



Explicitation in Translation: Culture-Specific Items from Persian into English

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Abstract. Investigating the concept of explicitation has been the center of attention to many scholars recent years. A lot of studies have been carried out dealing with the exploitation of explicitation on the culture-specific items on the translation of English source text into Persian. However, few studies has been carried out investigating such culture-specific items on Persian source text translated into English. The present article aims at providing sufficient data to cover the identification and classification of different kinds of culture-specific items exploited in the translation of a Persian novel entitled Boof-e Koor by Hedayat, S. (1937) and its translated version into English The Blind Owl by Bashiri, I. (1974). Its peripheral objective is also identifying the most frequent strategy adopted to explicitate the culture-specific items in the translation of the above mentioned novel. To this end, the study adapts a conceptual framework incorporating Klaudy's (2008) typology of explicitation entailing obligatory ,optional ,pragmatic and translation-inherent explicitation as well as Newmark's (2010) classifications of culture-specific items comprising of ecology, public life, social life, personal life, customs and pursuits and private passions. The Findings of this study show culture items were more translated by adopting pragmatic explicitation. This study introduces explicitation as applicable strategies for translating culture-specific items to translator.

Keywords: Explicitation, culture-specific items, translation

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of 'explicitation' is generally understood as 'the spelling out of information which is otherwise implicit in the source text'. The notions of 'explicit' and 'implicit' are thus central in understanding the terms of explicitation and implicitation. Explicitation is a translation feature which has been received a lot of attention in the studies of translation. It has been first introduced by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) who defined it as the method of introducing into the target language details which are implicit in the source language, flowing Vinay and Darbelnet, Blum-Kulka (1986) proposed her Explicitation hypothesis, which posits that translations are generally more explicit than their respective source texts, i.e. "explicitation is a universal strategy inherent in the process of language mediation" (p.266). Klaudy (2004) considers explicitation as the act of explicating the information in the target text, which is implicit in the source text. Translating culture-specific items in literary translations seems to be one of the most challenging tasks to be performed by a translator. Translation scholars have introduced many strategies for translating culture-specific items among which explicitation is the most important one.

Culture-specific items are words and phrases conditioned by the cultural diversity. Newmark (1998) described six "cultural categories" and their sub-categories. Culture-specific items have been discussed and categorized by many scholars such as Baker, Newmar; Espindola; Gambier and Aixela. (Baker 1992: 21; Newmark 2010: 173; Espindola 2006:49-50; Gambier 2004: 159; Aixela 1997: 59).

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Culture-specific items in the present study are categorized based on Newmark (2010) classification. The category he proposed for classifying foreign cultural words entails six sub-categories: Ecology, public life, social life, personal life, customs and pursuits, private passions.

Many studies have been carried out considering the notion of explicitation, however, types of explicitation used in the translation of culture-specific items have not been investigated thoroughly in novels translated from Persian into English. The aim of the present study is to investigate the explicitation in the translation of culture-specific items in a Persian novel entitled *Boof-e Koor* and its English translated version *The Blind Owl*.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Having the above objectives in mind, the following research questions are proposed:

1. What types of explicitation are more dominantly employed in the translation of culture-specific items in the selected novel from Persian into English?
2. What is the most frequent strategy adopted to explicitate the culture-specific items in translating the selected novels from Persian into English?

3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for the present study is based on the six categories suggested by Newmark (2010) for classifying foreign culture-specific items. These six categories are: ecology, public life, social life, personal life, customs & pursuits and Private passions. For exploring explicitation in a Persian – English corpus, four chapters from the predetermined novel randomly selected are used. The categorization of culture-specific items in this study is based on the Newmark, (2010) categorization. These categories are ecology, public life, social life, personal life, customs & pursuits and Private passions.

Ecology encompasses cultural-specific items referring to geological and geographical environment. Public life refers to politics, law and government. Social life includes economy, occupations, social welfare, health and education. Personal life encompasses food, clothing and housing. Customs and pursuits refer to various body language signs that are specific to particular culture and Private passions include religion, music, poetry and their different social organizations.

The present study adopts the typology of explicating shifts proposed by Klaudy (2008).

In her typology, which has become widely accepted in the translation studies literature, Klaudy distinguishes between the following four kinds of explicitation in translation:

Obligatory explicitation: caused by lexicogrammatical differences between the source language and the target language.

Optional explicitation: motivated by differences in stylistic preferences between source language and target language.

Pragmatic explicitation: motivated by differences in cultural and world knowledge shared by members of the source and target language communities; and.

Translation-inherent explicitation: caused by “the nature of the translation process itself” (Klaudy 2008, p.107).

4. PROCEDURE

The procedures for identifying, extracting and classifying the desired data are carried out manually. At first the selected novel is carefully read for identifying the culture-specific items being explicitated.

In this study, following Newmark's (2010) category, 25 samples of CSIs were selected. The selected units of translation are coupled with their corresponding target texts. The comparison is carried out for any mismatches, followed by identifying the desired shifts.

The identified incidents of explicitation are analyzed and classified according to Klaudy's typology of explicitation for investigating type of explicitation (optional and pragmatic) most frequently used in translation cultural items.

As part of the contrastive-linguistic approach, the researcher relies on Klaudy's (2008) typology of explicitation optional and pragmatic.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

25 items of this novel (ST) "Boof-e Koor" were selected from the texts in both Persian (source text) and English (target text). They were selected from the beginning, amidst and final part of this novel.

Sample 1

ST	نگاهم به بالای رف افتاد.
TT	The topmost the shelves on the wall
Type of Explicitation :optional	
Type of CSIs: personal life	

Sample 2

ST	فقيه
TT	An interpreter of the law
Type of Explicitation :pragmatic	
Type of CSIs: public life	

Sample 3

ST	در محمدیه بودم.
TT	I was in the Mohammad square.
Type of Explicitation :optional	
Type of CSIs: ecology	

Sample 4

ST	وضو
TT	The ceremonial washing of the body
Type of Explicitation :translation -inherent	
Type of CSIs: private passion	

Sample 4

ST	جگرکی
TT	A cooked-meat vendor
Type of Explicitation :optional	
Type of CSIs: social life	

Table 1. Percentage of different types of explicitation adopted to explicitate culture-specific items

Classification of CSIs	Type of Explicitation	
	Optional	Pragmatic
Social items	33%	67%
Public items	-	100%
Personal items	62.5%	37.5%
Ecology items	47%	53%
Private items	25%	75%

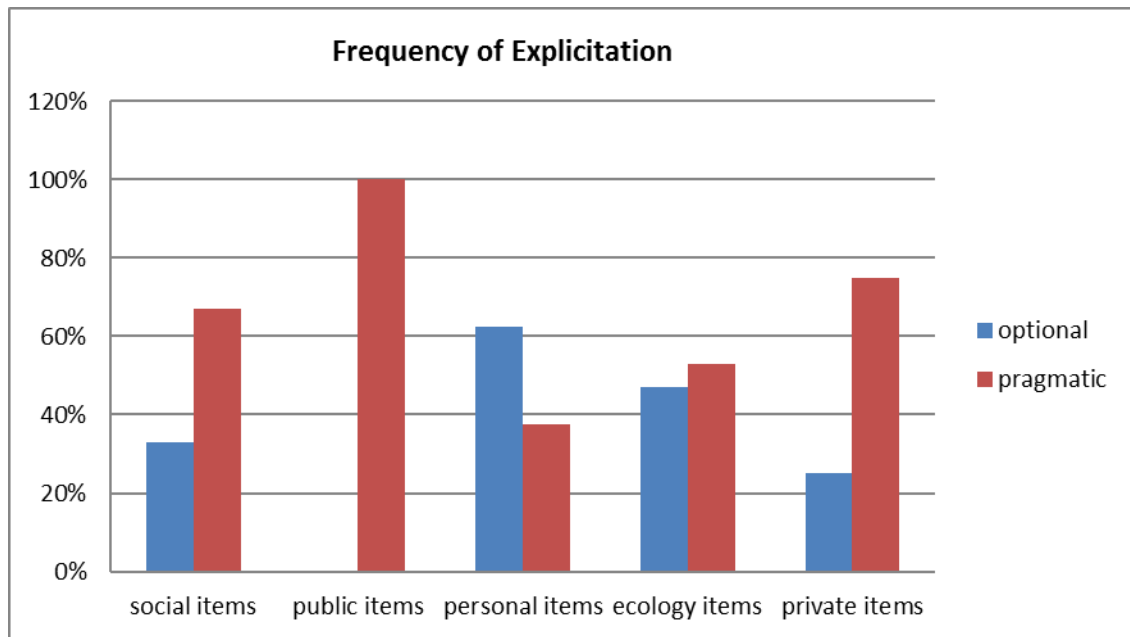


Figure 1. Frequencies of optional and pragmatic types of explication exploited in the translation of selected source text.

6. CONCLUSION

Analyzing the accumulated data in the present study, it was found that the translator distinctly applied explication in translation of amidst from Persian into English. Overall, among different types of explication exploited in the translation of culture-specific items in the selected novel, pragmatic explication were used more frequently among others.

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