

Deixis in Literary Translation: Evidence of Explicitation

Dr. Othman Abualadas

Department of English Language and Literature, The University of Jordan-Aqaba (E-mail: othmanadass48@yahoo.com)

Dr. Wael Salam

Department of English Language and Literature, The University of Jordan-Aqaba

Abstract

This study explores the different types of shifts in the translation of deictic expressions in three Arabic translations of an English novel to see how these shifts can be related to the framework of universals of translation, namely Blum-Kulka's (1986/2000) Explicitation Hypothesis. The data suggest a tendency in translation to reveal more deictic features than the original, suggesting a more explicit text than its original. Although this general trend may point to strengthening of textual relations at the explicit level, it may weaken the dynamic interactive relationship between the linguistic expression and context of use/user, arousing less interpretive inferences and allowing less projection of the reader's personal views into the text.

Keywords: deixis; translation shifts; explicitation; implicitation; translation universals.

Theoretical Background and Methodological issues

This section will discuss the corpus of the study and then provide a theoretical framework for the analysis of translation shifts. Firstly, the corpus comprises three Arabic translations of the English novel "Wuthering Heights" by Emily Brontë; namely Ref'at Naseem (1972), Helmi Murad (1998) and Mamdouh Haqi (2011). The original novel has thirty-four chapters, but to provide an adequate qualitative account of the research problem, only the first eight chapters will be analyzed, which contain about 24,514 words.

The study will look at what is potentially done in or by the source text; it looks at deictic properties of the source text, and then compare what is done in the source text with what is done in the translation as a response to the original (Hickey 1998: 4). The study here will trace and identify any change in meaning (e.g. omission, addition, substitution, explicitation, implicitation etc.) or any problematic areas that can suggest shift in the translation. The reason that the starting point of search is shifts is because they are what should distinguish translation from non-translation and lead the search for universals of translation (Toury 2012 and Chesterman 2004). After identifying the translation shifts, the study will analyze and categorize the shifts and the different features they change in the original. The study will then identify what variations in the formal features and translational strategies associated with each shift and categorize them. The study will then look at patterns and regularities in the translation shifts and the translator's choices and strategies. This will help show the level of the generality of certain features in the

data and compare tendencies in the translations. This will also help in looking at the relationship between certain features or variables, most importantly the causal relationship, which can help make some claims about the triggers and effects of the shift.

The different types of deixis that will be analyzed is based on Levinson's (1983, 2006) theory of deixis, which draws upon some previous influential accounts of deixis such as Bühler (1935), Fillmore (1975) and Lyons (1977). Levinson (1983: 68-94) identifies five types of deixis:

- 1) **Personal deixis:** This concerns the identities of participants involved in the speech event. It is exemplified by personals which include personal pronouns (e.g. "I", "me" etc.), possessive pronouns (e.g. "mine" "yours" etc.) and possessive adjectives (e.g. "my", "his" etc.)
- 2) **Spatial deixis:** This type is the encoding of spatial location relative to the participant's location in the communicative event (Levinson 1983: 62). It is exemplified by demonstratives like "this" and "that", and adverbs like "here" and "there". It also deals with the proximal (i.e. near the speaker) or distal (i.e. away from the speaker) dimension.
- 3) **Temporal deixis:** This encodes the time at which the speech event takes place. It is manifested in tense (i.e. present, past and future) and time adverbs (e.g. "now", "then", "today", "yesterday", "tomorrow", "last", "next" etc.).
- 4) **Discourse (textual) deixis:** This is lexical or grammatical items which point or refer to some portion of the ongoing discourse (Fillmore 1975: 70), such as "this joke" in "You must have heard this joke". This type can be exemplified by expressions like "the later", "the former", "in the next paragraph" etc.
- 5) **Social deixis:** This is "that aspect of sentences which reflect or establish or are determined by certain realities of the social situation in which the speech act occurs" (Fillmore 1975: 76). It includes linguistic performance which be regarded as social acts (e.g. greetings and insults) and the various ways in which names, titles, and kinship terms differ in form and usage depending on the relationships among the speaker, the hearer, and the person addressed (ibid).

As to translation shifts, there is an underlying assumption here, which goes that regardless of the languages involved "TRANSLATION INVOLVES SHIFT" (Toury 2004: 21 emphasis in original), such as, among others, explicitation and implicitation (see Vinay and Darbelnet 1958/1995). Blum-Kulka (1986/2000) finds a particular type of explicitation motivated by shift in cohesion and coherence. Coherence as she (ibid: 299-300) defines is a covert potential meaning relationship between the text's parts, made overt by the reader through interpretation, while cohesion is an overt relationship holding between the text's parts, signalled by certain linguistic markers (ibid) (see Halliday and Hassan 1976: 4-9). She finds a rise in both covert and overt textual markers in translation, suggesting hence an increased level of cohesive explicitness in the target text compared to the original. This pattern of shift as she argues is the result of the process of interpretation performed on the source text meanings. Blum-Kulka takes her finding as evidence of explicitation tendency in translation: a translation tends to be more explicit than the corresponding non-translation (see Baker 1996: 180-81).

More recently, some scholars have refined the notion of explicitation and their findings have been taken as supporting evidence for the Blum-Kulka's hypothesis, such as Séguinot (1988), Øverås (1998), Olohan and Baker (2000), Pápai (2004), Klaudy (2001, 2006, 2009) and others. Séguinot (1988: 108) suggests that explicitation not only occurs when a translation is more redundant than its original, but also when a translation introduces something unexpressed in the original, or when a certain meaning implied or presupposed in original is explicitly stated in the translation. Séguinot analysed French-English and English-French translations and found a tendency to explicitation in both texts, manifested in the persistent addition of linking words, the improvement on topic-comment relationships, among others (109). She however related the explicitation trend in both texts to the editing strategies carried out by the revisers of the translations rather than to language constraints.

Olohan and Baker (2000) studied the optional use of the complementizer "that" after the two verbs "say" and "tell" in translated narratives taken from Translational English Corpus and corresponding non-translated from British National Corpus. They found that the optional complementizer is more frequent in the translated texts compared to the non-translated, and viewed it as an indication of greater explicitness in the translated texts. They however claim that this explicitation tendency is due to 'subconscious' choices made in the translation process. Abdul Fattah (2010), in a number of Arabic translated texts and comparable non-translated texts both produced by the same translators, finds that cohesive markers (e.g. conjunctions) are more common in the translated texts than the non-translated, confirming, as he argues, that explicitation is a translation-specific feature. Pápai (2004), using the ARRABONA corpus, which includes English-Hungarian parallel texts (both literary and non-literary) and comparable non-translated Hungarian texts, also found an explicitation tendency in the translated Hungarian texts compared to the non-translated. This tendency was manifested in the higher frequency of cohesive ties and also in the addition of linguistic and extra-linguistic information (e.g. conjunctions, demonstratives, cultural presupposed knowledge) and the attempts of resolving ambiguity. The ultimate goal of explicitation as Pápai claims is "the translator's conscious or subconscious effort to meet the target readers' expectations" (ibid: 145).

Klaudy (2001, 2006 and 2009) also extends the notion of explicitation to more than cohesive markers. Her new approach to explicitation (from Klaudy and Károly 2005) distinguishes first between explicitation and implicitation as two automatic or conscious translational strategies. As she argues, several translational operations can involve these two broad strategies. Examples of translational processes involving explicitation include lexical and grammatical addition or lexical specification, etc., while implicitation includes processes like lexical and grammatical omission or lexical generalization etc.

Klaudy also distinguishes between 'optional' and 'obligatory' shifts. Obligatory explicitations and implicitations are motivated by differences in linguistic systems between the source and target language, such as specification of grammatical gender when translating from English into Arabic or generalization of gender when translating in the other direction. Optional shifts, on the other hand, are the free choice of the translator; they could be motivated by differences in presuppositional knowledge or text building strategies rather than language differences, such as when explicitating the background information "the river" in "the river Maros" when translating

from Hungarian into English, or implicitating this information when translating in the other direction.

Saldanha (2008: 32-33) explains explicitation with reference to relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986) and audience design¹ (Bell 2001, Mason 2000). She (2008: 32-33) argues that explicitation is a conscious strategy which translators use based on their assumptions about the presupposed cognitive context of the target readers. She also suggests that the constant use of explicitation may improve the readability and ease the comprehension of the text. However, she argues that it is not the translation process *per se* which inevitably induces explicitation, but individual translators' realization of their role as intercultural mediators and their intention to help reader. Finally, Pym (2005, 2008) links explicitation to 'risk management': a process where translators try to manage the risk involved in their activities. He (2005: 41) argues that translation tends to involve greater risks (e.g. misinterpretation) than non-translation because it normally involves communication into a context with less shared knowledge. And where we find greater risks, we expect greater opportunities for risk reduction. For Pym, the proposed universals of translation, including explicitation, can be approached as 'risk-reduction measures' (2010: 165-66, see also Becher 2010).

Discussion of results

The comparison between the source text and the target translations reveals 643 shifts occurring in the translation of deixis (one instance per 38 words), in which the translator has intervened in the source text and made changes to the deictic features of the original story. The translation shifts in all deixis types point to a tendency to display greater or more explicit deictic information than the original. This will be explained below.

The study finds that translation shifts have involved either (i) addition of a new deictic, (ii) omission of a deictic, (iii) explicitation of a deictic or (iv) shifting from one deictic form to another (e.g. from "this" to "that", or "his" to "this"). These are presented below.

Table 1. Deictic Addition, Omission, Explicitation and Shifting in the Three Translations

	Type of shift	Haqi	Naseem	Murad	Total
1	adding a deictic	81	54	92	227
2	explicitating a deictic	29	20	25	74
3	omitting a deictic	69	43	18	130
4	shifting from one deictic form to another	45	39	67	151

¹According to Bell (1984, 2001), audience design is based on the idea that speakers or writers design the style (linguistic choices) of their communication based on, and in response to, the people they are addressing. This view has been adopted in translation studies: translators design their translations to confirm expectations of target readers and to be received as instances of the established practices of the target culture (Mason 2000: 18).

Total	224	156	202	582
-------	-----	-----	-----	-----

The data above show that 227 shifts (39% of total shifts) involve addition of a deictic, 74 (13%) involve explicitation of a deictic, 130 (22%) involve omission, and 148 (25%) involve shifting between deictics. The study argues that both addition and explicitation shifts here, which constitute 52% of the total shifts, point to an explicitation trend in the shifts: an overall tendency towards increasing the explicitness of the target text [+explicitness] in comparison with the original.

As Klaudy (1998/2009: 104-6) and Klaudy and Károly (2005: 15-16) discuss (see Section 2.5.1), standard transfer operations which involve explicitation can include, among others, (i) 'lexical addition': "when new meaningful elements appear in the TL text" and (ii) 'amplification from implicit to explicit status' (Nida 1964/2003). In other words, explicitation may occur when something expressed in the target text, which was not in the source, or when semantic elements carried implicitly in the source text are overtly expressed in the translation (cf. Nida 1964/2003 and Séguinot 1988). The study argues here that deictic addition and explicitation shifts can involve these two operations. The following paragraphs will illustrate this in greater detail.

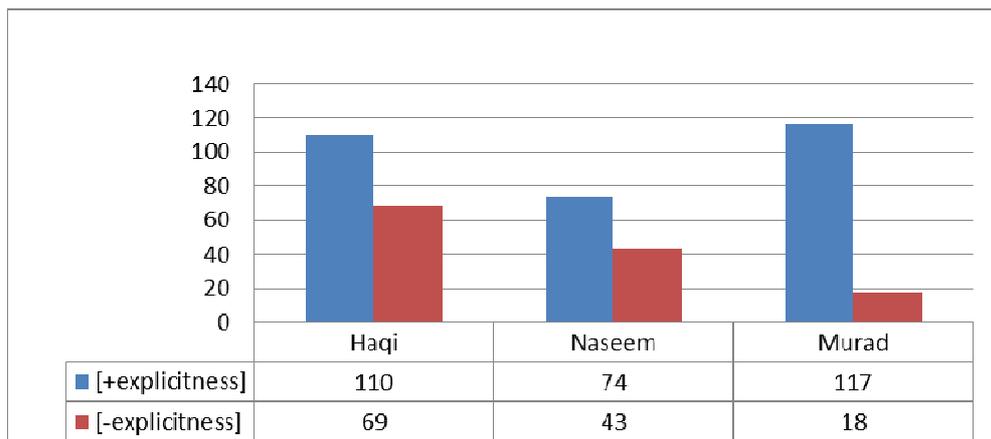
The addition of new deictics via translating can lead to target utterances that are more deictically anchored than the original. It can result in other words in target utterances which in comparison with the original reveal more deictic information, such as time and place settings, participants' roles and their social identity or the previous discourse. Although this added deictic information is not stated in the source text, it can easily be inferred from the context of situation of the original. Take for example the insertion by the translators of time deictics "that night" and "on the morrow" in the target utterance "Cathy sat up late that night, she had a world of things to order for the reception of her new friends on the morrow", or insertion of social deictics such as "Mr" or "Miss" before some characters' names in the translation, which all involves deictic information derived from context of situation. The same can apply here when shifting from unmarked to marked elements for proximity, person, or social status (e.g. from "the lantern" to "this/his lantern", or from "the two parties" to "Mr. and Mrs. Heathcliff") (see Halliday and Hasan 1976: 57-62 and Levinson 1983: 83), which adds more deictic information to the text. What is obvious from all of this are two things: (i) extra deictic information has been introduced into the target text, which is a form of lexical addition, and (ii) this information is available only from the context.

Also, explicating deictics involves change from the implicit to the explicit status. For example, when translating the place deictic "there" as "in the Heights", time deictic "now" as "after sending Hindley to college", person deictic "my landlord" as "Mr. Heathcliff", and discourse deictic "that" as "this promise", the translator makes explicit in the target text information which is available only implicitly from the source text. Accordingly, it may be argued that both addition and explicitation shifts, which involve either an addition or explicitation of knowledge derived from context, may make the translated text appear more explicit than its original.

Assuming that addition and explicitation shifts involve information gain and hence can be a marker of increased explicitness, omission shifts should suggest the opposite here. Omitting deictic elements via translating results in target utterances that are less deictically anchored than the original, which can then be argued to lead to target utterances that give less deictic knowledge than the original. In other words, it results in the loss or implicitation of some deictic knowledge of the original, and hence decreasing the explicitness [-explicitness] of the translation compared to the original. Shifting from one deictic form into another (e.g. from “there” to “here”, “that family” to “this family”, “then” to “now” etc.) might not on the other hand suggest any direct change in the level of explicitness since no deictic knowledge seems to appear or disappear from the text in comparison to the original. It rather indicates an adjustment in the spatial and temporal viewpoints and the psychological perspective adopted in the original than information gain or loss and hence explicitation or implicitation shift.

Based on the above assumptions, the translation shifts in deictics can be argued to point to three patterns: (i) increased explicitness, (ii) decreased explicitness, or (iii) no or negligible explicitness change in the translated text. Figure (1) shows the overall direction of shifts in the three translations.

Figure 1. Explicitness Change in the Three Translations



As the data in the figure indicate, there are more shifts towards explicating than implicating. As the data show this explicitation trend is manifested in each translation. The trend here gives evidence that an explicitation process is in operation in the corpus, supporting again Blum-Kulka’s (1986/2000) Explicitation Hypothesis: translations tend to be more explicit than their originals. Since the addition and explicitation shifts in Table (1) as pointed out involve deictic information inferable from the context of the situation, probably to remove or clarify any potential ambiguities (Pápai 2004, Saldanha 2008), the shifts here can be characterized as a free choice of the translator and related to her/his personal interpretive work (see ‘non-obligatory shifts’ Toury 2012: 80, or ‘optional shifts’ Klaudy 2009: 106). It could be that the translator was not sure about the reader’s willingness to process this contextual information while the interpretation process and therefore the explicitation might have sounded a better or safer option. Such a choice may likely be attributable to “the translator’s perception of their role as mediators between authors and audiences” (Saldanha 2011: 46).

The explicitation trend here may then suggest a text that demands less inferencing or less processing effort (Gutt 1998, 2000), on the part of target reader than the original. The explicitation of a deictic (such as the translation of “there” as “in the Heights”, “this” as “these words” and “her companion” as “Heathcliff” etc.) for instance spells out the situational or contextual meaning of the deictic which the reader normally needs to infer to build a coherent interpretation of the text (Blum-Kulka 2000: 308). Shifting from elements neutral as to the spatial location and identity of participants to element marked for such features suggests extra deictic information being added to the target text, taking readers by the hand in finding the intended referent. Take an example the translation of “the book” into “that book” in Mr. Lockwood’s utterance “She answered, ensconcing herself in a chair, with a candle, and the long book open before her...”, or “the invitation” as “his invitation” in his utterance “... and I think that circumstance determined me to accept the invitation”. The same applies here when inserting new temporal or social deictic elements into the text, which all suggests that readers are repositioned in the translation as needing to be helped and given more information as to the spatial and temporal location of speakers and referents, and their potential roles and social identity.

Conclusion

The data on the shifts suggest a strong preference for explicating contextual deictic information likely to remove or resolve any potential ambiguities and ultimately meet the audience’s expectations (Pápai 2004). Such a translational behaviour, which may result in a translation product that is ‘simpler’ and ‘flatter’ than the original (Laviosa-Braithwaite 1996, Pym 2010), may reflect efforts during the translation process to accommodate the text to the language and culture of the target reader. The shifts in other words may be more attributable to the translator’s interpretive position on the code user’s intentions, i.e. the text’s ‘intentionality’, than being inherent in the ‘code’ itself (cf. Bell 1991), i.e. linguistic differences between the two languages.

References

- Abdul Fattah, A. 2010. A Corpus-based Study of Conjunctive Explicitation in Arabic Translated and Non-translated Texts Written by the Same Translators/Authors. Ph.D. thesis, The University of Manchester.
- Abdulwahab, A. 2012. Necessities of Pragmatic explicitation in Translating English Short Stories into Arabic. *Adab Al-rafidayn*, (16): 1-34.
- Baker, M. 2000. Towards a Methodology for Investigating the Style of a Literary Translator. *Target* 12 (2): 241-266.
- Bell, T. 1991. *Translation and Translating: Theory and Practice*. London: Longman.
- Bell, A. 2001. Back in Style: Reworking Audience Design. In: Eckert, P. and J. Rickford, eds. *Style and Sociolinguistic Variation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.139-169.
- Blum-Kulka, S. 1986/2000. Shifts of Cohesion and Coherence in Translation. In: L. Venuti, ed. *The Translation Studies Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, pp.298-313.
- Brontë, E. 1967. *Wuthering Heights*. London: Zodiac press.
- Gutt, E.-A. 1991/2000. *Translation and Relevance: Cognition and context*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

- Gutt, E.-A. 1998. Pragmatic Aspects of Translation: Some Relevance-Theory Observations. In: L. Hickey, ed. *The Pragmatics of Translation*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, pp.41-53.
- Halliday, M. and Hasan, R. 1976. *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- Hickey, L. ed., 1998. *The Pragmatics of Translation*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Klaudy, K. 2009. Explicitation. In: Baker, M. and G. Saldanha, eds. *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies, 2nd ed.* London: Routledge, pp.80-84.
- Klaudy, K., and Károly, K. 2005. Implication in Translation: Empirical Evidence for Operational Asymmetry in Translation. *Across Languages and Cultures*, 6 (1): 13-28.
- Levinson, S. 1983. *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Laviosa-Braithwaite, S. 1996. *The English Comparable Corpus (ECC): A Resource and a Methodology for the Empirical Study of Translation*. Ph.D. thesis, UMIST.
- Levý, J. 2011. *The Art of Translation*, translated by Patrick Corness. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Lyons, J. 1995. *Linguistic Semantics: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nida, E. 1964/2003. *Toward a Science of Translating*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- Olohan, M., and Baker, M. 2000. Reporting That in Translated English: Evidence for Subconscious Processes of Explicitation? *Across Languages and Cultures* 1 (2): 141-158.
- Pápai, V. 2004. Explicitation: A Universal of Translated Text? In: Mauranen, A. and P. Kujamäki, eds. *Translation Universals: Do They Exist?* Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp.143-164.
- Pym, A. 2005. Explaining Explicitation. In: Károly, K. and F. Ágota, eds. *New trends in Translation Studies: In Honour of Kinga Klaudy*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, pp.29-45.
- Pym, A. 2008. On Toury's Laws of How Translators Translate. In: Pym, A., Shlesinger, M., and Simeoni, D., eds., *Beyond Descriptive Translation Studies*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp.311-328.
- Saldanha, G. 2008. Explicitation Revisited: Bringing the Reader into the Picture. *trans-kom*, 1 (10): 20-35.
- Saldanha, G. 2011. Translator's Style. *The Translator*, 17 (1): 25-50.
- Séguinot, C. 1988. Pragmatics and the Explicitation Hypothesis. *TTR: Traduction, Terminologie, Rédaction* 1 (2): 106-113.
- Toury, G. 1995/2012. *Descriptive Translation Studies-and beyond*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.