



A Critical Discourse Analysis of Political Implications in Three Persian Translations of *Animal Farm*

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Abstract

This study draws on a comparative framework to evaluate the translation of political implications in three Persian translations of the novella *Animal Farm* (by George Orwell), using Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA) model. The study regards political implications and ideologies as a mode of background knowledge shared by writers and audiences in the source language. Fairclough's model involves three qualitative stages (interpretation, explanation, reproduction) and takes into account ideological stances. Political allusions in novels, if not sufficiently translated, could downgrade the implicit purposes and even the meaningfulness of the text. Given this significant function, the study specifically focuses on linguistic items that play an extra-textual role in meaning formation and the way they are translated into Persian. Hidden ideologies may appear in the form of assumptions, presuppositions, interactional history, or cultural references. This study emphasizes that translators must not take at face value what Fairclough calls "members resources" and must examine their choices against other sources.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Translation Studies, Political Allegory, *Animal Farm*, Ideology

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Introduction

Texts rely on audiences' assumptions, presuppositions, and general world-views, without explicitly expressing them. Such pieces of information are called *background knowledge* in studies concerned with discourse analysis. Background knowledge includes various types such as situational, cultural, social, and historical pieces of information. Political implications and ideologies, too, are a mode of background knowledge shared by writers and audiences in a community (Karimnia & Rahbarian, 2017; Karimnia & Sabbaghi, 2018; Mansourabadi & Karimnia, 2013; Van Dijk, 1997). Although political implications may mainly appear in politically oriented text-types (e.g. international contracts, journalistic reviews), literary texts can also involve various degrees of shared political knowledge. In cross-linguistic communication, however, it would be very difficult to decide the adequacy of political knowledge for the audience.

Translation is a type of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communication. Translators have a mediatory role in the translation process, and one of their functions is to strike a balance between presuppositions in the source text (ST) and the target text (TT). Texts including political implications involve ideologies that must be shared with target language readers (Valdeon, 2007). In doing so, the translator has to implement changes in the translation. A serious problem, however, is *how* the translator should know about political allusions in a text and *how* he/she should demonstrate those allusions in the TT? Without such knowledge, the translator may fail to reflect political readings that are potentially embedded in the original text.

Given the theoretical and analytical bases of critical discourse analysis (CDA), this study investigates the Persian translations of political implications in George Orwell's novella *Animal Farm*, to find out how each translation reflects political implications in the original text. This analysis would clarify the extent to which the translations managed to represent ideological assumptions in a politically oriented story. CDA specifically focuses on ideological assumptions by taking into account semantic and syntactic resources in a text. The analysis of these elements can help translators to shape a better understanding of cross-cultural differences and find better strategies to express political implications. The study is a qualitative, linguistic analysis which draws on Fairclough's (1995) CDA model to investigate three Persian translations of *Animal Farm*. In doing so, the study primarily presents a sample of political allusions in the ST and then explores how each TT reflects the implications in the Persian renditions. Fairclough's (1995) model is used because of its straightforward structure and compatibility of the type of text analysis in translation criticism.

Literature Review

Political texts are one of the most commonly used text types to disseminate ideologies. To trace and analyze such ideologies, linguistics has proposed theories and methods, including CDA. Unlike descriptive discourse analysis, CDA is primarily interested in revealing power relations, ideologies, power struggles, modes of legitimation, and

concealed meanings. CDA methods have been applied to translation studies to help analyze ideology (especially in political texts). Schaffner (2002, p. 5) defines politics as “a struggle for power, between those who seek to assert and maintain their power and those who seek to resist it”. Exploring the relationship between CDA, ideology, and translation, Mason (1992, p. 23) states that “ideology impinges on the translation process in subtle ways.”

Fairclough’s CDA framework has been among the most frequently used models in translation studies. Baker (1998) believes that this framework uncovers the underlying power and ideological relations in the text. An additional approach to text analysis was introduced by Fairclough (to the existing “bottom-up” approach), namely the “top-down” approach, which explains not only how lexical and syntactic elements create meaning, but also how the political, social, and the individual background knowledge affect the choice of linguistic elements to create the different effects on the participants in a communicative situation (Fairclough, 1995). According to Schaffner (2002), CDA is used to analyze the ST and TT, bringing translation theory to a completely new level (for a detailed discussion of Fairclough’s model see section 3 below).

Many studies have probed into the relationship between translation, ideology, and discourse. Sertkan (2007) investigated the ideology in five different abridged Turkish versions of Charles Dickens’ *Oliver Twist* (1838). Through a CDA, he observed that there were many discrepancies between the original and its five TTs. Schaffner (2008) looked at translations influenced by institutionalized forms of political discourse, including texts that were produced by media or political institutions. In this study, the link between translation profiles and the social, institutional, and ideological conditions of text production was illustrated with reference to authentic political texts (interviews, speeches by politicians, and press conferences), mainly in German, French, and English. She concluded that an awareness of translation as a social practice suggests that translation strategies have to be compatible with the sociopolitical conditions in which the STs were produced.

According to Blackledge (2005), all transformations that occur in recontextualisation processes are “dependent on the goals, values and interests of the context into which the discursive practice is being recontextualised” (p. 122). Khajeh and Khanmohammad (2006) focused on the relationship between language and ideology in translation, while uncovering the underlying ideological assumptions implicit in the ST and TT. They observed that there were significant alterations made by the two translators under study in their selection of syntactic structures and lexical items, in comparison to those in the ST. Attaran (2009) investigated the influence of ideology on translations, relying on two different models; one of them was proposed by van Dijk (1977) and the other by Fairclough (1995). The study revealed that Fairclough’s CDA framework could provide a better analysis of the situation.

Moradijuz (2009) focused on the underlying truths of translated political subtitles, utilizing a CDA approach. Of course, his focus was not on the whole text as he limited himself just to *modality* in the corpus, while excluding other parts of the

context. The study found that there was intentional manipulation in different translations of political texts. Most obviously, the ideological content is the target of manipulation in such translations. Another observation in the literature suggests that in many cases translators do not tend to transfer the intentions of the ST and simply implement an insufficient linguistic choice or even omit the whole segment in translation. The next section substantially explores the model used in the present study. What can be inferred from the extant literature is that detecting underlying ideologies and political assumptions in a literary text can be a challenging task and translation quality assessment or translation criticism models would have to specifically address this area of translation.

Method

Materials and Framework

This study investigated the political allegory, *Animal Farm* (by George Orwell) as the ST, along with three Persian translations of the book: (a) Javaherkalam (2003); (b) Mosae (2003); and (c) Golkarian (2006). The theoretical framework was based on Fairclough's (1995) CDA model, which emphasized the relationships between language, ideology, and institutional positions. As Baker (1998) explains, Fairclough's framework uncovers the underlying power and ideological relations in the text, and through the "top-down" approach it pursues, it can serve the basic purposes of translation theory (which now considers major variables and macro-structures). Fairclough (1995) discusses different levels of critical studies in CDA by distinguishing and subdividing them into three stages, namely interpretation, explanation, and reproduction (as same as *translation* in this study).

According to this framework, primarily the resources in the ST should be analyzed to see what the most significant features of ST are; these sources are called *members resources* (MR) (Fairclough, 1995, p. 143). As a result, in this study, first the ST ideology was uncovered. More specifically, social orders, interactional history, and the linkage between them through semantics, pragmatics, and discourse, were studied and interpreted (see Figure 1). To reveal the author's intention, Fairclough (1995, p. 144) states:

... to interpret the global coherence and 'point' of a text, you draw upon interpretations of the local coherence of parts of it; and to arrive at these, you draw upon interpretations of utterance meanings; and to arrive at these, you draw upon interpretations of the surface forms of utterances.

The next step involved an *explanation* of the interpretive resources found in the previous stage. Normally discourse participants may not readily figure out how a discourse relies on background assumptions or how the ideological properties of these assumptions link them to social struggles and ideology. The translator, then, has to unveil these elements for participants through explanation, to show how the text is "as part of a social process" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 163). Finally, in the reproduction stage, the translator has to use strategies in finding the most natural and appropriate equivalents in the translation process and then determine the proper translation.

Social and ideological meanings cannot be simply explored in the surface structure of the text. In fact, all the data gathered from MRs through interpretation and explanation must guide the translator on how to decide the equivalents.

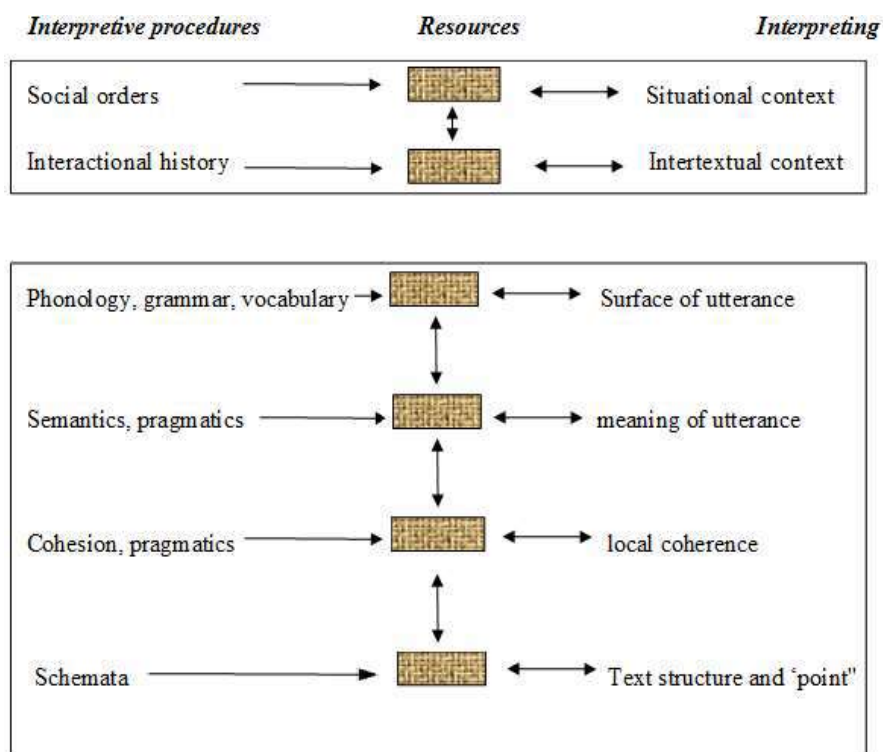


Figure 1. A Re-Version of Fairclough's Model

The process, however, is not yet complete. From the perspective of translation, to find the most appropriate equivalents and to make an analytical interpretation for reproducing the TT require some other principles to be observed. To this end, some other issues complementing the previous framework must be considered according to Fairclough (1995) (see Figure 2).

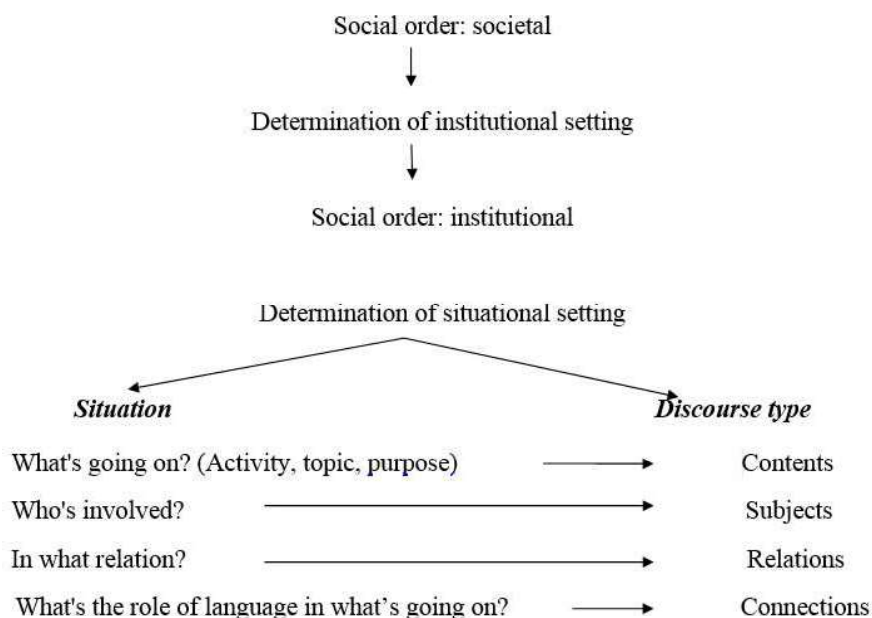


Figure 2. Fairclough's Model of Societal, Institutional and Situational Relations

Data Collection and Analysis

In the first phase of data collection, the study tried to find the underlying ideologies of the ST. These ideological relations were revealed according to the “interpretive procedures” of Fairclough’s CDA model. For example, in terms of interactional history, what was Orwell’s historical intention to illustrate a character like *Mr. Jones*, a drunkard with some grievous dictatorial characteristics, or what was the function of the tame raven, *Moses*, one who was Mr. Jones’s special pet, a spy and a tale-bearer. What does *Sugarcandy Mountain* represent? How did the Persian translators transfer these elements into Persian? Did they reflect the interactional history in the translations? Demystifying such ideological relations was the first task of the researchers in data collection.

Next, through a comparative and contrastive analysis between the ST and TTs, the study determined the types of equivalents and lexical choices, along with critical points raised by literary critics about this novel. At this stage, the bottom left part of Fairclough’s model (Figure 1), including cohesion, coherence, and pragmatics were considered to find the meaning of the utterances and text structure. In exploring the situational settings, the researchers investigated the events in the novel. Who are the characters involved? What are their relations? And, what is the role of language in expressing the events?

For example, the relationship between the characters of the novel with their possible corresponding politicians in the real world was an important question

(Welch, 1980): (a) like George III to the American colonists or Czar Nicholas II to the Russian revolutionaries, Jones is the embodiment of the tyranny against the animals' rebel; and (b) Old Major's ideas reflects the thoughts of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. The Seven Commandments correspond to the Communist Manifesto of 1848, as the main principles of socialism. Therefore the social orders and institutional settings were explored. This type of analysis helped us to reveal the ideological relations. Therefore, the findings of the first stage were used to make sense of the ST original utterances, the meaning of the utterances, their local coherence, and their equivalents.

Findings and Results

In this section, some samples taken from the ST, along with their three Persian translations, are presented in tables. The Persian translators are as follows: Javaherkalam (TT1), Mosaei (TT2), and Golkarian (TT3). Following each ST-TTs set, the choices are evaluated and compared according to Fairclough's CDA model.

Table 1. ST-TTs Set 1

ST	TT1	TT2	TT3
I do not think, comrades	گمان می‌کنم	رفقا ، فکر نمی‌کنم	عزیزانم فکر نمی‌کنم

Major in his speech introduces himself to his listeners as one who has reached a high degree of wisdom in his long life of twelve years and views the other animals as equals, not as misguided rabble that need advice and correction from a superior intellect. As a result, he addresses his audience as "comrades", trying to maintain an equal level of communal status with the other animals in the farm. This is one of the most important words used in a communist society and those who are familiar with Marxist's ideology. Being unaware of the setting and ideology of the ST could lead to misunderstanding. The appropriate Persian equivalent of this word is not observed in TT1 and TT3, although the choice in TT2 is appropriate (رفیق).

Table 2. ST-TTs Set 2

ST	TT1	TT2	TT3
Tame raven	کلاغ زاغی	حیوان دست آموز	کلاغ سیاه دست آموز

A good example of ideological intention is expressed through the role of Moses, the *tame raven* in the novel. This role reminds the reader of the time the biblical Moses freed his people out of bondage and led them to the Promised Land; Moses, the raven, only tells a *story* about an obviously fictitious place, a utopia. Therefore, the "religious figure" in this story was Moses. According to Moran (2001, p. 21), this refers to

Marx's famous quotation which reads, "Religion . . . is the opium of the people - an idea shown in the animals' acceptance of Moses' tales." Given the TTs, one can understand that none of them tried to retell the story behind Tame Raven and because of this there was a misunderstanding in conveying the message. The researchers even did not find any footnote or endnote as the complementary explanation for the ideology behind the character.

Table 3. ST-TTs Set 3

ST	TT1	TT2	TT3
Sugarcandy	Sugar Candy	کوه شوگرکندی
Mountain	شوگرکندی	

From the very beginning of the story, in terms of the situational context of the novel, it is revealed that Sugarcandy Mountain (or paradise) is an unattainable place as a farm wholly devoted to the principles of Animalism and the Seven Commandments enacted to attain that utopia. As the TTs show, no sufficient equivalent was suggested for this important underlying idea.

Table 4. ST-TTs Set 4

ST	TT1	TT2	TT3
When Mr. Jones got back he immediately went to sleep on the drawing-room sofa with <i>the News of the Worlds</i> over his face.	تا این که یک روز بعد از ظهر ارباب خسته و مانده از شهر آمد و یکسر به اتاق خودش رفت و قبض‌های مالیاتی را روی هم ریخته مشغول حساب شد	وقتی آقای جونز در حالی که صورتش گویای اخبار بود برگشت	آقای جونز پس از بازگشت به مزرعه بلافاصله روی کاناپه اتاق پذیرائی با روزنامه ای روی صورتش به خواب رفت.

"News of the World" is a proper name, the title of a popular periodical in the ST. The Persian equivalent of this word is conveyed improperly in the TTs. Although the first letters of the title are capitalized, TT1 is totally oblivious to the fact that the item is a proper noun and translated it into "قبض‌های مالیاتی را روی هم ریخته". TT2 rendered it into "صورت گویای اخبار", which repeated the same mistake. TT3 also translated the phrase as a generic word "روزنامه‌ای" and deleted the title of the periodical. Unfortunately, none of the TTs decoded the meaning in the reproduction stage (translation).

Table 5. ST-TTs Set 5

ST	TT1	TT2	TT3
Early in October	یک روز صبح اول آفتاب	اوایل مهرماه	اوایل ماه اکتبر

One aspect of *Animal Farm*, which all readers must consider, is the *purpose* of the book. According to Welch (1980), Orwell's purpose in writing this novel was to show that political idealism can turn sour, like the Rebellion of 1917, which happened in Russia. The Russian Revolution is also known universally as the *Octoberists' Revolution*. Among the TTs, however, only TT3 was aware of the situational context and the interactional history of the text, which are two important elements in Fairclough's theoretical framework. Neither TT1 nor TT2 conveyed their equivalences appropriately.

Table 6. ST-TTs Set 6

ST	TT1	TT2	TT3
Something between
Clementine and La	چیزی بین کلمنتین و
Cucaracha	لاکوکاراچا
		

According to Moran (2001, p. 55), although the narrator of *Animal Farm* humorously states that the tune is "something between Clementine and La Cucaracha," two of most famous popular folk songs, the animals found it rousing and moving. The use of the song was to stir the citizenry as an old political maneuver. These references along with some other cultural elements are found in different parts of the novel but most of them are omitted by the translators. Fairclough (1995, p. 155) argued that:

Interpreters draw upon semantic aspects of their MR which represent their ability to combine word meanings and grammatical information and work out implicit meanings to arrive at meanings for whole propositions. They also draw upon pragmatic conventions within their MR, which allow them to determine what speech act(s) an utterance has used to 'perform.'

The roles of these concepts in this political allegory were highlighted to represent the popular culture at the time it was written. TT1 and TT3 did not recognize these speech

acts and their roles. As a result, the meanings are conveyed erroneously, and the MR Fairclough talks about was not taken into consideration in the interpretation stage.

Table 7. ST-TTs Set 7

ST	TT1	TT2	TT3
Animalism and Seven Commandments	اصول انیمالیسم و هفت دستور	مکتب حیوان گری و هفت فرمان

The Seven Commandments correspond to the Communist Manifesto of 1848, which represent the main principles of socialism. But Moran (2001, p. 73) explains his idea about Seven Commandments in another way: “The Seven Commandments of Animalism, like the biblical Ten Commandments, are an attempt to completely codify the Animals’ behavior to comply with a system of morality”. Like the Ten Commandments, the Seven Commandments are direct and straightforward, leaving no room for over-interpretation or qualification of what will happen in the future of revelation. The fact that they are painted in “great white letters” on the side of the barn shows the animals’ desire to make these laws permanent (like the permanence of the Ten Commandments which were engraved on stone tablets). Another similarity between Seven Commandments and Ten Commandments is that Seven Commandments are bound to be broken by those who are looking for a loophole to perpetrate their wrongdoings. TT1 provided no translation for this part. TT2 and TT3 provided word-for-word translations and did not convey the meaning appropriately.

Table 8. ST-TTs Set 8

ST	TT1	TT2	TT3
A bird’s wing is an organ of propulsion and not of manipulation	بال پرندگان یک اندام رانشی است و نه یک اندام حرکتی	بال عضوی برای سیطره دیگران است

The most important part of Fairclough’s CDA model is the way ideological differences can be understood through representation of language in the real world (the way words are coded to show a clandestine meaning). There is a word (*manipulation*) in this example which conveys a strong political sense and the author uses it at the very beginning of the novel. The word *manipulation* means making someone think and behave exactly as you want them to, by skillfully deceiving or influencing them. This word is used intentionally as the reason for what Napoleon did for Animalism maxims, what was known as Seven Commandments. Because none of

other Animals on the farm could get further than letter “A” in literacy, therefore Napoleon abused them and made some alteration in Seven Commandments. The representation of political, social, ethical events, along with some allegorical representations like “Seven Commandments” (as a kind of constitutional law), illustrated an ideological stance and consequently included the message of the novel. This use of language, in fact, represented social-cultural meanings and power relations occurring in the story.

In TT1, the word “manipulation” is entirely omitted. In TT2, this word is not conveyed and is translated as یک اندام حرکت (a motor organ) instead. TT3 rendered this idea into سیطره (dominance). In the translation process, what is regarded as a unit of translation must clearly convey the general message of the text and the most important task for the translator is to *observe and keep ST’s message in the TT*, without any word-for-word or word-by-word translation. As it is represented in TT3, the word سیطره was intended to convey a *political sense* as implied in the ST, although TT2 ignored this implication and reproduced a literal translation. In this way, the reader of the TT2 cannot perceive what will happen in the following parts of the story from a political viewpoint.

Table 9. ST-TTs Set 9

ST	TT1	TT2	TT3
... except that “friend” was written “freind” and one of the S’s was the wrong way round	به جز لغت دوست که اشتباه نوشته شده بود و همچنین نوع قلم که به صورت بر عکس نوشته شده بود.	منهای کلمه دوست که به صورت “دوتس” نوشته شده بود...

Interpretation involves a combination of what is in the text and what is in the interpreter’s MR; from an interpreter’s perspective, the formal features of a text are “cues” which contribute to the interpreter’s MR, while interpretations arise from the dialectical interplay of the cues and MR. MRs are often called *background knowledge* and are often ideological; ignoring the MRs could be a reason for misunderstanding this political allegory in translation. Table 9 shows such a misunderstanding, in which TT3 did not convey the message, TT2 conveyed the word erroneously, and TT1 did not even translate it.

Discussion and Conclusion

Texts with political implications are particularly challenging to translators, especially as such texts have not been sufficiently explored. Many CDA-based studies have found that translators usually misunderstand the ideologies behind STs with political

connotations. Khajeh and Khanmohammad (2006) and Yazdanimogaddam and Fakher (2011) investigated the relationship between language and ideology in translation in general, but more specifically, tried to reveal the underlying ideological assumptions which are invisible in the ST and TT, to find whether translators' ideologies are superimposed on their translations or not. Their study revealed that the two translators made significant changes, either unintentionally or intentionally, in their selection of syntactic structures and lexical items in comparison to those in the ST. They concluded that translators, as any other language users who actively participate in the process of creating meaning, need to be conscious of every discursive choice or strategy, ranging from addition and deletion to lexical and syntactic variations.

Attaran (2009) looked at the influence of ideology on translation, relying on two different theoretical frameworks. One of the frameworks was suggested by van Dijk (1997) and the other by Fairclough (1995). The study traced different types of ideologies, which were manipulated especially those related to the religious ideas incompatible with the translators' ideological stances. This manipulation was more clearly revealed through Fairclough's CDA theoretical framework.

Sertkan (2007) probed into the ideological dimension in five different abridged Turkish versions of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* (1838). Through critical discourse analysis, he observed a great number of discrepancies between the original novel and its five different abridged Turkish versions. The findings of the present study support the findings of Sertkan (2007) who investigated the impact of ideology on translators' lexical choices. The author concluded that the differences between the source book and the translated versions are ideologically-laden.

Generally speaking, the CDA approach used in the present study to explore three Persian translations of the *Animal Farm*, primarily revealed the translation choices. Although the three Persian versions were translated from an identical English original, apart from other syntactic and lexical variations between TT1, TT2, and TT3, they displayed noticeable differences mainly in terms of additions and deletions. As Fairclough's CDA model indicates, a misunderstood decoding of one step in interpretive procedure of the CDA framework could lead to another interpreting mistake in the subsequent stages.

From the perspective of the institutional settings in the novel, the most common problem among the translators was their unawareness of the content, subject, relations, and connections. Among these problematic issues, unawareness of connections and contents were more remarkable than the other problems. In order to avoid such problems, Fairclough (1995) proposed a framework including interpretation, explanation, and reproduction. The major problems arose from the interpretive procedure, because this stage failed to provide appropriate input for the next stages including translation. For instance, when the narrator of *Animal Farm* humorously mentions that the tune is "something between Clementine and La Cucaracha" (p.32), two of most famous popular folk songs, TT1 and TT3 did not

recognize the speech acts involved and their roles. As a result, the meanings were erroneously conveyed.

The roles of these concepts in this political allegory were highlighted to represent the popular culture at the time the novel was written. The results, however, showed that the reproductions were not appropriate equivalents. Fairclough's (1995, 2013) emphasis on decoding social order or institutional settings represents an important issue for translators because when they fail to accomplish the decoding processes, the outcome might be an ill-framed translation with incongruent sets of words that do not contribute to the whole discourse. In cases the background knowledge of the original text receivers cannot be recreated in the final translation product, TTs appear incoherent and less effective.

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