



Translation or Recreation: News in Different Languages

Reza Abbaszadeh

M.A. student of Translation Studies

University of Tehran

Tehran, Iran

reza.abbaszadeh@ut.ac.ir

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Abstract

Although translation dates back to thousands of years ago but since the 1960s so forth, Translation Studies has gone under central changes, owing its significance to prior approaches and theories. Various approaches have been introduced to different types of texts, one of which is news discourse that made the translation and translating begin a new era. Translating news discourses, due to the amount of audience they have, is of great importance and it may be sensitive in specific cases. Therefore, in this paper, different news agencies providing their international audience with pieces of news and their translations into different languages have been investigated to see what is happening in the field in practice. Overall, it is concluded that well-known news agencies prefer recreating pieces of news in different languages rather than translating the ones that have been worked in a specific language.

Keywords: News Translation, News Discourse, Translation Studies, Media Studies, Critical Discourse Analysis



1. Introduction

There is almost a general, consummate consensus over the primary goal of translation, that is, communication. But since the act of translating was introduced as an autonomous discipline under the name of Translation Studies by James S. Holmes which was followed by other scholars using other names, e.g., the science of translating (Eugene Albert Nida, 1964), the science of translation (Eugene A Nida, 1969), and Translatology (Harris, 1988), therefore, with the proliferation of this discipline and various approaches toward it, it has gone under many changes (Toury, 2012; Venuti, 2013).

Chronologically checking, the practice of translation dates back to the first century when people inaugurated disseminating their knowledge among other nations. Cicero and Horace were among the first people who used to be involved in the practice of translating (or interpreting) from one language into another - both of whom rejected word-for-word translation that influenced Saint Jerome. St Jerome was criticized severely for his Latin translation of the Christian Bible where he states that he chose to render from Greek not word-for-word, but sense-for-sense (Munday, 2016; Venuti, 2012).

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Long after St Jerome, Dryden's, English poet and translator, trichotomy of "metaphrase" (literal or word-for-word translation), "paraphrase" (free or sense-for-sense translation), and "imitation" (adaptation) influenced the field among which he believed the "paraphrase" is the fit choice. In the same vein, Schleiermacher (1768-1834), stated:

Either the translator leaves the writer in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him, or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him. (Schleiermacher 1813/2012:49)

Another effective person in the field, who should not be neglected, is Roman Jakobson whose trichotomy can be considered as a milestone of Translation Studies, namely, a) intralingual translation (rewording) which is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language; b) interlingual translation (translation proper) which is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.; and finally c) intersemiotic translation (transmutation) which is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems (Munday, 2016; Venuti, 2012).

Alongside the given information, since the 1960s, with the proposal of Nida, an American Bible scholar, two kinds of equivalence were introduced to the field: a) formal equivalence (formal correspondence), and b) dynamic equivalence (functional correspondence). These two forms of equivalence, which introduced Translation Studies as a "science", played a significant role in coming theorists' ideas (Bassnett, 2014; Munday, 2016; Eugene Albert Nida, 1964; Eugene A Nida, 1969; Venuti, 2012).

A following important phenomenon influencing Translation Studies, as stated in Toury's *Descriptive Translation Studies – and beyond* (1995), is Holmes' basic 'map' of Translation

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Studies wherein he interpolates divisions to the field. Toury believes that these divisions employ “various kinds of scholarly activity having different foci” (Toury, 2012).

In line with the functional theories, Skopos theory, introduced by Vermeer, drew attention for a long time. According to this theory and the idea of Reiss and Vermeer, every source text (ST) has its own purpose and result; therefore, a Translatum, a technical name for target text (TT) by Vermeer, must be functionally adequate. Reiss and Vermeer (2010) consider six basic rules for their theory as in the following:

1. A translational action is determined by its skopos.
2. It is an offer of information (informationsangebot) in a target culture and TL concerning an offer of information in a source culture and SL.
3. A TT does not initiate an offer of information in a clearly reversible way.
4. A TT must be internally coherent.
5. A TT must be coherent with the ST.
6. The five rules above stand in hierarchical order, with the skopos rule predominating.

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Following the functional theories and cultural turns in the field, it was time for postcolonialism to attract attention. The sublime scholar of this era was Spivak. In her prominent article named *The Politics of Translation*, she states that “language may be one of many elements that allow us to make sense of things, of ourselves ... making sense of ourselves is what produces identity” (Spivak & Barrett, 1992). She criticizes western approaches, specifically feminism, toward translation, and in doing so, she challenges the existing theories of her era (twentieth century) (Munday, 2016).

Having elaborated on the significant theories above, now it is time to stick to the main objective of this paper which is to find the predominant approaches to translating news discourse. It is speculated, in this article, that having a functional approach to translating these kinds of discourses be appropriate; while the impact of the ideologies of agencies, stemming from the countries that they are situated, in the process of broadcasting news is inevitable. Nevertheless, it seems to be quite fit to briefly go through the works regarding news translation first.

2. News Translation

Generally, newspapers have two main purposes namely the commercial nature and broadcasting as much as possible, e.g., global scale. Bearing this point in mind, in translating news discourses, the linguistic aspect and the audience receiving that piece of news are taken into account as well. As a result, those pieces may need to be localized for every specific locale so it may prevent controversies and misunderstandings among the people of that locale (Orengo, 2005).

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In the field of news translation, as an autonomous subordinate of Translation Studies (TS), there is a factor that makes it hard to elaborate on it with TS approaches which is the existence of an editor in the process of translating who is responsible to finalize the publishing of a piece of news whereas in other branches of TS the translators themselves confirm the final work (Bielsa, 2007).

Another issue encountered in news translation is the topical structure of this discourse. Topical structural analysis (TSA) is an analysis of coherence gained by scrutinizing every paragraph checking for key and repeated words and phrases which was broached by Lautamatti (Lautamatti, 1978). In translating news texts, the primary aim of the translator is to preserve the structure which, consequently, may retort the source text (source news) for which it seems to be the translators' task to compensate the losses before letting the editor(s) check them (Károly, 2012).

There is no question that translation, as an action, is intertwined with social studies; specifically, news translation which in its broad sense globalizes an event that occurred in someplace in the world. A new interpolation of social theories in TS is Giddens' structuration theory in which the notions of structure and agency have been elaborated on (Giddens, 1991). In a recent work, Marlie van Rooyen (2013) has revealed that approaching news translation using this theory can show the stance of an agency in the world in regards to time and space.

Speaking of social studies and the act of translating, it must be expounded that there is an action-reaction relation between news translation and society indulging the readers in global stories turned into a localized context wherein the focus is on TT (Kaniklidou, 2018). This relation can be sought in political economy, e.g., Girija (2020); Gunde (2017), linguistic, e.g., Choudhary and Arora (2021); Singh, Dasgupta, Sonagra, Raman, and Ghosh (2017), and sociology/cultural studies, e.g., Fruttaldo and Venuti (2017); Krasnenko (2020). Alongside these areas, Conway (2015) believes there can be a materialistic approach to news translation as well.

Having all these concepts said, it seems that there should be more analysis to understand the nature of the news translations properly. In the following different international and Iranian national news agencies have gone through analyses to check the Persian translations tendency toward translating news. To this end, some news that is translated from Persian – employed by Iranian news agencies with English counterparts – and some are chosen from foreign agencies that provide their audience with Persian reports.

3. A Case Study of Different International News Agencies

Given the information about both translation, in general, and news translation, in specific, in the following tables ten headlines and five leads will be analyzed to elaborate on the issues existing in their counterparts in a second language. Every piece of news in these tables has been chosen in English and Persian. In some cases, they are from English to Persian and in some of them, the case is vice versa.

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Table 1. Headlines chosen from news agencies in both English and Persian

No.	News agency Date of news	English	Persian
1	IRNA December 21, 2020	Iran's futsal legionnaire among world top 2020 players	حضور لژیونر ایرانی در جمع بهترین های سال ۲۰۲۰ فوتسال جهان
2	IRNA Dec 21, 2020	Iranian businessmen ready to further develop trade ties with Azerbaijan	تجارت آذربایجان غربی آماده مشارکت اقتصادی در جمهوری آذربایجان هستند
3	DW Dec 5, 2020	OSCE secretary-general Helga Schmid: A skilled negotiator	مسئول پرونده هسته های ایران دبیرکل سازمان امنیت و همکاری اروپا شد
4	DW Dec 21, 2020	Coronavirus digest: Countries impose UK travel ban, EU awaits vaccine approval	کشورهای اروپایی ارتباط هوایی با بریتانیا را قطع می کنند
5	BBC Dec 20, 2020	Covid in Sydney: New restrictions announced as outbreak grows	ویروس کرونا؛ ایالت های استرالیا مرزهایشان به روی اهالی سیدنی را بستند
6	Euro news Dec 19, 2020	Humans and robots battle it out for control of the future	روبات های فیلسوف و هکر های اخلاق مدار در نمای شگاف فناوری جی تکس
7	ILNA Dec 13, 2020	Iran, India, Uzbekistan to talk on joint use Chabahar port	نشست مشترک ایران، هند و ازبکستان در مورد بندر چابهار
8	Fars News Dec 24, 2020	Oil Minister: Iran to Increase Petrochemical Revenues to \$25bln in 1 Year	افتتاح ۳ طرح نفتی با سرمایه گذاری یک میلیارد دلاری/درآمد پتروشیمی به ۲۵ میلیارد دلار می رسد
9	Fars News Dec 24, 2020	Iranian President: US Economic War Taking Last Breaths	روحانی: سراسر ایران در دوران تحریم اقتصادی به یک کارگاه بزرگ تبدیل شد/عمر جنگ اقتصادی به پایان آمده است
10	Mehr News Dec 25, 2020	US return to JCPOA must have no preconditions: Moscow	سخنگوی وزارت خارجه روسیه: نشست شورای امنیت شکست کامل تلاش ها برای تضعیف برجام را نشان داد

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In the first headline, there are some unnecessary abundancies in Persian headline as highlighted, that is, “حضور” (presence) and “فوتسال جهان” (world futsal) do not exist in English one. Conversely, looking from another viewpoint, the problem may be in English title if the translation is from Persian to English. In this case, there are some ellipses that, in fact, look unimportant to be mentioned. As discussed in previous sections, this could be caused by the editor’s interference in finalizing this piece of news.

In the translation of the second headline, whether it is from Persian to English or vice versa, there are critical mistakes, if not errors. According to the highlighted parts, the concepts of both headlines are diverse. In the English title, it is inferred that there are some collaborations between both countries and, now, businesspeople are developing it as a transaction. On the other hand, in the Persian headline, it can be perceived that there is no trading between them, but, now, they are planning to have some in a way (based on the prepositions used) that Iran invests in Azerbaijan. This problem may be due to the cultural differences between international and national readers and translators.

The third piece of news was worked on by DW but there is a significant difference in the point of view of the Persian and English sectors of this news agency. In English one, as the words themselves imply, it is supposed that the characteristics of Helga Schmid will be analyzed, given that the audience knows her position and objectives of the organization she works at. In the Persian headline, however, it provokes a feeling that this person is effective on Iran’s nuclear power (which, in fact, she is) and the whole news will be about Iran and Mrs. Schmid’s position’s sensitivity in this regard. It seems the significance of the general stance of a country/geographical area is inevitable; that is, although the goal, on paper, in broadcasting is to be objective, the agencies cannot resist employing some specific and purposeful ideas in texts.

With a simple look at both headlines in four, it can be understood that these headlines are on the same concept but with diverse perspectives. In English one, there exists a demonstration of coronavirus which is eliminated in Persian one and it may show some hostility between the UK and European countries prima facie as is not the case with English headline; again, the trace of the translator, or editor, can be felt.

The fifth one is to some extent correct – in the sense that it is correspondent, without retortion. The only problem may be the intensity of them, i.e., in Persian one, the number of restrictions can be considered exaggerated.

Once more, in six, we have the very same topic with different headlines. In English one, the headline is in a way that the audience is assumed to be well informed about an exhibition about robots that is going on, while, in Persian, there is a concise statement of the event. These kinds of differences in headlines may not be of importance since they are somewhat deforeignized forms of the same topic and somehow it enjoys explication in the translation of such phenomena.

This next one may be the only one, so far, to be called a translation, based on the existing theories and approaches. There is just minor infidelity in this translation which is highlighted and

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it can be neglected since not only it has not caused any losses but it also has clarified the situation for the audience.

As is the case with most of the headlines so far, there is a diversity in the topic of the eighth headlines, as well. In English one, Iran's income is in focus which is of importance to foreigners but in Persian one, the source of this income has been mentioned.

There is a grammatical issue in the English headline of the ninth subject that retorts the meaning. "Iranian president" could be considered a president (of anywhere) who is from Iran. Therefore, Iran president or president of Iran could be alternatives. One more issue here is the economy in the translation from Persian to English i.e., the highlighted sentence in the Persian headline is eliminated in the English one.

In the last one, the translation seems to be completely retorted – if we consider it as a translation. The headline in Persian has concentrated on enemies' weakness but in English headline states the outcome of the task force on Iran's issues.

Table 2. Leads chosen from news agencies both in English and Persian

No.	News agency Date of news	English	Persian
1	IRNA Dec 17, 2020	"Hossein Tayebi (Benfica/Iran) transferred to Portuguese giants Benfica after successfully clinching another title with Kairat Almaty in Kazakhstan. Now he is instrumental in his team's success, having scored six goals already," FutsalFeed website reported.	به گزارش ایرنا، «حسین طیّبی» بازیکن ملی پوش ایران که در فصل جدید به بنفیکا پیوسته است از سوی سایت فوتسال فید در میان نامزدهای بهترین بازیکن فوتسال جهان در سال ۲۰۲۰ قرار گرفت.
2	IRNA Dec 17, 2020	Urmia, Dec 21, IRNA – Chairman of Urmia Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture said that Iranian businessmen especially in West Azarbaijan Province are ready to further develop trade ties with the Republic of Azerbaijan, provide the needs of Karabakh and expand trade ties with the country.	ارومیّه- ایرنا- رییس اتاق بازرگانی، صنایع، معادن و کشاورزی ارومیّه گفت: فعالان اقتصادی آذربایجان غربی آمادگی کافی برای مشارکت در بازسازی منطقه قریباغ و توسعه مراودات اقتصادی با جمهوری آذربایجان را دارند و ظرفیت لازم نیز مهیاست .

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3	DW Dec 5, 2020	EU diplomat Helga Schmid is the new secretary-general of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. She has a record of negotiating behind the scenes, and is known for her perseverance and sharp instincts.	هلگا اشمید دیپلمات پرسابقه آلمانی و مذاکره کننده ارشد اتحادیه اروپا در توافق هسته ای با ایران بود. او اکنون قرار است بزرگترین نهاد میان دولتی جهان یعنی "سازمان امنیت و همکاری اروپا" را رهبری کند.
4	DW Dec 21, 2020	A new strain of COVID-19 found in Britain has led to multiple countries imposing a ban on travelers coming from the UK. Meanwhile, the EMA is set to rule on the BioNTech-Pfizer vaccine.	در بریتانیا گونه تازه و فعال تری از ویروس کرونا شناسایی شده که با شدت بیشتر و نیروی سرایت بالاتری گسترش می یابد. در اروپا کشورهای هرچه بیشتری مرزهای هوایی خود با بریتانیا را می بندند.
5	BBC Dec 21, 2020	Australia's most populous state has announced new restrictions for the Greater Sydney area in an attempt to contain a growing outbreak of Covid-19.	افزایش مبتلایان به کوید - ۱۹ در سیدنی باعث شده که ایالت ها و قلمروهای دیگر استرالیا، مرزهای شان با بزرگترین شهر این کشور را قطع کنند.

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In the translation of the first lead into English, there is a kind of amplification that arises from the insufficient background knowledge of non-Iranian audiences which is acceptable. Therefore, having some changes can help the editors improve the impact of specific news on the audience – in a condition that it is not ideologically purposeful.

The highlighted vocabularies and phrases, in the second lead, illustrate the problems both in choosing equivalent words and, perhaps wrong, clarifications. “فعالان اقتصادی” is a term whose equivalence is “economic agent” which, basically, is different from “businessmen”. In the same vein, “to further develop trade ties” is a kind of investment while in Persian it is translated as “مشارکت” which means “partnership”. “ظرفیت لازم مهیاست” (the necessary capacity is ready) is not in English lead at all.

According to the shared knowledge among middle-eastern people, specifically Iranians, Mrs. Schmid, in the third lead, is somehow unknown for the aforementioned people, so, some explications employed in the Persian title may be of no problem.

The fourth piece of news was worked by DW on a new version of coronavirus in the UK both in English and Persian. Elaborating on both leads, it is perceived that, in English one, there is a kind of conservatism which may be due to saving some specific benefits while in Persian one the arrival of a new virus is explicitly mentioned.

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In the news stated by BBC, the fifth one, they have clarified the importance of Sydney by including a high amount of people in that city while in Persian lead, the sentence is in a way that it is assumed that Iranian people have a good knowledge of Australia. In the Persian one, the intensity of verbs is notable although it is mild in the English one.

4. Conclusion

This paper aimed to analyze the English<>Persian translations of news to find out the tendency of the news agencies toward the Persian-speaking audiences. Overall, after challenging years in Translation studies, it seems, when it comes to news, approaching translation with a social/cultural viewpoint can be a congruous choice since news is directly employed in human relationships. Consequently, inspecting the given approaches in translated news – from/to Persian – the pieces of news are more likely to be manipulated as if Iranians are put against the world.

In general, given the analyses above, it seems there is a tendency of re-reporting the news in the worlds' biggest agencies rather than translating the reported news in different languages which are provided in order to attract international audiences, that is, there are diversities in headlines of a subject in language A in comparison to language B, C, and so on. On the other side of the spectrum, smaller agencies (perhaps with less validity among the audience or with fewer followers) tend to translate the pieces of news they have worked on which are of imperfections in their translations (e.g., Mehr News Agency). These problems seem to stem from insufficient followers, i.e., if there existed a keen audience following these agencies, there would have been some notices by readers of the news letting the agency officials know of their mistakes (or errors).

As the last point in this paper, it seems there is no specific approach to translating news discourse; that is, every agency according to the rules and ideologies of the geographical and political areas that they are located can resort to an approach that suit that area – which is in contrast to the aim of objectivity in translating news, however, it may be the most proper choice for the audience in their vicinity.



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