in another language. In 1959, Jakobson claims that translation is a whole message transference into another rather than transfusion of single separate-code units. What the translator does is recording the entire message and transmitting it into the target language (quoted in Miremadi 2005: 126) House (1997:31-32) defines translation as "the replacement of a text in the source language by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language (p.31). Thus an adequate translation text is a semantically and pragmatically equivalent one" (p.32). Al-Talisi (1991:55) claims that translation is a creative process... he continues that "when I translate, I took for my creativity in others' work. I translate as an amateur who found what he wants to express in others' work". Zhongying (1990:99) describes the translation process in different terms: "in doing translation, one has to re-express in the target language what has been said in the SL, so the receptor of the reproduced message can get more or less the same impression as the receptor of the original gets from source message".

Munday (2001:109-110), as a more recent authority, is of the opinion that in translation process the translator changes an original written text in original verbal language into a written text in a different verbal language. Translation assessment arises from equivalence in the two or more languages. Equivalence starts from the smallest unit of the sentences (morphemes) to the largest units (sentence) and from the apparent units (alphabets) to unseen units (effect). According to Baker (1992: 11), in the process of translating, the smallest unit that possesses individual meaning is the 'word'. Inexperienced translators tend to seek an exact word in the target language (TL) that share the exact meaning of a word in the source language (SL). Unfortunately, there is hardly any one-to-one relationship between words and elements of meaning (Baker, 1992:11). Equivalence in word level is assessing in the forms as well as the meaning. Basing on Baker (1992:11), morpheme is 'the minimal formal element of meaning in language'. It 'cannot contain more than one element of meaning and cannot be further analyzed' and is different in any language. 'Non-equivalence at word level means that the target language has no direct equivalent for a word which occurs in the source text.' 'Different kinds of non-equivalence require different strategies' (Baker, 1992:20). Palmer (1976:21) believes that 'the words of a language often reflect not so much the reality of the world, but the interests of the people who speak it.' This is extremely true with

poetic discourse given that it is the kind of text that carries heavy subjective elements. It is important for the translator to adopt proper strategies to deal with non-equivalence at the word level by basing them on semantic translation. Sometimes words occur in the company of other words. 'But words are not strung together at random in any language; there are always restrictions on the way they can be combined to convey meaning' (Baker, 1992: 46).

Almost all translation theories, somehow, refer to the most controversial and problematic center of translation which is equivalence. Equivalence is the major part of the translation studies. And scholars including Nida, Catford, Taber and Toury are the theorist of this category. According to the Bakers (1988:174), in terms of grammar, technical texts include five controversial – specific areas. They are verb, tense, voice, modals, articles and nominalization. These grammatical structures are frequently used in their proper forms. Regarding verb and tense, there are some more probable tenses simple present, and simple past. The dominant from the voice is passive form. Modals like “may and might” are used very much. The choice of adding or deleting “articles” affects the technical jargon. Nominalization is also the use of verbal nouns ending in suffixes.

4. Methodology

4.1. Description of the Type of Research

This study is based on one the qualitative research using interpretive approaches.

4.2. The Corpus

All the data were written article which was going to be published in one of the famous journal indexed by ISI.

4.3. Procedures for Data Analysis

Data were analyzed according to the Baker's Taxonomy of grammar and vocabulary within the scientific text.

4.4. Procedures for Data Collection and Recording

A selected text was provided to one of the assistant professor in medical science university to translate from Persian into English as an introduction part of the article written in Persian by herself. So, she was aware of the contexts. And another translation done by one of the group's members.

Since the study is descriptive-analytical one, the original text with its translation was comparatively analyzed as in the following steps:

1. Reading translation and the original text
2. Marking problematic word choosing or grammatical errors
3. Tabulating features of paragraphs in accordance with Bakers' taxonomy of characteristics of scientific texts.

table 1: translation assessment based on Baker model				
	Information	Source Text	TargetText(A)	TargetText(B)
Vocabulary				

scientific terms Or words	نیفدپین/nifedipin/	Nifedipine	nifedipin
	سولفات منیزیم /sulfat e mænyazum/	Magnesium Sulfate	magnesium sulfat
	زایمان زودرس /zaimane zoodræs/	Preterm Labor	preterm labour
	تهدید به زایمان زودرس /tæhdid be zaimane zoodræs/	Threatened Preterm Labor	threatend preterm labour
	مورتالیتیه /mortaliteh/	-	-
	موربیدیته /morbidity/	-	-
	نازایی /nazaei /	Infertility	Infertility
	انقباض /enqebaz /	Contraction	contractions
	دیلاتاسیون /dilatasion /	Dilatation	dilatation
	افاسمان /efaseman/	effacement	effacement
	انقباضات رحمی /enqebazat e ræhemi /	Uterus contractions	-
	سرویکس /servix /	cervix	-
	نوزاد زودرس /nozadeh zoodræs/	slink	-
non scientific terms Or words	عوارض / ævarez/	complications	-

			مشكلات / moshkelat/	Problems	complication	
			اثر بخشی / æsær bækhshi/	effectiveness	effectiveness	
Grammar	tense	first paragraph	present	present	present	
		second paragraph	present	present	present	
		third paragraph	present	present-past	present-past	
	voice		passive	passive	passive	
	Nominalization		شیوع /shiuħ/	prevalence	prevalence	
			منافع /mænafeh/	beneficence	beneficence	
			عوارض /ævarez/	complication	complications	
			انقباض /enqebaz/	contraction	contractions	
			توصیف /tosif/	description	description	
			مقدمه /moqæddæmeh/	introduction	introduction	
				دیلاتاسیون /dilatasion/	dilatation	dilatation
				افاسمان /efaseman /	effacement	effacement
		اثر بخشی / æsærbækhshi	effectiveness	effectiveness		
Modal		0	0	0		

Article(effective)	0	4	1
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details	translator A %	translator B %
spelling errors	0	25%
omission	12%	37.5%
wrong word choosing	0	6.25 %
use of modal	25%	6.25%

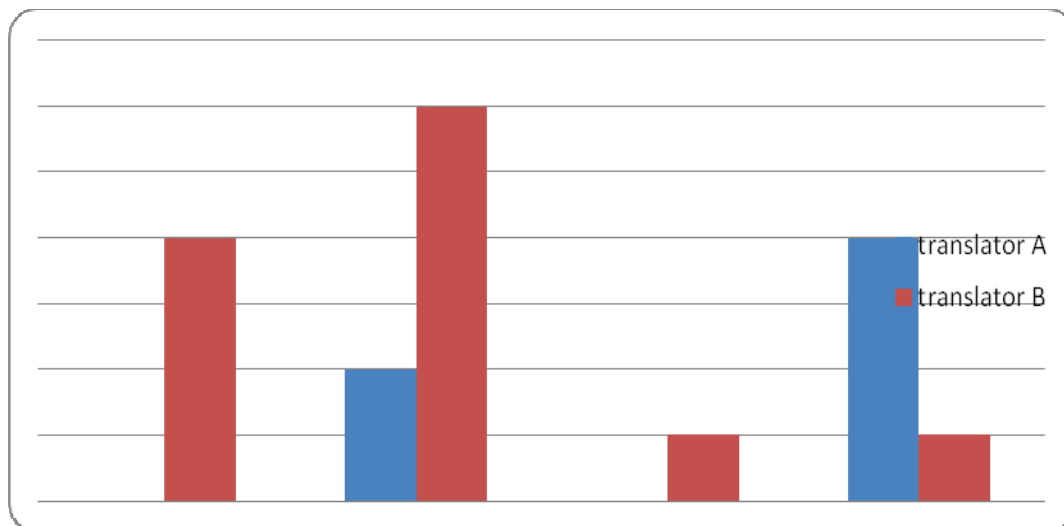


Figure1: data analysis

5. Conclusion

5.1. Summary of the Findings

According to the results of the table I, the A has translated the texts according to semantic features and structural and grammatical rules on the base of loyalty, which leads to have a meaningful, understandable and fluent text. But , the B translation has lots of grammatical and semantic problems and in some sentences reduction, omission of a word has occurred. In the other hand the B translation is literal translation and meaningless. As the results of table II show the educated translator had no spelling error and wrong word choosing while the B translator respectively had 25 and 6.25%. In 37.5 % the B translator omitted the words while the A translator omitted 12% of the words due to the repetition and acceptable reasons. And also the A translator uses modal verbs frequently while the B translator uses rarely that causes that the A translator has a comprehension in her translation.

The A translator tries to have accurate translation on the base of translation science and art while the B translator starts translating a text without any attention to the translation science and art. She also has lots of spelling problem due to the high self-confidence to its knowledge on medicinal science more than translation. And also the A translator pay more attention not only to true and adequate translation but also to the beauty features of translated text. (See figure 1)

According to the above translation we should suppose that educated translator is more successful than non educated translator. The educated translator tries to use and apply strategies on the base of the kind of a text, genre, style and register while the non- educated translator tries to do something which is called translation in her opinion and thoughts.

5.2. Suggestion for Further Research

Finally it is necessary to pay more attention to the future of translation under the educated translators which leads to be in the first steps of the science production. Also I think we can study on not only the assessing the quality of translation and word choosing but also the common errors occurred by the educated translators and non- educated people who feel that ever one can be a translator and translation is invalid.

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