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Translators' Personality Types, Functions, and Revision Behavior[1]

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Abstract

Translators' personality can provide insights to better understanding of the effects of personality types and functions in translation. In this vein, current study seeks to identify the dominant personality functions in translators as revisers and to shed light on the relationship between freelance translators' personality functions and their revision behavior. To this end, a questionnaire was developed consisting of three sections as demographic information, the revision behavior, and MBTI personality test with 207 freelance translators participating in the research. Regarding the data analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted and subsequent statistical tests were run. As for the results, no significant correlations could be established between personality types, translation and revision behaviors except for the working fields of translation, the frequent pauses, and the level of their familiarity with the field being translated.

Keywords: Personality functions, Revision behaviors, Translators' personality types

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1. Introduction

Translation can be viewed both as a cognitive process (Bell, 1991) and as a text-induced activity or product (Neubert & Shreve, 1992), but it cannot be separated from the translator who is the central figure in the former and the creator of the latter. The translator not only connects two cultures through the target text, but also two ways of thinking and ultimately, two minds—those of the author and the translator. Thus, understanding the psychological types and functions and personality of the translator is crucial to comprehending the translation process and its outcomes.

Studies which investigate the relationship between translators' personality functions and types and revision behavior have been gaining traction during the last decade. Studies have sought to address the process of self- and other-revision, focusing on in-time quantitative data collection (Dragsted & Carl, 2013; Englund Dimitrova, 2005; Jakobsen, 2002) with tools such as keystroke logging (Jakobsen, 2017), eye trackers (Carl & Jakobsen, 2010), pause plots (Immonen, 2006), to name but a few.

On the other end of the spectrum lie the studies that seek to analyze the final revised product, in terms of quality (Künzli, 2005, 2007; Robert & Van Waes, 2014). The majority of the research canon adopt a comparative lens between translation students and professionals as in Lehka-Paul (2020) or only including professionals as for Asadi and Séguinot (2005) and Shih (2006), or with mere focus on translation students as in Antunović and Pavlović (2011). Therefore, there exist few studies focusing on large quantitative data into the revision behavior of freelance translators, including both students and professionals. Also, other studies mostly adopted qualitative perspectives (Lehka-Paul, 2020; Lehka-Paul & Whyatt, 2016; Mossop, 1982) which are characterized by their lack of generalizability (Carminati, 2018).

Capturing the psychological aspects of translation can be traced back to the early 1970s by the work of Reiss (1971/2000) who categorized different personality types of translators based on the preferred text type for each to translate. Therefore, the current research attempts to identify the dominant personality functions in translators as revisers and to shed light on the relationship between freelance translators' personality functions and their revision behavior. Therefore, this paper seeks to provide answers to the following research question:

1) What are the dominant personality functions in freelance translators?

2) Is there a relationship between translators' personality types and their revision behavior as declared by participants?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Research into Self/ Other-revision Behaviors of Translators

In an experiment conducted by Jakobsen (2002), a comparison was made between a group of professional translators and translation students in order to capture the time allocated for each of the three phases of translation as initial orientation, drafting phase and final end revision with the segmentation pattern and the mental effort processed in translation. The study showed that the time allocation for each phase varies and both groups spent more time on the drafting stage rather than the orientation stage. Although mere quantitative data into the translation process research is meaningless, it could be beneficial if integrated with qualitative data.

Likewise, with a comparative perspective and similar language pairs of Danish and English, Carl, Dragsted and Jakobsen (2011) conducted a research, this time analyzing the styles of translation using both Translog and eye tracker. They found that various behaviors were seen during each of the three stages of translation; for instance, for the orientation phase, behaviors as instant translation, skimming, systematic planning and fast planning were observed. Regarding the drafting phase, some translators processed the translation task at macro-level and others at micro-level, dealing with larger and smaller amount of information, respectively (as cited in Dragsted and Carl (2013)).

Looking at revision process from translators' viewpoint and using interviews with professional literary translators, Shih (2006) revealed that, on average, translators revise two times, but other variables such as text length, text difficulty, and text familiarity could also play a role. The participants were also asked about drawer time (the time a translator puts the draft away before final revision) and the participants reported no drawer time between translation and revision.

Working on translation students' views toward revision and its importance in translation process, Kasperavičienė and Horbačauskienė (2020) suggested that almost all of their participants emphasized such factors as the accuracy of the translated piece and the grammatical structure of the text to be of the greatest importance.

Investigating the role of personality into translation process and product, Lehka-Paul and Whyatt (2016) conducted a research to test whether some of the personality traits are crucial and prominent in translation process and which personality functions perform better in translating each text type. They found that the personality traits at work in translators differ from those of non-translators and traits such as conscientiousness and openness to experience were prevailing among translators. Regarding the personality functions, Intuitors performed better than sensors since they are more independent and rely on their own knowledge rather than external sources, which complement the study of Hubscher-Davidson (2009).

3. Methods

3.1. Participants

Based on the suggested guidelines for developing questionnaire instruments, subsequent to the initial literature review, semi-structured interviews were conducted to ensure proper conceptualization among the participants and the existing theoretical canon (Artino et al., 2014; Gehlbach, Artino, & Durning, 2010). Five English-Persian and Persian-English freelance translators were interviewed to shed light on their revision behaviors during their translations. In terms of age, the participants' age ranged between 23–31 years old and as for gender, participants were 3 females and 2 males. They had an average translation experience of 7 years as freelance translators.

As for the quantitative phase, the sample includes 207 Iranian translator-revisers (79=male, 124=female, 4=preferred not to say) translating from English-Persian and Persian-English language pairs with Persian as their mother tongue. The participants' field of study was mostly English Translation Studies, which is illustrated in more details in Figure 1:

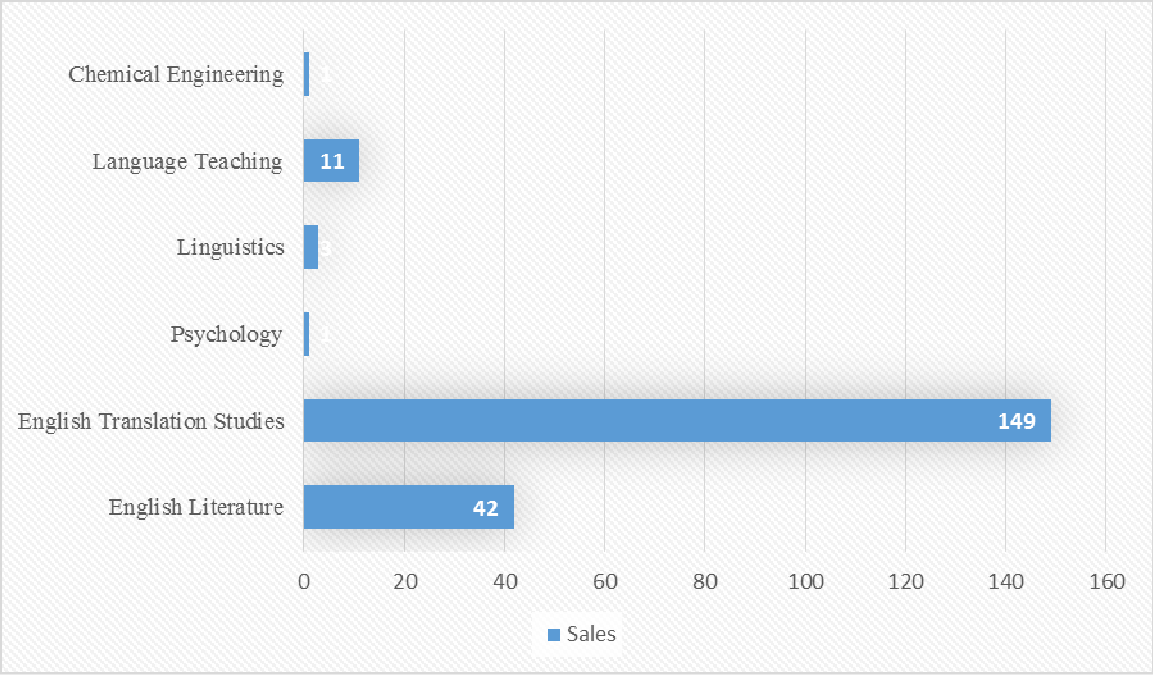

Figure 1. Participants' Field of Study

Regarding the current academic status of the participants, 115 were BA students, 27 hold BA degree, 19 hold MA degree, 18 were MA students, 14 PhD students, and 14 hold PhD degrees. Therefore, shaping the largest share in this study, following Angelelli (2020) and Ehrensberger-Dow and Perrin (2009), novice translators are characterized by the following features: (1) studying at an undergraduate translation training program, and (2) not earning a living through translation.

3.1.1. Personality Demographics of Participants

All of the 16 personality types have been recorded in the questionnaire, with INFJ and ENFJ at the top, which is demonstrated in Table 1:

***Table 1**. Personality Demographics*

NO.	Personality type	Frequency	Percentage
No.1	INFJ	30	14.5
No.2	ENFJ	29	14
No.3	INFP	23	11.1
No.4	INTJ	17	8.2
No.5	ISFJ	17	8.2
No.6	ESTJ	13	6.3

No.7	INTP	12	5.8
No.8	ENFP	11	5.3
No.9	ISFP	10	4.8
No.10	ESFJ	8	3.9
No.11	ISTJ	8	3.9
No.12	ENTP	7	3.4
No.13	ESFP	6	2.9
No.14	ISTP	6	2.9
No.15	ENTJ	5	2.4
No.16	ESTP	5	2.4
Total		207	100.00

Among the personality types recorded in the questionnaire, the frequency of personality functions also differed. As for the first dichotomy of Extroversion/Introversion, the number of Introvert (n=106) freelance translators was more than the extroverts (n= 84). As for the second dichotomy of Sensing/Intuition, the number of Sensors (n=73) was less than Intuitors (n=134). Regarding the Thinking/Feeling dichotomy, the number of Feelers (n=134) was more than Thinkers (n=73), and with regard to the last dichotomy, Judging/Perceiving, Judgers (n=114) went beyond the number of Perceivers (n=80) participating in this phase of study.

3.2. Instruments

The main instrument for the present study was initially developed by conducting a thorough literature review (Asadi & Séguinot, 2005; Dayton, 2003; Lehka-Paul, 2020; Mossop, 2014; Shih, 2006, 2013, 2015) followed with a semi-structured interview. The developed questionnaire was divided into three sections including demographic information, the revision behavior, and MBTI personality test. The content was validated through expert validation where two Translation Studies professors assessed the relevance and clarity of the items with respect to the construct of interest. The face validity was confirmed by having three potential participants reading through the items to ascertain readability and comprehensibility.

3.3. Data Collection

Being an exploratory sequential design, this research gathered initial qualitative data and proceeded towards a quantitative analysis of it (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). Therefore, the data collection procedure for this research was

divided into two phases. As for the qualitative phase, the interviewees were recruited for participation. The interviews were conducted in various forms, including telephone, online, or face to face, depending on the individual participant. As for the quantitative phase, the developed instrument was distributed online and on site. As for online, online social media platforms such as Telegram, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Email were used.

3.4. Data Analysis

For this quantitative analysis of data, both descriptive and inferential analyses were used. Firstly, to validate the questionnaire, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to check for the relation between the variables included in the questionnaire and ensure construct validity. To this end, the EFA was conducted with the Unweighted Least Squares (ULS) extraction method and promax rotation. The EFA yielded a seven-factor solution, where the suitability of the number of factors was ensured through parallel analysis (PA) and Kaiser's rule of eigenvalues. Regarding internal consistency, inter-item correlation was measured through Cronbach's alpha to assess the extent to which the items included in each factor are related to one another. After validating the instrument, to test for cross-group differences for the purposes of our research, the Kruskal-Wallis test was run.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis

An EFA was run on our 35-item revision and translation behavior questionnaire to uncover the latent variables underlying the observed variables and, thus, validate the structure of our instrument, on the one hand, and reduce the number of items included in the questionnaire to their core dimensions on the other. To add to the robustness of our argument for the appropriateness EFA for the sample size at hand, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy was carried out (Kaiser, 1970). For our case, the KMO yielded a value of .625, which falls within the acceptable range for EFA (Kaiser, 1970, 1974).

Given our expectations of partial overlap between the test components, a promax rotation with the extraction method of Unweighted Least Squares (ULS) was used since our data was characterized by nonnormality, making ULS a more suitable extraction method. This rotation produced a 7-factor solution, the factor loadings and inter-item correlations of which are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Factor Loadings and Inter-item Correlations*

Factor 1		**Factor 2**		**Factor 3**		**Factor 4**		**Factor 5**		**Factor 6**		**Factor 7**	
Self-revision behavior		Translation behavior		Working fields		Revision modality		Translation process		Other-revision revision behavior		Text type	
Item	Factor loading	Item	Factor loading	Item	Factor loading	Item	Factor loading	Item	Factor loading	Item	Factor loading	Item	Factor loading
N01	.63	N26	.73	N24	.91	N08	.90	N32	.56	N07	.47	N19	.67
N04	.62	N28	.67	N25	.74	N09	.76	N36	.55	N31	.46	N18	.45
N02	.61	N23	.48					N22	.38	N05	.37		
N10	.50	N27	.39							N29	.36		
Cronbach's alpha: .63		Cronbach's alpha: .59		Cronbach's alpha: .72		Cronbach's alpha: .82		Cronbach's alpha: .42		Cronbach's alpha: .43		Cronbach's alpha: .44	

The inter-item correlations as calculated through Cronbach's alpha ranged between .42 and .82, which suggests that the identified factors sit within the satisfactory threshold for reliability (Field, 2017, p. 3304; Piedmont, 2014).

4.3. Personality Functions and Translators' Translation and Revision Behavior

As suggested in the previous section, no significant correlations could be established between personality types and translation and revision behaviors. We were interested in considering the potential effect of personality functions on translation and revision behaviors. To account for this effect, a Kruskal-Wallis test was run to ascertain if there is any significant difference between translators in terms of their translation and revision behaviors based on their personality functions. We chose the Kruskal-Wallis test given the non-normal distribution of the item responses. To check for the normality of distribution in the sample, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test (K-S test) was run. The K-S test yielded a significant value ($p < .001$), which is suggestive of non-normal distribution in the sample and the suitability of non-parametric tests for our purposes.

4.3.1. Extroversion/Introversion

The first personality function under question was that of extroversion and introversion. In other words, we were interested in ascertaining whether an extrovert

or introvert personality function could impact translators' revision and translation behavior. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for this personality function are presented in Table 4.

Table 3. Extroversion/Introversion and Translation and Revision Behavior

	SRB	TB	WF	RM	TP	OB	TT
Kruskal-Wallis H	.026	.809	3.996	.001	.340	.397	.690
df	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.872	.368	.046	.974	.560	.528	.406

As suggested in Table 3, translators with extrovert and introvert personality functions differed significantly in terms of whether they undertake translation and revision tasks that they are familiar with: H (1) = 3.99, p= .046). More specifically, extroverts were less inclined to translate in already familiar fields (M = 4.13) than were introverts (M = 4.29). The same could be said with respect to revision, where introverts more heavily leaned toward revising in the fields that they are familiar with (M= 4.10) than extroverts (M= 3.83). This significant difference was also supported by the presence of significant correlations between translators' extroversion and introversion and their working fields (r_s= .139, p < .04).

4.3.2. Intuition/Sensing

The second binary that was analyzed was whether translators' intuition or sensation orientation can affect their translation and revision behavior. The Kruskal-Wallis test was run and the results are provided in Table 4.

Table 4*. Intuition/Sensing and Translation and Revision Behavior*

	SRB	TB	WF	RM	TP	OB	TT
Kruskal-Wallis H	1.638	1.675	1.802	.248	4.044	.003	8.138
df	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.201	.196	.179	.619	.044	.955	.004

As could be seen in Table 4, significant differences were observed between translators' intuition or sensation regarding their behaviors during the process of translation (H (1) = 4.04, p < .04) and text types (H (1) = 8.138, p < .00). Intuitive translators were less overwhelmed by translation problems (M= 2.7) compared to sensing translators (M= 3.03). Additionally, intuitive translators were less lenient toward making use of machine translation and then post-editing the draft (M= 2.93)

than were translators with a sensing personality function (*M*= 3.36). These two cases accounted for the difference observed between intuitive and sensing translators since the mean score for translation by revising (making a lot of changes while translating) were absolutely identical across the two groups (*M*= 3.22). The follow-up correlational analysis using Spearman's correlations also provided support for this finding since a significant positive correlation was established between translators' intuition and sensing personality functions and their behavior during the process of translation (r_s= .140, p < .04).

Further, to break down the difference between translators' personality functions in terms of intuition and sensation in the working text types, the mean scores were calculated for both independent groups. Intuitive translators consistently reported having an easier time dealing with informative (*M*= 3.25) and expressive (*M*= 2.85) text types compared to sensing translators (*M*= 3.21, *M*= 2.27, respectively). This finding could be linked with the above finding where intuitive translators were less overwhelmed by translation problems. In other words, it could be argued that since intuitive translators are more comfortably able to cope with translation problems, it becomes easier for them to deal with different types of texts. This finding is partially supported by the significant correlation between translators' intuition/sensing personality function and their comfort while dealing with expressive text types (r_s= -.204, p < .03).

4.3.3. Thinking/Feeling

The next personality function of interest was the dichotomy of thinking and feeling. We tested the possible differences between translators with thinking and feeling personality functions in terms of their translation and revision behavior. To this end, similar to the previous binary, the Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted, the results of which are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. *Thinking/Feeling and Translation and Revision Behavior*

	SRB	TB	WF	RM	TP	OB	TT
Kruskal-Wallis H	.323	2.553	.760	.318	.026	.001	.765
df	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.570	.110	.383	.573	.872	.978	.382

According to the results, no significant differences existed between translators with thinking and feeling personality functions and their translation and revision behaviors.

4.3.4. Judging/Perceiving

The final pair of personality function of interest was Judging and Perceiving personality functions. More specifically, we tested whether there is a significant difference between translators with Judging and Perceiving personality functions and their translation and revision behavior. The cross-group analysis was conducted through the Kruskal-Wallis test, for which the results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. *Judging/ Perceiving and Translation and Revision Behavior*

	SRB	TB	WF	RM	TP	OB	TT
Kruskal-Wallis H	.416	.421	1.759	.160	.030	5.302	1.334
Df	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.519	.516	.185	.689	.863	.021	.248

As for Table 6, the only difference between translators with judging and perceiving personality was in terms of their other-revision behaviors (H (1) = 5.302, p < .02). On a more detailed note, we found that translators with judging personality tended to rely on others to revise their work (M= 2.46 versus M= 1.99), make use of CAT tools for revision (M= 2.89 versus M= 2.78), and use placeholders for later reference for problematic items (M= 3.26 versus M= 2.98). However, our participants scored identically in terms of their tendency to revise others' works (M= 2.80). This association was further corroborated by the presence of significant correlations between this dichotomy and other-revision behaviors (r_s= .160, p < .02).

5. Discussion

Throughout this research, it was attempted to unravel the relationship between translators' personality types and functions and their translation and revision behavior. The results suggested that translators' personality type and their translation and revision behaviors are not significantly correlated. However, the role of translators' personality types and functions and their revision was further corroborated by the current findings. This is partly in line with Lehka-Paul and Whyatt (2016) who revealed that the personality functions at work between translators and non-translators are different and that certain personality functions can outperform others in certain respects. We also found that translators' personality functions bear on their revision behavior. More specifically, it was revealed that extroverts were more inclined to revise and translate in unfamiliar

fields than introverts. The importance of translator-revisers' familiarity with the text has also been highlighted in the existing literature (Shih, 2006). This could be ascribed to the point that extroverts are more lenient toward stepping out of their comfort zones and encountering new experiences and challenges (Schmidt, 2016).

It was revealed that sensing and intuitive translators differed in their translation and revision behavior in that sensing translators were more inclined towards post-editing machine translation output compared to intuitive translators who preferred to translate themselves and were less overwhelmed by translation problems. This interesting finding could be attributed to the fact that individuals with a sensing personality function are better able to focus on details (the preference to post-edit and modify micro-structures) (Ferguson, 2020).

Lastly, it was found that judging translators would prefer to have others revise their work, use CAT tools for revision, and mark problematic items for future regression. This is an interesting finding that fits well with the description of individuals with judging personality functions in that they tend to think through their options and always adopt a more methodical approach. Therefore, they view others' perspectives as constructive to their action plans (Choong & Varathan, 2021).

6. Conclusion

The present study focused on identifying the dominant personality functions in translators as revisers and shedding light on the relationship between freelance translators' personality functions and their revision behavior. The findings showed that introversion, intuition, feeling and judging personality functions are more dominant among freelance translators.

Also, it was concluded that there are no significant correlations between personality types and translation and revision behaviors except for the working fields of translation and the frequent pauses and the level of their familiarity with the field being translated. Regarding the cross-group differences, the Kruskal-Wallis test showed that there are significant differences between translators with Extroversion/Introversion and translators with Intuitive/Sensing functions which highlights the role of personality function in performing revision tasks.

To the best of our knowledge, the present study is the first large-scale quantitative take on the interrelation of translator-revisers' personality function and

their translation and revision behavior. The validated instrument could be implemented to replicate studies with a greater population sample in terms of size and also in different contexts and different language pairs. Additionally, each of the points of difference identified in this research could benefit from rich and in-depth qualitative studies to provide more nuanced understanding. Overall, the findings of the study could bear pedagogical implications for translator training courses in terms of curriculum and syllabus design by drawing attention to an oft-neglected element in translator training courses.

It especially adds to the degree of existing focus on having trainee translators as the centerpiece of attention, especially project-based teaching of translation (e.g., Li, Zhang, & He, 2015). The present research could draw attention to the importance of shedding light on the role of translators as revisers, on the one hand, and the impact between their personality and performance. Such endeavor could be enriched by following up through process-oriented enquiries by means of biometrics and other objective measurement instruments to delve into the mental processes of translators while revising. Additionally, adopting a genre-specific perspective could be beneficial to test whether our findings would be true for translators-revisers working in a particular field of translation and revision activity.

Appendix

The link to the self-revision questionnaire:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfuEJDYbQdyYvkP7Q_JgwXayxa5Qwr7Lh6N2N-JDB_dVVY2lg/viewform?usp=sf_link

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