Original Research Article

Error Analysis in Korean-English Translation-with Special Reference to *The Ropewalker* by Yi Chong Jun

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Abstract: This paper aims to discuss the problems faced by Indian students majoring in Korean language while translating the story "The Ropewalker" from Korean to English by analyzing their translation errors and suggest more effective ways to give students guidelines to produce better translation work for different translation situations. For this research paper, 15 Indian students of Korean Language are selected and each is made to translate portions from the novel "The Ropewalker" by Yi Chong Jun. The translated texts are then analyzed thoroughly based on the findings of text linguistics, especially those of Beaugrande and Dressler (1981)'s Seven standards of textuality and discussed. A text can only be called a text if it satisfies all the seven standards of textuality. Analyzing the errors shows that among Beaugrande and Dressler's Seven standards of textuality, most of the errors are seen in coherence, informativity and acceptability. Lastly, this research was taken up with the hope that it will provide a guide to help avoid such translation errors in the future.
Keywords: Translation error, Beaugrande and Dressler, The Ropewalker, Text Linguistics, Cohesion, Informativity, Acceptability.

INTRODUCTION

A good translator and interpreter, it goes without saying, needs to have expert understanding of the target language. His purpose is to communicate information as accurately and naturally as he can in the target language. With this aim, a translator usually begins the translation process by first analyzing the text type and accordingly deciding on his translation strategy. Thus, it is essential that the translator is an astute reader of the source text with the ability and skill set to understand all the subtle nuances, allusions and differences.

For Indian students of Korean language department aspiring to become translators (Korean to English and English to Korean), they have the added task of mastering both English and Korean first as neither is their first language [1]. Also, Korean and English belong to very different language groups, each having distinct word forms, grammar, syntax, etc. Thus, the students need to pay extra attention and care to avoid the various types of error that can occur when translating (eg, grammatical errors, inappropriate choice of words, comprehension difficulty due to cultural differences, unnatural expressions). Thus, studying errors to better understand why they occur forms a very important aspect of translation for Indian students of Korean language.

This paper will try to focus on researching and analyzing errors between English and Korean in English translations of Korean text. It will also seek to give students guidelines to produce better translation work for different translation situations.

For this study, a short novel "줄광대 (The Ropewalker)" written by Yi Chong Jun is selected. 15 Indian students [2] are made to translate few selected parts from the story from source text Korean to English. The collected

translations are then analyzed thoroughly based on the findings of text linguistics, especially those of Beaugrande and Dressler 1981's seven standards of textuality [3].

The layout of this paper is as follows: Section 2 discusses the theoretical background; Section 3 analyzes the translation errors and Section 4 is a more detailed discussion of the findings of Section 3.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kim Kyung-Suk [4], in her paper examined 107 University students' errors in translating 76 words long English passage and another 128 words long English passage into Korean. She focused on errors regarding diverse lexical units such as individual word, multi-word, collocation, formulaic expression and sentence frame and head. She classified the errors into nine categories, namely: 1) wrong word or phrase, 2) incorrect word sense, 3) wrong part of speech, 4) detour, 5) difference in the acuteness of meaning, 6) compound word, 7) addition, 8) literal or partial translation of multi-word expression and 9) intentional avoidance. Among these 9 categories, the three categories that show the higjest rate of error are word phrase – 40%, intentional avoidance – 15% and incorrect word sense – 12%.

Yi Hye-seon [5] examines the types of errors in English-Korean translation done by the average Korean University students. She looked for and studied the difficulties related to translation that the students face and their translation strategies based on the empirical analysis. Her results show that errors are of two types – linguistic factors and extra-linguistic factors. In extra-linguistic factors, errors occur due to five difficulties in translation, namely: 1) vocabulary-related difficulties 2) grammar/syntax-related difficulties 3) difficulties of the topic-related knowledge 4) difficulties of the sociocultural background knowledge and 5) difficulties of paraphrasing

Park Ocksue [6] analyses the errors in translating designators and examines the results and implications. After analyzing the data, the degree of the errors is categorized as 'serious' (where the meaning of the text is damaged and conveys different message compared to the source text) and 'partial' (which does not affect understanding of the context). Results show that 18 errors out of 22 are classified as serious and very few were partial errors. The reasons for the cause of serios errors are as follows: in a long and complicated sentence, the students are unable to grasp the directive target of the designator in the sentence, and in a sentence with more than two designators, the students are unable to comprehend who the directive target is.

These three authors mentioned above share the same opinion of many famous linguists and experts that Translation is not simply an exchange of words or an exchange of sentences between two different languages but also between two different cultures and society. In addition to that, Kim Kyung-suk, in her paper, presented and thoroughly examined the diverse lexical errors made during translation; Yi Hye-seon [5] focussed on translation errors committed due to linguistic and extra-linguistic factors while Park Ocksue [6], in her paper, talks about the errors in translating designators and the reasons behind it. But in this paper, effort will be made to discuss and analyse the problems of translation based on the findings of text linguistics, especially those of Beaugrande and Dressler [3].

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Many well-known linguists and philologists have defined *translation* in many different ways. Catford [7] defines translation as "the replacement of a textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)". This definition shows that translation is a process where shifts occur between two different languages. It means that translation is not simply an exchange of words or an exchange of sentences between two languages but also between two different cultures. So, it is necessary that the translator knows the two cultures in depth.

Translation is an effort to achieve maximum equivalence between two cultures and two languages despite the underlying obstacle inherent in language differences. While it is important to convey as closely as possible the intentions and thoughts of an author, translation must also be done to convey the author's thoughts in the most natural way (also known as: natural expressions).

In order to achieve all these, we take into consideration Beaugrande and Dressler 1981's seven standards of textuality: cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, situationality, informativity and intertextuality [3].

Text linguistics is the study of how texts function in human interaction. A *text* is a communicative occurrence which meets the seven standards of textuality [8]. If any of these standards is not satisfied, the text will not be considered communicative. And texts that are not communicative are treated as non-texts.

The first standard is called Cohesion. Cohesion is concerned with the ways the components of the surface text (the actual words we see and hear) are mutually connected within a sequence. The surface components depend upon each other according to grammatical forms and conventions and therefore cohesion rests upon grammatical dependencies.

The second standard is Coherence and concerns the ways in which the components of the textual world (the configuration of concepts and relations which underlie the surface text) are mutually accessible and relevant.

In other words, Cohesion is the act of forming a united whole while Coherence is the quality of being logical and able to be understood. Cohesion is the bricks and cement that makes up the building and Coherence is the building. Bricks and cement can be laid in any form to create any structure but it is only when they are laid together in a proper fashion that a building can be formed. Similarly, a text can be cohesive but it can only be coherent if it gives proper meaning.

ST: 그런게 어디 있어!
TT1: Where is that?
TT2: Don't be silly. / What are you talking about!?

TT1 strictly follows the sentence structure of ST. It is a Cohesive text. However, it is a result of direct translation of ST and it does not convey the meaning the speaking wants to imply. The expression "그런게 어디 있어" is usually followed by an exclamatory mark and is quite often used when a story sounds absurd or doesn't make sense.

Example
A: I saw an alien yesterday.
B: 그런게 어디 있어!

Translating the ST as TT2 might not be Cohesive but it makes sure that the correct meaning of the expression is conveyed and so it is Coherent.
Whereas Cohesion and Coherence are text-centered notions, Intentionality and Acceptability are user-centered notions.

The third standard, Intentionality concerns with the attitudes and intentions of the text producer as he uses cohesion and coherence. Without Cohesion and Coherence, due to breakdown of communication, intended goals of a text may not be achieved. However, depending on the conditions and situations in which a text is being used, the intended goal of a text may still be attained even if cohesion and coherence are not upheld.

In other words, the third standard, Intentionality is the way a text producer makes use of a text in order to convey the meaning he wants to convey.

ST: But that was because…. didn't you get my message?
TT: 그런데 그것은…..내 문자 못 받았어?

In this example, cohesion is not maintained. In such sentence where there is no connection between the two sentences, we must look into the context of the conversation. We can see in this example that though Cohesion is not maintained in this sentence, the speaker still succeeds in achieving the goal of finding out whether the text receiver received his message or not.

Acceptibility, which is the fourth standard, concerns the text receiver's attitude that a text should contain useful information or details worth accepting. In order to consider a text's acceptability, the type of text, political and sociocultural setting and cohesion and coherence are important factors.

ST: The apple doesn't fall far from the tree
TT1: 사과는 나무에서 멀리 떨어지지 않는다.
TT2:부전자전. / 아이는 부모를 닮는다.

The saying "The apple doesn't fall far from the tree" means a child usually has a similar character or qualities to his or her parents. TT1 is the direct translation of ST which will not be accepted by the Korean speaker. The more acceptable translation would be TT2.

The fifth standard, Informativity is the extent to which the contents of a text are expected or unexpected, known or unknown, certain or uncertain, etc. for the text receiver. Due to unforeseen variability, a text will always be informative at least to some degree no matter how predictable a text may be. The level of Informativity should not exceed a point where a text becomes too complicated and at the same time it should also not be so low that it results in rejection of the text. Informativity is very important in order to understand and predict the meaning of a text by a receiver using the amount of information given by a message.

The sixth standard of textuality, Situationality concerns with the factors which make a text relevant to a situation of occurrence. The situation or time and place in which a text is exchanged influence the comprehension of the text. For example,

The Indians slaughtered the bear.
인디언이 곰을 잡았다.

The example given above can give different meanings depending on where and when it was mentioned. If it is a text in a history book, it can mean the Indians actually killed an animal which is a bear. But if it's a text mentioned in a sports magazine, it means a team named Indian won a match against a team named bear.

Intertextuality, the seventh standard, concerns with the factors which make the utilization of a source text dependent upon knowledge of one or more previously encountered texts. If the receiver does not have prior knowledge of a relevant text, communication may fail because the understanding of the source text is thereby obscured. For example,

I know you're lying. I can see your nose is growing.
네가 거짓말 하는 거 다 알아. 너의 코가 자라는 것을 볼수 있어.

For a text receiver to understand this example, he must have a prior knowledge of Pinocchio, a fictional character and the protagonist of the children's novel "The Adventures of Pinocchio". Translating this text as it is into Korean is not a problem as Pinocchio is a character well known and well received worldwide. But in general, if the content of a text has elements (e.g., a metaphor, an example, an analogy) that may not necessarily have wide currency in the society/culture of the target reader, then we see the need to appropriately translate it into something (e.g., a similar metaphor/example/analogy nearest in meaning to the original one) which the target reader can understand.

METHODOLOGY

The novel "줄광대 (The Ropewalker)" by Yi Chong Jun has all the elements needed for this research such as narrative part, conversational part and also cultural elements. Moreover, I have selected this work in the hope that it will to some extent help spread awareness about the writer and his works. Yi Chong Jun is a well-known writer in South Korea. Some of his famous works include "The Wounded", "Seopyeonje", "Your Paradise", etc. Despite this, there are still many in the field of Korean Language who still has no knowledge about Yi Chong Jun or about his works.

Portions of the short story that translators have a higher propensity of committing an error in translating due to different cultural background, lack of text linguistics background, etc. are selected. The summary of the story has been provided to the students beforehand along with a contextual explanation beside each selected portion.

In Section 4, two examples from amongst common translation errors for each text are selected and thoroughly discussed.

The translated texts are then collected and each translated text is analyzed thoroughly based on the findings of text linguistics, especially those of Beaugrande and Dressler (1981)'s seven standards of textuality [3].

The subjects of study for this paper are 15 Indian students majoring in Korean Language. Five are studying in India (Jawaharlal Nehru University) while ten are studying at a university in Korea at the time of survey. All 15 students have advanced TOPIK level (5 or 6) and speak fluent English.

Translation error Analysis

A translator needs to pay close attention to all the details in the source text and transform the same picture into the target text. To do that, he must first analyze the source text based on standards of textuality to grasp and understand the hidden meanings and intention of the text and only then must he try to render it to the target text, again basing it on

the standards of textuality. However, it is important that the translator also makes use of his knowledge, ideology and creativity in applying the seven standards so as to produce the most natural translation.

In this section we will analyze the errors based on text linguistics, especially those of Beaugrande and Dressler [1]. Translation errors to be analyzed are those errors found in the translation works collected from 15 Indian students. And for the analyses, 2 representative errors for each case are selected from out of the 15 translations.

The original text of the story "The Ropewalker (줄광대)" is taken from the book "Snowy Road" by Yi Chong Jun [9].

Error Analysis 1:
ST: 아까여자는<u>슈미즈</u>바람이되자마자재촉을해댔다.
TT1: Underwear
TT2: Undergarment

One carelessly translated word can adversely affect the essence of the entire sentence. One such example is the translation of the word "슈미즈". The girl mentioned in the sentence is the prostitute whose service the journalist 'I' has purchased for the night. The author is specific as to what the girl was wearing. He used "슈미즈", a French word. Chemise (shu.meez) is a woman's sleeveless undergarment typically more delicate and usually more revealing. Translating it simply as "Underwear" or "Undergarment" is not enough to convey the essence the author wants to convey as these two words are very general and can mean any type of inner garments. So the appropriate translation of "슈미즈" would be "Chemise".

Error Analysis 2:
ST: "<u>누추한</u> 곳을 어떻게……"
TT1: Filthy
TT2: Squalid

In the above sentence, the error is in the translation of the word "누추하다". The word "누추하다" has several meanings: shabby, humble, filthy, squalid, sordid, dirty, untidy, etc. In such a situation, a translator should make the correct choice of word that will help convey the meaning of the situation clearly.

The above sentence was said by the trumpet man to the journalist "I" when he came to his house to meet him. The condition of the house as explained by the journalist was filled with an unpleasant odor. However, even in such situation, calling one's own place 'filthy or squalid' seems implausible. So, the right translation would be "How come you're here in such a shabby place…."

Error Analysis 3:
ST: 그러나 너는 정직한 <u>창녀다</u>.
TT1: Prostitute
TT2: Whore

The journalist "I" after spending some time in "C" town and getting to know the girl better, comes to realize that the girl is honest and is a good person. He said the above statement to the prostitute girl before leaving the town.

Translating "창녀" into "whore" is inappropriate because the word whore is mostly considered an offensive term. Replacing "whore" with "prostitute" (as in "You are an honest prostitute" might also seem correct in this situation as the word simply denotes her profession without carrying any other meaning, offensive or otherwise. But the likelihood of the phrase "an honest prostitute" actually appearing in spoken or written English is very slim. "An honest person" is a more plausible phrase. The more accurate and natural translation, therefore, will be: "You are an honest person."

Error Analysis 4:
ST: 그 며칠을 통해 운이 여자에게 한 말을, 여자는 전부 기억하고 있었습니다.
TT1: The girl was recollecting all the words that Un had said to him in the past couple of days.
TT2: The girl remembers whatever Un had told her the past couple of days.

In the above two translations of ST, we see two different types of errors. TT1's error is in using the wrong word choice and TT2 though correct in word choice, makes use of the wrong tense.

"Recollect" means to recall or collect one's thought again, especially about past events while "remember" is to have an image in one's memory. Not knowing the difference between the two can create error while translating. The author here wants to convey that the girl has all the information in her memory about the talk she had with Un. So, the proper word should be "remember" and not "recollect". While TT2 has the correct word choice, the error is in Tense. ST uses "기억하고 있었습니다" which is in past tense. So, the translation that will convey the original meaning more accurately would be "She remembered everything Un had said to her the past couple of days."

Error Analysis 5:
ST: 워낙 처음 있는 일이라 <u>부처님</u> 같은 운도 약간 호기심이 돌았다.
TT1: Because this was something that happened to him for the first time, Buddha-like Un became a little curious.
TT2: Even Un, who was like Buddha, was curious as it was something which happened for the first time.

According to Wikipedia, the word Buddha means "the awakened one" or "the enlightened one". Other meanings include a person who stills the fires of desires and attachment. The author of the story uses the word "부처님" in this context to mean Un generally had no interest in women. Moreover, the word Buddha can have different connotations across different cultures and countries. Thus, translating it verbatim as "Buddha" is not enough to convey the complete sense of the sentence. Here we see the need of Transcreation [10], a process considered as something more than mere transfer of meanings from one linguistic and cultural system to another. Its aim is to create a fluid text completely accessible to the target reader. Keeping this in mind, the appropriate way to translate this sentence would be to omit the word "Buddha" and add more words to explain Un's personality. i.e., "Because this was something that happened to him for the first time, Un, who generally was disinterested in women, couldn't help but become a little curious."

Informativity means the degree to which information is new or unpredictable and generally it applies to semantics. If a word is considered unfamiliar to the target reader, the translator must add a description (in the form of parenthesis, footnote, etc.) or replace it with another word/phrase that is well known to the reader of the target text. In cases where a text contains proper nouns with word play or particular meaning, some information may be lost in the process of translation. In order to avoid such mistranslation due to informativity in the original text, the translator must substitute it with another word/phrase with the same or similar effect. In the analysis of translation errors 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, the translators did not follow this rule thereby resulting in mistranslated or poorly translated work.

Error Analysis 6:
ST: 이 여잔 그런 거 절대로 손 안 대요.
TT1: She never touches anything like that.
TT2: This woman would never touch such kind of thing.

Having a distrust for the prostitute girl, the journalist "I" pointed towards his portable recorder and camera, and asked the errand boy whether he would be responsible if his belongings were to be found missing in the morning. The above sentence is the boy's reply to him. TT1 and TT2 used word for word translation strategy resulting in creating an unnatural expression for the situation. The errand boy wants to let the journalist know that she is not someone who would steal anything. TT1 and TT2 translated the expression "절대로 손 안 대요" literally as "never touch". For such situation, to make the conversation sound natural, it is advisable to translate it as "She will never do such a thing."

Error Analysis 7:
ST: 어쨌든 지금 여자가 자고 있다.

    "여봐!"

    나는 다시 여자의 뺨에 손바닥을 대소 흔들었다.
TT1: "See"
TT2: "Huh"

The girl came to the room to spend the night with the journalist under the agreement that she should not sleep before he does. Finding the girl already sleeping, he tried to wake her up. In this situation, the most natural way to translate would be "Hey".

A same text can convey different meanings according to who said it and when, where and how it was said. The same text can be accepted by some reader as a text but not by other readers. It is because a reader's criteria for a text are relative and subjective. Acceptability is a general prerequisite for a successful communication in a text. Especially in the translation of conversation, it is required that the standard of acceptability should be observed so as to produce a natural sounding conversation.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper is to study and analyze the errors found in the translations of the story "The Ropewalker" by Yi Chung Jun based on text linguistics. Many scholars have stressed the significance of error analysis. Corder [11], in his influential article, states that "they are significant in three different ways. First, to the teacher, in that they show how far towards the goal the learner has progressed. Second, they provide to the researcher evidence of how a language is acquired, what strategies the learner is employing in his learning of a language. Third, they are indisputable to the learner himself because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn" (pp.161)

Literary translation is considered to be the most difficult field of translation as the translator must not only reproduce the content of the source text but also reveal the writer's unique style of writing. Implementing text logistics can help obtain the desired translation work without having to compromise on the content of the original text. In this paper, by analyzing some translation errors we can find out what strategy to use in order to reproduce the intended meaning of the original text into the target text.

Analyzing the errors shows that among Beaugrande and Dressler's seven standard of textuality, most of the errors are seen in coherence, informativity and acceptability. A text can only be called a text if it satisfies all the seven standards of textuality. In this paper, translation errors made are thoroughly analyzed and corrected based on these seven standards of textuality. In Error 6, translation error occurred because coherence is not maintained. Coherence is a basic component without which a sentence can not make sense.

For a successful conversation to take place, acceptability is one of the components to be considered. The translated text of Error 7 can be considered a text by some reader but not a text by others. The error is because of this nature of text.

Error 1, 2, 3, and 4 is due to the translator's inability to appropriately understand the standard of informativity thus resulting in failure to convey the intended meaning of the source text.

As already mentioned, this study is conducted based on text linguistics. Rather than focusing on grammatical and structural error of the translated sentences, this study gives more importance to whether the translations can convey the intended message of the source text in the most natural target language by focussing on Coherence of the sentence which is the dominant standard of textuality, user-centred standard Acceptibility and finally, informativity that helps connect two different cultures.

In order to achieve the desired translation, it is necessary that we not only study the language and the types of text but try to reproduce a translated text taking into consideration the problems arising when text linguistics is not applied. Despite the obstacles inherent in language differences, the original text and the target text can be viewed as same if all the linguistic subtleties and possibilities of the target language are retained.

REFERENCE

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