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Towards a More Rigorous Treatment of the Explicitation Hypothesis in Translation Studies

Abstract

This article offers a critical look at the Explicitation Hypothesis, which claims that translated texts are universally characterized by a "translation-inherent" process of explicitation. The first part of the article features a short review of previous corpus-based studies on the Explicitation Hypothesis, coming to the conclusion that their results are ambiguous due to a number of methodological errors that have been made. The second part of the article presents a new study on explicitation that has tried to avoid the methodological pitfalls identified. Explicitations were counted in a corpus of English popular scientific magazine articles and their German translations. Language-pair specific instances of explicitation were carefully identified and excluded. While the results of the study are ultimately inconclusive, the main aim of the present article is to call for a more rigorous treatment of the Explicitation Hypothesis in translation studies.

1 Introduction

In a seminal paper published almost 25 years ago, Blum-Kulka proposed her Explicitation Hypothesis, which posits that translations are generally more explicit than their respective source texts, i.e. that "explicitation is a universal strategy inherent in the process of language mediation" (Blum-Kulka 1986: 21). The idea that explicitation might be a translation-inherent phenomenon has attracted considerable attention in translation studies, with most studies on explicitation claiming to offer evidence in favor of Blum-Kulka's hypothesis. In the present article, I argue that this conclusion has been wrong in all cases (that I know of). In the first part of the article, I am going to show that previous studies on explicitation have suffered from two severe methodological shortcomings and therefore cannot be regarded as confirming the Explicitation Hypothesis. In the second part of my paper, I will present a corpus-based study that has tried to take the identified methodological problems into account but which, like the studies criticized in the first part of the paper, has ultimately failed in providing conclusive evidence for the Explicitation Hypothesis.¹ The overall aim of the article is to show that explicitation in translation is a highly complex phenomenon which needs more rigorous treatment than it has received so far.

¹ This paper reflects the state of the author's knowledge at the time of writing. In the meantime, further analyses and literature-based insights have led to divergent assessments of the topic discussed in this paper. In particular, I have become convinced that the Explicitation Hypothesis itself is problematic and should not be investigated anymore, since it is unmotivated, unparsimonious and vaguely formulated (Becher forthc. a).

The article is structured as follows. The present introductory section will briefly take up the debate on whether translation-inherent explicitation can be regarded as a "translation universal" (Baker 1993) and concludes with a summary of Klaudy's (2008) typology of explicating shifts. Section 2 features the above-mentioned critical review of previous studies on explicitation. Section 3 describes the data and methods used in the present study, with Section 4 providing some information on the German deictic adverb *damit*, which has served as an object of investigation for the study. In Section 5, the results obtained from the study will be presented and discussed. Finally, Section 6 features a short summary of this article as well as some conclusions relevant to further research on explicitation.

I define *explicitness* as the verbalization of information that the addressee would (most probably) be able to infer from the context, her world knowledge or from other inferential sources if it were not verbalized (see Becher forthc. a for details). In translation, we find many cases where a given stretch of the target text is more explicit than the corresponding source text, a phenomenon which is generally referred to as *explicitation*. There are two main views as to the cause of the phenomenon:

- 1 Baker (1993, 1996) claims that explicitation is a translation universal, i.e. a characteristic and distinguishing feature of translated text. This view goes back to Blum-Kulka's Explicitation Hypothesis, which "postulates an observed [increase in, VB] cohesive explicitness from [source language] to [target language] texts regardless of the increase traceable to differences between the two linguistic and textual systems involved" (Blum-Kulka 1986: 19).
- 2 House (2004), on the other hand, denies the alleged status of explicitation as a universal feature of translation.² She advances the "competing" hypothesis that "differences in linguistic-stylistic conventions between source language and target language texts" account for translational explicitation rather than a universal tendency of translators to explicitate (House 2004: 193).

The two positions are sometimes viewed as mutually exclusive, as if there were only two possible "standpoints [to be] taken in the 'a professional strategy vs. a by-production of language mediation' dilemma" (Pápai 2004: 144). But in fact, the two views are compatible: there is no a priori reason to assume that there is only a single type of explicitation (cf. Saldanha 2008). It is conceivable that language pair-specific (i.e. non-universal) explicitations co-exist in translation with translation-inherent (i.e. universal) explicitations. This is the standpoint taken by Klaudy (2008), who assumes four different kinds of explicitation in translation (examples follow in Section 5):

- 1 **Obligatory explicitations** are caused by grammatical differences between source and target language. They occur when the translator is forced by these differences to spell things out explicitly that are only implicit in the source text.
- 2 **Optional explicitations** are the result of "differences in text-building strategies [...] and stylistic preferences between languages. Such explicitations are optional in the sense that grammatically correct sentences can be constructed without their

² In fact, she even argues that translation universals do not exist at all (House 2008).

application in the target language, although the text as a whole will be clumsy and unnatural" (Klaudy 2008: 106). House (2004) and Baumgarten, Meyer and Özçetin (2008) argue that what might look like a universal tendency to explicitate can in fact be attributed to the frequent occurrence of this type of explicitation, which is clearly language pair-specific and thus not universal.

- 3 **Pragmatic explicitations** are due to differences in cultural and/or world knowledge that members of the source and target language community share. They typically occur when a translator needs to add linguistic material in order to explain a concept specific to the source culture. (Thome 2007 provides many examples of this type, although she does not call them explicitations.)
- 4 **Translation-inherent explicitation** "can be attributed to the nature of the translation process itself" (Klaudy 2008: 107) and thus corresponds to Baker's (1996) and Blum-Kulka's (1986) view outlined above. It is interesting to note that this is the only type of explicitation for which Klaudy does not present any examples.

While obligatory explicitations (which occur where the grammatical systems of the source and target languages differ) and pragmatic explicitations (which occur where culture-specific knowledge is presupposed in the source text) should be easy to identify, we have to expect problems in distinguishing between optional and translation-inherent explicitations. This was already recognized by Blum-Kulka (1986). On the one hand, she claims that "it should be possible to ascertain by empirical research to what extent explicitation is indeed a norm that cuts across translations from various languages and to what extent it is a language pair specific phenomenon" (Blum-Kulka 1986: 23). On the other hand, she cautions us that in order to distinguish between translation-inherent and optional explicitations "it would be necessary to first carry out a large scale contrastive stylistic study (in a given register) [...] and then to examine translations to and from both languages to investigate shifts [...] that occur in translation" (Blum-Kulka 1986: 33). This is an important word of warning that Blum-Kulka provides us with. For if we do not know where the stylistic differences between the source and the target language in question lie, we will often be unable to say whether a given instance of explicitation has been performed by the translator in order to comply with the stylistic norms of the target language (i.e. is an instance of optional explicitation) or is a result of the translation process itself. Unfortunately, as we will see in the next section, Blum-Kulka's word of warning has largely been ignored.

2 Previous Studies on Explicitation and Their Methodological Problems

This section presents a critical short review of studies whose aim was to test Blum-Kulka's Explicitation Hypothesis, i.e. to find out whether there is a separate, translation-inherent type of explicitation. We will come to the conclusion that the reviewed studies do not provide conclusive evidence for the Explicitation Hypothesis. There are two reasons for this conclusion. First, we will see that the studies discussed have largely ignored the problem of distinguishing between translation-inherent explicitation on the one hand and the other types of explicitation listed by Klaudy (2008) on the other.

Second, I am going to show that some studies either do not define explicitation at all or introduce a definition but do not apply it consistently. (Due to lack of space, I have to restrict myself to demonstrating the shortcomings of the discussed studies and cannot point out their merits.)

In one of the most frequently cited studies on explicitation, Øverås (1998) manually identified and counted a wealth of different explicating shifts in English-Norwegian and Norwegian-English translations, ranging from the insertion of a connective to the replacement of an unusual collocation by a more common one. While recognizing the distinction between optional and translation-inherent explicitation, Øverås decided to include both types (Øverås 1998: 9). It is therefore not surprising that her results exhibit a remarkable mismatch between the two investigated translation directions: the frequency of explicating shifts in the English-Norwegian translations turned out to be much higher than the corresponding frequency in the Norwegian-English translations (347 vs. 248). Instead of acknowledging that this imbalance is most probably due to the intermixed optional explicitations – which, by definition, are direction-dependent – Øverås concludes that “Blum-Kulka’s explicitation hypothesis is confirmed” and that “[c]onfirmation was stronger in translations from English into Norwegian than in the opposite direction” (Øverås 1998: 16). It is difficult to see how the hypothesis that “explicitation is a universal strategy inherent in the process of language mediation” (Blum-Kulka 1986: 21) which is supposed to take place “regardless of the increase traceable to differences between the two linguistic and textual systems involved” (Blum-Kulka 1986: 19) can find “stronger” confirmation in one translation direction than in the other. In principle, it would be possible that not a single explicating shift identified by Øverås belongs to the translation-inherent category, i.e. that she has only observed optional explicitations. Thus, her study does not provide evidence for the Explicitation Hypothesis. (For more detailed discussion see Becher *forthc.* a.)

Similarly to Øverås (1998), Pápai (2004) acknowledges that translation-inherent explicitation as hypothesized by Blum-Kulka is not the only player in the game, but she nevertheless includes all explicitations she encountered in her frequency counts. It is thus not surprising that Pápai found higher frequencies of explicitness-related features in English-Hungarian translations than in non-translated Hungarian texts. From this finding, she concludes that “explicitation is likely to be a universal feature of translated texts, i.e. this set of data supports Blum-Kulka’s hypothesis” (Pápai 2004: 157). Again, I cannot see how data which include optional explicitations could support Blum-Kulka’s assumption of a translation-inherent process of explicitation in any meaningful way. To name just one example of an alternative explanation, Pápai’s findings may equally well be explained as resulting from an overly generous use of optional explicitations by translators, i.e. as a case of normalization.³

Another methodologically problematic study was carried out by Konšalová (2007), who has investigated explicating and implicating shifts in the domain of syntax (e.g. the rendering of nonfinite clauses as finite clauses, the latter of which are more explicit

³ Normalization, which “is a tendency to exaggerate features of the target language and to conform to its typical patterns”, has been proposed by Baker (1996) as another candidate for a translation universal.

as they contain an overtly encoded subject). She counted these shifts in a corpus of German-Czech and Czech-German translations in order to compare the resulting levels of explicitness with those of non-translated texts in the two languages. While she found a higher degree of explicitness in the Czech-German translations than in the non-translated German texts, the analysis of the opposite translation direction "did not reveal any clear-cut explicitation tendencies" (Konšalová 2007: 31). First, this finding indicates that Konšalová's data contain a considerable number of (direction-dependent) obligatory and optional explicitations, which are likely to account for the observed skewing. Second, the Explicitation Hypothesis is clearly disconfirmed for this data set; if translation-inherent explicitation had the status of a universal phenomenon, both translation directions investigated by Konšalová should display a tendency towards explicitation, not just one. But, quite surprisingly, once again we read the familiar chorus: "[t]he results of this study are in line with the findings of other authors, whose research offers data in support of the explicitation hypothesis (e.g. Øverås 1998, Fabricius-Hansen 1998, Olohan and Baker 2000, Pápai 2004)" (Konšalová 2007: 31).

Incidentally, the studies Konšalová quotes can hardly be said to support the Explicitation Hypothesis either. The results of Øverås (1998) and Pápai (2004) have already been discussed above. With regard to Fabricius-Hansen (1998), Konšalová acknowledges that "it remains unclear whether the explicitations can in this case be attributed to the translation process itself, or different stylistic preferences [...]" (Konšalová 2007: 18). It is thus unclear why she cites the study as evidence for the Explicitation Hypothesis.⁴ Finally, the results of Olohan and Baker (2000) are similarly ambiguous. The authors found that the optional use of the subordinator *that* after the reporting verbs *say* and *tell* is remarkably more frequent in translated than in non-translated English texts. While Olohan and Baker view their observations as "evidence of inherent, subliminal processes of explicitation in translation" (Olohan/Baker 2000: 143), another interpretation would be that their findings are simply the result of source language interference. Many of the source languages represented in the corpus that Olohan and Baker used,⁵ like e.g. Czech or French, require a subordinator after reporting verbs. An over-use of reporting *that* in texts translated from these languages might thus be attributable to source language interference rather than to translation-inherent explicitation (cf. Saldanha 2008: 22; additional discussion is provided in Becher forthc. a). Only a typological survey of the source languages represented in Olohan and Baker's corpus with respect to the (obligatory or optional) use of a complementizer with reporting verbs could tell which of these two explanations is correct.

Leaving aside the methodological difficulty of isolating the type of explicitation to be investigated, another problem that many studies on Blum-Kulka's hypothesis share

⁴ Fabricius-Hansen herself, by the way, only considers stylistic and structural contrasts between the languages studied (German, Norwegian and English) as possible explanations for her findings (Fabricius-Hansen 1998: 232).

⁵ Olohan and Baker (2000) carried out their investigation on the Translational English Corpus of the University of Manchester. The corpus can be searched online without charge at <http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/ctis/research/english-corpus/>.

is that they lack a definition of the term explicitation. One particularly problematic example is Kamenická's (2008) study of explicitation-implication ratios in English-Czech translations by two different translators. Although Kamenická acknowledges that "the concept of explicitation has been surrounded by much conceptual vagueness" (Kamenická 2008: 188), she neither defines what she counted as explicitations, nor does she mention how she operationalized the concept. Only at the very end of her article does Kamenická provide two examples of what she considers as cases of "interpersonal explicitation", one of which definitely does not qualify as such:

(21) English Original: Now, before you get upset listen to me.

Czech translation: 'Now, before you get upset you must listen to me'⁶

(Kamenická 2008: 127)

For some reason, the Czech translator of (21) has chosen to translate the imperative of the English original as an indicative plus a modal expression ('must'; probably *muset* was used in the Czech translation that Kamenická does not quote). Nevertheless, contrary to what Kamenická states, the illocutionary force of the utterance is the same in both cases: an obligation is imposed on the addressee to listen. The only difference between the English original and its Czech translation is that in the former, the obligation is expressed by means of the imperative while in the latter it is encoded by means of the modal 'must'. (Cf. Verstraete 2007: 39ff, who highlights the parallels between the English imperative and modal expressions such as *must*.) The target text does not express more information lexicogrammatically than the source text, so there is no explicitation here.⁷

That the English original in (21) does not contain the personal pronoun *you* is irrelevant with respect to explicitness, since the existence of an addressee is part of the imperative's constructional meaning and thus does not need to be inferred. We could say that in the target text reference to the addressee is encoded lexically (by means of the personal pronoun *you*), while in the source text it is encoded grammatically (by means of the constructional meaning of the imperative). The example shows that Kamenická's (2008) study was based on a superficial and intransparent notion of explicitation, which unfortunately casts serious doubts on the validity of her interesting findings.

The previously discussed study by Pápai (2004) is an example of another aspect of the common definition problem. On the one hand, Pápai defines explicitation as "a technique of resolving ambiguity, improving and increasing cohesiveness of the [source text] and also of adding linguistic and extralinguistic information" (Pápai 2004).⁸ On the other hand, she claims:

⁶ Unfortunately, Kamenická only provides English glosses of the Czech translations.

⁷ In fact, it is even the other way round: (21) is an instance of implicitation. The modal 'must' is vague between a subjective and an objective reading on the one hand and between a deontic and an epistemic interpretation on the other (Lyons 1982: 109). The English imperative is not vague in these respects (cf. Verstraete 2007: 39ff), i.e. more explicit than 'must'.

⁸ This simple definition of explicitation (which is comparable to my definition given in Section 1) is already sufficient for excluding pseudo-explicitations such as (21).

If we consider the structural differences between the two languages involved (the agglutinative Hungarian uses fewer words to express the same meaning than the analytical English, e.g. *I love you* → *Szeretlek*) translations from English into Hungarian would be expected to result in implicitation (making things more general, omitting linguistic or extralinguistic information of the [source text]) rather than in explicitation. (Pápai 2004: 159)

This argumentation is clearly fallacious. Just because Hungarian in certain cases encodes functional categories such as subject or object by means of verbal affixes rather than by means of separate words, that does not mean that the language is 'inherently implicit' in comparison with English.⁹ Like my definition of explicitation given in Section 1, Pápai's definition of explicitation refers to the addition of (lexicographically encoded) *information*, which of course is not equivalent to the addition of *words*. Her above claim that Hungarian is generally characterized by a lower degree of explicitness than English shows that her view of explicitation is much more superficial (equating explicitation with the addition of words) than her definition suggests.

At the end of the previous section, we have seen that the problem of isolating translation-inherent explicitations from other kinds of explicitation has already been pointed out by Blum-Kulka in her 1986 paper. As the short but representative literature review provided above has shown, however, the problem has hardly been addressed at all, and this has led to ambiguous results throughout. Most studies which purport to offer data in confirmation of the Explicitation Hypothesis in fact beg the question, taking the existence of translation-inherent explicitation for granted instead of seeking to provide conclusive evidence. Another problem that many studies on explicitation, two of which were mentioned as examples, share is the lack of a definition of the term or the introduction of a definition which is not applied consistently. These two related problems seriously question the validity of the results obtained.

This is not to say that the studies discussed above are worthless. On the contrary, all studies cited in this section have delivered interesting results which imply valuable suggestions for further research. However, as has been shown above, their results are difficult to interpret since the authors have not taken sufficient care in operationalizing the phenomenon of translation-inherent explicitation and/or in isolating it from related phenomena.

To conclude this section, I would like to briefly discuss a study where the problem of distinguishing between translation-inherent and language pair-specific explicitations has been taken seriously: Baumgarten, Meyer and Özçetin (2008). The authors investigated the addition of parenthetical expressions by translators in a corpus of English-German translations,¹⁰ finding 284 cases of explicitation. Following Blum-Kulka's (1986)

⁹ "Languages cannot be divided into inherently explicit or implicit languages" (Klaudy 1993: 68). However, Klaudy falls into the same trap as Pápai when she goes on to claim that "Hungarian for instance is implicit on phrase level (synthetic noun and verb forms), but explicit on sentence level (finite clauses)" (Klaudy 1993: 68). The fallacy that Pápai and Klaudy seem to commit is to equate synthetic with implicit and analytic with explicit, an equation which is not admissible.

¹⁰ Baumgarten, Meyer and Özçetin (2008) investigated a subset of the corpus that has been used in the present study (described in Section 3).

advice to start out with a contrastive investigation of stylistic contrasts between source and target language, Baumgarten, Meyer and Özçetin first established the different ways in which parentheticals are used by English and German authors. Drawing on the results of this contrastive pilot study, the authors then 'filtered' the 284 cases of explicitation identified in the translation analysis by excluding optional and pragmatic explicitations (obligatory explicitation did not play a role in their study, since the addition of a parenthetical is never obligatory). Only five instances of explicitation remained, leading Baumgarten, Meyer and Özçetin to conclude that

explicitation [...] is clearly not a universal phenomenon. Sometimes it occurs, sometimes it does not, and when it occurs it is [...] more often than not an explicitation triggered by the communicative conventions and stylistic norms of the target language community rather than being inherent (i.e. beyond the control of the translator) in the process of translation. (Baumgarten/Meyer/Özçetin 2008: 198f)

3 Data and Method

The aim of the present study was to test Blum-Kulka's Explicitation Hypothesis by analyzing occurrences of the deictic adverb *damit* in English-German translations without an equivalent expression in the English source text. The adverb was chosen for investigation because it represents a highly versatile and frequent cohesive device of German (see the following section) and is thus expected to occur in the context of explicating shifts.

The corpus used for the study consists of:

- 1 English texts (c. 165,000 words),
- 2 their German translations (c. 151,000 words)
- 3 and comparable (non-translated) German texts (c. 183,000 words).

All texts belong to the genre popular science and were published between 1978 and 2002, mostly in the journal *Scientific American* and its German daughter publication *Spektrum der Wissenschaft* (see Baumgarten 2007 for more detailed information on the corpus).

The following procedure was adopted in the present study. Occurrences of *damit* in the corpus were counted and, in the case of the translation corpus, analyzed according to their equivalents in the English source text (or the lack thereof).¹¹ Only clear cases of explicitation – namely occurrences of *damit* without an equivalent in the source text – were singled out for further analysis. As the literature does not offer any criteria for identifying translation-inherent explicitations, it was attempted to proceed 'the other way round': drawing on previous studies of grammatical and stylistic contrasts between English and German, obligatory, optional and pragmatic explicitations (Klaudy's 2008 types no. 1 to 3 presented in Section 1) were identified, hoping that the remaining occurrences of *damit* would have some commonality that would

¹¹ Uses of *damit* as a subordinator (cf. Schrodtt 1988) or as a correlate of a subordinate clause (cf. Dončeva 1982) were excluded (i.e. neither counted nor analyzed), as they fulfill mainly structural functions and only rarely occur in the context of explicating shifts in translation.

warrant their identification as translation-inherent explicitations, i.e. as exponents of Klaudy's explicitation type no. 4. In other words, the present study has adopted Baumgarten, Meyer and Özçetin's (2008) 'filtering method' of identifying translation-inherent explicitations (see the previous section).

4 German *damit* and Its Functions in Written Discourse

Damit is a *composite deictic* ("zusammengesetztes Verweiswort", Rehbein 1995).¹² It consists of two parts:

- 1 The first part (*da* 'there') is a deictic which, when used in written text, corefers with an expression in the surrounding discourse by instructing the addressee to direct her attention to the associated parts of her knowledge (Ehlich 1982, 1992, 2007; Diessel 2006; see also Blühdorn 1993, 1995).
- 2 The second part (*mit* 'with') is a preposition. Its semantic function is to establish a meaning relation (of concomitance, cf. Zifonun et al. 1997) between the knowledge elements focused by the deictic and the running sentence. Its syntactic function is to anchor the focused knowledge parts in the valency frame of the sentence (Rehbein 1995; similarly Braunmüller 1985).

Its deictic nature makes *damit* an exceptionally versatile means for establishing semantic relations in written discourse. In (1), for instance, *damit* is coreferent with an aforementioned NP (*Saugnäpfe* 'suckers').

- (1) Männliche wie weibliche Tiere verfügen über Saugnäpfe, aber nur die Männchen heften sich *damit* an der Wand der Blutgefäße fest.

'Male as well as female animals have suckers, but only the males attach to the walls of the blood vessels *with them*.'

A proper English translation of the sentence would rather make use of an anaphoric expression (cf. *with them* in the provided gloss) to convey the same coreference relation. In German, however, deictic coreference in cases where an anaphoric might be used as well is commonplace (Becher forthc. b).

In (2), *damit* cannot be said to corefer with an element of the linguistic surface structure, since we cannot identify a contiguous coreferent expression.¹³ All we can say is that *damit* refers to the proposition expressed in the previous sentence (viz. 'stars form in dense clouds of gas and dust') (cf. Consten/Knees/Schwarz-Friesel 2007; Consten/Knees 2008):

¹² This section was adapted from Becher (2009a).

¹³ Note that it cannot be said that *damit* in (2) is coreferent with the whole preceding sentence, since the epistemic operator *nach allgemeiner Auffassung* 'according to common perception' is not in its referential scope; *damit* only refers to the proposition modified by the operator. I have described the meaning of *da-* as an instruction to the addressee to direct her attention to certain parts of her knowledge. This is a somewhat cumbersome formulation, but it seems difficult to find a simpler one, since examples such as (2) (and also (3)) show that the use of *da-* is not a matter of simple coreference.

- (2) Sterne bilden sich nach allgemeiner Auffassung in dichten Wolken aus Gas und Staub. *Damit* im Einklang steht die Beobachtung, daß sehr junge Sterne in solchen Wolken und deren unmittelbarer Umgebung anzutreffen sind.

'According to common perception, stars form in dense clouds of gas and dust. Consistent *with this* is the observation that very young stars may be found in their immediate surrounding.'

The next example shows that *damit* may also be used to refer to several propositions at once, combining them into one complex proposition. This complex proposition is then integrated into the running sentence (by means of the relational element *-mit*):

- (3) [Software-Realisierungen sind im allgemeinen sehr viel langsamer (um einen Faktor 10 bis 100) als eine Hardware-Implementierung. Diese ist allerdings aufwendig und teuer, weil die Befehle der JVM – schon wegen des Resolutionsprozesses – extrem komplex sind.]

Damit verläuft die Entwicklung des Netzwerkcomputers genau in die Gegenrichtung zur bisherigen Tendenz.

'[Software realizations are generally much slower (by a factor of 10 to 100) than a hardware implementation. But the latter is laborious and expensive, because the commands of the JVM – not only because of the resolution process – are extremely complex.]

That is to say that the development of the network computer runs right into the opposite direction as compared to the current tendency.'

In (3), the deictic 'globally' refers to what was said in the preceding paragraph (cf. Doňčeva 1980; Rehbein 1995). In this way, *damit* functions as what Halliday and Matthiesen call an "expository" connective (Halliday/Matthiesen 2004: 542), as it introduces a stretch of discourse which "restates the thesis of the primary clause [here: preceding paragraph] in different words, to present it from another point of view, or perhaps just to reinforce the message" (Halliday/Matthiesen 2004: 397-398).

From another perspective we could say that *damit* in (3) serves as a signal of the discourse pattern Situation–Evaluation (cf. Jordan 1984; Hoey 2001; see also example (11) in Section 5.2): the first paragraph of (3) sketches a Situation, whose Evaluation is provided in the second paragraph. The role of *damit* is to make explicit that the author's Evaluation is supposed to follow directly from the characteristics of the presented Situation (rather than from independent criteria). The deictic *damit* thus functions as a signal of the text's structure and in this way increases its explicitness. In fact, *damit* could even be omitted from (3) because the reader can infer on his own that an Evaluation is made and that it is based on what was said in the preceding discourse. (This is so because first, the discourse pattern Situation–Evaluation is commonplace in English and German texts and second, the reader knows that an Evaluation must be based on something.)

Summing up, the discussion above has indicated that *damit* is an important part of the cohesive toolbox of the German language (cf. Becher 2009b, forthc. b). The composite deictic may be used to overtly express semantic relations ranging from 'simple' coreference with an aforementioned NP (1) up to 'complex' reference to the

meaning of a whole paragraph (3). In cases of 'complex' reference, *damit* is no longer distinguishable from 'connective proper' such as *also* 'thus' or *folglich* 'consequently' (cf. Waßner 2001). Most interestingly for the present study, *damit* has no close equivalent in English. This raises the question of how and when English-German translators use this versatile cohesive element.

5 Results

As table 1 shows, the frequency of *damit* is considerably lower in the investigated English-German translations than in the comparable German texts.

	Absolute	Per 10,000 words
English-German translations	106	7.0
comparable German texts	190	10.4

Table 1: Absolute and normalized frequencies of *damit* in the investigated corpus.

The frequency counts show that the investigated English-German translations are in fact less explicit than non-translated German texts – as far as the use of *damit* is concerned. On the face of it, we might surmise that there is no explicitation at all in the data. But as will soon become clear, the opposite is the case: when *damit* is used in the English-German translations it is in fact very often the result of explicitation. This tendency, however, is quantitatively canceled out by a strong degree of source language interference.

Table 2 lists all occurrences of *damit* in the investigated English-German translation corpus according to their respective equivalents in the source text. In this way, it provides an English-German 'translation image' (cf. Dyvik 1998) of *damit*.

Source text equivalent of <i>damit</i>	Frequency
connective adverb	19
anaphoric or deictic	11
no equivalent (Ø)	55
paraphrase or repetition	9
other	12
TOTAL	106

Table 2: Occurrences of *damit* in the investigated English-German translations listed according to their equivalent in the source text.

As is evident from the table, roughly every second occurrence of *damit* in the translations has no equivalent in the English source text and thus represents a case of explicitation. Only these occurrences of *damit* were submitted to further analysis. It was found that most of them were plausibly attributable to one of Klaudy's (2008) first

three (language pair-specific) types of explicitation. Only a small residue of cases remained that might be attributed to Klaudy's fourth category, translation-inherent explicitation. The four categories will be dealt with in turn in the following subsections.

5.1 Obligatory Explicitations

Two triggers of this kind of explicitation were identified: first, English-German differences in the complementation of adjectives and nouns, and second, English participial adjunct clauses. The following example shows how different complementation requirements of English and German adjectives with similar meaning can be said to trigger explicitation (cf. Becher forthc. b).

(4) EO (English Original): [A]n electron has a quantity of angular momentum (its "spin") and an associated magnetism [...].

GT (German Translation): Es hat einen Drehimpuls, den "Spin", und *damit* verknüpfte magnetische Eigenschaften [...].

'It has an angular momentum, the "spin", and magnetic properties associated *with it*.'

In English, the deverbal adjective *associated* may occur without an explicit complement when the complement may be understood from the context – as witnessed by (4), where the reader will understand from the prior discourse that the magnetism of an electron is associated with its angular momentum. In contrast, its German equivalent *verknüpft* may not occur without a complement in this context; an ungrammatical sentence would result. The addition of *damit*, which provides a prepositional complement by anadeictically¹⁴ referring back to *Drehimpuls*, can therefore be regarded as an obligatory explicitation, i.e. an explicitation which is necessitated by the different complementation requirements of the English and German adjectives in question. The same, *mutatis mutandis*, applies to the following example:

(5) EO: These environmental conditions may cause damage to the hypocretin / orexin system [...] or may prompt damage to closely linked systems of neurons.

GT: Möglicherweise schädigen mitunter irgendwelche Außenfaktoren das Orexin-System oder andere *damit* assoziierte Nervenzellverbände.

'Possibly some external factors occasionally damage the orexin system or other neuron structures associated *with it*.'

In (5), *closely linked* occurs without a prepositional complement, whereas its German equivalent *assoziiert* has been (obligatorily) complemented by means of *damit*.

Different complementation requirements of English and German nouns may also lead to obligatory explicitation, as the following example illustrates.

(6) EO: [...] thousands of richly populated clusters, each of which consists of thousands of galaxies made up of tens of billions of stars. In comparison our own galaxy is a member of a very small system known...

¹⁴ Ehlich (e.g. 2007) and Becher (forthc. b) have argued that the coreferential use of deictic expressions such as *damit* should be described as "anadeictic" rather than anaphoric.

GT: Jeder von ihnen besteht aus Tausenden von Galaxien, die ihrerseits viele Milliarden Sterne enthalten. Im Vergleich *damit* liegt unsere eigene Galaxie (die Milchstraße) in einem recht bescheidenen System...

'Each of them consists of thousands of galaxies, which in turn contain many billions of stars. In comparison *with them* our own galaxy (the Milky Way) lies in a quite moderate system.'

In (6), the noun *comparison* occurs without a prepositional phrase specifying the – contextually inferable – object of comparison. The complementation requirements of its German equivalent *Vergleich* are stricter: the object of comparison needs explicit mention in the form of a prepositional phrase (at least in this context). As the object of comparison has already been mentioned in the previous sentence, the anadeictic *damit* lends itself to the occupation of the obligatory complement slot.

The second source text trigger of obligatory explicitation by means of *damit* that has been identified is the English participial adjunct, whose "formal inexplicitness allows considerable flexibility in what we may wish [it] to convey. According to context, we may wish to imply temporal, conditional, causal, concessive, or circumstantial relationship" (Quirk et al. 1985: 1124). Consider the following example:

(7) EO: For example, researchers could transfer the alleles associated with autism from humans to mice, engineering them to be genetically susceptible to the disorder.

GT: Gentechniker könnten beispielsweise die verdächtigen menschlichen Allele auf Mäuse übertragen und die Mäuse *damit* sozusagen anfällig für "Autismus" machen.

'Geneticists could for example transfer the suspicious human alleles to mice and *thus*, as it were, make them susceptible to "autism".'

The source text of (7) has an adverbial *ing*-participle clause which may be characterized semantically as 'resultative', since it describes the result of what is reported in the preceding main clause. Since German does not have a construction equivalent to the English *ing*-adjunct, the translator needs to resort to a connective – *damit* – to convey the relation between the two clauses (cf. König 2001: 325).

The following example is similar, except that we are dealing with an *ed*-participle clause in this case:

(8) EO: [...] more virulent viruses that then die with their hosts, denied the opportunity to spread.

GT: [L]etztere gehen mit dem Wirt zugrunde und verspielen *damit* jegliche weitere Chance, sich auszubreiten.

'The latter [viz. more virulent viruses] perish with the host and *thus* gamble away any chance to spread.'

The *ed*-adjunct clause in the source text of (8) may again be described as resultative, and again we find a translation that makes use of *damit* as a connective to verbally encode the meaning relation, a construction comparable to the English *ed*-participle not being available in German.

Of course, *damit* is not the only way of translating resultative participial adjuncts into German. In principle, the semantically vague conjunction *und* 'and' would suffice as a translation, since "[i]n their indeterminacy, adverbial participle [...] clauses resemble [...] the connective function of the coordinator *and*" (Quirk et al. 1985: 1123). From this perspective, the translation of participial adjuncts by means of *damit* would be regarded as optional rather than obligatory explicitation. The reader may decide this issue for themselves by comparing the examples above with the examples of optional explicitation provided in the following. I would argue that *damit* as a translation of a participial adjunct is a case of optional explicitation which is, however, instigated by grammatical differences between English and German, i.e. that the translation of a participial adjunct into German by means of *damit* is to be located somewhere in between obligatory and optional explicitation. In general, we can see from this case that the line between obligatory and optional explicitation can be difficult to draw. Perhaps it cannot be drawn at all and the distinction is not absolute but rather a gradual one.

5.2 Optional Explicitations

The bulk of insertions of *damit* in the investigated German translations may be plausibly explained as optional explicitations, which are motivated "by differences in text-building strategies [...] and stylistic preferences between languages" (Klaudy 2008: 106) and thus constitute a prototypical case of "cultural filtering" (House 1997) in translation, i.e. the adaption of the target text to comply with the stylistic preferences of the target language community. The following examples represent cases where the addition of *damit* by the translator may be seen as a result of cultural filtering.

(9) EO: [S]uch genes usually affect processes other than meiosis *and* [...] are almost always harmful.

GT: Gewöhnlich ändern solche Gene nicht nur den Verlauf der Reduktionsteilung, sondern beeinträchtigen auch andere Vorgänge [...] *und* erweisen sich *damit* als schädlich.

'Usually such genes do not only change the course of meiosis, but also affect other processes and *thus* prove to be harmful.'

In the English source text of (9), the conjunction *and* gives rise to the implicature that there is a causal relation between the two clauses (Posner 1980), i.e. the reader will infer – in part from the prior discourse – that the mentioned genes are harmful *because* they affect processes other than meiosis. The German translator, however, has used *damit* as a causal connective to relieve the reader of drawing the inference. In this way, the translation has become more explicit than its English original.

The same considerations hold for the following example:

- (10) EO: In addition, since 1994 several impeccably designed and executed clinical trials have established beyond a doubt that lipid-lowering drugs can reduce the likelihood of atherosclerotic complications *and* can prolong life seemingly across the board [...].

GT: Außerdem haben seit 1994 mehrere sorgfältige klinische Studien zweifelsfrei belegt, dass Statine [...] die Wahrscheinlichkeit arteriosklerotischer Komplikationen reduzieren *und damit* offenbar das Leben vieler Menschen verlängern können.

'In addition, since 1994 several careful clinical studies have doubtlessly established that statines [...] reduce the likelihood of atherosclerotic complications and thus apparently can prolong the life of many people.'

Here too, the addition of *damit* has made the German translation more explicit than the English original, which solely relies on the "general purpose link" *and* (Leech/Svartvik 2002) for cohesion.

I would argue that in both (9) and (10), the translator has (consciously or subconsciously) chosen to explicitate because the communicative norms of German generally favor a greater degree of explicitness than the ones operative in English discourse. This cross-linguistic difference in communicative preferences, which manifests itself as cultural filtering in translation, is well supported by empirical research (see House 2006 for an overview). For example, several studies have shown that in many contexts German tends to use a connective where English prefers to leave the semantic relation in question implicit, i.e. to be inferred by the reader (Stein 1979; Behrens 2005; Fabricius-Hansen 2005; Becher 2009b, forthc. b). Fabricius-Hansen argues that English favors strategy (i) in many contexts where German prefers strategy (ii):

- (i) If the informational effect of using the connective is rather low, then don't use it. ("Be brief!")
- (ii) If using the connective is more informative than not using it, then use it! ("Be precise!") (Fabricius-Hansen 2005: 43)

It is not proven yet that we are dealing with optional – i.e. convention-dependent – explicitations here; in principle, the examples presented above might as well be cases of translation-inherent explicitation. However, a comparison with the non-translated German texts shows that this is unlikely. A search for the string *und damit*¹⁵ in the comparable German texts shows that almost every second occurrence of *damit* occurs as part of this collocation (79 of the 190 occurrences, i.e. 41.1%). The collocation *und damit* may thus be regarded as characteristic of German texts, or at least of German popular science texts.¹⁶ Therefore, when we observe English-German translators using this collocation where it is not directly prompted by an equivalent expression in the

¹⁵ If we were to count cases where a verb intervenes between *und* and *damit*, as in (9), the figure would be even higher. Again, occurrences of *damit* functioning as a subordinator or correlate were not counted (cf. Note 11).

¹⁶ In comparison, the collocation *and thus* only accounts for 15 of the 81 occurrences of *thus* (18.5%) in the English texts.

English source text (e.g. *and thus*), we are most likely dealing with their efforts to conform to the communicative norms of German (and maybe of German popular scientific texts in particular). In fact, the translators could do this even more often, since only 24 of the 106 occurrences of *damit* in the translations (22.6%) occur as part of the collocation *und damit* – a clear case of source language interference.

Optional explication does not only occur as a result of the commonly observable effort by English-German translators to “strengthen” *and*-conjunctions semantically (cf. Behrens 2005: 22f, who describes a similar use of Norwegian *dermed* in English-Norwegian translations). As the following example shows, translators also tend to add *damit* when they encounter a familiar discourse pattern, namely the pattern Situation–Evaluation:

(11) EO: [I]t may have a genetic underpinning. Today’s view of the basis of the condition is strikingly different from that of just a few years ago.

GT: [...] könnte bei solchen Kindern eine genetisch bedingte Entwicklungsstörung vorliegen. Die Einordnung des Syndroms hat sich *damit* in den letzten Jahren grundlegend gewandelt.

`[...] could be a genetically caused developmental disorder. The classification of the syndrome has *thus* fundamentally changed in the last years.

In (11), we observe a transition from one thematic unit of the text to the next, viz. from a Situation to its Evaluation. While the transition is not signalled in the English original, the translator has added *damit* as an explicit marker of the discourse pattern.

Again, a comparison with the non-translated texts shows that we are here most likely dealing with optional rather than translation-inherent explication: in the comparable texts, approximately¹⁷ 20 occurrences of *damit* are used in this function (cf. (3) in Section 4). Considering the fact that discourse patterns may be signalled in a multitude of different ways (cf. Mann/Thompson 1988; Hoey 2001), this is an impressive number, which suggests that *damit* may be regarded as a conventionalized marker of the Situation–Evaluation relation. The upshot is that cases like (11) are most plausibly interpreted as (felicitous) attempts by translators to comply with the communicative conventions of German discourse – which demand explicitness in general and seem to demand explicit signalling of the Situation–Evaluation pattern in particular.

A related use of *damit* may be observed in the following two examples.

(12) EO: [S]ubsequent processing of the newly made proteins that those transcripts encode can alter their function.

GT: *Damit* nicht genug: Die neu gebildeten Proteine erlangen mitunter durch Nachbearbeitung nochmals andere Funktionen.

`That is not all: the newly made proteins sometimes again obtain other functions through subsequent processing.’

¹⁷ The exact number is hard to determine, since there are no hard and fast criteria for identifying discourse patterns such as Situation–Evaluation.

(13) EO: Regardless of how children develop their initial system of values, the key question is: What makes them live up to their ideals or not?

GT: *Damit* will ich sagen: Wie immer Kinder ihr anfängliches Wertesystem entwickeln – vor allem gilt es zu verstehen, was sie dazu bringt, sich dann auch danach zu richten, also ihren moralischen Idealen entsprechend zu leben.

'*With this* I want to say: However children develop their initial system of values – above all it is necessary to understand what makes them comply with it, that is, to live in accordance with their moral ideals.'

In both examples, the English-German translator has added a comment on the structure of the text: in (12), the comment signals the introduction of a new aspect of the current topic; in (13), it signals a reformulation of the problem presented in the prior discourse. More precisely, *damit* has a two-fold function in these instances of "metadiscourse" (Crismore/Farnsworth 1990): first, it connects the comment to the preceding discourse, and second, by way of its deictic, attention-directing force,¹⁸ *damit* aids the perspective change from the content plane to the plane of metadiscourse.

Once again, a comparison with the non-translated German texts suggests that both in adding these comments and in using *damit* to connect them to the prior discourse, the translators were 'inspired' by what looks like a conventionalized type of metadiscourse in German popular science texts. Cf. the following examples of metadiscourse taken from the comparable texts.

(14) *Damit* komme ich zu der noch ungelösten Problematik.

'*With that* I proceed to the yet unsolved problem.'

(15) *Damit* ist der Punkt erreicht, an dem uns die fossilen Pflanzen im Stich lassen und die Spekulation beginnt.

'*With this* the point is reached where the fossil plants run out on us and the speculation starts.'

(16) *Damit* enden die Parallelen aber noch immer nicht.

'But the parallels do not end *with that*.'

(17) Doch *damit* nicht genug.

'But *that* is not all.'

While there are alternative ways in German of embedding a stretch of metadiscourse into the text, examples like the above suggest that in the genre of popular science, using *damit* is the preferred choice. Additions of *damit* (plus additional metadiscursive material) such as the ones observed in (12) and (13) are thus plausibly explained as instances of optional explicitation.

¹⁸ It is worth pointing out that in its comment-marking function, *damit* almost exclusively appears sentence-initially, a position which maximizes its attention-directing effect. Exceptions occur when *damit* is displaced from this position by another signal of text structure, chiefly *Doch* 'But' (cf. example 17).

5.3 Pragmatic Explicitations

Only a single instance of pragmatic explicitation was found among the occurrences of *damit* without an equivalent in the English source text:

(18) EO: Ianni named the set of shared standards in harmonious communities a "youth charter."

GT: Ianni nennt die Verhaltensnormen der moralisch integrierten Gemeinden "youth charter" und meint *damit* eine Art Satzung oder Verfassung für die Jugend.

'Ianni calls the codes of conduct of the morally integrated communities "youth charter" and *by that* means a kind of charter or constitution for youth.'

In (18) the translator has chosen to retain the term *youth charter* instead of translating it into German (which would have been possible, e.g. as *Jugend-Charta*). As a result, a pragmatic explicitation becomes necessary, i.e. an explanation of the English term, which the translator provides by adding a coordinated main clause. Together with the coordinator *und*, *damit* serves the purpose of establishing the link between the two clauses, by anadeictically referring back to the *explanandum* (i.e. the term *youth charter*). While the addition of *damit* itself cannot be described as a pragmatic explicitation, it may be regarded as a 'side effect' of the translator's decision to explicitate pragmatically.

5.4 Translation-inherent Explicitations (?)

After the majority of occurrences of *damit* has been 'filtered out', i.e. attributed to the three language-pair specific types of explicitation, only a few (approximately 5–10) occurrences are left to be considered as possible candidates for translation-inherent explicitation. Two representative examples follow.

(19) EO: If the string network is infinite, they might hope to satisfy their appetite forever.

GT: Sollte das Fadengeflecht im Universum unendlich ausgedehnt sein, könnten diese Intelligenzen darauf hoffen, *damit* ihren Energiebedarf für alle Zeiten zu stillen.

'If the string network in the universe should be infinitely expanded, these intelligences might hope to satisfy their appetite *with it* forever.'

(20) EO: [T]he fertility rate [...] has declined over the past three decades, [...] prompting some commentators to venture that overpopulation may no longer be a threat.

GT: In den vergangenen 30 Jahren ist die Fertilitätsrate [...] zurückgegangen, und schon hört man den einen oder anderen spekulieren, dass die Gefahr der Überbevölkerung *damit* abgewendet sei.

'In the past 30 years the fertility rate has declined, and one already hears some people speculate that the danger of overpopulation is *thus* averted.'

In (19), *damit* serves a twofold function (cf. Section 4): its deictic part *da-* corefers with the NP *das Fadengeflecht* 'the string network' and its prepositional/relational part

-mit classifies the referent of the NP semantically as an INSTRUMENT. In the English source text, both the coreference relation and the semantic relation of instrumentality are not linguistically encoded, i.e. left implicit.

In (20), we can describe *damit* as a connective with resultative meaning (cf. (7) and (8)). What (19) and (20) have in common is that in both cases the use of *damit* is characterized by a high degree of redundancy, even 'by German standards'. Nevertheless, it is impossible to decide whether we are dealing with optional or translation-inherent explicitation here. On the one hand, we do not find any evidence (such as an implicit Situation–Evaluation pattern) that would allow us to classify (19) and (20) as instances of optional explicitation. On the other hand, it is generally unclear how cases of translation-inherent explicitation may be identified, since no independent criteria have been proposed and the 5–10 cases under consideration – apart from their extreme redundancy – have nothing in common that would make their attribution to the (hypothesized) category of translation-inherent explicitation seem plausible.

6 Summary and Conclusion

The short literature review presented in Section 2 has pointed out two major methodological shortcomings of previous studies seeking to provide evidence for Blum-Kulka's (1986) Explicitation Hypothesis, i.e. for the existence of a translation-inherent type of explicitation. First, most researchers have not taken reasonable precautions to isolate translation-inherent explicitations from optional ones. Instead, the general trend seems to be to simply 'argue away' the ambiguity of the results obtained, claiming that they are 'by and large' supportive of Blum-Kulka's hypothesis. Second, two examples were given to illustrate that many studies do not properly define and/or operationalize what they try to investigate. Only when these two problems are addressed can we hope to find reliable criteria for the identification of translation-inherent explicitations.

The study of explicating shifts in English-German translations of popular science texts presented in this article has found empirical evidence for three of the four types of explicitation assumed by Klaudy (2008). The hypothesized fourth type of explicitation, translation-inherent explicitation, has however turned out to be problematic: in English-German translations, translation-inherent explicitations – if they exist at all – seem to be indistinguishable from optional explicitations, at least as far as shifts in the domain of textual cohesion are concerned. The reason for this is that on the one hand, the German preference for explicitness demands the addition of cohesive elements such as *damit* in English-German translations, and on the other hand we have observed a great deal of source language interference leading to a general 'underuse' of *damit* by translators (cf. Section 5). With cultural filtering leading to explicitness and interference leading to implicitness, it seems impossible to identify additions of *damit* unambiguously as instances of translation-inherent explicitation.

The detrimental effects of source language interference as a disturbing factor in studies on explicitation have already been observed by Puurtinen (2004). Her quantitative investigation of clause- and sentence-level connectives in English-Finnish translations and non-translated Finnish texts yielded a random looking pattern of

implications and explicitations: "some connectives are more frequent in Finnish originals [...], others in translations [...], and a few connectives have roughly equal frequencies in both subcorpora" (Puurtinen 2004: 170). However, the results are not uninterpretable: Puurtinen argues that at least some of the observed frequency differences are the result of "a tendency to translate [source text] expressions literally" (Puurtinen 2004: 174), i.e. caused by source language interference.

How can we get rid of disturbing factors such as optional explicitation and source language interference in future investigations of translation-inherent explicitation? One promising way of tackling this problem is demonstrated in recent work by Steiner and co-workers at the University of Saarbrücken (Steiner 2005, 2008; Hansen-Schirra et al. 2007). Drawing on the Hallidayan framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics, Steiner and colleagues seek to provide a theoretically motivated operationalization of explicitation "by defining explicitness and explicitation, by stratifying it in terms of different linguistic levels, by tightening its boundaries, and by modularizing it in a multifunctional perspective" (Steiner 2005: 19). Their empirical studies are carried out using a carefully constructed corpus of English and German texts as well as translations in both directions. While most explicitation phenomena identified so far in the corpus seem to be attributable to typological differences between English and German (i.e. are cases of obligatory explicitation), Hansen-Schirra et al. (2007) have found one variety of explicitation – a rise in lexical density from source to target text – which actually "might be due to the translation process" (Hansen-Schirra et al. 2007: 225).

But also methods less sophisticated than the ones used by Steiner and colleagues may yield valid results – if all types of explicitation are taken into account. One very simple way of doing this is the 'filtering method' which was used by Baumgarten, Meyer and Özçetin (2008) and in the study presented in this article: obligatory, optional and pragmatic explicitations are subtracted from the set of observed explicating shifts in order to obtain a residue of translation-inherent explicitations. In Baumgarten, Meyer and Özçetin's study of parentheticals in English-German translations, this procedure left "the addition of translations of foreign-language terminology as the only instances of translational [i.e. translation-inherent, VB] explicitation in [their] corpus" (Baumgarten/Meyer/Özçetin 2008: 193). I have not seen their data, but on the face of it, the addition of a parenthetical to elucidate a foreign language term rather sounds like a case of pragmatic than of translation-inherent explicitation. (In any case, Baumgarten, Meyer and Özçetin found only 5 of the 284 observed parentheticals to be of this kind.)

In the study presented here, the filtering method did not lead to the desired result due to strong source language interference effects on the one hand and the pervasiveness of optional explicitations caused by cultural filtering on the other. A follow-up study should therefore address the opposite translation direction: if we should find (1) more connectives in German-English translations than in non-translated English texts which (2) were not triggered by connectives in the German source texts but added by translators, these occurrences might be plausibly explainable as translation-inherent explicitations. I think that the filtering method can in fact be used to identify translation-inherent explicitations, but only in combination with a carefully thought-out research

design. For example, as the present study has shown, the method is not feasible for identifying translation-inherent explicitations in English-German translations, since the communicative norms of German always have to be the prime suspect when a connective has been added (House 2004). In German-English translations, however, where we should expect cohesive implicitation rather than explicitation, the filtering method should work just fine.

It may well be that Blum-Kulka's Explicitation Hypothesis will in fact turn out to be correct, i.e. that there is a universal tendency to explicitate caused by the translation process. However, I hope to have shown that we will not get far if we do our investigations without taking the language-pair specific types of explicitation as well as other disturbing factors such as source language interference into account.

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