

Translation and Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract:

Critical Discourse Analysis is a linguistic approach that aims to highlight manifestations of ideology within language material that conveys meanings and social relations ideologically saturated through discourse. It is a recent approach of discourse analysis mixed into translation as a process of transferring linguistic and cultural characteristics of a text from a social and cultural context to another, in which the ideological dimension takes an inseparable part of translation practice and its theory. In this paper, we try to shed light on critical discourse analysis approach that allows us through a selected example to show the linguistic manifestation of ideology in translation; an ideology representing the background that influences the translator's decision-making, and the reference that justifies a specific linguistic choice among several available options.

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1. Introduction

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The first assumption of the current study is that translators' language, as well as all people, reveals the ideology that is a part of their background. In this context, ideology is to be regarded more broadly to refer to a set of beliefs that shape a person's worldview linguistically embodied, rather than to the Marxist sense of the conflict of ideas of a political or economic class or system. (Munday, 2008, p. 8) According to Thompson (1990), ideology is the term used to describe the social structures and mechanisms that allow symbolic forms to circulate in the social world. It refers to how different types of symbolic forms are used to create and vehicle meaning. (cited in Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p.10)

From the perspective of critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach, the analysis is not devoted to the surface structure of texts, but it goes beyond that to an interpretive reading of the choices made by the translator in translating essentially the cultural and religious characteristics that literary texts encompass. The translation of these characteristics may create particular difficulties related either to linguistic obstacles that the translator may overcome by using some translation techniques, or to other extra-linguistic factors that determine the translator's decisions and the aim of his translation. There is no doubt that these choices are made under the influence of the ideology that orients the translating methods in one hand, and meanings that reflect the translator's attitude and convictions, his culture, and his worldview in another hand. This fact makes us aware about the challenges imposed by ideology on the actual translation practice and translation production.

This research aims to bring to light the approach of critical discourse analysis, to show to how extent the implementation of this method can uncover the ideological influence in rendering cultural characteristics, and its efficiency in revealing the background that motivates the translator's one linguistic choice over another. Our paper starts with a definition of critical discourse analysis method, followed by a description of its relationship to ideology and translation. Then, a case study work in which we apply CDA on a selected example through which we will explain the stages of analysis within this method. By the end, a conclusion that includes the exposition of the manifestation of ideology aspect through linguistic forms, an explanation of the ideological background involvement in the translator's choices, and the results of the study.

2. What is critical discourse analysis?

Discourse analysis is the direct description of the linguistic units under study on the quest of meaning that constitutes the core of the process of communication. It is a multi-branch field whose topics range from descriptive analysis of discourse to critical discourse analysis. (جمعة صبيحة, 2019, p.18) The latter is the most recent approach that focuses on the way meanings and social relations ideologically charged are conveyed through discourse. This evolution reflects the shift from the analysis of the mechanisms by which communicators lead communication, to the analysis of the facts that influence the selection of those means and how they are used to support particular orientations, as well as to establish certain values and goals based on a particular ideology. (Wodak & Meyer, op.cit, p. 9)

Critical discourse analysis is an approach devoted to study discourse within a critical framework, and to considerate linguistic behavior in situations of natural speech use related to social contexts as long as language is a form of social practice. (Fairclough, 1995, p. 20) It is a tool serving to uncover the hidden ideologies in texts and to highlight their linguistic manifestations. Wodak claims that ideology, in the context of CDA, is a key component of creating and preserving uneven power relations. The ways that language mediates ideology in various social institutions are of special interest to critical linguistics. (Wodak & Meyer, op.cit, p.10)

The basic purpose of CDA is to find and shed light on the hidden components of speech. Language is seen from the standpoint of CDA as existing in an interactive relationship with social reality. The use of textual linguistic features in critical discourse analysis indicates uneven power relations (class or ideological conflict) between the participants in the communicative act and reflects the ideological affiliation of the text's producer and his objectives. Thus, this notion aims to reveal the hidden power balances and ideological relationships present in both written and spoken discourse. (Mahdiyan & Rahbar, 2013, p. 36)

In line with this, critical discourse analysis has adopted a critical approach to study language to reveal the manifestations of ideological content. According to Paul Simpson, the driving idea behind these analyses is to investigate the sets of values and views that are present in texts; in other words, to investigate ideology in language. (Simpson cited in Munday, 2008, p. 8)

For practice needs, Fairclough distinguish three stages of critical discourse analysis:

- **Description** is the stage which is concerned with formal properties of the text.
- **Interpretation** is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction - with seeing the text as the product of a process of production, and as a resource in the process of interpretation. (the term interpretation is used for both the interactional process and a stage of analysis).
- **Explanation** is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context - with the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects. (Fairclough, 1989, p. 26)

In the light of the above, the process of critical discourse analysis is basically done in three stages: description, interpretation, and explanation. It means that CDA method is based on a precise and strict methodological path, which begins with a description of the textual practice, then linking of its outcomes with the output of the discourse interaction analysis in the context of usage, so that all the outcomes become linguistic data ready for social interpretation. (يطاوي, 2019, p.11) There is no doubt that the linguistic form that expresses ideology features falls within the scope of the critical discourse analysis approach, which aims to reveal how ideology influences the linguistic choices made by the writer or the translator, and how language is used to establish and consecrate ideologies. Hence, the relationship between ideology and critical discourse analysis becomes clear, meanwhile this type of analysis allows the detection of the manifestations of ideology aspects that are linguistically embodied in discourse.

3. Translation and Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis impacted translation studies as well as the field of linguistics, through some translation theories that allow CDA to go in the field. As a result, a new perspective is taken on the translation activity. While the original text is created in a particular sociocultural context, the target text is produced under the influence of the translator's linguistic and sociocultural background and his experience. The aforementioned illustrates furthermore how translators, either intentionally or inadvertently, incorporate their own worldview and ideology when translating in accordance with their personal beliefs and convictions or the specifications provided in their translation memory. (Mahdiyan & Rahbar, op.cit, p. 36)

Communication between people, according to social and cultural norms, is considered a common factor in critical discourse analysis and translation studies, where texts and discourses are a product of this activity. Accordingly, the translator's work must not be limited to the role of a mediator who translates from one language to another, but rather must be viewed as a producer of new discourse in the target language. (Schaffner, 2004, p.136) This is because the translator creates a new communicative act in a different linguistic environment, based on a previous act, using his cognitive reference (linguistic, social, and cultural) and negotiating the meaning between the source and target texts. Through this process, the translation is perceived as an adapted text to a new social and cultural context, emerging from an existing original text within its own social and cultural context. (ibid, p. 138)

When examining the relationship between translation and critical discourse analysis, we find that this issue falls within the field of translation studies, regarding especially the translation operation when the translator undertakes his role in the translation process, closely to his strategy and the target audience. Hence, the translator's has to adapt his translation with some changes to the target text (a literal approach), or with major changes (a dynamic approach).

Before concluding, we would like to dispel any ambiguity surrounding the concept of critical discourse analysis: it is neither a critical method for distinguishing between good and bad translations, nor a concept devoted to aesthetic, structural, psychological, or cultural criticism, but the purposes for which CDA is implemented is to uncover the hidden intentions and aims implicitly expressed by linguistic choices in literary discourse.

4. How to do critical discourse analysis: A case study

In the light of the above, the method of critical discourse analysis is used primarily to analyze linguistic elements and cultural characteristics of a text, for the sake to find meanings ideologically saturated and social relations intended to be conveyed through discourse.

By doing this, we do not aim to assess the quality of the translation. Rather, we investigate the background behind the choice and connect it to the socio-cultural context to uncover the motives and references behind translator's choices. We also aim to uncover the orientations and positions of

the translator and those involved in translation production, according to the goals they set to control communication processes and establish values and objectives based on specific ideologies

Below, we expose a selected example from Naguib Mahfouz's novel «**Qasr al-shawq**», its translation into English: «**Palace of Desire**» (1991) by William Maynard Hutchins, Lome Kenny, Olive E. Kenny, and its translation into French: «**Le palais du Désir**» (1987), by Philippe Vigreux, on which we try to apply the three stages of critical discourse analysis method and expose its findings and results.

النص الأصل :

«وكان السيد أحمد قد فرغ من الصلاة [...] وفي أثناء ذلك كانت أمينة تُعد المائدة، ثم ذهبت إلى حجرة السيد فدعته -**بصوتها الوديع**- إلى تناول الفطور...» (ص 22)

English version :

«Al-Sayid Ahmad had finished praying [...] At the same time Amina was setting out the breakfast. Then she went to invite him **in her meek voice** to have breakfast. (p.19)

French version:

« ...Ahmed Abdelgawad avait terminé sa prière ... Pendant ce temps, Amina préparait la table matinale [...] elle monta à la chambre de Monsieur, le pria **de sa voix effacée** de venir prendre le petit déjeuner,... » (p, 41)

First stage: identification of the text (text description):

This stage is reserved to the examination of the linguistic form chosen by the translator to express the equivalent meaning of the original text. The chosen model is the expression “**بصوتها الوديع**”, which is an adverbial phrase (حال). It occurs in the context of a morning scene, when Mr. Abdelgawad is doing his prayer and reciting his usual supplication in his deep voice, while his two sons are in their room getting ready to go out. Mrs. Amina has prepared breakfast and then went toward her husband, “**بصوتها الوديع**”, inviting him to take a seat beside the table.

Second stage: Interaction or influence (interpreting the relationship between the text and interaction):

This stage allows to see the meaning of the selected form of language that the author of the original text (Arabic version) want to convey to the reader through the phrase “**بصوتها الوديع**”, looking in the same time for the meanings (pretended equivalent) of the expression in the English and French versions.

The Arab expression meaning refers to the calm voice that evokes positive energy when it is heard. It is characterized by softness inherent in the nature of women's voices, it is furthermore a sign of kindness and respect in Arab's culture.

In seeing the English chosen equivalent to the expression "in her meek voice", we find that it expresses exactly the same contextual meaning. So, translators have been extremely faithful to the original message.

In contrast and considering the French chosen equivalent to the expression "de sa voix effacée", we find that it denotes a soft voice that is barely audible which refers to fear, or physical or psychological illness or submission.

The question is: Is it the right translation of the original text or a distortion that deforms the intended meaning? If so, what are its aims?

Third stage: The social context (explaining the relationship between interaction and the social context):

The reader knows that the novel deals, among many others, with women issue in Arab and Islamic societies, their status and their relationship to men. The author of the original text wrote the phrase "بصوتها الوديع" to denote kindness and respect, but the translator's in choosing the French equivalent "voix effacée", in which we do not find any aesthetic dimension connected to the literature creativity, aims to link one characteristic associated with the stereotypical image in the West about the life and status of women in Arab and Islamic societies. It favors the emerging of a thought that suggests the lack of courage or ability for an Arab and Muslim woman, regarding restraints commonly imposed by convention or prudence, to speak in normal mode or to raise her voice in front of her husband, even to invite him to breakfast, because she is unable to do so under the authority and tyranny of her husband.

In seeing the degree of concordance or divergence of the expression meaning between the original text and its equivalent in the French version that the translator wanted to convey through his choice, we notice a clear distortion that affected the pretended meaning under the influence of ideology. It reflects an ideological background that stands behind this choice. Hence, the process of distortion took on an ideological dimension as a criterion by which the type of equivalent was determined, the aim of which is to present an image of the Arab and Muslim woman subordination to man in Arab and Muslim societies, as one among lot of stereotypes prevalent in Western societies about them in order to consecrate some preconceived ideas already existing in the mind of the foreign reader. It aims also to bring up in the mind of French reader the superiority of European women over others, within the European civilization.

5. CONCLUSION

Critical discourse analysis integrated the dictionary of translation studies for the aim to study the relationship between discourse and ideology, to demonstrate how a text shifts towards a particular ideology. It is an approach used to reveal how the ideology of the translator and his attitudes affect the target text production. In its practical aspect, CDA is implemented through three stages: identifying the text (description), interaction (interpreting the relationship between the text and the interaction), and finally explanation of the relationship between the interaction and the social context.

What emerges from this paper and the example listed in the case study above mentioned, **that an ideological aspect appears through the studied linguistic structure**. We proceed then with the investigation of the factors, motives, and backgrounds that lie behind the choice and the decision made by the translator for the purpose to control the processes of communication to serve certain orientations.

CDA could be applied to both the source text and the target text. Just as the author of the original text has choices based on linguistic and cultural motivations, the language of all translators also reveals of their own choices ideologically charged, in producing the target text into another language, within another culture and a different context. In this way, the translation strategy is determined according to the type of text and the purpose of the translation.

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