

**EXPLORING IDEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE  
STRUCTURES IN ENGLISH AND PERSIAN  
TRANSLATOR EDUCATION**

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**EXPLORING IDEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE STRUCTURES IN ENGLISH AND  
PERSIAN TRANSLATOR EDUCATION**

**by**

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## **Dedication**

To all my teachers, all the generous people who helped me learn something

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Dedication	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables	ix
List of Figures	xiii
Abbreviations	xiv
Abstrak	xvii
Abstract	xix
CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION	1
1.1    Background of the Study	1
1.2    Statement of the Problem	4
1.3    Objectives of the Study	7
1.4    Research Questions	9
1.5    Significance of the Study	9
1.6    Considerations of Ethics	11
1.7    Assumption of the Study	11
1.8    Delimitations of the Study	12
1.9    Organization of the Study	13
CHAPTER II – CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	15
2.1    Introduction	15
2.2    Definition of Key Terms	15
2.2.1    Ideology	16
2.2.2    Discourse	19
2.2.3    Ideological Discourse Structures	20
2.2.3.1    Actor Description	21
2.2.3.2    Authority	21
2.2.3.3    Consensus	21
2.2.3.4    Counterfactual	22
2.2.3.5    Disclaimer	22
2.2.3.6    Distancing	23
2.2.3.7    Evidentiality	23
2.2.3.8    Euphemism	24
2.2.3.9    Fallacy	24
2.2.3.10    Hyperbole	25
2.2.3.11    Implication	25
2.2.3.12    Litotes	26
2.2.3.13    Lexicalization	26
2.2.3.14    Local Coherence	26
2.2.3.15    Modality	27

2.2.3.16	Nominalization	27
2.2.3.17	Polarization	28
2.2.3.18	Situation Description	29
2.2.3.19	Topoi	29
2.2.3.20	Topics and Themes	30
2.2.3.21	Vagueness and Hedging	30
2.2.4	English Translator Education	31
2.2.4.1	BA in English and Persian Translation	31
2.2.4.2	MA in English and Persian Translation	34
2.3	Theoretical Framework	35
2.4	Summary	52
CHAPTER III – REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE		54
3.1	Introduction	54
3.2	Ideology and Critical Discourse Studies	55
3.2.1	Critical Discourse Analysis	55
3.2.1.1	Critical Discourse Analysis as a Method?	55
3.2.1.2	Aims and Tenets of Critical Discourse Analysis	56
3.2.2	Mainstream Critical Approaches to Discourse	59
3.2.2.1	The Sociocultural Approach	59
3.2.2.2	The Discourse-Historical Approach	63
3.2.2.3	The Sociocognitive Approach	66
3.2.3	Ideological Issues in Critical Approaches to Discourse	73
3.3	Ideology and Translation Studies	77
3.3.1	Ideology and Cultural Turn in the Interdiscipline	77
3.3.2	Ideology and Politics in Translation	81
3.3.3	Ideology and Gender in Translation	85
3.3.4	Ideology and Translation in Persian Context	89
3.3.4.1	Ideology and Translation Criticism	94
3.3.4.1.1	Ideology and Fitzgerald's Translation	94
3.3.4.1.2	CDA Based Translation Criticism	96
3.3.4.1.3	Ideology in Persian Translation Criticism	99
3.3.4.2	Ideology in English and Persian Translator Education	101
3.4	Summary	104
CHAPTER IV – METHODOLOGY		106
4.1	Introduction	106
4.2	Selection of Participants	109
4.2.1	Phase I	109
4.2.2	Phase II	117
4.3	Instruments	126
4.3.1	Ideological Discourse Structures Inventory (IDS)	126
4.3.2	Think Aloud Protocol	129
4.4	Data Collection	131

4.4.1	Phase I – Quantitative Data Collection	131
4.4.2	Phase II – Qualitative Data Collection	133
4.5	Data Analysis	137
4.5.1	Phase I – IDSI Questionnaire Data	137
4.5.1.1	Descriptive Statistics of Ideological Discourse Structures	138
4.5.1.2	Internal Consistency Reliability	139
4.5.1.3	Exploratory Factor Analysis	140
4.5.1.4	Construct Validity	142
4.5.1.5	Subscale Internal Consistency Reliability	143
4.5.1.6	Confirmatory Factor Analysis	143
4.5.1.7	Descriptive Statistics of Discourse Categories	144
4.5.1.8	One-way Analysis of Variance	145
4.5.1.9	Independent Samples <i>t</i> -Test	146
4.5.2	Phase II – Think Aloud Protocols Data	147
4.6	Summary	150
	CHAPTER V – PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA	153
5.1	Introduction	153
5.2	Demographic Information	154
5.3	Addressing the Research Questions	160
5.3.1	Research Question I	160
5.3.1.1	Entire Sample of Students	160
5.3.1.2	Junior and Senior Students	164
5.3.1.3	MA Students	167
5.3.2	Research Question II	170
5.3.2.1	Scale Reliability Analysis	171
5.3.2.2	Exploratory Factor Analysis	173
5.3.2.2.1	Sample Size	174
5.3.2.2.2	Preliminary Analysis	174
5.3.2.2.3	Factor Extraction	179
5.3.2.2.4	Factor Rotation	182
5.3.2.2.5	Factor Labels	186
5.3.2.3	Subscale Reliability Analysis	190
5.3.2.4	Confirmatory Factor Analysis	193
5.3.2.4.1	Structural Equation Modeling	193
5.3.2.4.2	Goodness of Fit	196
5.3.2.4.3	Measurement Equations	198
5.3.2.4.4	Path Diagrams	202
5.3.2.5	Weighted Summated Scale Scores	208
5.3.2.6	Descriptive Statistics of the Categories in Discourse	210
5.3.3	Research Question III	212
5.3.3.1	Preliminary Analysis	213
5.3.3.2	Welch Test	216
5.3.3.3	One-way ANOVA Statistics	217
5.3.3.4	Post hoc Tests	218

5.3.3.4.1	Games-Howell Test	219
5.3.3.4.2	Hochberg's GT2 Test	220
5.3.4	Research Question IV	224
5.3.4.1	Preliminary Analysis	224
5.3.4.2	Independent Samples <i>t</i> -Test	226
5.3.4	Research Question V	228
5.3.4.1	Ideological Discourse Categories	230
5.3.4.2	Ideological Discourse Structures	235
5.5	Summary	241
CHAPTER VI – DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS		243
6.1	Introduction	243
6.2	Review and Discussion of the Findings	244
6.2.1	Demographic Information	244
6.2.2	Research Question I	249
6.2.3	Research Question II	256
6.2.4	Research Question III	262
6.2.5	Research Question IV	268
6.2.6	Research Question V	269
6.3	Implications of the Study	276
6.4	Recommendations for Further Research	281
6.5	Contributions	285
BIBLIOGRAPHY		289
APPENDIXES		302
A –	Ideological Discourse Structures Inventory (IDSI)	303
B –	Cover Letter of the Questionnaire	307
C –	Source Text I Used in Think Aloud Protocol	308
D –	Source Text II Used in Think Aloud Protocol	311
E –	Correlation Coefficients Matrix of IDSI Items	314
F –	Correlation Significance Levels of Matrix of IDSI Items	320
G –	Anti-image Correlation Matrix of IDSI Items	326
H –	Ideological Discourse Structures Inventory (IDSI): English Edition	332
I –	English Translation of a Segment of TAP Transcription of Student A	337
J –	English Translation of a Segment of TAP Transcription of Student B	339

## List of Tables

Table 2.1	Some Ideological Discourse Structures Subscribing to Several Categories	51
Table 4.1	Participants in the Study Based on University, Candidature, Age and Location	112
Table 4.2	Age of Participants Based on Study Program and Gender	116
Table 4.3	Competences in English and Persian Translation Undergraduate Program	118
Table 4.4	Descriptive Statistics of Results of the Class on the Entire Coursework	120
Table 4.5	Total Variance Accounted for by the Retained Eleven Factors	121
Table 4.6	Rotated Component Matrix for the Participants' Coursework Results	123
Table 4.7	GPA, Translation Competence and Translation Quality of the Translators	124
Table 4.8	Descriptive Statistics of BA Graduates' Translation Competence	125
Table 4.9	TAP Participants' GPA, TQA, Translation Competence, and Gender	125
Table 4.10	T Particulars of the Source Texts Used in the Think Aloud Protocol Task	130
Table 5.1	Percentage of Participants and Gender Distribution from Every University	155
Table 5.2	Self Assessments on EFL Proficiency and Translation Quality	157
Table 5.3	Age and Self Assessments across Genders and Programs	158
Table 5.4	Age Language Related Work Experience across Gender and Program	159

Table 5.5	Descriptive Statistics of IDSI Items rated by the Entire Sample Population	161
Table 5.6	The Most and the Least Explored Ideological Discourse Structures for Ideological Representations according to the Entire Sample Population	163
Table 5.7	Descriptive Statistics of IDSI Items rated by the Junior & Senior Students	165
Table 5.8	The Most and the Least Explored Ideological Discourse Structures for Ideological Representations according to the Junior & Senior Students	166
Table 5.9	Descriptive Statistics of IDSI Items rated by the MA Students	168
Table 5.10	The Most and the Least Explored Ideological Discourse Structures for Ideological Representations according to the Graduates	1689
Table 5.11	IDSI Items Reliability Statistics and Case Processing Summary	171
Table 5.12	Scale Internal Consistency Reliability and Item to Total Statistics	172
Table 5.13	Univariate Descriptive Statistics of each of the Forty-seven Variables	176
Table 5.14	KMO and Bartlett's Test for the Variables in Analysis	177
Table 5.15	Factors with Eigenvalues Greater than 1 and the Total Variance Explained	180
Table 5.16	Component Matrix of the Factor Solution for IDSI Items	183
Table 5.17	Total Variance Explained by the Final Factor Solution	185
Table 5.18	Initial and Extraction Communalities of the Variables	187
Table 5.19	Rotated Component Matrix of the Factor Solution of IDSI Items	188

Table 5.20	Subscale Internal Consistency Reliability and Item-Total Statistics	192
Table 5.21	CFA Measurements Output Regarding Goodness of Fit Statistics	198
Table 5.22	CFA Measurement Equations	200
Table 5.23	Descriptive Statistics of Ratings for the Discourse Categories	211
Table 5.24	Descriptive Statistics for the Dependent Variables across the Three Levels	214
Table 5.25	Test of Homogeneity of Variances for ANOVA	215
Table 5.26	Robust Tests of Equality of Means	216
Table 5.27	One-way ANOVA Analysis for the Remaining Dependent Variables	218
Table 5.28	Multiple Comparisons by Group Means Games-Howell Post hoc Test	219
Table 5.29	Multiple Comparisons of Group Means by Hochberg Post hoc Test	222
Table 5.30	Descriptive Statistics of the Male and Female per Variable	225
Table 5.31	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances for t-Test	226
Table 5.32	Independent Samples <i>t</i> -Tests Results for the Male and Female	227
Table 5.33	TAP Results on Exploring Each Discourse Category	232
Table 5.34	Discourse Categories Explored by Groups in TAP in Descending Order	233
Table 5.35	Most Frequently Examined Ideological Discourse Structures	237
Table 5.36	Most Studies Ideological Discourse Structures by MTQ and HTQ	238

Table 5.37	GPA and TQA of BA Graduates and their Frequency of Exploring the Source Discourse	239
Table 5.38	Ideological Discourse Structures Not Tapped by BA Graduates	240
Table 5.39	Correlation Coefficients Matrix of IDSI Items	314
Table 5.40	Correlation Significance Levels Matrix of IDSI Items	320
Table 5.41	Anti-image Correlation Matrix of IDSI Items	326

## **List of Figures**

Figure 2.1	Premises of Ideological Square	37
Figure 2.2	Interrelated Categories of Ideological Discourse Structures	40
Figure 2.3	Model of Ideological Discourse Structures and Corresponding Discourse Categories	50
Figure 4.1	Illustrated Summary of Data Analysis Procedures	151
Figure 4.2	Illustrated Summary of Data Collection Procedures	152
Figure 5.1	Scree Plot of the Factor Analysis for the Ideological Discourse Structures	181
Figure 5.2	Path Diagram for Text Organization Category in Discourse	203
Figure 5.3	Path Diagram for Rhetoric Category in Discourse	204
Figure 5.4	Path Diagram for Meaning & Content Category in Discourse	205
Figure 5.5	Path Diagram for Argumentation Category in Discourse	206
Figure 5.6	Path Diagram for Evidential Support Category in Discourse	206
Figure 5.7	Path Diagram for Lexical Choice Category in Discourse	207
Figure 5.8	Path Diagram for Sentence Category in Discourse	208
Figure 5.9	Path Diagram for Generalization Category in Discourse	208
Figure 5.10	Path Diagram for Unclarity Category in Discourse	209

## **Abbreviations**

AGFI	Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BA	Bachelor of Arts
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CDS	Critical Discourse Studies
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
df	Degree of Freedom
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
f	Frequency
F	F ratio
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index
GPA	Grade Point Average
H <sub>o</sub>	Null Hypothesis under Test
HTQ	High Translation Quality
IDSI	Ideological Discourse Structures Inventory
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure
L1	Native/First Language
L2	Foreign/Second Language
M	Mean

MA	Master of Arts
MANOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Variance
Max	Maximum
MDA	Mediated Discourse Analysis
Min	Minimum
MTQ	Mediocre Translation Quality
N	Number of the Sample Population
n	Number of a Subsample
p	Probability (Criterion Value)
PDA	Political Discourse Analysis
PGFI	Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index
RMR	Root Mean Square Residual
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
RQ	Research Question
R	Multiple Correlation
SD	Standard Deviation
SE	Standard Error (of Measurement)
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
Sig	Significance Value
SL	Source Language
ST	Source Text
t	Computed Value of t-Test
TAP	Think Aloud Protocol

TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
TQ	Translation Quality
TQA	Translation Quality Assessment
TS	Translation Studies
TT	Translated Text
TL	Target Language

# **MENELITI STRUKTUR WACANA IDEOLOGIKAL DALAM PENDIDIKAN PENTERJEMAH BAHASA INGGERIS DAN BAHASA FARSI**

## **Abstrak**

Kajian ini yang dijalankan dalam dua fasa cuba meneliti bagaimana pelajar terjemahan bahasa Inggeris di universiti-universiti di Iran mendekati secara kritis teks sumber yang mempunyai kandungan sosiopolitik untuk memperolehi representasi ideologi tersirat dalam terjemahan daripada bahasa Inggeris kepada bahasa Farsi. Fasa pertama merupakan satu kajian kuantitatif yang melibatkan penggunaan borang soal selidik reka kendiri dan sampel bertujuan seramai 469 peserta. Fasa kedua melibatkan kaedah campuran yang menggunakan protokol pemikiran secara verbal yang melibatkan populasi persampelan kriteria seramai 10 peserta. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa pelajar Iran yang mempelajari terjemahan bahasa Inggeris cenderung untuk menerokai wacana sumber untuk mencari ideologi tersirat pada tahap wacana sumber yang lebih nyata dan konkrit. Tahap wacana yang lebih abstrak kurang dirujuk. Terdapat bukti bahawa pedagogi terjemahan bahasa Inggeris dan bahasa Farsi di universiti-universiti di Iran amat kurang sekali melibatkan analisis ideologikal wacana dalam terjemahan, dan ia gagal memberi kesan yang tetap dan konsisten terhadap cara penterjemah pelatih menangani ideologi tersirat dalam wacana sumber. Kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa tiada perbezaan bererti antara pendekatan penterjemah pelatih lelaki dengan penterjemah pelatih wanita dalam menerokai wacana sumber untuk memperolehi representasi ideologikal. Dapatan kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa penterjemah dengan prestasi terjemahan yang berkualiti tinggi menerokai wacana sumber untuk memperolehi idologi tersirat dengan lebih kerap dan pada tahap yang lebih abstrak

berbanding penterjemah yang mempunyai prestasi terjemahan yang berkualiti sederhana. Implikasi praktikal kajian ini dan cadangan untuk kajian akan datang juga dibincangkan.

# **EXPLORING IDEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE STRUCTURES IN ENGLISH AND PERSIAN TRANSLATOR EDUCATION**

## **Abstract**

The present research in two phases investigated how students of English translation in Iranian universities tended to approach the source text with socio-political content critically for representations of embedded ideologies during English to Persian translation. The first phase was a quantitative study involving a self-designed questionnaire instrument and a purposive sample population of 469 participants. The second phase was a mixed-methods design study using think aloud protocol data from a criterion sample population of 10 participants. The results demonstrated that the Iranian students of English translation tended to explore the source discourse for embedded ideologies at the more tangible and concrete levels of the source discourse, whereas the more abstract levels were referred to relatively less often. Evidence was provided that English and Persian translation pedagogy in Iranian universities barely involved ideological analysis of discourse due for translation, and it has failed to have a constant and consistent influence on how the trainee translators cope with inscribed ideologies in the source discourse. The study showed that there was no significant difference between the approach of the male and the female trainee translators in exploring source discourse for ideological representations. The findings also revealed that the translators with high quality translation performance explored the source discourse considerably more frequently and delved deeper at more abstract levels of the source discourse for hidden ideologies than the translators with mediocre quality translation performance. Practical implications of the study and recommendations for further research are discussed.

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In Iranian higher education, Translation Studies as a distinct and autonomous field of study is almost a decade old, whereas undergraduate translator training for several language pairs has a relatively long history. Against this background, this doctoral study is principally aimed at the investigation of the current approach by translation students to explore ideological representations in source discourse during English to Persian translation in translator training in Iranian universities. Prior to the appearance of Translation Studies (TS) as a fledgling yet thriving interdiscipline, research on translation has been carried out in Iran. However, the research was always conducted by linguists who for obvious reasons predominantly adopted pure linguistic approaches in contrastive analysis of the source text (ST) and the target or translated text (TT) pair.

The advent of the cultural turn in translation studies extended to incorporate an entire range of approaches from cultural studies in addition to other disciplines for the study of translation. Thus, as Hatim and Munday (2004, p. 102) maintain the cultural turn refers to the analysis of translation, in a broad sense, in terms of variables of culture,

ideology and the political context. However, some others insist to distinguish a self-contained ideological turn in translation studies which specifically entails a focus on ideological issues in relation to the study of translation (Leung, 2006). Given the advantages of stepping beyond textual analytical ST-TT pair research on translation and considering the pivotal position of ideology in relation to translation, this study based on a quantitative approach in the first phase and a mixed-methods design in the second phase to study how ideological representations in a discourse for translation are looked for by students in English and Persian translator training programs in Iranian higher education.

In a larger context, with reference to the seminal paradigm proposed by Holmes (1988), this research lends itself partly both to the applied and the pure branches of Translation Studies, where Holmes further subcategorizes the applied side into: translator training, translation aids, and translation criticism, and the pure side into theoretical and descriptive extensions.

Within the domain of the pure branch, the theoretical aspect of this study would relate to the achieved results of the inferential statistics used in the study in an attempt to empirically verify van Dijk's (1998a, 2000a) theoretical framework on approaching discourse critically at multiple levels for ideological representations. Having applied van Dijk's framework of ideology inscribed in discourse in the context of English and Persian translation, the results appear to have implications towards some fragments of a local, Iranian theory of translating.

The descriptive aspect of the study is clearly reflected in the achieved descriptive results of the study both from the quantitative surveys and the qualitative think aloud

protocols in depicting the approach and process of tracing implicit ideologies of the ST text producer by English and Persian translation students.

As for applied translation studies, given that the study is principally based within an educational context for training translators, the curricular and pedagogical implications of the findings of the study directly relate to the first subcategory of applied branch, that is translator training. As for translation criticism as another extension under the applied side, the results of the study seem to be able to provide insights which could contribute to the recently developing translation criticism model based on critical study of discourse (Farahzad, 2009).

Moreover, in terms of dealing with the complexity of the translation phenomenon, House (2009) discusses the perspectives on translation which have focused attention to the process of restating meaning in another text. She classifies the main perspectives into the following: focus on the original text, focus on the process of interpretation, focus on variable interpretations such as cultural, ideological or literary, the irrelevance and the remaking of the original, and focus on the purpose of translation (pp. 15-27). The perspective on translation that is of most concern in the present study is the focus on ideological or critical interpretation of the original text.

Toury (1995) states that unlike the pure branch of the discipline which is theoretical and descriptive, the applied branch is prescriptive by nature. However, even though the present study is in principal a translator training research and mainly within the applied side of the field, it does not intend to overgeneralize the results prescriptively, and it simply offers insights and shares implications.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The Persian language, which is also known as Farsi, is the native language (L1) for most Iranians and the national language in Iran, while English which currently serves as the lingua franca for the international community is a foreign language (EFL) to the Iranian as opposed to a second language (ESL) for some other nations. Unlike some multilingual nations such as Malaysia the average public can barely communicate in English in Iran. Given that Persian is a language with fairly limited diffusion, a considerable scope of translation both to and from Persian is required for the society and administration in Iran to maintain commercial, political and ideological interaction and communication with the world. This situation makes English and Persian translation a relatively highly demanded form of expertise and accordingly a popular degree program in most universities in Iran.

Besides, it is only natural for a Middle Eastern country with one of the largest oil reserve in the globe and located on a strategic spot on the Silk Road, to have a history of politically volatile circumstances. The policies of post-revolution Iran have been making international headlines in the media, and a myriad of Iran-related news stories are broadcast all the time worldwide, the majority of which are in English. The unique socio-political context of Iran, the ethics, the religion and the value system of the Iranian society, and the well-known critical effects of mass media on both the Iranian and international audience (media broadcast is fed through English and Persian translation, as far as Iran is concerned) increases the significance of the role that English and Persian translation plays at the moment for Iran, and thus the English and Persian (prospective) translators.

Moreover, translation is not simply the mechanism of transferring textual knowledge as it used to be considered, and presently it is known for a fact to serve as a process of movements of people, rituals, ideologies, and literature among nations.

In geographical areas where conflict and war are rife, translators may be engaged in circulating texts designed to further the goals of one side or the other. In such contexts, translators may well feel that their job of furthering ‘intercultural communication’ is at odds with the task of mediating texts which explicitly propagate violent ‘clashes of civilizations’. Politically sensitive environments such as Guantanamo Bay, Iraq, Iran, Israel/Palestine ... are relevant examples.... Ideological skewing – however ethically justified it may be – is clearly the results of an imposition of the translator’s views on the intercultural medication process, and it must be recognized as such (House, 2009, p. 74).

Granted the decisive role of translation globally and considering the socially, culturally and politically sensitive aspects of translation in Iran, it is not hard to notice the critical function of English and Persian translator training programs and the services they are expected to present. However, Venuti (1998) maintains that “translation and translator training have been impeded by the prevalence of linguistics-oriented approaches that offer a truncated view of the empirical data they collect” (p. 1). Similarly, translator education in Iranian universities has been under the predominance of linguistic theories exclusively for too long. The currently used syllabus for English and Persian translation degree programs has stayed put and unrevised for approximately two decades. Apart from all other important aspects of study of translation (e.g., linguistic and despite the insights revealed by the modern turns in translation studies (i.e., cultural, ideological and sociological), little is known of how variables of culture and sociology generally and ideology specifically within translation are perceived and approached in the Iranian training institutions by prospective translators.

“How does the translator attend to the specificity of the language she translates?”

That is how Spivak (2004, p. 398) initiates a argument to emphasize the intricacy and significance of reading for translation and the risks for the translator to take in “translation as reading”.

In terms of the role and importance of Discourse Analysis for translation and translator education, Schäffner (2000) asserts that some sort of analysis of the source text is an indispensable step in the translation process, and it is imperative to teach and practice discourse analysis in translator training programs.

There is general agreement that understanding a text is a prerequisite for translating it, that is, for producing a target text (TT) on the basis of a source text (ST). Understanding includes reflecting about the linguistic structures which a text displays, realizing that the structure chosen by the text producer is (to be) seen as the most appropriate one to fulfill the intended aims and purposes which the author wanted to achieve with the text for specific communicative situations in a specific sociocultural context for specific addressees. A systematic text analysis therefore figures prominently in many textbooks about translation, but the actual methods suggested and the concepts used vary. (Schäffner, 2000, p. 178)

The significance of critical comprehension of ideology in translation and its crucial role for English and Persian translators on the one hand, and the significance of discourse analysis of the source text, on the other hand, both indicate to the paramount significance of the application of critical (ideological) discourse analysis in English and Persian translator education in order to prepare prospective translators who could be qualified to honor their social, professional and ethical responsibilities.

Because of inconclusive research in this regard so far, the present study is planned to investigate exploring discourse for implicit ideologies during translation by English and

Persian translation students, as prospective translators, and map out how the students critically examine the ST discourse for uncovering embedded ideologies.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The overall purpose of this study was to map out how translation students approach the source text for ideological representations in translation from English to Persian. It was planned to describe how translation students critically explore the ST discourse for the inscribed ideologies of the source text producer during English into Persian translation. The study entails two phases and uses quantitative and qualitative data, in order to achieve the following objectives.

The first objective of the study was to identify which particular discourse structures in the source discourse and in what priority, the students tend to explore when seeking ideological representations in translation of journalistic, social, or political texts from English to Persian. The second objective was to identify at what levels and in what priority, the students explore the source discourse for the ideological representations in translation of journalistic, social, or political texts from English to Persian.

It is imperative for translator training programs to improve the recognition and critical comprehension of translation students in order to make critical readers and alert (re-)writers. Therefore, the third objective of the study was to determine if the students' choices and priorities about what discourse levels to explore for implicit ideological representations in translation of journalistic, social, or political texts from English to Persian were significantly different at various stages of training, namely, after the junior

year and senior year during undergraduate study and after the graduate coursework at the MA study. The purpose behind this objective was to examine whether or not the instruction and practices the students receive in different years of study and different programs have any effective influence on the way they tend to approach exploring implied ideologies during translation of text with socio-political content.

Moreover, the variable of gender in many language practices and translatorial strategies has proved to be a source of discrepancy. Several studies have shown that the gender of the translator is a pivotal influence on the choices and strategies of the translator (e.g., Chamberlain, 1992, 2004; Simon, 1996; von Flotow, 1999, 2007). On the other hand, some studies have pointed out that gender sometimes does not function as a variable of change concerning the choices and strategies of the translator (e.g., Farahzad & Faridzadeh, 2009). Thus, the forth objective was to determine if the junior, senior and MA students' choices and priorities about what discourse levels to explore for implicit ideological representations were different across genders during translation of journalistic, social, or political texts from English to Persian.

In order to investigate the possible influence of translating performance quality of the fresh graduates of English and Persian translation on the way they critically approach the text in translation, the fifth objective was to study how, if at all, exploring implicit ideological representations in the source discourse was different by trained translators with different translating performances at the two levels of mediocre and high quality.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

Based on the aforementioned objectives, the following five research questions were developed to direct the course of this study:

1. What discourse structures do (junior and senior/MA) students of English and Persian translation tend to explore the most and the least when seeking ideological representations in the source text during translation?
2. What are the priorities of discourse categories to explore for students of English and Persian translation when seeking ideological representations in the source text during translation?
3. Is there a significant difference between the choices and priorities of junior, senior and MA students about exploring discourse categories when seeking ideological representations in the source text during translation?
4. Is there a significant difference between the choices and priorities of the male and the female students about exploring discourse categories when seeking ideological representations in the source text during translation?
5. How does exploring the source discourse for ideological representations compare and contrast between trained English and Persian translators at the two translating performance levels of mediocre and high translation quality?

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The study can be assumed to be of some significance for a number of reasons. To begin with, some significance may lie in that it addresses an ideological issue as the topic

of investigation within English and Persian translation. Many scholars (e.g., Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990; Farahzad, 2009; Hatim & Mason, 1997; Hatim & Munday, 2004; Kuhuczak & Littau, 2007; Lefevere, 1992a; Leung, 2006; Munday, 2008; Venuti, 1992, 1995) discuss ideology as a pivotal factor in translation – in a macro and/or micro sense – and accordingly a critical issue for further research.

Using a mixed-methods design in the second phase of the research also contributes to the significance of the study. As can be noticed in the published world of translation studies, there is a dominance of qualitative studies in addition to a meager percentage of quantitative studies. However, research using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is fairly scarce. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) one of the unique qualities of mixed-methods research is its methodological pluralism or eclecticism, which at often time results in superior research in comparison with monomethod research.

The study is also significant in that in the attempt to address the research questions, it succeeds to design and validate a new quantitative measurement instrument, IDSI Inventory (see Appendix A), which can be used to replicate the study in other linguistic, cultural or educational settings.

The study also should be credited for contributing empirical data and statistical evidence which support and validate a theoretical framework (van Dijk, 1998a, 2000a), which theorizes that ideological representations manifest in multiple levels of discourse. The results of the study empirically support the assumptions of the theory.

Finally, the study can be considered significant as it is the first thesis on English and Persian translator education which also uses a large number of participants to form the sample population for the quantitative survey in Iran. The results of the survey, apart from providing the data and evidence for addressing the research questions, give access to a useful collection of self assessments and demographic data from the participants about the target population.

### **1.6 Considerations of Ethics**

To protect the rights of the participants in the study and to observe the ethics of research, the overall purpose of the study was explained to the participants prior to their cooperation. Their informed consent and their agreements with all the details of the research were sought.

Furthermore, confidentiality of the information obtained and anonymity were fully observed in the final report of the research.

### **1.7 Assumption of the Study**

The study is based on the main assumption that the sample population selected for participation in the study responds to the questions of the survey questionnaire honestly and truthfully on a voluntary basis.

## **1.8 Delimitations of the Study**

The researcher utilizes a number of delimitations in the study. The first delimitation was that the focus of the research was concentrated only on translation of the English text with journalistic, social and/or political content. The reason for this constraint was the controversy about the applicability of the premises of critical discourse analysis on a wide range of genres. Although the researcher stays on the side that indications for assumptions about the implied ideologies of the text producer can be accessed in any biased discourse with no limits regarding the genre or content, to be on the safe side, the study delimited its focus and implications to the journalistic, social and political texts in translation from English to Persian.

Another delimitation used in the study is that based on the general market demand, and the overriding practices of translator training especially in the undergraduate program, translation in the study is unidirectional, that is, only from English into Persian. Although it is likely that the results would be similar in the case of translation in the opposite direction, the verification of that is in need of further future research.

Finally, to gain a reliable perspective of the process of exploring the source discourse for ideological representations in translation from English and Persian at the university setting, the research selected participants only from among the students in conventional modes of education. Thus, to control the effects of other external intervening variables, English and Persian translation students at many of the 550 branches of Payame Noor University were not included for participation. This institution of higher education, affiliated with the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology,

which only offers distance learning programs, admits approximately 4500 students for English and Persian translation undergraduate program, annually (Mollanazar, 2003).

### **1.9 Organization of the Study**

This thesis is presented in six chapters. The first chapter is a detailed introduction to the study and includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives and significance of the study. It also introduces the research questions, the assumption of the study and how the study is delimited for further focus.

The second chapter presents and discusses the theoretical framework and conceptual models of the study. This chapter, however, begins with defining the key terms and concepts that are necessary for a better understanding of the grounds based on which the study is designed and conducted.

The third chapter presents a review of the related literature to the study. It consists of two main sections, under the headings of Ideology and Critical Discourse Studies, and Ideology and Translation Studies. Each of the sections subsequently contains subsections presenting more detailed review of the pertinent research to provide the appropriate preview and furnish the necessary rationale for the study.

The fourth chapter systematically describes the methodology employed for this study. This chapter consists of two parts each devoted to one of the phases of the study. Every part separately includes the details on selection of participants, instrumentation, procedures of data collection and analysis for each of the two phases.

The fifth chapter presents the results of the analysis of the quantitative data collected through the questionnaire addressing the first four research questions. In addition, it presents the results of the analysis of the qualitative date collected through the think aloud protocol technique in response to the final research question of the study. The data and the results of the analysis are presented in the form of tables, figures in addition to narratives.

The sixth chapter concludes the entire study. This chapter begins with a review of all the results, and subsequently the findings are discussed and interpreted. The final chapter also presents implications in terms of approaching the source discourse critically for embedded ideologies for consideration and application in translation material development, translation curriculum and syllabus (re-)design, translation criticism, and translation didactics specifically for English and Persian translator education and probably for other similar pedagogical settings and translation of other language pairs in general. The chapter additionally offers suggestions for further research by considering the limitations and delimitations of the present study and advantages of replication of the study in other educational contexts. The final chapter of the thesis ends with a list of the contributions of the study.

# **CHAPTER II**

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter comprises two main sections. Key terms and phrases that are essential for a thorough understanding of the theoretical framework and the grounds on which the research is based are defined in the first section. In the second section, the theoretical framework and the conceptual models are presented and discussed in detail in order to provide the rationale for the present research.

### **2.2 Definition of Key Terms**

To begin with, due to the elusive nature of the term, ideology, and considering the dissimilarity of perception of this concept in various fields, ideology is briefly discussed and defined as it is understood in this study, and so is the term, discourse. In the following, for further clarity, this study provides definitions and delineations to distinguish between various ideological discourse structures according to the framework in use (van Dijk, 1998a, 2000a). However, from all the ideological discourse structures of interest in this study, a selection of which seem to be less known was chosen for

definition. Eventually, the two main programs on English and Persian translation involved in the study are described in order to clarify possible discrepancies with similar programs in other educational contexts.

### **2.2.1 Ideology**

It is barely possible to find one single adequate definition of ideology. In this regard, Eagleton (1991, p. 1) states that the reason for the lack of a comprehensive definition is because there is an entire spectrum of useful meanings for the term, ideology, some of which do not even seem to be fully compatible with each other. He further states that an attempt to incorporate such wealth of meaning into one individual definition would be as such not helpful, even if it were possible; ideology is a text woven of a whole tissue of various conceptual strands.

In the following, there are a number of currently circulating definitions of ideology through which the diversity of the meaning of the term may be better illustrated (Eagleton, 1991, pp. 1-2):

- The process of production of meanings, signs and values in social life
- A body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group or class
- Ideas that help legitimize a dominant political power
- False ideas that help legitimate a dominant political power
- Forms of thoughts motivated by social interests
- Identity thinking
- Socially necessary illusion
- The conjecture of discourse and power
- The confusion of linguistic and phenomenal variety
- Semiotic closure
- Action-oriented sets of beliefs

As can be noted from the above definitions, there are certain points in common in several of the definitions, yet some also appear to be inconsistent and even in conflict with each other, which provides support for the claim that ideology is a diverse notion and too rich of meanings that refrains from a single all-inclusive definition.

From another perspective, Hawkes (2003) believes that postmodernism is a means devised to deny the binary contradiction between capital and labor in the contemporary societal structure. Realizing that capital is nothing but objectified labor which is totally in opposition with human subjective activity and in conflict with life itself is the accurate comprehension of the dilemma of our current era. He asserts that there are determined and strong modes of thought trying to obscure this comprehension about the purpose of postmodernism, and he names these modes as ideology.

From a different view in a broad sense, to Thompson (1990) ideology denotes social forms and processes within which, and also by means of which, symbolic forms circulate in the societal world. Almost in the same line as Thompson, Fairclough (1992) shares his understanding of ideologies “to be significations/constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities) which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of dominations” (p. 87).

In this regard, Hatim and Mason (1997) contend that in the western world, it is accepted that in the realm of journalism and popular writing on politics to consider ideologies as deviations from the established norms. To disapprove of this perspective, they bring the example that often in the western media, this statement is made that “a

particular political move or measure is ideologically motivated”, and they criticize such statements as if other moves were not (p. 144). Hatim and Mason agree with Simpson (1993) to define ideology as “the tacit assumptions, beliefs and value systems which are shared collectively by social groups” (p. 5).

Despite all the vagueness and vastness of the concept of ideology, van Dijk (1998a) argues that it is barely any vaguer than other notions in humanities and social sciences such as society, power, mind, knowledge, discourse among others (p. 1). He believes that definitions are mostly inadequate to capture all the complex intricacies of such notions like ideology. Nevertheless, it is believed that definitions should not be expected to sum up all the multiple insights accommodated in such bodies of knowledge even though there was no controversy over the meaning of constructs like ideology.

All the approaches to the notion of ideology have a shared routine back in the eighteenth century, at a time when Destutte de Tracy, the French philosopher, suggested a science of ideas to be named *ideologie*, a discipline which never made it, in case we do not take philosophy or even psychology as the existing representatives (van Dijk, 1998a, p. 2). According to the writing of Tracy, ideology has to do with the system of beliefs, particularly social, political and religious beliefs which a social group shares. To clarify, in agreement with Tracy, van Dijk (2000a) names communism as well as anti-communism, socialism and liberalism, feminism and sexism to name a few that some may be more or less negative or positive depending on our own point of view and group membership (p. 6). He states that still in many social sciences a negative notion of ideology, as a system of self-serving beliefs of the dominant group, does exist by which

he delineates that a polarization between the ingroup and the outgroup can be presupposed. *We* have true knowledge; *They* have ideologies.

At any rate, following van Dijk (2000a) a working definition of ideology could be “the fundamental beliefs of a group and its members” (p. 7). As for the structure of ideology, van Dijk (1998a) holds that the very general polarization schema defined by the opposition between Us (We, Ours, or the ingroup) and Them (They, Theirs, the Others, or the outgroup) proposes that group conflicts are at issue, and that groups create an ideological image of themselves and others, in a way which We are represented in a positive way, and They in a negative way.

Ideologies are representations of who we are, what we stand for, what our values are, what our relationships are with other groups, in particular our enemies or opponents, that is, those who oppose what we stand for, threaten our interests.... In other words, an ideology is a self-serving schema for the representation of Us and Them as social groups. (p. 96)

In the present study, how ideology is understood is basically consistent with the final definition by van Dijk (1998a, 2000a), so the term is perceived to bear no potential positivity or negativity by itself.

### **2.2.2 Discourse**

It has been a challenge to define the concept of discourse for the scholars of Discourse Studies. According to van Dijk (2009) a comprehensive definition of discourse “would have to consist of the entire discipline of discourse studies, in the same way as linguistics provide many dimensions of the definition of language” (p. 66). He

enumerates some of the fundamental aspects of discourse which are required in defining this concept (p. 67):

- Discourse is a multidimensional social phenomenon.
- It is at the same time a linguistic (verbal, grammatical)
- object (meaningful sequences or words or sentences),
- an action (such as an assertion or a threat),
- a form of social interaction (like a conversation),
- a social practice (such as a lecture),
- a mental representation (a meaning, a mental model, an opinion, knowledge),
- an interactional or communicative event or activity (like a parliamentary debate),
- a cultural product (like a telenovela) or
- even an economic commodity that is being sold and bought (like a novel).

To maintain a more operationalized definition of this elusive concept, the study is premised on understanding of discourse as Wodak states (2001b):

‘Discourse’ can be understood as a complex bundle of simultaneous and sequential interrelated linguistic acts, which manifest themselves within and across the social fields of action as thematically interrelated semiotic, oral or written tokens, very often as ‘texts’, that belong to specific semiotic types, that is, genres.... [Whereas] ‘Texts’ can be conceived as materially durable products of linguistic actions. (p. 66)

### **2.2.3 Ideological Discourse Structures**

Discourse is typically comprised of numerous devices, moves, and strategies the majority of which are likely to be used by the discourse producer for inscribing hidden ideologies in the text or talk. The more apt discursive moves and devices for accommodating ideological representations are named ideological discourse structures by van Dijk (2000a). In the following, a definition or description is provided for a selection

of the ideological discourse structures which are discussed in this study and are likely not to be as readily understood as the remaining others.

### **2.2.3.1 Actor Description**

According to van Dijk (2000a) the arguments of a proposition may be about actors in various roles, such as agents, patients, or beneficiaries of an action. Since ideological discourse is typically about Us and Them, further analysis of actors is very important. Actors might, therefore, appear in many guises, collectively or individually, as ingroup or We, or as outgroup members or They, specifically or generally, identified by their name, group, profession or function, in personal or impersonal roles, etc. (p. 51).

### **2.2.3.2 Authority**

It is one of the structures present in (particularly social and political) discourse where interlocutors in an argument mention to support their case. Authority is usually an organization or individual who is above the conflicts of parties, or who is generally recognized an expert or moral leader. International organizations (such as the United Nations), scholars, the media, religious institutions or the courts often have that role (van Dijk, 2000a, p. 63).

### **2.2.3.3 Consensus**

One of the discursive strategies that are often used in discourse on (particularly in political and social) debates is the display, claim or wish of Consensus. This means the

interests of the majority are placed before any internal, political divisions among the ingroup. In other words, ingroup unification, cohesion and solidarity against that of the outgroup. This is a very typical ideological move in arguments that try to win over the opposition (van Dijk, 2000a, p. 65).

#### **2.2.3.4 Counterfactual**

The standard formula which defines Counterfactuals is "What would happen, if ...." In argumentation, they play an important role, because they allow people to demonstrate absurd consequences when an alternative is being considered when the ingroup would be in the same position. As a warning or advice, a Counterfactual is relevant in a debate to show what would happen if certain measures were not taken (van Dijk, 2000a, p. 66).

#### **2.2.3.5 Disclaimer**

A well-known combination of positive self-presentation (expressing good thing about the ingroup) and negative other-presentation (expressing bad things about the outgroup), is the many types of Disclaimers. Note that a Disclaimer in a debate is not usually an expression of attitudinal ambiguity, in which both positive and negative aspects of a controversy are mentioned. Rather, a Disclaimer briefly saves face by mentioning Our positive traits, but then focuses rather exclusively on Their negative attributes (van Dijk, 2000a, p. 67). It is typical of any kind of prejudiced discourse. Disclaimer is a semantic move of which the *apparent negation* is the best known: I have nothing against X, but.... It is called an apparent negation because it is only the first

clause that denies adverse feelings against the outgroup, while the rest of the discourse may express very negative things about Them. The negation in such a case primarily serves as a form of positive self-presentation, of face keeping. In such cases, discourse producers want to avoid that the recipients have a negative opinion about them because of what they say about Them (p. 50).

#### **2.2.3.6 Distancing**

One of the ways Us-Them polarization may be expressed in discourse is by words that imply certain distance between ingroup speakers/writers when referring to outgroup speakers. Distancing as a sociocognitive device may, for instance, be expressed by the use of demonstrative pronouns instead of naming or describing the Others. For instance, in a debate on immigration, thus, those in disagreement may refer to refugees as those people (van Dijk, 2000a, p. 67).

#### **2.2.3.7 Evidentiality**

Claims or points of view in argument are more plausible when interlocutors present some evidence or proof for their knowledge or opinions. This may happen by references to figures of authority or institutions, or by various forms of Evidentiality: How or where they got the information (van Dijk, 2000a, p. 69). Of course, each genre, context and culture has its own evaluation criteria for what is good, acceptable or bad evidence. Scholarly proof in the natural sciences, social sciences or humanities may require different types of evidence, and the same is true for proof in everyday life, which may

range from “I have seen it with my own eyes” to more or less reliable hearsay. In contemporary society, the media are a prominent criterion of Evidentiality. For example, “I have seen it on TV.” or “I read it in the newspaper.” are rather powerful arguments in everyday discourse (p. 52).

#### **2.2.3.8 Euphemism**

The well-known rhetorical figure of Euphemism functions mostly as a semantic move of mitigation. Within the broader framework of the strategy of positive self-presentation, and especially its correlate, the avoidance of negative impression formation, negative opinions about the ingroup are often mitigated. The same is true for the negative acts of the ingroup. Obviously, mitigation of the use of Euphemism may be explained both in ideological terms (ingroup protection), as well as in contextual terms, for example, as part of politeness conditions or other social interactional rules (van Dijk, 2000a, p. 69).

#### **2.2.3.9 Fallacy**

Fallacies may be generally defined as breaches of argumentation rules and principles. Argumentation principles are violated if, for instance, we use an irrelevant argument, play on people's emotions, ask the opponent to show I am wrong, argue that something must be true because everybody thinks so, or because some authority says so. Similarly, we engage in a Fallacy when we overgeneralize, use false analogies, or assume that from bad ones necessarily go to worse (van Dijk, 2000a, p. 58).