

An Analysis of Explicatures in English -Arabic Subtitles: The Case of *Friends* on Netflix^(*)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33806/ijaes.v24i2.625>

Sukayna Ali
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia
The University of Jordan, Jordan
Wan Rose Eliza Abdul Rahman
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia
Yean Fun Chow
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

Received: 22.12.2023

Accepted: 21.3.2024

Published: 6.6.2024

Abstract: This descriptive study examines the presence of explicatures in subtitling, specifically focusing on the prioritization of various areas of explicatures in English-Arabic subtitles of the American sitcom *Friends* on Netflix. Explicatures, as defined by Sperber and Wilson in 1986, pertain to the developments made by communicators to the explicit content of their statements. Drawing from Relevance Theory (1986) and Huang's (2014) explicature classifications, this study delves into explicatures present in Arabic subtitles of the first season of *Friends*. The corpus comprises 631 subtitles identified as explicatures, categorized according to the five areas outlined in Huang's typology. The findings indicate the presence of all five areas of explicatures in the analyzed subtitles, albeit with inconsistent coverage by the subtitler. Notably, disambiguation emerged as the most commonly addressed area, whereas saturation received the least attention.

Keywords: corpus, explicatures, relevance theory, subtitling

1. Introduction

The world has seen unprecedented growth in the consumption of audiovisual content over the last few decades (Bogucki 2020: 1). Digital life has become a ubiquitous reality, with audiovisual works expanding and experiencing a boom like never before. Video streaming platforms have been at the forefront of elevating audiovisual materials to new heights. This can be ascribed to a multitude of factors, with the foremost being the practice of releasing complete seasons of television programs in one go, thereby enabling audiences to binge a whole season rather than adhering to a daily broadcast schedule on traditional television channels.

Given the exponential growth of audiovisual communication, the concurrent surge in the volume of audiovisual translation is unsurprising. To meet the high demand for audiovisual works, there was a pressing need for this content to be globally translated. As a result, audiovisual translation has

become not only a practice for translating audiovisual content from one language to another but also one of the most dynamic branches of translation studies (Diaz-Cintas 2009; Agost 2011; Peromingo, Martin and Rianza 2014; Pérez-Escudero 2018; Bogucki 2020).

Being one of the most common techniques of audiovisual translation, subtitling has also seen remarkable progress in the last decades. It is receiving increased attention in research due to its importance in making many works accessible to a wider audience, including people who speak different languages, as well as the deaf and hard of hearing (Al-Abbas and Haider 2021:4).

It is taken for granted that understanding communication, whether in real life or in films, necessitates the acquisition of what aids in obtaining both explicit and implied meaning (Dessilla 2012; Youssef 2024). To aid the target audience's comprehension of the audiovisual work, the subtitler must ensure that the subtitled utterances are explicit enough to be deciphered by the audience (Erguvana 2015: 41-44). To guarantee this, translators/subtitlers need to look for pragmatic processes to explicate and enrich the meaning, resulting in the rendition of 'explicatures' (Murtisari 2013; Jarrah and Al-Jarrah 2023).

Subtitlers often try to make subtitles explicit in an effort to reduce subtitling deficiencies or failures and help target viewers overcome any comprehension hurdles (Erguvana 2015). According to Baker (1993, 2019), explication pertains to the lexico-grammatical representation of an element that is deemed implicit (or relatively less explicit) in the ST, but can generally be inferred from the context in the TT. This can be achieved by adding the contextual information required to render an explicit subtitle (Perego 2004: 160). Based on the importance of context in subtitling, the current study looks into 'explicatures' to underline the role pragmatics plays in facilitating comprehension of the explicit side of utterances. Explicatures are inferential developments of utterances articulated in communication (Carston 2004: 2). In the case of subtitling, these developments take place by adding contextual information to what was uttered by actors to guarantee they are clear enough for the audience. The additional contextual information does not spell out what was meant to be inferred by the source audience, but it provides the audience with the necessary details to comprehend the utterance and draw inferences when required. More precisely, this study examines how subtitlers employ contextual information to clarify the explicit aspects of utterances, with a focus on the subtitles of the sitcom *Friends* as a primary case study. The study attempts to achieve the following goals:

1. To identify explicatures in subtitling by uncovering the pragmatic processes that lead to their creation,
2. To determine which areas of explicatures are more prioritized by the subtitler than others.

2. Subtitling

Subtitling is possibly the most predominant technique employed for translating audiovisual content among the various techniques available, and it has been instrumental in driving recent developments in the field (Díaz-Cintas 2013). Subtitling has been defined from diverse perspectives. Considering subtitling as a process, Shuttleworth and Cowie's *Dictionary of Translation Studies* (1997:161) define it as "the process of providing synchronized captions for film and television dialogue". On the other hand, subtitling as a product has been the focus of other researchers. According to Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021:9), a subtitle is a written translation that is situated in the lower section of the screen and aims to convey the original dialogue along with any other visible verbal information, such as letters and text. These definitions of subtitling prioritize formal attributes, thereby exhibiting a product-centric approach. Several scholars endeavor to formulate a user-centric definition, as opposed to a product- or process-centric one. Gracia (2020: 25), for example, presents a definition of subtitling as follows:

Subtitling is an instrument that serves the purpose of supporting users in understanding any type of audiovisual content by displaying fragments of written text (integrated in the images and conveying the relevant linguistic or extralinguistic aspects of the content for its understanding) that are legible, readable, comprehensible and accessible for the intended users.

Subtitlers frequently face constraints in terms of time and space. Consequently, they may opt to exclude certain parts of utterances made by actors in order to effectively communicate the intended meaning while adhering at the same time to these constraints. This is the reason why the practice of subtitling has been denoted as a form of selective translation (Gambier 1994; Mason 2001). The subtitling constraints pertain to various factors such as the number of lines and characters within each line, the positioning of subtitles on screen, the font utilized, and the color of the text. According to Díaz-Cintas (2018), it is recommended that subtitles be limited to a maximum of two lines in length and occupy no more than one-twelfth of the screen. Scholars have noted that the typical number of characters per line is approximately 35 (De Linde and Kay 1999; Ghaemi and Benyamin

2010; Diaz-Cintas and Remael 2021). In order to minimize the potential for viewer distraction, neutral fonts are commonly employed, and the majority of subtitles are rendered in white. Empirical evidence suggests that the gaze of viewers tends to be drawn towards the lower section of the screen, in proximity to the subtitles, during the consumption of subtitled media. Hence, Georgakopoulou (2003: 66) stresses the importance of reducing the size of subtitles so that viewers' eyes can enjoy the visual. As per Antonini's (2005) and Chiaro's (2009), the process of subtitling invariably entails the act of condensing and reducing the original content, resulting in subtitles that are generally shorter in length than the corresponding dialogue in the soundtrack. The purpose of this reduction is to provide ample time for the audience to read, view, and understand, a notion which has also been corroborated by Georgakopoulou (2003: 66). However, the decrease is compensated for by inter-semiotic redundancy (Gottlieb 2001: 16). Moreover, the synchronization of characters' dialogue and the appearance of subtitles on the screen is an important factor that greatly influences how viewers perceive the success or failure of subtitles. The duration of subtitles on screen is primarily determined by the speed of the dialogue and the reading speed of the audience.

Given the aforementioned constraints and the tendency for subtitles to be shorter than the original utterances, it would be intriguing to investigate how explicatures are conveyed in subtitling, despite the need for additional words in certain areas of explicatures.

3. Explicatures

Sperber and Wilson (1986) put forth relevance theory as a theory of human communication. It proposes that individuals tend to prioritize information that is expected to yield the highest increase in knowledge while incurring the least processing cost (Yus 2006). Relevance theory sees communication as an inferential activity in which the meaning of an utterance is not solely understood based on the language forms used by the speaker. In fact, the linguistic form (the logical form as named by the theory) is merely a schema in relevance theory, which the receiver enriches with background knowledge and context to understand the speaker's intended meaning. This means that relevance theory makes communication's interpretation context-based rather than linguistic form-based (Wilson 2016). The theory posits that what people say falls short of delivering their intended meanings to the receivers, i.e., there is a gap between the linguistically given meaning (a logical form) and the speaker's primary meaning (explicature) (Carston 2013:177). This study aims to analyze how subtitlers make the meaning explicit for the Arabic

audience by providing additional contextual information or adjusting the actors' utterances for clarity.

Relevance Theory comes up with the term 'explicatures' to refer to what is explicitly said, aided with contextual information. In other words, an explicature is an inferential development of what is encoded by an utterance (Sperber and Wilson 1986; Carston 2004; Yus 2006; Murtisari 2013), as opposed to 'implicatures' that refer to the meaning inferred. Explicatures typically serve to complete and enrich logical forms (what is exactly said) in the following five areas: disambiguation, reference resolution, saturation, free enrichment, and ad hoc concept construction (Huang 2014: 275). This research adopts Huang's explicature typology to enhance clarity, as while Sperber and Wilson extensively explore the five areas of explicatures, they do not offer a specific classification categorizing them into five distinct groups. Therefore, incorporating Huang's typology would facilitate a more streamlined and comprehensible analysis of the processes at hand. In the rest of this section, each pragmatic area is discussed in detail with some clarifying examples.

4. Huang's (2014) typology of explicature areas

As previously stated, Huang (2014) presents a classification of explicature areas, encompassing disambiguation, free enrichment, ad hoc concept construction, reference resolution, and saturation. Each area is discussed extensively in this section, accompanied by illustrative examples for clarity.

4.1 Disambiguation

According to Huang (2014: 288), the process of disambiguation typically involves the selection of a single sense from among multiple potential senses that are provided by the linguistic system. Explicatures serve to resolve ambiguities in the logical form by selecting a specific sense of a word or structure based on contextual cues. Consider the following example:¹

- (1) I am not planning to join the party.
(a) I am not planning to join the social joyous occasion.
(b) I am not planning to join the organization of people who share the same set of beliefs.

Both explicatures in (a) and (b) serve to disambiguate the logical form presented in (1) by attributing a different sense to the homograph (party), with the choice of these senses being dependent on the context.

4.2 Reference resolution

The task of reference resolution involves assigning the relevant contextual meaning to a referential or anaphoric expression on the explicit side through the incorporation of background assumptions (Huang, 2014). Consider the following example:

- (2) I enjoyed the party. The food was just made the way I like.
 The possible explicatures of (2) are mentioned in (a) and (b):
 (a) I enjoyed the party where the food was just made the way I like.
 (b) I enjoyed the party. The food there was just made the way I like.

4.3 Saturation

According to Recanati's (1993, 2004) definition, saturation is a pragmatic process that involves the completion of a particular slot within the logical form of language. It is used with utterances that are syntactically complete, but semantically not. Consider the following illustration:

- (3) I believe John is less responsible.

In sentence (3), there is a slot in the incomplete logical form of the sentence. This must be explicitly filled out in order to obtain the full propositional form. Depending on the context, some explicatures of (3) could be:

- (a) I believe John is less responsible than his brother.
 (b) I believe John is less responsible than he used to be.
 (c) I believe John is less responsible about causing the accident.

For more illustration, see the following examples that all require to be saturated:

- (4) I do not think your suggestion is the same. (same as what?)
 (5) Poor Sally! She is too young. (too young for what?)

4.4 Free enrichment

As posited by Recanati (2004), within this area, it is necessary to augment the conceptual content of the utterance's logical form. The term 'free' is utilized in reference to its reliance on pragmatics as opposed to semantics. That is to say, it appears to lack any linguistic requirements and is solely driven by the assumption that the statement will fulfill a specific level of communicative relevance when the logical form is enriched. For illustration, consider the following two examples:

- (6) I have a heart.
 (7) The surgery lasted for three hours and the life of the patient was saved.

The logical form presented in (6) requires further enrichment to achieve the full propositional form, as it is widely acknowledged that all individuals possess hearts. The following is a propositional representation of (6):

I have a sympathetic heart.

In (7), the conjunct relation has to be strengthened in the two parts of the utterance as in:

The surgery lasted for three hours. As a result, the life of the patient was saved.

4.5 Ad hoc concept construction

Huang (2014) posits that ad hoc concept construction refers to the pragmatic modification of a concept in its logical form. The concept in question is derived via pragmatic considerations and necessitates inference based on the particular context of its employment. Barsalou (1987, 1992) posits that words in this pragmatic area do not inherently possess meanings that can be assigned based on predetermined rules. Rather, they convey a diverse range of meanings that vary depending on the context, with different meanings being chosen on an as-needed basis to accommodate different situations. Consider the following examples:

(8) Mary is sweet.

(9) It was daring to kiss her in public.

The general concepts in (8) and (9) may be indicative of a large number of more specific sub-concepts indicating various kinds, degrees, and qualities. For example, the sentence 'Mary is sweet' may have a variety of explicatures based on the meaning of the adjective 'sweet' in a given context. Example (8) explicatures may include 'Mary is kind', 'Mary is charming', and 'Mary is tender'. In (9), understanding the meaning of the concept 'daring' depends on the context where it appears. It might indicate rudeness, bravery, and courage.

Explicatures have been discussed in written translation, but, to the best of researchers' knowledge, there is a lack of research on their application in subtitling. Within the domain of translation, some studies have demonstrated the significance of explicatures in reaching the ultimate intended meaning in translation. Yus (2012) conducts a study regarding the translation of humorous texts. The author's starting point is that comprehending humor in communication necessitates enriching the utterance through inference, thereby transforming it into a comprehensively contextualized explicatures (Yus 2012: 16). Al-Jarrah et al. (2018) argue that the responsibility of the translator is to furnish the recipients with the necessary tools to facilitate their comprehension of explicatures of the original text, thereby enabling them to deduce the implied meanings. Jarrah and Al-Jarrah (2023) investigate the extent to which translators are able to identify and incorporate explicatures in their translations. Additionally, the study aims to determine whether translators exhibit equal attention to all areas of explicature

identification or if they prioritize certain areas over others. Jarrah and Al-Jarrah's (2023: 189) starting point was that translation is an inferential gap-filling activity, and that the sentence's intended meaning may not always be equally apparent to all receivers. According to Jarrah and Al-Jarrah's (2023), the inclusion of explicatures in translation ensures the highest degree of lucidity as explicatures serve to restore the incomplete logical form of a sentence. Jarrah and Al-Jarrah's (2023: 196) confirm that "Translating the explicature of the utterance, rather than the utterance itself, exempts the audience from more processing efforts which, if not simplified, might hinder (or possibly twist) their understanding of the original context". The study concludes that disambiguation received the most attention because it ensures the rendition of the same semantic meaning as the source text. On the other hand, the ad hoc area was the least observed, likely due to the study's corpus consisting of short sentences without context, making it difficult for translators to adjust the meaning of such words.

5. Methodology

This study examines how explicatures are rendered into Arabic subtitles of the English sitcom *Friends* on Netflix. The sitcom revolves around six friends, namely Ross, Monica, Phoebe, Chandler, and Joey, as they collectively find their way to various life experiences. This sitcom was selected due to its extensive potential for research, as it encompasses various areas of explicatures. The popularity of this sitcom in the Arab world raises interest in examining the role of subtitling in conveying meaning to the Arab audience. Additionally, most descriptive studies on subtitling primarily focus on movies, while there is a noticeable dearth of research on television series (Gambier and Pinto 2018). Having explicatures represented in all different seasons of the sitcom and knowing that all episodes in the ten seasons are beyond the scope of this research, the researchers, following Singh and Mangat's (1996) and Taherdoost's (2016) explanation of simple random sampling, select the first season of the sitcom as the corpus of the study.

The data collection process begins with listening to actors' utterances in English and then reading Arabic subtitles. After that, a comparison between the original statement and its subtitle is held to see if the subtitle is translated literally or is changed in terms of the five pragmatic processes (areas) discussed in Huang's (2014) typology. If no change is made, the example is skipped, but if any of the pragmatic processes are identified, the subtitle is considered as an explicature and is chosen for analysis. After identifying the explicature areas, the sequence of these areas is determined based on the number of examples identified within each area.

6. Findings and discussion

The analysis of the Arabic subtitles of the first season of *Friends* sitcom reveals that they cover all five areas of explicatures outlined in Huang's (2014: 288) typology, namely disambiguation, free enrichment, ad hoc concept construction, reference resolution, and saturation. A total of 631 explicatures were identified in the subtitles, distributed across the five areas of explicatures. It is evident that the subtitler did not allocate equal attention to all areas of explicatures, as disambiguation is prioritized while saturation is given the least attention. However, the identification of all five types of explicatures carries implications that are of considerable importance to the notion of explicatures in subtitling. The presence of all types of explicatures in the subtitles of the sitcom implies that the subtitler is aware that the linguistic form employed by the actors alone is insufficient to produce a subtitle that is explicit and understandable to Arab readers. This is because logical forms function solely as one of the contributing inputs in the process of inference, ultimately resulting in the derivation of the speaker's intended meaning (Wilson and Sperber 2004). The presence of all areas of explicatures also suggests that the subtitler believes in the importance of pragmatics as it serves as a bridge between the semantic meaning of a sentence and the intended meaning of the speaker (Wilson and Sperber 2004).

The data analysis revealed that the areas were addressed in the following order: disambiguation, free enrichment, ad hoc concept construction, reference resolution, and finally saturation. Table 1 summarizes the results of data analysis:

Table 1: The number of explicatures detected and the corresponding percentages.

The Explicatures	The Number of Examples Detected	The Percentage
Disambiguation	300	47.54
Free Enrichment	161	25.52
Ad Hoc Concept Construction	90	14.26
Reference Resolution	78	12.36
Saturation	2	0.32
Total	631	100

As mentioned earlier, disambiguation is the area most attended to by the subtitler. The primary reason for this can potentially be attributed to the

fact that failing to disambiguate ambiguous words would jeopardize equivalence and result in subtitles that diverge from the original source texts in terms of semantic meaning. According to Relevance Theory, the interpretation of a given input is determined by both the linguistic form used in the communication and the context (Carston 2013: 178). The significance of disambiguation arises from this juncture, meaning that the decoding of linguistic form serves as a starting point for subsequent processes of inference. Consequently, if the starting point is incorrect, the subsequent inferences will be based on an erroneous foundation, resulting in an explicature that holds a different meaning from the original utterance. Mistakes in the process of disambiguation may give rise to severe consequences in translation, thus necessitating a highly cautious approach to this pragmatic process. According to Jarrah and Al-Jarrah (2023: 205), ambiguity is highly language-dependent, as what may be ambiguous in one language is typically not in another. In light of this, disambiguation is predominantly influenced by the concept of translation appropriateness. This explains the scarcity of instances in which errors of disambiguation occur. Consider the following two examples:

ST	TT
Rachel: “Ok, you caught me. I’m a laundry virgin.”	"حسناً لقد كشفتني أنا جاهلة في أمور الغسيل" <i>ḥasanan laqad kaftani: ?ana: dʒa:hila fi: ?umu:r ?al- yasi:l</i> Back translation: “Ok, you caught me. I’m ignorant about laundry issues.”

The word ‘virgin’ in English refers to females who are unmarried or who have not engaged in sexual intercourse. Nevertheless, it possesses inherent ambiguity as it has various distinct meanings. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary (n.d.), the noun ‘virgin’ has five different meanings, one of them is “a person who is inexperienced in a usually specified sphere of activity”. Using the abovementioned context, the subtitler realized that opting for the commonly referenced meaning of ‘virgin’ would distort the intended meaning of the entire utterance. As a result, the word ‘ignorant’ was selected to indicate a lack of knowledge or experience in the task of laundry.

ST	TT
Rachel: "Look at the window, there is my name! Hi, me!"	"انظروا الى هذه الزاوية اسمي مدون عليها مرحبا بي" ʔunḏʕuru: ʔila: ha:ḏihi ʔalzawija ʔismi: mudawwan ʕalajha: marḥaban bi: Back translation: "Look at the corner, my name is written on it! Hi, me!"

In this example, Rachel received her first salary, so she experienced a surge of enthusiasm upon seeing her name inscribed on the salary envelope, prompting her to say, "Look at the window, there is my name! Hi, me!"

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary (n.d.), the word 'window' encompasses a range of ten distinct definitions, with the typical meaning referring to an opening, typically found in a building's wall, that facilitates the ingress of light and air. However, upon examining the context provided in this example, it becomes apparent that the intended meaning is not an opening in a building, but rather pertains to "the transparent panel or opening of a window envelope" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Having the ambiguity about the meaning of "window" clarified based on the context, the intended meaning of Rachel's statement is effectively conveyed to the target audience using minimal efforts through the use of a subtitle that aligns with the meaning understood by the original audience with no addition of extra words.

As shown in Table 1, the second pragmatic process that is most attended to by the subtitler of *Friends* is free enrichment. This area of explicatures involves the inclusion of words that were not originally uttered by the sender in a communication but are added in order to enhance the relevance of the subtitle for the intended audience. By including these additional words, readers are relieved from the task of seeking out the contextual information that these words offer. The total number of identified examples pertaining to this particular area of explicatures amounts to 161, signifying a notable prevalence in comparison to the other pragmatic processes that follow. This has several implications, all of which hold significance when examining the topic explicatures in subtitling.

First and foremost, the fact that free enrichment is ranked second clearly indicates that the practice of rendering explicatures rather than

logical forms does not contradict the essence of subtitling and its constraints, particularly that this pragmatic process involves incorporating additional words that were not uttered by the actors by default. Undoubtedly, this does not imply that the subtitler may add as many words as desired; rather, it means that incorporating additional words won't pose a problem as long as the subtitler stays within the character count restrictions set by the organization or platform for which he works. In a nutshell, free enrichment and any other pragmatic process involving inserting additional words won't pose a subtitling issue if the subtitler plays it safe by adding words to boost relevance while maintaining within the allowed character count. It was clear that the subtitler's desire to assist the target audience did not cause him to lose sight of such subtitling constraints as none of the subtitles that featured free enrichment explicatures surpassed the standard character limit for subtitles, which is 42 characters per line for Arabic language as put forth by Netflix's guidelines ("Arabic Timed Text Style Guide" n.d.). To illustrate this with numbers: 115 out of the 161 examples found on free enrichment involved the addition of just one word to render the explicatures. Additionally, 33 examples required the addition of two words, while 10 examples needed three words added. Furthermore, 2 examples involved the addition of four words. Finally, throughout the entire season, there was only one example requiring the addition of five words. It's worth noting that all these additions adhered to the character count of subtitles.

It is important to bear in mind that the inclusion of words that were not uttered by the actors in subtitles does not necessarily qualify as free enrichment. This can be tied to the inherent grammatical differences between Arabic and English, which necessitate the inclusion of certain words for proper language use. For instance, the word 'although' in English is most likely rendered as *ʔala: ʔalruym min ʔa:lik* على الرغم من ذلك in Arabic. The English word is rendered into four words into Arabic. The translation of the word 'although' does not represent a free enrichment endeavor by the subtitler to aid the intended viewers in overcoming comprehension obstacles; rather, the addition of words stems from grammatical differences between the two languages.

The second finding from the analysis is that pragmatic processes, such as ad hoc concept construction, which typically do not necessitate the introduction of new words, would be more prevalent in the subtitles of the sitcom than free enrichment due to subtitling constraints. However, the fact that free enrichment ranked second implies that it is more effective in explicitly communicating the intended meaning, at least from the perspective of the subtitler. This effectiveness can be attributed to multiple reasons. One reason to consider is that the analysis of free enrichment and

ad hoc concept construction examples reveals that, in most cases, the meaning of an utterance remains understood and explicit even when the pragmatic process of ad hoc concept construction is not applied, except for some cases where cultural references are made. This indicates that rendering ad hoc explicatures aims at making the explicit meaning more explicit. Nevertheless, in the majority of cases involving free enrichment, the incorporation of additional words plays a role in elucidating the intended meaning or making it natural in Arabic. The omission of the pragmatic process of free enrichment may not render the subtitle completely incomprehensible, but it can lead to ambiguity and perplexity regarding the exact intended meaning. Another possible explanation for the subtitler's preference for free enrichment over ad hoc concept construction could be attributed to the subtitler's conviction that employing multiple words would make it linguistically easier to express ideas compared to utilizing a single word and modifying its meaning to align with the context. It is important to note that ad hoc concept construction sometimes involves the introduction of new words, but in the majority of cases (97% of examples detected), it only requires modifying the meaning without adding extra words. The last reason is the assumption that the provision of free enrichment contributes significantly to achieving the highest degrees of equivalence between the original utterances and the corresponding subtitles. Equivalence in translation/subtitling represents the overall aim of translation. According to Farghal (1994: 56), "translation is a mode of communication where choices are further subjected to a principle of equivalence between a source text in one language and a target text in another". Equivalence according to Relevance Theory is realized in presenting what is 'relevant' to the target audience. As pointed out by Jarrah and Al-Jarrah (2023: 199), the equivalence achieved by free enrichment is not strictly based on a word-for-word comparison, but rather on the overall meaning involved. Upon analyzing the examples detected on free enrichment, it is found that this pragmatic process achieves equivalence and increases the relevance of subtitles for the target audience in a variety of ways, namely by including additional contextual information that can eliminate ambiguity and potential alternative interpretations that may arise in the minds of the audience, or by confirming and enhancing the meaning. This is represented in numbers in Table 2 as follows:

Table 2: The means through which free enrichment achieves equivalence.

The Means through which Free Explicatures Achieve Equivalence	The Number of Examples	The Percentage
Confirming and enhancing the meaning	105	65.22
Eliminate ambiguity and potential alternative interpretations	56	34.78

Consider the following two examples on free enrichment:

ST	TT
Joey: "What? Thought we were trying to find stuff."	"ماذا في الأمر؟ ظننتنا نحاول العثور على أشياء تذكرنا بها" <i>ma:ða: fi: ʔal-ʔamr ðʕanantuna: nuħa:wilu ʔalʕuθu:r ʕala: ʔa fja: ʔ tuðakkiruna biha:</i> Back translation: "What? I thought we were trying to find stuff that remind us of her."

In this example, Chandler, Joey, and Ross were in their way to attend a hockey game, Ross kept pausing at whatever he came across that may have reminded him of Carol, his ex-wife. When a lady passed by the three friends, Joey said that she has a body that resembles Carol's. When Ross and Chandler gave Joey a look of disdain, he said that he was just trying to find 'stuff'.

This example demonstrates the effort of the subtitler to aid the target viewers in comprehending the utterance. Joey's utterance that is considered as a logical form was supplemented by a clause comprising two words in the Arabic subtitle. The logical form 'I thought we were trying to find stuff' is better comprehended by the audience when the clause 'that remind us of her' was added. The inclusion of this relative clause following the noun 'stuff' elucidated that 'stuff' refers to the objects that the friends encounter on their way to the hockey game, which would serve as reminders to Ross of Carol. As explained by Murtisari (2016: 67), rendering explicatures strengthens the utterance's "self-sufficiency" by eliminating the necessity for the reader to

refer to the context in order to comprehend it, and this is what the subtitler did in this example. Simultaneously, the line's character count, which included the additions, was 27. This suggests that the meaning was clarified without violating the limitations of subtitling.

ST	TT
Phoebe: "Big Bird's friend."	"هو صديق الطائر الكبير في برنامج سيسمي ستريت" <i>Huwa sʿadi:q ʔaltʿa:ʔir ʔlkabi:r fi: barna:midʒ sismi: stri:t</i> Back translation: "It is Big Bird's friend in Sesame Street program".

In this example, the subtitler appended the phrase *barna:midʒ sismi: stri:t* (in Sesame Street program) to the logical form in order to create an explicit subtitle. One of Relevance Theory's basic assumptions is that when communication occurs, the utterance must interact with the hearer's cognitive environment to produce cognitive effects. However, if the utterance is about something that is partially or completely unfamiliar in the hearer's cognitive environment or knowledge of the world, comprehension will not take place or will take a long time (Wilson and Sperber 2004). Accordingly, for the subtitle to be relevant, it has to be known to the viewers in the first place. The subtitler may have held the belief that providing a literal translation for this cultural reference would result in audience confusion. Consequently, with the intention of facilitating comprehension for the viewers, the subtitler ensured that the reference to the 'Big Bird friend' made by the speaker was explicitly identified as a character from the television program Sesame Street.

As mentioned earlier, ad hoc concept construction emerged as the third most frequently identified category, following disambiguation and free enrichment. This is because disambiguation is considered crucial for achieving accuracy and appropriateness in subtitling, making it the primary concern of the subtitler. As stated earlier in this section, errors made by the subtitler in disambiguation may result in a subtitle that does not share the same semantic intended meaning of the original statement.

Moreover, the subtitler's preference for free enrichment over ad hoc explicatures is best exemplified in the sitcom's cultural references, which, based on data analysis, are either subtitled using the free enrichment process or the ad hoc construction method. The data analysis reveals that only 28 references were represented using ad hoc concept constructions, typically using more generic terms than the reference itself, while 35 references were

subtitled by free enrichment. It seems that the subtitler thinks it is more explicit for the readers to have a cultural reference that has been enriched rather than having a broader term that substitutes that reference, which has helped free enrichment go up to the second spot. Consider the following two examples on ad hoc constructions:

ST	TT
Monica: "Power company guys? Eligible looters?"	"عمال شركة الكهرباء أم سارقي غنائم عزاباً" <i>ʕummal ʕarikat ʔal-kahraba:ʔ ʔam sa:riqi: yana:ʔim ʕuzzaban</i> Back translation: "Power company workers or bachelor looters?"

In this instance, the subtitler replaced the adjective 'eligible' with the noun 'bachelor' as it better aligns with the intended meaning of 'eligible' within this specific context. This example represents Monica's sarcastic response to her mother's inquiry about Monica's attire during a blackout in the city. Monica informs her mother that there will be no visitors during the blackout, thus there is no necessity to dress up because only individuals with criminal intent can visit her in such circumstances. The English adjective 'eligible' is used to describe an individual who possesses the necessary qualifications or merits to be selected (Merriam- Webster n.d.). Hence, the subtitler used the word 'bachelor' which, in this specific context, means being eligible to engage in a romantic relationship with Monica.

ST	TT
Joey: "You look good".	"تبدين فاتنة" <i>tabdi:n fa:tinah</i> Back translation: "You look luscious".

In this example, Joey encountered Angela, his former love. Joey's attraction to Angela's remarkable physical appearance prompted him to consider reconciling with her. He complimented her appearance, acknowledging her attractiveness by saying, "You look good."

The Arabic version of the example exemplifies an ad hoc concept construction explicature, as the subtitler has substituted the adjective 'good' with the more specific word 'luscious'. In this particular scene, Joey is greatly captivated by Angela's beauty, prompting him to feel compelled to approach her and initiate a conversation the moment he saw her. In English, when a lady is described as looking good, it conveys a positive connotation, indicating that she appears attractive and pleasing. However, when a lady is described as being luscious, the meaning and the connotations are much stronger than 'good'. It implies that the beauty of the person being described

is exceptional or extraordinary (Merriam-Webster n.d.). This adjective appears to convey Joey's perspective on Angela's attractiveness and stunning appearance in this particular scene. In Arabic subtitles, the adjective 'good' was translated as *fa:tin* *أفنت*, which has the same meaning and connotations as luscious. In Arabic, when a lady is described as *fa:tin*, it means she is exceptionally pretty and attractive (Almaany dictionary n.d.). This means that the subtitler provided a translation that is more specific than what was uttered by the actor to make the meaning more explicit to the target audience.

As mentioned earlier, the fourth observed area of explicatures is reference resolution. This area involves assigning the appropriate contextual value to a referential or anaphoric expression in explicit utterances or sentences (Huang 2014). It is common to use pronouns instead of their referents as this practice serves to prevent repetitive use of the same words and to establish textual cohesion (Andersen 2014). In the context of subtitling, there are instances where the opposite takes place, meaning that a referential expression is substituted with what it refers to. This process is employed when the translator or subtitler determines that it is more advantageous to mention the referent than to keep the referential expression in terms of clarity of meaning and cohesion within the text. In such a case, subtitlers encountering referential expressions need to identify the appropriate referents for them. Given the importance of the issue, a key focus of language comprehension research pertains to the comprehension of referential terms and what they refer to (Albrecht and Clifton 1998).

Despite the fact that this pragmatic process adheres to the constraints of subtitling by not necessitating the inclusion of additional words in most cases, it obtained a fourth-place ranking, potentially due to two reasons. The first is that reference resolution is potentially thought of as the most area in which other audiovisual modalities, specifically the visual one, can compensate for the lack of rendering explicatures. The second reason pertains to the nature of this pragmatic process as resolving reference can be accomplished by the viewers through some linguistic considerations related to referential words themselves, particularly pronouns (which are the focus of most reference resolution examples). Such considerations include gender, number, agreement, and the syntactic structure, in addition to pragmatic factors. Reference resolution process is pragmatic in nature since replacing the referential expression with its referent relies mainly on inferential contextual processes that result in spotting the reference of the pronoun (Carston 2013). However, this process also relies on means other than the pragmatic, which gives rise to the assumption that the reference can be easily retrieved by the audience even if the subtitler does not resolve it. Such means

are morpho-semantic (which aid in pronoun referent identification by utilizing specific characteristics associated with pronouns themselves, such as number distinctions, the role of the speaker, addressee, or others in the speech act, and gender distinctions), morpho-syntactic agreement, or syntactic devices based on the syntactic structure of utterances (Simon and Wiese 2002). Consider the following two examples:

ST	TT
Rachel: "Wow! Would I have seen you in anything?"	رائع هل يمكن أن أكون قد رأيتك في عرض ما؟" <i>raʔiʕ hal jumkin ʔan ʔaku:n qad raʔajtuka fi: ʕardʕin ma:</i> Back translation: "Great! Would I have seen you in any show?"

In this example, Rachel is acquainting herself with the other friends in the group and inquiring about what they do for a living. Joey informed her of his profession as an actor, prompting her to inquire if she had seen him in anything. The subtitler opted to substitute the word 'thing' with the word 'show' in order to establish clarity regarding the intended referent of the word 'thing'. Given that Joey disclosed his profession as an actor to Rachel, it can be inferred that Rachel's query was intended to inquire whether she had seen him in any televised productions.

ST	TT
Monica: "Is it me?"	"هل أنا السبب" <i>hal ʔana: ʔalsabab</i> Am I the-reason Back translation: "Am I <u>the reason</u> ?"

In this instance, Monica expresses her dissatisfaction with her romantic experiences involving men. She took this action in response to her boyfriend's infidelity and deceitful manipulation in order to engage in sexual activity. Monica's contemplation led her to inquire with her friends about her potential role in the failure of her past romantic relationships with men.

The clarification of the reference of the pronoun 'it' is likely linked to the separation of the scene where Monica's boyfriend cheated on her from the one in which she inquired about whether she was the reason, with some other intervening scenes. Consequently, the reference, relying on the context, was successfully addressed in order to spare the audience from the need to remember the potential antecedent of the pronoun. Resolving the reference would enhance the clarity of the subtitle and increase its 'self-

sufficiency’, thereby enabling the audience to comprehend the intended meaning without the need for additional cognitive exertion.

The last observed area by the subtitler is saturation. Saturation final position might be attributed to the fact that the majority of logical forms requiring saturation necessitate the subtitler to provide information for which he has no knowledge or clues. In other words, to transform a logical form into a saturation explicature, the subtitler requires access to additional information beyond the context of utterances and general background knowledge. An additional reason that contributes to the difficulty of expressing saturation explicatures is the requirement to include a significant number of additional words when saturating logical forms. This requirement contradicts the spatial and temporal limitations imposed by subtitling, which primarily allow for the inclusion of individual words or short phrases. Consider the following two examples:

ST	TT
Rachel: “No, not even close.”	"لا، لم أقترب من المبلغ اللازم" <i>la: lam ʔaqtarib min ʔal-mablay ʔalla:zim</i> Back translation: “No, I am not close to the required amount.”

In this instance, Rachel made significant efforts to gather \$100 in order to fund a trip. When questioned by her friends about whether she had collected such a sum, she responded by stating that she had not come anywhere close.

The utterance made by Rachel, “No, not even close,” is syntactically complete but semantically not (Carston 2013). Upon perceiving this utterance, one would infer that there exists a completion that would enhance the clarity and comprehensibility of the conveyed message. Based on the context provided in this statement, a saturated completion would be ‘No, the amount of money available is not even close to the amount required to cover the expenses of the trip.’ However, considering the limitations of subtitling, the subtitler opted to include only three additional words to convey the intended meaning, specifically *min ʔal-mablay ʔalla:zim* (to the amount required).

ST	TT
Rachel: "which makes it so much harder".	"مما يجعل الأمر أكثر صعوبة مما هو عليه" <i>mimma: jadʒʕalu ʔal-ʔamr ʔakθar</i> <i>sʕuʕu:batan mimma: hua ʕalajh</i> Which make the-issue more hard than it-is already Back translation: "Which makes the issue much harder than it already is."

In this example, Rachel contacted her former fiancé to inform him of her intention to return their wedding ring. However, she lost the ring. Rachel expressed that it is so hard on her to encounter her former fiancé, whom she left at the altar on their wedding day, but now it is harder.

The subtitler enhances the logical form expressed by Rachel, aiming to complete the comparative structure of the adjective 'harder.' It is widely recognized that comparative and superlative adjectives necessitate explicit saturation in order to provide readers with a clear understanding of the entities being compared. The complete statement required for the aforementioned expression is 'harder than it already is following the loss of the wedding ring'. Nevertheless, the subtitler possibly made the decision to only include three additional words in order to adhere to the constraints imposed by subtitling.

6. Conclusions

This study aims to examine the presence of explicatures subtitles and determine if all five areas receive equal attention. The study's findings suggest that *Friends* Arabic subtitles contain all five areas of explicatures, although their presence varies. Disambiguation receives significant attention, as errors in this area can completely undermine the intended meaning of subtitles and divert the attention of the intended audience. Disambiguation is followed by free enrichment, which is widely regarded as a crucial aspect for subtitlers in achieving communicative equivalence between the source and target texts. The manipulation of word meanings to suit the context, known as ad hoc concept constructions, is ranked third as it makes the explicit meaning even more explicit. Reference resolution can potentially be recovered from other modalities, such as visual cues, as well as from linguistic factors, prompting it not to be as observed as the first three areas. Saturation is considered the least preferred option due to its reliance on information inaccessible to the subtitler.

Sukayna Ali- Corresponding author
Instructor of Translation
University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan
ORCID ID: 0009-0003-7909-1143
Email: sukayna.ali@student.usm.my

Wan Rose Eliza Abdul Rahman
Senior lecturer of Translation and Interpreting
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-7966-7451
Email: wardah@usm.my

Yean Fun Chow
Senior Lecturer of Translation Studies
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-6480-1224
Email: Yeanfun.chow@usm.my

*This research paper is extracted from a PhD dissertation titled “An Analysis of Explicatures in English-Arabic Subtitles of the ‘*Friends*’ Sitcom on Netflix” at USM University.

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