

Analyzing Translated Texts: A Strategic –Based Approach

By : Inst. Amthal Mohammed Abbas (Ph.D)
College of Education –Asmaee

Abstract

This study is an attempt to shed light on the strategies that can be manipulated to analyze translated texts. These strategies are covert potential relationships among the parts of a text, made overt by the reader or listener through processes of interpretation. These processes are based on the interpretation of each individual sentence relative to the interpretation of other sentences. Hence, it is based on the assumption that these strategies can point out all the relationships and links among the parts of a text. The study comes under two main parts; the first is the theoretical side which surveys the strategies used to analyze while the second deals with the practical side which uses an original text and its Translation to show how a text is analyzed.

Preliminaries

The relatedness of sentences leads to continuity of sense, which is, as Beaugrande and Dressler (1981, 84) suggest, the foundation of coherence. They claim that a text makes sense because there is a continuity of senses among the knowledge activated by the expressions of the text. A non-sensical text is one in which text receivers can discover no such continuity usually because there is a serious mismatch between the configuration of concepts and relations expressed and the receivers' prior knowledge of the world.

Beaugrande (1991, 276) states that coherence can be syntactic and pragmatic. He adds that van Dijk and Kintsch focus on semantic coherence. They see two fundamental types: "conditional", which dominates in typical expository texts, and "functional", in narrative ones. A distinction is made between three levels of coherence gauged by depth of interpretation: "superficial", if two propositions are in the same frame or script; "normal", if the two also instantiate a direct conditional or functional connection, and "full" if further information is inferred from semantic or episodic memory.

The realization of the text, according to Blum – Kulka (1986, 23), can be approached either theoretically, by postulating an "ideal reader", or empirically, by investigating the ways a given text has been interpreted by various readers.

So far , the major concern of this paper is to suggest and , then , manipulate a number of strategies that are used for analyzing discourse with special reference to translation.

1.1 locally-Oriented Strategies

Beaugrande (1991 , 276) states that local coherence strategies establish meaning connections between successive sentences in a discourse or between constituents of sentences . These strategies need guidance and constraints from the global to relate to the discourse as a whole to surmount discontinuities . Moreover , they operate both " bottom – up " with words and phrases and " top – down " with a schema , frame , script or macro proposition . Local strategies provide constraints for specific meanings by looking " forward " for meanings to come or " back – ward " for meanings only partially interpreted . Likewise , Brown and Yule (1983 , 235) show that the reader operates a top – down interpretive strategy which create expectations about what is likely to come next in the text . It is the predictive power of top – down processing that enables the human reader encounters , via his bottom – up processing , ungrammatical or misspelt elements in the text and to determine what was the most likely intended message .

1.1.2. Processing Strategies

Coherence relations are the possible connections between utterances in a text . The specification process of these relations requires certain adequate guide lines . Beaugrande (1991 , 276) displays van Dijk and Kintsch's criteria for text comprehension as that conditional semantic coherence is based on " cause " , " consequence " and " temporality " relations , whereas functional one is based on " example " , " specification " , " explication " , " contrast " , " comparison " , " generalization " and " conclusion " relations .

Jurafsky and Martin (2000 , 695) mention another set of coherence relations . The terms S1 and S2 represent the meanings of the two sentences being related . Each one of the following relations is associated with one or more constraints that must be met for it to hold . To do this , deduction is the most familiar method for performing inference . The criteria are:

- a. **Result** : Infer that the state or event asserted by S1 causes or could cause the state or event asserted by S2 .
 1. John bought an Acura . His father went ballistic .

- b. **Explanation** : Infer that the state or event asserted by S2 causes or could cause the state or event asserted by S1 .
2. John hid Bill's car keys . He was drunk .
- c. **Parallel** : Infer that (P) from the assertion of S1 and (P) from the assertion of S2 are similar .
3. John bought an Acura . Bill leased a BMW .
- d. **Elaboration** : Infer the same proposition (P) from the assertion of S1 and S2 .
4. John bought an Acura this weekend . He purchased a beautiful new Integra for 20 thousand dollars at Bill's dealership on Saturday afternoon .
- e. **Occasion** : A change of state can be inferred from the assertion of S1 , whose final state can be inferred from S2 or a change of state can be inferred from the assertion of S2 whose initial state can be inferred from S1 .
5. John bought an Acura . He drove to the ballgame .
(Shriffrin etal, 2003:287)

Another set of relations , emphasized by van Dijk (1977 , 106) , reveals that the orderings of descriptions depend on the relations between individuals or proscriptions denoted by the subsequent sentences .

a. General – particular

6. Peter always comes late . He won't be in time tonight either .

b. Whole – part / component

7. She could see Harry Duke . She could see his powerful Shoulders .

c. Set – subset – elements

8. Many girls had applied for the job . Some of them were invited to a meeting with the staff .

d. Including – included

9. There was a large glass on the table . In it was a pinkish juice .

e. Large – small

10 . Peter climbed upon the hill , which was covered with pine trees . Under the trees were thick bushes .

f. Outside – inside

11- We came to an isolated inn . The lights were already on .

g. Possessor – possessed

12. Peter was shabbily dressed . His jeans had large holes in them .
(Yule , 1997:122)

1.2. Globally-Oriented Strategies

Beaugrande (1991 , 276) notes that global coherence strategies determine the meaning of fragments of discourse or of the whole . Global coherence organizes and orders predicates , referents , properties , and so on , around the central ones and imposes unity and sequence . It is imposed by a theme , topic , gist , upshot , or point , all theoretically reconstructed as macrostructures .

Beaugrande and Dressler (1981, 90) add that these global patterns would be stored as complete chunks because of the usefulness in many tasks .

Knowledge structures are represented in terms of schemas, frames and scripts as information in memory , having a label or slots (variables) within a prearranged relation and accepting information of a given type via instantiation . Such schemas are descriptions not definitions and vary from concrete to abstract and their information is normally valid . (Beaugrande , 1991 : 276; Coulhard,1985:176) . Besides, Beaugrande adds that schematic structures often determine the current function from the global content , therefore the instantiated schemas or frames or scripts are not equated with the textual representation . A schema provides readers with a basis for interpreting the text and a conceptual skeleton to which they can bind the semantic units derived from the textual input .

A frame is a set of propositions characterizing our conventional knowledge of some more or less autonomous situations (activity , course of events , states) . (van Dijk , 1977 : 99) In the same tone , Brown and Yule (1983 , 238) envisage Minsky's frame – theory as when one encounters a new situation , one select from memory a structure called a " frame " . This is a remembered framework to be adapted to fit reality by changing details as necessary .

Emphatically , Beaugrande and Dressler (1981 , 91) claim that using global patterns greatly reduces complexity over using local ones , and allows retaining much more material in active storage at one given time .

1.2.1 Processing Strategies

As criteria for discourse processing , Beaugrande (1991 , 295) proposes van Dijk and Kintsch's model of macro strategies:

- a. specification
- b. addition
- c. particularization

The resulting distribution depends on " complexity " , " importance " and " relevance " , high degree of which call for indepent units like " clauses " or " sentences " rather than dependent ones like " modifiers " or " relative clauses " .

A common strategy is to start from given information . e.g. in the first noun phrase functioning as subject and topic of a sentence) and go on to the new (e.g. in a predicate phrase functioning as the comment) .

Beaugrande and Dressler (1981 , 90) add the following patterns :

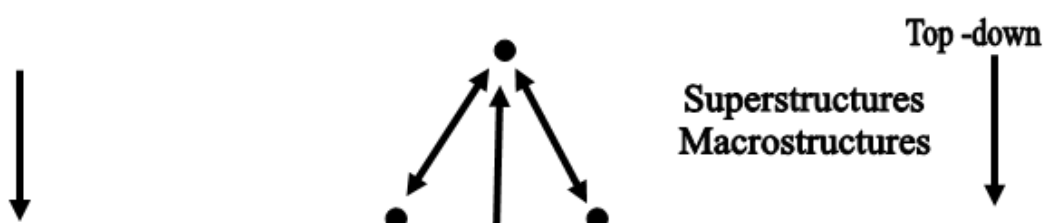
Frames : Global patterns that contain commonsense knowledge about some central concept , e.g. " polling station " , " birthday parties " . Frame states what things belong together in principle, but not in what things will be done or mentioned .

Schemas : Global patterns of events and states in ordered sequence linked by time proximity and causality . Schemas are always arrayed in a progression , so that hypotheses can be set up about what will be done or mentioned next in a textual world.

Plans : Global patterns of events and states leading up to an intended goal . Plans differ from schemas in that a planner (text producer) evaluates all elements in terms of how they advance toward the planner's goal .

Scripts : They are established plans called up very frequently to specify the roles of participants and their expected actions . Scripts , thus , differ from plans by having a pre – established routin.

What follows is a diagram that shows how these strategies work in the area of text processing .



2.1. Practical Implications

In this side of the study , an original text and its translation will be analyzed in terms of the above mentioned strategies . these strategies are supposed to focus on the hidden ties in the text.

2.1.1 The Text

“ It was a graveyard of the old – fashioned western kind . It was on a hill , about a mile and a half from the village . It had a crazy board – fence around it , which leaned inward in places , and outward the rest of the time , but stood upright nowhere . Grass and weeds grew rank over the whole cemetery .

All the old graves were sunken in . There was not a tombstone on the place ; round – topped , worm – eaten board staggered over the graves , leaning for support and finding none. " Sacred to the memory of " So – and – so had been painted on them once , but it could no longer have been read , on the most of them , now , even if there had been light . “

(Twain , ch- 9 : 68)

كانت المقابر (جبانة) من الطراز الغربي العتيق ، أنشئت فوق تل يبعد ميلاً ونصف ميل عن القرية ، ولها سياج عريض مالت بعض أجزائه إلى الداخل وبعضها الآخر إلى الخارج ، ولكن لم

يكن به جزء واحد مستقيماً . وكانت الأعشاب والحشائش تملأ كل مكان بالجبانة . أما المقابر نفسها فقد كانت أبنية متداعية طمس الزمان ما سُجِّل على شواهدها من أسماء الموتى .

(translated by : Mahir Nassim)

2.1.1. Discourse Processing

This practice is achieved in two stages . The first stage is concerned with the processing of the English text which can be done in terms of processing sentences locally and globally .

The second stage is dedicated to find out whether the relations among sentences are well preserved and presented by the translator in the Arabic text .

1- " It was a graveyard of the old .fashioned western kind " .

The noun phrase (graveyard) presents an example of a graveyard – frame viz a set of slots or typical graveyard individuals ((board – fence , grass , weed , graves , tombstone , hill , etc .)

This sentence instantiates the graveyard – frame by the use of text – fillers .

This sentence is coherent because (old – fashioned western kind) is a normal whole for the individual (graveyard) Specification is shown through dealing with the (graveyard) as subclass and (western kind) as its super class . Moreover , cataphoric reference is represented by (it – graveyard) .

2- " It was on a hill , about a mile and a half from the village.

Locally , the relation between this sentence and the previous one is explication .

Globally , the relation among the parts of this sentence is addition . it is coherent in virtue of elaboration of the meaning . (about a mile and a half from the village) is a normal location the (it – graveyard) and (hill

3- " It had a crazy board – fence around it , which leaned inward in places , and outward the rest of the time , but stood upright nowhere " .

The local relation between sentence (2) and (3) is specification . This sentence represents the subclass of the previous sentence , i.e.,superclass .

This kind of relation , i.e. , specification , is globally shown through dealing with the parts of the graveyard . Moreover , the predicate (leaned

inward) determines a possible consequence for the (fence) . All the predicates come in accordance with the argument (fence) .

4- " Grass and weeds grew rank over the whole cemetery " .

The relation between this sentence and the previous one is explication .

Globally , the predicate (grew rank) denotes a possible relation between the argument (grass and weeds) and (cemetery) or it is a normal consequence .

5- " All the old graves were sunken in " .

For the relation between this and the previous sentence is generalization . This sentence is coherent because the predicate (were sunken in) reveals a possible consequence . Particularization is introduced , via , (old graves) part from the graveyard . This can be interpreted as :

- 1- There are old and new graves .**
- 2- New graves were not sunken in .**

6- " There was not a tombstone on the place ; round – topped , worm – eaten board staggered over the graves , leaning for support and finding none " .

The relation between (5) and (6) is identified as specification . Globally , let's start with the predicate (staggered over the graves) which shows two things : on the one hand , it is a possible consequence for the argument (tombstone) , and on the other hand ,it denotes an acceptable relation between (tombstone) , and (grave) , i.e. , whole – part .

7- " ' Sacred to the memory of ' So – an – so had been painted on them once , but it could no longer have been read , on the most of them , now , even if there had been light " .

Locally , this sentence is a relation of example and globally , elaboration or addition can be easily noticed in this sentence .

The argument (sacred to the memory) can be correctly denoted by the predicate , it can be (painted) (read) . Both are typical activities or consequences for the argument . The argument (sacred to the memory) is anaphorically referred to as (it) . (them) refers to (graves) as well .

The second stage is to find out whether coherence relations are preserved or not in the Arabic text . It is noticeable that the translator

neglected a number of words , for one reason or another , in order to keep the text coherent .

The translator puts an explicit instrument , namely , the coordinator (و) among sentences to maintain the logical connection .

The first sentence is not coherent with the penultimate one . The first equates (المقابر والجبانة) and the other give each one a different meaning by using the particle (اما) which shows contrast . In the English text , there is only one word denotes the meaning of (المقابر) , i.e. , graveyard , there as the Arabic text uses two words for the same word .

Concluding Remarks

On the basis of what has been mentioned , it can be concluded that :

- 1- Comprehension processing can be easily tackled if criteria are used adequately .
- 2- The criteria suggested showed high degree of applicability and comprehensiveness , and this agrees with the hypothesis of the study .
- 3- Frame can be directly instantiated through text representation .
- 4- Coherence relations are not , more or less , well incorporated in the Arabic text .

هذه الدراسة محاولة لتسليط الضوء على الاساليب المستخدمة لتحليل النصوص المترجمة . و يمكن تعريف هذه الاساليب بأنها العلاقات الكامنة فيما بين اجزاء النص والذي يكون دور القارئ او المستمع متجسدا في اظهارها الى السطح من خلال عمليات التحليل . و عمليات التحليل هذه مستندة الى تحليل الجمل المنفردة و معرفة علاقاتها بالجمل الاخرى . هذه الدراسة تستند الى الفرضية القائلة بان الاساليب قيد الدراسة تمكن من اظهار جميع العلاقات الكامنة في النص . تقع الدراسة في جزأين رئيسيين ، اولهما ، نظري حيث يستعرض جملة من الوسائل التي تمكن القارئ او المستمع من تحليل النص فيما يتمحور الجزء الثاني في وضع هذه الاساليب في محاولة تطبيقية يتم من خلالها تحليل نص اصلي مع ترجمته باستخدام الوسائل المشار اليها .

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