

## The 'Explicitation Hypothesis' and Non-professional Translators: A Case Study

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**Abstract:** *In an article entitled 'Shifts of cohesion and coherence in translation', Blum-Kulka (1986) introduced the 'explicitation hypothesis'. The hypothesis posits that translators add information in the target text that is implicit in the source text. This amplification, that produces translated texts that exhibit a higher degree of explicitness in comparison with the originals, takes place regardless of the differences between the language pairs involved in the act of translation. Therefore, explicitation is considered to be part and parcel of any translation activity whether conducted by professional or non-professional translators. This paper tries to test whether this hypothesis applies to the translations of non-professional translators by analyzing the work of fourth year students majoring in translation at the University of Petra, Jordan. The analysis of the students' translated texts has revealed that non-professional student translators 'spell out' information that is implicit in the source text, and hence produce translated texts that are more explicit than the original.*

### 1. Introduction

Work carried out within the Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) approach to translation, and which has been lately supported by the application of large-scale electronic corpora in the study of translations between different language pairs, has revealed that there are certain features that are typical of translated texts irrespective of the source and target languages involved in the act of translation. One of these general features that recurs in translated texts and is absent in the corresponding non-translated texts is the phenomenon of 'explicitation', understood here as a tendency that involves adding information in the target text 'that renders the sense or intention clearer than in the ST' (Hatim & Munday 2004:339). Translation scholars state that explicitation can be brought about in a number of ways: by adding cohesive devices, expanding phrases into clauses, inserting explanatory phrases, inserting footnotes, explaining implied

information, expanding condensed information and repeating information that has been mentioned previously in the source text (Baker 1992; Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997; Blum-Kulka 2000; Klaudy 2001; among others).

Much of the research conducted on explicitation has shown that it is a frequently observed phenomenon in the translated texts produced by professional translators. However, Blum-Kulka (2000)<sup>1</sup> maintains that this translation process is not confined to the translational work of professional translators since instances of explicitation have also been detected in the work carried out by **non-professional translators**. With this in mind, this paper sets out to investigate whether non-professional student translators produce texts that are more explicit than the originals by analyzing the work of fourth-year students majoring in translation at the University of Petra, Jordan. This paper focuses on non-professional translators for two reasons: (1) to the best of my knowledge, researchers in the Arab world have not given the phenomenon of explicitation and non-professional translators the attention it deserves in spite of the growing number of universities in this part of the world that offer BA degrees in Translation and Linguistics,<sup>2</sup> and (2) research on Arabic-English and English-Arabic translations has provided evidence in support of the claim that professional translators produce target texts that are more explicit than the source texts (Baker 1992; Aziz 1993; Abdel-Hafiz 2004; al-Khafaji 2005). Consequently, it would be interesting to test whether explicitation is detected in the translational work of non-professional student translators. In order to conduct this study, the present paper will attempt to answer the following questions:

- 1) Do non-professional student translators produce target texts that are more explicit than the source texts?
- 2) If they do, what patterns of explicitation are prevalent in the work of non-professional student translators?
- 3) Are these patterns observed in the translations of the majority of student translators, or are they just confined to individual students?
- 4) Why do non-professional student translators produce translated texts that are more explicit than the originals?

## **2. Explicitation: background information**

As stated in the introduction, explicitation is a phenomenon that involves adding elements in the target text that are implicit in the source text but can be interpreted from the context. Translation scholars differentiate between obligatory and optional explicitation (Klaudy 2001; Frankenberg-Garcia 2004). Obligatory explicitation is unavoidable because the grammatical, semantic and textual differences between the source and target languages compel the translators to 'spell out' elements that are implicit in the original text. Therefore, failure to explicate these elements in the target text renders it ungrammatical and unacceptable. Optional explicitation, however, results when translators decide to insert information in the target text although the discrepancies between the two languages do not dictate these additions.

The term explicitation was first used by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) who study the differences attested in texts written in English and French and identify translation 'procedures' that can help in overcoming the translation problems that may result because of these discrepancies. One of the processes discussed is explicitation which is defined in the glossary of terms as a 'stylistic translation technique which consists of making explicit in the **target language** what remains implicit in the **source language** because it is apparent from either the context or the situation' (Vinay & Darbelnet 1958/1995:342). This definition, therefore, associates explicitation with the addition of information in the translated text that is not overtly expressed in the original because, in the latter, the context provides the clues needed in interpreting this implied information.

Another attempt at showing the importance of explicitation in translation is Nida's (1964) work that focuses on Bible translation. Nida discusses the 'adjustment' strategies used in translation and differentiates between additions, subtractions and alterations. He mentions a number of additions that translators can revert to in the process of translation, such as the addition of grammatical structures dictated by the grammatical differences between the source and target languages, the addition of ellipted material, and the addition of classifiers and connectors. Nida (*ibid.*:131) considers that the strategy of addition in translation is important because the translated messages are easier

to understand “if ‘drawn out’ by the addition of a certain amount of REDUNDANCY.”

However, Blum-Kulka’s (2000) work on explicitation, first published in 1986, represents a turning point in the research conducted on this phenomenon. Blum-Kulka studies the shifts that result in the act of translating cohesive markers between French and English and claims that these shifts result in target texts that are more explicit than the originals regardless of the grammatical and textual differences between the language combinations involved in the act of translation. Blum-Kulka (ibid.:300) states that:

the process of interpretation performed by the translator on the source text might lead to a TL text which is more redundant than the SL text. This redundancy can be expressed by a rise in the level of cohesive explicitness in the TL text. This argument may be stated as “*the explicitation hypothesis*”, which postulates an observed cohesive explicitness from SL to TL texts regardless of the increase traceable to differences between the two linguistic and textual systems involved. It follows that explicitation is viewed here as inherent in the process of translation.

What distinguishes Blum-Kulka’s study of explicitation from previous studies is the formulation of the ‘explicitation hypothesis’ which considers explicitation a translation universal that is part and parcel of any translation activity whether performed by professional or non-professional translators.

Building on Blum-Kulka’s findings, other studies were carried out on a number of language pairs in an attempt at confirming or refuting the ‘explicitation hypothesis’. Indeed, the results were in support of this hypothesis. For example, Vehmas Lehto’s study (1989; qtd. in Klaudy 2001:82) on journalistic texts translated from Russian into Finnish indicates that these translated texts employ more connectives in comparison with the texts originally written in Finnish. Also, Séguinot (1988) notes greater explicitness in texts translated between French and English. The instances of explicitation attested include: the conversion of subordinate clauses into coordinate clauses and the addition of linking words. However, Séguinot points out that these additions are attributed to the editing decisions that text revisers advocate and not to the translators themselves.

More recently, the use of large-scale electronic corpora in the research carried out on translations between a number of languages has further confirmed the 'explicitation hypothesis'. For example, Øverås (1998) studies Norwegian-English and English-Norwegian translations and concludes that the translated texts in both languages exhibit greater explicitness than the originals although the levels of explicitation vary between the two languages under investigation. Also, Olohan and Baker (2000) investigate the deletion and addition of the optional *that* after the reporting verbs *say* and *tell*. The results indicate that the translated English texts use *that* more frequently than the originals; a result that reveals a higher level of syntactic explicitness in the target texts. Another corpus-based study on explicitation is Frankenberg-Garcia's (2004) comparative study of English and Portuguese translated texts. Frankenberg-Garcia reports that the results of her study are consistent with the explicitation hypothesis since additions have been detected in the translational material investigated.

As for research conducted on explicitation between Arabic-English and English-Arabic translations, a number of studies have supported the claim that translated texts tend to be more explicit than the originals. Aziz (1993) investigates whether Arabic and English differ in their use of explicit-implicit reference by analyzing Naguib Mahfouz's novel *Awladu Haaratina* and its English translation. Aziz distinguishes between three referring expressions, namely proper nouns, noun phrases and pronouns, and their subtypes, and studies how the translator of the Arabic novel renders these expressions in the English version. Using a scale that shows that proper nouns represent the most explicit of these referring expressions and pronouns as the least explicit, Aziz (*ibid.*:149) says that the results of the study reveal 'overall greater explicitness of reference in the English text'.

Baker (1992) shows how translators working from English into Arabic resort to explicitation to clarify culture-specific information that may not be familiar to the readers of the target text. She quotes an extract from the book entitled *Autumn of Fury: the Assassination of Sadat* by Mohamed Heikel, in which Heikal compares the American President Harry Truman and the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. Baker explains that the

translator adds several lines in the Arabic version to provide the Arab reader with 'additional background knowledge about Truman' since 'the Arab reader may well know that Truman was a former president of America but is not expected to know enough about him to draw the specific analogy between him and Sadat that the writer wishes him/her to draw' (ibid.:247-8).

Abdel-Hafiz (2004) also studies the lexical cohesion ties employed in Naguib Mahfouz's novel *Al-Lissu wa-lkilaab* and considers how these ties are rendered in English. Abdel-Hafiz concludes that the results reached confirm Blum-Kulka's observations, for the translator of the Arabic text resorts to strategies that result in an end-product that is more explicit than the original.

Another interesting study is al-Khafaji's (2005) which examines whether the two universals of translation, namely the 'explicitation hypothesis' and the 'repetition avoidance hypothesis' can be observed in translations between English and Arabic and vice versa.<sup>3</sup> As far as explicitation is concerned, al-Khafaji reports that the analyzed translated texts exhibit instances of explicitation not used in the original texts. Some of the instances of explicitation noted include: the addition of explanatory phrases, the addition of culture-specific information, the addition of conjunctions, the replacement of pronouns by proper nouns and the addition of footnotes.

This brief overview of the research done on explicitation shows that many of the studies conducted so far on different language combinations have confirmed that professional translators produce translated texts that are more explicit than the originals. Consequently, this paper attempts to examine whether this result can be perceived in the work of non-professional student translators by analyzing a literary text that students at the University of Petra have translated from English into Arabic.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Corpus and participants**

To be able to answer the four questions set in the introduction, twenty fourth-year students majoring in translation at the University of Petra were asked to translate into Arabic the English short story *Mr. Know-All* by W. Somerset Maugham. *Mr. Know-*

*All* was chosen for the following reasons: (1) the students were unfamiliar with the story; I did not want previous knowledge of the source text to affect the students' translation decisions; (2) the story is told in a clear and economical style; and (3) the story is neither too long nor too short (2362 words).

As for the student population, they had completed most of the compulsory language and literature courses offered by the Department of English at the University of Petra, in addition to four compulsory translation courses and two or three optional courses (one of which is a translation course).<sup>4</sup> To ensure the reliability of the analysis, the following steps were taken: (1) the students were not told about the objectives of the study so as not to influence their translation decisions; (2) the students were also informed that the translations would be graded and the mark allotted would be part of their coursework to ensure that they took the assignment seriously; and (3) to guarantee that the students did the assignment themselves, they were told that I would discuss their translations with them on an individual basis during my office hours. This step was also taken to understand the reasons underlying the students' translation decisions. The students were given five weeks to hand in the assignment.

### **3.2 Procedure of data analysis**

The following is a brief survey of the method of analysis adopted in the analysis of the students' translated texts. The analysis was divided into two stages. The first stage of the analysis involved comparing each translated text against the corresponding original text to identify and classify the instances of explicitation attested. When the instances of explicitation were identified and classified, all the obligatory explicitations were disregarded and the optional explicitations were counted. Only the optional explicitations were taken into consideration because obligatory explicitations are dictated by the syntactic and semantic differences between English and Arabic; hence, it is expected that fourth-year-student translators can identify these differences and insert explicit elements where necessary to avoid producing texts that are ungrammatical. Optional explicitations, however, 'are of interest since they involve such linguistic items which are not found on the linguistic surface of the ST, and it is therefore not self-evident that they should be found in the TT' (Dimitrova 2003:22).

After classifying and counting the optional explicitations, the analysis then proceeded to the second stage. In this stage, the instances of optional explicitations attested were discussed with each student in an attempt at understanding the reason(s) that dictated such decisions and resulted in target texts that are more explicit than the originals.

#### **4. Results**

The analysis of the twenty translated texts reveals that these texts are more explicit than the original although differences in the frequency of explicit occurrences are noted in the translated texts produced by the student population. Thus, the highest number of optional explicitations observed in the student translations amount to 93, while the lowest number of occurrences is 8 (see Table 1). However, three points have to be mentioned at this stage. First, although there are variations in the frequencies of optional explicitations attested in the translated texts, many of these instances recur in 60% of the target texts. Second, some of the instances of explicitation attested could have been avoided; an aspect which is in line with Blum-Kulka's (2000:301) claim that "we can expect to find a trend for explicitation especially marked in the work of 'non-professional' translators." Third, the translated text that exhibits the lowest number of explicit markers was not translated in its entirety, for some parts of the text were missing.

The analysis indicates that the students who produced a high number of explicit occurrences did not advocate a word-for-word translation and tried to abide by the conventions of Arabic to avoid an end-product that reads like a translation, and hence sounds 'foreign'. However, the students who used the word-for-word approach had a lower number of explicitations.

The analysis also shows that the most prominent instances of explicitation are grouped under the following categories, in order of importance: the addition of cohesive devices, the addition of sentences, the replacement of general nouns by more specific nouns, and the addition of pronouns. The other occurrences that involve the addition of explanatory phrases, footnotes, nouns, prepositional phrases, adverbs, adjectives and adjective clauses are all peripheral in nature, for in comparison with the other instances of explicitation, they only recur in a limited number of



translations. Hence, they do not constitute trends and are not discussed in the analysis.

Table 1: Total number of explicit instances attested in the students' translations

<b>Student number</b>	<b>Total number of explicitations</b>
Student 2	93
Student 3	71
Student 5	68
Student 11	67
Student 6	64
Student 7	60
Student 8	58
Student 13	55
Student 1	54
Student 9	52
Student 4	44
Student 17	43
Student 20	42
Student 10	34
Student 16	24
Student 15	24
Student 12	22
Student 19	20
Student 18	19
Student 14	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>922</b>

## **5. Discussion of results**

In what follows, a summary of the results is presented. First, examples of the most prominent instances of explicitation are discussed. This is done by quoting the source text portion followed by two different translated excerpts drawn from the students' translational work. Then, the reasons that have prompted the students' translation decisions, and which have resulted in target texts that are more explicit than the source text, are provided.

### **5.1 Cohesive devices**

Text linguists consider cohesion a strategy that involves creating 'ties' between sentences that make up a text. According to

Halliday and Hasan (1976), these ‘ties’ are perceived using a number of cohesive devices: reference, ellipsis, substitution, conjunctions and lexical cohesion.

The analysis indicates that of the 922 instances of explicitation attested in the twenty translated texts, 528 (57%) of the explicitations are grouped under cohesive devices. Within this category, the most prominent instances of explicitation involve, in order of importance, the following cohesive markers: conjunctions, reference and ellipsis<sup>5</sup> (see Table 2).

Table 2: Instances of explicitation: cohesive devices

<b>Student Number</b>	<b>Conjunctions</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Ellipsis</b>	<b>Total number of explicitations: conjunctions, reference, and ellipsis</b>
Student 1	21	8	2	31
Student 2	21	14	4	39
Student 3	35	6	4	45
Student 4	10	5	4	19
Student 5	21	13	2	36
Student 6	23	8	5	36
Student 7	14	5	3	22
Student 8	7	14	5	26
Student 9	19	3	5	27
Student 10	7	5	1	13
Student 11	15	15	4	34
Student 12	7	4	3	14
Student 13	25	6	3	34
Student 14	2	0	0	2
Student 15	11	1	1	13
Student 16	7	3	3	13
Student 17	4	5	3	12
Student 18	4	2	1	7
Student 19	4	3	2	9
Student 20	11	6	1	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>450<sup>6</sup></b>

### 5.1.1 Conjunctions

Conjunctions are linking words that are used in texts to help readers understand the relationship and the line of argument between the different text constituents. These conjunctions can

express adversative, additive, causal and temporal relations (Halliday & Hasan 1976).

The analysis reveals that the most noticeable kind of explicitation involves the insertion of conjunctions that are implicit in the source text. Indeed, out of a total of 528 explicit cohesive markers, 268 (51%) involve conjunctions. In fact, seventeen students out of twenty had more explicit conjunctions inserted in the target texts in comparison with the additions that involve the other cohesive markers. The students added a variety of conjunctions in the target texts depending on the implicit meaning relations expressed in the English text. These include conjunctions like *الفاء ، و ثم ، ولكن ، وإلا أن*.

This seems to be an interesting result since research carried out on explicitation and professional translators working between a number of different language pairs has shown that the target texts these translators produce are more explicit than the source texts with regard conjunctions. For example, Vanderauwera's study (1985) on Dutch novels translated into English shows that translators add conjunctions in the target texts that are implicit in the source texts. Also, Séguinot (1988) points out that instances of explicit conjunctions are noted in the translations she studied between French and English and vice versa. As far as translations from English into Arabic are concerned, al- Khafaji (2005) quotes examples taken from literary texts translated from English into Arabic that exhibit the addition of conjunctions that are only implicit in the source texts. Al-Khafaji states that the translators have most probably added these conjunctions to facilitate text comprehension.

In Example (1a), Mr. Kelada and Mr. Ramsay are discussing whether the chain Mrs. Ramsay is wearing is real or an imitation. Whereas Mr. Kelada insists that it is real, Mr. Ramsay argues that it is an imitation. To put an end to this argument, the two gentlemen agree that Mr. Kelada should thoroughly inspect the chain. After inspecting the chain with his magnifying glass, Mr. Kelada decides that it is not an imitation, and he is about to reveal this 'discovery' to Mr. Ramsay. However, he suddenly stops when he sees Mrs. Ramsay's facial expressions. In the English text, the implicit adversative relation between the second and the third sentences can be easily understood from the context. Nevertheless, the student translators explicate this relationship by

adding the conjunction لكن . Although this conjunction in Arabic explicitly expresses the adversative relation between the two propositions, adding it in this context is optional.

(1a) He handed back the chain. He was about to speak.  
Suddenly he caught sight of Mrs. Ramsay's face.

(1b) أعاد العقد مرة أخرى ، وكان على وشك الحديث ولكن فجأة رأى وجه السيدة رامزي. (Student 2)

(1c) أعاد العقد. وكان على وشك الحديث ، ولكن فجأة لمح وجه السيدة رامزي. (Student 9)

When the students were asked why they added this conjunction, fourteen<sup>7</sup> students indicated that the absence of an explicit conjunction sometimes made understanding and interpreting the meaning relations between the text constituents difficult. This, in turn, meant that they had to exert an additional effort in an attempt at deciphering the line of argument presented in the English text to be able to reproduce it successfully to the recipient(s) of the target text. Therefore, by adding the conjunction, the students believed that this would minimize reader effort and facilitate text comprehension. The students' motive seems to support Pym's (2005) explanation associated with why translators resort to explicitation. Pym (ibid.:8) maintains that since translators fulfill a dual role as readers of the source text and writers of the target text:

this situation would 1) make them especially aware of the difficulties of constructing meaning (because they are trying to make sense of the source text), 2) put them in a position where they can solve those problems in an explicit way by writing down markers for everything they have just construed, and 3) do this at a time when the construction process is very fresh in their mind. **More bluntly, translators would want to help readers because they, the translators, are also readers**" (emphasis added).

Nine students out of the fourteen provided another reason in addition to the aforementioned one. These students pointed out that they had been taught in the practical and theoretical translation courses that Arabic does not prefer implicit conjunctions; consequently, they decided to insert in the target text many of the implicit conjunctions in the source text. They

thought that this ‘strategy’ of addition fulfills two goals: it helps in text understanding, and it does not violate the conventions of Arabic.

### 5.1.2 Reference

Halliday and Hasan (1976) consider reference a cohesive device that is used in texts to create a link between a referent and a linguistic sign. They mention three types of reference items: personal pronouns, demonstratives and comparatives.

The analysis indicates that the second most prominent group of explicitations is noted under reference. Indeed, out of 528 explicit cohesive markers, 126 (24%) occurrences attested involve replacing a pronoun with a proper or a common noun as can be seen in Examples (2b and 2c).

(2a) I noticed that Mr. Kelada’s hands were trembling. The story spread over the ship as stories do, and **he** had to put up with a good deal of chaff that evening.

(2b) لاحظت أن يدا السيد كيلاده كانتا ترتجفان. انتشرت القصة بين جميع من كان على الباخرة كما تنتشر القصص، وكان على السيد كيلادة أن يتقبل المزاح الذي تعرض له تلك الليلة.  
(Student 13)

(2c) لقد لاحظت أن يدا السيد كيلاده كانتا ترتجفان. وانتشرت القصة بين ركاب السفينة كما تنتشر القصص؛ وكان على السيد كيلادة أن يتقبل المزاح الذي طاله تلك الليلة.  
(Student 8)

In the English version, the author employs the pronoun ‘he’, instead of repeating the noun ‘Mr. Kelada’, to create a link between the sentences quoted above. This is most probably done because English employs pronominal reference extensively to bind sentences together. Halliday and Hasan (ibid.:48) note that ‘the use of personal forms as reference items with a cohesive function is so all-pervading in English’. In this context, the readers of the source text can easily retrieve what the pronoun ‘he’ points to by referring to the preceding sentence. The student translators, however, decide to repeat the proper noun السيد كيلادة although adding a connected pronoun to the preposition على would have sufficed in Arabic. Based on Aziz’s (1993) cline of referring expressions, it becomes clear that the student translators

have changed the least explicit reference item with the most explicit.

Eleven students explained the reason underlying the addition of a proper noun instead of repeating the pronoun used in the original by saying that this step facilitates readability since the readers of the Arabic text do not need to go back to the previous sentence to identify the pronoun referent. Once again, nine students<sup>8</sup> stated that this decision was also taken because Arabic is a language that prefers lexical repetition (Aziz 1998); therefore, in their point of view, adding a proper noun to replace the pronoun used in the English text would not have produced a text that reads like a translation.

### 5.1.3 Ellipsis

Ellipsis is a grammatical cohesive device that involves deleting an item that has been previously mentioned in the text. Halliday and Hasan (1976) differentiate between three types of ellipsis: nominal, verbal and clausal.

The third common kind of explicitation detected is ellipsis. Out of a total of 528 explicit cohesive markers attested in the twenty translated texts, 56 involve ellipsis (11%). The students replaced nominal, verbal and clausal ellipsis with the full forms in the target texts. In Example (3a), the noun ‘tricks’ is deleted in the English text to avoid repetition especially that this word is mentioned twice in the dialogue that takes place between the narrator and Mr. Kelada. This instance of ellipsis is not reproduced in the Arabic text; rather, the student translators decide to make the Arabic text more explicit by adding the noun خدع .

- (3a) “Do you like card tricks?”  
 “No, I hate card tricks,” I answered.

“Well, I’ll just show you this one.”  
 He showed me **three**.

- (3b) - هل تحب خدع الشدة؟  
 - أجبت: لا أنا أكره خدع الشدة.  
 - إذا سأريك هذه الخدعة.  
 - إلا أنه أراني ثلاث خدع. (Student 1)

- (3c) - هل تحب خدع الشدة؟  
 - أجبت: لا أنا أكره خدع الشدة.  
 - حسنا، سأريك هذه الخدعة.  
 - لكنه أراني ثلاث خدع. (Student 4)

When the students were asked why they added the noun خدع, there was unanimous agreement that although ellipsis would not have hampered text comprehension because the noun خدع is repeated in the previous sentences, they thought that inserting the noun would minimize reading effort on the Arab readers' part.<sup>9</sup>

#### 5.1.4 Addition of sentences

As for the remaining 394 instances of explicitaion, the most frequently noted additions are sentences (see Table 3). Out of a total of 394 instances, 151 (39%) involve sentence insertion, and most of these sentences are in the form of reporting clauses. The students also add complete propositions, but these additions only reappear in four translated texts. Inserting reporting clauses is noted when the dialogue in the English text is rather long, and there is no reference to the speakers taking part in the conversation(s).

The excerpt cited in Example (4a) is part of a long dialogue that takes place between Mr. Kelada, and Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay. Mr. Kelada has just 'revealed' to the passengers on the ship that he is an expert in pearls, and to prove this, he tells Mrs. Ramsay that the chain she is wearing is very precious. Mr. Ramsay, who thinks that the chain is an imitation because his wife told him that she had bought it for eighteen dollars, does not take Mr. Kelada seriously. To test Mr. Kelada's knowledge of pearls, he asks him to determine the value of the chain Mrs. Ramsay is wearing by saying: 'I didn't buy it myself, of course. I'd be interested to know how much you think it cost' (Maugham 2006:4). Although Mr. Ramsay's identity is not explicitly expressed in the English dialogue using a reporting clause, the readers of this text can identify, based on the context, the speaker

of these two sentences. In the translated texts, however, the students add the reporting clause *قال رامزي*. It is clear that by adding this reporting clause, the students not only explicate the reporting verb, but they also make explicit the identity of the speaker by lexicalizing the subject of the reporting verb: *رامزي*. This addition is optional since the preceding and subsequent sentences in the Arabic translations reveal the identity of the speaker.

- (4a) Mrs. Ramsay in her modest way flushed a little and slipped the chain inside her dress. Ramsay leaned forward. He gave us all a look and a smile flickered in his eyes.  
 "That's a pretty chain of Mrs. Ramsay's, isn't it?"  
 "I noticed it at once," answered Kelada. "Gee, I said to myself, those are pearls all right."  
**"I didn't buy it myself, of course. I'd be interested to know how much you think it cost."**

- (4b) نظرا لتواضعها احمر وجه السيدة رامزي وخبأت العقد داخل ثوبها، وانحنى رامزي إلى الأمام ونظر إلينا جميعا بابتسامة.  
 قال: "عقد السيدة رامزي جميل. أليس كذلك؟"  
 أجاب السيد كيلاده "لاحظت ذلك على الفور، وقلت لنفسي هذه لآلى حقيقية."  
**قال رامزي: " طبعاً لم أشتريه بنفسى ، وأحب أن أعرف بكم تقدر ثمن هذا العقد."**  
 (Student 8)

- (4c) وبسبب تواضعها احمر وجه السيدة رامزي وخبأت العقد داخل ثوبها. انحنى رامزي إلى الأمام ونظر إلينا جميعا بابتسامة صفراء.  
 قال: "عقد السيدة رامزي جميل. أليس كذلك؟"  
 أجاب السيد كيلاده "لاحظت ذلك فوراً، وقلت هذه لآلى حقيقية، لا شك في ذلك."  
**قال رامزي: " طبعاً لم أشتري العقد ، وأحب أن أعرف بكم تقدر ثمنه."**  
 (Student 17)

The students who added reporting clauses stated that they sometimes encountered problems identifying the speakers taking part in the different turns that make up the dialogues(s). To guarantee that the readers of the target text do not face the same problem, they decided to insert the reporting clauses. The ten students who inserted the reporting clause in the above dialogue explained that the addition was undertaken to ensure that the dialogue flows smoothly.



### 5.1.5 Replacement of general words with specific words

The second most prominent kind of explicitation in this group is replacing words that are general in English with words that are more specific in Arabic. This is achieved by adding pre-modifiers, explanatory noun heads, the genitive construction and prepositional phrases. One hundred and six cases (27%) are attested out of 394. In such cases, although a general word in Arabic would have conveyed the meaning expressed in English, students decided to make the lexical item more explicit as can be seen in Examples (5b and 5c):

(5a) Mrs. Ramsay hesitated a moment. She put her hands to the **clasp**.

(Student 3) ترددت السيدة رامزي ثم وضعت يدها على مشبك السلسلة. (5b)

(Student 4) ترددت السيدة رامزي لوهلة، ثم وضعت يدها على مشبك السلسلة. (5c)

The readers of the source text can easily understand that the word *clasp* in this context refers to the clasp belonging to the chain Mrs. Ramsay is wearing. This is so because the word ‘chain’ is repeated a number of times in the preceding sentences since it plays an important role in the development of the story. Although the students’ translations enable the reader of the Arabic texts to understand what the word مشبك refers to in this context, they decide to make the noun more specific by adding the noun السلسلة to مشبك instead of using the article ‘*al*’ to create a link between the word مشبك and the word سلسلة mentioned in the preceding sentences; the genitive construction in the Arabic text clearly specifies what the noun مشبك refers to.

When the students were asked why they added the noun السلسلة, eleven students claimed that this addition facilitates readability because the relation between the ‘clasp’ and the ‘chain’ is clearly expressed in the Arabic version.

### 5.1.6 Addition of pronouns

The third noticeable kind of explicitation is the addition of pronouns. Sixty two (16%) instances of explicit pronouns are identified. In Example (6a), the readers know that this conversation is taking place between the narrator and Mr. Kelada because, at this point in the story, the readers are only introduced

to these two characters. Thus, the pronoun ‘him’ is not made explicit in the English version because the preceding sentences make speaker identification straightforward. The readers know that the narrator is telling Mr. Kelada that the cocktail he had just offered him was very good. In their translations, many students insert the pronoun له after the reporting verb; an addition which specifies and emphasizes the person that the narrator is addressing.

- (6a) “Whisky and soda or a dry martini, you only have to say the word.” .... I chose the martini and calling the steward he ordered a tumbler of ice and a couple of glasses.  
 “A very good cocktail,” **I said.**

(6b) "هل تشرب الويسكي مع الصودا أم المارتيني الجاف. ما عليك إلا أن تختار. ... فأخذت المارتيني ونادى النادل وطلب منه وعاء الثلج وكأسين. قلت له: إنه كوكتيل جيد. (Student 6)

(6c) " الويسكي مع الصودا أم المارتيني الجاف. اختر ما شئت. ... فاخترت المارتيني ونادى على النادل وطلب منه وعاء الثلج وكأسين. وبعد أن تذوقت المشروب قلت له: إنه كوكتيل جيد. (Student 2)

Interestingly, when the students were asked why they added the pronoun, they could not explain the reason underlying this instance of explicitation. In fact, the students were unaware that they had added this pronoun, and many others, in their translations. It is clear that this was a subconscious translation decision.

Based on the explanations the students provided concerning the reasons underlying the instances of explicitation attested in their translations, it is obvious that most of these additions were done consciously and deliberately, with the exception of pronoun insertion. Also, the students’ explanations show that these additions were undertaken to facilitate readability and to avert risks associated with text miscomprehension. This translation decision seems to be in line with Toury’s (1995:227) argument that there is a ‘correlation between explicitness and readability’.

**Table 3:** Instances of explicitation: sentences, nouns and pronouns

<b>Student Number</b>	<b>Insertion of sentences</b>	<b>Replacement of general nouns with specific nouns</b>	<b>Addition of pronouns</b>	<b>Total number of explicitations</b>
Student 1	1	11	1	13
Student 2	22	9	11	42
Student 3	6	5	4	15
Student 4	0	9	5	14
Student 5	18	1	1	20
Student 6	2	6	7	15
Student 7	26	2	3	31
Student 8	20	6	2	28
Student 9	11	8	2	21
Student 10	2	11	3	16
Student 11	11	6	4	21
Student 12	0	4	1	5
Student 13	6	5	3	14
Student 14	1	1	1	3
Student 15	2	4	2	8
Student 16	0	2	2	4
Student 17	17	6	1	24
Student 18	3	5	2	10
Student 19	1	2	5	8
Student 20	2	3	2	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>319<sup>10</sup></b>

## 6. Conclusion

The analysis of the students' translations and the discussions with the students have provided the answers to the research questions addressed in this paper. First, the results attest that non-professional translators produce translated texts that are more explicit than the original; a result that supports Blum-Kulka's (2000:302) claim that 'explicitation is a universal strategy inherent in the process of language mediation, as practiced by language learners, non-professional translators and professional translators alike'.

Second, the results reveal that there are certain patterns of explicitation that are noted in the students' translations. These

patterns include: the addition of cohesive devices, the addition of sentences, the replacement of general nouns with specific nouns and the addition of pronouns.

Third, it is observed that the aforementioned patterns recur in 60% of the students' translations. Therefore, these additions may be considered as trends since they are not confined to the translations of individual students.

Finally, the analysis indicates that most of the student translators do not add elements in the translated texts haphazardly. Rather, they are conscious of their translation decisions; the only exception being the addition of pronouns. It is also clear from the student responses that they resort to explicitation for two main reasons: (1) the majority of students believe that explicitation facilitates mediation because it minimizes processing effort on the reader's part and guarantees readability; and (2) some students add elements to the target text to implement the theoretical aspects of translation that they had been introduced to over the four years of study at the university. When students take the translation courses offered by the Department of English, they are taught the major lexical, grammatical, textual and pragmatic differences between Arabic and English. They are also introduced to some key concepts in translation studies, like equivalence, explicitation, shifts of translation, universals of translation, foreignization and domestication, among others. These differences and concepts are discussed with the students when evaluating their translations and in the analysis of authentic translated texts. This approach, therefore, has helped some students apply these theoretical aspects when translating *Mr. Know-All* into Arabic.

Although the results of this study demonstrate that there is a tendency among non-professional student translators to produce target texts that exhibit a higher level of explicitness than the source text, it is important to note that the results of the current study are tentative in nature. They can only be generalized if more studies are undertaken on a number of language pairs, a variety of text-types and a greater sample size of students.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Reference to Blum-Kulka's work is based on the 2000 reprint.

<sup>2</sup> In Jordan, there are six private universities that offer BA degrees in Translation and Linguistics.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of the universals of translation see Laviosa-Braithwaite (2001).

<sup>4</sup> With regard to the Arabic courses, all the students had completed two compulsory Arabic courses offered by the university. In addition to these two courses, twelve students had completed an optional course in Arabic entitled 'The Art of Writing and Expression'.

<sup>5</sup> The limited number of explicitations that involve substitution and lexical cohesion are attributed to the following reasons: (1) most of the explicitations observed under these two cohesive markers are obligatory explicitations; and (2) in their translations, the students reproduce many of the lexical cohesive ties employed in the English text.

<sup>6</sup> The total number of explicitations does not add up to 528 instances because substitution and lexical cohesion are not included in this table.

<sup>7</sup> The explanations the students provide for the reasons underlying their translation decisions are not limited to the examples cited; they also apply to the other instances of explicitation attested.

<sup>8</sup> These are the same students mentioned in subsection 5.1.1.

<sup>9</sup> Nineteen students out of twenty added the noun *عند* in the translated texts.

<sup>10</sup> The total number of explicitations does not add up to 394 instances because the other additions that are considered peripheral are not included in this table.