

A PRAGMATIC STUDY OF PRESUPPOSITION IN IMAM ALI'S SOME SELECTED TRANSLATED SAYINGS IN 'NAHJUL BALAGHA'

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ABSTRACT

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Translation, Culture,
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The present research provides a pragmatic investigation of 'presupposition' utilized in Imam Ali's some selected translated sayings to show how far the culture and the shared background knowledge could affect the translator when translating presupposition from Arabic to English. This research could be of a specific significance to those who are interested in the fields of pragmatics as well as translation. The present research is limited to analyzing some selected translated sayings of Imam Ali from 'Nahjul Balagha' and the universal concept of 'presupposition'. The research is based on two hypotheses that are: 1) culture and background knowledge have an effect on the way of translating presupposition, and 2) The presuppositions and their occurrences in Imam Ali's translated sayings are the same in both languages. In order to fulfil the hypotheses of this study, Yule's (1996) Model for this study analysis because it contains all the types of presupposition and it is the most accepted Model among the majority of linguists. Based upon the practical part of the study, the research comes up with some conclusions including the verification of the main hypotheses of the study that implicate that culture and the background knowledge have an intrinsic impact on the translator when translating presupposition from Arabic to English.

1. Introduction

Scholars point out that "presupposition" is one of the important topics in linguistics, especially in pragmatism as it supports the process of persuasion in religious texts, because these texts have distinctive characteristics as stated in (Bloor and Bloor, 2007). The pieces of knowledge that the speaker presumes that crystalizes the user's frame of mind is referred to as the presuppositions

of utterance. This wide definition includes anything from fundamental conversational conventions to the specifics of how individual linguistic statements are delivered. A presupposition refers to a wide range of factual and semantic events that have an important impact on speech understanding. This idea indicates that the truth is assumed in any utterance with a lexical element or specific grammatical traits. Generally, pragmatics is very important in analyzing the extent of rhetorical and sentential meaning.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Problem

Most users of language, even translators, ignore the fact that presupposition is culturally determined, and the background knowledge has a very significant role in comprehending the initiator's intended message. In Nahj Al Balagha, one can notice that Imam Ali utilizes many types 'presupposition' to refer to anything that is presupposed and served as the beginning point for the 'presuppositions' or propositions. Imam Ali's use of 'presupposition' types may help the recipient comprehend the relationships between concepts in order to generate the meaning that he wants to deliver. These forms are indicators of potential presupposition, which can only become actual presupposition when contextualized with the users of language. A problem which needs a deeper cultural pragmatic investigation throughout this study.

2.2 Research Questions

The current research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the types of presupposition that are characterized culturally and pragmatically in the translated texts?
2. How far do the culture and the background knowledge affect the translating of the presupposition from Arabic to English?

2.3 Research Objectives

The current research is intended to:

1. Investigate the types, structures and the functions of presupposition Imam Ali's Nahj Al Balagha some translated sayings.
2. Identify the role of culture and background knowledge upon the translator's ways of translating presupposition in the two languages (Arabic and English).

2.4 Research Hypotheses

To fulfill the aims of the present study, it is hypothesized that:

- 1) *Culture and background knowledge have an effect on the way of translating presupposition.*
- 2) *The presuppositions and their occurrences in Imam Ali's translated sayings are the same in both languages.*

2.5 The Procedures

The following steps will be adopted in this study:

1. Supplying a theoretical component of research, encompassing language and culture, the notion of translation, the translation impact of culture and the presupposition function.
2. Analyzing the two selected translations, one of which was translated by the Iraqi translator Yasin T. Al-Jibouri (2009) and the other one was by the Iranian translator Sayyid Ali Reza (2003).
3. Selecting and analyzing the data with reference to Yule's classification of presupposition (1996).
4. Collecting the arithmetical outcomes of the frequency and the percentage of the types of presupposition in both texts under analysis.
5. Drawing conclusions in the light of the analysis

2.6 Research Limits

This study is limited to the cross-cultural pragmatic analysis of presupposition in selected translated sayings by Imam Ali. These translations are Yasin T. Al-Jibouri (2009) from Iraq, and Sayyid Ali Reza (2003) from Iran. This study adopts Yule's classification of presupposition (1996) for analyzing the data which focuses on the pragmatic types of presupposition.

2.7 Research Significance

This study is hoped to be valuable for researchers who are interested in translation and linguistics generally. In addition, it is valuable to those who could find this topic a beneficial and interesting guide to detect the ways by which Al-Imam Ali assumes for his utterance to be meaningful in the current context.

3. The Theoretical Background

3.1 Language and Culture

According to Charteris-Black (2004:90), language and culture are inextricably linked in an infinite number of ways. There are many areas of language study that deal with some clear links between culture and language; for example: politeness, ideology, proverbs, metaphor, context, semantic change, etc. Numerous disciplines within the language sciences try to analyze, describe, and explain the intricate interrelationships between the two broad categories.

3.2 The Concept of Translation

For millennia, translation has been refined, and discussions about the concept of translation have been critical to translation practice for nearly as long. Scholars of translation credit Saint Jerome, who lived around 400 A. D., with initiating the "'literal' versus 'Free'" debate over translation. The discussion of translation practice eventually returns to the definition of translation. When scholars characterize translation, they contrast their focus on translation items versus translation interaction. Most of the interpretational meanings found in the writing are item-based, emphasizing the concept of equality between the source and target messages (the objective content being the interpretation item). According to Catford (1965: 20), "translation is the process of substituting equivalent textual material in one language for textual material in another." Whereas Levy (1967:148) and Nida (1959:19), point out that translation is a basic process of communication its purpose is to impart knowledge about the original to the foreign reader. The translation estimates the entire process by which a translator converts a book or portions of a book into another vernacular. The translation cycle can be thought of as unraveling the source text's meaning and re-encoding or deciphering it in the target language (TL). Behind this apparent cycle are numerous activities such as checking the source language's sentence structure, accentuation, adages, semantics, and so on, as well as the lifestyle of its speakers. The mediator requires a large amount of data to decode and then re-encode the significance in the target language. When in doubt, it is critical that the mediator's knowledge of the target language takes precedence over his knowledge of the source language (Nida and Taber, 2003:178).

The translation interaction did not depend on the significance of the word reference alone, but on the setting of the content-based circumstance in which that word occurred or appeared. The translation interaction likewise alludes to the programmed utilization of the interpreter's information on the design of his local language that he is converting into the objective language (ibid).

3.3 The Effect of Culture on Translation

All human activities occur within the context of culture. It is the vast instrument by which man accomplishes his goals, both as an animal who must eat, rest, and produce and as a spiritual being, who wishes to expand his mental horizons, create works of art, and develop systems of faith," (Malinowski, 1962:169).

Culture can be defined as "a set of rules and standards which when acted upon by the members of a society produce behavior that falls within a range of variance that readers consider proper or acceptable", (Haviland (1975:12). Through one's use of language, the fabric of society operates and becomes visible. This fabric encompasses the social context in which language is used, which logically presupposes the existence of a specific society. Society has implicit and explicit values, norms, and laws, as well as unique economic, social, political, and cultural conditions of life (Davis, 1977: 21-57). Moreover, Aziz and Muftah (2000:85) define culture as a collection of shared beliefs that govern a society's behavioral patterns. Religion, economics, politics, literature, and language are all examples of these beliefs. Moreover, Toury (2000:200) defines translation as "a kind of activity which inevitably involves at least two languages and two cultural translations", as this remark implies, translators are constantly confronted with the challenge of how to approach the cultural features hidden in a source text (ST) and how to correctly transmit these aspects to the target language using the most appropriate technique (TL).

3.4 The Function and Meaning of Presupposition in Different Translated Texts

Presupposition assumes a significant part for specialists to comprehend the interpretation or the process of translation, work out the ramifications of translated texts, and disclose different issues identified with translation. About the Presuppositions in translation, ideas have been moved forward: At first, the translator may not actually share the data that the author is pushing to obtain. This requires translators to conduct unusual research in order to obtain such data. Regardless of a significant portion of the time, translators simply complete comprehension tasks according to their preconceptions about goal perception and goal setting. Likewise, translators should check how much the target peruses are presumably going to share their Pres, which is "an inconvenient judgment to make and incorporates a touchy troublesome exercise", (Fawcett, 1997:125). Presuppositions assume a fundamental part in the translator's dynamic cycles regarding what data to give and how to give it. Indeed, the Presupposition examined here covers substantially more than the previous definition, as the previous may have included whatever could be identified with translation or interaction, for example, information controlled by target peruser, and data that is divided among translators and the target reader. Nonetheless, the conversation here (in this study) is limited to the textualization standards found in the Arabic texts and the translators' requirements with their communication standards; adding to that, their understanding of the context and its co-text.

4. Material and Methods

4.1. The Data of the Study

It is important to give an outline of the data of the Sayings of Imam Ali in Nahjul Balagha as a text to be analyzed in this study. The investigator and analyzes the types of presupposition used in Nahjul Balagha. So, the researcher collects fifteen samples of sayings that contain presupposition from the original text and compares them with two selected translations. One of them was translated by the Iraqi translator "Yasin T. Al-Jabouri (2009)" and the other was by the Iranian translator "Sayyid Ali Reza (2003)". There are likewise a few stages engaged with in gathering data. First, the researcher has read all the sayings in order to find the presupposition and its types. Then, the researcher has marked the saying that contains presupposition in Nahjul Balagha. After that, the data will be analyzed following Yule's (1996) Model. The selected sayings of Nahjul Balagha have been chosen to present a sufficient understanding of the nature of presupposition in religious texts.

4.3. The Procedure and Method

This study follows a sequential explanatory mixed - method approach, which consists of two various "methods", namely qualitative and quantitative, to answer the study questions and prove or disprove since they supplement each other and provide a clear picture of the study problem. The model adopted in this study is the main tool used for the qualitative analysis of the chosen text. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004: 123) describe "a mixed method technique as one in which the researcher utilizes both quantitative and qualitative methods for broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and endorsement". The data has been statistically examined, with the results calculated using a statistical tool. As a result, "a mixed method" will be used to improve the value of the analysis' results. Furthermore, it is critical to obtain deeper and broader insights into the research questions in order to gain advantages over employing just one.

5. Data Analysis

This section offers samples from the data analysis:

Table 1 Data Analysis of the First Translation of Nahjul Balagha (2003)

No.	The Original Text in Arabic		The 1st Translation	Type of presupposition
	Page No./ Saying No.	Text		
1	472/ 22	"(1)لنا حقان اعطيناه والا ركبنا اعجاز(2) الابل وان طال (3)السرى"	"We have a right ,(1)if it is allowed to us well and good, otherwise, we will ride on (2)the hind of the	(1)CF (if-clause) (2)E (definite article)

			camel even though (3)the night journey may be long” .	(3)E (definite article)
2	474/35	"(1) من اسرع الى الناس بما يكرهون قالوا فيه بما لا(2) يعلمون"	“(1) If someone is quick in saying about people what they dislike, they speak about him that about which they have no knowledge”.	(1)CF (if-clause)
3	477/50	"(1)قلوب الرجال وحشية فمن تالفها اقبلت عليه"	“(1)The hearts of the people are like wild beasts. Whoever takes them, they would pounce upon him”.	(1)E (definite article)
4	482/82	"اوصيكم بخمس(1)لو ضربتم لها اباط(2) الابل لكانت لذلك اهلا..."	“I impart to you five things which, (1)if you ride (2)your camels fast in search of them, you will find them worth it ...”	(1)CF (if-clause) (2)E (possessive)
5	483/91	"ان(1)هذه(2)القلوب تمل كما تمل(3)الابدان فابتغوا لها طرائف(4)الحكم"	“(1)The hearts get disgusted (2)as bodies get disgusted, so look for beautiful wise saying for them”	(1)E (definite article) (2)CF (temporal clause: as)
6	485/100	"اللهم انك(1)اعلم بي من(2)نفسي وانا(3)اعلم(4)بنفسي منهم..."	“... you (1)know me better than (2)myself, and I (3)know (4)myself more than they (5)know. ...”	(1)F (factive verb 'know') (2)E (possessive) (3)F (factive verb 'know') (4)E (possessive) (5)F (factive verb 'know')
7	487/106	"لا يترك(1)الناس شيئا من امر(2)دينهم لاستصلاح(3)دنياهم الا فتح الله عليهم ما هو اضر منه"	“(1)If people give up something relating to religion to set right (2)their worldly affairs ,Allah will inflict upon them something more harmful than that”.	(1)CF (if-clause) (2)E (possessive)
8	489/115	"(1)كيف نجدك يا(2)امير المؤمنين؟ فقال(2)كيف حال من يفنى(3)ببقائه ويسقم(4)بصحته"	“... (1)how are you ,O (2)Ameer al-Momineen? (3)How can he be whom life is driving towards death, whose state of healthiness can change into sickness ...”	(1)S (wh-question) (2)E (popular name) (3)S (wh-question)

9	491/124	"(1)غيرة المرأة كفر و(2)غيرة الرجل ايمان"	"(1)The jealousy of a woman is heresy ,(2)while (3)the jealousy of a man is a part of belief” .	(1)E (definite) (2) CF (temporal clause: while) (2)E (definite article)
10	491/128	"توقوا (1)البرد في (2)اوله وتلقوه في (3)اخره فانه يفعل في(4)الابدان ...".	"Guard against cold in (1)its (seasonal) beginning and welcome it towards (2)its end because it affects bodies ...”	(1)E (possessive) (2)E (possessive)
11	496/146	"سوسوا(1) ايمانكم بالصدقة وحصنوا(2) اموالكم بالزكاة وادفعوا امواج(3)البلاء بالدعاء"	"Protect (1)your belief by charity ,guard (2)your wealth by paying ..., and ward off (3)the waves of calamity by praying”.	(1)E (possessive) (2)E (possessive) (3)E (definite article)
12	501/171	"كم من اكلة منعت اكلات"	"Many a single eating prevents several eatings”	
13	501/172	"(1)الناس اعداء ما جهلوا"	"People are enemies of what they do not (1)know”	(1)F (factive verb 'know')
14	501/173	"(1)من استقبل وجوه الأراء عرف مواقع(2)الخطأ"	"He who has several opinions understands (1)the pitfalls”	(1)E (definite article)
15	502/181	"و(2)ثمرة (1)ثمرة التفريط الندامة الحزم السلامة"	"(1)The result of neglect is shame ,(2)while (3)the result of far-sightedness is safety”	(1)E (definite article) (2)CF (temporal clause: while) (3)E (definite article)

Based on the data analyzed, certain types of presupposition are found in two copies. Those types are 'Existential presupposition', 'Factive', 'Structural' and 'Counterfactual', except the 'Lexical' and 'Non-Factive' type which is not found in the data under analysis. Table (2) illustrates the overall data of presupposition in the translated texts along with the types, frequencies, and percentages of presupposition.

Table 2: Types of Presupposition with Frequencies and in the First Translation (2003)

Table 2 Types of Presupposition with Frequencies and in the First Translation (2003)

No.	Types of Presupposition	Frequency	Percentage
1	Existential Presupposition	19	59.38%
2	Counterfactual Presupposition	7	21.87%
3	Factive Presupposition	4	12.5%
4	Structural Presupposition	2	6.25%
5	Lexical Presupposition	0	0.0%
6	Non-Factive Presupposition	0	0.0%
	Total	32	100%

As indicated in Table (2), the total number of presuppositions in the first translation is 32. ‘Existential Presupposition’ is higher than all other types of presupposition in this copy. It forms 19 frequencies out of 32. This read (59.38%). This is followed by ‘Counterfactual Presupposition’, It shapes 7 frequencies from 32 and reads (21.87%).

‘Factive Presupposition’ has been repeated 4 times out of 32. This occurrence statistically marks (12.5%). While ‘Structural Presupposition’ constitutes 2 frequencies from 32 and reads (6.25%).

The non-mentioned types of presupposition is ‘Lexical Presupposition’ and ‘Non-factive Presupposition’ which doesn’t occur any time.

Table 3: Data Analysis of the Second Translation by Yassin T. Al-Jibori (2009)

Table 3 Data Analysis of the Second Translation by Yassin T. Al-Jibori (2009)

No.	The Original Text in Arabic		The 2nd Translation	Type of Presupposition
	Page No./Line No.	Text		
1	472/ 22	"(1)لنا حقان اعطيناه والا ركينا اعجاز(2) الابل وان طال (3)السرى"	"We have a right, (1)if it is granted to us that is good, otherwise, we will ride on (2)the hind of the camel even though (3)the night journey may be long".	(1)CF (if-clause) (2)E (definite article) (3)E (definite article)

2	477/50	"(1)قلوب الرجال وحشية فمن تالفها اقبلت عليه"	"(1)The hearts of the people are like wild beasts. (2)If someone tries to tame them, they will pounce back ..."	(1)E (definite article) (2)CF (if-clause)
3	482/82	"اوصيكم بخمس (1)لو ضربتم لها ابطاط (2) الابل لكانت لذلك اهلا...". ا	"I impart to you five things which, (1)if you ride (2)your camels fast in search of them, you will find them worth (3)the effort ..."	(1)CF (if-clause) (2)E (possessive) (3)E (definite article)
4	483/91	"ان (1)هذه (2)القلوب تمل كما تمل (3)الابدان فابتغوا لها طرائف (4) الحكم"	"(1)The hearts get disgusted (2)as bodies get disgusted, so look for beautiful wise saying for them"	(1)E (definite) (2)CF (temporal clause: as)
5	485/100	"اللهم انك (1)اعلم بي من (2)نفسي وانا (3)اعلم (4)بنفسي منهم...".	"... you (1)know me better than (2)myself, and I (3)know (4)myself more than they (5)know ..."	(1)F (the word: know) (2)E (possessive) (3)F (factive verb 'know') (4)E (possessive) (5)F (the word: know)
6	487/106	"لا يترك (1)الناس شيئا من امر (2) دينهم لاستصلاح (3)دنياهم الا فتح الله عليهم ما هو اضر منه"	"(1)If people give up something relevant to religion to set right (2)their worldly affairs ,Allah will inflict upon them..."	(1)CF (if-clause) (2)E (possessive)

7	491/124	"(1)غيرة المرأة كفر و(2)غيرة الرجل ايمان"	"(1)The jealousy of a woman is heresy ,(2)while (3)the jealousy of a man is a part of belief” .	(1)E (definite) (2)CF (temporal clause: while) (3)E (definite article)
8	491/128	"توقوا (1)البرد في (2)اوله وتلقوه في (3)اخره فانه يفعل في(4) الأبدان ..."	"Guard (1)yourselves against cold in (2)its (seasonal) beginning and welcome it towards (3)its end because it affects bodies ...”	(1)E (possessive) (2)E (possessive) (3)E (possessive)
9	496/146	"سوسوا(1) ايمانكم بالصدقة وحصنوا(2) اموالكم بالزكاة وادفعوا امواج (3)البلاء بالدعاء"	"Protect (1)your belief by charity ,guard (2)your wealth by paying ... and ward off (3)the waves of calamity by praying”.	(1)E (possessive) (2)E (possessive) (3)E (definite article)
10	501/171	"كم من اكلة منعت اكلات"	"(1)How often one meal blocks many”	(1)S (wh-question)
11	501/172	"(1)الناس اعداء ما جهلوا"	"People are enemies of what they do not (1)know”	(1)F (factive verb 'know')
12	501/173	"(1)من استقبل وجوه الأراء عرف مواقع (2)الخطأ"	"One who welcomes various views gets to (1)know (2)where error lies”	(1)F (factive verb 'know') (2)S (wh-question)

Based on the data analyzed, certain types of presupposition have been revealed in the second translation. Those four types are 'Existential', 'Counterfactual', 'Factive', and 'Structural'. Table (4) below, illustrates the overall data of Presupposition in the second translation along with the types, frequencies, and percentages of Presupposition.

Table 4 Types, Frequencies, and Percentages of Presupposition in the Second Translation.

No.	Types of Presupposition	Frequency	Percentage
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1	Factive Presupposition	5	55.3%
2	Counterfactual Presupposition	8	18.4%
3	Existential Presupposition	21	15.8%
4	Structural Presupposition	4	10.5%
5	Lexical Presupposition	0	0.0%
6	Non-Factive Presupposition	0	0.0%
	Total	38	100%

As indicated in Table (4), the total number of presuppositions appeared in the second translation is 38. 'Existential Presupposition' is higher than all other types of Presupposition in this copy. It shapes 21 frequencies from 38 and reads (55.3%). 'Counterfactual Presupposition' is the second type of presupposition with 8 frequencies from 38. It rates (18.4%). 'Factive Presupposition' shapes 6 frequencies from 38, and it constitutes (15.8%). The frequent occurrence of 'Structural Presupposition' is 4 times from 38, and these read (10.5%).

6. Results and Discussion

The analysis exposes a difference of frequencies in using Existential, Factive and Structural types of presupposition in the two translated versions of Nahjul Balagha book. These differences in the frequencies that are observed by the researcher, can be related to the different attitudes of the two translators toward certain linguistic constructions according to their culture.

It is also obvious from the frequencies of analyzed fifteen of sayings above, the researcher finds that the first translation of the Iranian translator contains (19 times, 100%) and the second translation of the Iraqi translator contains (21 times, 100%) of Presupposition. So, it can be said that the translation of the Iraqi translator is closer to the original texts than the Iranian one, for the reason that the Iraqi translator and the original writer belong to the same culture. so, he is more successful in transmitting the proper information as they are introduced by the original text.

7. Conclusion

Thus Concerning the question of the problem which states 'Does the culture and the background knowledge affect the translator way of translation?', the researcher notices, through the analysis and the discussion of the data, that the Arabic translation is however very much close to the meaning of the Arabic text, because the translator is of the same culture and of the same background knowledge of the original text, while the other translated text, since it is from a different culture, it is somehow far away from the original meaning, and this proves the hypothesis of this research which claims that 'Culture and background knowledge for the translator affect the way of translation'.

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