Deforming Tendency in Subtitling Animations

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Abstract-Audiovisual translation in general and subtitling in particular have been subjects of growing interest among translation researchers in the past decade. This is as the result of living in a society heavily confined by the images provided by the mass media which are broadcasted on numerous national and international stations that make their journey from one country to another and obliges translating them as they are to be consumed by the speakers of other languages. Although some strategies were proposed in order to facilitate subtitling these products yet none has concerned the very first tendency of a subtitler to favor a strategy over another. Utilizing Berman's (1985) framework this study attempts to find those deforming tendencies which are of the highest frequency in subtitling by analyzing five animations. Although some of these deforming tendencies happened contrarily while some others co-occurred for one item the most frequent tendencies observed are the destruction of expressions and idioms and the destruction of linguistic patterning respectively.

Key words-Deforming tendency; animation; subtitle; idioms

1. INTRODUCTION

The scarcity of academic attention to Audio visual translation by translation studies scholars during the past decades has led to subjective renderings of the original which lacks solid academic framework by subtitlers. In Iran for instance, neither a governmental nor a private organization bears the task of subtitling. This can be substantiated through considering the significant number of dubbed movies and programs broadcasted from Iranian national TV and comparing them with the very few subtitled ones if not any (Zemeckis, 2009). However, the advent of the virtual super highway besides the extraordinary enhancement of audiovisual products, animations in particular which are considered a worthy resource for edutainment, along with the audiences' unquenchable thirst to watch the recently released ones necessitates the presence of the subtitles which can be prepared faster and cheaper than the dubbed versions (Munday, 2001).

This paper, hence, embarked upon shedding light on subtitling as it is overshadowed by another method of audiovisual translation, dubbing, in some countries like Iran in addition to tackle the under-researched area of academic/scientific translation in Iran from a systemic perspective focusing on animation. Second, it provides the subtitlers a scientific frame work by applying Antoine Berman's Invalid source specified as a deforming tendency to leap toward achieving more natural renderings.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Subtitles have been referred to Reib and Vermeer (1991) as intersemiotic translation, apparently on the assumption that not only verbal utterances per se, but also the accompanying facial expressions and gestures are somehow transferred Invalid source specified. Jacobson supports this and states his definition of subtitles as "an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems, Invalid source specified. Gottlieb (1992) on the contrary denies that subtitling is intersemiotic in the Jakobsonian (1959) sense by explicitly narrowing down subtitling to the translation of speech into writing, i.e. "from one manifestation of the semiotic system cultural language to another, Invalid source specified. He defines subtitling as "a (1) written, (2) additive (i.e. new verbal material is added in the form of subtitles), (3) immediate, (4) synchronous, and (5) polymedial (i.e. at least two channels are employed) form of translation." Invalid source specified.

2.1. Subtitling Procedures

Several strategies are proposed by different scholars such as Delabastita's (1996) Invalid source specified, Leppihalme's (1997) Invalid source specified, and

Gottlieb's (1994c) Invalid source specified. Gottlieb Invalid source specified**.** has devised ten strategies that he sees at work in reducing a text to subtitles, and which he classifies as *expansion, paraphrase, transfer, ,imitation, transcription, dislocation, condensation ,decimation , deletion, resignation*. Marashi and Poursoltani (2009) identified them as Invalid source specified. , unfolded that the most frequent strategies are transfer and paraphrase and the least frequent one is deletion and decimation in their *Analysis of Farsi into English Subtitling Strategies Employed in Iranian Feature Films*. Eriksen (2010), Invalid source specified. , supports this in his case study of translating slang terms that paraphrase was shown as the prevailing micro strategy applied to the subtitles of slang and that transfer was the second-most used subtitle. Yet Berman's deforming tendencies remain scarce in subtitling. Safari (2012), Invalid source specified. It is found that quantitative impoverishment and destruction of underlying networks of signification are of high frequency when it comes to transferring proper nouns.

2.2. Antoine Berman's (1985) deforming tendencies

By the emergence of cultural turn in early1980s several TS scholars shifted gears from considering translation as a linguistic activity that was done in isolation, but as the product of a broader cultural context that encompassed plural belief systems. One of the first theorists who adopted this stance is Andre Lefevere who stated that "Translation needs to be studied in connection with power and patronage, ideology and poetics, with emphasis on the various attempts to shore up or undermine an existing ideology or an existing poetics, Invalid source specified. Another advocate of this perspective is Lawrence Venuti (1997, 2000) who proposed *domestication* and particularly *foreignization as an* Invalid source specified. He defines foreignization as "choosing a foreign text and developing a translation method along lines which are excluded by dominant cultural values in the target language" Invalid source specified. Berman's Invalid source specified strongly supports foreignization proposes twelve deforming tendencies as follows:

1. Rationalization: primarily influences the syntactical structures of the original including punctuation, sequence of sentences, and the word order. Berman (1985) states that rationalization recomposes sentences rearrange them according to a certain idea of discursive order.
2. Clarification: concerns the level of "clarity" perceptible in words and their meanings (Zhang, Yan, Wei & Wu, 2011; Zhang & Wu, 2011). Berman contends that Clarification is inherent in translation, to the extent that every translation comprises some degree of explicitation. This causes the manifestation of the untold.
3. Expansion: as a result of the previous tendencies, rationalizing and clarifying, expansion, an unfolding of what, in the original, is "folded" takes place. He calls this expansion empty from the text point of view as this addition adds nothing, but it merely augments the gross mass of text.
4. Ennoblement: includes those translators who try to improve the original through rewriting it in a more elegant style. The process that is called "poetization." in poetry since it is called "rhetorization" in prose and is the consequence of an annihilation of the oral rhetoric and formless polylogic of the ST.
5. Qualitative impoverishment: happens when replacement of words and expressions with TT equivalents 'that lack their sonorous richness or, correspondingly, their signifying or "iconic" features' takes place. Consider the following example:
6. Quantitative impoverishment: takes place when the translator faces lexical loss during the act of translation.
7. The destruction of rhythms: happens when a translator attempts to destroy the rhythm of the text which it even sometimes leads to a multiplicity of rhythms. Berman contends that this tendency generally happens through an arbitrary revision of the punctuation.
8. The destruction of underlying networks of signification: Berman's Invalid source specified states that the misreading of the underlying networks of the subtext corresponds to the treatment given to *groupings of major signifiers* in a work, such as those that organize its mode of expression and may cause the lack in conveying the intended meaning in the target text.
9. The destruction of linguistic patterning: takes place when a range of techniques, such as rationalization, clarification and expansion are utilized to the destruct the original sentence constructions and patterning for the sake of achieving a linguistically more homogenous target text.
10. The destruction of vernacular networks occurs when translators destruct the local speech and its language patterns through the use of a TL vernacular or slang.
11. The destruction of expressions and idioms: is taken into consideration through the replacement of an idiom or proverb by its TL (Target Language) 'equivalent' in to consideration as to be an 'ethnocentrism' that manipulation of the "equivalence" which attacks the discourse of the foreign work.
12. The effacement of the superimposition of languages: which is considered by Berman as the central problem in translating novels, is the inclination of erasing the traces of different forms of language that co-exist in the ST.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Corpus

This bilingual/parallel non-automated corpus was collected manually in two ways from 5 animations e.g. A Christmas Carol, Cars, Rango, *The Emperor's New Groove*, and *The Princess and the Frog*. The English

subtitles were extracted from their DVDs and then were converted to plain text through the use of Microsoft Windows 7 notepad (Zhang, Wang, Wu & Huo, 2011; Zhang, Wu, Wei & Wang, 2011). The Persian ones were downloaded from 2 leading websites in subtitling. They are http://www.subscene.com/ and http://www.subtitlesz.com/. They were put in to plain text through the same process. The most significant factor shadowed in choosing these subtitles, is that they had not gone through machine translation.The corpus is constructed of 40784 words (5English subtitle files) and 42340 words (5 Persian subtitle files).
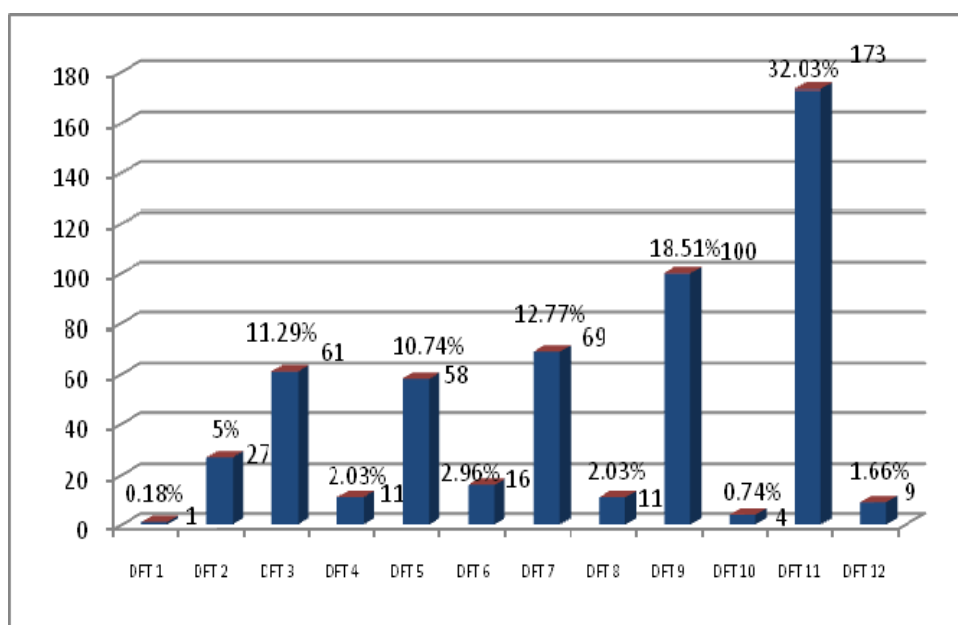
3.2. Procedure

The subtitles were analyzed manually and in pairs (translation against original), and the unit of analysis was the clause complex. According to Halliday and Matthiessen's (1994) Invalid source specified refers to a sentence can be interpreted as a CLAUSE COMPLEX: a Head clause together with the other clauses that modify it". But author's concern here is the clause complex, as the "sentence" is a terminology of grammarians and shows just one aspect of a clause complex. This was chosen as the unit because of the prosodic nature of evaluation strategies.

The main purpose of this analysis is identifying those tendencies that are of high frequency in subtitling animation. After dissecting the texts into their clause complexes and comparing them against the originals, the related tendencies were extracted and put into the data 66 sheet for further analysis.

4. RESULTS

It has to be first stated that some of Berman's deforming tendencies happened contrarily while some others co-occurred for one item .The most frequent tendencies found are the destruction of expressions and idioms with a frequency of 173(32.03%) and the destruction of linguistic patterning which was observed 100 times holding the ratio of 18.51% respectively. The least frequent deforming tendencies in these animations are rationalization (0.18%), ennoblement (2.03%), and the destruction of underlying networks of signification (2.03%). The following chart shows the frequency of all five animations.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The first deforming tendency which was observed to be of the highest frequency in subtitling these animations is *the destruction of expressions and idioms,* and is define*d* by Berman's Invalid source specified is the replacement of an idiom or proverb by its TL 'equivalent' that is an 'ethnocentrism' the manipulation of the "equivalence" which attacks the discourse of the foreign work." He proposed (ibid) his disdain of replacing an English expression containing the name of the well-known insane asylum Bedlam to 'Charenton', a French insane asylum in Conrad's novel *typhoon*, since this would result in a TT that produces a network of French cultural references. Examples of this sort are abundant; however, it would be satisfactory to mention some.
Bugger it!　گَندش بزنن
(Gǽndesh Bezǽnǽn!)

5.1.Invalid source specified.

According to Collins Cobuild's (2006) Invalid source specified. , some people say bugger it *or* bugger when they are angry that something has gone wrong. This word also associates with describing a person who has done something annoying or stupid. Yet, the Persian equivalence which means rotten in English associates with fruit and food and not a person (Verbinski, 2011).

Give him hell Rango!   دهنشو سرویس کن رنگو

(Dǽhǽnesho Service Kon
Rango!)

5.2.Invalid source specified.

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Fifth Edition's Invalid source specified defines "give somebody hell" as to treat someone in an unpleasant or angry way with no reference to any parts of the body. However the Persian counterpart which is a polite version of jagging somebody's mouth means to provide somebody's mouth with maintenance.

The destruction of linguistic patterning was seen to be of high frequency as well. *Berman's Invalid source specified* stated that translators would utilize this deforming tendency as the result of their effort in creating a linguistically more homogenous target text. Consider the following example.

I was <u>an</u> apprentice here!   (Mǽn Inja <u>Shǽgerdi</u>
Kǽrdǽm.)   من اینجا شاگردی کردم

Invalid source specified.

The translator of this animation utilized transposition- a term used by Vinay and Darbelnet's Invalid source specified which the change of one part of speech is for another one without changing the sense- to apply this tendency. In this sentence the word apprentice which is a noun is translated as a verb in the target language. What follows are examples concerning this matter (Lasseter, 2011).

Well Dadgum, you're <u>leaking</u> oil again. Must be your gasket.

خیلی خب لعنتي ، دوباره <u>روغن ریزي</u> داري باید از واشرهات باشه.
(Xeili Xob Lǽnǽni, Dobǽreh <u>Roghǽn rizi</u> Dǽri, Bǽyǽd
ǽz Vasherhat Basheh.)

5.3.Invalid source specified.

In this example, the word leaking which is a present progressive verb is translated as a gerund. However in the following example "rust" which is a noun is translated as "corrode" that is a verb.

Don't tell anybody but I think <u>my rust</u> is starting to show through.

<u>میزنم</u> که دیگه گاو _به کسي چیزي نگو ، ولي به نظرم دارم <u>زنگ</u>
پیشوني سفید بشم.
(Beh Kǽsi Chizi Nǽgo, Vali Beh Nǽzǽrǽm <u>Daram</u>
<u>Zǽng Mizǽnǽm</u> Keh Digeh Gave Pishoni Sefid
Beshǽm.)

An in-depth investigation carried out quantitatively and qualitatively on five animations has located the most frequent tendencies to be the destruction of expressions and idioms and the destruction of linguistic patterning respectively. Concerning the first mentioned tendency the translators tend to translate idioms and expressions with an 'equivalent' in the target text without noticing the connotating meanings residing in each expression and idiom.

It was observed that the trend is to translate nouns to verbs or vice versa when it comes to achieving a linguistically more homogenous target text (Gorjian, Pazhakh, & Parang, 2012; Gorjian, Pazhakh, &

Naghizadeh, 2012). This can be traced back to the subtitling technical restrains that subtitlers have to deal with the limited space available on the screen and provide the audience with a natural target text.

The pedagogical implications of the present study may help students to be well-acquainted with the restrains they may encounter while subtitling (Gorjian, Alipour & Saffarian, 2012). As each restrain would lead translators to unconscious forces form part of the translators' *being* in dealing with the text, proper acquaintance with these tendencies and having them chosen willfully would lead to better decision makings. Having known the most occurring tendencies in addition to the strategies applied in order to satisfy them would make the students come up with a more natural rendering of the original.

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