An Analytical Study Of Rationalization As A Deforming Tendency In English Translation Of Udaas Naslain

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Abstract

Translation is an important and effective source of cross-cultural communication in the present world. However, there are some deforming tendencies which may affect the transfer of original meaning from one language to other. The present research carries out a comparative analysis of the Urdu novel Udaas Naslain and its English translation The Weary Generations. In this context, five excerpts have been selected from the source text (ST) and the corresponding target text (TT) which portray the themes of imperialism and human sufferings. The study is qualitative in nature and examines the structural and semantic aspects with reference to Berman’s notion of domestication. This phenomenon is explored through rationalization which is one of the deforming tendencies of Berman’s model (1985/2004) of textual deformations. Through a comparative analysis, it has been found that the structural inequalities between the two languages distort and deform the intended meanings of the ST in the TT. The loss of meaning is found in the themes of imperialism and human sufferings. The TT seems to be translated with a different ideology in mind that favors the imperialist and does not represent true conditions of the source country. Finally, it is concluded that the presence of rationalization in translation has largely domesticated the TT on the cost of structural and semantic equivalence.

Keywords: domestication, rationalization, deforming tendency, translation.

1. Introduction

The Urdu novel Udaas Naslain (1963) is written by Abdullah Hussein who is looked upon as one of the leading writers of Urdu literature. His novel Udaas Naslain (1963) brought him worldwide fame and he was honoured with the Adamjee Award in 1964. He himself
translated his Urdu novel *Udaas Naslain* (1963) into English titled, *The Weary Generations* (1999). The present research analyzes the writer’s attempt of translating his own novel 36 years after its publication in Urdu. Although, the translation has been rendered from Urdu to English by the writer himself yet the context and the audience of the novel has been changed accordingly. It is translated for the target audience that is now English. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate whether this shift of context retains the originality of the novel or not, and how far the translation preserves the ideology and essence of the themes of imperialism and human sufferings in the target text.

According to Jacobson (2000), translation takes three different forms: 1) intra-lingual, 2) inter-lingual and 3) inter-semiotic translation. The research undertaken by the researchers focuses on the second type of translation. In this regard, the text of the Urdu novel *Udaas Naslain* (1963) written by Hussein is the (ST) and its English translation *The Weary Generations* (1999) is the target text (TT). The research is limited only to rationalization which is the first deforming tendency of Berman’s model. In this regard, 5 excerpts are selected and analyzed from the ST and the TT. These selected excerpts are related to the two central themes of the novel namely imperialism and human sufferings. The analysis is made with reference to Berman’s model of translation (1985/2004). The semantic change resulting from the structural deformation is analyzed. The purpose of this research is to examine rationalization as a deforming tendency and to find out whether differences between the syntactical structures of the source text and the target text contribute to distortion of the original meanings of the source text or not.

The writer himself translated his novel into the English language which was published by UNESCO in 1999 by the title *The Weary Generations*. The target text mentions in the introductory pages that it is a translation of the Urdu novel *Udaas Naslain* (1963). The source text contains 50 chapters with a total of 512 pages. In contrast to this, the target text consists of only 30 chapters having 334 pages.

As the novel is related to the main themes of war, imperialism, history, human suffering and partition, the story is quite interesting for the readers. Moreover, it also describes the time when the British ruled over the subcontinent; therefore, it has natural appeal for the English readers. Its significance can be judged by the fact that it was selected by UNESCO for translation into English. Hussein himself translated *Udaas Naslain* (1963) into English with the title *The Weary Generations* (1999) while he was living in England. It is important to note that before the publication of the translated text, Hussein lived in the UK for more than 30 years. Therefore, the social context and background of the translator may also affect the translator’s approach while translating the novel for the English audience. In addition to it, the change in the target audience can also influence the translator’s approach in translating the novel of his own.

According to Santoyo (2010), a self-translator possesses the freedom of modifications in the original text as it is his own work that he translates. The translator is concerned about a different community and new audience; therefore, he adapts, modifies, omits and swaps information related to all areas especially cultural values and ethnic sensitivities, which are usually different in every culture and ethnic group. Hence, the original text is changed
and a new reality is constructed and this new reality also re-contextualizes and distorts the original reality. Meanings and ideologies, therefore, change in new self-translation unconsciously on the part of translator but these may have serious consequences on the ideological/thematic understanding of texts. It may also change the purpose of the whole text in translation.

The writers self-translate their works so that they might not be misrepresented by the other translators, but having said that, self-translators also manipulate their own texts because of the special freedom they have to translate their own works. Hence, self-translation can serve as a resistance in the context of colonial powers but considering its manipulative tendency it may also play in the hands of the present day colonial dynasty who may have the agenda of establishing supremacy of English culture in the present post-colonial era too. Therefore, the present research focuses on the deforming tendency of rationalization and examines the structural inequalities in the ST and TT. In addition to it, when structural inequalities exist between the ST and TT, whether they retain the ideology and essence of the ST in the TT or the original text is adapted according to the target audience.

1.1 Research Questions

1. How can the syntactical nonequivalence in English and Urdu cause disturbance in the process of translation?

2. How does the semantic loss take place in the translation/transformation of the themes of imperialism and human sufferings in TT?

1.2 Rationale for the Study

_Udaas Naslain_ (1963) maintains a specific style that is shaped by the detailed and thorough description of the partition of Indian subcontinent. The ST (1963) is written for the Pakistani readers but the context of the TT (1999) has changed as it is translated for the English readers. In this regard, the concern of our research is to find out whether any differences exist between the syntactical structures of the source text and the target text (such as loss of grammatical category) and whether there are any ideological differences in the themes of imperialism and of human sufferings comparatively in both texts or not. As the novel is based upon the main themes of imperialism (imperialistic attitude of the British) and of human suffering (encountered in war, during partition and in resistance to imperialism), it is, therefore, very important that these themes are communicated with the same effect in the TT as they are expressed in the ST. Thus, the research aims to explore whether the translator is able to preserve the ideology and essence of the themes of the source text in the target text due to the change in the context of the translation or not.

2. Literature Review

Translators know that the concept of translation is always a hard nut to crack because there is a considerable difference between concepts in various languages. Translation is a function which is practiced on languages, and it translates the main content of a text into the target language (Catford, 1965). Generally, it is believed that it is a simple procedure of translating the content of one language into the other, but in fact it is a highly complex
procedure that requires the skills of a professional translator. During translation, a text may be interpreted in different ways and can be molded in different directions since every language has a different way of describing concepts as languages have their own structures, figures of speech, vocabulary, collocations, idioms, and proverbs (Newmark, 1998). Some of the aspects of language specifications which may cause problem in the process of inter-lingual translation are discussed in the following paragraphs below.

2.1 Cultural Gap

The idea of translation has gone beyond the concept of literal versus free translation and now a new agent has entered this arena very forcefully. This is the cultural dimension, and it is a well-known fact that languages play a central role in any culture and the latter cannot function without the former (Nida, 2001). As a matter of fact, translators have been aware of cultural differences to a great extent and how significant they are in the process of translation. Robinson (2007) focuses on how culture and language affect each other. Literal translation can be a good strategy when cultures are alike and languages belong to the same language family such as Hebrew and Arabic. On the other hand, when two cultures are dissimilar and the languages spoken in these cultures also belong to two different family groups then translation becomes a very complicated process as the ideologies and themes of the two cultures are not the same which are hard to be translated and understood by the readers of other cultures. According to Venuti (2004), it often happens that both language and culture are different from each other. In this situation, the translator has to deal with both linguistic and cultural constraints, and producing a good translation becomes a challenging endeavour for the translator. The present research analyses a translation that falls into this category where both the source language and culture are different from the target language and culture. The eastern culture, and the language and culture of Pakistan is immensely different from that of the English-speaking nations. Therefore, they naturally have a number of lexical and syntactical differences. Hence, in this research, it is examined how the translator handles the differences found between the two languages and what effect it has on the meaning and themes of the source text.

2.2 Self-Translation

Self-translation is a translation of a writer’s own work into another language aimed at the readers of a different culture and society. According to Rabacov (2013), the most motivating factor for self-translation is the writer’s urge to earn the readership of comparatively a far larger audience. The process of self-translation is very old, and it goes back to first century AD. Richters states that Josephes, the Jewish historian “wrote seven books in Aramaic and later translated them himself into Greek, all the while correcting mistakes in the first set of books” (2012, p. 6). The Bible was translated into French during the period of Renaissance. In the 18th century, the need and importance of self-translation was lost. In the 19th century, bilingual writings were not promoted but at the start of the twentieth century self-translations again gained importance due to the First World War, and in the coming years, its significance increased even more because of World War II.
Currently, the process of self-translation is rampant Turkey (Halman), Denmark (Blixen), Pakistan and India (Devi, Raja Rao and Vijayan) and Kyrgyzstan and also Bengal (Tagore, a poet, a noble prize winner) (Richters, 2012).

Bandin (2004) opines that self-translation has always existed and writers have been involved in the process of translating their writings into other languages in different periods of history. However, this sidelined and downgraded phenomenon of self-translation gained prominence and distinction by the appearance of the self-translations of Beckett. Sabljo (2011) considers Beckett’s original texts and the translated texts as parallel texts, and this proves his mastery in self-translation. Praeger (1992), however, has other views and according to him there are deviations between the original and translated versions of Mercier Camier and a close analysis of the two reveals the differences of addition and omission of terms and expressions in the source and target texts. Some critics think that a translation produced by the author himself cannot be regarded as a translation of the original but as a new version or recreation of the original. Bandin also states, “a self-translation cannot be considered only in terms of fidelity or equivalence to another previously written text. It is a recreation of the first text, a dialogue with that previous work” (2004, p. 36).

The practice of adaptation, addition and omission is found in the self-translation of Beckett which leads to the recomposing and rewriting of the original text. The gap of time between the original work and the translated work also played a part in influencing the self-translations of Beckett. In this regard Richters (2012) points out that: “often the lapse of time between the original and its translation has an influence on the extent of discrepancy between the two” (p. 17). The variation between the self-translations of Beckett is found due to the two dissimilar readerships who belong to two different cultures, and the self-translations of Beckett were adapted in order to come up to the expectations of the foreign audience. Petruca (2013) supports this stating, “The disparities between the two cultures determine the author-translator to make changes in the work in order to minimize them. What has been carefully chosen in one version is in purpose overlooked or altered in the other one” (p. 762). The same phenomenon needs to be analyzed in Hussein’s self-translation and to find out whether he has also molded the original text according to the target culture, or he has succeeded in retaining the foreignness of the text. In addition to it, the Urdu novel *Udaas Naslain* (1963) was published in 1963, whereas the self-translation of this novel came 36 years after its publication. Resultantly, the more the time span between the original text and the translated text the more the chances of deviations.

### 2.3 Domestication and Foreignization: An Approach to Translation

Foreignizing and domesticating are terms that are brought up by Venuti although the concept of foreignizing and domesticating was first introduced by the German scholar Schleiermacher in 1813 who recognized the division between foreignizing translation (verfremdende Übersetzung) and domesticating translation (einbürgernde Übersetzung). The translator has to choose an approach which can either be in favor of source culture or inclined more towards the target culture. The approach that is in favor of the norms and
values of the source culture is termed as foreignization and the approach that is in favor of the beliefs and social settings of the target culture is termed as domestication. According to Wang (2013), in a domesticated translation the reader is led to believe that he is reading the work of an original author as it has a fluent and lucid style which represents the skillfulness and deftness of a native like writer, and therefore, gives the reader a sense and spirit of the original text. Domestication aims that the target language reader should have the same feeling and experience which the source language reader undergoes. Benjamin (1955/1968) opined that the aim and objective of translation is not to bring the same effect and experience for the target language readers but to synchronize the two languages in such a way that the target language is blended with the foreign language and flows in movement with the foreign language.

Foreignization intentionally preserves the traits and characteristics of source culture in the translated text. Snell-Hornby (1988) cites Francis William Newman who stated that every essential quality of the source text must be preserved by the translator wherever and whenever possible. The greater the care in retaining the idiosyncrasies of the foreign text the more foreign the text will be. Franz Rosenzweig (1886–1929) also pursued the theory of foreignization and for him the ST should be the focal point of the translator, and it is the text that the translator must serve with full dedication (Cheung, 2013). Longfellow (1807–1881) translated the classic poem Divina Commedia written by Dante Alighieri. While discussing his work, he acknowledged that it communicated neither more nor less to what Dante stated, and that a translator’s work is to express what a writer says and not to clarify what he suggests and implies (Nordell, 2010). Hatim & Munday (2004) claim that the best translation carries with it a sense of resistance towards the target culture and indicates the foreignness of the source text.

Schleiermacher’s choice of foreignizing translation also influenced the French translator and theoretician Berman who took Schleiermacher’s reasoning one step further and established the ethics and morals of translation. Berman in his famous article, Translation and the Trials of the Foreign, talks about the process of textual malformation which functions in every single translation and precludes it from being a trial of the foreign (Berman, 1985/2004). He also, points out that the deforming inclination is old and deep rooted in translation. Traditionally the translators have been attempting to restore and compensate for the lost meaning and in attempting to create a fluent, lucid and elegant text: these textual deformities take place and this keeps the foreign from entering in the translated text. According to Berman (1985/2004), these deforming tendencies are pertinent to the translation of prose especially in the genre of the novel and essay.

Translation can be identified as a communication between cultures in which the source language culture is made comprehensible and accessible to the target language audience. “As a matter of fact, a good translator should be familiar with the culture, customs, and social setting of the source and target language speakers. This awareness can improve the quality of translation to a great extent” (Akbari, 2013, p. 13). Proficiency and competency in the target language alone is not enough; rather, the translator must have a thorough knowledge of the target culture along with his competence and command in the target
language. “Translator will need, above all, to acquire a sound knowledge of the raw material with which they work: to understand what language is and how it comes to function for its users” (Baker, 1992, p. 4).

The influence and supremacy of the privileged nations also play an important role in conditioning the translation process and in choosing the works to be translated. According to Bassnett & Lefevere, “Cultures that are relatively homogeneous tend to see their own way of doing things as ‘naturally’, the only way, which just as naturally becomes the best way when confronted with other ways” (2003, p. 14). Cheyfitz (1991) has a very similar view and he claims that translation has always been used as an effective tool for colonial authorities, and it has deprived the indigenous inhabitants from expression and voice. During the British colonization, the identity of the American Indians was presented similar to that of the European identity in translations. This was in line with the imperialistic model in which the privileged nations ruled and controlled the weaker nations that were subservient.

On the basis of the works mentioned above, it can be concluded that the translators use both the strategies of foreignization and domestication in combination and there is not one single example which follows only one of these approaches. In fact, each work is a fusion of foreignization and domestication. These two approaches to translation always exist together parallel to each other and the difference is found only in the rate of occurrence of these strategies. On the basis of the above mentioned works which cite instances of foreignization and domestication, the present research along with finding the deforming tendency of rationalization also explores the application of domestication and foreignization in the themes of imperialism and human sufferings in the target text.

3. Research Methodology

The present research is qualitative and is rooted in the epistemology of social constructionism. The basic concept of social constructionism is that reality in total, as meaningful reality, is constructed in view of social perspectives (Crotty, 1998). This theory proposes that there is no single objective interpretation of reality; rather, humans construct numerous interpretations of reality depending mainly on contextual and ethnocentric elements, consisting of culture, religion, particular customs and historical background of people. This reality is constructed by different people in different ways depending upon the framework provided by their respective cultures that shapes the way in which they create their own versions of reality. Therefore, these preconceptions of the specific cultures affect almost every author and translator, and translated texts may not be an objective version of reality, but a depiction of their own viewpoints and perceptions influenced by the societies they reside in.

Das (2005) points out, “translation is a creative activity for it recreates a SL (source language) text in a new way in the TL (target language)... Translator is a reader, an interpreter, and a creator all in one” (p. 58). Hence, the translation of a literary work which consists of adaptation, addition and omission creates and constructs a new reality.
As the preconceptions of the specific cultures affect every author and translator and no translator is free from them; therefore, social constructionism is a suitable perspective for interpreting the translated text. In order to analyze the procedure of translation, the social context and conditions must be kept in view that affect a translator’s choices. Therefore, the researchers have analyzed the text by the perspective of social constructionism with regards to the understanding of syntactical structures present in the ST comparing it with the preferred syntactical structures of the translator in the TT.

The research method employed in the study is comparative and exploratory since it is going to compare source text which is in Urdu with its translated text, i.e., English. Moreover, the researchers aim to explore the syntactic structures which are used in both the texts encompassing socio-cultural contexts in which both the texts represent the themes of imperialism and human sufferings.

3.1 Berman’s Model of Translation

Berman proposes the idea of exposing the “foreignness” of the text. He describes that neutralization of translation causes the removal of “foreignness” from the text which results in the distortion of the foreign work. The idea encouraged Berman to present an analytic of translation for the aim to show the textual distortion which occurred through translation. It also exhibits the forces which result in the deformation of translation from its original. Berman describes his analytic as negative analytic because of its negative nature of investigating the textual deformations. However, he explains that the analytic might have a positive replacement if the negative tendencies of deformation of text are erased. Berman described twelve deforming tendencies to analyze the deformation in the process of translation. These are rationalization, clarification, expansion, ennoblement, qualitative impoverishment, quantitative impoverishment, the destruction of rhythm, the destruction of underlying networks of signification, the destruction of linguistic patterning, the destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization, the destruction of expressions and idioms, and the effacement of the superimposition of languages (Berman, 1985/2004). Our research is only delimited to the first deforming tendency which is rationalization. It is explained below.

3.1.1 Rationalization as a Deforming Tendency

This deforming tendency chiefly focuses on the distortion in syntactical structures. This encompasses altering the punctuation, identifying the sequence of sentences, reconstructing the order of the sentence and its division. Berman (1985/2004) even suggests that any change in subject verb order is considered as rationalization. Rationalization also holds abstraction of the source work, causing the text missing its genuineness. This also suggests rendering the noun with a verb form or maintaining a technique of generalization in the process of translation.
4. Analysis of Deforming Tendency in Selected Excerpts

This section compares the lexical items and syntactic structures present in the ST with some of the lexical choices and syntactical structures of the translator in the TT. In the presence of the differences in socio-cultural sensitivities between the source culture and target culture, it is important to explore how the translator represents the themes of imperialism and human sufferings of war in the translated text.

4.1.1 Excerpt 1. ST:  "اسی لیے کم پڑے لکھے لوگ قید کر دیے جاتے بین. اور اپ کیا توقع رکھتے بین. تلک جیل میں بے کیا؟ "

TT: ‘Is that why less educated people are put in jails? What about Tilak? He is in confinement.’ Everyone turned to look. The newspaperman’s face became flushed with anger, causing pink stripes to appear on his cheeks.

4.1.1.1 Rationalization. In this excerpt, the syntactic form of the first sentence in the ST is changed from a declarative sentence into an interrogative sentence in the TT. The first sentence in the ST is an assumption by the central character of the novel Naim that people are put to prison only because they are less educated but the interrogative syntactic form in the TT informs us that it is a question which demands an answer. This alters the structure of the ST. In the ST sentence, Naim concludes that this is the reason why the less educated people are put in jails whereas in the TT Naim questions the English journalist and asks, “Is that why less educated people are put in Jails?” Therefore, converting a declarative sentence into an interrogative sentence results in loss of grammatical category (structure), which deforms the structure and also changes the meaning of the ST.

The sentence, “Everyone turned to look” is an addition in the TT which is not present in the ST. This sentence is inserted after the third sentence, and its insertion spoils the order of the sentences of the original text. In the TT, this sentence shows that Naim’s
conversation with the newspaperman captures everyone’s attention and every person present in the party starts looking at Naim when Naim talks against the unfair British system. The TT expression also suggests that something is out of place that is why everyone turns to look at Naim. Moreover, it indicates that most of the people in the party did not actually appreciate what Naim said and his conversation was improper and out of place in the context of a party. Therefore, this addition is an over-translation which adds what is actually not there in the ST and results in deforming the meaning of the ST.

The next sentence, “ الخبراء انگریز کا چہرہ ایک دم غصے سے سرخ بو گیا دم غصے سے سرخ بو گیا “, is translated as “The newspaperman’s face became flushed with anger, causing pink stripes to appear on his checks”. The ST sentence is made longer in the TT and is converted to a compound sentence by adding the punctuation mark, i.e., comma. The simple translation of this sentence could be: “Suddenly, the English newspaperman’s face became red with anger” but the translator prefers to rationalize the text by adding the extra clause “causing pink stripes to appear on his checks”. Furthermore, the ST word انگریز which is a noun is omitted from the TT and the ST adjective اخبار نویس is made as a noun in the TT sentence. This conversion of noun from adjective is a movement from concrete to abstract, and it generalizes the meaning in the TT. This generalization is a tendency (technique, feature) of rationalization. As a result of this generalization, the TT does not inform the readers here that the newspaperman is British or English. Hence, a clear loss of meaning and grammatical category have been observed here.

4.1.2 Excerpt 2. ST:

“وہ عدالت میں تو پیش ہو گا۔ "نعم نئی خفگی سے کیا۔ ضرور بھی گا۔ ضرور بھی گا۔" وہاں نے ادمی بولا۔ "پہلی باری ہے قانون دان بونے بین۔ لیکن جیوری میں کونو بو ہے؟ تعمیرا کوئی چچا جیوری میں ہے۔"

(Hussein, 1963, p.45)

TT: ‘He is going to be charged’, Naim said to the man standing next to him. With great sarcasm, the man nodded his head repeatedly and said, ‘Yes, oh yes, yes indeed. Who will be the judge and who the jury? Not your uncle, young man, not our uncle.’ (Hussein, 1999, p.51).

4.1.2.1 Rationalization.

The ST sentence وہ عدالت میں تو پیش ہو گا۔ is translated as “He is going to be charged”. The ST expression is in simple future tense whereas the TT expression is in present continuous tense. In addition to it, the TT expression is in passive voice. The active voice of the same expression could be “The court is going to charge him” but the TT uses the passive voice. This change in the structure of the sentence also modifies the meaning of the ST. The subject (doer of action) in the TT is the court, so it shows that the court is going to charge him for his crime, whereas the ST informs the readers that he will present himself before the court and he will do it himself. Hence, this rationalization of the structure results in the loss of grammatical category and this maneuvering of the ST also deforms the TT.
An instance of rationalization can also be seen in the sentence, “who will be the judge and who the jury?” The ST sentence could be translated as: “but who will be in the jury?” but in the TT, there is an addition of the word “judge” and the interrogative pronoun “who” is used twice, once with the judge and once with the jury. The addition of the words “who” and “judge” not only modify the structure of the ST sentence, but also give a new meaning in the TT and make it explicit that along with the jury the judge will also be there. The translator has used this structure to emphasize the fact that justice will not be provided both by the judge and the jury. This modifies the syntactical structure of the ST and results in the deformation of the original text. Furthermore, both the words “judge” and “jury” are preceded by the definite article “the” which gives the impression that the man already knows what members this jury would constitute of. The use of the definite article also modifies the structure of the TT and results in grammatical loss.

The ST sentence is changed from an interrogative sentence to a declarative sentence in the TT. The ST sentence is translated as “Not your uncle, young man, not our uncle” and there is also addition of punctuation marks. The expression “young man” is inserted between the TT sentences by placing commas on either side. The ST sentence ends with a question mark, whereas the TT sentence consists of two commas and ends with a full stop. The sentence in the ST is a question, but the TT sentence does not start with a question word but instead starts with a negation word “Not”. This not only alters the structure of the ST sentence, but also changes the meaning of the ST expression. The ST sentence is a question which inquires whether he has any chacha (uncle) in the jury or not. Contrary to it, the TT sentence is a statement that informs the readers that he does not have any uncle in the jury. Therefore, it results in modifying the meaning and deforming the ST.

4.1.3 Excerpt 3. ST:

"حکومت برطانیہ کو بچانے کے لئے آپ کی ضرورت ہے۔ جوان اپنا نام دیں۔"

(Hussein, 2010, p.77)

TT: I want all young men to come forward and fight to save our country
(Hussein, 1999, p.85).

4.1.3.1 Rationalization.

The two sentences of the ST, i.e., "حکومت برطانیہ کو بچانے کے لئے آپ کی ضرورت ہے۔ جوان اپنا نام دیں۔" are combined into one single sentence in the TT. The ST sentence is a separate sentence. The word "جوان اپنا نام دیں۔" is taken from the second sentence and is inserted in the TT sentence by placing an adjective “all” before the word “young men”. In addition to this, the subject of the ST is changed from حکومت برطانیہ “(British Government)” to the personal pronoun “I” in the TT which shifts the focus of the sentence from حکومت برطانیہ to the person who is addressing the people of Roshan Pur. The modified structure of the TT sentence places stress on the person who is speaking and makes him important instead of the British government حکومت برطانیہ. Moreover, the ST expression حکومت برطانیہ is
translated as “our country” instead of British government. The ST noun بريطانيا is replaced by a more abstract noun “country” in the TT which results in generalization of the ST and is an instance of rationalization. The ST clearly states that young men are needed to save the British government as the British government is at war with the Germans. On the other hand, the pronoun “our” is added in the TT expression: “our country” which shows that it is a combined enemy of both Britain and Hindustan and the young men will fight to protect both Britain and Hindustan. Since the British are ruling over Hindustan, the use of the pronoun “our” in the TT changes the meaning of the sentence and states that it is the mutual enemy of both the British and the people of the subcontinent, and they have to fight together in this war to protect their country. Contrary to it, the ST clearly states that young men are needed to save the British government and not “our country”. Therefore, it can be clearly seen that the whole perspective is changed and the structural modifications in the above excerpt manipulate the entire meaning of the ST.

In addition to this, the expression “to come forward and fight” is inserted right in the middle of the TT sentence which alters the structure of the ST sentence. Although it does not bring any significant difference in the meaning of the sentence yet it deforms the structure of the ST.

4.1.4 Excerpt 4. ST:

аб کسی کو دم مارنے کی مجال نہ تھی۔ فوجیوں نے اپنا کام شروع کیا۔ کسانوں کے مجمعے میں ایک خاموش بلج پیدا ہوئی لیکن وہ ایک ایک ننگے بدن ڈاکٹر کے آگے سے گزرتے رہے。

(Hussein, 1963, p.79)

TT: Roshan Agha’s word was law. (Hussein, 1999, p.85).

4.1.4.1 Rationalization.

The first sentence of the ST اب کسی کو دم مارنے کی مجال نہ تھی is restructured in the TT as “Roshan Agha’s word was law”. Here the translator has completely modified the structure of the ST sentence. Both the sentences are declarative but the ST sentence is a negative sentence which is made by adding the negation نہ (no) after the Urdu verb مجال whereas the TT sentence is a positive sentence. This restructuring of the sentence rationalizes the TT. The target text uses the name (proper noun) of the landlord of the village, whereas the ST explains the same context without using the proper noun. The TT informs the readers that it was due to Roshan Agha that the villagers had to go through the insulting and degrading process in which the common villagers were examined by the doctor but, in fact, they had to go through this process on the orders of the Britishers who needed the people of Hindustan to go and fight a war for them against the Germans. Hence, the perspective is changed by the change in the structure of the TT sentence.

The above excerpt shows that the villagers are not given any respect by the colonizers. Although these villagers are going to fight for the British yet it is very evident that the British have no care for their self-respect. These poor peasants mean nothing to the British.
Imperialism is a central theme of the novel; however, this imperialistic attitude is softened in the TT; consequently, it harms the theme of imperialism.

4.1.5 Excerpt 5. ST: ویلے سے پیس قدم کر فاصلے پر رحم دین پڑا تھا۔

TT: Next he came across Rahm Din, who had been hit in the neck and blood had collected in a puddle, his sightless eyes staring from his head. Naim took a mouthful of snow from the ground and kept crawling (Hussein, 1999, p. 112).

4.1.5.1 Rationalization.

The first two sentences of the source text are combined into one single sentence in the target text by adding punctuation marks and changing its division. This process is known as rationalization. Both the sentences are blended into one by inserting the relative pronoun ‘who’ in the TT to refer back to the subject ‘Rahm Din’. The ST expression رحم دین پڑا تھا is rationalized and translated as “he came across Rahm Din”. The subject of the ST رحم دین is moved to the object position in the TT and the third person pronoun “he” is inserted in the TT at the subject position. In the ST the verb پڑا تھا comes after the name رحم دین whereas in the TT the verb “came across” is coming before the name “Rahm Din”. This is because the translator has changed the whole structure of the sentence and recomposed it which also modifies the meaning of the ST sentence. The ST informs the readers that Rahm Din was lying there while the TT expression means that he (Naim) found him by chance. Therefore, rationalization not only alters the structure of the sentence but also modifies its meaning. The ST expression اوں خون بہ بہ کر گر گر رحم دین مینجمو بو ریا تها is in past continuous tense which is translated into English in past perfect tense as “and blood had collected in a puddle”. As the ST sentence is in past continuous tense its literal translation could be “and the blood was flowing out and was being collected in this puddle (ditch)” but the TT sentence is a reduction and rationalization of the ST sentence. In addition to this, the expression “his sightless eyes staring from his head” is inserted at the end of this sentence by adding a comma which deforms the structure of the original sentence and rationalizes it.

The literal translation of the ST expression اس نے برف کا ایک ٹکڑا ڈالا تھا کر آئی انتہا کرمنہ مین دیا is “He picked a piece of snow and put it in his mouth” but it is translated as “Naim took a mouthful of snow from the ground”. The ST pronoun اس نے is substituted for the Noun “Naim” which changes the grammatical category of the ST word. Moreover, the translator does not provide the English of the ST words انتہا کرمنہ; therefore, he inserts the prepositional phrase “from the ground” to refer to the fact that it was picked up from the ground. This prepositional phrase is not used in the TT; hence, the translator distorts the structure of the original sentence which results in rationalization of the text. The remaining part of the sentence اس نے برف کا ایک ٹکڑا ڈالا تھا is translated as “took a mouthful of snow” which is semantically equivalent to the ST expression. According to the English dictionary Lexico
(2019), the word mouthful means, “A quantity of food or drink that fills or can be put in the mouth.” Therefore, the word “mouthful” means any edible thing that can be put in the mouth. Thus, the expression “took a mouthful” is equivalent to the ST expression یک ٹکڑا منہ میں دالا as the word “mouthful” and the article “a” cover both the ST expressions یک ٹکڑا منہ میں دالا respectively. Similarly, the words برف کا is equivalent to “of snow”. Although the overall meaning of the sentence remains the same yet the sentence is restructured and recomposed which results in rationalization of text.

The TT is domesticated as a result of rationalization, and it misses the genuineness of the source text and does not convey the suffering and pain in the same way as it is depicted in the source text.

5. Conclusion

The researchers aimed to examine the structural inequalities in the ST and TT, and also, intended to explore whether the translator was able to preserve the ideology and essence of the themes of imperialism and of human sufferings in the target text. The study aimed at finding answers to the following questions:

1. How can the syntactical nonequivalence in English and Urdu cause disturbance in the process of translation?
2. How does the semantic loss take place in the themes of translation/transformation of imperialism and human sufferings in TT?

The research reveals that the structural inequalities between the two texts distort and deform the intended meanings of the ST in the TT. The research intended to find out the deforming tendency of rationalization and how it affects the structure of the TT. Rationalization that is concerned with the structural changes in the target text is encountered in all the five excerpts. This encompasses altering the punctuation marks, changing word positions and reconstructing the order of the sentence. Rationalization takes place in all the selected excerpts and more than one instance of rationalization is found in all the excerpts which reveals that the syntax or language structures of the original text are deformed.

A considerable loss of meaning is found in the themes related to the topics of imperialism and human sufferings encountered in resistance to imperialism. These themes have been altered and the thought and ideology of these themes found in the ST is compromised in the TT. At certain places, a loss in the ideological meaning is observed. The loss in the ideological meaning is explained below with regards to each theme.

The ST informs the readers about the brutalities of war and about the sufferings of soldiers and of common people. In this connection, the ST gives the details of the human sufferings and loss of innocent lives encountered during partition in resistance to imperialism and during World War I. In addition to it, the ST also informs the readers that this war is imposed upon the people of Hindustan by the British. This war is basically between the British and the Germans (Excerpt 4 and 5 explain this concept) but the British use the human resources of Hindustan and order the villagers to give their names for fighting
against the Germans in World War I. Therefore, the poor villagers and peasants from different areas of Hindustan are forced by the British authorities to participate in the war. The ST describes the miseries and suffering of these people during war which they have to face owing to the British in a war which is not their own. However, the translator in the TT modifies these sufferings of the villagers probably because he does not want to represent such things in the target text which go against the imperialistic nations and might be unpleasing for the target English audience. Moreover, the fact that this novel was selected by UNESCO for translation into English language and was also published by UNESCO could be a reason in the modification of such details.

The imperialistic attitude of the colonizers that was full of hatred and resentment for the people of the subcontinent is also not reflected with the same intensity as it is found in the ST. Therefore, it can be clearly seen that the whole perspective is changed and the structural modifications in the selected excerpts manipulate the entire meaning of the ST.

The analysis further reveals that many details of the ST are modified in the TT, and the TT provides a more objective and concise version of the ST. This is because of the change in context and audience of the novel. The novel is translated for the target audience belonging to the imperialistic nations. This shift in context results in a significant amount of deformation in the target text which affects the essence of the themes of imperialism and of human sufferings. The details of these themes have been minimized in the TT and the cohesive effect created by the ST is lost in the TT due to rationalization. All these changes modify the structure of the source language according to the structure of the target language which can have two-fold purposes. Firstly, the translator aims to naturalize the translation to make it seem like an original writing and not a translated text. Secondly, he aims to create a fluent and lucid text to facilitate the target text readers. The target text is integrated and assimilated according to the socio-cultural sensitivities of the English culture, and hence the genuineness of the original work is lost. It can be said that the presence of rationalization found in the comparative analysis of the Urdu novel Udaas Naslain (1963) and its English translation The Weary Generation (1999) shows that the translator has largely domesticated the target text according to the target culture and has compromised on semantic equivalence at many places.

6. References


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