English Language Topic and Comment Pattern as a Suggested Method for Translating English into Arabic Written Discourse

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Abstract:
It has recently been observed that there is a kind of mismatching in translating English into Arabic language written discourses. The data are based on the conceptual analysis of two English educational terms and how far these two terms have precisely been given their appropriate Arabic translation. The main topic of this paper is to find best-fit Arabic translation to English language texts as a source language. That is, the paper has followed a driven qualitatively low – explicit investigation using only the researcher's own observations. What has been proposed in the literature of translation as an applied linguistic field proved to be insufficient for translating English texts into Arabic. Making use of contrastive rhetoric and text linguistics as theoretical fields, the writer of this paper suggests English Language topic and comment as a suitable pattern for translating English to Arabic written discourses. It is hoped that this alternative can function as a practical strategy and serve as a convincing addition to the schools of translations.

Keywords: Arabic into English Translation, Contrastive Rhetoric, Text Linguistics, Topic vs. Comment

Introduction:

It has recently been observed that until now, there is no adequate translation from English as a source language (SL) to Arabic Language as a target language (TL). All too often, what it is believed to be as acceptable Arabic translations may, in fact, be considered as only surface forms translations or structural equivalent translation. This mismatching in the translation between the two mentioned languages, however, may be attributed to the development of English language in the field of text – linguistics. That is, English language linguistics now embraces new linguistic terms such as "utterance" "text", " spoken and written discourses" , etc. The progress of the English language in these linguistic fields should not be overlooked in translating English into Arabic texts. Both pragmatic and semantic types of translation are also considered to be as untenable because they seek to measure effect or illocutionary effect in readers, which is both impossible and impractical; this is clearly seen in the Bible translators such as Nida (1964), Nida & Taber (1969), and Larson (1984). This kind of mismatching in translation may, however, be the reason which makes the writer of this paper search for a best-fit tool for English to Arabic translation .

Obviously, no translation process, whatever it is, can convert the sweetness of the rhetorical mode of a certain language into another language. Therefore, translation and interpreting can be considered as linguistic mediation forms that render written or oral text from one language to another as pointed out by Baker and Gonzalez (2011, p. 39). Rendering written or oral texts is a sweeping generalization, and such a proposition may be accepted if a text driven message is exactly what is intended from the process of text rendition

The Sudan high educational system has recently adopted Arabicization (using Arabic as a medium of instruction in the higher education institutions) as a formal policy to be followed throughout the country. As result, one would anticipate reliable, subtle, and tangible English to Arabic translation processes as end specifications targets. That is, for Arabicization policy to be fully implemented, a need for drawing policies of strategic translations is deemed to be of necessity. Therefore, for more effective translation that helps enhance the Arabicization process, the following questions should also be clearly answered. What is to be translated? Are there any authoritative decisions sorting out certain English language scientific books (utterances) to be translated into Arabic? Are there any specialized committees that undertake the process of revision to what has been translated? Does the term "Arabicization" involve the process of translation, or does it only confine the Arabic language as a medium of instruction in the higher education institutions?

It is noticeable, as an example, that English language educational terms translated into Arabic do not quite hit the mark. For example, the Arabic translations for the two educational concepts "distance education" and "best practices" have completely missed out what is intended educationally by these English language utterances. The present paper endeavor, then, is to provide an English language topic and comment pattern as a new method of translation that may function as a practical replacement for the aforementioned three types of translation. The term topic and comment is borrowed from Connor (1996, p. 8097-). It is a comprehensive approach that conveys the whole picture of the linguistic utterance by not letting a text message to get lost while performing the act of translation.

Topic vs. comment in text linguistics:

Text linguistics handles language away from idealization, a process which dominated sentence linguistics from 1930 through the1960s (Levinson, 1989). This process eliminates context or circumstance of the language usage to language that is not idealized, that is to language in use, or to discourse analysis (Cook,1989, p. 10). Crystal (1991, p. 116) described text linguistics as written as well as spoken utterances. However, this field has been treated in recent publications only as a written, not spoken, form.

The Prague school of linguistics has contributed much to text linguistics domain by initiating what is called functional sentence perspective, or topic and comment pattern, for writing English language paragraphs. Connor (1996, p. 81) pointed out that topic is what the sentence is about, whereas comment is what is said about it. Topic also refers to old or given information that the writer thinks the reader already knows. Comment, on the other hand, is new information the writer thinks that the reader does not know. Conner (1996) illustrated that in the following:

> In most sentences in Western Indo-European languages such as English, new information is placed at the end, in the predicate. In most texts, comments or new information of one sentence becomes the topic or the old information of the next sentence .This constitutes, the information dynamic of texts (p. 81)

This notion of information dynamic of textis hard to quantify, control, and be understood or translated unless it is conceived as old information that the writer thinks the reader already knows and new information that the writer thinks the reader does not know. This range of old and new information constitutes the starting and ending points of what is called a linguistic utterance. This type of linguistic thinking may give a justification for some linguists to widen the concept of an utterance to include a word, a sentence, sentences, a chapter, or sometimes a whole book or a novel (Cook, 1989; Widdowson, 1990). This idea of an utterance and how it can affect what is preceding and what is succeeding in the interpretation of coherent texts was identified by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, p. 2). Vince (1993, p. 84), for instance, in response to the question of how we choose what to say showed that what we say depends on how we feel. Hartouni (1997, p. 14) provided an answer to the question how we feel by showing it as a notion which points to our epistemological, ontological, and philosophical assumptions. This notion, Hartouni added, also includes, "ways of seeing, of decoding, deciphering, translating and interpreting." What has been said coincides with Kaplan's (1966) definition of contrastive rhetoric as a field that embraces pedagogy as well as knowledge and awareness about difference in writing patterns across cultures.

Translators and interpreters have become important economic as well as political players in the services sector worldwide, and this is due to the role they play in reconciling between our present world extremes. Baker and Gonzalez (2011, p. 39) have shown that there is an exceed in the global translation industry that is expected to reach at £12 billion in 2010   (Allied Business Intelligence Inc, 2002). Translators, the writers added, with their important roles in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan have become well-known as important political players. Because of these important roles assigned to translators, the writer of this paper believes those translators who use English as a source language should seriously consider English language topic and comment

pattern as an idiosyncratic fact, which distinguishes the English language writing system from other languages systems. For example, Leki (1991, 1992as cited in Connor, 1996) also pointed out this characteristic of English language writing: "English – speaking readers are convinced by facts, statistics, and illustrations in arguments; they move from generalization to specific examples and expect explicit links between main topics and subtopics; and they value originality" (p.167).

Expecting explicit links in English language writing topics and subtopics, may, however, support the idea of English language topic and comment pattern of translation. That is, English language texts should be treated as linguistic utterances, whose range may vary from a single word to a whole novel. For this reason, the present study presents English language topic and comment pattern as an alternative to the old tradition methods of translation which do not best fit English to Arabic translations.

Methodology:
This paper follows a low-explicit, heuristic investigation which mainly focuses on understanding educational terms that are translated into Arabic language and the extent to which they are suitably matched or best-fit the original English language as a source language. The methodology adopted attempts to be synergistic by making use of contrastive rhetoric, text linguistics as a theoretical field, and translation theory as an applied linguistic field. Having read some educational English textbooks on "distance education" and "best practices ", the researcher made short visits to four faculties of education in Sudan to determine if there are matching translations for these two terms or not. The four educational colleges are as follows: Faculty of Education,   Nile Valley University; Teacher College, Nile Valley University; Faculty of Education, Khartoum University; and Faculty of Education, Azaim Al-Azhari University.

Results:
This paper concludes that there is nominal translated literature on these two educational terms in the faculties of education that were visited by the researcher. It has been observed that the Arabic equivalent for "distance education" has been assigned to all types of "correspondence education", "correspondence study", "home study " independent study", "external study" , and "distance teaching" , "teaching in distance", irrespective of the educational stance whether it is at the high, further, or bachelor level. There are also no Arabic equivalents for "best practices", and there are also no organizations for evaluating and synthesizing evidence based practices in general or in a specific way for those with disabilities, such as those mentioned by Hess (2008). What is arrived at can be summarized in the following propositions with the hope that they can appropriately deliver good hypotheses to be tested descriptively by other researchers in the future.
English to Arabic translators do not follow English language topic and comment pattern of translations.
- There is no strategic planning by the Sudanese academic authorities sorting out what is to be translated .
  -Most of the English to Arabic translations have been undertaken by individuals.

Discussion

The need to clarify educational terminologies by using appropriate English to Arabic translation is considered to be an essential aspect for the transferred message. It is crucial to first understand the message of the English language text. After that, translators should undertake the job of shifting this message from the ideational (message–oriented) to the interpersonal (addressee–oriented) Halliday (1973, p. 64). The last step is that translators should try hard to draw an acceptable target pattern that is compelling and resort to the Arabic readers as the target audience and to Arabic as thea target system. Any area of educational endeavor cannot proceed forward unless its theoretical underpinnings as well as its guides to good practice are fully formulated . For example, distance education has been formulated as a generic term which involves a number of existing but not synonymous terms. Keegan (1986, p. 29) defined several types of distance education. These include "correspondence education "and "correspondence study", which are used at higher education levels in the United Kingdom. There are also "home study", "independent study", "external study", and "distance teaching", "teaching in distance" as forms used at higher education in the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States. Keegan (1986, p. 44) has also pointed out that each type is considered as a model with its peculiar theoretical knowledge, costs, and a detailed knowledge of the social, political, and historical background that suits its regional educational structures. This purpose of non-campus education has been synthesized by many educational researchers in the following points:

-Distance education separates the teacher from the learner.
-It is controlled by an educational organization, and this quality distinguishes it from private education.
-Teachers and learners are united by sending printed educational content through technical media to the students.

The provision of two – way communication distinguishes it from educational technology as an" educational technology" as an educational autonomous field.

-        Possible occasional meetings may help enhance didactic and socialized purposes.
-        Students have the chance to participate in an industrialized form of education.

Best practices, on the other hand, address four main issues: implementing, scaling up, sustaining and evaluating and synthesizing strongest evidence practices. Research findings are practically used as benchmarks by organizations and professionals who examine the latest empirical research in a particular field. Researchers, then, do not bother themselves by piecing together the findings of research while these findings can easily be delivered from these organizations. Hess (2008) pointed out many types of such organizations in America showing the philosophy and objectives for each one behind its synthesis of research findings.

Concluding Remarks:
From his short visits to the faculties of education mentioned above, the writer of this paper discovered the fact that all English to Arabic translated texts was done as individual attempts. Translators have broken down the linguistic utterance of what they have translated. That is, translation always breaks down the pattern of English language topic and comment translation. For example, a translator may translate book (3) in a series (linguistic utterance) before translating book (1) in the same series. The paper also has come to a frightening conclusion, that is, what has been translated until now is merely considered as scholars' choices and interpretations but not institutions'.

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I am Mustafa Shazali Mustafa Ahmed. I am associate professor in English language / Nile valley University / Sudan. I have been working in Nile Valley University in Sudan since 1994. I have worked for three academic years in Saudi Arabia / Al – Baha University 2011-2014. I have written many scientific papers in some International reputed journal. Also, I am an editor of many international journals. I have supervised a considerable number of international and local M.A, and PhD students .

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