



Translating English Implicit Comparative Reference into Arabic

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Abstract

The current study intends to investigate the process of translating English implicit comparative reference into Arabic. The scrutiny has been conducted by examining certain sentences from J. K. Rowling's (2010) book "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" and Ahmad Hassan Mohammed's (2010) translation into Arabic. The analysis of the examples has shown that it is possible to translate English implicit comparative reference into Arabic, either by using the explicit or implicit method. It should be noted that capturing the desired meaning in the target language is the deciding factor in which approach to use. Furthermore, the research has shown that literal translation and formal equivalence are viable choices and present themselves as valid options for translating the English implicit comparative reference into Arabic. The recommendations of the present study are made for the current study at the end of the investigation.

Keywords: comparative reference, formal equivalence, implicit meaning, literal translation

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

"Implicit meaning is a meaning that is not shown but is part of the conversation or intention to convey the speaker" (Larson, 1984, p. 36). Additionally, the intended meaning of the source language might be expressed by implicitly cohesive devices. Therefore, these techniques might pose certain difficulties for translators. As a result, implicit meaning should be looked upon carefully because it has the intended meaning expressed by the source language writer.

When it comes to reference, it is generally understood to be an expression's relationship to an item or a situation in the real world. Similarly, the phrase reference "refers to the situation where the identity of an item can be retrieved from either within or outside the text" (Paltridge, 2006, p.131). The relationship that exists between a word and what it refers to in the real world is also described by Baker as "the term reference" (1992, p.181).

Therefore, translating implicit comparative reference might be a great difficulty and a demanding task for translators who are not familiar with the differences in language and culture between the target and source languages.

As stated above, to come up with an outstanding translation, translators are required to be competent in both languages and know a great deal about the different cohesive devices in the source language and the target language.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Comparative reference is a cohesive device that is used to show comparisons between one thing and another. It sometimes forms a source of difficulty for translators. This difficulty can be attributed to the language distinctions between Arabic and English.

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine the two hypotheses:

- 1) English implicit comparative is rendered in an implicit way into Arabic.
- 2) English implicit comparative reference can be translated into Arabic using both literal translation and formal equivalence, which are both effective techniques.

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1 Implicit Meaning

Implicit meaning, as we have mentioned earlier, is the intended meaning, which is not written in an outspoken way in the source language text. In this respect, Larson (1984) asserts that implicit information is a component of the meaning intended for the original writer to understand, and as such, it is part of the meaning that the translation is supposed to convey (p. 38).

Therefore, to understand the implicit meaning, the responders have to be familiar with the cohesive devices in the language, such as reference.

2.2 Comparative Reference

A cohesive technique known as a comparative reference is a reference that shows a comparison between two objects. It is indicated through the comparative degrees of adjectives and adverbs. In this respect, Halliday and Hasan (1976) divided comparative reference into two groups: general comparative reference and special comparative reference.

General comparative reference refers to the similarity between two different things. This can be realized by certain words that have a comparative meaning, such as: *same, equal, as, else, other, similarly, differently, otherwise and likewise*. As for special comparative reference, it refers to a comparison between things based on their quality and quantity. It can be achieved by certain words such as: *better, worse, more and less*. Regarding this, Halliday and Hasan assert that special comparison means “comparison that is in respect of quantity and quality” (1976, p. 77).

2.3 Literal Translation

The earliest form of translation practice is most likely literal translation. This approach involves translating the denotative meaning of phrases and sentences inside a text from one language to another. It should be mentioned that word-for-word translation and literal translation are entirely different. It is a process that uses the grammar of the target language. When there is semantic and structural



correspondence between the languages, it can be claimed that literal translation is effective.

2.4 Formal Equivalence

Formal equivalence is a translation procedure that aims to preserve the structure of the original language utterance. It "focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content" (Nida, 1964, p. 159).

3. Research Approach

The present investigation has used a descriptive analytical study. This approach is employed for identifying, analyzing, and describing the sentences in "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" that have implicit comparative reference.

The present investigation has used a descriptive analytical study. This approach is employed for the purpose of finding, identifying, analyzing, and describing the sentences in "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" that have implicit comparative reference. According to Wallen and Fraenkel (1990), the descriptive method is defined as "a method to explain, analyze, and classify something through various techniques, a survey, an interview, a questionnaire, and a test" (p.33).

In order to complete the study, Ahmad Hasan's Arabic translation of J. K. Rowling's (2010) book "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" will be described together with the data from the original work. Therefore, seven specific examples will be analyzed and examined. In each of these examples, two versions will be used. The first one, data



a, refers to the original text. The second one, data b, refers to the translated version in Arabic.

It should be mentioned that the transliteration symbols for Arabic vowels and certain consonants used in the translated examples were given by the Association of Professors of English and Translation of Arab Universities (APETAU), in 1997.

4. Results

When it comes to translating the implicit comparative reference from English to Arabic, there are two possible approaches, the first of which is the implicit one. It can be used if the intended meaning is accurate and understood by the target language reader. The second method, which is the explicit one, can be used if the intended meaning would be difficult for the target language to understand. In order to clarify this, let us look at the following examples.

Data 1.a

“Harry jumped up out of the bed; Hermione had done the **same**” (P.419).

Data 1.b

“قفز هاري من فراشه وكذلك فعلت هيرميون” (p.386).

In this instance, the comparative reference "the same" alludes to the incidents in which "Hermione jumped out of the bed" and "Harry jumped out of the bed." The goal of using this comparative reference is to prevent the first sentence from using the same verb twice. In order

to prevent repetition and preserve the coherent device, the translator in this case chose to employ the implicit technique and used the Arabic term "وكذلك" as a comparison reference. Since the reader of the target language understands the intended meaning, the translation is therefore clear.

Data 2.a

“Come follow me, dear friends, and we shall find our goal, or **else** shall perish bravely in the charge!” (p. 78).

Data 2.b

“تعالوا اتبعوني يا أصدقائي الاعزاء, وسنجد هدفنا والا سنهلك بشجاعة في الهجوم” (p. 66).

To avoid repeating the subject "we" twice in the phrase, a comparative reference has been used. In order to prevent repeating the same subject twice in the sentence, the translator chose to interpret the referent implicitly as "سنهلك". In Arabic verbal sentences, the personal pronoun "نحن" is removed until it is stressed. In the sentence, the pronoun "we" is referred to as the subject of the verb "shall perish", so the use of the Arabic morpheme "س" makes the intended meaning clear. Therefore, the reader of the target language can understand the translation easily.

Data 3.a

“So, Professor Lupin had taken out his wand, and indicated that Harry should do **the same**” (p.257).

Data 3.b

“فقال الاستاذ لوبيين وهو مخرج عصاه مشيرا لهاري ان يفعل مثله” (p.236).

In this instance, the comparative phrase "the same" alludes to two distinct events: the first is that "Professor Lupin had taken his wand," and the second one is that "Harry should take out his wand." In order to avoid duplicating the verb phrase from the first sentence, a comparative reference has been used. The translator continued to translate the underlying comparative reference into Arabic as "مثله" to maintain the cohesive device in the target language. So the translation is comprehensible, and the meaning is easily understood by the second language reader because the referent was mentioned before.

Data 4.a

"Couldn't have put it **better** myself, said Professor Lupin" (p. 146).

Data 4.b

"قال الاستاذ لوبين مشجعا: ما كنت أستطيع أضع تعريفا أفضل من ذلك" (p. 139)

As an example, data 4.a, has the comparative reference "better". It refers back to the pronoun "it". The translator here preferred to translate the pronoun explicitly into Arabic as "تعريفا", but kept the comparative reference implicit in the form of a demonstrative pronoun as "ذلك" to maintain the cohesive device in Arabic. This translation is clear and comprehensible.

Data 5.a

"What- they kill? Oh, no, said Lupin. **Much** worse than that" (P.268).

Data 5.b

"ماذا؟ هل يقتلون؟ أجاب لوبين: لا بل أسوأ من ذلك" (p.247).

The reference “much” in this example refers anaphorically to the action of killing. The translator here opted for keeping the cohesive device in Arabic, so he used the Arabic word “ذلك”. This translation is acceptable because the intended meaning is clear owing to mentioning the referent in the previous sentence. As a result of translating the comparative reference implicitly, the cohesive device in Arabic is maintained.

Data 6.a

“In one hand she held an enormous suitcase, and tucked under **the other** was an old and evil-tempered bulldog” (p.30).

Data 6.b

“وفي احدى يديها كانت تحمل حقيبة كبيرة وفي اليد الاخرى يوجد ذلك الكلب الشرير بولدوج” (p.25).

Here, the word “the other” is a comparative reference. It alludes anaphorically to earlier remarks, which is the word “hand”. It functions as a comparison between two things. Sometimes, the translator has the choice to opt for an implicit or explicit method. Here, the translator chose to translate the implicit referent in an explicit way as “اليد” to clarify the intended meaning.

Data 7.a

“Harry was bursting to say that he’d **rather** live in an orphanage **than** with the Dursleys” (p. 31).

Data 7.b

“وكان هاري يرد قائلا: أن معيشته في دار للايتام ستكون أفضل كثيرا من يقائه وسط ال درسلي” (p. 27).

Here, the word “rather than” is a comparative reference, which refers to “living in an orphanage. It compares “living in an orphanage” to “living with the Dursleys”. In the translation process, the comparative reference can be translated implicitly because the referent is mentioned before, but sometimes for the intended meaning to be clear and understood by the target language reader, the translator has to choose the explicit method in translating the implicit comparative reference. Here, the translator opted for translating the referent explicitly as “أفضل من بقائه وسط ال درسلي” This case illustrates the point.

5. Discussion

It is time now to shed light on the two hypotheses stated in the present research. The investigation has revealed that the majority of implicit English comparative reference data is implicitly translated into Arabic. Data 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 have been translated implicitly into Arabic. The target language reader can easily understand the translation because the comparison pronouns in these examples refer to previously stated words. It should be noted that just two examples out of seven have been translated explicitly in order for the intended meaning to be clear and comprehensive to the target language reader. As a result, this conclusion proves that hypothesis number (1) is valid.

Concerning the second research hypothesis, the examples have shown that the literal translation employed by the translator has been successful in conveying the intended meaning of the implicit comparative reference from the source language into the target language. As a result of this technique, formal equivalence, which is



the closest match between the source and target languages in terms of form and content, has proved itself to be a viable option in cases of implicit comparative reference. This would lead us to say that hypothesis number two is valid.

6. Conclusion

The present study has culminated in the following conclusions:

- 1) To maintain the same cohesive devices in English and Arabic, an implicit comparative reference can be translated in an implicit way if the intended meaning of the reference is conspicuous and understood by the target language.
- 2) It is necessary to translate an implicit comparative reference explicitly if the intended meaning is difficult for the reader to understand.

7. Recommendations

The present study can come up with these recommendations:

- 1) The current study can be categorized as field research on the choice of translating the English implicit comparative reference into Arabic using the explicit or implicit method.
- 2) The research has looked at the procedure of translating English implicit comparative reference into Arabic. Another investigation could be carried out to examine the process of translating Arabic implicit comparative reference into English.



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ترجمة المرجع المقارن الضمني في اللغة الإنجليزية إلى اللغة العربية

المستخلص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى النظر في طرق ترجمة المرجع المقارن الضمني في اللغة الإنجليزية إلى اللغة العربية. وذلك من خلال فحص بعض الجمل الموجودة في رواية جي كي رولينج (2010) "هاري بوتر وسجين أزكابان" وترجمة أحمد حسن محمد (2010) إلى اللغة العربية. وقد أظهر تحليل الأمثلة أنه من الممكن ترجمة المراجع المقارنة الإنجليزية الضمنية إلى اللغة العربية، سواء بشكل صريح أو ضمني. إن الوصول للمعنى المطلوب في اللغة الهدف هو العامل الحاسم في الأسلوب الذي يجب استخدامه في الترجمة. علاوة على ذلك، أظهر البحث أن الترجمة الحرفية والتكافؤ الرسمي هما خياران قابلان للتطبيق لترجمة المرجع المقارن الإنجليزي إلى اللغة العربية. وسوف يتم تقديم التوصيات للدراسة الحالية في نهاية التحقيق.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المرجع المقارن، التكافؤ الشكلي، المعنى الضمني، الترجمة الحرفية