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Film altyazılarında çeviri kalitesi değerlendirmesinin incelenmesi: House'un TQA modeline dayalı açık ve gizli analiz / M. Valizadeh & A. E. Vazifehkhah

88. Investigating translation quality assessment on movie subtitling: Overt and covert analysis based on House's TQA model

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Abstract

This paper examines the role of translation quality assessment in movie subtitling. Hence, the researchers applied House's (2015) translation quality assessment model as the main model in this study to investigate appropriate translations in subtitling based on overt and covert strategies. This study is a corpus-based, descriptive and non-judgmental analysis of the English-Persian parallel corpus. Moreover, this research comprises English audio scripts of four American movies with 956 frames in Persian subtitles. The result indicated that the overt translation strategy at 75% was used more, and translators made an effort to take advantage of this strategy to convey the message from the source language into the target language. However, the covert translation strategy was only used in 25% because of the limitation of time in subtitling.

Keywords: Translation Quality Assessment (TQA), Translation, Subtitling, Overt Translation, Covert Translation

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Öz

Bu makale, filmlerin altyazılarında çeviri kalitesi değerlendirmesinin rolünü incelemiştir. Bu amaçla araştırmacılar, açık ve örtülü stratejilere dayalı altyazılarda uygun çevirileri araştırmak için bu çalışmada ana model olarak House'un (2015) çeviri kalite değerlendirmesini uygulamışlardır. Bu çalışma İngilizce-Farsça paralel derleminin derlem tabanlı, betimleyici ve yargılayıcı olmayan bir analizidir. Bu araştırma, Farsça altyazılı 956 kareli dört Amerikan filminin İngilizce sesli senaryolarından oluşmaktadır. Sonuç, %75 oranında açık çeviri stratejisinin daha fazla kullanıldığını ve çevirmenlerin mesajı kaynak dilden hedef dile iletmek için bu stratejiden yararlanmaya çalıştıklarını göstermiştir. Ancak, altyazıda zaman kısıtlaması nedeniyle örtülü çeviri stratejisi sadece %25 oranında kullanılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Çeviri Kalitesi Değerlendirmesi (TQA), Çeviri, Altyazı, Açık Çeviri, Gizli Çeviri

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1. Introduction

Translation acts like a bridge to connect two different languages and cultures. It seems like a simple job at first look, but it has often been one of the most complicated activities and studies in the field of humanities. In addition, translation is an international key to the following multilingual poster that welcomes customers to a small restaurant near the home of one of the authors. The most important role which translation plays in our daily life is to transfer and share knowledge from one language to another (Hatim & Munday, 2004, p.3).

Moreover, House (2015, p.2) introduced a definition of translation as a linguistic-textual process in which a text in the source language is replaced by semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language. In fact, it is re-contextualized in a second language and influenced by a variety of extra-linguistic factors and conditions. Further, her model (overt and covert types of translation) are based on the comparison of ST and TT profiles to see whether there are kinds of mismatches between them or not and the results lead to deciding about the appropriateness of the translated texts.

In addition, House (2015, p.26) asserted in analyzing the quality of translation to find out whether there are mismatches between the source text and the target text. She defines translation quality assessment as a functional-pragmatic model in general which ST and TT profiles are linguistically, overtly, and covertly analyzed. She claims, "translation quality assessment means both retrospectively assessing the worth of a translation and prospectively ensuring the quality in the production of a translation" (p.2).

According to Baker and Saldanha (2009), translation quality assessment presupposes a theory of translation. Different views of translation have been caused to create different concepts of translation and different and unequal concepts of quality have caused to create different points of view of quality in the vast field of translation quality assessment as a subcategory of translation studies (p.222).

Moreover, nowadays translation and subsequently translation quality assessment plays an important role in movie industry. Subtitling as one of the main tools in translation to convey the meaning and the message of actors` scenarios from one language to another one in movies has an effective role as well. It is worth pointing out that the notion of subtitling strategies is more under attention than past, and more scholarly articles have been published recently. Furthermore, there are different classifications for subtitling strategies, which demonstrate the fact that strategies convey the relevant concept in translation.

Baker and Saldanha (2009), pointed out that subtitling in movies includes the production of snippets of written text (subtitles, or captions in American English) to be superimposed on visual footage—normally near the bottom of frame—while an audiovisual text is projected, played or broadcast (p. 14).

In addition, Neves (2008) divides subtitles into two main branches, interlingual and intralingual subtitles. He defined intralingual subtitles as a type of translation that is similar to its dialogues. Hence, an interlingual subtitle is different from the audio. Further, Bravo (2005) suggests that both interlingual and intralingual subtitles are beneficial for different language learning and learners of lower levels must work with the interlingual subtitles, while advanced learners work with the intralingual subtitles to develop pronunciation and their knowledge of words and idioms (p. 116).

Gottlieb (1998) believes intralingual subtitle is a subtitle in the original language that changes the mode but not language so its main function is communication rather than being a translation aid so

intralingual subtitles are favored for the benefit of the deaf and the hard of hearing (subtitling of domestic programs) and language learners (subtitling of foreign-language programs) (p. 85). Moreover, he believes that interlingual subtitle (diagonal) is a subtitle that differs from the original language and the subtitler must cross over from one language to another; so in this case, both mode and language undergo changes (ibid. p. 106).

Hatim and Muday (2000) described different aspects of subtitling in movies and asserted that subtitling is a sort of shift in mode from speech to writing and the production of this shift includes some special factors such as intonation, style-shifting, and non-standard dialect which could not be represented in written mode (as cited in Mohseni & Mozafar, 2013). Hence, a translator is supposed to apply the best strategies to convey the message from the source language to the target one. It is worth pointing out that House (2015) proposed overt and covert as two different types of translation strategies, which can be helpful for translators to take advantage of them in subtitling.

In this study, the researchers made an effort by investigating translation quality assessment on movie subtitling with a concentration on overt and covert analysis based on House TQA model presents with information that will be useful for translators and even translation learners to make familiar with applicable strategies in the translation of movies.

1.1. House TQA Model: Overt versus Covert Translation

1.1.1. Overt   Translation

House (1997, p.66) defines an overt translation as a translational action in which the cultural characteristics of the source language are protected intentionally, and the source language receptors are not being overtly and directly addressed. This sort of translation never claims to be a unique and independent translation and that is to say, it is a translation for target language receptors, but enjoying source language culture characteristics.

In this case, (House, 2015, p. 60) the equivalent relationship is established only on the register, genre, and text levels, not on the individual textual function, and a second-level function is available. She acknowledges that "the translator cannot strive for simple functional equivalence in the target culture, which would involve the undertaking of adjustments of cultural presuppositions. Rather, he has to restrict himself to simply transposing ST from source to target culture, giving target culture members the opportunity to have access to the original via the medium of the foreign language". Finally, the translator's mission in overt translation is to be as possible as faithful to the source text's form and content.

1.1.2. Covert translation

House (1997, p.69) also defines this sort of translation as translational action which enjoys the characteristics of an original source text in the target language culture and the translated text pretends it is unique and new. The target text's function acts the same as the source text's function. The covert translation attempts not to show the translation's essence and spirit through the functional equivalence to create a text as it would act in the source language. In this case, the cultural characteristics of the source language are quite substituted with the target language. This is done by a means that House calls it "cultural filter" as if the text has been created in target language culture. Around this sort of

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translation, she also believes that a kind of re-contextualization, reproducing, and recreating take place which enjoys the speech event of the source text furtively.

House (2015, p. 57) claims that "these texts are not source-culture specific, and if the source and target text are to have the equivalent function, however, which is necessary in a covert translation, the translator has to take different cultural presuppositions in the two language communities into account to meet the needs of the target language addressees in their cultural setting, and to keep the textual function equivalent in source and target cultures". Finally, the translator's mission in overt translation is to be as possible as familiar with the target language's cultural features.

1.2. Research Question and Hypothesis

In light of the discussion exhibited in the introduction above, the present research provides the following research question:

✓   To what extent does translation quality assessment affect movie subtitling?

This study also includes a main hypothesis:

✓   Translation quality assessment does not affect movie subtitling.

2. Method and materials

2.1. Design of the study

This study is descriptive research with the qualitative approach conducted with the purpose of applying Juliane House's (2015) TQA revisited model on four Persian subtitling of American movies to realize the applicability of House's (2015) model in this regard. Furthermore, the current study includes four American movies as the corpus of the study, which analyzed them non-judgmentally. In doing so, the researchers followed three main steps: At first, viewing the movies and putting them under the analysis, second transcribing the English utterances and comparing them with the Persian subtitles and finally, determining the used strategies based on House's (2015) model of translation. Furthermore, the corpus includes 95 minutes of movie dialogues in English and 95 minutes of Persian subtitles with 956 frames.

Four selected American movies are as follows:

1. *Never back down: No surrender* (2016) by Michael Jai White

2. *She's the man* (2006) by Andy Fickman

3. *Kick Boxer: Vengeance* (2016) by John Stockwell

4. *Southpaw* (2015) by Antoine Fuqua

2.2. Procedure

In this study, the researchers to obtain the result took four main steps which are as follows: 1. In the first step, the researchers selected four American movies which are popular not only among USA people but also in Iran. It is worth pointing out that the main reason for the popularity was the cultural differences,

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which is one of the obstacles for translators in subtitling. 2. In the second step, the researchers adopted the scenarios with their subtitling in Persian. Moreover, to analyze any word by an actor or actress, the researchers used the written forms of scenarios with their translations. 3. In the third step, 95 minutes of movie dialogues in English and 95 minutes of Persian subtitles which included 956 frames selected to get under close inspection. In addition, at this phase of study, the researchers adopted House's (2015) overt and covert translation strategies with movie subtitles in Persian. 4. At the final step, the researchers put the used number of overt and covert translation strategies with their frequencies and percentages in a table and demonstrated them through a pie chart.

3. Result and discussion

In this part of the study, the researchers concentrate on the quantitative analysis of the corpus. Moreover, the researchers presented descriptive tables for the selected movies. Hence, Table 1 indicates the frequency and percentage of overt and covert strategies in the four movies. However, Table 2 demonstrates the total number and percentages of the used strategies.
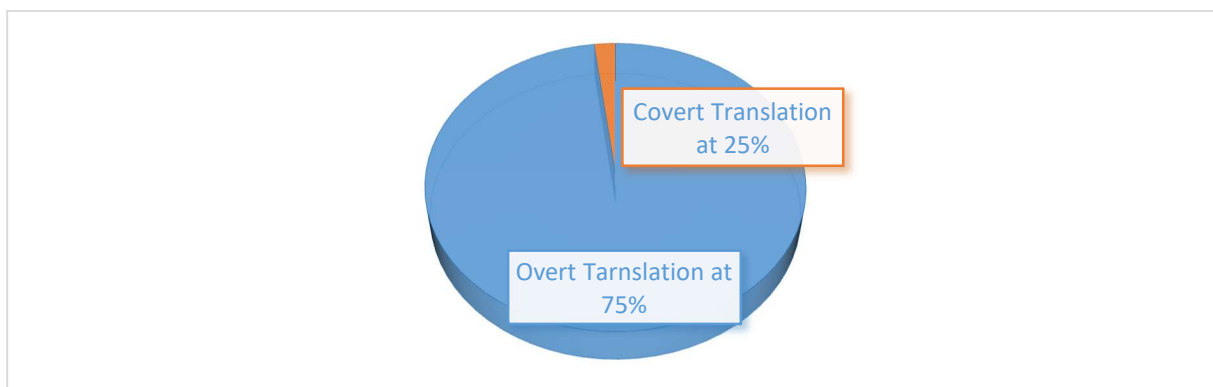
Table 1. Frequencies and percentages of overt and covert strategies in the four movies

Strategies		Southpaw	She is the man	Kick Boxer	Never back down
Overt Translation	Frequencies	8	13	6	10
	Percentages	80%	76%	75%	71%
Covert Translation	Frequencies	2	4	2	4
	Percentages	20%	24%	25%	29%

Table 2. Total numbers and percentages of the used strategies

Types of Strategies	Total Number	Percentage
Overt	37	75%
Covert	12	25%

Figure 1. The used Frequencies and Percentages of Overt and Covert Translation in four American movies

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After collecting and analyzing data, the result demonstrated the fact that the overt translation strategy with 37 frequencies at 75% on four movie subtitling was used more than the covert translation strategy. Also, it was found that cultural differences were one of the main obstacles in conveying the message and that is why overt translation was the translators` choice of movie subtitling. Furthermore, translators pretended to convey the message from the source language into the target language in a way that is more understandable to the target addressees. As a result, terminologies and expressions did not translate word by word. This originates from the fact that only 25% of the used strategies with a total number of 12 frequencies belonged to the covert translation. This importance indicates that translation accessibility was more significant than word-by-word translation in the view of translators. Hence, covert translation was utilized less in subtitling. However, one of the certain advantages of covert translation was taking time. It was found that translators, based on the shortage of time in dialogue and the subtitling, pretended to use word-by-word translations on some occasions.

4. Conclusion

In this study, the researchers investigated translation quality assessment on movie subtitling by applying the overt and covert translation strategies based on House's (2015) model. Furthermore, through different sections of the study, it was shown that House's (2015) model of translation was usable with different frequencies and percentages. Hence, the result of the analysis indicated the most used strategy was overt translation at 75% of the entire study. Besides, the result revealed that the cultural items which could not match with the target language culture is one of the main reasons to apply this strategy. Although, covert translation based on the limitation of translation and cultural filters only used in 25%.

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