RESEARCH ARTICLE

TRANSLATORIAL PREFACES: A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS MODEL

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ABSTRACT

Translatorial prefaces as personal stories of translators and valuable primary sources are productive to be explored. The present study aims at working out a relatively comprehensive model for the analysis of the narratives of translatorial prefaces, to be then utilized in further researches on translatorial prefaces. To devise the model, a corpus of 104 prefaces written by Iranian translators on the first published edition of their translations of the fictions from different languages into Farsi during the last sixty years in Iran have been compiled. The translatorial prefaces were investigated in terms of their form, content, and function purporting to figure out the model. For the matter of clarity, the findings were tabulated as far as possible. Some apparatus were also suggested for interpreting the findings which can evolve the proposed model in turn.

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1. INTRODUCTION

"Prae-fatio" means "a saying before-hand" (Oxford English Dictionary). Genette (1987) claims that most of the techniques of prefaces were set in mid sixteenth century and from then onward no fundamental evolution has taken place (p. 163). Emphasizing on the value of prefaces as one of the paratextual devices in general and a peritext in particular "that form part of the complex mediation between book, author, publisher and reader" (p. 431), Genette (1987) underlines that each of the paratextual elements has its own history which is worth broad and comprehensive investigations (p. 14).

There is also an implicit assumption that there should not be any translatorial prefaces[1] attached to the literary work. Spivak (2005) takes note of the contemptuous notice from Kirkus reviews for writing a preface to the work of fiction she translated which was in sharp contrast with the abundant praise she received for her preface on a volume of philosophical criticism; in line with this negative approach to translators' prefaces on fictions, Lander (2001) argues that among the privileges the translators of non-fiction enjoy is the fact that prefaces are often permissible and welcomed thus allowing the translator a "wider latitude for explanation of the translational choices made" (p. 103). Seemingly, though the challenges in literary translation is potentially a hotbed for translators' conscious decision making and applying strategy,

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[1]The term "Translatorial Preface" has been coined by the researcher analogous to the term "Authorial Preface" introduced by Genette (1987), in his classification of types of prefaces; however, the word commonly used for this concept is "Translator's Preface" which has been also interchangeably used throughout this study.

practically it is the very context wherein translators are most praised for not being visible and are most widely acquired to be faithful.

Translatorial prefaces are the story of translators, the story of self, and an "ontological narrative" in Somers & Gibson's (1993) terms. Everyone not only has a story, but also has a right to tell his/her story (Bamberg, 2011). The ownership of the stories and the stories' representational powers have been fore-grounded in De Fina & Georgakopoulou (2012). The story ownership perceives the teller of the story as an agent who is the author of his/her life experiences (p. 149). The telling rights not only allows the tellers to tell their narratives of a story, but also to reevaluate, and reconstruct the people's narratives (p. 136) or public narratives in Somers' (1994) terms where public narratives "are those narratives attached to cultural and institutional formations larger than the single individual" (p. 619).

Public narrative comprises of three elements, namely the story of self, story of us (other), and the story of now (action). The story of self, reveals the self's identity, values, experiences and why s/he does what s/he does; The story of us shows who we/they are, and what are our/their shared values; and finally the story of now entails actions that transform "the present into a moment of challenge, hope, and choice" (Ganz, 2008, para3).

The notion of narrative itself demands more contemplation as it has been defined in various ways and has penetrated into many disciplines. According to Chase (2005), narrative can be used in labelling any text or discourse as well as mode of inquiry in qualitative research. In literature, narrative has been defined as an optional mode compared to the non-narrative mode (Baker, 2005) while in social theories according to Somers & Gibson (1993) "social life is itself storied and that narrative is an ontological condition of social life" (p. 2). Baker (2005), drawing on the concept of narrative introduced by Somers & Gibson (1993), maintains that there is "no narrative-free perspectives" on the world. (p. 12).

Baker (2007) explicates that narrative theory aids in exploring the large narrative wherein translations and translators are embedded and perusing the translatorial choices rather as what shape the narratives that constructs their world (p.113). Every choice can activate a special narrative and mostly those leading to labelling and positioning can more effectively frame narratives for others (p. 119).

Venuti (1995) underscoring the discourse of "visibility" of translators, seizes translator's prefaces as a public sphere for translators to raise their voice and make it heard. In an interview by Nogué (1998), Carol Maier expressing her preference for "women-identified translator" over "feminist translator", refers to translatorial prefaces as a good tool for women-identified translators to make the women translation more visible (p.161).

Gomez (2003) deals with prefaces in general and translators' prefaces in particular as a codified literary genre. He argues that a particular genre is characterized with particular discourse. And the discourse in prologue of any work has a value to be studied per se. He refers to Laurenti and A. Porqueras Mayo who long ago deplored the gap in researches on exploring the prologue as an independent literary vehicle.

2. Statement of the Problem

Translators' prefaces, as the voice of translators and as their personal narratives have been claimed to have a constructive role in shaping the public, conceptual, and even meta narratives on the concept of translation and translator itself. They are weighty documents in translation studies, indicating the translators' challenges, conscious decision makings, preferences, agency, positioning, identity, and many other investigable, yet not investigated questions. Through prefaces as their personal narratives, as their small d-discourses, translators can claim authority for their narratives.

Reviewing the related literatures on translatorial prefaces, the lack of any comprehensive framework for the analysis of translatorial prefaces has been perceptible. The present study is an attempt to work out a model for the analysis of the translatorial prefaces, to be utilized in further researches by other scholars.

3. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid any ambiguity, the researcher's intended meaning for the key terms of this research is briefly shared in this part.

3.1 Translatorial prefaces

"Translatorial Preface" is a cover term for "introductions, notes, afterwords, or any other commentary preceding or following a translation written by the translator" (McRae, 2010, p.7); however, for the purpose of this study a distinction has been made between prefaces as a paratextual element preceding the texts and post-faces as succeeding the texts.

3.2 Paratext

Paratexts are those liminal literary and stylistic devices and conventions which are not the main texts, but surround texts and contextualize them. Paratexts comprise "peritext" and "epitext": Peritexts include titles, forewords, dedications, epigraphs, prefaces, afterwords, etc. that enclose a text; epitexts are "the elements in the public and private history of the book" (Genette, 1987, pp. xi-xviii).

3.3 Narrative Theory

There are many fundamentally different definitions suggested for narrative and narrative theory in different disciplines, but this study has adopted narrative theory introduced by Somers and Gibson (1993) into social sciences as "an ontological condition of social life" (p.2). In this sense, narrative represents "a mode of thinking and being" which can be found everywhere rather than being limited to literature (Currie, 1998, p. 6). Such approach is in close relationship with studies on identity, ontology, and social actions.

3.4 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is one of the qualitative analytic methods within and beyond psychology in search of themes and patterns. It is a foundational method for qualitative analysis; hence, it provides the basic skills for deploying most of the other qualitative analyses. Its flexibility besides its potentiality to provide comprehensive and detailed accounts of the data is one of its main advantages. (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 1-5).

4.   Significance of the Study

Recently, along the new emerging concepts of translators' visibility and the concept of identity, some scholars in the field of Translation Studies here and there are emphasizing on the importance of translators' prefaces, but a very quick review would deplorably reveal that, compared to the fast-growing bulk of studies which have been done in the field, very few systematic studies have been conducted on translatorial prefaces as important primary sources.

Historical and descriptive approaches in Translation Studies have been utilizing different materials such as the actual translations, critical reviews, interviews, etc, but they have mostly overlooked the closest materials surrounding the very text of translation, namely peritexts, of which preface is among the most important elements; the fact that more than one-third of Genette's seminal work on paratext (1987) is allotted to discussions over prefaces, is self-evident of the weight of this paratextual element among all.

Regardless of the subject of translatorial prefaces, the main advantage of the framework proposed in this study is its drawing on a conceptual apparatus, narrative theory in working out a model for analysis of the translatorial prefaces as a primary source and the outcome of the translators' first-hand practical experiences with the translated texts. Having analyzed 104 translatorial prefaces written during sixty years, the researcher found otherwise meaningless patterns, and proposed a framework to facilitate further researches on translatorial prefaces. The findings of such Descriptive Translation Studies researches, as Toury (1995) writes, "should make it possible to formulate a series of coherent laws which would state the inherent relations between all the variables found to be relevant to translation" (p. 16). The findings of descriptive researches on Translation Studies can be also fed into the theoretical concerns to develop a general or partial theory of translation. In Holmes' (1988) view, establishing a general history of translation is one of the final goals of Descriptive Translation Studies (pp.184-85). One of the main vantages of this research is the interdisciplinary nature of this study which made it feasible to bring Translation Studies, Literature, and Narrative Studies in social sciences together to create a new approach, model, and knowledge which was not otherwise possible.

5.   Devising the Model

As aforementioned, the purpose of the study is to investigate translatorial prefaces in order to devise a rather comprehensive framework for investigating the translatorial prefaces.

5.1 Material

To investigate the narratives of translatorial prefaces, a representative corpus is needed to be analyzed, as "corpus based analysis is especially useful for quantitative analyses, to identify linguistic patterns" of use during time (Biber & Conrad, 2009, p. 92). The corpus for this study included original translatorial prefaces, i.e., those prefaces written by translators on the first published edition of the translation of the fictions they translated from different languages into Farsi during the last sixty years in Iran, i.e., the years 1330-1390 of the Iranian calendar, covering the period 1951-2011. Formerly, the time scope was decided to be a period of 50 years, but as sufficient number of prefaces could not be found for the first three decades (1330-1360), the duration of the study is extended to sixty years, adding one more decade. The timing is significant as in-between, Iran has experienced the determining event of the change of regime from Pahlavi to Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979, which could have affected translatorial prefaces.

By fiction, it meant those prose literatures including short stories, novelettes, and novels which were according to Abrams & Harpham (2010) "invented instead of being an account of events that actually happened" (p. 128).

To increase the reliability of the corpus, the fictions were chosen from different countries including England, America, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, Africa, Italy, India, Turkey, and Arab countries. Great cares were taken to encompass different types of fictions including action, adventure, comedy, crime, historical, horror, science, and other genres. After finding the sources, they had to be scanned for later in-depth analysis.

At the beginning, it was decided to find twenty translatorial prefaces for each decade, but as the problem of the availability of data mostly for the first three decades arose, the researcher had to apply availability sampling method where the size of the samples was unknown and undecided at the beginning but ultimately reached to one hundred and four prefaces as indicated in table 1.

Table 1. The Size of the Corpus

Years	1330-40	1340-50	1350-60	1360-70	1370-80	1380-90	Total
No. of prefaces	8	12	11	23	26	24	104

5.2 Instrumentation, procedure, data collection, and data analysis

The abovementioned four stages, i.e., instrumentation, procedure, data collection and analysis could not be categorized separately as the processes were very recursive in this study; therefore, they are merged and recorded under one heading for the purpose of effectiveness.

The researcher did a computer search in data bases of three libraries in Iran including The National Library of Iran, located in Tehran. Books were retrieved by providing the delimiting information on their year of the publication, genre, and country of the origin. Then each book had to be checked for whether it had any translatorial prefaces or not, and whether the preface was an original one written by the translator; Ultimately, lots of books had to be discarded in this process.

In search of a critical approach suitable for the nature of this study, the researcher found Narrative Theory as outlined by Somers & Gibson (1993), Riessman (1993), and Baker (2006). Narrative Theory or Narrative Analysis was preferred as according to Creswell's (2006), it is the best quantitative approach for tracing changes and differences.

The model applied here relied principally on the notion of narrative as understood in some strands of social sciences and communication theory rather than narratology in linguistics and literature. In this sense, narrative is not an optional mode of communication, as Fisher (1987) says, it is "not a mode of discourse laden by a creator's deliberate choice, but the shape of knowledge as we first apprehend it" (p. 193). In this approach, there is no other mode/form of representation than narrative, no anti-narrative or no non-narrative; narrative is hence applied as a method not genre, and the research is with narrative not on narrative.

The analysis started with micro analyses, but did not stop there. The findings of the micro analyses were merged to form the macro analyses and interpretation. As texts are typically viewed as consisting of form and content, translatorial prefaces are also investigated in terms of their form and content. Various

approaches to thematic analyses were utilized to frame the analyzable themes for having a more comprehensive narrative analysis of the content. Narrative analysis is very context/situation bound, so the researcher also utilized the outlooks provided by genre analysis, register analysis, supplemented with thematic analysis in working out her model of analysis. Like most qualitative researches, the reading, re-reading and analysis of data are quite time consuming. Finally the findings of form and content can be fed into a functional analysis. The findings of form, content, and function analyses can be later merged and interpreted. The model has been devised however, acknowledging that divisions in the categories and subcategories of such models are in many ways artificial and have overlaps.

5.2.1 Analyzing the form of the translatorial prefaces

Starting with the form of the prefaces, the 104 translatorial prefaces were investigated, the related literature, mostly Genette (1987), were studied, and it was concluded that in terms of the form, translatorial prefaces can be investigated considering their title, length, pagination, and signature.

By title it means the label which is placed at the topmost part of the first page of translatorial prefaces for naming them. The term "Translatorial Prefaces" was used as a general term for consistency of the study. It was observed that translators used different terms for labeling their prefaces. The analyses of the 104 translatorial prefaces showed that what for the sake of convenience was called translatorial prefaces in this study, can be divided into five main types in terms of their titles; first, those titles which used only a generic cover term such as preface, note, introduction, foreword, prologue, guide; second, those titles which used the term "translator" with a generic cover term; third, what Genette (1987, p. 12) calls "thematic title", referring to the content of the preface; fourth, a combination of title and subtitle wherein the titles were a generic term followed by thematic subtitles; and fifth, the translatorial prefaces without any title.

In investigating the length of the translatorial prefaces, the researchers may encounter a methodological problem due to the lengths of the texts themselves. The varied lengths of the texts of the samples collected for different decades may extraneously affect tracing the diachronic changes in length of translatorial prefaces, as the works with longer texts can more probably have longer prefaces and the length of the prefaces cannot be solely attributed to the diachronic changes, but also to the length of the relative texts the prefaces are contributing to. To solve the problem, the "Normed" Rate of the Length (NROL) of prefaces can be calculated, i.e., the number of pages of each preface out of the total number of the respective text. For ease of comparison, the result can be then calculated out of 100 and reported as percentage.

Setting of translatorial prefaces refers to the location of translatorial prefaces apropos to other elements of frontispiece. The setting of translatorial prefaces is significant as any narrative meaning is partly shaped by the particular point it occupies and any change in spatial position may change the narrative.

Pagination, as numbering of the pages, is another element of form investigable in translatorial prefaces. It refers to the way the prefaces are paginated, following the same format applied for the text or a format different from it, integrated with or disintegrated from the text, etc.

Signatures as one more element of form in translatorial prefaces, refers to the translators' closing their prefaces by composing their names, date, place, etc. somewhere at the end of their prefaces.

5.2.2 Analyzing the content of translatorial prefaces

To investigate the fold of content, a quantitative approach is needed. Being hesitant between applying Thematic Analysis or Grounded Theory, finally Thematic Analysis method was preferred and hence an inductive thematic analysis, which is a data-driven "process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researcher's analytic preconceptions", was conducted (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 12). Braun & Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as "a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (p. 6). The data of this study were investigated for identifying the themes at the latent level and not the semantic levels. By latent level, Braun and Clarke (2006) mean what "goes beyond the semantic content of the data, and starts to identify or examine the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations – and ideologies - that are theorised as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data" (p. 13). The Thematic Analysis followed the six phases proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006), and was adjusted for the present study as follows:

1. Becoming familiar with the data: This first phase involved repeated readings of the translatorial prefaces. Through an active familiarizing reading, the researcher allowed the potential patterns evolve to find their shapes in her mind. Drafts and notes were made for later coding.

2. Generating initial codes: In this phase, the re-read data were organized into identified meaningful groups as the initial codes of the analysis. These initial codes were later utilized in developing the themes which were mostly broader concepts.

3. Searching for themes: This phase was where the interpretative analysis started. Now having a miscellaneous list of different codes prepared, the researcher reconsidered the codes in terms of their potential relevance to be thematized or subthematized. The themes were still open to later redefinitions.

4. Reviewing themes: The predefined codes and themes were reworked for their unnoticed or misnoticed relevance or irrelevance; however, it is an ever-refinable process.

5. Defining and naming themes: Having a clear picture of the actual themes, the researcher resolved the story tellable in each theme and where they stood in relation to the framework being devised. Then she gave the final adequate labels to the themes.

6. Producing the report: The last of this six-phase analysis was the organized and inductive accounts of the compared and contrasted stories/narratives of the translatorial prefaces within and across different themes during the last sixty years in Iran which was excluded from this research, as the objective was proposing a thematic framework.

As there was no software program available, all the stages were done manually through writing notes on margins, highlighting, using post-it notes which were later integrated for the analysis. The process was by no means a linear process, but a cyclic process continuously under revisions of thematizing, rethematizing, dethematizing, etc. The researcher also kept a record of some codes which were not repeated or could not be situated under any theme, in case they might be deployed later.

To analyze the content, the six phase-Thematic Analysis method proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006) was applied manually. By the end of the fifth phase, having defined and named the themes, the researcher could work out table 2 for the available and investigable themes in translatorial prefaces on the fictions in the last sixty years in Iran. It must be added that the arrangement of the themes also followed the relative relevance of the themes as well.

Table 2. The Thematic Content of Translatorial Prefaces

Themes
Presenting/recommending the text
Referring to the films adapted from the work
The time it took to translate
Genre indication
Biographical or critical information on the author
Biographical or critical information on the translator
The social/historical/ cultural context of the source text
The social/historical/cultural context of the target text
Further general social/ historical/ cultural information of the target society
Strategies of translating
Difficulties/problems of translating
Establishing a metonymic relationship of proximity between the source texts/culture and target texts/culture
Definitions on translation/translator
The reasons of selecting the book for translating
The moral
Readership
Asking for feedbacks

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Guidelines/instructions for other translators

Guidelines/instructions for critics/writers

Apology making

Attitudes toward translatorial prefaces

Reasons for writing the translatorial prefaces

Referring to other prefaces

Introducing other translated or to-be-translated works of the translator

Introducing the translations of other translators

Acknowledgements

Dedications

Translators' using first person singular pronoun to refer to him/herself

Use of the term "original" instead of "source"

References

The sixth phase of the Thematic Analysis proposed above, will be the report of the findings provided by every researcher, applying the above table on his/her corpus.

The form and content micro analyses of the personal narratives, small-d discourse of the translators, in their prefaces can lead to a Macro/Diological/Interactional/Performative/Functional analyses (to use different terms used by different scholars). After clearly documenting the findings of the first two folds, they can be fed into an interpretative functional approach to manifest their functional associations and implications.

5.2.3 Analyzing the function of translatorial prefaces

The functions the translatorial prefaces may serve can be divided into the three Explanatory; Normative/Prescriptive; and Informative/Descriptive functions drawing on the typologies introduced by Dimitriu (2009). In brief, Explanatory function refers to the translators' explaining their problems, and justify their strategies and decisions through their personal reasons and/or socio-cultural stimuli; Normative/Prescriptive function contributes to the prefaces' furnishing guidelines and models to be followed by translation practitioners, trainees, writers, critics, and others involved; Informative/Descriptive function is fulfilled when the prefaces present a narrative on source text analyses, source authors, and the socio-cultural contexts of the source.

Having investigated the findings of the form and content analyses, the researcher confronted problems in practically applying Dimitriu's typologies of functions on the 104 prefaces compiled, as there were many cases wherein the prefaces served not only different functions, but also different functions at indiscriminate weights. The researcher hence had to devise some bipartite or even tripartite categories of functions although based on Dimitriu's three proposed functions. Studying the 104 translatorial prefaces, the functional categories worked out were as follows:

Table 3. Types of Functions

Types of Functions							
Info	**Exp**	**Info=Exp**	**Info=Nor**	**Info>Exp**	**Exp>Info**	**Nor>Exp**	**Info=Exp=Nor**

Note. Info=Informative; Exp=Explanatory; Nor=Normative

It is noteworthy however that, based on the three main functions distinguished, as well as the possibility for bipartite and tripartite categories, many more categories of functions can be distinguished in other studies, following the same vein.

Despite the narrative analysis is mainly a qualitative approach, wherever possible some quantitative statistical methods and charts can be also deployed to supplement the qualitative findings; "whenever the analytic focus is on the narrative means, qualitative and quantitative approaches have been employed side by side with little joint considerations" (Bamberg, 2011, p. 78).

Having the findings of form and content analyses fed into the functional analysis, the researcher constructs his/her narrative through discovering and constructing the patterns and relationships between these findings to answer the research questions of the respective study.

6. Discussion

Translators as well as their prefaces have been always marginalized. Genette (1987), elaborating on the importance of paratext, degrades translatorial prefaces to an allographic preface, and has an extremely source-oriented view indicative of a subordinate position of translation and translators while the analysis of the narratives of translatorial prefaces may illuminate that a translator is an author, too close to his target (re)production, and involved in the process of (re)writing, to be called a third party. So, in a revision to Genette's classification, it is advisable to add a distinct type as "Translatorial Preface" which is worthy of distinct detailed studies.

The framework proposed can be applied in many ways, to many comparative, non-comparative, synchronic, or historical studies. The analysis model for each fold can be utilized separately or integrated with other folds, as proposed. The model once applied, will help the researchers to manage large samples and corpuses of translatorial prefaces to mine and trace the patterns.

The four reframing strategies of *Labelling, Selective Appropriation, Positioning, and Temporal and Spatial Framing*, proposed by Baker (2006) can be very effective in interpreting the findings while the model is applied; however, among the limitations of this model are inclusion of a comprehensive linguistic analysis due to unavailability of corpus linguistic software, the corpus's being limited to original prefaces, and the genre's being limited to fiction.

The framework has no claim of being comprehensive as it has been only the initial step in circulating a narrative in systematizing the analysis of translatorial prefaces. As this study focused on original translatorial prefaces written on fiction, further researches can analyze the narratives of later or delayed translatorial prefaces or those written on non-literary texts including political texts, philosophical texts, technical texts, etc. The findings, experiences, and observations of other researchers applying the model will undoubtedly enrich the narrative initiated, and evolve the model proposed.

Hence, many changes in the status of translators and translations can start from within the translatorial prefaces as this must be the concern and responsibility of translators before all to increase the public awareness on the translators' identities and status. Translatorial prefaces are among the most effective rare opportunities provided for translators in their struggle for visibility, and worthy of in-depth analyses.

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