

CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL DISCOURSE FEATURES IN PAKISTANI TRANSLATED LEGAL AND NARRATIVE TEXTS

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Abstract

Competence in translational transformation and its functional appropriacy is dependent upon text organization patterns and these patterns are text type and genre specific. This study presents a contrastive analysis of textual features based on Bystrova-McIntyre (2012) global textual feature framework. The global textual features i.e cohesive devices, nominalization, passivization, propositional phrases, lexical density, and average word and sentence length have been analysed in the translated legal and narrative prose "The Weary Generations" and the Urdu draft of the constitution of Pakistan. Urdu and English POS taggers and Wordsmith 7 has been used to analyse the both translated texts. The analysis revealed that both the translated texts have retained the characteristic textual features of their source texts and context of production in terms of translator's role and sociocultural milieu have proved instrumental in retaining these features.

Keywords: Translation transformation, Global textual features, Source text, Context of production

Introduction

Text organisation and the choice of appropriate textual devices have been subject of constant inquiry and assumed the status of quality criteria both in translated and non translated literary and specialized texts. This convention to investigate text organisation and its translational transference has determined certain global textual features. Global textual features can be termed as recurrent features that occur at sub sentential level and the major function of these features is to tie textual segments and create "connections among the elements within the discourse" (Campbell 1998). These features include cohesive devices, nominalization, passive

constructions, prepositional phrases and average sentence and word length. These textual devices not only represent writer's sense of organization but also influence readers understanding.

Literature Review

Studies on text organizational units can be traced in (Halliday and Hasan 1976, De Beaugrande and Dressler 1981, Hatim and Mason 1990, Baker 1992, -kulka Blum 2000, Teich and Fankouser 2005). Similar studies have also been conducted in order to evaluate translators performance and assist translators' training. During the process of translation these text organization features are readjusted in order to resituate them into target language, culture and genre. A parallel contention regarding the use of global textual features in translation studies is that expert translators display higher skill in their usage as compared to novice translators.

Cohesion serves the function of a unifying mechanism that ties textual segments and develop "connections among the elements within the discourse." (Campbell 1998). Halliday and Hassan (1976) refer cohesion as the relationship "of meaning that exists within the text, and that defines it as a text." For De Beaugrande, cohesion includes " the procedures whereby surface elements appear as progressive occurrences such that their sequential connectivity is maintained and made recoverable"(1981). For Le Tourneaus, 'cohesion stands for syntax of texts' with respect to the conformity of syntactic structure to the demands of information structure"(2007). Byrne(2006) in his study on the quality of technical translation has considered organizational units as average sentence length, average word length, nominalization and passive constructions, fundamental to the successful accomplishment of the translation task. The use of the textual features like sentence length and lexical density has been studied as distinct organizational units in newspaper articles and narrative prose by Laviosa(1998). The study found that the lexical density is lower in translation of both text types but the mean sentence length is lower in newspaper translation as compared to prose translation. Average sentence length as a measure of textual complexity has been studied by Khanna et al (2012).

Cohesion a significant component of textual organization

The lexico-grammatical category of cohesive devices include pronouns both personal, demonstratives, modifiers, elliptical forms, substitutions and conjunctions as well as lexical categories like verbs, nouns and adjectives. Cohesive devices serve the purpose of linguistic strategies by embedding information in such a way as will facilitate conceptual flow and logical continuity in a text either translated or non translated (Louwerse & Graesser 2007; Halliday & Matthiessen 2004). The semantic links developed by cohesive devices transcend clause boundaries. However, the analysis in this study would be confined to two grammar driven cohesive categories i.e reference and conjunction devices since these devices develop conceptual relations between parts of text by means of explicit linguistic forms (Halliday & Matthiessen 2013). Translational transformation may change the type of the cohesive devices as well as the reference chain maintained by these devices according to the requirements of the target language, mode and register adopted for communication.

Studies on cohesive devices suggest that the use of these devices is determined by text type as indicated by Mahlberg (2006) "cohesive links are genre specific". He observes that narrative texts show an excessive usage of "reference and chains of reference items", on the other hand news paper articles "illustrate lexical relationships where sentences share three or more lexical links". Smith and Frawley (1983) contend that similar type of conjunctions are used in

religious texts and fiction while journalistic and science texts tend to use additives and hypothetical conjunctions. The use of conjunctive cohesive devices in scientific research articles and textbooks has been studied by Varikaite(2005) with the findings that causal and temporal conjunctions are used more frequently in research articles. Though the investigation of translational transformation or ‘shifts’ in the usage of cohesive ties is a belated development yet studies by (Hoey1991, H.O.U 2000, Yeh 2004,and Zhao et al 2009) provide sufficient insight regarding the transformation cohesive ties undergo during translation process.

Text organizational features have also been exploited in order to communicate certain ideologies. Nominalization has been defined by Halliday (1994) as a process “whereby any element or group of elements is made to function as a nominal group in a clause”. Moreover, they enable text developers and translators to reclassify events as abstractions Heyvaert (2003). For CDA analysts nominalizations have ideational function that of concealing agent and reifying. The hidden part of information contributes in communicating the impression that entities denoted by nominalization have real, necessary existence. Kuo and Nakamura(2005) investigated the use of nominalization as a tool to mask the reality’, presented in English Vietnamese translations. Martin (2008) on the other hand observed attempts to ‘de- vilify’ nominalizations.

Lexical density

Lexical density has been considered an important indicator of text organization skill, mostly dependent upon text type, genre, mode i.e spoken or written, translated or non translated. Since the prevalence of corpus based studies, type token ratio derived by dividing the number of unique items and their variant forms by the total sum of tokens in any text. The higher type token ratio suggests that the text has lexical diversity and these unique items are communicative of the specification of the meaning (Westin 2002). On the other hand, lower type token ratio indicated less creativity and it is communicative of more generality of content with less specification. Earlier studies on type token ratio in e.g (Biber 1988) were conducted on variation of spoken and written genres with the findings that written texts entails higher type token ratio. The context of production of both texts were considered responsible for this variation in lexical diversity. In translated texts lexical density has constantly been study Braithwaite(1996), Zanettin(2000), Laviosa(2000), Xiao and Dai’s(2010),Kajzer-Wietrzny, (2015) as a measure to determine the simplification or disambiguation of translated texts in comparison to the complexity of non translated one.

Average word length

Average word length again an indicator of mature writing and creativity both in translated and non translated texts. The logic behind this contention is that word frequency and word length have inverse relation, the more length the words would have in some text the lesser frequency there would be of the words (Troia 2019). The word length is measured by the total sum of letters in a word. Average word length has been considered as a component in readability tests and norm based writing tests.

Average sentence length

Like average word length average sentence length has also been studied as an index of readability and style. In Gary and Leary (1935) higher sentence length was established as an

indicator of textual difficulty. In translation studies average sentence length has unique status being an indicator of translational universal of simplification Laviosa (2000),Hu (2007),Wen (2009),Xiao and Dai (2010).

Passives

Passives or passivization like other structures have distinct syntactic form, 'semantic mapping and functional accounts' Abraham (2006). Multiple pragmatic roles performed by passives include: agent suppression, topicalization of non agent, predictive stativization, agent loss and patient promotion. These characteristic roles of passives are equally applicable to both translated and non translated texts and genres. However, frequency of passivization varies according to text types. Science texts use passives excessively followed by news paper writing Svartvik(1996). Legal texts are loaded by passives and this passivization has its functional implications too. Westin(2002) finds that the use of agentless passives in English newspaper editorials has decreased over time, which might indicate "a drift away from a language that Biber characterizes as 'abstract, technical, and formal' (Biber 1988)

Prepositional phrases

Prepositional phrases conventionally associated with information ridden texts Westin(2002), highly frequent in academic genres Biber(1988) is considered to be a specification of information discourse.

Earlier studies conducted on the use of cohesive devices and global textual features either deal with non translated texts or deal with translations in other language pairs i.e Russian and English, Chinese and English. Since no earlier study has been conducted on textual features and generic conventions in Urdu, English language pair specific translated texts, this study aims to investigate global textual and cohesive features in Urdu English language specific translated legal and literary texts.

Purpose of The Study

This study aims to investigate the translational transference of global textual features in two distinct text types i.e institutional legal documents and narrative prose with following objectives:

- Do both texts being translated versions share similar tendencies in the use of cohesive devices and global textual features?
- Either translation process or generic orientation has informed the use of cohesive devices and global textual features in the texts under study?
- Has the source text genre influenced the use of global textual devices and cohesive ties or translators have deviated from source text norms in the use of these devices?

Methodology

In order to sustain the standard of reliability and validity in findings, corpus based analytical tools have been used. Both the English and Urdu parts of the data was tagged with Claws7 designed by university of Lancaster and Urdu 0.3 POS tagger designed by ICLE respectively. All the categories for grammatical cohesive devices were automatically retrieved from the literary translated text. Since Urdu POS tagger does not tag the specific categories equivalent to Claws7, so they were manually sought from the broader categories of relevant parts of speech. Nominalization, passive constructions and prepositional phrases were also sought

manually from the broader tagged category of verbs and prepositions. In order to find the information about the type token ratio, average sentence length and average word length Wordsmith7 has been used for both types of translated texts.

Analytical Framework

The analytical framework for this study is based on Bystrova-McIntyre (2012) who has employed this framework to analyse the differences in the use of cohesive devices and global textual features in the non translated, human translated and machine translated texts in Russian and English. The same model except two categories i.e possessive cohesive devices and average sentence length was employed earlier by Dong and Lan (2010) to analyse Chinese, English translated language pair. The analytical design is based on Halliday and Hasan's (1976) category of grammatical cohesive devices and Campbell's (1998) model of translation competence. Following Dong and Lan (2010) the analytical framework in this study for nominalization is restricted to only noun forms of verbs and for cohesive devices it is restricted to grammatical cohesive ties i.e. reference and conjunction devices.

The Data

The distinction of this study lies in the translational data employed for the purpose of analysis. While earlier studies applied the model to investigate the specifications in non translated, human translated and machine translated texts on one hand and Chinese English or Russian English translation pair on the other hand. The current study has selected two different translated text variants i.e translated narrative fiction and institutional legal translated text. The narrative fiction selected for the analysis is the English translation of Abdullah Hussain's novel "Udas Naslain". The translated draft "The Weary Generations" falls in the category of self translation by Abdullah Hussain. The legal data consists of institutional legal text, the Urdu translated text of the constitution of Pakistan as available on the official site of the Supreme court of Pakistan. This study attempts to investigate how far text type and generic conventions in translated texts influence the use of cohesive devices and global textual features.

Results

The analysis has established that both texts are at poles apart in textual features despite having undergone the translation process. The textual choices are not informed by the translation process rather they were result of source text interference. Neither the context of production in terms of socio cultural milieu nor the translators textual choices have influenced the textual formation of both of the texts. The translated literary text i.e narrative fiction has shown higher tendency in the use of reference cohesive devices and conjunctions. All the sub categories of reference devices i.e personal, pronominal, comparative and demonstrated devices has outnumbered legal translation in the occurrence of these reference devices. Same is the case with occurrence of additive, adversative casual and temporal conjunction devices As far as the comparative occurrence of nominalization is concerned legal text has more than double usage of nominalized verbs. The use of passive constructions is seven times higher in legal text as compared to literary text. Similarly the legal translated text abounds in the use of prepositional phrases. Average sentence length in legal translated draft is double than the literary translation. On the other hand the literary translated text has higher lexical density and average word length. The detailed description of the findings with the occurrence rate per thousand words is given in the table below:

Table.1: The occurrence rate of cohesive devices and global textual features per 1000 words.

Components of model	Analytical framework based on Bystrova-McIntyre(2012)	
Cohesive devices		
Reference devices	Literary translated Text	Legal translated Text
Pronominal devices----personal	40.01	10.91
Pronominal devices----possessives	35.35	2.25
Demonstratives	7.589	5.89
Comparative devices	2.11	2.65
Conjunction devices		
Additive devices	27.21	21.89
Adversative devices	3.42	0.56
Causal devices	10.45	8
Temporal devices	5.35	2.16
Nominalization	4.40	11.58
Lexical density (type-spoken ratio)	43.87	32.15
Word length(average)	4.27	3.53
Passives	3.70	20.61
Prepositional phrases	118.37	174.81
Sentence length (average)	22.31	45.15

Discussion

As far as the use of grammatical cohesive devices in both translated genres is concerned the translated legal text has shown a consistent tendency of lower occurrence rate of all cohesive devices. This result can be attributed to the fact that the very nature of legal genre being formal, objective and impersonal does not permit the excessive use of cohesive ties. This fact has been described by (Varo and Huges 2002) "The lexicon of legal texts is often marked by stiff formality or downright pedantry." Cao (2007) indicates that a common feature of the syntax of legal language is "the formal and impersonal written style coupled with considerable complexity and length". On the other hand, the literary narrative being representation of life by means of imaginary characters and an interplay of human feelings and emotions is supposed to have higher proportion of possessive, personal, demonstrative pronouns as well as conjunctions and temporal devices.

These findings are suggestive of the fact that both translated versions have sustained the generic conventions of their source texts. In doing so the both texts have adhered to Toury's (1998) norms of acceptability "In translation, phenomena pertaining to the makeup of the source text tend to be transferred to the target text" Toury (1995). Blum- Kulka (2000) also seems to be suggestive of the same fact while stating that it is possible for cohesive patterns in the target text to reflect the conventions of the source text in the same register and it can be result of the

transfer process active at the time of translation. For Toury (1998) the higher the consideration would be given to the makeup of the target text the more it would show traces of source text. So the analysis has found the translational feature of 'shining through' or the exhibition of the linguistic traits of source text in case of fiction translation.

Toury's (1998) contention that the degree of transformational influence can be dependent upon the expertise of the translator and the sociocultural scenario in which a particular text is translated and consumed. If we view the findings of this study from this perspective we would find that in the case of literary translated text both the above mentioned factors i.e translators expertise and socio cultural context had been static since the source text author has himself translated the target text and he has endowed the translated version with the spirit of source text and similar discourse pattern has been employed to achieve this end. While the legal translated text being an institutional translation that has undergone the translational transformation with the objective to provide an authentic legal document was neither decontextualized nor had any imprints of translators expertise or otherwise. Hence this text sustained the very spirit of source text and this spirit has surely been communicated by retaining the discourse features of the source text. Gibova(2017) observation regarding EU institutional translated documents "EU translation is not a personal act of text production, but a linguistically governed process by which EU institutions ensure their control over multilingual translation" seems applicable to the translation process of text of the constitution of Pakistan as well.

Another dimension form which translation of constitution of Pakistan can be viewed is Cao's (2007) label of translating domestic legislation in bilingual jurisdiction. The distinct feature of such type of translation is that translation process does not involve any cultural transfer of concepts and no comparison of legal system is involved, and translation is such case in only a matter of altering languages and in de Groot's classification it can be termed as relatively easy translation. Kjaer (2008) has also observed this feature in EU translation and regarded it as translating within legal system focusing at reproduction of words and phrases that would assure coherence and cohesion.

The legal translated text understudy has higher average sentence length as compared to translated narrative. This tendency is also characteristic of source text genre as described by Varo and Hughes (2002) "due to the all-encompassing and self-contained nature of legal texts, they often are comprised of unusually complex and long sentences and the postponement of the main verb until very late in the sentence." For example, Gustafsson (1975) reports an average of 2.86 clauses per sentence. The abundance of restrictive connectors such as 'notwithstanding, subject to, pursuant to, whereas, in other words', the density of subordination and parenthetical restriction in legal language, makes the syntax of legal texts anfractuous (Varo and Hughes 2002). As expressed by Bhatia (1997) these properties give to legal texts their characteristic air of complexity. Moreover, since the source text is highly influenced by Common Law the text understudy has followed Common law writing conventions and there is an abundant use of conditionals, qualifications and exceptions and they have added to the average sentence length.

The excessive use of nominalized verbs is atypical syntactic features of legal texts (Bhatia, 1994; Gibová, 2009 and Pavlíčková, 2012). The translated draft of the legal text understudy also followed this generic convention and it has higher use of nominalized verbs as compared to literary translated text. For Halliday (1994) nominalization is associated with impersonal or

abstract voicing of ideas. For a legal text and its translation it is natural to use nominalizations in order to give an air of formality, aloofness and objectivity. However, an excess of nominalization resulting in condensation may prove detrimental to the communication of meaning (Gibová, 2009 and Pavlíčková, 2012). Lack of nominalized verbs in translated literary texts as compared to other translated functional varieties i.e science and academic texts has already been established by Bystrova-McIntyre(2012).As a matter of fact it is the functional need of narrative prose to avoid formality and aloofness and establish an intimate understanding among readers by means of linguistic choice too.

This higher tendency for nominalization in legal translation can also be interpreted in another way. In translational strategies nominalization technique is employed for the purpose of implicitation. Precision of expression is a characteristic feature of Common Law family legal documents. Since the source text has its origin in Common law so it is evident that both the source and target text would follow this generic linguistic convention.. However, an excess of nominalization resulting in condensation may prove detrimental to the communication of meaning (Gibová, 2009 and Pavlíčková, 2012).

The use of passive constructions in legal translated text is almost seven times higher in literary translated text. The same proportion of passive constructions in scientific texts as compared to literary text has been observed by Bystrova-McIntyre(2012). Along with nominalized impersonal constructions, multiple negations, and abundant use of passive constructions is also a feature of legal text conventions. According to Varo and Hughes, the use of passive voice in legal texts allows “to keep the stress on the action, rule or decision rather than on the personality of the doer” (2002). The tendency to follow the generic norm of passive constructions has added an impact of abstraction and enhanced the focus on process than on agent.

As far as lexical density is concerned the literary translated text has higher STTR. Similar findings have been suggested by Bystrova-McIntyre(2012), who found that literary translation has higher STTR as compared to other functional varieties. This finding can be attributed the fact that the literary genre is imaginative in character and the literary artists are always at liberty to use language creatively and even to coin new words so they can employ a wider range of vocabulary for the expression of ideas in order to achieve artistic and stylistic effect. Similar reasons can also be attributed to the increased word length of legal translated text. On the other hand like other functional varieties legal genre employs narrow range of vocabulary. The purpose the use of conventional restricted vocabulary is to achieve clarity of expression.

Prepositional phrases alternatively termed as glue words also abound in legal translated text and this finding is consequent of increased sentence length and complex sentence structure that a sentence of legal language characteristically adheres. These prepositional phrase serve strategic purpose of restrictive connectors communicating a sense of clarity ambiguity avoidance. Since such ambiguity avoidance technique required least in literary translation hence the literary translated text lacks in prepositional phrases.

Limitations of the study

The study is based on contrastive analysis of text type (literary and legal) and genre (narrative prose and authentic institutional legal draft) specific. The language pair involved is

Urdu and English. Bidirectional translated data i.e literary translated English text and Urdu translated legal texts have been analysed. The analytical frame work is confined to grammatical cohesive devices and global textual features restricted to Bystrova-McIntyre (2012). The findings can be made more comprehensive and inclusive by adding other text types and other genres belonging to the same text types. Unidirectional translation and inclusion of both source texts would add further insight to the findings. Expansion of the analytical design to the lexical cohesion and inclusion of more textual features would provide worthwhile addition to the existing findings.

Practical Implications

The study would provide information about the characteristic features of translated texts in both literary and legal texts. Its findings would inform the work of translators, trainers, trainees, editors, terminological databank developers and evaluators working in both text types and languages.

Conclusion

The study has established that the texts under study are quite different in their textual organisation from each other despite having undergone the translation process, retained the specific conventions of their respective source genres i.e authentic legal text and narrative prose in the use of grammatical cohesive devices and global textual features. The textual formation of both texts remained uninfluenced by translation process. Following the jargon of the subject we can say that translational transformation has preferred the expected norms rather than norms of acceptability and the process has neither decontextualized nor did it changed the communicative function of the source texts. The literary translation being self translated lacked cultural and generic reorientation and textual choices preferred source text patterns. The legal draft being institutional translation restrained the textual and linguistic choices of the translators and they were unable to impart translational variants of their own choice in meaning making. The findings can be summed up in (Gibová 2009 and Sosoni 2012)'s words both translated texts being 'language matrices' or 'mirror images' of their source texts in the choice of textual features.

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