# In the Name of God



# Allameh Tabataba'i University Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages Department of English Translation Studies

# **Explicitation in English Translations of Masnavi**

A Research Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master of Arts in English Translation Studies

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### چکیده

الف. موضوع و طرح مسئله (اهمیت موضوع و هدف): اگرچه تحقیقات فراوانی در خصوص پدیدهٔ تصریح صورت گرفته است، اما دربارهٔ تصریح در حوزهٔ شعر مطالعات چندانی صورت نگرفته، در نتیجه تحقیق حاضر می کوشد پدیدهٔ تصریح را در ترجمهٔ اشعار فارسی به انگلیسی مثنوی معنوی و از منظر سبک شناختی و تأثیر آن بر این پدیده بررسی نماید. همچنین بررسی تأثیر گذشت زمان بر میزان و کیفیت بکار گیری استراتژی تصریح از دیگر مواردی است که بر اهمیت این تحقیق می افزاید.

ب. مبانی نظری شامل مرور مختصری از منابع، چارچوب نظری و پرسشها و فرضیهها: تصریح برای نخستین بار توسط وینی و داربلنه (۱۹۵۸) به عنوان یکی از استراتژیهای ترجمه معرفی شد. پس از آن، محققان برجستهٔ دیگری نظیر بلوم کولکا (۱۹۸۶)، سگوئینو (۱۹۸۸)، کلادی و کارولی (۲۰۰۵) تحقیقات گستردهٔ دیگری را دربارهٔ پدیدهٔ تصریح انجام دادهاند و فرضیهها و چهارچوبهایی را از منظرهای مختلف ارائه کردهاند. در این تحقیق سعی بر آن بوده که به سه پرسش پاسخ داده شود: ۱) منظرهای به سبک سپید مثنوی صریح تر از ترجمههای قافیهدار آن هستند؟ ۲) دلایل بکارگیری این استراتژیهای تصریحی توسط مترجمان چه بوده است؟ ۳) آیا گذشت زمان به لحاظ کیفی و کمی بر پدیدهٔ تصریح در چهار ترجمهٔ بررسی شده از مثنوی تأثیری داشته است؟

پ. روش تحقیق شامل تعریف مفاهیم، روش تحقیق، جامعهٔ مورد تحقیق، نمونه گیری و روشهای نمونه گیری، ابزار اندازه گیری، نحوهٔ اجرای آن، شیوهٔ گردآوری و تجزیه و تحلیل داده ها: تصریح بنا به تعریف کلادی (۲۰۰۱، ص. ۸) تکنیک صریح بیان کردن اطلاعات در متن مقصد است که در متن مبدأ به طور ضمنی بیان شده اند. این تحقیق بر آن بود تا با استفاده از چهارچوب کلادی (۱۹۹۸) که در آن تصریح به چهار نوع اجباری، اختیاری، کاربردی و ذاتی ترجمه طبقه بندی شده است، عناصر تصریحی موجود در ترجمههای مورد مطالعه را بیابد. پیکرهٔ این تحقیق را ۵۶ بیت ابتدایی دفتر اول مثنوی و چهار ترجمه آن تشکیل می داد که دو ترجمه به صورت سپید \_ یکی در سال ۱۹۲۶ توسط نیکلسون و دیگری در سال ۲۰۰۶ توسط ویلیامز ترجمه شده اند \_ و دو ترجمهٔ دیگر قافیه دار هستند \_ یکی در سال ۱۸۸۱ توسط ردهاوس و دیگری در سال ۲۰۰۶ توسط مجددی ترجمه شده اند. هر بیت و چهار ترجمهٔ آن در جدولی قرار گرفته اند و به صورت مقابله ای بررسی شدند تا عناصر تصریحی در هر ترجمه یافته شود. سپس شمار استفاده از هر یک از انواع تصریح به کاربرده شده توسط دو مترجم محاسبه شد و تمام این یافته ها نیز در جدول دیگری ارائه شد تا بر اساس آن به نتیجه گیری هایی دست محاسبه شد و تمام این یافته ها نیز در جدول دیگری ارائه شد تا بر اساس آن به نتیجه گیری هایی دست

یافته شود. دلایل بکارگیری هر یک از این استراتژیها نیز با کمک گرفتن از نظریات و مباحث ارائهشده توسط بلوم کولکا (۱۹۸۶)، کلادی (۱۹۹۸/۲۰۰۱) و پیم (۲۰۰۵) تحلیل شد.

ت. یافتههای تحقیق: هر چهار نوع تصریح در ترجمهها یافت شد. نوع تصریح اجباری بیشتر در ترجمههای سپید دیده میشود. از طرف دیگر نوع تصریح ذاتی ترجمه در ترجمههای قافیهدار بسامد بیشتری دارد. میزان استفاده از تصریح اختیاری و کاربردی در هر چهار ترجمه کمابیش در یک سطح بود. به جز تفاوتهای دستوری، معنایی، سبکی و فرهنگی، ترس مترجم از اینکه مطلبی از متن مبدأ در زبان مقصد ناگفته بماند، باعث میشود که دست به استراتژیهای تصریحی بزند.

ث. نتیجه گیری و پیشنهادات: ترجمههای سپید مثنوی از ترجمههای قافیهدار آن صریح تر هستند. پس هرچه زبان شعری به زبان نثر نزدیک تر باشد، به خاطر حضور بیشتر عناصر دستوری و زبانی، استفاده از استراتژیهای تصریحی نیز بیشتر می شود. در کل، تفاوت چشمگیری در میزان استفاده از استراتژیهای تصریحی بین ترجمههای قدیم و جدید مشاهده نشد. اما، در نگاهی دقیق تر، ترجمههای جدید در میزان استفاده از تصریح اختیاری قوی تر بودند و این نشان می دهد که ترجیحات و علایق سبکی و استراتژی ساختاری متن در طی یک سدهٔ گذشته در زبان انگلیسی تا میزانی تغییر کرده است. خواننده و به طبع مترجم امروزی، متنی را که ساختاری منسجم تر، روان تر و نزدیک تر به زبان امروزی شد نشته باشد، بیشتر ترجیح می دهد.

پیشنهاد می گردد که مسئلهٔ تأثیر گذشت زمان بر پدیدهٔ تصریح در پیکرههای گسترده تری و در ژانرهای مختلف در ترجمههایی که در دورههای زمانی متفاوتی ارائه شدهاند، مورد بررسی قرار بگیرد.

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September 2011

# Dedicated to My Family

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#### **Abstract**

In this study, the phenomenon of explicitation was investigated in the genre of poetry in four English translations of Masnavi. Two of these translations are in blank verse and the other two are rhymed, and in each pair, one has been translated in recent years, while the other has been translated more than ninety years ago. The main problem that was investigated in this study was if blank verse translations are more explicit than the rhymed ones. Finding out the probable reasons behind the explicitatory behaviors of the translators was another aspect of the study. The other issue investigated was if the time factor has any effect on the explicitation phenomenon. The explicitation elements were detected following Klaudy's (1998) framework in which explicitation is categorized into four types of obligatory, optional, pragmatic and translation-inherent explicitations. The findings of the study were as follows: Blank verse translations were more explicit than the rhymed ones. Beside syntactic, semantic, stylistic, text-building strategies and cultural differences, the fear of losing any intended and implied information and thus the conscious or unconscious engagement of the translator in some interpretation processes that resulted in more explicit, comprehensible and natural sentences in the target language were the possible reasons for explicitations in this corpus. Finally, since the corpus was small, not a clear and firm answer could be reached concerning the effect of time on the explicitation strategies applied by translators in the old and new translations of Masnavi.

**Key words:** explicitation, explicitness, parallel corpus, translation universals

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# **List of Abbreviations**

BV: Blank verse

R: Rhymed

SL: Source Language

TL: Target Language

ST: Source Text

TT: Target Text

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**Table 3.1** Frequency of explicitations detected in the four translations of the first 56 couplets of Masnavi

**Table 4.1** Frequency of explicitations applied in the translations

**Chapter One** 

Introduction

#### 1.1. Introduction

The development of descriptive translation studies in the 1980s has enabled the observation that certain linguistic phenomena typically occur in translated texts, not considering the language from which the text was translated. Referred to collectively as "translation universals", such phenomena as simplification, avoidance of repetitions present in the source text, explicitation, normalization and the distinctive distribution of lexical items became the object of further study, first through the use of parallel corpora (consisting of source language texts and their target language translations) and later through comparable corpora (consisting of translated texts and original texts written in the same language for analogical pragmatic situations). Observed already in the pre-descriptive and precorpora period of translation studies (e.g. by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), Levý (1963), Nida (1964) and others), explicitation was one of the translation universals that attracted the greatest amount of attention from the start, both as a SL universal (explicitatory shifts between the ST and TT were studied in parallel corpora) and a TL universal (the overall degree of explicitness was compared in translations and non-translated texts in comparable corpora)—and since the formulation of the so-called "explicitation hypothesis" by Blum-Kulka in 1985, the discourse on explicitation has become a very lively one (Kamenická, 2007, p. 45).

To give a brief definition of explicitation, Klaudy (2001) states that "explicitation is the technique of making explicit in the target text information that is implicit in the source text". From the translational strategies point of view explicitation occurs when the translator chooses from several opportunities, all acceptable in the target language (TL) and

his choice is normally the more explicit, more elaborated version (Klaudy, 2007, p. 158).

### **1.2.** Background of the Problem

Explicitation/implicitation and addition/omission strategies were first postulated by Vinay and Darbelnet in 1958. This was the beginning of the later on researches in large scales conducted by scholars such as Blum-Kulka (1986), Séguinot (1988), Klaudy and Károly (2005) and others on this phenomenon which proved to be a translation universal. The phenomena of explicitation and implicitation have been studied in different frameworks like discourse analysis, contrastive linguistics, metadiscourse analysis, and the relevance theory. Researchers have studied explicitation in different language pairs and various genres, each contributing in a way or another to the subject in Translation Studies. Likewise Iranian researchers in the past few years— since the inception of Translation Studies at MA level in 2003 – have carried out some similar parallel and comparable studies on explicitation and implicitation in the English-Persian and Persian-English language pairs, in an attempt to confirm the so-called hypotheses postulated on explicitation and add new findings to the subject.

## 1.3. Significance of the Problem

Although many studies have been carried out on translation universals and especially on explicitation, the issue still needs to be investigated from some other new aspects capturing data from all times and all languages.

Linguists believe that language use changes over time due to historical, social, political, and cultural reasons. On the other hand, explicitation is one of the many linguistic features which, probably, would have been affected by this change and evolution. Therefore, this study gets its significance in examining the issue from the time evolution aspect and its effect on language and similarly on translation.

Equally important is the study of the relationship between style and explicitation. Poetry translation is the most difficult and complicated one, in which besides the linguistic differences between source and target languages, the stylistics play an important role leading to various styles in translation, namely, prose, rhymed, blank verse, imitation, etc. Hence, this issue that how the style affects the explicitatory strategies of the translator became another significant reason for the researcher to carry out this study, hoping to achieve some important findings and in this way contribute to the explicitation studies in translations.

It is also noteworthy to mention that the corpus — Rumi's Masnavi— the researcher has chosen for the study is one of the best masterpieces of Persian poetry which has been translated into English by many translators since 1770s onwards and into various types and styles of poetry translation.

## 1.4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to find out about the relationship between two styles of poetry translation and the phenomenon of explicitation. To put it in another way, the researcher wants to investigate what strategies the translators have applied in order to make the implicit text in the source text

explicit in the target text and also discover the differences in manifestation of explicitation in poetry translation, particularly in rhymed and blank verse styles. Discussing the reasons why translators have adopted such explicitatory behaviors is another domain of interest to be investigated about. Finally, the research is also aimed at finding an answer to the question that if the explicitatory behaviors of translators have undergone any changes qualitatively and quantitatively throughout about a century's period.

#### 1.5. Statement of the Problem

The phenomenon of explicitation has attracted the attention of Translation Studies scholars since 1950s and as a universal of translation since 1980s. However, it has been studied mostly in genres other than poetry that is why it has been an inclination for the researcher to study it in this genre in a Persian-English corpus. While searching for a suitable corpus to carry out the project fruitfully, the researcher came across one of the greatest masterpieces of Persian poetry, i.e. Rumi's *Masnavi* that many direct and indirect translations and versions of it exist in English, the oldest of which, as she could find, goes back to 1772 and the most recent one belongs to 2006. However, for conducting the research, she has chosen only four of them (which have been explained in the methodology section).

Now, the problem to be investigated in the present research is that if any differences exist in the manifestation of explicitation in these translations and why translators use explicitatory strategies, not mentioning the obligatory and optional explicitations which are due to syntactic and

stylistic differences. Also, another issue studied is the effect of the metatextual feature of time on the phenomenon of explicitation.

#### 1.6. Research Questions

- 1- Are blank-verse translations of *Masnavi* more explicit than rhymed translations of it?
- 2- If so, what are the reasons behind the explicitatory behaviors of the translators?
- 3- Has the time factor had any effect on the phenomenon of explicitation in the four translations studied?

### 1.7. Research Hypotheses

The related null hypotheses could be as follows:

H<sub>0</sub>: Blank verse translations of *Masnavi* are less or as explicit as the rhymed ones.

H<sub>0</sub>: The time factor has not had any effect on the phenomenon of explicitation in the four translations studied.

### 1.8. Theoretical Framework

Klaudy (1998) considers four types of explicitation as:

## 1) Obligatory explicitation

As a result of some differences in the semantic and syntactic structures of two languages, explicitation becomes obligatory because without such explicitation the sentences in the target