

Preserving the Original Sentential and Syntactic Patterns and the Translational Manipulation Thereof: Jean Webster's Daddy Long Legs in Focus

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Abstract

The primary objective of this investigation was to examine the two Persian renditions of Daddy Long Legs (Webster, 1912) with regard to their adherence to the original sentence and syntactic patterns, as well as the manipulative alterations made during translation, as per Antoine Berman's distorting inclinations. In order to accomplish the objectives of this study, the researchers employed content or document analysis as a qualitative method to scrutinize the strategies employed in the translation of the novel from English to Persian. The data for this analysis were derived from an examination of two translated volumes by Soleimani (2020) and Dana (2018), respectively. The findings obtained from the comparison and contrast of two translated books with their original text, as well as with each other, revealed that the two Persian translations of the work experienced a form of stylistic distortion in their sentence and syntactic structures. Consequently, there were discrepancies between the translations and the original work in terms of textual patterns, which could be attributed to stylistic distortion resulting from manipulations in the sentence and syntactic elements.

Keywords: Antoine Berman's distorting inclinations, content analysis, novel, translation, translational manipulation

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1. Introduction

The syntax encompasses a collection of regulations and classifications that govern the formation of sentences in the realm of human language. Each sentence consists of a verb and the subject associated with said verb. An array of diverse sentence types can be constructed, including verbal, nominal, declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamatory, simple, complex, compound, and compound-complex sentences.

Consequently, the objective of this investigation was to examine the extent to which syntactic adjustment or manipulation was present in the two Persian translations of the novel. The aim of this investigation was to scrutinize and juxtapose the two Persian translations of the novel in terms of their adherence to the original syntactic structure. The chosen translations were carried out by Soleimani (2020) and Dana (2018). Therefore, this investigation aimed to assess the degree of syntactic modification that existed within the two Persian translations under examination. To summarize the rationale for conducting the current study, the primary aspects of importance in this study arise from the stylistic and contextual characteristics of Jean Webster's acclaimed novel, *Daddy Long Legs*. As an object of critical examination, Webster's novel swiftly gained popularity upon its release and continues to be widely read today due to two primary factors: Firstly, as a feminist work, this literary masterpiece has garnered significant attention from women and stands among numerous other contemporary works that have attracted similar interest. Secondly, there have been analyses of the novel from the perspective of reader-response theory, particularly as it pertains to the attitudes of children. Thus, it can be inferred that Webster's views on the creation of literary works and on matters pertaining to education, suffrage, and gender relations were shaped by her experiences as a woman.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Theoretical Foundation

As a primary theoretical concern, the initial step involves contemplating the oversimplified characteristic of the English sentences portrayed in the syntactic dichotomy of kernel versus derived sentences, as indicated in the pertinent literature (Cook & Newson, 2007; Lyons, 1977). One aspect of the manner in which grammar operates within a language pertains to the organization of sentences, which is referred to as syntax (Carnie, 2002). According to Morley

(2000), two distinct approaches exist with regard to the structure of syntax: formal and functional. Formal syntax pertains to the methodology of employing words to construct more extensive formations, encompassing phrases and ultimately sentences. Functional syntax, on the other hand, encompasses the arrangement of sentences in relation to smaller functional components and words. From a technical standpoint, the fundamental sentence structure in English fundamentally constituted a straightforward, assertive, and dynamic sentence. This resulted in the automatic generation of various other patterns of sentences, including but not limited to compound or complex structures, negative or interrogative forms, and active or passive voices. Nida and Taber (1969) assumed that “languages agreed far more on the level of the kernels than on the level of the more elaborate structures” (p. 39). Intuitively, the presence of these sentence patterns and comparable syntactic manifestations did indeed exist in Persian, albeit with occasional emergence of certain minor parametrical structures in the translated texts. In Toury's (2012) poly-systemic perspective, it is possible to discuss the "operational norms" within the target language community, where the matter of translational manipulation in translated literature holds influence. From an alternate standpoint, as indicated by Berman (2012), there exist deformative tendencies, including "rationalization," which primarily affects punctuation as the most mutable component within the syntactical framework of the original prose text. 'Rationalization' refers to the process of abstraction. In this regard, rationalization facilitated the transition from concrete to abstract by not only reorganizing the structure of sentences but also by transforming verbs into nouns and selecting the more general noun in instances of choice.

Consequently, 'rationalization' reconstructs sentences and the sequencing of sentences, reordering them based on a specific conception of discursive arrangement. Wherever the sentence structure was relatively unconstrained, the possibility arises for it to be condensed in favor of rationalization, as explained earlier. This phenomenon was evident in the strong aversion that the French have toward repetition, the extensive use of relative clauses and participles, as well as the inclusion of lengthy sentences or sentences lacking verbs - all of which are indispensable components of prose.

2.2. Previous Studies

The most discernible syntactic characteristic that unveils the discrepancy in sentence structure between Persian and English is encapsulated in the observation that Persian follows a subject-object-verb (SOV) order, whereas English adheres to a subject-verb-object (SVO) order. It is while such discrepancies are of a different nature in Turkish translation. In an analysis of the Turkish translations of Webster's *Daddy Long Legs*, Alimen and Kalaycioğlu (2021), in which two translations, *Dede* by Bürge (1973) and *Bacaklı Baba* by Ekiz (2003), respectively, were analyzed in terms of their systemic affiliation to the children's system. Both target texts were analyzed in relation to their systemic affiliation, specifically in terms of their affiliation to existing models, the comprehensiveness of the text, the complexity of the text, ideological or evaluative adaptation, and adherence to stylistic norms. The findings of the analysis indicated that *Dede* was subject to manipulation, with systemic affiliation being achieved through the use of omissions, additions, and changes in the illustrations. On the other hand, *Bacaklı Baba* was only affiliated with the target system in terms of enhancing children's vocabulary and serving a didactic purpose. It was also observed that *Dede* was intended for children as the target audience, while *Bacaklı Baba* was aimed at children and young adults.

Thus, it can be inferred that the perception of what was considered to be 'positive' or 'suitable' for children might differ among various target audiences. From the perspective of the literary polysystem, given the marginal position of translated children's literature within the literary polysystem, translators may seem to possess the autonomy to modify the texts; in contrast to adult literature, alterations were accepted and often necessary in order to create a translation that was deemed 'positive' for young readers.

In a separate investigation concerning grammatical metaphor in *Daddy Long Legs*, Pambudi (2018) reached the conclusion that there exist two distinct categories of grammatical metaphors, specifically ideational and interpersonal, with the ideational metaphor being the most frequently employed one in the novel under examination. Moreover, a study conducted by Ramadhan (2022) focused on the conservation of figurative language during the process of translation. In this study, Ramadhan aimed to delineate the various forms of figurative language found in the source text that must be retained in the translated text. The results of this investigation revealed the utilization of two approaches, namely literal and adaptation translation, in the translated text.

A further investigation carried out in 2023 by Ardiyanti and Basid examined the perspective of Buthayna's translation of Jean Webster's novel *Daddy Long Legs*, published in 2018. This study employed a qualitative and descriptive research approach. The methodology employed for data analysis involved the categorization and identification of the narrative structure within the novel. The findings of this investigation revealed that the order of the narrative presented in the novel was characterized by an anachrony, and the duration of the narrative consisted of three distinct forms: pause, scene, and summary. Furthermore, it was also observed that the frequency employed in the novel took the form of single representation and anaphoric representation, while the mood was characterized by internal focalization and zero focalization. The narrator's narration utilized in the novel can be classified as heterodiegetic as well as homodiegetic.

In a Master of Arts thesis carried out from the perspective of reception aesthetics, Chensi (2012) conducted an examination of the two Chinese renditions of *Daddy Long Legs*, which were created by YU Fang and Ai Ke, respectively, from the standpoint of reception aesthetics. According to reception theory, readers assume a more active role in the reception of the author's message, rather than merely being passive recipients.

Instead, the genuine meaning of a literary work can only be attained when the reader fully comprehends and embraces it. This study endeavored to investigate, in light of reception aesthetics, the most appropriate translation style for children's books. The researcher employed two fundamental concepts—namely, horizon of expectations and indeterminacy—based on Reception theory, due to the specific audience of young readers. Upon comparing and contrasting the two Chinese translations by YU Fang and Ai Ke, it became evident that both translations broadened the horizons of young readers while accurately preserving any potential ambiguity that might have existed. The translator must consider the reading capabilities of the Chinese audience when translating children's books such as *Daddy Long Legs*. It is crucial for the translator to ensure that the audience's expectations regarding comprehension and enjoyment are met.

3. Method

3.1. Research Objectives

The primary aim of the present investigation was to analyze the texts of the two translations that are being examined in order to ascertain whether the theme-rheme or old-new information patterns present in the original text have been preserved. In the process of doing so, the deviations from the fundamental patterns of constructing sentences, specifically the operative categories of compound sentences, main and subordinate sentences, and simple sentences, as well as various types of clauses, were scrutinized in both translations with the objective of accomplishing the aforementioned goal. To some extent, the comparison and contrast of the translations being studied was predicated on the structure and length of the sentences as they appeared in the original text.

3.2. Research Questions

Major RQ: Do the translations under study differ in preserving the original sentence structure and syntactic patterns?

Minor RQ1: Regarding the preservation of the original syntactic patterns, do the translations under study differ in adequately preserving the compound and simple sentence patterns?

Minor RQ2: Do the translations under study differ in retaining the linear order of sentences and syntactic elements?

Minor RQ3: Regarding the preservation of the original syntactic patterns, what are the primary patterns of syntactic manipulation in the translations under study?

3.3. Procedure

Although this study employed descriptive statistics, it possessed a qualitative essence. In its initial phase, this study sought to extract a sample of sentence-based elements from *Daddy Long Legs* (Webster, 1912). In the subsequent phase, the objective was to compare and contrast the extracted elements with their corresponding counterparts in the two translations. Upon the collection of the raw data, the emergent patterns of translational manipulation were ascertained, and frequency values were assigned to each of them. Lastly, the appropriate statistical methodologies were employed to further analyze the data.

To comprehend the syntactic composition of a work, one must examine both phrasal and sentential patterns. A sentence can consist of multiple lexical phrases, each of which obtains its syntactic features from its head word. Consequently, the study analyzed the two translated works to determine how they maintained the theme-rheme or old-new information patterns. The two translations were scrutinized for any violations of the fundamental patterns of sentential composition, including compound and simple sentences, main and subordinate sentences, as well as active and passive sentences. Taking a critical perspective, we compared and contrasted the translations under study based on their sentential structure and the length of the sentences as they appeared in the original text.

3.4. Instrumentation

Due to its wide circulation and the presence of a distinguished author/translator, this investigation selected the novel (Webster, 1912) and its two Persian translations by Soleimani (2020) and Dana (2018), all of which were published at different points in time. In the preliminary phase of the analysis process, the original work was divided into sentences and separated into individual units, while the corresponding segments in the two translations were also extracted. The subsequent step involved the comparison of the original material with its translational equivalents.

Subsequently, the researcher documented the similarities and differences in terms of the distribution of old-new information or the division of theme and rheme, as well as the preservation of the original's syntactic structure and the translator's manipulations in the translated text. Lastly, the raw data were transformed into a table to enhance clarity.

In the following examination, two distinct examples were selected and integrated in this document, originating from the results of the previously explained procedural approach. These specific events exemplify the existence of specific modifications in the translations being scrutinized, regardless of the absence of any inherent allowance for such manipulation.

'And' Elimination (Soleimani)

Sentence 1: Jerusha leaned forward watching with curiosity—and a touch of wistfulness—the stream of carriages and automobiles that rolled out of the asylum gates. چروشبا کنجکاوای ردیف ماشینها و کالسکههایی را که از در پرورشگاه خارج میشدند تماشا میکرد.

Sentence 2: And you were pretty dazed too.

تو هم خیلی گیج بودی.

'And' Elimination (Dana)

Sentence 1: Jerusha assembled her charges, straightened their rumpled frocks, wiped their noses, and started them in an orderly and willing line toward the dining-room to engage themselves for a blessed half hour with bread and milk and prune pudding.

جروشها بچه ها را قطار کرد، بینی یک یک را پاک و لباسهایشان را صاف کرد و آنها را به صف به سالن غذا خوری برد تا شام خود را که عبارت از نان سفید و شیر و یک ظرف کمپوت بود بخورند.

Sentence 2: I was so excited that really and truly my feet would hardly take me up.

به طوری هیجان زده شده بودم که راستی به سختی خود را سر پا نگاه می داشتم.

'And' Change to a Comma (Soleimani)

Sentence 1: They are organizing the Freshman basket-ball team and there's just a chance that I shall make it.

دارند تیم بسکتبال سال اول را راه می اندازند، شاید من هم انتخاب شوم.

Sentence 2: it was so dim coming in from the brightly lighted hall that for a moment I could scarcely make out anything; then I saw a big easy chair before the fire and a shining tea table with a smaller chair beside it.

اتاق چنان در مقایسه با سالن روشن، تاریک بود که برای لحظه ای نتوانستم چیزی را در اتاق تشخیص بدهم، ولی بعد یک صندلی راحتی را نزدیک بخاری دیواری، میز چای خوری براق و صندلی کوچکتري را پهلوی آن دیدم.

'And' Change to a Comma (Dana)

Sentence 1: Ninety-seven squirming little orphans must be scrubbed and combed and buttoned into freshly starched gingham; and all ninety-seven reminded of their manners, and told to say, "Yes, sir," "No, sir," whenever a Trustee spoke.

نودو هفت بچه یتیم کوچولو را که در هم میلیدند باید تمیز کرد، سرشان را شانه زد، لباس ارمک نو به آنها پوشانید، تکمه هایشان را انداخت و هر چند دقیقه به هر نودو هفت نفر یادآوری کرد که هرگاه یکی از آنها؛ سوالی کرد بگویند " بله آقا " یا " نه خیر آقا " و کلمه " آقا " را فراموش نکنند.

Sentence 2: I know from the way he said it that he loved you- and I think he's an old dear!

از حرف زدن وی احساس می شد که علاقه ی زیادی به تو دارد، و به همین جهت جای خود را در قلب من باز کرد.

'And' Change to a Period (Soleimani)

Sentence 1: He's connected with a bond house now, and goes about the country selling bonds to banks.

جیمی الان برای یک شرکت سهام کار میکند. در کشور راه میافتد تا سهام به بانکها بفروشد.

Sentence 2: I know from the way he said it that he loved you- and I think he's an old dear!
از طرز حرف زدنش فهمیدم که به تو خیلی علاقه دارد. خوب به نظرم پیرمرد نازنینی است.

'And' Change to a Period (Dana)

Sentence 1: We had a bishop this morning, and what do you think he said?
امروز صبح اسقفی برای ما صحبت کرد. حدس میزنید چی گفت؟

Sentence 2: I've been writing as fast as my pen would go every day this summer, and my only quarrel with life is that the days aren't long enough to right write all the beautiful and valuable and entertaining thoughts I'm thinking.
در تمام طول تابستان با سرعت هر چه تمام تر چیز نوشته ام. فقط متاسفم که چرا روزها درازتر نیست که من بتوانم افکار پر ارزش و قشنگ خود را بر روی کاغذ بیاورم.

'And' Change to Another Conjunction (Soleimani)

Sentence 1: And poor Jerusha Abbott, being the oldest orphan, had to bear the brunt of it.
اما از آنجا که جروشا آبد بیچاره از همه بچه ها یتیم بزرگتر بود، بیشتر زحمتها به گردن او بود.

Sentence 2: It was a very sweet half hour before your doctor came and sent me away.
آن نیم ساعتی که قبل از آمدن دکتر آن جا بودم، واقعا برایم شیرین بود. بعد دکتر مرا بیرون فرستاد.

'And' Change to Another Conjunction (Dana)

Sentence 1: Jerusha escaped from the pantry where she had been making sandwiches for the asylum's guests, and turned upstairs to accomplish her regular work.
جروشا که تمام بعدظهر در آبدارخانه برای مهمانهای نوانخانه ساندویچ درست کرده بود، با کمال خستگی به طبقه بالا رفت که به وظایف عادی و روزانه خود بپردازد.

Sentence 2: and I knew that somewhere another man—dearer than Daddy—was wanting to see me and somehow I had a feeling that before the journey ended I should meet him too...
ولی این را هم میدانستم که در نقطه ی دیگری مرد دیگری عزیزتر از بابا آرزوی دیدن مرا دارد.

Basic Sentence Dislocation (Soleimani)

Sentence 1: A hundred little things might have told me, if I had had any wits
گر یک ذره هوش داشتم از صدها شواهد جزئی که دال بر این موضوع بود این را میفهمیدم.

Sentence 2: I am so sorry that you have been ill; I wouldn't have bothered you with my affairs if I had known
از اینکه فهمیدم مریض بوده اید خیلی ناراحت شدم. اگر می دانستم شما مریض هستید با مطرح کردن مشکلاتم اذیتتان نمی کردم.

Basic Sentence Dislocation (Dana)

Sentence 1: "To college?" Jerusha's eyes grew big. چشمهای جروشاً گرد شد، خیره شد و پرسید: "به دانشکده؟"

Sentence 2: A hundred little things might have told me, if I had had any wits. اگر یک یک ذره شعور داشتم هزار مورد پیش آمده بود که این راز را برای من روشن کند.

Theme-Rheme Displacement (Soleimani)

Sentence 1: Outside the door he turned and whispered, "He's been very ill, Miss." دم در کتابخانه خدمتکار مخصوص رو به من کرد و آهسته گفت: "خانم، آقا خیلی مریض بوده اند."

Sentence 2: I know from the way he said it that he loved you- and I think he's an old dear! از طرز حرف زدنش فهمیدم که به تو خیلی علاقه دارد. خب به نظرم پیرمرد نازنینی است.

Theme-Rheme Displacement (Dana)

Sentence 1: When I came to the house on Madison Avenue it looked so big and brown and forbidding that I didn't dare go in, so I walked around the block to get up my courage. وقتی که به خیابان مادیسون و به در خانه شما رسیدم، از دیدن آن عمارت مجلل بزرگ قهوه ای رنگ زهره ام آب شد برای اینکه خونسردی خود را به دست آورم یک دور، دور، دور عمارت گشتم ولی حواس من بی جا بود، چه سر پیش خدمت پیرمرد مامانی بود و چنان پدران به من صحبت کرد که ترس و دلهره ای من آنرا از بین رفت.

Sentence 2: Julia and I were born to be enemies. گمان میکنم من و ژولیا از روز اول دشمن یکدیگر خلق شده ایم.

4. Results and Discussion

This investigation constituted an endeavor to examine the two Persian interpretations of the novel, one translated by Soleimani (2020) and the other by Dana (2018), with respect to their ability to uphold the original sentential and syntactic structures. With this aim in mind, the former research inquiries were formulated. Subsequently, the findings of descriptive and inferential statistics pertaining to the research inquiries and hypotheses are provided. In order to compare the translators' performance in terms of total syntactic manipulations and determine whether there existed a significant disparity in this regard, a chi-square test was conducted, and the results of this test were presented in the subsequent tables and figures.

As shown in Table 1, Soleimani adopted 1426 syntactic manipulations, while 1023 syntactic manipulations were used by Dana, indicating that Soleimani made use of more syntactic manipulations compared to his counterpart, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Table 1

Total Syntactic Manipulations Adopted by the Translators

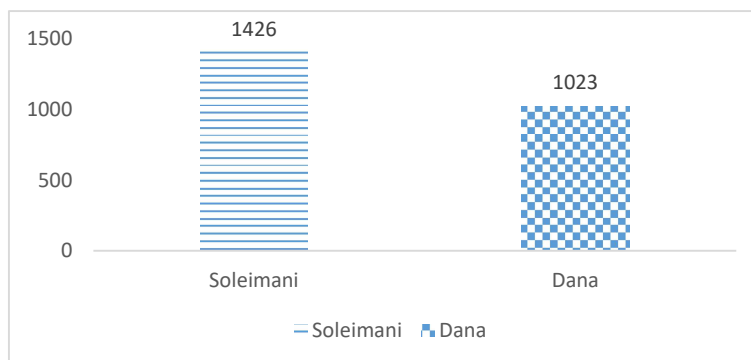
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Soleimani	1426	1224.5	201.5
Dana	1023	1224.5	-201.5
Total	2449		

As illustrated in Figure 1, Soleimani made use of more syntactic manipulations than Dana did. To compare the performance of these two translators on each page of the book, the following figure was designed.

As illustrated in Figure 2, it seems that the line of Soleimani’s performance was moving above the line of Dana’s performance in most parts of the chart. To see whether there was a significant difference in adopting syntactic manipulations, a chi-square test was run, the results of which can be seen in Table 2.

Figure 1

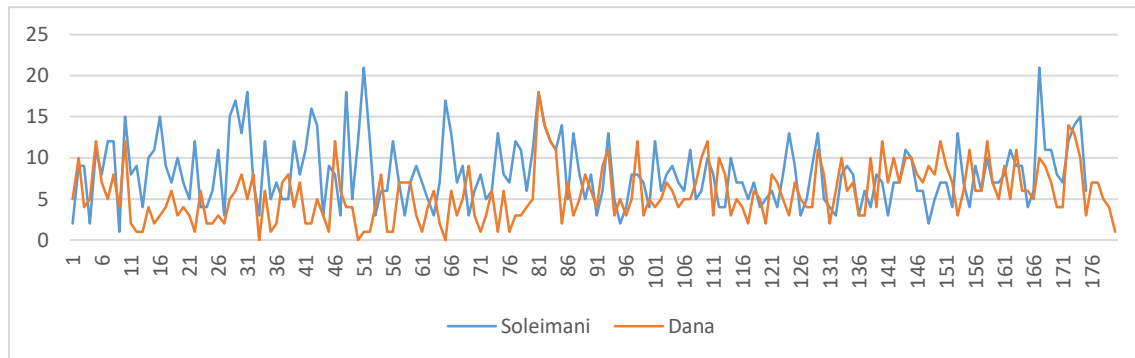
Total Syntactic Manipulations Adopted by the Translators



As indicated in Table 2, there was a significant difference between the two translators ($p < .05$) in adopting syntactic manipulations in their translated texts, with Soleimani ($N = 1426$) making use of more syntactic manipulations compared to Dana ($N = 1023$).

Figure 2

Total Syntactic Manipulations Adopted by the Translators on Each Page



To compare the performance of translators in terms of all manipulations applied and to see whether there was a significant difference in this regard, a chi-square test was run, the results of which are presented in the following tables and figures.

Table 2

Chi-square Statistics for Total Syntactic Manipulations

	Translators
Chi-Square	66.31
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.00

Table 3

All the Manipulations Adopted by the Translators

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Soleimani	1784	1676.5	107.5
Dana	1569	1676.5	-107.5
Total	3353		

As shown in Table 3, Soleimani adopted 1784 manipulations, while 1569 manipulations were used by Dana, indicating that Soleimani made use of more manipulations compared to his counterpart, as illustrated in Figure 3.

As illustrated in Figure 3, Soleimani made use of more manipulations than Dana did. To compare the performance of these two translators on each page of the book, the following figure was designed.

As illustrated in Figure 4, it seems that the line of Soleimani's performance was moving above the line of Dana's performance in most parts of the chart. To see whether there was a significant difference in using manipulations, a chi-square test was run, the results of which can be seen in the table below.

As indicated in Table 4, there was a significant difference between the two translators ($p < .05$) in adopting manipulations in their translated texts, with Soleimani ($N = 1784$) making use of more manipulations, compared to Dana ($N = 1569$).

Figure 3

All the Manipulations Adopted by the Translators

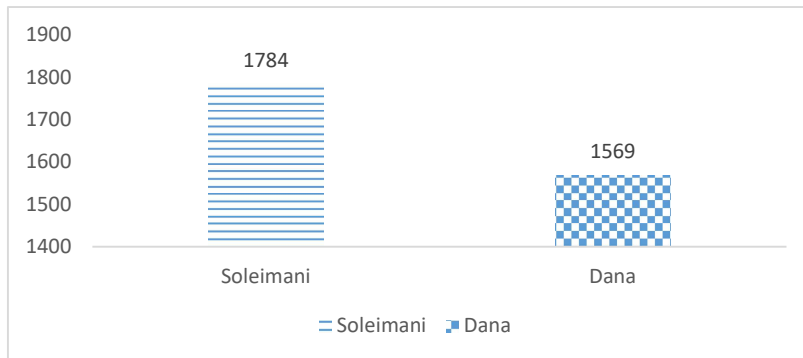


Figure 4

All the Manipulations Adopted by the Translators on Each Page

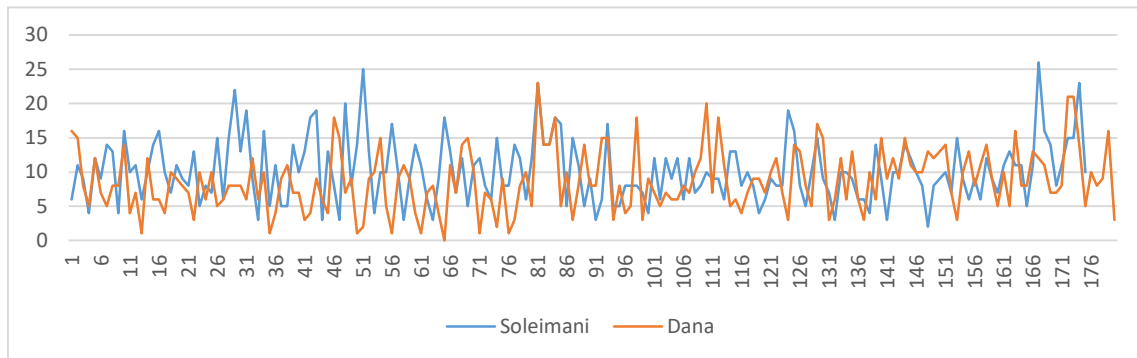


Table 4

Chi-square Statistics for All the Manipulations

	Translators
Chi-Square	13.78
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.00

The works of two translators, Soleimani (2020) and Dana (2018), underwent analysis and comparison with regard to various aspects. These aspects include (1) the elimination of the conjunction ‘and,’ (2) the substitution of ‘and’ with a comma, (3) the replacement of ‘and’ with a period, (4) the substitution of ‘and’ with another conjunction, (5) the total number of manipulations involving ‘and,’ (6) the dislocation of basic sentences, (7) the displacement of theme and rheme, (8) the total number of syntactic manipulations, and (9) all manipulations combined. By conducting descriptive statistics, specifically examining the frequency of these manipulations, as well as employing inferential statistics such as the chi-square test, it was determined that Dana employed a greater number of additions, eliminations, and alterations to commas, periods, and other conjunctions and manipulations when compared to Soleimani. Conversely, there was no discernible difference between Dana and Soleimani in terms of the adoption of basic sentence dislocation. On the contrary, Soleimani implemented more displacements of theme-rheme and utilized a higher number of syntactic manipulations in comparison to Dana. Similarly, Soleimani employed a greater number of manipulations, both syntactic and involving the conjunction "and" in contrast to Dana.

5. Conclusion

The researcher conducted statistical analysis on the data acquired by comparing the syntactic and sentential analysis of the source text with the syntactic and sentential order of the target text translation. This was done based on the research questions and assumptions. The analysis was performed on six specific parts that were mentioned earlier. The results of the manipulation analysis, which focused on the manipulation of sentential and syntactic elements, were examined for the novel and the two translations by Soleimani and Dana. The aforementioned results were assessed in consideration of Berman's distortive inclinations. It was determined that the six alterations identified in the original text sentences and their corresponding translated text sentences were in accordance with Berman's distortive inclinations.

Furthermore, these alterations were determined to be incongruous with alternative theoretical frameworks, Tezcan's (2015) for one.

Conflict of interest

The author(s) certify/certifies that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest (such as honoraria; educational grants; participation in speakers' bureaus; membership, employment, consultancies, stock ownership, or other equity interest; and expert testimony or patent-licensing arrangements), or non-financial interest (such as personal or professional relationships, affiliations, knowledge or beliefs) in the subject matter or materials discussed in the present research paper.

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