Investigating Socio-pragmatic Failure in Cross-cultural Translation: A Theoretical Perspective

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Abstract
Pragmatics of translation is mainly concerned with how social contexts have their own influence on both the source text (ST) initiator's linguistic choices and the translator's interpretation of the meanings intended in the target text (TT). In translation, socio-pragmatic failure(SPF), as part of cross-cultural failure, generally refers to a translator's misuse or misunderstanding of the social conditions placed on language in use. In addition, this paper aims to illustrate the importance of SPF in cross-cultural translation via identifying that such kind of failure most likely leads to cross-cultural communication breakdown. Besides, this paper attempts to answer the question of whether translators from English into Arabic or vice versa have recognized the ST intentionality and rendered it in the TT or no. Furthermore, the examples examined in this paper were selected from many published works and these examples include, among others, Qur'anic and Biblical translations, extracts from literature and newspaper headlines. The said examples are analyzed according to the functional pragmatic approach to translation where the norms of both the ST and the TT are bilaterally considered. Moreover, this paper contributes to the literature on translation by highlighting that SPF, as one of the major issues in cross-cultural translation, has not been given due attention in the studies on translation from Arabic into English or vice versa. Finally, this paper concludes that when translators have adequate linguistic competence, communicative competence and cultural knowledge, SPF can be overcome and *socio-pragmatic success* is possible.
Key words: Context, linguistic choice, pragmatic competence, socio-pragmatic failure, socio-pragmatic success.