



The Impact of Textual Analysis on Translation Competence.

Siddig Ahmed Ali

College of Arts and Science, Texas University

Email: sidigahmed45@gmail.com

Abstract

The present study aimed to assess the impact of textual analysis on translation competence and attempts to investigate textual analysis as an essential phase in the translation process. Moreover, it claims that any translation competence is reached through three phases: analysis, transfer, and restructuring as Nida has stated. In addition to that, this study extends over the ideas and theoretical frameworks of textual analysis made by many scholars to ease comprehending the text to be translated. The researcher used the analytical descriptive approach in line with the field of the study. This approach describes the participants' feedback and data to assess translation competence. Then the researcher prepared a survey of 8 items as a tool for data collection. It conducted on 30 trainees and students of translation at Gassim University during the second term of the academic year, 2015. Moreover, the data were collected from various resources including the internet, encyclopaedias, and translation references together with the survey. After the analysis, the study reached some findings. The results of those findings and data analysis showed that textual analysis influences the translation quality and enhance translators' competence. A 67% of students were confident that the role of textual analysis in reaching translation competence. Based on these findings, the researcher presented some concluding remarks and recommendations. Finally, the study concluded that textual analysis enhances translator's skills and competence.

Keywords: text, textual analysis, translation competence, componential analysis, genre, register.

1. Introduction

The past few decades witnessed a paramount surge in translation studies all over the globe. Many scholars have viewed the phenomenon of translation as process and product. Others have taken it from the Skopos perspective because any they believe that any translation has an aim or purpose. Nord defines the concept of translation as the production of a functional target text that maintains a relationship with a given source text that is specified according to the intended or demanded function of the target text (translation Skopos) ^[1]. Source and target texts are determined by the communicative situation which conveys the required message. Translation allows a communicative act to take place, but influences with linguistic and cultural barriers would have been possible without it. (Ibid, P: 8).

Moreover, translation is viewed as a process that involves three major phases: Analysis, Transfer, and Synthesis. These phases enhance translation competence, particularly the analysis phase. The researcher believes that the analysis phase is the most important one because it manipulates the aspects and competence of translation and undoubtedly leads to all the decisions made by the translators. In Leech's views (1984) translation practice moves from the lower syntactic analysis to the higher one of semantics and pragmatic (context). Based on the level of translation practice, text analysis comprises of two levels: linguistic analysis known as the primary level which includes comprehension and

interpretation, where the secondary level is known as stylistic and textual analysis [2]. Thus, the present study is based on the nature of textual analysis in general and its impact on translation competence in particular as it provoked controversy among many educators, translators, and scholars.

1.1. The nature of text

Many linguists have examined the text, but no complete consensus on its nature. For instance, Nord describes the text as a communicative action, which is made by combining verbal and nonverbal means. Reiss views the text as a coherent, theme-oriented, linguistic set of utterances for communication purpose [3]. Hartman (1964, cited in the Beaugrande 1981: 3) notes that the decisive trait of the text is its occurrence in communication [4]. Halliday and Hasan regard the text as a functional part of a language while McKee (4) claims that a text as something we extract the meaning of. It has also been viewed as diverse implications and significance due to cultural differences and connotation of words [5]. A text in Snell-Hornby's view (112) is characterized by the situational relationship to reality with an emphasis on the style (syntax, semantics and Lexis and formal text presentation) and the proper translation strategies and methods. Moreover, Snell-Hornby (69) showed some of the phases of textual analysis, which begin with the macro level, including cultural and situational elements of a text [6].

Finally, Peter Newmark (13) compares the translator to the analyst who has to comprehend the text, exposes its intentions; recognize its attitude and discourse style [7].

To conclude, a meaningful text has to meet seven standards of textuality. These standards include Cohesion, Coherence, Intentionality, Acceptability, Informativity, Situationality and Intertextuality (1-11). They also represent the main elements in textual analysis, which have been illustrated as follows:

1. **Cohesion:** "sticky tape" semantic markers linking ideas (a set of verbal 'signposts' to guide the reader).
2. **Coherence:** the writer's text world and its relation to our experience of the phenomenal world depend less on overt markers, more on the ways situations are described and sequenced, issues of causality and time in the construction of the text worlds. E.g. No milk in the fridge. Have gone to the shops. Interpretation depends on assumptions about similar experiences. (Unity, harmony).
3. **Intentionality** is reflected in the writer's manipulation of rhetorical devices: commands, questions, etc. The effect is literally to make some waves and movement in the text.
4. **Acceptability** involves recognition on the reader's part of one and two.
5. **Informativity** affects the readers beneficially e.g. new information.
6. **Situationality** recognizes that the appearance of a text at a given time or in a context will influence the readers in their interpretation.
7. **Intertextuality** recognizes that all texts contain traces of other texts. Writers may wish to emit echoes of certain texts, though; readers may pick up these or others that they have read.

1.2. Textual analysis:

The term analysis means to break up something into its components in order to study it or recognize its nature. This definition can be applied to a text. Text analysis or textual analysis means to analyse a text into its components such as linguistic, cultural and stylistic ones. Halliday (13), says when we analyse a text linguistically, we usually have one of two possible goals. One is to explain why the text means what it does: why it is understood the way it is by the analyst, or by anyone else. The second goal is to explain why the text is valued as it is

again, by anyone who may be evaluating it: this might be the case of a literary or religious text, by a consensus within the culture^[8].

Textual analysis is essentially required for translation as well. In this sense, Nord (1) assured that most writers on translation theory agree that before rendering the text, the translator should analyse the text comprehensively because it is the only way of ensuring that the source text (ST) has been wholly and correctly understood. In addition, he corroborates textual analysis is often related to SL text rather than TL. Based on her views, the nature of the textual analysis is associated with the nature of the text and textual analysis is required for language and cultural components within a text.

According to McKee (1), the analysis of a text (textual analysis) is an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be made of that text^[9]. Therefore, it is an essential part of discourse analysis, which is not merely the linguistic analysis of the texts, but also interdiscursive analysis, that is, examining the texts in terms of the different discourses, genres and styles they draw upon and articulate together as Fairclough sees it (2)^[10]. Accordingly, types and styles of a text influence Textual analysis. Thus, Beau-grande (1981: 35 Cf. Nord 2003:21) asserts that a text type is a distinctive configuration of relational dominance obtaining between or among elements of the surface text; i.e. the textual world; stored knowledge patterns and a situation occurrence. Christiana Reiss's offers the following text-type/genre classification:

Informative, a plain communication of facts: information, knowledge, opinions; language is logical and communicating the content of text is also its main function (e.g. Encyclopaedia)

- **Expressive**, creative texts, the aesthetics of the language used is important, author and message are foregrounded (e.g. Novel, poem, etc.)
- **Operative** the text aims to persuade its receiver to do something; the language is dialogic and appellative (e.g. Adverts, political speeches, etc.)
- **Audio-medial** the text includes written and spoken material, including music and visual elements (e.g. Films, TV ads, Political programmes, etc.)

On the other hand, Nida classifies the text into four styles:

- **Narrative**: a dynamic sequence of events, where the emphasis is on the verbs or for English, 'dummy' or 'empty' verbs plus verb-nouns or phrasal verbs ('He made a sudden appearance', He burst in

- **Description**, which is static, with emphasis on linking verbs, adjectives, adjectival nouns.

- **Discussion**, a treatment of ideas, with emphasis on abstract nouns (concepts), verbs of thought, mental activity ('consider', 'argue', etc.), logical argument and connectives,

- **Dialogue**, with emphasis on colloquialisms and phaticisms.

Snell-Hornby (112) says a text, should not be analysed into parts, but as a whole, from the 'macro-level' to the 'micro-level'. The analysis is thus made by an explanation of the theme and rhyme construction, the concepts of given and new, coherent, mood and transitivity are available, and can be constantly referred to at any stage of the analysis. For example, the cohesion box explains the basic tenets of anaphoric and anaphoric reference, substitution, conjunction and lexical cohesion.

Methods of analysis varied from a scholar to another. Halliday (1992 cited in Yallop and Steiner: 283) for instance, suggested the following parameters for macro-analysis (text as a whole) and for Mirco-analysis (sentence by sentence):

1. Theme and rheme structure
2. Information structure
3. Mood and modality
4. Cohesion
5. Transitivity structures

Other scholars have taken it from historical perspectives and viewed the development of textual analysis through the ages. In Connor's views (1994) for instance, text analysis date back to the Prague School of Linguistics since the 1920s when the school contributed to textual analysis by presenting the terms *theme* and *rheme* which describe the flow of information in sentences and its relation to text coherence, Connor (1994) ^[11]. On the other hand, Stubbs (1995) states that the text analysis was developed in British linguistics from the 1930s to the 1990s. Conventionally, as Stubbs (1995) continues, text analysis is mainly found in the work of scholars like Halliday, Sinclair, and Firth. These works, as stated by Stubbs, demand to study the language in written and spoken discourse and performing a textual analysis of naturally occurring language. Eventually, Text analysis was first used in language, but now it became prominent in translation studies ^[12].

1.3. Textual Analysis in Translation

Nord (1988/2005) introduced textual analysis in translation. The analysis is based on functional model and elements of the text at or above sentence level. The aim of the analysis is to enable translators understanding the SL text to facilitate translating it. Moreover, the analysis assists the translators to select the optimal strategies for proper translation. Nida model does not only distinguish between translation product and process but also takes into account analysing a complex series of interlinked extra-textual factors and intratextual features in the ST. Nord's model was a comprehensive based on the function of the text. Nord (2005, P: 24) views the model as a comprehensive model of text analysis, which take into account intratextual as well as extratextual factors the translator can establish the function in the culture of ST. This is then compared with the prospective function in the culture of the target text required by the initiator, identifying and isolating those ST elements, which have to be preserved or adapted in translation. Moreover, Nord's list of intratextual factors (2005: 87-142) is one possible model for the ST analysis. These factors are: subject matter content: including connotation and cohesion presuppositions: real-world factors of the communicative situation presumed to be known to the participants composition: including microstructure and macrostructure non-verbal elements: illustrations, italics, etc. lexicon: including dialect, register, specific terminology, sentence structure and suprasegmental features: including stress, rhythm and 'stylistic punctuation', which are documentary translation and instrumental translation.

1.4. Models of textual analysis:

The model of translation-oriented text analysis is useful not only for students, but also for professionals because it enables the translator to justify their translational decisions, deal with translation problems, and understand translation conventions conspicuously, (Nord (2).

Neubert (1985) agrees with Reiss (1981) that the task of the first phase of the translation process is text analysis, i.e. analysis of the SL text according to certain parameters that would enable the discovery of the inner and outside factors that influence the production and reception of the text. This concept forms the basis for the Translation Quality Model as outlined by House (1981). Textual analysis is the method communication used to describe **and** interpret the characteristics of a recorded or visual message.

1. The purpose of the textual analysis is to describe the content, structure, and functions of the messages contained in the texts.
2. The important considerations in the textual analysis include selecting the types of texts to be studied, acquiring appropriate texts, and determining which particular approach to employ in analysing them.

Kussmaul P (1995:105) illustrated the benefits and ways of textual analysis. He says when we analyse a source text we analyse meaning and we try to get the idea of meaning potential of a given word. In addition, we examine how, as an interplay of bottom-up and top-down process this meaning potential is activated by the context in which the word is used. The text is analysed to comprehend the meaning of the SL text and express it in the target text without undue changes in form and avoiding interference. Textual analysis can be in units. These

units involve words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, complete discourse and text collective [13], Leube and Karen (2000:174) [14].

To carry out a textual analysis, a translator needs to identify the genre and purpose of text analysis of the communicative elements (social context, sender, receiver, and medium), move structure text type and rhetorical strategies. The genre and the purpose determine the move of the structure as both sender and receiver have specific expectations in relation to how a text within is should be restructured in a given genre. The move structure in return calls for specific modes of writing (the type of text). The rationale for the genre also influences the content, language use, and rhetoric strategies, Bodil Helder (25). According to Bodil Helder (2011, 25 P), rhetorical strategies are categorized into three groups [15]:

- 1- Strategies relating to the topic.
- 2- Strategies related to sender's attitude and the relationship between sender and receiver.
- 3- Strategies relating to the text.

Knowing these strategies, the translator may produce perfect textual analysis and hence develop translation skills and competence.

1.5. Textual analysis and Translation Competence

Scholars of translation describe Translation competence (TC) is a multifaceted concept. Kelly (2002: 14-15) defines Translation competence as the macro-competence that comprises the different capacities, skills, knowledge and even attitudes that professional translators possess and which are involved in translation as an expert activity. It can be broken down into sub-competencies, which are all necessary for the success of the macro-competence.¹⁶ Anthony Pym (2011: 78) also defines translator competence as the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become a translator. According to him, the competence consists of two components: declarative knowledge (knowing that) and operational knowledge (knowing how). He also states that the term can be substituted by expressions that are more specific: "skill, knowledge, and disposition, with degrees of expertise operative within all three" Pym, (78) [17]. Linguistics, on the other hand, usually defines the competence as a set of rules that underlie performance. To provide another example, Stansfield (1992) says that competence should be divided into two different skills: accuracy (of the transfer of ST content into the TT) and expression (quality of translator's expression) [18]. Other theories concerning translator competence include various components, for instance, knowledge of language, knowledge of translation technologies, ability to apply translation strategies, confidence, speed, etc. (Pym 2003: 482).

He thus defines translation competence as the ability to generate a series of more than one viable target text (TT₁ TT₂...) for a pertinent source text (ST) The ability to select only one viable TT from this series, quick and with justified confidence (Pym 2003: 489).

The significance of translation-oriented text analysis: The model of translation-oriented text analysis is useful not only for students, but also for professionals because it enables the translator to justify their translational decisions, deal with translation problems, and understand translation conventions conspicuously. (Nord (2005, P: 2)

¹⁶ Kelly, D. (2005): *A Handbook for Translator Trainers*, Translation Practices Explained Series, Manchester, St. Jerome Publishers

Kelly, D. (2005): *A Handbook for Translator Trainers*, Translation Practices Explained Series, Manchester, St. Jerome Publishers

Strengths and limitations of textual analysis:

In other words, any text is an expression of a 40 specific situation and of a wider social, historical, political, ideological, etc. environment. Culture can be defined as “a set of interrelated semiotic (i.e., meaning) systems” (Miller 2005: 2). All these factors could be captured by a set of WH- questions based on the New Rhetoric Formula, which is used by Nord as a guideline to the textual analysis. The questions are as follows: Who transmits On what subject matter to whom does he/she say what for what by which medium (what's not) where in what order when using which nonverbal-elements why in which words a text in what kind of sentences with what function? In which tone to what effect?

Levels of competence:

Miller (1973) assumed that this knowledge, in the case of a language user, is organized on five levels: phonological, syntactic, lexical, conceptual knowledge, and system of beliefs. These five levels of knowledge lead to the classification of the levels of competence:

1. Linguistic competence
2. Comprehension competence
3. Encyclopedic Competence
4. Reexpression Competence

The translator needs to acquire communicative and textual competencies among the other types to enable them practice to produce the accurate translation.

2. Material and methods

The study emerged from the need to examine the influence of textual analysis on translation competence. The data were assembled from different resources including the participants (graduates of the department of English and translation, college of science and arts, Gassim University, Saudi Arabia). The analytical descriptive approach was adopted in this study which was conducted on 30 translation trainees (novices) who recently have graduated from university and started practicing translation in different areas. The participants were randomly selected to reflect their feedback about textual analysis. The participants were asked to respond to a survey of eight items about the impact of textual analysis on translation. They volunteered to deliver their responses to the survey, which may help them to consider textual analysis in their specialized professional translation to Professional translation required employing all process, procedures, and techniques to provide a translation of high quality. In order to prove textual analysis is a vigorous process to achieve translation competence, the researcher distributed the survey to receive their feedbacks about whether translation process is done more properly and accurately when the textual analysis is applied to written texts. The duration of this study three months from (August - October 2015). The data has been received, assembled and statistically analysed and the result was as follows.

3. Results and discussion

The researcher designed a survey of eight items for trainees to test the use of textual analysis for translation purpose. Trainees' feedback was generally positive about the textual analysis. The accompanying table shows their feedback: **To what extent do you think that textual analysis helps you to achieve translation competence?**

Statements	Agree	Disagree	No sure
I had a background in textual analysis.	58%	28%	14%
I adopt text analysis when I translate any text.	77%	18%	5%
Textual analysis facilitates translation	67%	26%	7%
Textual analysis is time-consuming	80%	15%	5%
It is better to use textual analysis when translating socio-cultural text genres.	81%	15%	4%
Textual analysis is needed for ST text rather than TL.	69%	26%	5%
The major items in text analysis are field, mode and genres.	67%	20%	11%
To achieve translation competence, linguistic, cultural and stylistic analyses are required.	67%	23%	10%

Table (1): the survey of textual analysis for translation competence.

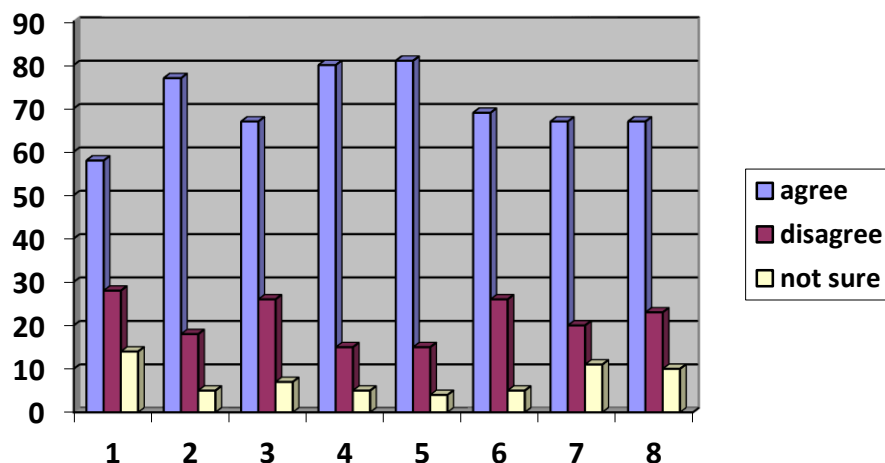


Figure 1: The impact of textual Analysis of Translation

As shown in the above table, the students and trainees were surveyed if they have a background in textual analysis. Around 58% agreed that they are acquainted with the knowledge of textual analysis when they studied translation courses in the undergraduate program, whereas 28% claimed that they have no background in it. A 14% of the trainees were not sure whether they have studied it or not. On the other hand, the participants were asked whether they adopt text analysis when they translate any text. A 77% of the trainees confirmed that they used textual analysis in translation while 18% of the respondents denied that and only 5% were not sure, whether they are using it or not. Moreover, 67% believe that Textual analysis facilitates the translation process; however, 26% reject the idea while only 7% were neutral. About 80% were convinced that analysing a text take a long time, i.e. it consumes the time of translator whereas 15% rejected this claim and only 5% were not sure of the waste of time.

Moreover, the participants were asked if it is better to use textual analysis when translating socio-cultural genres, 80% were very positive about it while the rest disagreed. A 69% of the trainee was positive about Textual analysis of ST text rather than TL. In addition to that, the participants were asked about the items of text analysis, such as field, mode and genres; the majority believe that they are significant. Finally, they were asked about achieving translation competence through linguistic, cultural and stylistic analyses. They were positive about the role of analysis of a text linguistically, culturally and stylistically. This statement plays a vital role in achieving translation competence.

This result is similar to a study result carried out at Macquarie University in Korea (2006-2008) where students were surveyed to reflect their experience concerning the usefulness of the textual analysis (Cluadia, 2009, 147- 149) [19]. The focus of the survey was of the following items:

- 1) The degree of difficulty of textual analysis.
- 2) The usefulness in developing critical thinking
- 3) The usefulness in enhancing translation skills.

The survey was made of the following questions:

The first question:

The application of SFL-based text analysis in this course was at an appropriate level for me. The students' responses were as follows:

Year	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2006		87%	12.5%		
2008	16%	67%	16%		

The students were very positive about applying textual analysis in their translation.

The second question:

The meaning-oriented analysis of translation issues helped me think critically about translation issues

Year	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2006	31.5%	62%			
2008	25%	75%			

The students were very positive about the influence of textual analysis on critical skills and translation.

The third question:

The application of text analysis to translation helps me improve my overall translation competence and skills.

Year	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2006	25%	25%	50%		
2008	8%	58%	25%	8%	

However, the respondents displayed hesitation about the role of textual analysis, but the responses were in favour of textual analysis particularly in 2008. These results are almost identical to the result of the survey of this study. Therefore, the researcher reached some conclusion and put forward some suggestions and recommendations.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the results of this study provided some fascinating insights into the impact of textual analysis on translation the study dealt with nature and significance textual analysis. It investigated whether Textual Analysis has been adopted in translation classes and normally used by novice translators(students). On the other hand, the participants' responses were positive about the role of textual analysis in raising translation competence, though some of them believe it wastes of time and impedes fluency of the translation. Other researchers agreed with the findings of this study and supported the proposition of the idea of textual analysis as one of the crucial stages of translation competence as proposed by Eugene Nida and emphasized by other scholars. Thus, textual analysis enhances translation competence.

5. Recommendations

Based on the results of the present study and its implications on translation, some suggestions and recommendations are introduced. I hope that these suggestions and recommendations will help to improve the quality and competence of the translation:

1. Students need to be trained to translate using extensive textual analysis.
2. The students should study translation courses that enable them to use textual analysis.
3. The teachers of translation should pay more attention to text analysis.
4. Attitude toward textual analysis that it is a merely time-consuming should be changed.
5. Teachers should raise learners' awareness to all types of analyses of SL and SL texts.

Acknowledgements

My friends, colleagues, and students helped me in composing the theme and ideas of this work. I am deeply indebted to all of them. I am also particularly grateful to the department of English and translation at Arrass, Gassim University.

Competing interests

I hereby declare that nobody or organization that could inappropriately influence this work.

References

- [1] Nord C. Textual Analysis in translation. Rodopi, Amsterdam. NY; 2005, P 1, 2,16,21,32.
- [2] Kelly, D. A Handbook for Translator Trainers, Translation Practices Explained Series, Manchester, St. Jerome Publishers, (2005).
- [3] Leech, Geoffrey "Corpora". Kirsten Malmkjær ed. The Linguistics Encyclopedia. London and New York: Routledge 1991, P 73–80.
- [4] REISS, Katharina, "Type, Kind and Individuality of Text, Decision Making in Translation", in, Venuti, Lawrence (ed.), The Translation Studies Reader, London-New York: Routledge, 2000, pp. 160-171
- [5] De Beaugrande, R., & Dressler, W. U. *Introduction to text linguistics* / Robert-Alain De Beaugrande, Wolfgang Ulrich Dressler. London; New York: Longman, 1981, P 3.
- [6] Halliday M. Language as social semiotic. London: Edward Arnold; 1985, P 10.
- [7] Snell-Hornby M. Translation Studies: An integrated approach. John Benjamins Publishing Company; 1988, P 112.
- [8] Newmark P. A Text Book of Translation. Printed and bound in Great Britain by A.Wheaton & Co. Ltd, Kxeter; 1988, P 13.
- [9] Halliday M "Towards a theory of good translation" in E. Steiner & C. Yallop (eds.), Exploring translation and multilingual text production: Beyond content. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter; 2001, P 13-18.
- [10] McKee, A (2003) Textual Analysis: A Beginner's Guide Sage Publications Ltd 6 Bonhill Street London; 2003, P 1, 4.
- [11] Fairclough N. Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research. Psychology Press; P: 2003. 2.
- [12] Connor, U. Text analysis (TESOL Quarterly). Cambridge university press, New York; 1994, P 28, 682-685.
- [13] Stubbs M. Text and corpus analysis. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers Inc.; (1995).
- [14] Kussmaul, P. Training the Translator. Amsterdam: John Benjamins; P 1995.125.
- [15] Leube K. Information Structure and Word Order in the Advanced Learner Variety. BoD. Libri Hamburg; 2000:174.
- [16] Helder B. textual analysis: An approach to analysing professional texts. Samfundslitteratur press; 2011, 25 P.
- [17] Pym A. Redefining Translation Competence in an Electronic Age "In Defense of a Minimalist Approach in Meta". *Translator's Journal*, 2/2/2012; volume 48, (4), page 481-497.
- [18] Stansfield, C. "The Measurement of Translation Ability." *The Modern Language Journal*, (1992). 76-iv, pp. 455-67.
- [19] Claudia V. Angelelli & Holly E. Jacobson. Testing and Assessment in Translation and interpreting studies: A call for a dialogue between research and practice. John Benjamins Publishing; 2009, P 147 -149.
- [20] APPENDIX

Appendix A: Survey

Dear Student,

I would be very grateful if you participated in this study entitled: Textual Analysis to enhance Translation Competence. Your participation is an asset and can affect translation training positively and it is very useful for prospective students. You are requested to provide answers with agree, disagree or not sure. However, please provide no answer unless you read the questions carefully.

Thanks for your cooperation!

To what extent do you think that textual analysis helps you to achieve translation competence?

Statements	Agree	Disagree	No sure
1. I had a background in textual analysis.			
2. I adopt text analysis when I translate any text.			
3. Textual analysis facilitates translation			
4. Textual analysis is time-consuming			
5. It is better to use when translating socio-cultural text genres.			
6. Textual analysis is needed for ST text rather than TL.			
7. The major items in text analysis are field, mode and genres.			
8. To achieve translation competence, linguistic, cultural and stylistic analyses are required.			