

Gabriela Saldanha

Explicitation Revisited: Bringing the Reader into the Picture

1 Introduction

Olohan and Baker (2000: 142) suggest that among studies dealing with translation “universals”, also known as “features of translation” (see Olohan 2004: 90-92), the general preference has been to focus on explicitation. This seems to be corroborated by a quick search on St Jerome’s Translation Studies Abstracts and Bibliography of Translation Studies database,¹ where a simple search for the terms *explicitation/explicitating*, *normaliz/sation*, *simplification*, *standardiz/sation* produces 65, 42, 41 and 6 hits, respectively. These studies mostly report on quantitative studies of explicitation (for example, Shlesinger 1995, Olohan/Baker 2000, Olohan 2001, Øverås 1998, Nilsson 2002, Puurtinen 2004, Klaudy/Károly 2005, Kenny 2005) and tend to rely on previous definitions of explicitation (for example by Vinay/Darbelnet 1958/1977, Blum-Kulka 1986 or Baker 1993), without actually engaging with those definitions and their implications for their findings. Notable exceptions are Séguinot (1988) and House (2004). However, as it is argued below, the definition of explicitation is not unproblematic.

The first aim of this paper is to question two of the fundamental assumptions underlying the definitions offered so far. These assumptions are that (1) instances of explicitness in the target text correspond to instances of implicitness in the source text, and that (2) there is increased “informativeness” in the target text as a result of that implicitness/explicitness relationship. Examples are discussed that challenge these assumptions. The examples have been grouped into three categories according to the linguistic features under consideration: optional connectives, instances of self-referentiality and culture-specific items (discussed in sections 2, 3 and 4 below).

The second aim is to argue that, if we are to fully understand the phenomenon of explicitation in translation, we need to go beyond mere descriptions and dig deeper into translators’ motivations for using explicitation as a strategy. Looking at the diversity of approaches taken by translators working in similar conditions and with the same languages might enable us to identify more clearly the factors influencing their decisions. The examples offered in this paper come from the Corpus of Translations by Peter Bush and the Corpus of Translations by Margaret Jull Costa; both include contemporary English translations of Spanish and Portuguese narrative and their source texts. It is argued that, when seen as forming consistent patterns across

¹ <http://www.stjerome.co.uk/tsaonline>. This search was carried out on 5 March 2008. The database is continuously updated and these figures are bound to change in a short space of time.

translations by the same translator, instances of explicitation can be explained with reference to relevance theory and the concept of audience design (Saldanha 2005).

2 The Problem of Defining Explicitation in Relation to Source Text Implicitation: Optional Connectives

One of the defining characteristics of explicitation as a translation strategy seems to be a correspondence between explicitness in the target text and implicitness in the source text. Vinay and Darbelnet's (1958/1977: 9) definition, one of the first offered in the literature, describes it as a: "procédé qui consiste à introduire dans LA des précisions qui restent implicites dans LD, mais qui se dégagent du contexte ou de la situation", that is, literally: 'a procedure that consists in introducing in the target language information (precisions) that remain implicit in the source language, but that are apparent from the context or the situation' (my translation). This requirement for implicitness in the source text is a recurring feature of other definitions of explicitation, such as that by Blum Kulka (1986), Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997: 55), Øverås (1998: 574) and Olohan and Baker (2000: 142). Øverås refers to the explicit rendering of "*implicit, co-textually recoverable ST material*" (Øverås 1998: 574, my emphasis). Olohan and Baker define explicitation as "the spelling out in a target text of information which is only *implicit in a source text*" (Olohan/Baker 2000: 142, my emphasis).

A clear example where explicitation in the target text (TT) is *not* necessarily linked to implicit information in the source text is where a certain connective (or any other function word) is optional in the target text but not in the source text. This is the case of the connective *that* following verbal processes to introduce the reported clause (verbiage) in English: *that* is optional in constructions such as "I said that I hadn't finished it yet" (in JCSCCTT²), compared to the (unattested) "I said I hadn't finished it yet". The use of this connective in translation has been studied in some detail by Olohan and Baker (2000), Kenny (2005) and Saldanha (2005). Olohan and Baker (2000) report that the use of the optional *that* after the reporting verbs SAY³ and TELL is far more frequent in translations of narrative into English than in non-translated English narrative, and interpret this as evidence of explicitation, although they also mention other possible conditioning factors. The figures reported by Olohan and Baker are compelling, the *that*-connective is far more frequent in the translated corpus (a subset of the Translational English Corpus),⁴ where it also tends to occur more often than the zero-connective for most forms of the verbs. In the non-translated corpus (a

² Unless otherwise indicated, all examples in this paper come from the Corpus of Translations by Margaret Jull Costa (CTMJC) and the Corpus of Translations by Peter Bush (CTPB). These are parallel corpora containing Spanish and Portuguese texts translated into English by the respective translators, compiled by the author. Reference to the texts is made using abbreviations starting with JC or B, corresponding to Jull Costa and Bush respectively, followed by the author's initials, and ending in ST or TT, for source text or target text.

³ SMALL CAPITALS are used here and elsewhere to represent lemmas.

⁴ The Translational English Corpus is held at the University of Manchester, for information and free access visit <http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/ctis/research/english-corpus/> (25 March 2008).

subset of the British National Corpus),⁵ the zero-connective is more frequent for all forms of the verb.

However, not all instances where the optional *that* has been spelled out in the translation are instances where there is implicitation in the source text. The Translational English Corpus (TEC) contains texts translated from a range of source languages, but some of them are better represented than others, so potential source-text interference is not excluded either. This is precisely the possibility explored by Kenny (2005), who looks at the use of *that* in reporting structures with the verb SAY in a parallel corpus of literary texts translated from German into English (GEPCLT). German, like English, has an optional connective (*dass*) which can be used to introduce reporting structures. Kenny's (2005) results show that when *that* is used in reporting structures with SAY in the English translations, roughly only half the time is there a corresponding *dass* in the source texts. In other words, the use of optional *that* in English translations from German does not seem to be determined by the use of the *dass*-connective in German. Furthermore, the replacement of *dass* with *that* was more common than the replacement of *dass* with zero, which suggests that the tendency is to explicitate rather than implicate.

The situation in translations from Spanish and Portuguese is rather different: reported speech introduced by the verbs DECIR and DIZER (the closest equivalents to SAY and TELL in Spanish and Portuguese, respectively) actually requires the use of the connective *que* in most cases.⁶ Thus, the use of *that* in translations from Spanish and Portuguese into English does not necessarily imply a shift whereby something that is implicit in the source text is made explicit in the target text. In examples (1) and (2), the link between the reporting verb and its object is made explicit in the source text by the (obligatory) use of the connective *que* in Spanish.

(1) La madre perdonó a su hijo; pero el niño dijo que quería ser disecador...
(JCSFST)

The mother forgave her son, but the boy said that he wanted to be a taxidermist... (JCSFTT)

(2) ... y tuvo que irse de la escuela porque el maestro decía que daba mal ejemplo.
(JCSFST)

... had to leave the school because the teacher said he was setting a bad example. (JCSFTT)

Still, it is possible to talk about explicitation as a preferred strategy in translation in relation to other possible alternative renderings in the target language. In example (1), it would have been possible to say *the boy said he wanted to be a taxidermist*, and this option is realised in other similar cases in the same translation (as in example 2). It should also be noted that the use of *that* after a reporting verb in English translations from Spanish and Portuguese is not always triggered by the use of a reporting verb

⁵ For more information and to access the British National Corpus visit <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/> (25 March 2008).

⁶ See Butt/Benjamin (2000: 288, 446, 450), and Mira Mateus *et al.* (1983: 414-416) for a description of the rare exceptions to this rule.

followed by the connective in the source language. In a parallel corpus of five book-length English translations (136,534 words) from Spanish and Portuguese source texts (123,494 words) by Margaret Jull Costa (CTMJC), it was found that of the 34 instances where *that* was optional after SAY in the target texts, only 23 cases corresponded to instances where the connective *que* was used in Spanish and Portuguese (Saldanha 2005). Of the 11 instances where the reporting structure with SAY in English did not correspond to a reporting structure with *que* in the source texts, *that* was used in the target text in 6 cases. An example (3) is provided below, where direct speech is used in the source text and indirect speech in the target text.

- (3) en el Ministerio de Defensa se dice 'La cosa no pasará de acá' (JCVST)
in the Ministry of Defence it is said 'The matter will go no further' (literally)
in the Ministry of Defence it is said that the matter will go no further (JCVTT)

In brief, the examples in this section show that explicitation can be said to occur in relation to other less explicit options in the target text, even when there is no clear shift from an implicit connection to an explicit connection as in examples (1) and (3).

3 The Problem with Assuming an Increased "Informativeness" as a Result of Explicitation: Self-referentiality

Blum-Kulka explains that "the translator simply *expands* the TL text, building into it a *semantic redundancy absent* in the original" (Blum-Kulka 1986: 21, my emphasis). Séguinot criticizes Blum-Kulka's definition as "too narrow" because "explicitness does not necessarily mean redundancy" (Séguinot 1988: 106). She then goes on to describe three forms explicitation can take:

[...] something is expressed in the translation which was not in the original, something which was implied or understood through presupposition in the source text is overtly expressed in the translation, or an element in the source text is given greater importance in the translation through focus, emphasis, or lexical choice. (Séguinot 1988: 106)

Séguinot thus seems to distinguish between the repetition of information (redundancy) and the addition, clarification or emphasis of information. In any case, the assumption is that the target text will be more informative than the source text. This assumption is echoed in Olohan and Baker who refer to "the introduction of *extra* information" (Olohan/Baker 2000: 142). However, describing what is implicit or explicit in terms of the meaning of a word (not to mention of a sentence, or text) would be controversial in any one language, and even more so if we compare meanings across languages.

The examples in this section, apart from not fulfilling the requirement of implicitness in the source text as those in the previous section, also challenge the assumption of increased informativeness in the target texts as a result of explicitation. These are examples of what Hermans (1996) calls cases of self-reflexiveness or self-referentiality involving the medium of communication itself. These are instances of what is generally known as meta-language, that is, language used to talk about language. Metalinguistic uses of language do not always pose a problem for the translator. In example (4), the second instance of *reconocerlo* is used to refer to the word itself but because there is

no reference to the linguistic system the word belongs to, or to other signifiers in that system, it can be easily translated by the English word *recognize*.

- (4) [...] enciende rápido la lámpara sobre la mesita de luz y sonríe aliviada al reconocerlo a Alfredi. Y reconocerlo es la palabra porque el médico-taxista lleva puesta (mal) una barba postiza blanca. (JCVST)

[...] she quickly turns on the bedside light only to smile with relief when she recognizes Alfredi. And 'recognize' is the right word since the doctor-cum-taxi driver is at this point wearing a (clumsily applied) false white beard. (JCVTT)

Metalinguistic uses of words present problems only when there is an explicit or implicit reference to the linguistic system the word or expression belongs to (see example 5). These are instances where texts "affirm being written in a particular language" or "exploit their idiom through polysemy, wordplay and similar devices" (Hermans 1996: 29). As a result:

[...] translations run into contradictions and incongruities which challenge the reader's willing suspension of disbelief; or the translated text may call on the explicit intervention of a Translator's Voice through the use of brackets or of notes, and they then remind the reader of this other presence continually stalking a purportedly univocal discourse. (Hermans 1996: 29)

Examples (5) and (6) come from a translation by Margaret Jull Costa, *The Mandarin*, of a novel by Eça de Queiroz. They are taken from a conversation between a Portuguese man, Teodoro, and General Camilloff, Russian ambassador to Peking. They are in China and the latter asks Teodoro whether he speaks any Chinese. Teodoro replies that he knows "two important words... 'mandarin' and 'chá'". The general then goes on to explain (despite several interruptions by his interlocutor, which have been omitted here) that 'mandarin' is not a Chinese word and comes from the Portuguese 'mandar', and that the word for tea may not be enough:

- (5) "Mandarim" [...] É o nome que no século XVI os navegadores do seu país, [...] deram aos funcionários chineses. Vem do seu verbo [...] Do seu lindo verbo "mandar"... (JCQST)

Mandarim [...] Is the name that in the 16th century the sailors from your country [...] gave Chinese officials. It comes from your verb [...] From your nice verb "mandar" [...] (literally)

"Mandarin" [...] It's the name the sixteenth-century navigators from your country [...] gave to Chinese officials. It comes from the verb [...] From that lovely verb of yours "mandar" – to command. (JCQTT)

- (6) Resta-lhe portanto “chá”. É um vocábulo que tem um vasto papel na vida chinesa, mas julgo-o insuficiente para servir a todas as relações sociais. (JCQST)
Thus you are left with “chá”. It is a word that has a vast role in Chinese life, but I find it insufficient to serve you on all social relations. (literally)
So that leaves you with the word for tea, “chá”, a word that does indeed play an immensely important role in Chinese life, but would still not be enough, I fear, to deal with all social occasions. (JCQTT)

These seem to be clear instances of explicitation, where the translator, Margaret Jull Costa, provides a gloss for the Portuguese words mentioned. Presumably, the intention is to clarify information that is assumed not to be part of the cognitive store of the reader. However, the meanings of *mandar* and *chá* are not in any way “implicit” in the source text, they do not need to be co-textually or contextually recovered. What is more, talking of increased redundancy or informativeness in the target text would involve assuming that there is at least some degree of semantic content conveyed by the foreign words in the target text. This, in turn, involves assuming that the meaning of the words are inscribed in the word itself without any consideration for the situation in which it is uttered/written. These assumptions are clearly problematic and are further discussed in Section 4 in relation to pragmatic and semantic meanings.

As mentioned above, instances of self-referentiality do not always prompt the translator to intervene with his or her own voice, but then it is likely that the translation will result in incongruities that will nevertheless challenge the reader's willing suspension of disbelief. This is the case in example (7) below, where the author, writing in Spanish, compares the terms for ‘firefly’ in Spanish and Catalan. The translator, Peter Bush, leaves the words in the original language and in doing so disturbs the illusion of transparency: sudden departure from the language of the translation is bound to remind the readers that they are not reading Goytisoló's writing. Nevertheless, he does not intervene to explain to the reader what the terms mean, i.e. he does not resort to explicitation.

- (7) [...] la belleza misteriosa del término “luciérnaga” frente a la grosería y miseria del “cuca de llum” local (BGST)
[...] the mysterious beauty of the term *luciérnaga* as opposed to the miserable obscenity of the local *cuca de llum* (BGTT)

These examples show that explicitation is optional concerning instances of self-referentiality and that it does not necessarily correspond to implicitation in the source text. In fact, when foreign words are used in any text, there seems to be little point in attempting to measure how explicit or implicit their meaning might be. A more interesting question with regard to the examples above is what has prompted the translators to explain or not the meaning of the foreign words. In example (5), knowing that *mandar* means ‘to command’ is necessary to make a connection with *Mandarin* as someone who commands. In example (6), the sarcasm in the General's answer would be lost on a reader who does not know that *chá* means ‘tea’. It could be argued that the meaning of the foreign words in the target text in example (7) are not so relevant to understand the text, since the comparison concerns purely their

aesthetic qualities. On the other hand, maybe comparing *firefly* with a literal translation for *cuca de llum* as *light bug* would give the reader a better appreciation of what Goytisolo and Bush mean when they refer to the “misery” of the term, even though its “obscenity” would still be left unexplained (*cuca* in Catalan is slang for ‘penis’).

4 Culture-specific Items

Apart from cases of self-referentiality and optional connectives where there is no correspondence between ST-implicitness/ST-explicitness, there are cases where, although it could be argued that certain meanings are implicit in the source text and explicit in the target text, the question about increased semantic redundancy, in the sense of a more “informative” rendering, is still not clear cut. When dealing with culture-specific items, for example, the question of the “informativeness” of an item clearly depends on the cognitive store of the reader.

- (8) En un rincón había una montaña de botellas, color guardia civil, cubiertas de polvo. (JCSFST)

In one corner there was a pile of bottles, guardia-civil colour, covered in dust. (literally)

In one corner there was a pile of dusty bottles, green as a guardia civil’s uniform. (JCSFTT)

In the source text in example (8), *guardia civil* modifies *color* ‘colour’, and it is an unusual collocate for that word, an instance of what Kenny calls ‘creative collocation’ (Kenny 2001: 134-141). Jull Costa borrows the Spanish term and, although she does not define it, she provides two important pieces of information, namely, that a *guardia civil* wears a uniform, and that this uniform is green. What is more, the metonymy in the source text is rendered as a simile⁷ in the target text, so the comparative element is also more explicit (see Weissbrod 1992). So, there is explicitation at several levels. Nevertheless, if we bring the source- and target-text readers into the picture, can we really argue that explicitation has resulted in increased informativeness? What is a “guardia-civil green”? A bright, dry, pale or dark green? Assuming for a moment that we can actually locate readers in a specific culture, common sense would say that “guardia-civil colour” is much more specific from the source-culture reader’s point of view than “green as a guardia civil’s uniform” from the target-culture reader’s perspective.

It is also interesting to note that although explicitation seems to be triggered by the presence of a culture-specific item, the translator’s solution is not to explain the meaning of the item itself but – probably on the basis of assumptions concerning the cognitive store of the readers – to provide a minimum amount of information that enables them to work out the *function* of the lexical item even without a clear understanding of its semantic meaning. The target-text readers may still not know what

⁷ A simile is a comparison where the similarity is directly expressed using terms such as ‘like’, ‘as’ or ‘similar to’. Metonymy is a figure of speech where a thing, concept, person, or group is represented by something closely associated with it.

guardia civil actually *means*, but they do not need to, because they will know that here it is used to describe a "colour" and that the colour in question is some sort of green.

Another example is provided by Peter Bush's rendering of *chicha* as *chicha beer* in the translation of a text by Luis Sepúlveda:

(9) [...] cuando éstos se adormecían bajo los efectos de la chicha y de la natema... (BSST)

[...] when they would fall asleep under the effects of the chicha and the natema... (literally)

[...] once they had fallen asleep, overcome by chicha beer and *natema*... (BSTT)

Chicha is a fermented beverage, traditionally made from maize and sometimes from rice. Its alcohol percentage can vary, sometimes it can be made as a soft drink, although in the particular context where *chicha* is used in Sepúlveda's text, it refers to an alcoholic beverage. In this case, there is a certain piece of information that is implicit in the source text and is made explicit in the target text: *chicha* contains alcohol. Nevertheless, the item *chicha*, on its own, is likely to be much more informative to a source culture reader than *chicha beer* to an Anglo-saxon reader. Indeed, a reader who has been acquainted with *chicha* may find it rather misleading that it should be called a type of 'beer'.

At this stage, a distinction between pragmatic and semantic meanings might be thought useful: semantic meaning being what is encoded in the text, and contained within the text, and pragmatic meaning that which is inferred by reference outside the text (see, for example, Widdowson 1998: 17). Klaudy, following Pym (1993), describes as pragmatic explicitation cases where "members of the target language cultural community may not share aspects of what is considered general knowledge within the source language culture" (Klaudy 1998: 83). One of the risks of thinking along these lines, as pointed out in passing above, is that we might end up assuming too much about readers and their cultural contexts. When references are highly specific to a local culture, as in this case, establishing a degree of informativeness even among native speakers is difficult. A source-text reader from Spain, for example, may not be at all familiar with *chicha*.

Another problem with categorizing explicitation along those lines is that the distinction between what aspects of meaning can be said to be semantically inscribed in the text and what aspects can only be pragmatically inferred by reference outside the text is not clear cut (see, for example, Widdowson 1998, Fetzer 2004). According to Widdowson (1998: 21), semantic meaning constitutes only a range of delimiting coordinates which are given pragmatic meaning in association with contextual assumptions. In other words, the meaning encoded in the text allows us to delimit the range of possible contexts it could apply to, but it is not until we go from text to context that the pragmatic potential is realised. Bianchi (1999: 74) goes even further and argues that a conception of autonomous linguistic meaning does no longer seem reasonable, and should be replaced by a context-dependent conception, whereby words have *semantic potential*, that is, a set of applications to situations, objects, or contexts that are accepted by the linguistic community. The notion of context still

needs some elaboration within translation studies (see Baker 2005), and this is not the place to attempt further refinements. For the purposes of this paper it is sufficient to recognise that the meaning potential of an utterance is not realised until it is applied to a specific context, shared by a certain linguistic community, and therefore distinguishing between semantic and pragmatic meanings will not be of assistance in refining the notion of explicitation when looking at texts without considering an immediate field of reception.

The solution I would like to propose here is to explain explicitation as a strategy that is not necessarily associated with implicitness in the source text, but with translators' assumptions about their readership and about their role as literary and cultural mediators.

5 Exploring Motivations: Implicit and Explicit for Whom?

In example (10) the definitions of explicitation provided in the literature work quite well: there is a piece of information that is explicit in the TT but only implicit in the ST, and that is the fact that the *doce reales* are Alfanhuí's payment for his work as oxherd. It is interesting to note, however, that even if the definition holds in relation to the pair *con/earning*, this only helps us *describe* the shift without *explaining* it, since it remains to be seen whether it is the implicitness in the preposition itself (*con*, whose closest equivalent in English is 'with') that has triggered the shift. Another candidate that may have worked as a trigger in this case is the foreign item *reales* (a Spanish form of currency no longer in use) appearing in the same sentence. It is possible that rather than explaining the meaning of the term *reales* itself, or risking misunderstanding, the translator has rendered the whole sentence in such a way that the meaning of *reales* can be more easily derived from the co-text (as in example 8) than if she had translated the preposition *con* literally.

(10) Así entró Alfanhuí de boyero en Moraleja, con doce reales cada día. (JCSFST)

Thus became Alfanhuí an oxherd in Moraleja, with twelve *reales* a day. (literally)

And so Alfanhuí became the oxherd in Moraleja, earning twelve *reales* a day. (JCSFTT)

Several hypotheses have been presented as to *why* and *when* translators resort to explicitation. Communicative preferences across languages are one of the factors to consider. Contrastive German-English discourse analyses suggest that German speakers and writers tend to present information in a more explicit manner than their English counterparts: "they tend to (overtly) encode or verbalize propositional content rather than leave it to be inferred from the context" (House 2004: 187). Therefore, according to House, a tendency to explicitate among English to German translators would simply be a reflection of German communicative preferences. House's hypothesis that explicitation reflects differences in linguistic-textual conventions between source and target texts is presented as "in stark opposition" to that postulated by Blum-Kulka, who argues that it is the constraints of the translation process which causes greater cohesive explicitness in the translation relative to its original (House 2004: 193). It

could be argued, however, that these two hypotheses are not necessarily mutually exclusive: cognitive constraints inherent in the translation process and textual-linguistic conventions can be seen as two of the probably many more factors that influence the translators' choice. Explicitation in translation from English into German could still be directly associated with the translation process if a heavier tendency to explicitness was to be found in translated than in non-translated comparable German corpora.

House (2004) does not dismiss the role of context and its influence on the reader's interpretation, but argues that an adequate description of decisions taken by the translator on the basis of an assessment of the addressee's contextual resources

[...] can only be achieved in the framework of a psycholinguistic theory. For the purposes of our objective of coming to grips with the notion of 'explicitness in texts', a psycholinguistic framework seems less appropriate than for instance the linguistic one suggested by Halliday [...] (House 2004: 191)

Following Halliday, House distinguishes between three types of explicitation, depending on whether it relates to the ideational, interpersonal or textual functional component. In each of these types, explicitness can take three different forms:

- *elaboration*, when the clause or part of it is elaborated upon by using other words, specifying, commenting or exemplifying;
- *extension*, when there is expansion via the addition of a new element, provision of an exception, or offer of an alternative,
- *enhancement*, when some circumstantial, temporal, local causal, or conditional element is used to embellish or qualify the clause.

This systemic functional framework is useful to *describe* instances of explicitation but less so to *explain* them. House herself acknowledges that in order to gain a complete picture of the many factors influencing explicitation across discourse, we must take non-linguistic factors into account, such as translator variables, situational variables and translation-task variables (House 2004: 203). When it comes to explore motivations underlying translator's choices, relevance theory does indeed seem to be more apt.

The main thesis in relevance theory is that human communication creates an expectation of optimal relevance: "An assumption is relevant in a context if and only if it has some contextual effects in that context" (Sperber/Wilson 1986: 122). However, relevance is a matter of degree, and having contextual effects is not sufficient for optimal relevance. Two conditions have to be fulfilled: the contextual effects have to be large and the processing effort required small (Sperber/Wilson 1986: 125). The principle that

In aiming at relevance, the speaker must make some assumptions about the hearer's cognitive abilities and contextual resources, which will necessarily be reflected in the way she communicates, and in particular in what she chooses to make explicit and what she chooses to leave implicit. (Sperber/Wilson 1986: 218)

seems particularly suitable to explain examples (5), (6), (8), (9) and (10) above. However, as argued in Saldanha (2005) on the basis of a detailed analysis of the choices made by translators working from and into the same languages, with a similar

genre and in similar conditions, assumptions about the cognitive environment of the addressee are not always enough to explain different tendencies in the use of explicitation as a strategy.

The results presented in Saldanha (2005) were obtained from the same two corpora of translations by Margaret Jull Costa and Peter Bush from where the examples analysed here have been taken. The results showed that Jull Costa was less likely than Bush to use cultural borrowings as a strategy for dealing with culture-specific terms, and that when she did, she provided contextual information that facilitated their understanding (as in examples (5), (6), (8) and (10) above). A look at patterns in the use of the optional connective *that* after reporting verbs SAY and TELL showed that Jull Costa tended to use the *that*-connective far more often than Peter Bush. Jull Costa also tended to add emphatic italics in her translations (a strategy that was noticeably absent in Bush's translations), which could be indicative of a tendency to facilitate readability. It was therefore suggested that there was a more marked tendency towards explicitation in translations by Margaret Jull Costa than in translation by Peter Bush, and that this was the result of the two translators' different stylistic preferences (Baker 2000) since the different patterns could not be explained by different constraints in terms of languages involved, genres or cultural backgrounds. What was particularly interesting was that the translators seemed to opt for different strategies even when presented with rather similar cases, as in examples (11) and (12).

(11) Siempre, en todo caso, nos trataremos de usted. (BOST)

[...] we must always use *usted* to each other. (BOTT)

(12) [...] eu e Ricardo não nos tratávamos por tu, (JCSCTT)

[...] Ricardo and I never addressed each other as 'tu', (JCSCTT)

Both Portuguese and Spanish distinguish between a formal and informal form of address, which are used in these examples self-referentially. Although both translators reproduce in the translations the actual source language forms (*usted* and *tú* in Spanish and *você* and *tu* in Portuguese), they generally differ in the choice of verb introducing them. The Spanish *trataremos de* and the Portuguese *tratávamos por* both mean 'address as'. The lemmas in the two languages are cognates; surface differences in the examples below are explained partly by the fact that the Spanish verb is marked for future tense, while the Portuguese verb is in the past tense. Bush translates the Spanish as *use 'usted' to each other*, whereas Jull Costa opts for the more explicit *address each other as 'tu'*, making clear that what is being discussed is a form of address. Technically, this does not count as explicitation, since the idea of 'addressing' is also present in the Portuguese *tratar por*, and in the Spanish *tratar de*. It is only when contrasted with the choice of *use* in the translation by Bush (and therefore with the choices available in the English language in general), that Jull Costa's lexical choice strikes us as more explicit.

In order to find an explanation for these tendencies, Saldanha (2005) looked at Peter Bush's and Margaret Jull Costa's own writing about translation and interviews with both translators. On the basis of a detailed analysis of the translators' *position*,

horizon, and *project* (Berman 1995), it was argued that what may explain the use of different strategies was not so much the translator's different assumptions about their reader's contextual resources, but their own different conceptions of their roles as intercultural mediators in relation to their audience.

According to Bush (2002a: 30), it is not possible to analyse the experience of the source text readers, and it is not possible to re-create those imponderables in a reader in another language. Bush's position is that:

[...] although the translator will inevitably think about the eventual readerships for his translation, the reader he must translate for is himself, as no-one else will be so embedded in the struggle between original and nascent text. (Bush 2002a: 23)

Another point made by Bush is that readers are patronised; he points out that some readers may like to have to reach for a dictionary to understand what they are reading (personal communication). We can read in Bush's comments a willingness to challenge his readers. Jull Costa, on the other hand, sees it as her challenge "to make them stop thinking that translations are not worth reading, that they are not, somehow, the real thing" (personal communication). Her strategy, however is not to challenge her readers but to reach out to them. In doing so, she also has the author's interest at heart:

Any good translator feels a huge responsibility towards his or her author [...] Since English is the main world language and therefore the biggest market in the world, authors are obviously keen to be translated into English. I am very aware that my translations *are their entrée into this market and this new readership*. (Jull Costa, personal communication, my emphasis)

When we associate the patterns of explicitation with the translators' own views of their role in relation to their readers, it seems plausible that we could explain explicitation as a feature of audience design (Mason 2000). The basic tenet of audience design is that style is oriented to people (a response to an audience) rather than functions (Bell 2001). Applying Bell's notion to translation as an extension of skopos theory, Mason postulates that:

[...] in many cases, according to their skopos, translators will wish their output to conform to the expectations of users and to be accepted as viable instances of the established practices of the target culture. In others [...] it is the element of source language cultural and socio-textual practices which the translation skopos seeks to preserve. (Mason 2000: 18)

I would not go as far as saying that Jull Costa and Bush have different readerships in mind. They both translate for an educated English-speaking readership that is prepared to read translated literature, including "difficult" writers such as Goytisolo or Saramago. They differ, however, in terms of how far they will go to meet the audience on its own terms and their willingness to align themselves occasionally with the source culture and present translated language as the language of an "out-group".

Jull Costa wants her translations to be acceptable in the terms established by the target culture, her translations are driven by a desire to make their reading a pleasurable experience, which is not interrupted by encounters with information, such as source language words, that the readers cannot process in their own cognitive environment. This does not mean that the target text will have been simplified or that

it will be more informative than the source text. However, when there is a cultural gap that would prevent the target text reader from making relevant assumptions, then she is likely to mediate, providing an intratextual gloss or adding contextual information.

Bush, on the other hand, is driven by a desire to introduce new foreign authors to Britain's literary market (see Bush 2002b), and is ready to challenge readers to shift out of their usual patterns to read them. Describing his experience of translating Onetti, Bush talks about resisting "the weight of conventional English pressing down on the brain" (Bush 1999: 182). This does not mean that he is prepared to sacrifice idiomaticity, but here and there, he will diverge from the reader's language and confront them with a language that is not their own, reminding them that the text has originated in another language.

A clear advantage of seeing explicitation from this point of view, is that the same explanation can be offered in relation to instances of implicitation. In example (13), Jull Costa adds information that specifies that a *fado* is a tune (something that is implicit in the Portuguese *repenicando à viola*), but omits another piece of information: the title of the song. From the target reader's perspective, however, this does not hinder comprehension. If anything, it facilitates comprehension by restricting the number of unfamiliar elements that the reader will be confronted with, and therefore is in line with the explanation given above concerning Margaret Jull Costa's tendency to use explicitation.

(13) [...] o mesquinho tenente de quinze mil réis de soldo, ria com a D. Augusta, repenicando à viola o "Fado da Cotovia". (JCQST)

[...] the insignificant lieutenant of fifteen *mil-réis* a month, laughing with D. Augusta, picking out on his guitar the "Fado da Cotovia". (literally)

[...] that happy and insignificant lieutenant with his fifteen *mil-réis* a month, laughing with Dona Augusta and picking out the tune of a *fado* on his guitar. (JCQTT)

6 Conclusion

Explicitation can be conceived as a translation strategy whereby translators spell out optional interpersonal, ideational or textual meanings in the target text. When this is a conscious strategy, it is likely to be made on the basis of their assumptions regarding the likely cognitive context and environment of their readers. Patterns in the use of explicitation seem to be related also to how individual translators see their role as intercultural and literary mediators. If regularities in the use of this strategy were established within a certain socio-cultural field we might be able to make certain generalizations as to how the role of translators in relation to their audience is conceived within that field. It is possible that subconscious processes of explicitation are also at work in translation, but explanations for these might have to be found in the field of psycholinguists and have not been explored here.

The frequent use of explicitation is bound to have an effect upon the readability and ease of comprehension of a text in its own right, but not necessarily in relation to

the source text. It has been argued here that the informativeness of a text cannot be postulated a priori because it cannot be measured outside specific contexts of reception. Although translations are products of the target culture, little research has been carried out on the reception of translations across different socio-cultural contexts. Research along these lines may prove useful in order to find out how accurate are translators' assumptions about their readership and their preferences.

References

- Baker, Mona (1993): "Corpus Linguistics and Translation Studies: Implications and Applications." Mona Baker, Gill Francis, Elena Tognini-Bonelli (eds): *Text and Technology: In Honour of John Sinclair*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins, 233-250
- Baker, Mona (2000) "Towards a Methodology for Investigating the Style of a Literary Translator." *Target* 12 [2]: 241-266
- Baker, Mona (2005): "Contextualization in Translator- and Interpreter-mediated Events." *Journal of Pragmatics* 38: 321-337
- Bell, Alan (2001): "Back in Style: Reworking Audience Design." Penelope Eckert, John R. Rickford (eds): *Style and Sociolinguistic Variation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 139-169
- Berman, Antoine (1995): *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne*. Paris: Gallimard
- Bianchi, Claudia (1999): "Three Forms of Contextual Dependence." Paolo Bouquet, Luciano Serafini, Patrick Brézillon, Massimo Benerecetti, F. Castellani (eds): *Modeling and Using Context. Second International and Interdisciplinary Conference, CONTEXT'99, Proceedings*. (Lecture Notes in Computer Science 1688.) Heidelberg etc.: Springer 1999, 67-76
- Blum-Kulka, Shoshana (1986): "Shifts of Cohesion and Coherence in Translation." Juliane House, Shoshana Blum-Kulka (eds): *Interlingual and Intercultural Communication: Discourse and Cognition in Translation and Second Language Acquisition*. Tübingen: Narr, 17-35 – reprinted in: Lawrence Venuti (ed.) (2001): *The Translation Studies Reader*. London/ New York: Routledge, 298-313
- Bush, Peter (1999): "Translating Juan Carlos Onetti for Anglo-Saxon Others." Gustavo San Román (ed.): *Onetti and Others: Comparative Essays on a Major Figure in Latin American Literature*. New York: State University of New York Press, 177-186
- Bush, Peter (2002a): "The Act of Translation: The Case of Juan Goytisolo's *A Cock-Eyed Comedy*." Keith Harvey (ed.): *CTIS Occasional Papers 2*. Manchester: Centre for Translation and Intercultural Studies, UMIST, 21-32
- Bush, Peter (2002b): "The Politics of a Literary Translator's Interventions: the Case of *Strawberry and Chocolate*." *Traduire* [195]: 53-67
- Butt, John; Carmen Benjamin (2000): *A New Reference Grammar of Modern Spanish*. 3rd ed. London: Arnold
- Fetzer, Anita (2004): *Recontextualizing Context: Grammaticality Meets Appropriateness*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins
- Halliday, Michael A. K. (1994): *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. 2nd ed. London: Arnold
- Hermans, Theo (1996): "The Translator's Voice in Translated Narrative." *Target* 8 [1]: 23-48
- House, Juliane (2004): "Explicitness in Discourse across Languages." Juliane House, Werner Koller, Klaus Schubert (eds): *Neue Perspektiven in der Übersetzungs- und Dolmetschwissenschaft. Festschrift für Heidrun Gerzymisch-Arbogast zum 60. Geburtstag*. Bochum: AKS-Verlag, 185-207

- Kenny, Dorothy (2001): *Lexis and Creativity in Translation: A Corpus-based Study*. Manchester: St Jerome
- Kenny, Dorothy (2005): "Parallel Corpora and Translation Studies: Old Questions, New Perspectives? Reporting *that* in GEPCOLT: a Case Study." Geoff Barnbrook, Pernilla Danielsson, Michaela Mahlberg (eds): *Meaningful Texts: The Extraction of Semantic Information from Monolingual and Multilingual Corpora*. London/New York: Continuum, 154-165
- Klaudy, Kinga (1998): "Explicitation." Mona Baker (ed.): *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*. London/New York: Routledge, 80-84
- Klaudy, Kinga; Krisztina Károly (2005): "Implicitation in Translation: Empirical Evidence for Operational Asymmetry in Translation." *Across Languages and Cultures* 6 [1]: 13-28
- Mira Mateus, Maria Helena; Ana Maria Brito, Inês Silva Duarte, Isabel Hub Faria (1983): *Gramática da Língua Portuguesa: Elementos para a descrição da estrutura, funcionamento e uso do português atual*. Coimbra: Livraria Almedina
- Mason, Ian (2000): "Audience Design in Translating." *The Translator* 6 [1]: 1-22
- Nilsson, Per-Ola (2002): "An Assessment of the Translation-specificity of Over-represented Multi-word Patterns in Swedish Fiction Texts Translated from English." *Linguistica Antverpiensia* NS 1: 407-417
- Olohan, Maeve (2001): "Spelling out the Optionals in Translation: a Corpus Study." *UCREL Technical Papers* 13: 423-432
- Olohan, Maeve (2004): *Introducing Corpora in Translation Studies*. London/New York: Routledge
- Olohan, Maeve; Mona Baker (2000): "Reporting *that* in Translated English: Evidence for Subconscious Processes of Explicitation?" *Across Languages and Cultures* 1 [2]: 141-158
- Øverås, Linn (1998): "In Search of the Third Code: An Investigation of Norms in Literary Translation." *Meta* 43 [4]: 571-588

trans-kom

trans-kom ist eine wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für Translation und Fachkommunikation.

trans-kom veröffentlicht Forschungsergebnisse und wissenschaftliche Diskussionsbeiträge zu Themen des Übersetzens und Dolmetschens, der Fachkommunikation, der Technikkommunikation, der Fachsprachen, der Terminologie und verwandter Gebiete.

Beiträge können in deutscher, englischer, französischer oder spanischer Sprache eingereicht werden. Sie müssen nach den Publikationsrichtlinien der Zeitschrift gestaltet sein. Diese Richtlinien können von der **trans-kom**-Website heruntergeladen werden. Alle Beiträge werden vor der Veröffentlichung anonym begutachtet.

trans-kom wird ausschließlich im Internet publiziert: <http://www.trans-kom.eu>

Redaktion

Leona Van Vaerenbergh
Hogeschool Antwerpen
Hoger Instituut voor Vertalers en Tolken
Schilderstraat 41
B-2000 Antwerpen
Belgien
leona.vanvaerenbergh@scarlet.be

Klaus Schubert
Fachhochschule Flensburg
Studiengang Internationale Fachkommunikation
Kanzleistraße 91-93
D-24943 Flensburg
Deutschland
schubert@fh-flensburg.de

- Puurtinen, Tiina (2004): "Explicitation of Clausal Relations. A Corpus-based Analysis of Clause Connectives in Translated and Non-translated Finnish Children's Literature." Anna Mauranen, Pekka Kujamäki (eds): *Translation Universals. Do They Exist?* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins, 165-176
- Pym, Anthony (1993): *Epistemological Problems in Translation and Its Teaching: A Seminar for Thinking Students*. Teruel: Edicions Caminade
- Saldanha, Gabriela (2005): *Style of Translation: An Exploration of Stylistic Patterns in the Translations of Margaret Jull Costa and Peter Bush*. Unpublished PhD Thesis. Dublin: School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies, Dublin City University
- Séguinot, Candace (1988): "Pragmatics and the Explicitation Hypothesis." *Traduction Terminologie Rédaction* 1[2]: 106-114
- Shlesinger, Miriam (1995): "Shifts in Cohesion in Simultaneous Interpreting." *The Translator* 1 [2]: 193-214
- Shuttleworth, Mark; Moira Cowie (1997): *Dictionary of Translation Studies*. Manchester: St Jerome
- Sperber, Dan; Deirdre Wilson (1986): *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*. Oxford/Cambridge: Blackwell
- Translation Studies Abstracts and Bibliography of Translation Studies. – <http://www.stjerome.co.uk/tsaonline> (7 March 2008)
- Vinay, Jean-Paul; Jean Darbelnet (1958): *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais*. (Bibliothèque de stylistique comparée 1.) Paris: Didier / Montréal: Beauchemin – 1977. 2nd revised ed. Chomedey, Laval: Beauchemin Itée
- Weissbrod, Rachel (1992): "Explicitation in Translations of Prose-fiction from English to Hebrew as a Function of Norms." *Multilingua* 11 [2]: 153-171
- Widdowson, Henry (1998): "The Conditions of Contextual Meaning." Kirsten Malmkjær, John Williams (eds): *Context in Learning and Language Understanding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 6-23

Author

Gabriela Saldanha is Lecturer in Translation Studies at the Centre for English Language Studies, University of Birmingham, UK. She has co-edited, with Mona Baker, the new revised edition of the Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies (in press).

E-mail: g.saldanha@bham.ac.uk

Website: <http://www.cels.bham.ac.uk/staff/saldanha.htm>