

A Study of Relationship between Translation Studies Students' Critical Thinking Ability and the Quality of Literary Prose Text Translation

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Abstract—This study aims to find the relationship between students of translation studies' Critical Thinking Ability and the quality of translation of prose text. To this end, a Ricketts Critical Thinking Ability questionnaire (2003) which contained 33 items and some paragraphs of Mrs Dalloway novel by Virginia Woolf, which is literary text, were given to the 60 MA students of translation study at Fars Science and Research Azad University. The students' translation corrected based on Vinay and Darbelnet's model. The obtained data were analyzed by using SPSS software and the correlation between Critical Thinking ability and Translation Quality Scores found to be .320 and significant at .013. Thus the results indicated that there was a relationship between Critical Thinking Ability of translators and their translation quality of literary text.

Index Terms—critical thinking, translation, literary text

I. INTRODUCTION

Atichon (1997) said critical thinking (CT) has been always accounted an important issue in human life, as all the time, we need to make a decision, and this process involves critical thinking. Thus, it is not odd to claim that critical thinking ability is one of the main notions investigated in education. Today the role of critical thinking in foreign and second learning is very significance. And critical thinking refers to be able to consider, criticize and defend of opinions, inductively or deductively and according to the sound inferences which come from unequivocal opinion or knowledge cause to achieve the real results (Freeley and Steinberg, 2000).

A. Definition of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking defined as a decision which is deliberate and automatically regulate and the result of expression of documentary, perceptual, methodological or attention to the context are according to this judgment (Facione, 2000). Chance (1986) declared critical thinking is decomposition of facts, produce and arrange the thoughts, vindicate the thoughts, make conclusion, consider the reasoning and dissolve difficulties. Tama (1989) said critical thinking is a kind of study which needs to defend of one's ideas. Critical thinking is capability of a man/woman to have criticism thinking which is awareness of his/her thought processes (Paul, 2004). It seems the best intelligible definition for critical thinking is the capability of thinkers to accept the responsibility of their own thinking, which requires a developed sound critical and criterions for considering and evaluating their thinking and therefore improve its quality by using those criteria and standards (Paul & Elder, 1997). Paul (1995) believed an incomparable and purposive thinking in which the thinker regularly and conditionally exert criteria and intellectual scales upon the thinking, accepting the responsibility of the framework of thinking, conducting the framework of the thinking based on critical thinking criteria, and determining the effectiveness of the thinking according to the goal, specification and criteria of thinking (Paul, 1995). Ennis (1992) stated that critical thinking means rational and logical thinking based on the making decision for what he/she performs.

B. CT and Translation of Literary Texts

Besides critical thinking, translation of literary texts is another important issue. Literature is seen as an ideological and historical group with its political and social performance (Culler, 1997). The best define of literature is "a highly valued kind of writing" (Eagleton, 2008, p.9). Toury (1980) displayed it as "the presence of a secondary, literary code superimposed on a stratum of unmarked language" (p.78). As literary texts are important, this study may help ones who care about literary translation.

As translation studies is a new discipline in Iran, many researchers and scientists try to explore the different elements that have influence in translation in order to increase translation quality. Some scholars work on the translator

himself/herself to find the translator's role and their specific personalities on the text which they translate. Undoubtedly, specific personalities such as experience, creativity, knowledge of the translator, feature of the translator and other different abilities which the translator utilizes in procedure of the translation can have effect on the quality of translation. Recent years, translation studies and the field of psychology are linked together (Pourgharib & Dehbandi, 2013). Many issues may be affected the translation of literary texts such as SL and TL culture, SL and TL norms, TL readership, and many other factors. In Iran Ghanizadeh and Mirzae (2012) worked on the EFL learners' self-regulation, critical thinking and language achievement was considered in order to find out the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' self-regulation, critical thinking and language achievement. The results showed that the self-regulation of EFL learners find out near 53 percent of the achievement of language but the CT of EFL learners find nearly 28 percent of the achievement of language. Fahim and Rezanejad (2014) considered the critical thinking in the EFL context of Iran. Hassani, Rahmani and Babaei (2013) investigated the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' critical thinking and reading comprehension performance in journalistic texts. And strong correlation found out between two variables. So the results indicated that students who are critical thinkers have better performance in reading journalistic texts. In this connection this study attempts to investigate whether there is any relationship between translators' critical thinking ability and the quality of their literary translation text based on Vinay and Darbelnet's model; who introduced two strategies of translation, one of them is direct and the other one is oblique. The direct one includes literal translation, calque translation and borrowing translation. The oblique one includes adaptation translation, equivalence translation, modulation translation and transposition translation.

II. BACKGROUND

The way of thinking has been discussed over the years. Russel (1999) finds out critical thinking as the process of evaluation or classification in terms of fundamental knowledge which obtained previously. Critical thinking (CT) is a basic part of management, decision making, clinical judgment, professional achievement, and effective collaboration in the community (Akyuz & Samsa, 2009).

A. *Philosophical Approaches to Critical Thinking*

Many scholars and scientists write about philosophical approach such as Richard Paul, Matthew Lipman, Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates. Lewis & Smith (1993) and Thayer-Bacon (2000) believed that the concentration of philosophical approach is on supposition of critical thinker, counting individual features than actions/conducts that a critical thinker may perform. Some definitions of critical thinking which appear from the philosophical tradition are as follow: Ennis (1985) stated CT is the reasonable and reflective thinking which concentrates on the decision that he/she do or believe. Lipman (1988) noted because of three factors the responsible and skillful thinking make easy the good judgment: based on criteria, sensitivity of context and self-correcting. Paul (1992) declared CT is organized and self-oriented thinking and represents the perfect thoughts which are proper to a specific or attitude of thought. Bailin et al., (1999b) suggested thinking is purposeful; and thinking intends to make a judgment and itself facing with criterion of precision and adequacy. CT is a reflective way of making decision for what he/she believe or do (Facione, 2000).

According to Mertes (1991) CT is the awareness and ponders process which can explain the information with a series of intellectual abilities and attitudes which leads to the contemplative opinions and activities. Passmore (1967) introduced critical thinking as a procedure which is imaginative and reflective. Other scholars like Bullen (1998) said thinking is rational and intellectual and concentrated on what to think or do. Beyer (1995) suggested that "Critical thinking means making reasoned judgments" (p.8). Siegel (1988) described critical thinking as pedagogical roots of reasonableness. He mentioned two definitions for critical thinking: one of them is the skill which is pure and the other one is the skill beside attentions. He believed the critical thinking meaning for the first one entirely concentrate on a one's ability to completely measure or assess the certain types of statements. Based on this notion, if an individual has the proficiencies or skills which are needed for the appropriate assessment of statements, one can be a critical thinker. But, Siegel (1988) mentioned as this meaning disregard main points of actual functions of abilities and skills in the individual's daily life, this definition is not perfect. Lipman (1991) believed Critical thinking is a fine hesitancy, while Norris and Ennis (1989) explained critical thinking as rational and intellectual thinking that its central point is making decision for what he/she believe. Critical thinking is thinkers' ability that must be responsible for the contemplation procedure and raises the rational standards for measuring their thinking (Elder and Paul, 1994). Halpern (2003) recommends critical thinking as using the cognitive abilities which enhance the desirable result that is deliberate. Maiorana (1992) stressed that achieving the understanding and solving the problems is the task of critical thinking. Bensley (1998) believed critical thinking is intellectual thinking, i.e evaluating evidence to reach a reasonable conclusion. Levy (1997) defines critical thinking as cognitive strategy for examining, understanding, solving problems based on evidence and wisdom. Diestler (2001) declares critical thinking is utilizing the particular standard to measure the rational thinking. Dewey (1933) described critical thinking as always considering belief and knowledge based on the context and the conclusions it wants to cause. Moreover, Chafee (1988) noted critical thinking means our activity and our aims attempt to create feeling of our universe by look out our thoughts and others thoughts in order to illuminate and make better our opinions. Bassham, Irwin, Nardone, and Wallace (2011) assert that critical thinking is regular thinking which controlled by explicit intellectual criterions.

B. *Literary Texts*

Carrier of an aesthetic function is the important characteristic of a literary work of art. According to Hermans (2007) other important characteristic of the texts which are literary is the connection of distribution of various meaning of vocabularies for realization of texts which are accomplished just by an exact plotting of the whole aspects of denotative connotative and denotative meanings. Moreover, it is asserted that the main feature of literary text is not on content it is on the message. (Landers, 2001; Burkhanov, 2003; Hermans, 2007; Sánchez 2009,). Thus, translating literary text is a type of aesthetic communication, aiming a target text with a form as similar to the original as possible, similar to the original text and based on the literary and translation norms of the target culture and language (Burkhanov, 2003). In literary translation, the translator explored the aesthetic pleasures of working with tremendous pieces of literature, in order to recreating that in a TL. Traditionally literary translation divided into translation of poetry, prose (fiction), and drama. Although in the translation of poetry, the main aim is to receive the same emotion effect on the TT, in drama the relationship between text and performance goes under focus (Hrehovčík, 2006). But, fiction translation is not dedicated with an insignificant social influence. The reason is that translated novels or short stories may be read by millions readers and sometimes many movies may be make from the successful novels.

The main difference between Literary and non-literary Text is that non-literary text includes facts, information and reality, but literary text contains ideas and feelings and imagination. Peter Newmark (2004) compared literary and non-literary translations. He declared although man/woman can practice both of literary translations and non-literary translations, but they are disparate works. They are supplementary of each other. Both of them are valuable in ST but literary translation is aesthetic and figurative, while the non-literary translation is factual. Sometimes the cultural backgrounds of both are different and refer to the two various cultures that are against each other.

C. *Translation*

Larson (1984) declared the translation is a change of form. Form means the actual paragraphs, sentences, Phrases, clauses, words, etc. Besides, Bell (1991) suggested a meaning for translation. He said that translation is the expression of one language in to the other language, preserving semantic and stylistic equivalences. Different views of translation describe different concepts of translation quality. According to Maier (2000), the term “quality” and “value” have various definitions and uses in relation to translation. Maier asserted that for defining value of the translation, “some refer to this determination as evaluation; others use assessment, and many, if not most, use the two interchangeably, often without indications that they consider the terms synonymous” (p. 137). Because of difficulty and importance of distinguishing these concepts, Maier (2000) declared “one sees a shared emphasis on defining and assessing quality in the context of specific situations, especially pedagogical ones” (p.103). Melis and Albir (2001) described that “evaluation in the pedagogical context encompasses not only examinations but also the educational system as a whole” (p. 275). In the evaluation of translation, the main question is that are there any certain measures for the quality of the translation. Sager (as cited in Williams, 1989), suggested there are some proper translations for the target that translation has, but no absolute criteria are exist for the quality of translation.

Darvish (2001) explained translation quality as an intellectual, logical, purposeful and result-oriented process that produce a series of characteristics that can be explicit or implicit. He mentioned if we consider translation as an accidental activity, it will be away from principles of translation quality which is relying on logical and awareness of deciding.

Many scholars and researchers worked on translation and different elements of translation and suggested various techniques for translating. Jakobson asserted three kinds of translation: intralingual which means rewording or creating the idea with another verbal sign in the same language, interlingual which refers to translation between two different languages; and inter-semiotic translation which means the interpretation of verbal signs in to the non-verbal signs. He said the interlingual translation included replacing messages in one language. In fact, the translator recodes and conveys the message which received from another source. Nida stated meaning is divided in to “linguistic meaning” which borrows from Chomsky’s model, “referential meaning” that means dictionary meaning and “emotive (connotative) meaning” which is culture-based or context-based. Then, Nida noted there are two types of equivalence: one of them is “Formal equivalence” which is writer-oriented and it focuses attention on the message, both content and meaning. Another one is “Dynamic equivalence” which is receptor-oriented and target text language should not represent interference from source language. Newmark believed success of equivalent efficacy is illusive and the gap between TL and SL will stay as the main problem in translation practice and theory. Thus, he declared “Semantic” and “Communicative” translation for Nida’s “Formal” and “Dynamic” translation. Koller (1979) mentioned five different kinds of equivalence for translation: 1) “Denotative meaning” that means dictionary meaning. 2) “Connotative meaning” which should be find in the text. 3) “Text-normative equivalence” which is related to the texts types and is based on the usage in various communicative situations. 4) “Pragmatic equivalence” is Nida’s Dynamic equivalence. This is TT oriented. 5) “Formal equivalence” is relevant to the form and aesthetic of the text. Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) introduced two general translation strategies, direct translation and oblique translation. These two strategies include seven procedures. Direct translation consists of three procedures: Borrowing (Source Language word directly is transferred to the Target Language. Borrowing procedure occurs when the word does not exist in target language), Calque (Source Language expression is transferred in a literal translation), Literal translation (This is a kind of word for

word translation between languages which has the same culture and family). Oblique translation consists of four procedures: Transposition (changing of one part of speech for another without changing the sense), Modulation (changes the point of view and semantic of SL), Equivalence (This is used where the languages have the same situation by different structural means), and Adaptation (This is changing the cultural reference. This procedure occurs when the situation in SL culture does not exist in TL culture). In this study, the researcher tried to consider on Vinay and Darbelnet's Model of translation.

D. Who Is an Interpreter?

According to House (1997) the interpreter is the intermediacy of bilingual factor among monolingual connections contributors in the two various language societies. This means the interpreter detects messages in language and after that he/she re-codes messages into the other language (decoding and coding). As Bell (1991) mentioned this re-encoding process distinguishes bilingual translator from monolingual communicator. They are both receivers who should decode the statements but are engaged in a different encoding process. Razmjou (2003) stated a good translator must increase a good competence in source and target language and upgrade the skills in using the dictionaries. Besides, he mentioned translation must rehearsal in the academic places and neophytes try to increase their knowledge in theories of translation and work on the practicable works under the supervision of instructors.

E. Translation and Psychology

In translation, two scientists have endeavored to survey translators' personalities in the context of psychological framework: Katharina Reiss (2000) and Thilde Barboni (1999). Reiss (2000) talked about types of translator personality. She declared that the translator personality is a divided entity to that of the author's. And also the temper of the translators is the key factor in the process of translating. Thild Barboni (1999) combined translation with psychoanalysis. As cited in Hubscher-Davidson (2009) Barboni noted many factors such as unconscious, psychology, Freudian which are interference in the process of translation but up to now they are not been completely researched. She stated that in the face of stressful situation, the translator respond in a specific manner based on his or her personality. Thus translators use difference defense mechanisms.

III. METHOD

A. Participants

In this study, 60 Iranian M.A students of English-Persian translation study, both male and female, between ages of 20-30 were selected randomly from Fars Science and Research Azad University. As the number of participants was limited, the participants were selected randomly.

B. Materials and Instruments

The materials which used for this investigation include a critical thinking questionnaire and some paragraphs of *Mrs Dalloway* novel.

Ricketts critical thinking questionnaire (2003) which contains 33 closed questions was used to measure the Critical Thinking Ability of the selected sample. In this study, the Persian version of CT was used. This questionnaire was made based on Facione (1990) Critical Thinking Questionnaire. The scales of CT were ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". As this questionnaire is created according Facione (1990), the validity is confirmed (Ricketts, 2003, Roberts, 2003). The total reliability of the questionnaire was found to be 0/73 by calculating Cronbach's alpha. Besides, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire are reported in some theses in Iran such as Ghoddoumizadeh (2013).

Mrs Dalloway is the novel by Virginia Woolf. Some paragraphs are chosen from this novel.

C. Data Collection Procedure

To obtain the research question of this study, the Ricketts critical thinking questionnaire (2003) and three paragraphs which were chosen from *Mrs Dalloway* novel were distributed to the selected sample at the same time. First, they answered the questionnaire and then translated the text in to the Persian. There was no limitation of time for answering. And also using any dictionary for translating the text was free.

D. Data Analysis Procedure

After collecting the data and correcting the students' translation based on Vinay and Darbelnet's model, the data were analyzed by using SPSS software and made correlation in order to find if there is any relation between translators' critical thinking ability and the quality of literary text translation and compare the data.

IV. RESULTS

In order to obtain the research question, the Ricketts Critical Thinking Questionnaire (2003) and three paragraphs of *Mrs Dalloway* novel by Virginia Woolf distributed to the 60 male and female MA students of translation study from Fars Science and Research Azad University, who were studying at semester three and the range of age was 20 to 30. First, they answered the questionnaire which was included 33 closed questions and ranging from "strongly disagree" to

“strongly agree” (strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, no idea=3, agree=4, strongly agree=5). And then they translated the text from English to the Persian. Students were free in using dictionary and there was no limitation of time.

After collecting the data, the translation of students corrected based on Vinay and Darbelnet’s model. Then the researcher scored the participants’ translation out of the total mark 10.

The researcher entered the scores of translation and CT questionnaire in the SPSS software. The total score of the questionnaire computed for per student. At the end, the investigator made correlation between the translation and the total score of the CT questionnaire.

The results of descriptive statistic which obtained from the data are stated in Table 1.

TABLE I.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF CRITICAL THINKING AND TRANSLATION QUALITY SCORES

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Translation Score	60	5	10	7.57	1.500
Total Score of CT	60	94	158	120.68	11.972
Valid N (listwise)	60				

As shown in Table 1, the number of participants is 60 (N = 60). The mean of the translation score is 7.57. The lowest score is 5 out of 10 and the highest score is 10. The standard deviation of translation score is 1.500.

The mean for Critical Thinking is 120.68. The minimum and maximum score of CT is 94 and 158 respectively. And the standard deviation of CT is 11.972. (N = 60)

The histogram of descriptive statistic of translation quality scores is presented in Fig. 1.

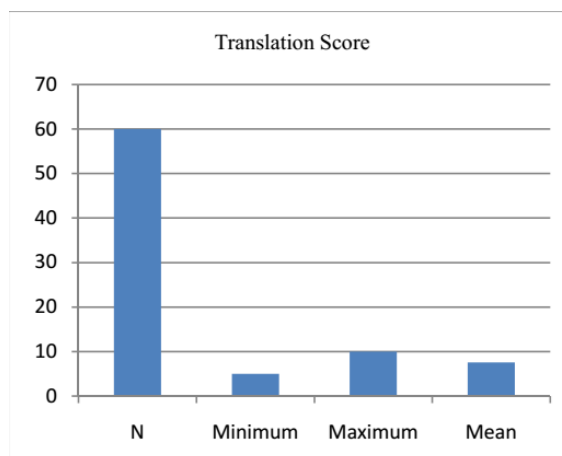


Figure 1. Histogram of Descriptive Statistic of Translation Quality Scores

As it is clear in in Translation Quality Scores chart in Figure 1, the maximum and minimum score is 10 and 5 out of 10. And the mean score is 7.5.

The histogram of descriptive statistic of critical thinking scores is presented in Fig. 2.

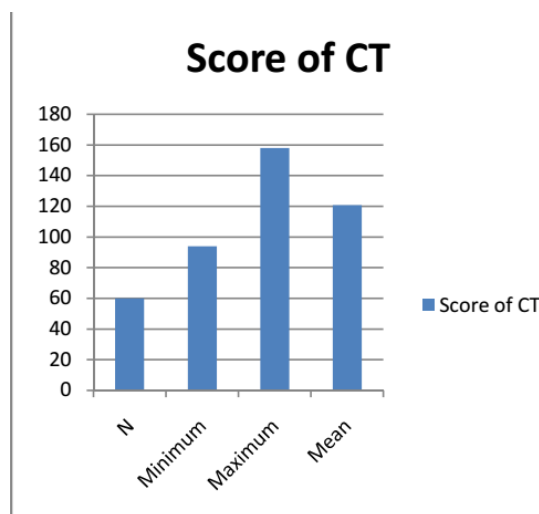


Figure 2. Histogram of Descriptive Statistic of Critical Thinking Scores.

With due attention to the Critical Thinking chart, by looking at the figure 2, we easily can see the mean score of CT equals 120. The minimum score which shows the low level of CT is 94. And the maximum score of CT is 158 which indicate the high level of CT.

TABLE II.
CORRELATION OF CRITICAL THINKING AND TRANSLATION QUALITY SCORES

		Total Score of CT	Translation Score
Total Score of CT	Pearson Correlation	1	.320*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.013
	N	60	60
Translation Score	Pearson Correlation	.320*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.013	
	N	60	60

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

According to Table 2, the correlation between Critical Thinking ability and Translation Quality Scores found to be .320. And significant at .013, so the significant is below .05 and the null hypothesis is rejected. This correlation coefficient is significant ($r = 0.320$). Based on the information, there is significant correlation between Critical Thinking ability and Translation Quality Scores. In other words, there is positive relationship between translators' critical thinking ability and the quality of their literary translation. This shows that the Critical Thinking ability has effect on Translation Quality Scores.

V. CONCLUSION

The research question of this study investigated the relationship between critical thinking ability and literary text translation. The findings demonstrated that there was significant correlation between translators' critical thinking ability and the quality of their literary translation. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is relationship between the translators' critical thinking ability and the quality of their literary translation. The results of this study can be beneficial for teachers who teach the translation students to educate the future translators. It may be helpful for translators who translate literary texts and, for publishers who publish translated books, especially literary books.

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