THE STUDY OF SIMPLIFICATION AND EXPLICITATION TECHNIQUES IN KHALED HOSSEINI'S "A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS"

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Abstract: Teaching and learning strategies help facilitate teaching and learning. Among them, simplification and explicitation strategies are those which help transferring the meaning to the learners and readers of a translated text. The aim of this study was to investigate explicitation and simplification in Persian translation of novel of Khaled Hosseini's "A Thousand Splendid Suns". The study also attempted to find out frequencies of simplification and explicitation techniques used by the translators in translating the novel. To do so, 359 sentences out of 6000 sentences in original text were selected by systematic random sampling procedure. Then the percentage and total sums of each one of the strategies were calculated. The result showed that both translators used simplification and explicitation techniques significantly in their translation whereas Saadvandian, the first translator, significantly applied more simplification techniques in comparison with Ghabrai, the second translator. However, no significant difference was found between translators in the application of explicitation techniques. The study implies that these two translation strategies were fully familiar for the translators as both translators used them significantly to make the translation more understandable to the readers.

INTRODUCTION

The notion of translation studies searching for regularities and universal laws is not new. Toury (1995) has been the famous disciple for universal laws of translation who presented this as a crucial burden of descriptive translation studies. Similarly, more

recently Chesterman (2000) has wished to see translation studies as a rigorously scientific pursuit, seeking generalizations like any other science. Universals have a long lasting way in knowledge of language as linguistic and cognitive sight. One of the innate abilities of human beings is language. And language universals are equalized with the aspects of language that are one of the human's genetic attributes. Translation Universals are determined as "Universal features of translation that are features which typically occur in translated texts rather than original utterances and which are not the result of interferences from specific linguistic systems"(Baker, 1993:243). Baker (1993) mentioned translation Universals items as: explicitation, disambiguation, simplification, conventionalization, avoidance of repetition, exaggeration of features of the target language and manifestations of the so-called 'third code'.

Explicitation has been seen as an inherent feature of the process of translation, e.g., by Blum-Kulka (1986), who first put forward the so-called explicitation hypothesis "according to which translations are always longer than the originals, regardless of the languages, genres and registers concerned" (Klaudy, 1998:84). Explicitation has also been considered in the context of the strategies used by both non-professional and professional translators (Laviosa-Braithwaite, 1996). Simplification is "the idea that translators subconsciously simplify the language or message or both" (Baker, 1996:181). In other words, the translator is thought to make the text more accessible for the reader by simplifying the language and/or message (Baker, 1996).

In the scope of translation and specifically in novels translation there have been many problems; for example, the translators themselves are not well aware of using suitable and appropriate strategies of features in translation of novels. In other hand, the inexact translation of a word especially titles, may result in serious problems for readers as receivers of the translation and has impact on their desire to read or reject the novel. Moreover, it may confuse the reader in selecting the appropriate translation of the novel.

The first aim of this study was to find out the frequencies of explicitation and simplification strategies according to Baker's (1993) hypotheses for explicitation and Laviosa's (2002) hypotheses for simplification techniques. Moreover, the study tried to identify if these two techniques were used significantly by the translators in translating novels from English into Persian. The findings of this study may pave the way for translators to draw their attention to different strategies of how to confront the possible problems posed by different languages and cultures. Therefore, the study aims at finding if the translators used simplification and explicitaion techniques significantly in their

translations. Furthermore, it seeks to explore any significant difference between two translators in application of simplification and explicitation techniques.

Translation history is the same as history of man. People needed to communicate with different languages, although some meanings might be conveyed through body language and employ onomatopoeic signals to all languages for the meaningful communication to happen. Indeed, translation changed into a science in the middle of the twentieth century when structural linguists highlighted the importance of contrastive analysis in foreign languages. Nida in her book (1964), Toward a Science of Translation, has also emphasized the significance of translation. Munday (1998) says translation process requires the translator to make some modifications in the original language and change it into the intended target text language. Translation has always been a controversial issue throughout the history of mankind. Due to the emergence of various theories, proposed by different theoreticians in the field, the history of translation has always been witnessing dramatic changes.

Based on some researches and random observation, many translation researchers have mentioned characteristics in translated texts "which typically occur in translated texts rather than original utterances and not the result of interference from specific linguistic systems"(Baker, 1993:243). These universal features of translation as translation specific, rather than culture or language specific features, were first distributed by Baker (1993:243-247) as follows: a) "Explicitation, b) Disambiguation and simplification, c) Textual conventionality in translated novels and interpreting, d) A tendency to avoid repetition present in the source text, e) A tendency to exaggerate features of the target language, and f) Specific distribution of lexical items in translated texts vis-a vis source texts and original texts in the target language".

In accordance with baker (1993:246), universal features like these can be seen as "a product of constraints which are inherent in the translation process itself", and this accounts for the fact that they are universal. Kruger (1997) states that they do not differ in different cultures. Just a brief review of previously-conducted study that led to the examination of these characteristics as being translation universals makes him classify some of these characteristics together (Krunger, 1997:137) and put them in three separate classifications of "universals", that is a penchant towards explicitation (a & e above), penchant towards disambiguation (b & d above), and a tendency towards conventionalization (c & f above). In his idea, all the early corpus-based translation study could be affiliated under these topics.

The present study tried to investigate explicitation and simplification universals. Thus, these two techniques will be briefly introduced. The term 'explicitation' was first raised in Vinay and Darbelnet's paper (1958). They explain explicitation as "the process of introducing information into the target language which is present only implicitly in the source language, but which can be derived from the context or the situation" (Vinay and Darbelnet's, 1958). Explicitation was defined as "the method and procedure of clarifying information that is unclear in the source text and in the target text" (Klaudy, 2001). It is the verbalization of information that the hearers and readers can comprehend if it were not verbalized. Considering the translation-related techniques, explicitation happens whenever translators select from a set of availabilities, all suitable ones in the target language and their selections are typically clearer (Klaudy and Karoly, 2007). This strategy can be discovered in translation texts only in reference to non-translated ones.

Simplification according to Petrilli (1992) has been absolutely conceptualized within a broader debate introduced by Baker (1993, 1995, 1996, 1998) which has concentrated on the entity of general characteristics of translation, their arrangement either as overlapping or discrete things, and the practicality of examining their plausibility. Baker (1996:181-182) explains simplification uncertainly as "tendency to simplify the language used in translation". To put it another way, the translator seeks to make conditions "better for reader (but not necessarily more explicit)". Toury (1995:270) articulates that in the case the destination text has an inferior message compared to the original one, it is due to the fact that the confused message in the original has been clarified in the procedure of translation. Baker (1992) expresses that an expression or word whose meaning is not vital to comprehension of text should not be translated as it might distract the reader with lengthy explanations. Deleting words, parts or phrases of the original text is the most common way of making texts simple in translation.

METHOD

The text examined in this study was a typical English literary text; namely, A Thousand Splendid Suns of Khaled Hoseini (2007), the book has been translated into Persian by numerous translators and there are various translations at hand. Its Persian translations including Gabrai (2007) and Saadvandian (2008) were selected as they were the most successful translations and best sellers. A Thousand Splendid Suns of Khaled Hoseini (2007) was selected for analysis because it is a long story and analyzing the sentences based on research questions is possible; moreover, it has different translations and the researcher can compare the techniques of different translators.

The first step taken to start the study was to select 359 sentences from 6000 sentences in original text by systematic random sampling procedure in order to be compared and contrasted with their translation with regard to the application of simplification and explicitation. The sample size was selected from Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table for a given population for easy reference. After collecting data, the Persian translations were compared with their English versions to determine the strategies adopted for their translation with regard to Baker's (1993) explicitation techniques and Laviosa's (1998) simplification techniques. After that, the percentage of each strategy and their total were calculated. To analyze data, descriptive statistics (mean and frequency) along with binominal and Mann-whitney U test as inferential statistics were used.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

To answer the first research question "Do translators used simplification and explicitation techniques significantly in their translations?", the researcher applied both descriptive and inferential statistics. following tables and figures show the frequency of simplification and explicitationstrategies applied by each one of the translators and its significance if any.

Frequency of simplification technique

The following figure and table visualize the findings.

Table 1. Distribution of frequency of overall simplification techniques

Translator		Total
Ghabrai	Saadvandian	
249	265	514
69.35%	73.81%	73.85%

As shown in Table 1, simplification techniques in general were used 514 times by both translators. Ghabrai used simplification techniques in the translation of 249 sentences equal to 69.35% of all analyzed sentences whereas the second translator, Saadvandian, applied simplification techniques in the translation of 265 sentences equal to 73.81% of overall 359 sentences analyzed in the study. As frequencies show both translators used simplification technique and the second one, Saadvandian, used it more frequently. To ensure the application of simplification techniques by both translators is statistically significant, binominal test has been used. According to this test, if a technique is used in 60% of the analyzed text, then it can be implied that the technique is used significantly by the translator.

The statistical hypothesis for the first translator, Ghabrai, is

$$\begin{cases} H_0: \ P \leq .60 \\ H_1: P > .60 \end{cases}$$

Table 2 shows the results of binominal test for the application of simplification techniques by the first translator to test the hypothesis.

Table 2. Binominal test for the application of simplification techniques by Ghabrai

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (1-tailed)
SIM	Group 1	yes	249	0.694	0.60	0.000
	Group 2	no	110	0.306		
	Total		359	1		

Yes= number of sentences (out of 359) in which simplification technique was used; No= number of sentences (out of 359) in which simplification technique was not used

According to the table 2, simplification techniques were used in the 69.2% of the sentences translated by the first translator, Ghabrai. Moreover, the table found this percentage significant as P< 0.05 (sig.= 0.000); therefore, null hypothesis was rejected and the other hypothesis was confirmed. Since 69% of the data was in "YES" group (249 sentences) and 30% in "NO" group (110 sentences), it can be concluded with 95% certainty that the first translator used simplification techniques significantly. The statistical hypothesis for the second translator, Saadvandian, is:

$$\begin{cases} H_0: \ P \leq .60 \\ H_1: P > .60 \end{cases}$$

Table 3. Binominal test for the application of simplification techniques by Saadvandian

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (1-tailed)
SIM	Group 1	Yes	265	0.738	0.60	0.000
	Group 2	No	94	0.262		
	Total		359	1		

Yes= number of sentences (out of 359) in which simplification technique was used; No= number of sentences (out of 359) in which simplification technique was not used

According to the table 3, the second translator, Saadvandian, applied simplification techniques in the translation of 73% of 359 sentences which were analyzed in the current study. Moreover, the table found this percentage significant as P< 0.05 (sig.= 0.000); therefore, null hypothesis was rejected. Since 73% of the data was in "YES" group (265 sentences) and 26% in "NO" group (94 sentences), it can be concluded with 95% certainty that the second translator used simplification techniques significantly.

Frequency of explicitation technique

As depicted in Table 4, explicitation strategies were used 182 times in general by both translators. It means that 26.14% of sentences translated by the application of explicitation. The first translator, Ghabrai, translated 78 out of overall 359 sentences by using techniques of explicitation that is equal to 21.72% of all analyzed sentences but the second translator, Saadvandian, used these techniques in the translation of 104 sentences equal to 28.96% all analyzed sentences. As it is seen, both translators used explicitation technique and Saadvandian used it more frequently than Ghabrai.

Table 4. Distribution of explicitation technique

Translator		Total
Ghabrai	Saadvandian	
78	104	182
21.72%	28.96%	26.14%

To find out if the application of explicitation technique by both translators is statistically significant, binominal test was run again.

The statistical hypothesis for the first translator, Ghabrai, is:

$$\begin{cases} \textbf{H}_0\text{: } \textbf{P} \le \textbf{.60} \\ \textbf{H}_1\text{ : P > .60} \end{cases}$$

Table 5. Binominal test for the application of explicitation techniques by Ghabrai

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (1-tailed)
SIM	Group 1	Yes	78	0.217		
	Group 2	No	281	0.783	0.60	0.000
	Total		359	1		

Yes= number of sentences (out of 359) in which explicitation technique was used; No= number of sentences (out of 359) in which explicitation technique was not used

As Table 5 shows, the first translator, Ghabrai, applied explicitation techniques in the translation of 21.7% of 359 sentences which were analyzed in the current study. Moreover, this percentage was found significant as P< 0.05 (sig. = 0.000); therefore, Null hypothesis was rejected and the other hypothesis was confirmed. Since 22% of data was in "Yes" group (78 sentences) and 78% of data (281 sentences) was in "No" group, it can be concluded with 95% certainty that the first translator used explicitation techniques significantly.

The statistical hypothesis for the second translator, Saadvandian, is:

$$\begin{cases} H_0: P \le .60 \\ H_1 : P > .60 \end{cases}$$

As the following table (6) reveals, the second translator, Saadvandian, applied explicitation techniques in the translation of 29.1% of 359 sentences which were analyzed in the current study. Moreover, Table 6 found this percentage significant as P< 0.05 (sig.= 0.000); therefore, Null hypothesis was rejected. Since 28.9% of data was in "Yes" group (104 sentences) and 71% of data (254 sentences) was in "No" group, it can be concluded with 95% certainty that the second translator used explicitation techniques significantly.

Table 6. Binominal test for the application of explicitation techniques by Saadvandian

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (1-tailed)
SIM	Group 1	Yes	104	0.291		
	Group 2	No	254	0.709	0.60	0.000
	Total		359	1		

Yes= number of sentences (out of 359) in which explicitation technique was used; No= number of sentences (out of 359) in which explicitation technique was not used

The statistics done up to here made it clear that both translators used simplification and explicitaion techniques significantly.

To answer the second research question"Is there any significant difference between two translators in application of simplification and explication techniques?", the researcher used inferential statistics. According to Table 1 and 4, Saadvandian used more simplification and explicitation techniques in comparison with Ghabrai, the first translator. Man-Whitney test was used to find if this difference is significant or not. The statistical hypothesis is:

H0: There is no significant difference between the application of simplification techniques by two translators of A Thousand Splendid Suns.

H1: There is a significant difference between the application of simplification techniques by two translators of A Thousand Splendid Suns.

Table 7. Mann-Whitney test for differences in the application of simplification technique between two translators

Sig	Mean rank	number	translators
0.186	351.50	359	GH
	367.50	359	SA

As Table 7 indicates, P value for differences between two translators in the application of simplification technique is 0.186, that is higher than the significance level (P< 0.05). Therefore, Null hypothesis was accepted with 95% certainty, that is, we can state that there is no significant difference between two translators in the application of simplification technique. It means that Ghabrai and Saadvandian used explicitation techniques similarly.

The same procedure was repeated to find if there is any significant difference among two translators in the application of explicitation technique. The statistical hypothesis is:

H0: There is no significant difference between the application of simplification techniques by two translators of A Thousand Splendid Suns.

H1: There is a significant difference between the application of simplification techniques by two translators of A Thousand Splendid Suns.

Table 8. Mann-Whitney test for differences in the application of explicitation technique between two translators

Sig	Mean rank	number	translators
0.024	345.89	359	GH
	372.15	359	SA

As Table 8 indicates, P value for differences between two translators in the application of explicitation technique is 0.024, that is lower than the significance level (P< 0.05). Therefore, Null hypothesis was rejected with 95% certainty, that is there is a significant difference between two translators in the application of explicitation technique. It means that the second translator, Saadvandian, used explicitation techniques more frequently than the first translator, Ghabrai.

Discussions

As it was stated in findings, Saadvandian used more simplification and explicitation techniques in comparison with Ghebrai, because Saadvandian used simplification techniques 265 times while Ghabrai used these techniques 249 times and this difference was found statistically significant. Regarding explicitation techniques, again, Saadvandian used them 104 times whereas Ghaabrai used them 78 times and again this difference was found statistically significant. The redundancy in explicitation was expressed by a rise in the level of cohesive explicitness in the TL text. It can be a kind of pragmatic explicitation as a universal translation, therefore maximum effect with minimum effort on these translations was illustrated (Minimax Strategy; cf. (Levy, 2000).

Arrojo argues that any regularity identified in translation "will reflect the interests of a certain translation specialist, or a research group, at a certain time, in a certain context" (Chesterman, 2000). But the results of this research cannot be generalized to all Persian translations. Therefore, the more research in this area is necessary.

The goal of use of universals is "to discover more and more facets of the nature of translated text and translating and raise awareness about the complex, reciprocal relationship that links language to culture" (Laviosa, 2002:77). Therefore, one of the most helpful applications of such researches is for describing how translators tend to develop over time and raises the translator's awareness of translation decisions and strategies and finally as Chesterman (2000) mentions, it should lead to a better understanding of how to create translations that have more desired effects.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

Universals of translation are linguistic features which "typically occur in translated rather than original utterances" and are "thought to be independent of the influence of the specific language pairs involved in the process of translation" (Baker, 1993:243). Baker's notion of explicitation, that is "an overall tendency to spell things out rather than leave them implicit in translation" (Baker 1996:180). They find that translations tend to use more syntactic markers than non-translations. In terms of simplification, Laviosa identifies four "core patterns of lexical use" (1998:565): a)Translated texts have a relatively lower percentage of content words versus grammatical words (i.e. their lexical density is lower); b) The proportion of high frequency words versus lower frequency words is relatively higher in translated texts; c)The list head of a corpus of translated text accounts for a larger area of the corpus (i.e. the most frequent words are repeated more often); d) The list head of translated texts contains fewer lemmas.

The research for translation universals is useful only if the data and methods we employ are adequate for the purpose. (Mauranen, 2004). Chesterman (2000, 2004) views the research for translation universals as one way in which descriptive scholars propose and look for generalizations about translation. The aim of this research was to survey the techniques of Simplification (based on Laviosa's hypotheses) and explicitation (based on Baker's view) as two known universals in Persian translation of novel of Khaled Hosseini's A thousand splendid suns. The results obtained in the research may pave the way for translators to draw their attention to different strategies of how to deal with the possible problems posed by different languages and cultures. In the current study, the researcher focused on use of high frequency items, range of vocabulary, ratio of lexical to running words, Sentence length, syntactic simplification technique (the complex structures are simplified by changing non-finite clauses into finite ones), stylistic simplification technique (e.g. breaking down long sentences, reducing or omitting repetitions or redundant information and splitting sentences or reframing from complex subordinations), and technique of explicitation when a target text is more redundant than the source text.

After analyzing the data, the results showed that the translators used explicitation and simplification techniques significantly. Furthermore, it was found that Saadvandian significantly applied more simplification techniques in comparison with Ghabrai, the first translator. However, no significant difference was found between translators in application of explicitation strategies.

The outcomes of this research are the data of investigation, usually assumed to be products of a particular translation process (in this case, translation of novels from English

to Persian). In the classroom, the students can use this result as a hypothesis in the Persian translations and survey such researches to compare the outcomes. Therefore, trainee translators can find the patterns of translational behavior revealed by professionals. If we accept that "Universals are absolute; translation is probabilistic" (Frawley, 1984:167); then the outcomes of this research can happen more or less in other researches in Persian translation. However, researchers should consider the differences between styles of translators.

The goal of use of universals is "to discover more and more facets of the nature of translated text and translating and raise awareness about the complex, reciprocal relationship that links language to culture" (Laviosa, 2002:77). Therefore, one of the most helpful applications of such researches is for describing how translators tend to develop over time and raises the translator's awareness of translation decisions and strategies and finally as Chesterman (2000) mentions, it should lead to a better understanding of how to create translations that have more desired effects.

In the area of universals, researcher can also work with different types of e-corpora: parallel corpora in bilingual (or multilingual), include source texts and their translations; comparable corpora in monolingual include translated and non-translated texts. So, to find out the most norms of Persian translation, the researchers must use large corpus for investigate, in groups and team in different universities to present common features of Persian translation.

All in all, the researchers can examine the main features and achievements of corpus-based Descriptive Translation Studies and then focus on the integration of corpus-based description into translator training and translation quality assessment, with particular reference to the role played by universals in applied research carried out in the translation classroom. Todays, greater emphasis is on exploring the cognitive factors that might account for regularities of translational behavior, Moreover, working in universals and finding more common features in translation can help the idea of a universal translator- a device that can seamlessly translate between languages.

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