

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTRASTIVE TEXT STUDIES IN TRANSLATOLOGY

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Article History:

Submitted: 04.06.2015

Accepted: 05.07.2015

Abstract: The paper aims at bringing up a type of text linguistic analysis, different from traditional one, with the emphasis on the contrastive studies in general and on the English-Albanian cross-linguistic phenomena in particular. It will concentrate in explaining some of the most intriguing and most diverse text analysis elements having in mind the following text categories: Point of view, Composition, Text Idioms. A grammatical structure (Relative Constructions) has been examined thoroughly within the translation method analysis, out of and within the co-text analysis. It resulted in two different outcomes: traditional direct method analysis on one side and text linguistic co-text analysis on the other. Text linguistics as a special field of studies has been greatly developed due to the increased number of translations from one language into another. Text analysis, which relies on the deep description of micro and macro text elements of the text, is crucial for determining the level of translation accuracy of a particular text. Having in mind the relevance of recent discourse and pragmatic analyses impact in the development of interdisciplinary studies, the explanation of constituent elements of the written text is of great importance for the contrastive text studies or translation studies respectively.

Keywords: text, discourse, paragraph, composition, point of view

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to emphasise the importance of text grammar as a special discipline within Text Linguistic studies and to prove its reliability by comparing the linguistic analysis of one of the segments of grammar in English and Albanian (in our case relative constructions) using the usual contrastive methods of sentence grammars and by taking into consideration some of the aspects of text grammar analysis.

Analysing grammatical structures and functions without having taken into account their co-text and context features could be compared to flavourless dishes! Since the flavour you add gives a more inclusive description of text grammar categories, sentences are not analysed isolated and several semantic and pragmatic concepts, very important for the understanding of the text as a piece of coherent writing or a stretch of coherent speech, are viewed differently.

2. TRANSLATION AS A PROCESS AND AS A PRODUCT

The theory of translation regards translation as a transformation of one text into another when being translated from a source language into a target one. A great part of this theory has been oriented towards the context studies, by emphasising that the translation process involves translation of one culture into another. Such an attitude and such a viewpoint are very much related to a sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, ethnolinguistic and anthropological text analysis, thus leading it towards a linguistic concept which treats the text as a process, as a discourse. However, another point of view, treating a linguistic unit as a product, is related to text grammar and the concepts of the linguist Theun Van Dijk (1972). It represents the main methodological basis of this paper, too.

3. CO-TEXT VS. CONTEXT

The text grammar analysis treats a linguistic unit within a co-text (Werlich, 1983), not context. There is always some text and some co-text that accompanies it. Context, on the other hand, includes more extralinguistic factors in order to give a prompt interpretation of a text (Rugova & Sejdiu-Rugova, 2015; Van Dijk (1972, 1977), De Beaugrande, Dressler 1981, Werlich, 1983). Text Categorization, Point of view, Composition and Text Variety are considered to be the most important categories in analysing the original text and their translations into a target language. Having in mind the fact that transformation from one text into another requires the text analysis of both languages, the above-mentioned text categories will be considered when contrasting the translation of grammatical structures from English into Albanian and vice-versa.

4. TRANSLATION OF RELATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS FROM ENGLISH INTO ALBANIAN AND VICE-VERSA – A CASE STUDY

The so-called Relative clauses in both English and Albanian belong to the group of subordinate clauses with a very specific function: that of a modifier of a noun phrase. However, the most recent CUP comprehensive grammar of the English Language, published in 2002, by Huddleston and Pullum classifies them within the Relative Constructions group, not clauses, due

to the fact that they contain an anaphoric element whose interpretation is determined by an antecedent and together with their antecedent they create a phrase and can be replaced very easily by a phrase. The special anaphoric tie or relation they create with their antecedent classifies their relation with the larger structure containing them into an integrated, supplementary, fused or a cleft relative. (Huddleston & Pullum at al., 2002: 1033-1095). Huddleston & Pullum (2002) suggest that the anaphoric element may be overt or covert, and according to them, in the overt case the relative clause is marked by the presence of one of the relative words *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *which*, etc., as or within the initial constituent and such clauses are called *wh-relatives*. In *non-wh relatives* the anaphoric element is covert, a gap; this class is then subdivided into *that relatives* and bare relatives depending on the presence or absence of *that*:

1. *He'll be glad to take the toys*

A *which you don't want.* [*wh relative*]

B *that you don't want.* [*non-wh: that relative*]

C *you don't want.* [*non-wh: bare relative*] (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002)

In Albanian, Relative Clauses have been treated and classified as Modifying Clauses (Fjali përcaktore), e.g.: *Hodhi sytë nga libri, fletët e të cilit ishin përthyer shumë.* (italicised relative pronoun in genitive, being the second modifying element in a relative construction), and most of the existing traditional grammarians (Domi at al., 1995; Floqi S. at al., 1991, Prifti, 1971, Çeliku, 2012) have listed them as an independent functional of the hypotactic sentence classification (including other categories, such as: Subject Clauses (kryefjalore), Predicative Clauses (kallëzuesore), and Adjunct Clauses (rrethanore)).¹ The relative pronouns in Albanian possess the category of number, case and gender; hence their contextualisation is more versatile and different from the one in English. In Albanian, a relative construction may appear before the word it refers to and this cataphoric reference is typical of the relative word in regard to a longer grammatical constituent it belongs to, in the situations when the relative constructions strongly approve an idea or a thought: *Që ti nuk erdhe, kjo po që është e saktë.* - *Kjo (This) being a presupposed element of reference, used after the relative construction Qw ti nuk erdhe... (That you did not come).*

5. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

More than 100 examples of Relative Constructions in English and their translation into Albanian have been analysed with the direct translation method analysis, common for traditional contrastive studies. The corpus has been extracted from the novel *Martin Eden* written by Jack London and contrasted with its Albanian translation of *Shaban Demiraj*. The relative constructions have been isolated from the phrases and sentences they were part of with the aim of interpreting their translation into Albanian by comparing it to the original English structural

¹ This type of classification is a functional one and covers only partially co-text functions of relative clauses in Albanian. However, I would like to distinguish two very good recent monographies published in Tirana, one is on Anaphora and another one on Relative Phrases in Albanian, by Çepani (2015) and Koleci (2013), from the generativist perspective, which exemplify very well that there are cases when Albanian anaphoric elements are not c-governed (a Government and Binding theory) and that Albanian anaphoric reflexives (vetvetja) bare the feminine noun features, too (they are more independent than English reflexives).

version. For the purpose of finding the more comprehensive equivalences and correspondences between Albanian and English relative constructions, a corpus of 50 sentences from Ismail Kadare's novel "Ura me tri harqe" (The three-arched bridge), translated into English by John Hodgson, has been extracted, too.

6. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Since English is quite analytical and Albanian belongs to a very fleective language type, the following research hypothesis could be drawn:

- The translation of relative constructions from English into Albanian is more dispersed;
- The relative constructions in Albanian have more possible structural forms;
- Analysing relative constructions in their co-text provides more reliable results to the translation method analysis.

7. RELATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS WITHOUT THEIR CO-TEXT (TRANSLATION METHOD ANALYSIS): RESEARCH OUTCOMES AND DATA ANALYSIS

One of the most astonishing facts that were encountered during our interpretation of relative constructions and their translations from one language into another is that more than ¼ of the examples of translated sentences have been considered to be incorrectly translated. So, most of corpus is being translated from relative integrated and supplementary clauses into fused relative clauses (relativizer becomes a hidden element of the subordinate construction) or even Nominal clause: *Se si mund të jetohej brenda një kafazi me një tigër, kjo merrej lehtë me mend.* (Kadare, p.72); *And it is well known what life is like with a tiger in its lair.* (Kadare, p.107)

However, there were cases when the translator tried to preserve the structures used in Albanian (Appositive Clauses were translated into Appositive Clauses): *e.g.: Kam parandjenjën se do të ndërrojë së shpejti fati i Arbrit.* (Kadare, p.8); *I have a premonition that the destiny of Arberia will soon change, ...* (Kadare, p.3).

Some of main findings of the study we conducted have been listed below:

1. The majority of English relative constructions have been translated into Albanian as relative clauses, mainly non-restrictive and restrictive. Even in the cases of fused relatives in English, the translation shows integrated and supplementary type of relatives in Albanian. This implies that integrated, supplementary and cleft relatives in English resemble structurally their Albanian translation correspondences, whereas fused relatives do not correspond that much to their Albanian corresponding forms:
2. Another characteristic feature of English relative constructions is that they can take a preposition before and after the relativizer (with few exceptions) whereas in Albanian its typical position is before the relative word: *me të cilin!*
3. Non-finite clauses used with a relative meaning are typical for English, but in very cases for Albanian. E.g.: *The girl walking in your direction is my sister.* / *Vajza qw po ecw drejt teje wshtw motra ime.*([^]*duke ecur drejt teje*)- subjunctive of standard Albanian (finite

form); or *Mendimi i tij pwr tw shkuar nw piknik ishte i drejtw.*- infinitive of purpose, appositive function, relativised partially).

There were even cases when the whole sentence was “sacrificed” for the sake of better adaptation from English into Albanian, such as:

She scarcely noted the rhythm otherwise, except when it became pompous, at which moments she was disagreeably impressed with its amateurishness. (Martin Eden, 166), and the zero translation into Albanian. We suggest it could have been translated with a relative construction, too: *Përkundrazi, asaj nuk i bënte përshtypje të madhe intonacioni i fjalisë, përveç rasteve kur amaterizmi i tij dukej sheshit. (authors' translation)*

An Albanian speaker can feel that the supplementary relative clauses had an open illocutionary force (as supplementary relatives usually do) which was not transferred into Albanian, its specification could have been a true or false proposition. Consequently, the illocutionary force was not transmitted into Albanian in the same way as it was supposed to, sometimes it even got lost in translation.

8. RELATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS WITHIN THE CO-TEXT – A MORE INCLUSIVE TYPE OF ANALYSIS

The direct translation method analysis, typical for most of the contrastive studies in FLT study programmes in the countries of the Balkan region, and as such, being excluded from the co-text, would be justified by any traditional grammarian as a very comprehensive method of grammatical analysis. However, it would not ‘satisfy’ the real translation analysis, or the Text Grammar Analysis.

So, in terms of text grammar studies, relative constructions could be treated as anaphoric cohesive devices even in the situations when the antecedent is not used immediately before the relative word: e.g. a) I met a man another day [who says (that he knows you)]; ... *who* and *he* refer to *a man*, *but only who is a relative*; or when the fused relative word has the anaphoric element in itself (*what=the thing that*), similar to reflexives, which are typical anaphoric words (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 1047): e.g. *What you offered is not what we wanted!* = (The thing that you offered) is not (the thing that we wanted)!

In terms of Text Point of View and considering the last example, the relative word *what* could be treated as a non-personal entity. It merges and fuses in itself the third person neutral / objective NP *the thing* and the objective relative word *that* into one neutral word *what* – the later representing an example of an objective view subordinator, trying to relate the speaker’s point of view with its co-text: nobody knows *what you offered* if the subordinate clause *what we wanted* is not given as its co-text. If a subordinate clause *what we wanted* presents concretization of *what you offered*, it is still neutral in terms of expressing factors to which the speaker relates the phenomena. However, the personal pronouns *you* and *we* (second person *you* addressing the receiver (dialogical communication) and first person plural *we* which appears to relate to the phenomena by placing the speaker in the sender group), tend to bring the co-text of this sentence towards the subjective point of view, by excluding the receiver point of view (*what we wanted* is

not fulfilled). In terms of its presentation, it can be regarded as a verbatim authentic text through a direct speech style.

In terms of Focus, relative constructions could be classified into narrowing focus text producers since they usually explain the substance of their antecedent, the voice of the relative clause is active in this example, which shows that the action presented in the fused relative structure results from animate phenomena and not from the outside context (Werlich, 1983). Regarding the mode of the relative construction, the above-mentioned example has a negative mode: the speaker assigns non-factual existence to the process of offering.

The text structuring of the relative constructions in the above-mentioned example is a co-text-free structure due to the agreement in number between the two fused relative constructions and due to the successive tense forms used in both of them (past)! However, they can be considered as co-text-bound constituents of a sentence having in mind the topical sequence forms of past simple in both constructions as a sign of a narrative text form. In terms of Text typical idioms (idioms referring here to the typical structural and constituent features of a text type), relative constructions are considered to be clause expansions of the descriptive text idiom:

e.g. *They were going out for a ride into the hills Sunday morning on their wheels, which did not interest Martin until he learned that Ruth, too, rode a wheel and was not going alone* (Martin Eden, p.125); (*Të dielën në mëngjes ata do të bënin një shëtitje me biçikleta nëpër kodrina. Kjo në fillim s'i bëri ndonjë përshtypje Martinit por puna ndryshoi, kur mori vesh se Ruthi e ngiste biçikletën dhe do të shkonte bashkë me të vëllezërit.* (Martin Iden, p.107)

Relative constructions may, however, appear when specifying additional modification of the antecedent by means of restrictive (integrated) Relative Constructions in the expository text idiom expansion, too:

I can't understand 'he murmured,' or maybe it's the editors who can't understand. (Martin Eden, p. 184); *S'po kuptoj dot gjë, pëshpëriti me vete. Ose ndoshta janë redaktorët e fletoreve ata që nuk kuptojnë.* (Martin Iden, p.172)

9. CONCLUSION

It has been proved that Albanian translation of relative constructions is more versatile in form and has more possibilities of occurrence than in English due to the various functional categories relative pronouns belong to in the sentence. The more detailed text analysis of relative constructions in comparison to traditional contrastive analysis (without having considered the grammatical elements, such as point of view, composition and text variety) proved to be more supportive and more inclusive method of enhancing the quality of translation and text adaptation from one language into another, too.

To sum up, a co-text analysis of relative clauses (text grammar analysis), very often incorporated in contextual analysis (extralinguistic analysis of situational factors and socio-historical circumstances shared by the communicants) give a more competence-based research. Text grammar and Text linguistics must be an integrated part of curriculum in foreign language

teaching in general, and particularly in translation studies. Both of them represent linguistic communication acts and as such, they cannot be analysed isolated from their linguistic environment, whether it be a pure linguistic or an extralinguistic one.

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