

A Comparison of the Application of Readability Formulas in English Translation Textbooks and Their Translations

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Abstract :

The main concern of the present study was to compare the readability level of English textbooks for translation courses and their Persian translations using two readability formulas: the Gunning Fog Index (GFI) and the Flesch New Reading Ease (FNRE) Formula. To this end a corpus comprising five textbooks for translation studies and their Persian translations were chosen. The reason behind choosing these textbooks is that they are the only translation textbooks translated into Persian and they are sources frequently referred to, by lower proficient students. Two hundred and eighty four sample texts were chosen randomly and examined in terms of readability levels by GFI; one hundred and forty two sample texts from English textbooks of translation and one hundred and forty two sample texts which were the translations of the respective English sample texts. A total number of thirty sample texts which were chosen from two hundred and eighty four samples were also examined by FNRE Formula; fifteen sample texts from English textbooks of translation and fifteen sample texts which were translations of the respective English sample texts. These sample texts were chosen randomly from the beginning, middle and end of each translation textbooks and its Persian translation. Based on the outcomes of the research the average difficulty using GFI of English textbooks of translation was 16.4 while the average GFI score of their Persian translations was 20.1. This means that Persian textbooks of translation are 3.7 grade levels above their English originals in terms of readability. According to Gunning (1968) the higher the, the less readable the text is. According to the results obtained by FNRE Formula, the average score of English textbooks was 46.006 while the average score of Persian translations was 19.240. According to Flesch (1949) the higher the FNRE score, the more readable a text is. The findings of the study showed that translation textbooks which have been translated into Persian are less readable than their English originals.

Key Word :

readability, readability formulas, translation textbooks, Gunning Fog Index (GFI), Flesch New Reading Ease (FNRE) Formula

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