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Research Article

The Study of Localization in the Persian Version of News Websites: A CDA perspective

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Abstract

The present study is aimed to shed light on the steps taken by translators at Euronews website in translating the News into Persian for the localized version of the website. Intending to do a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on the findings of the comparison of the website localization project, the researcher chose the highly visited website from the news genre, namely Euronews, which is supposed to bear ideological load. To achieve the objective, the original and localized versions of the website was probed in inconsecutive days, within this period, the news on the English and Persian websites, having the same textual content, and containing some ideological implications in their translations, were investigated. The textual differences between the original and localized versions of the website were extracted and analyzed critically based on Farahzad's (2011) three dimensional CDA model and Newmark's (1988) classification of translation procedures. Also, the semiotic aspect, that is the graphics on the relative web pages, was investigated. These were done to examine the ideological implications of the differences and to reach conclusions on the ideologically significant translational attempts in Euronews website and in news website localization projects in general. At the end it was concluded that the translators have removed or added, expanded or narrowed down and most frequently changed the ideas stated in the original version. The purpose of this was to convey their own ideologies and stances, or those of the website owners' and news agencies, to visitors.

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Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Locale, Localization, Websites, Translation, Translation Criticism

I. Introduction

With the rise in ownership of computers and internet usage growing daily, the internet is becoming the primary port of call for information, shopping and services. In addition, those computer and internet users are increasingly from non-English speaking countries, “At the end of 2002, it was estimated that 32% of internet users were non-native English speakers. This figure is constantly rising” (Payne, 2009, para.1). As (Lule, 2013) asserted, the Internet has been a key factor in driving into globalization in recent years. Accordingly the main role in this globalization is played by the Internet with the multi-dimensional website teams inside it. Communicating with these teams is now as simple as sending emails and instant messages back and forth, and often the most difficult aspect of setting up an international video conference online is figuring out the time difference. Especially, outsourcing for electronic services such as software over the Internet has greatly reduced the cost to develop a professionally coded site.

Moreover as (Pym, 2010) asserted, cross-cultural communication via websites, and the elements that comprise the individual screens of each site, is one of the fastest growing areas opened up by the era of electronic communications. The translation and localization of websites has thus become a beneficial, dynamic and inter-professional field, often involving marketing, design, and software engineering, as well as linguistic processes (Pym, 2010).

According to Macmillian online dictionary (2013), localization, the process of carrying out an activity only in a particular area of the world, or the process of changing it to make it suitable for a particular area of the world, has become one of the hottest issues these days. Seeking worldwide fame, institutions, companies, producers (whatever is their service) are looking for the ways in which they can attract more customers.

The localization of a website differs from non-hypertext translation with respect to the identification of translatable elements, the tools needed to render them, their nonlinearity, the way in which the translation process is prepared and coordinated, and the extent of the changes that may be introduced. Some of these features are shared with current technical translations, which increasingly also use hypertext technologies. The resulting complexity can be explained in terms of a basic translation process that is modified by a series of factors relatively specific to communication via multilingual websites. Localization involves some specific steps and procedures, the most important of which is translation. This is because of the fact that the first thing that should be understood by people in the target locale is the language in which the communication takes place. Nowadays translators attend specific courses to master this newly developed, but highly appreciated science; localization (Esselink and Caudieux, 2002). The birth

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of localization is traced back to peoples' need for communication; mentioning that in the beginning, or shortly thereafter, there were people, and when one people met another people, translation was born. Then, somewhat later, there came software. And when people started translating software; some of the changes required were not, strictly speaking, translation; changes to character encodings, date and time formats, sorting rules, etc(Esselink and Caudieux, 2002).

Ostuka (2008) provides a much more comprehensive definition, which is quoted from LISA (Localization Industry Standards Association). He states that localization involves more than just making the product readily available in the form and language of the target market. It must speak to the target audience, based upon its cultural norms and worldview. Thus, localization is the process of customizing technology for customers in a target market, so that they feel the technology was homemade and designed by their colleagues, especially for them. Ostuka (2008) continues to describe localization as follows:

When you are performing localization, try to think “translation of the whole culture”, not simply translation of isolated words. Include local conventions, tradition, manner, and common sense; at times, even unspoken rules come into play to provide the truly perfect localized look and feel.

Nemec (2009) also includes naturalness in her definition of localization. She believes that after a product has been internationalized, it can then be localized. Localization is the process of adapting a product to fit the specific language and culture of a target market. The goal is to make the product as natural and transparent as possible for the user, as if it was developed with that user in mind.

According to **Costales (2009)**, translation is not the only task done in the localization process, and localization being the wider process, involves translation as well as a number of additional tasks. The differences between localization and translation have been clearly defined by Esselink (2000). He believes:

Translation is only one of the activities in localization; in addition to translation, a localization project includes many other tasks such as project management, software engineering, and desktop publishing. Traditional translation is typically an activity performed after the source document has been finalized. Localization projects, on the other hand, of then run in parallel with the development of the source product to enable simultaneous shipment of all language versions. For example, the translation of software strings may often start while the software product is still in beta phase (Esselink, 2000, p.4).

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II. Methods

A. Corpus

A typical and world-famous multi-lingual news website, Euronews along with its localized version was selected as the corpus of this study. The website was selected from among the most authentic and highly –visited websites internationally. The website is originally produced in English and localized by their original producers so that they can be usable in various-speaking locales like Persian.

Because of the width of the study, only the pages containing the similar news content were investigated in inconsecutive days. Both the original and the translation are available at www.Euronews.com.

B. Theoretical Framework

As for the theoretical framework of the research, Farahzad's model for CDA (2011) is adopted in order to explore the ideological implications of translational choices. Farahzad presents a three-dimensional model, based on 'intertextuality' to redefine and explain the relation between the prototext and metatext (traditionally called the 'source text' and 'target text' respectively), examines translational choices made by the translator, and analyzes them in the light of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to identify ideological implications. In Farahzad's model comparative translation criticism is carried out at three levels as follows: a. Textual b. Paratextual c. Semiotic. Among the three dimensions proposed for the CDA model by Farahzad Intertextuality. Critical Discourse Analysis and Translational Choices (2011), the translational choices and textual element were chosen to be examined. Textual elements in the present study include lexical choices and translation strategies. It should not be left without saying that the study attempt to provide a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research method through which a combination of figures and descriptions are available.

C. Procedures

Original and localized versions of the aforesaid website (Euronews) were referred to within some inconsecutive days, in the hope that the intended results were achieved. To this aim, the news with the similar content that appeared in the two versions; English and Persian, had been saved. Then the ideologically noteworthy items of the web pages, which include lexical choice and translational procedures in this research, were examined according to their ideological load. From among the three dimensions in the CDA model Farahzad (2011) mentioned in the

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theoretical framework of the research, the translation strategy dimension was chosen. Furthermore, within that framework, the two categories of textual and semiotic elements were picked. Different translational strategies (procedures) were decided upon, based on Newmark's (1988) model, and at the two levels of words and sentences. Afterwards, the results of the comparisons were inserted in a table, for each of the news in every specific date. The procedures resulted from the pilot study were examined both at the level of word and sentence.

III. Results and Analysis

The present research is a corpus-based study, with a descriptive-comparative approach which was accomplished to investigate ideological implications in the translation of news websites for a localization project. Accordingly the differences between original and translated news were categorized according to the **Newmark's (1988)** model and then the ideological implications of them are analyzed. First, the researcher accomplished a pilot study on new stories to figure out which of the 18 translational procedures proposed by Newmark (1988) were the most frequent ones. Based on the pilot study, the most frequent ones counted 6: Addition, expansion, explanation, modulation, reduction and shift. However, due to its recurrent use, the researcher added the 'omission' procedure to the examined ones in the news. Then a critical analysis was provided for each of these differences in accordance with the CDA model. The numerical data are shown in tables and figures.

TABLE I
 TOTAL NUMBER OF PROCEDURES USED AT THE TWO LEVELS OF WORD AND SENTENCE

	Addition	Expansion	Explanation	Modulation	Omission	Reduction	Shift
Lexical choice	59	13	17	94	60	20	5
Sentence level	17	4	2	27	36	3	82
Total Number of Analyzed Sentences	206						

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TABLE II

TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF PROCEDURES USED AT THE TWO LEVELS OF WORD AND SENTENCES

	Addition	Expansion	Explanation	Modulation	Omission	Reduction	Shift
Choice	28.6%	6.3%	8.2%	45.6%	29.1%	9.7%	2.4%
nce level	8.2%	1.9%	0.9%	13.1%	17.4%	1.4%	39.8%

TABLE III

PROCEDURES' PERCENTAGES ARRANGED IN ORDER OF FREQUENCY

Lexical choice	Sentence level
Modulation 45.6%	Shift 39.8%
Omission 29.1%	Omission 17.4%
Addition 28.6%	Modulation 13.1%
Reduction 9.7%	Addition 8.2%
Explanation 8.2%	Expansion 1.9%
Expansion 6.3%	Reduction 1.4%

Shift 2.4%	Explanation 0.9%
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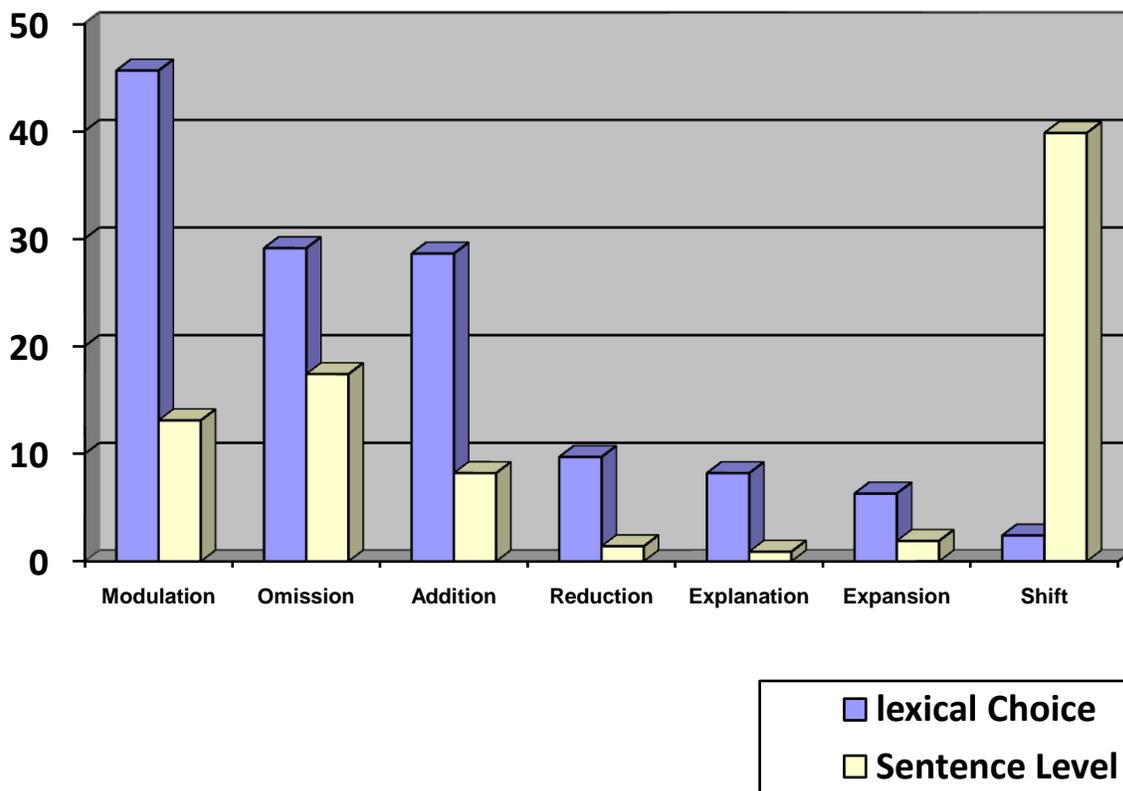


Figure. 1. Frequency for each of the 7 examined procedures, at the levels of lexical choice and sentences

In general, the following results were obtained regarding the use of different translational procedures in the news translation for the localized versions of Euronews websites:

- 1) At the lexical choice level, the translator used modulation most (45.6%); the procedures that could directly change the ideology of the story to his/hers.

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- 2) The translator used modulation more freely at the lexical level (45.6%) as compared to the sentences level (13.1%); that is s/he could more freely change a single word based on his/her view point rather than a group of words or a whole sentence.
- 3) As the researcher examined, at the lexical choice level, the modulations were mainly complete changes. Such variations show that the translator used the type of modulation that more easily inspired his/her ideology to the web visitors.
- 4) The higher percentages of addition (28.6%) and omission (29.1%) in comparison with explanation (8.2%)/expansion (6.3%) and reduction (9.7%) at the level of lexical choice, imply the translator's preference to a complete addition or removing rather than expanding or shortening some ideas through adding or removing some words.
- 5) While the procedure of 'shift' is the least frequent (2.4%) at the lexical level, it is the most used at the sentence level (39.8%). Such a difference implies that among the types of shift, listed by Newmark (1988) those which dealt with or affected the whole sentence, were more frequently used by the Persian translator; such as the change in verb tense, or sentence type (a compound sentence to two simple ones).
- 6) The second most frequent translational procedure at the sentence level is omission; that means the translator has removed chunks of sentences, rather than adding or modulating (making changes to inspire his/her ideology), to emphasize some ideas or de-emphasize some others.
- 7) The main modulation type at the sentence level involved changing active to passive or vice versa. Such a change affected the whole structure of the sentence; assigning agency to someone or taking it away from some others.
- 8) Regarding the semiotic part, it should be noted that generally 27 out of 36 investigated web pages contained different photos or videos; which is equal to 75%. That is, in 75% of the news examined, the web page designer had decided to use different graphics on English and Persian web pages.

IV. Conclusions

According to the nature of a qualitative research to provide a thick description of the matter, it can be pointed that, the examination of the 7 procedures, which were also the most frequent ones, revealed that the translator has removed or added, expanded or narrowed down and most frequently changed the ideas stated in the original version, so as to inspire his/her or even the web owners' ideologies and stances to the visitors. Accordingly the conclusion from the result of the study shows the importance of the ideological load of the any news item for the original writer as well. The English news providers seem to have some kind of ideology for any topic but

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the degree is becoming greater when translation to other languages comes to the field. The strategies used by the translator may be inspired by the news agencies authorities, but the ideology of the translator should be as close as possible to the agencies in the first step. The issue of ideology in translation is becoming more and more important for those who are in the job and the domain of ideological aspects spread whole over the matters including news TV, Newspapers. Respectively, the concept of ideology must be a main course to be thought to the translators who are working in the genre and who are not.

The findings of the research seem to be of certain importance for those who may wish to embark on a research, like that of the researcher with in the field of translation criticism. The results of the present study can be of use for practitioners and researchers in ideology related issues. They will find out how some subtle variations might imply some ideologically noteworthy focuses, and that how some beliefs can be inserted to a text. The results can also be useful for translation students and teachers. Since localization has become a new and popular field all over the world, translation as its major part is of utmost importance either. Teachers and students can use the present research to learn what the translation looks like in a localization project.

Those who participate in localization projects, translators in particular, may also benefit from the findings of the research as a pattern to learn what can be done during the localization of news or other ideologically significant genres.

The final group which is thought to be directly affected by the changes made in the localization of a new website is web visitors. While minor textual changes can bring about major ideological shifts, most of the visitors are them. The present research sheds light on the fact that how easily web owners and translators inculcate their own ideologies in the minds of the visitors with in following implications:

- Power relations impacts in all translation versions by changes.
- The extent of ideological load is extremely high and this is considered as the results of political preferences as well as power relation dominated the news agencies like Euronews.
- Websites are localized in accordance to their provider's Ideologies and view points of the situation and they are not seeking the target community fulfillment in their translations.

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