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Representation of social actors in Chinua Achebe's novel "*Things fall apart*" and its two persian translations

Esmat Babaii
Kharazmi University, Iran
babai@khu.ac.ir

Maliheh Rashed
Kharazmi University, Iran
rashed.maliheh@gmail.com

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Abstract: This paper discusses the feasibility of employing a discourse-based approach in examining the (un)successful portrayal of a given socio-cultural context through translation. In so doing, instances of two Persian translations of Chinua Achebe's post-colonial novel "*Things Fall Apart*" were selected to illustrate the congruence as well as incongruence of translations with their source text. Van Leeuwen's (1996, 2008) model of representation of social actors was used as the analytical framework and proved to work well for the aims of the study. The implications of using a discourse-based approach, along with possible future directions, are discussed.

Keywords: discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, social actors, translation studies, post-colonialism, self- and other-representation

1. Introduction

Until recently, translation was primarily regarded as a mimicry act of replacing the author's words and linguistic codes with words and linguistic codes in another language, but thanks to recent developments in translation studies and under the influence of other disciplines, the myth has been challenged, and translation is now considered a communicative event. In fact, this shift of emphasis from formalist examination of translation to recognition of its embedded, context-dependent nature has been labeled the 'cultural turn' in translation studies (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990). Lefevere & Bassnett (1998, p. 3) elaborate on this notion as follows:

> ... we are no longer 'stuck to the word', or even the text, because we have realized the importance of context in matters of translation. One context is, of course, that of history. The other context is that of culture. The questions that now dominate the field are able to dominate it because research has taken a 'cultural turn', because people in the field began to realize, some time ago, that

> translations are never produced in a vacuum, and that they are also never received in a vacuum.

This development that started in the mid-1980s, according to Snell-Hornby (2006), and was given the official name of 'cultural turn' in the 1990s by Bassnett & Lefevere (1990), has continued to influence the field by highlighting the role of cultural embeddedness of the act of translation. Toury (1995), for instance, views translations "as facts of a target culture". He contends that "translations have been regarded as facts of the culture which hosts them, with the concomitant assumption that whatever their function and identity, these are constituted within that same culture and reflect its own constellation" (p.24).

Along the same line, Neubert & Shreve (1992) advise translators to recognize and account for 'situationality' which they define as "the location of a text in a discrete socio-cultural context, in a real time and place" (p.8). They further elaborate on the difficult task of the translator to re-produce the text while preserving its local meanings:

> A source text is embedded in a complex linguistic, textual, and cultural context. Its meaning, communicative intent, and interpretive effect draw upon its natural relationships in that environment. It is a daunting task to pull a text from its natural surroundings and recreate it in an alien linguistic and cultural setting. The *text belongs to a dynamic cultural and linguistic ecology*. The translator uproots it in a valiant attempt to transplant its fragile meaning. (Neubert & Shreve, 1992, p. 1, emphasis added).

The importance of socio-cultural context has also been reiterated in the words of other scholars of the field. Bassnett (1980/1991), for instance, reminds that a translator who renders and transposes a source text into a target text belonging to a different culture "needs to consider seriously the ideological implication of that transposition" (cited in Hatim & Munday, 2004, p. 313). Similarly, House (2006) conceptualizes translation as "a process of recontextualization, because in translating, stretches of language are not only given a new shape in a new language, but are also taken out of their earlier, original context and placed in a new context, with different values assigned to communicative conventions, genres, readers' expectation norms, etc." (p. 343). More provocatively perhaps, Robyns (1994) argues that translation, as "a confrontation with the non-identical", is considered as a continual threat for the identity of any target discourse (p.405).

In short, regarding translation as a communicative event, translators as "mediators between cultures" (Katan, 2013, p. 84), are supposed to reflect on the cultural and socio-political context in which the text has been created, and need to be well aware of the context in which the translation is going to be used. Translation as 'intercultural mediation', to use Katan's term (2013, p. 84), should establish a coordination between two different languages with non-identical socio-cultural contexts. This emphasis on context entails and justifies highlighting the contribution of discourse analysis in translation studies. In fact, the versatility of discourse analysis, which is defined as "the study of text and talk in context" (van Dijk, 1999, p. 291), has been mentioned by several researchers (e.g. Trosborg, 2000; Hatim & Munday, 2004; House, 2006, to name but a few).

The rise of critical discourse analysis (CDA), as an offshoot of discourse analysis, has also affected translation studies in a productive way. According

to CDA, linguistic codes and elements in a text reveal the author's intentions and his/ her affiliation to a particular ideology that may lead to unequal distribution of power and exerting ideological domination over a given group of people. Thus, the main objective of CDA is to disclose unequal power relations among members of a society and unravel invisible inequalities, which may be coded, for instance, in the form of positive representation of Self and negative representation of Other. CDA in translation studies can equip translators and researchers with the necessary tools to examine the ideological messages in the source text (ST), and decide whether and how they should be re-constructed in the target text (TT). In fact, as Schäffner (2004, p. 136) states, "interest in human communicative activity in socio-cultural settings" is the commonality between translation studies and CDA. She considers the interaction between the two fields quite fruitful, and offers several examples where certain translation strategies have revealed or concealed the power relations in ST. Following this lead, Al-Hejin (2012) uses CDA methodology to uncover ideological manipulations present in BBC news about Muslim Arab women. The researcher, then, foresees good prospects for CDA in the translation of news reports and autobiographies. Nevertheless, these genres do not seem to be the only appropriate grounds for practicing critical analysis. In fact, one of the ripe candidates for implementing CDA methodology is post-colonial translation.

Originally introduced as a reaction to colonialist discourse, post-colonial scholarship, as Tejaswini (1992, p. 8) cogently remarks, "is still scored through by an absentee colonialism". Tejaswini defines colonial discourse as "the body of knowledge, modes of representation, strategies of power, law, discipline, and so on, that are employed in the construction and domination of 'colonial subjects' " (p. 7). In a world constructed and defined by colonialism, Tejaswini sees translation "as an act of resistance" (p. 84). Post-colonial translation, then, is essentially an ideological endeavor since it attempts to encourage a critical reading of the scholarship transferred to and from the colonial world. A systematic content analysis of colonial and post-colonial translations is what the field of translation studies needs, and CDA can provide us with the necessary analytical instruments.

To make a contribution to this under-researched area, the present study attempts to conduct a critical discourse analysis of Persian translations of a celebrated post-colonial work. The CDA model used for the analysis provides a systematic categorization of the representation of social actors and promises to reveal how colonizers and colonized are depicted in the novel and its translations. Through examining the extent to which the translations are aligned with the source text, the current analysis may have some implications for translation quality assessment as well. In the next sections more information is provided about the corpus and the analytical model used.

2. The corpus

The corpus of this study consists of "*Things Fall Apart*" (Achebe, 1958), a notable post-colonial novel and two of its Persian translations. The novel is "the most widely read and studied work of African fiction, both abroad and throughout the continent itself" (Whittaker & Msiska, 2007, p. xi). It is worth mentioning that the language of original composition is English. This is a post-colonial literary practice called 'writing-as-translation' (Batchelor, 2014)

which produces a 'hybrid' language: by using the colonizers' language as a tool "to find a voice on an international stage" the writers, in a way, "inflect the European language with vocabulary or turns of phrase native to their ownculture and language" (Batchelor, 2014, p. 248). Contrary to some African writers such as Ngũgĩ (1986) who denounces writing in colonial languages, Achebe is said to have supported this practice and believes that through writing in English, he has been able to introduce "a new voice coming out of Africa, speaking of African experience in a world-wide language" (Achebe, 1966, cited in Chua, 1996, p. 75).

The significance of this novel, at least in part, lies in the way it challenges the binary logic of colonialist discourse, i.e., colonizer/colonized, with its associated dichotomies: self/other, white/black, civilized/primitive, advanced/ retarded, and so on (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2007). It reverses the process of 'othering'—to use Spivak's 1985 term—in the colonial discourse "by which the empire can define itself against those it colonizes, excludes and marginalizes" (Ashcroft et al. 2007, p. 158). In Achebe's novel, contrary to colonial writings, the African natives are characterized as individual social actors, having names and personal history. In fact, African natives and white colonizers constitute self/other dichotomy, in the order opposite to colonial discourse.

This novel has been translated into many languages. It has attracted the attention of Iranian translators as well. Through the years, five translators have translated it into Persian.The first translation of "*Things Fall Apart*" was undertaken by Farhad Manshoorian (1989) [*Hame Chiz Foroo Mipashad*] (1368 Iranian calendar); the second one [*Hame Chiz Foroo Mirizad*] by Safavian in 1999 (1378 Iranian calendar), the third one [*Hame Chiz Foroo Mirizad*] by Ali Asghar Bahrami in 2001 (1380 Iranian calendar), the fourth [*Hame Chiz Foroo Mipashad*] by Kamrava Ebrahimi in 2012 (1391 Iranian calendar), and the fifth one [*Hame Chiz az Ham Mipashad*] by Hodavand in 2012 (1391 Iranian calendar).

Among these five translations, the ones by Farhad Manshoorian (referred to as T. A., henceforth) and by Kamrava Ebrahimi (referred to as T. B.) were selected due to their popularity and availability.

3. Socio-cultural contexts of the source and target texts

The novel *Things Fall Apart* describes the tribal life in the imaginary village of Umuofia in Nigeria before and after the arrival of British colonizers. From a socio-cultural perspective, the context of the target text, i.e. the Iranian culture, bears some degrees of resemblance to that of the source text, i.e. the Nigerian culture. In fact, although Iran was never a British colony, it was the target of several colonialist and imperialist attempts of Western countries, including Britannia (Baraheni, 1978). Thus, considering westerners as 'aliens' or 'others' in the Iranian context has a relatively long history; a sentiment intensified by post-revolutionary anti-Westernism of Iranian administration (Pieterse & Peters, 2012). Within this atmosphere, the translation of a post-colonial novel tends to keep the original image intact, as 'other' in the source African context is also 'other' for the target audience, though there are important cultural differences regarding the notion of 'self' in the two cultural contexts.

Moving beyond this macro-contextual analysis, it would be helpful to see how characters in the novel are portrayed and how this portrayal is re-produced in the translations. As Ponnuthurai (1974) puts it, "historical events, on however grand a scale, finally work themselves out in local areas and individual lives" (p. 98). In other words, in this novel, as is the case in many others, the depiction of characters is of great importance. Therefore, the way the characters are represented in translation helps to reinforce or distort the general picture produced by the original writer.

To provide a sketch of the main participants and their actions, it would be necessary to see who the characters in the novel are. John Chua (1996, pp. 14-16) introduces the main characters of the novel as follows:

Okonkwo, the central character, is a leader of the African Igbo community of Umuofia, known as a fierce warrior as well as a successful farmer. He has three wives and several children who live in their homes in his village compound. In the novel, several characters including Okonkwo's pathetic father, his close friend, his rival, the priestess of the village, his wives and some of his children are treated as individuals and thus, are referred to by their names. These are the main characters before the encounter with colonizers. In *self vs. other* dichotomy, they constitute *the self*.

Colonialism, however, introduces some new faces in the story, i.e., *the 'others'*. They include the following characters: Mr. Brown, the first white Christian missionary in Umuofia and Mbanta, who is an understanding and accommodating man; Mr. Kiaga, the native interpreter for the missionaries, who is a teacher and a leader of the new church in Mbanta; the Reverend James Smith, a strict, stereotypical white Christian missionary who takes over the church after Mr. Brown's departure; and the District Commissioner, a stern, stereotypical white colonial administrator of Umuofia. The latter follows regulations to the letter and has little knowledge or understanding of the people for whom he tries to administer a new government.

In addition to these individuals, there are collective identities in the novel: Okonkwo's household; the villagers; the low-status caste; the men stigmatized as having feminine personalities; the lepers, ironically known as 'the white'; colonizers' local agents; the elderly; and the sick. There are also some natural and supernatural entities like darkness, great evil, earth goddess, Oracle of Hills & Caves, and so on. What they do and what is attributed to them, all in all, help to depict a Nigerian village in late 18th and early 19th centuries when the British Empire was trying to expand and stabilize its influence in West Africa. The novel, in short, attempts to illustrate the result of this cultural encounter by describing a village life with its values *before* and *after* the British presence.

As mentioned earlier, due to Iranian translators' general sympathy towards the world of the novel, we can expect the macro role relationships, including the self/other dichotomy, and "overall narrative point of view" of the target text (cf. Munday, 2008, p.47) to be congruent with the source text. However, translation strategies practiced at the micro lexico-grammatical level may lead to certain degrees of deviation from the original meanings and connotations intended by the author. In what follows, the analytical tool that helped us detect the cases of congruence and incongruence will be briefly presented.

4. Methodological framework

Van Leeuwen (1996, 2008) speaks of a 'socio-semantic inventory' that can act as a discursive tool for investigating how participants of social practices may be represented in a given text. He uses his inventory for the critical analysis of a piece of racist discourse, entitled "our race odyssey" a feature article published in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. His analysis reveals how different

Table 1: The inventory of representation of social actors

Discourse Feature	**Description**
Inclusion & Exclusion	In any social practice, there are some social actors involved in the process. When representing the practice, some of these actors may be *included* (explicitly mentioned), some *excluded*. Exclusion with no trace is *suppression* (deletion). Exclusion with the possibility to infer the actor's involvement is *backgrounding.* In the latter case, the actor is de-emphasized, pushed into the background, but not completely deleted.
Role allocation	This feature concerns the roles that social actors are given to play in the representation. They may be *activated* (depicted as active, dynamic forces in an activity) or *passivated* (pictured as receiving end of the activity).
Genericization & Specification	Social actors can be represented through *generic* (as classes) or *specific* (as identifiable individuals) reference.
Association & Dissociation	This feature refers to forming and unforming the groups of social actors in a text as the texts proceeds.
Indetermination & Determination	*Indetermination* occurs when social actors are represented as unspecified, 'anonymous' individuals or groups, *determination,* when their identity is, one way or another, specified.
Nomination & Categorization	Social actors can be represented either in terms of their unique identity (*nomination*), or in terms of identities and functions they share with others *(categorization)*.
Functionalization & Identification	*Functionalization* occurs when social actors are referred to in terms of an activity, in terms of something they do, for instance an occupation or role. *Identification* occurs when social actors are defined, not in terms of what they do, but in terms of what they, more or less permanently, or unavoidably, are.
Personalization &Impersonalization	Social actors can be *personalized* (represented as human beings) or *impersonalized* (through concrete or abstract nouns whose meaning does not include the semantic features of human).
Overdetermination	*Overdetermination* occurs when social actors are represented as participating, at the same time, in more than one social practice. Here the social actor comes to symbolize different social practices which may be related to one another, be opposite, etc.

social actors in the text have received different role allocations, have been included or excluded in the social processes mentioned in the text, and how differently they were categorized, specified, and identified. In other words, through using the inventory, he has been able to uncover the hidden racist ideology of the writer. The components of this socio-semantic inventory are briefly presented in Table 1 above. All the descriptions of the discourse features are taken from van Leeuwen (2008, pp. 28-51). It should be noted that further branching of the discourse features is intentionally avoided here to provide a more reader-friendly account of the inventory.

The inventory has been used in several critical studies to analyze representations of people in presidential campaign speeches (Post, 2009), English Language Teaching textbooks (Sahragard & Davatgarzadeh, 2010), news reports (Rasti & Sahragard, 2012; Abid et al., 2013), and television crime report (Machin & Mayr, 2013). However, to the best of our knowledge, this study is the first to use van Leeuwen's model for the analysis of a post-colonial novel and its translations. It is our contention that the analysis of these discursive features will help us explicate the author's fictional world and its actors, and then, examine whether and to what extent the translators have been successful in re-producing this image.

5. Analysis and discussion

The results of the analysis are presented under three headings: *self/other* dichotomy*, the question of agency,* and *individual and collective identities.* Relevant discursive features that helped to realize these phenomena are mentioned and exemplified through citing extracts taken from the ST and its two translations.

5.1. Self/Other dichotomy

In Achebe's novel, the most important indicator of the othering strategy, perhaps, is the use of 'white' to talk about the English colonizers, while its opposite 'black' is not used to refer to the African in-group identity. The adjective 'white' has mostly appeared along with 'man' 'men' 'missionary' and 'commissioner'. In this book, which is divided into 25 chapters, the real, physical encounter with the colonizers happens in Chapter 16. Before that, however, in Chapter 8, there is a mention of the white man by Okonkwo and his friends in a manner as if the white man was fictive. They talk about "the story of white men who, they say, are white like this piece of chalk" (p. 24). They dismiss it jokingly: "and the polite name for leprosy was 'the white skin'". In Chapter 15, the fictive character comes alive. Okonkwo's close friend, Obierika brings the news and forces him to accept the reality:

> "During the last planting season a white man had appeared in their clan".
> "An albino", suggested Okonkwo.
> "He was not an albino. He was quite different […] And he was riding an iron horse".

From Chapter 16 on, "white man" does not only refer to a particular European person but becomes a symbol of colonization, especially in certain combinations like: the white man's god, white man's government, white man's fetish, white man's law, white man's court, white man's knowledge, and white man's medicine. In line with van Leeuwen's inventory (2008),

when 'white man' is used to refer to given person, the discursive feature of *identification* (here physical identification) is used. Accordingly, "physical attributes tend to have connotations" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 58), and the connotation could be that the world is divided in terms of skin color: White vs. Black. However, this is not the only function for 'white man'. As mentioned earlier, 'white man' in certain places symbolizes colonization, with no reference to any particular human being. According to van Leeuwen (2008), here, the feature of overdetermination applies to 'white man': It is both realistic and symbolic. In the two translations, this term has been variously translated as: سفید پوستان, مرد سفید پوست , and مرد سفید.

Among these translations, it seems that سفید پوستان is the most neutral and least expressive one as it simply refers to some groups of people (*literal trans*. people with white skin) and in Persian it evokes a neural response. While the two others, especially مرد سفید , refer to a singular character, with a figurative effect. As such, we may argue that in the case of No.1, [T. B.] is preferred over [T.A.]. Although the differences may not seem dramatic, they help to invoke different impressions for the Iranian reader as the target audience.

(No.1) The **white man**'s god

[T.A.] خدای **سفید پوستان**
[T.B.] خدای **مرد سفید**

Another interesting strategy used by [T.B.] which is in line with othering practice of ST, is using مستر (Mr.) rather than its Persian translation (آقا) to refer to Mr. Brown, the white missionary(see No. 2 and 3).

(No. 2) **Mr. Brown**, the white missionary …

[T.A.] **آقای براون،** یکی از مبلغان سفید پوست
[T.B.] **مستر براون،** همان مبلغ سفید پوست

(No. 3) **Mr. Brown**'s school produced quick results.

[T.A.] مدرسه ی **آقای براون** سرانجام نتیجه ی خوبی به بارآورد.
[T.B.] مدرسه ی **مستربراون** نتایج سریع ومهمی داشت.

This translation strategy may appear similar to the use of French address forms of 'Monsieur' and 'Mademoiselle' in an English text which could serve to preserve and emphasize the foreign status of the referents. However, the strategy in this case goes beyond that. In a story where all in-group characters are referred to by their given names, using a formal, foreign address form increases the social and psychological distance between the actors.

5.2. The question of agency

The importance of examining this feature in a given text lies in the fact that there is usually a difference between reality and discursive representation of reality as far as agency is concerned. In reality, when there is an action, there is (at least) someone or something doing the action; one that is called *doer*, *agent,* or *actor*. When that reality is represented in discourse, the writer/ speaker decides about the role he/she assigns to the actor(s). Such roles may or may not match the reality but they reveal the world the writer/speaker wants us to see. In literary writing, this tendency is even more pronounced.

Agency can be handled through two categories of van Leeuwen's inventory, namely, Exlusion/Inclusion and Role allocation. The following excerpts will investigate agency in Achebe's writing and its translations. Excerpt No. 4, which reiterates the main theme and title of the book, is a prominent example of agency and subjectivity.

(No. 4.) *Okonkwo* was deeply grieved. And it was not just a personal grief. ***He*** mourned for ***the clan***, which ***he*** **saw breaking up and falling apart**…

[T.A.] اوکنکوسخت غمگین بود .این غم واندوه در واقع تنها مربوط به شخص خود او نمیشد .او برای قبیله اش وسرزمینش، **که درهم شکسته وازهم پاشیده بود، ماتم گرفته بود**.

[T.A.] Back translation: Okonkwo was very sad. This grief was not in fact because of himself alone. He mourned for his clan, for his homeland **which was broken and fallen apart**.

[T.B.] اوکنکوحسابی غصه داربود .این غم واندوه به خاطرخودش نبود .او برای قبیله سوگواربود، **قبیله ای که گسستن و فروپاشیدنش را می دید**.

[T. B.] Back translation: Okonkwo was extremely sad. This grief was not for himself. He mourned for the clan, **the clan he saw its breaking and falling apart.**

As can be observed, 'things are falling apart' *in the eyes of Okonkwo*, the failing hero, not for everybody. In fact, as reminded by Jeyifo (1990, cited in Whittaker & Msiska, 2007), there are low-status people within the hierarchical system of Umuofian society for whom things certainly did not fall apart! The writer signals this subjective interpretation of the situation through highlighting Okonkwo's agency and perception. It seems that [T.A.] misses the point, as he depicts the clan's falling apart as an objective reality, omitting Okonkwo's perception. [T.B.], however, conveys the message as it is intended in the ST and renders a better translation.

In No. 5, both translations are congruent with the ST in which, the killing of the daughter of Umuofia is mentioned using a passive construction, with no concern about who committed the murder, i.e., the social actor in relation to the action of killing is excluded, and this is what is exactly observed in the two translations.

(No. 5) So when the **daughter of Umuofia was killed** in Mbaino, Ikemefuna came into Okonkwo's household.

[T.A.] **وقتی دختر اوموافیا در امبای نو به قتل رسید**،ایکه مه فونا بر جمع خانواده ی اوکنکو افزوده شد.

[T.B.] بنابراین بعد از **کشته شدن دختر اوموافیایی** بود که ایکی می فونابه خانه ی اکنکو آمد.

Sentence No. 6 refers to the missionaries asking the village chiefs to give them some piece of land so that they can build their church there. In the ST, the village chiefs and their action are *backgrounded* (subcategory of *Exclusion*), only the missionaries and their action are mentioned. Among the translations, [T.B.] follows this backgrounding strategy while [T.A.] *activates*

the village chiefs by foregrounding them and their agency. The words in bold type in [T.A.] are the translator's addition to the original sentence. [T.A.]'s translation, in effect, can be considered the translation of this sentence: "The missionaries **asked the village chiefs to give them a lot of land** so that they can build their church".

(No. 6) They asked for a lot of land to build their church.
[T.A.] در این دیدار، مبلغان از **سران دهکده** خواستند که قطعه زمینی برای ساختن ساختمان کلیسا **در اختیار آنها بگذارند**.
[T.B.] مبلغان یک قطعه زمین می خواستند که در آن کلیسا بسازند.

[T.A.] adopts the opposite strategy for No. 7. He omits the agency of the white missionary in terms of both 'building the school' and 'teaching young Africans'. In fact, his translation can be back translated as follows: 'A school **was built** so that young Christians **learn** to read and write'. [T.B.]'s translation, nevertheless foregrounds the missionary and his agency as in ST.

(No. 7) …where **the white missionary** had set up a school to **teach** young Christians to read and write…
[T.A.]… تا در آنجا در مدرسه ای که برای آموزش مسیحیان جوان دائر شده است خواندن و نوشتن بیاموزد
[T.B.]…جایی که **مبلغ سفید** مدرسه ای **بنا کرده** برای **آموزش** خواندن و نوشتن به مسیحیان جوان

In No. 8 and No.9, although the ST refers to interpreting as an agentless process, [T.A.] adds the word 'interpreter' (مترجم) and foregrounds the interpreter's role in translating the white man's talks to local people. [T.B.], on the other hand, preserves the author's style by highlighting the act of 'interpretation', omitting 'the person who did it'. As in the ST, he passivizes the 'interpreter'.

(No. 8) It **was interpreted** to them…
[T.A.] **مترجم** حرفهای او را برای حاضران **ترجمه کرد**
[T.B.] این حرفها برای آنها **ترجمه شد**

(No. 9) When this **was interpreted** to the men of Mbanta...
[T.A.] وقتی **مترجم** گفته های مرد سفید پوست را برای مردم امبانتا **بازگو کرد**...
[T.B.] وقتی این جمله برای مردم امبانتا **ترجمه شد**

No. 10 is significant as a cultural item, since it demonstrates the tribal people's desire to personify natural phenomena such as darkness. As can be observed, the author *activates* darkness, granting it the ability to frighten people. Here, [T.A.]'s translation is more congruent with this picture while [T.B.] activates 'people' as if it were the translation of a sentence such as 'people were afraid of darkness'.

(No. 10) **Darkness held** a vague terror for **these people**, even the bravest among them.
[T.A.] **تاریکی** وحشت ناشناخته ای **به جان این مردم می انداخت**. حتی شجاع ترین آنها در شب می ترسید.
[T.B.] **مردم**، حتی شجاع ترین آن ها، از تاریکی **وحشت مبهمی داشتند**.

5.3. Individual and collective identities

The categories 3 though 8 in van Leeuwen's model can effectively examine how people's identity is constructed in discourse. For instance, they can explore whether actors are identified as individuals or groups (*Genericization & Specification*), whether or not they are represented as human beings (*Personalization & Impersonalization*), whether they are recognized in terms of what they do or what they are (*Functionalization & Identification*) and so on. Each of these choices, made consciously or subconsciously, produce a unique portrayal of the characters in a fictional world, one that we expect to see in its translations as well. In what follows, a few excerpts are examined to demonstrate the importance of different choices in this regard.

In No. 11, a scene is described in which a violent encounter is witnessed by a crowd of local people who are just watching and do not participate in the action. To emphasize their passivity, Achebe describes them as 'waiting backcloth'. Through 'objectification', he *impersonalizes* these people, depriving them of their human features. It appears that none of the translators are successful in describing this scene as they have translated this phrase as 'the men who were witnessing the scene' [T.A.], and 'the men waiting under the shadows of trees' [T.B.].

(No. 11) **The waiting backcloth** jumped into tumultuous life and the meeting was stopped

[T.A.] **مردانی که ناظر صحنه بودند** …

[T.B.] **مردانی که زیر سایه درختها منتظر بودند** وارد همهمه ای آشفته شدند

Similarly, in No. 12, the people in the village are impersonalized as 'the village'. Here, [T.B.] has preserved the style, but [T.A.] has personalized them in his translation: 'the people in the village'.

(No. 12) **The village** has outlawed us

[T.A.] **اهالی دهکده** ما را تحریم کردند

[T.B.] **دهکده** ما را تحریم کرده است

No. 13 and 14 illustrate cases when tribal people are grouped and re-grouped (*Association & Dissociation*) probably to have a more emphatic tone. For No. 13, [T.A.] preserves the author's grouping of people in terms of men and women. [T.B.], however, seems to have assumed that it would be over-communicative to mention men and women separately, and has translated it as 'all'. In No. 14, nevertheless, the author's grouping and re-grouping preference 'the whole village' and 'men, women and children' is kept intact in both translations. These strategies, we can argue, with possibly no effect on general meaning, have the potential to affect the style.

(No. 13) **Every man and woman** came out …

[T.A.] **اهالی ، از زن و مرد،** بیرون آمدند

[T.A.]'s back translation: All the villagers, men and women came out

[T.B.] **همه** بیرون آمدند …

[T.B.]'s back translation: All came out

(No. 14) **The whole village** turned out on the ilo, **men, women and children**.

[T.A.] **تمام دهکده، از مرد و زن و بچه،** همگی به صورت دایره بزرگی دورتا دور ایلو جمع شده بودند.
[T.B.] **کل دهکده، مرد و زن و بچه،** در ایلو جمع شدند.

The last excerpts to analyze belong to *Functionalization* feature of the inventory which describes social actors "in terms of an activity, in terms of something they do, for instance an occupation or role" (van Leeuwen, 2008). Interestingly, the actors introduced to the reader through *Functionalization* (the social roles they play) remain distant throughout the story and Achebe does not want the reader to know more about their identities, private lives, etc. They have their stereotypical roles and are expected to create a stereotypical impression. The question is whether this impression is conveyed in translations.

In No. 15, [T.A.] does not manage to show the position and rank of 'the white commissioner' in relation to 'the court messengers'. In fact, as Chua (1996, p. 59) mentions, "the white men employ natives as their 'court messengers' much like today's sheriff's deputies to do the 'dirty work' of arresting, guarding, and administering punishment to offending citizens". However, in [T.A.]'s translation, the role of 'commissioner' is downgraded to an ordinary policeman and the literal translation of 'court messengers' (فرستادگان دادگاه) does not provide any information about their typical duties. Conversely, [T.B.] clearly illustrates the high rank of the commissioner (بخشدار سفید) and the duty of arresting outlaws for the latter (مامورهای جلب).

(No. 15) The **white commissioner** and **the court messengers** …
[T.A.] **مامور سفید پوست** و **فرستادگان دادگاه**…
[T.B.] **بخشدار سفید** و **مامورهای جلب**…

In No. 16 and 17, nonetheless, [T.A.] seems more successful. No. 16 refers to a church messenger, i.e., a missionary. As such, the Persian word (پیامبر), the equivalent offered by [T.B.], is used only for God's prophets and is not an accurate translation. It unduly raises the holy status of the referent. More neutral terms such as (سفیر) or (فرستاده) are appropriate here. Also, translating 'the missionaries' into more general words such as 'group members' does not give any information about the role of this social group.

(No. 16) The head of your church is in your country. He has sent you here as his **messenger**.
[T.A.] **سفیر**
[T.B.] **پیامبر**

(No. 17) Then **the missionaries** burst into song.
[T.A.] بعد **مبلغان** شروع کردند به خواندن
[T.B.] در این هنگام **اعضای گروه** شروع کردند به خواندن سرود

To sum up, the social actor representation inventory seems to be a reliable tool for a coherent discourse-based analysis of character portrayal in a novel with ideological overtone. This preliminary analysis was able to detect areas of congruence and incongruence between ST and its TTs and suggest revisions accordingly.

6. Conclusion and implications

The notion of 'translation as ideology', pioneered by Hatim & Mason (1997), has been an inspiration for several CDA-based translation studies, especially in the discourses of media, politics, news reporting and advertisement (House, 2016). In a volume edited by Calzada-Perez (2003), instances of political, religious and artistic texts are analyzed to demonstrate how ideology and translation are connected. Many researchers have tried to find traces of ideology outside the realm of political and journalistic texts by examining translations of literary, hybrid (Zand, 2015), inter-semiotic (Torop, 2013), religious (Watson & Morris, 2006), and ancient (Lynch, 1998; Jones, 2006) texts. Research on ideology in literary translation is particularly popular and encompasses a diverse collection of works including translation of Dostoevsky's novel (Jacobs, 2007), Spanish translation of Sir Walter Scott (García-González, 2006), translation of Edgar Allan Poe (Vale de Gato, 2010), and French Translation of *The Sound and the Fury* (Määttä, 2004). As a sub-branch of literary translation, analysis of translated children's stories is flourishing as well. For example, Pounds (2011) examines parental controls in children's literature and Angels (2014) and Furukawa (2015) have studied Japanese translations of Dr. Seuss' works and *Ann of Green Gable*s, respectively.

Considering such a rich body of research, it might seem that the notion of ideology in translation has been exhausted. However, with a new "focus on culture as a site of ideological struggle, a view of translators as stimulators of 'resistance' of hegemonic influence, and a focus on how 'meanings' in texts serve to set up and maintain relations of power and domination" (House, 2016, p. 33), critical analysis of colonial as well as post-colonial discourse deserves more recognition than ever.

The current analysis was an attempt to contribute to this recent movement in translation studies. As the results indicated, despite macro-contextual congruence between the source and target cultures, numerous instances of distortion at the micro lexico-grammatical levels were detected. The distortions were probably not as significant as to damage the overall ideological message of the ST. Nevertheless, they could mask the author's stylistic preferences, to some extent. The degree of distortion could differ in case the macro cultural distance between ST and TT were larger.

This paper attempted to demonstrate the contribution of discourse analysis, especially critical discourse analysis to translation studies. Discourse models can be used for systematic explication of the (hidden) ideologies and raising the awareness of translators and translation trainees with regard to different layers of meaning in a given text. This, it is hoped, will equip the translators with a variety of lexico-grammatical choices to offer more congruent renditions in terms of both the cultural context and the authorial style.

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