



Translating English Implicit Personal Reference into Arabic

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed at investigating how English implicit personal reference is translated into Arabic by analyzing sentences containing personal reference found in the novel "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban". The analysis showed that the translation of English personal reference into Arabic can be done implicitly or explicitly by paying attention to the references. The study culminated in the fact that literal translation and formal equivalence presented themselves as valid options in rendering implicit personal reference from English into Arabic.

KEYWORDS : personal reference, literal translation, formal equivalence

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Sometimes the meaning of the text might not be stated overtly in the original text. In this respect, Larson (1984) states that the "implicit meaning is a meaning that is not shown but it is the part of the conversation or intention to convey to the speaker" (p. 36).

In an attempt to understand and achieve the correct message of a source language text, the terms of reading the line and reading between the lines should be maintained. Reading the line refers to reading with a view to know the explicit meanings, while reading between the lines means reading to know the implicit meanings.

In general, reference is defined as the relation of an expression to a real world object or a situation. In this vein, Paltridge (2006) states that the term "refers to the situation where the identity of an item can be retrieved from either within or outside the text" (p. 131). Also, Baker (1992) states that "the term reference is traditionally used in semantics for the relationship, which holds between a word and what it points to in the real world" (p. 181).

Hence, to be able to capture the implicit personal reference properly, the translator must have the ability to recognize and translate the various kinds of meanings and ways of translating implicit meaning. In any text, sometimes the meaning is not conveyed explicitly. On the contrary, the reference to certain things, events or relations might be implicit. The meaning does exist but it is not expressed explicitly.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Personal reference is often a source of difficulty for translators due to the fact that it is a cohesive device that represents a slippery area where the learners are likely to lose sight of its important contribution to the texture of texts.

1.3 Hypotheses of the Study

The present study aims at testing these hypotheses:

- 1) It is hypothesized that implicit personal reference in the source language is rendered implicitly into Arabic.
- 2) Literal translation and formal equivalence are considered favorable options in rendering implicit personal reference in literary texts.

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1 Literal Translation

Literal translation is a procedure that involves the conveyance of denotative meaning of phrases and sentences in a text from one lan-

guage to another. In other words, it is a rendering that preserves the surface aspects of the messages both semantically and syntactically, adhering closely to source text mode of expression.

2.2 The Concept of Equivalence

Equivalence is a key concept in the process of translation. In fact, nearly all types of translation are based on equivalence between the source and the target text. Therefore, we cannot think of translation without taking equivalence into consideration.

2.2.1 Formal Equivalence

Formal equivalence is a procedure that seeks to capture the form of the source language expression. In other words, it focuses primarily on the form of the original. As Nida (1964) puts it, "it focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content" (p. 159).

2.3 Personal Reference

Personal reference is a pronoun that refers to a particular person, group or a thing. In other words, personal reference is a reference through the categories of person.

Personal pronouns are considered to be the most typical example of reference in English. They are used to refer to persons within the same linguistic environment. The category of personals includes the three classes of personal pronouns (I, we, you, he, she, it, they), possessive pronouns (mine, ours, yours, his, hers, its, theirs) and possessive adjectives (my, our, your, his, her, its, their).

In Arabic, personal reference is divided into three categories, first person (ana), second person (anta, anti, antuma, antum, antuna) and third person (huwa, heya, huma, hum, huna).

3. Research Approach

In this research descriptive analytical study is employed. This method is used in order to discover, identify, analyse and describe the sentences of implicit meanings in the novel "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" (Rowling, 1999), and the methods of translating the implicit meaning in the novel.

In this regard, Fraenkel and Wallen (1990) argue that the descriptive method is "a method to explain, analyze and classify something through various techniques, survey, interview, questionnaire, and a test" (p. 23).

The data collected were compared and analyzed based on the theories outlined in the previous section.

To this end, the data of the source novel "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" by J.K. Rowling as well as its Arabic translated version by Ahmad Hasan Mohammed were described.

4. Results

The translation of English personal reference into Arabic can be done implicitly or explicitly by paying attention to the reference. An implicit translation can be done if the entailments of references are clear and understandable without causing ambiguity and without sacrificing the unity of meaning. To illustrate this point, the researchers considered the following examples.

<p><u>Data 1. a</u> "Harry went down to breakfast next morning to find the three Dursleys already sitting around the kitchen table. They were watching a brand-new television..." (p. 22).</p>	<p><u>Data 1. b</u> Wa fi sabah alyaum altali tawajah Harry le tanawul aleftar fawajada al Durdleys jaleseen hawala maedat almatbakh le ushahedu jahaz altelfaz (p. 18).</p>
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In the example 1.a, the referent of the pronoun "They" is implicit. It functions as a subject of the sentence and has a reference of "the three Dursleys" stated in the previous sentence. Here, the translator opted for translating the pronoun implicitly as (ushahedu). In Arabic, unless emphasized, personal pronoun (hum) is omitted in verbal sentences. The morpheme (waw) for the plural in the Arabic sentence refers to the pronoun "they" as a subject of the verb "were watching". Therefore, this translation is clear and captured in the target language.

<p><u>Data 2. a</u> "Harry Potter was a highly Unusual boy in many ways. For one thing, he hated the summer holidays more than any other time of the year" (p.7).</p>	<p><u>Data 2. b</u> Lam yakun Harry waladan adyan methel baqeyat alawlad, faqad kana yakhtalef anhum fi katheer min alumur. Fahuwa methalan yakrah alejazat alsefyiyeh methla aye waqtin madha fi assaneh (p. 3).</p>
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In the sentence above, the referent of the pronoun "he" is implied. The pronoun signifies a masculine third person and has a reference of "Harry Potter". Therefore, the translator opted for translating the subject pronoun implicitly as (fahuwa). In 2.b the pronoun (huwa) is literally translated as a separate pronoun from the verb because it is the subject of the sentence. Therefore, this translation is acceptable because the Arabic language allows that.

<p><u>Data 3. a</u> "Harry, James wouldn't have wanted me killed.. James would have understood, Harry... he would have shown me mercy..." (p. 403).</p>	<p><u>Data 3. b</u> James lam yakun leureeda qatlee. Kana sayatafahama alamer.. Harry laqad kana sayerhamani. (p. 396)</p>
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This example has a personal pronoun "he" as a subject which signifies a third person. This pronoun has an implicit referent and refers anaphorically to "James" that is stated in the previous sentence. The translator rendered the pronoun implicitly into Arabic as (sayerhamani). In 3.b the pronoun (huwa), the separate pronoun in Arabic, becomes a concealed pronoun when it is used as a subject of the modal in the past. Therefore, the implicit translation of "he" into a concealed pronoun in Arabic is acceptable and captured by the target reader.

<p><u>Data 4. a</u> "So she phoned the telephone hotline. By the time the Ministry of Magic got there, he was gone" (p. 139).</p>	<p><u>Data 4. b</u> Lethaleka faqad itasaltu fi alkhat alsakhen, waendama hadarat wizarat alseher kana qad thahab. (p. 134)</p>
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In this sentence, the personal pronoun "he" is a subject, which has an implicit meaning and a reference of Black. The personal pronoun implies the third person singular and is used as a cohesive device in the source text. Unfortunately, the name of the man who was left implicit here is not mentioned in the previous sentence; it is stated in the previous two paragraphs. Therefore, keeping the implicit meaning

of "he" in Arabic made the translation unclear and not understandable. The Arabic reader might think that the pronoun "he" refers to the reference of "Harry" or "Black". The translator should have made the implicit meaning explicit by saying (kana Black qad thahab) in order to avoid the uncertainty caused by the far-distant location of the referent.

<p><u>Data 5. a</u> "Not too far from here, said Seamus, who looked excited. It was a Muggle who saw him. Course, she didn't really Understand..." (p.138).</p>	<p><u>Data 5. b</u> Qala Seamus belqurb min huna. Laqad raahu ahad alamah wa betabee faheyeh la tudrek alamer. (p. 133)</p>
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In this example, the referent of the personal pronoun "she" is implied. It signifies the third person singular woman. Here the personal pronoun functions as a subject that refers anaphorically to the "Muggle" which is mentioned in the previous sentence. The translator opted for translating the personal pronoun literally into Arabic as (heya). This translation is acceptable because the English personal pronouns used as subjects can be literally translated into Arabic and appear in isolation.

<p><u>Data 6. a</u> "And, sir, I'll need this skinned, said Malfoy, his voice full of malicious laughter" (p. 136).</p>	<p><u>Data 6. b</u> Qala Malfoy wasawtuahu yafouh belmaker: saydi sa'ahtaju aydan ila taneem hatheh alawraq (p. 131).</p>
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The example 6.a has a subject pronoun "I" which has an implicit referent. The pronoun signifies a singular first person. The subject pronoun has an implicit meaning and refers cataphorically to the referent "Malfoy". The translator opted for translating the pronoun "I" implicitly by omitting the pronoun and replacing it with a letter (alhamzeh) in the word (sa'ahtaju). In 6.b the translation is clear because a personal pronoun can be omitted and replaced by a letter when it is used as a subject of a full verb. Here, the subject (ana) is ellipted obligatorily in (sa'ahtaju) because the bound morpheme (alhamzeh) serves as an explicit reference to the concealed pronoun (ana).

<p><u>Data 7. a</u> "Yeah maybe, said Harry, as they reach the Entrance Hall and crossed into the Great Hall. It had been decorated with hundreds and hundreds" (P.173).</p>	<p><u>Data 7. b</u> Ajaba Harry: lestu adri wa endama wasalu ela albahu aladeem wajadoohu muzaynan bemeat alshmour. (p. 166)</p>
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This sentence has a pronoun "it" as a subject of the passive sentence "It had been decorated with hundreds and hundreds." The pronoun "It" has an implicit meaning and a reference of "the Entrance Hall" mentioned in the previous sentence. The translator opted for translating the pronoun "it" implicitly because it is mentioned in the previous sentence. Therefore, this translation constitutes no difficulty in capturing the meaning. In 7.b the English subject pronoun is translated into an object Arabic pronoun in the form of (ha), the connected pronoun in Arabic, in the word (wajadoohu). However, the two sentences have the same meaning although the two lexical items have different grammatical functions. The reason is that in both sentences the goal is the pronoun "it".

<p><u>Data 8. a</u> "Longbottom, at the end of this lesson we will feed a few drops of this potion to your toad and see what happens. Perhaps that will encourage you to do it properly" (p. 138).</p>	<p><u>Data 8. b</u> Fi nehayat aldars sanuteeka badha alnuqat le hathehe alwasfah, wa nara matha sayahduth asa an yushajeak hatha ala taqdeemeha beshakal saleem. (p. 133)</p>
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The pronoun "it" in the above example has an implicit meaning as an object of the sentence and a reference of "this potion" mentioned in the previous sentence. The pronoun is translated implicitly into Arabic as (ha) in the word (taqdeemeha). In 8.b the object (heya) is ellipted obligatorily in (taqdeemeha) because the bound morpheme (ha) serves as an explicit reference to (heya). This translation is clear and captured in the target language.

Data 9. a "You sold Lily and James to Voldemort, said Black, who was shaking too. Do you deny it ?" (p.403).	Data 9. b Qala Black: laqad beata Lily wa James ela Voldemort.. hal tunker thalek? (p. 372)
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The pronoun "it" in the above example has an implied referent. The pronoun "it" in the interrogative sentence refers anaphorically to the event of selling Lily and James to Voldemort which is described in the previous sentence. The translator opted for translating the English pronoun implicitly into Arabic by substituting the word "it" for the word "that". This translation is clear and causes no difficulty to the target reader.

Data 10. a "Your mum and dad are Muggles! But it'll be fascinating to study them from the wizarding point of view, said Hermione" (p. 65).	Data 10. b Ajabat Hermione: wa laken satakoon derasatehem mufeedah min wejhet alnathar alsehreyeh. (p. 62)
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In the example above, the referent of the pronoun "them" is implicit. The pronoun "them" has a reference of "the Muggles" mentioned in the previous sentence. The translator opted for translating the pronoun implicitly as (derasatehem). In 10.b the object pronoun takes another form in Arabic depending on the gender. Here, the pronoun "them" refers to plural animate, so it takes the form of (hem), the connected pronoun in Arabic. Therefore, the meaning is conveyed accurately and captured in the target language.

Data 11. a "Right then, said Professor Lupin. Can you picture those Clothes very clearly, Neville? Can you see them in your mind's eye? Yes, Neville uncertainly, plainly wondering what was coming next" (p.148).	Data 11. b Aada alustaz Lupin yaqool: hasanan.. hal yumkenuka tasawur hatheth almalabes bewudooh ya Neville? Aani hal yumkenuka an tatakhyluha fi thehnek? Fa ajaba Neville wahwa yatasaal fi thehneh an alkhutwa atalyeh: naam. (p. 141)
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The example above has an implicit pronoun "them" in the interrogative sentence "Can you see them in your mind's eye? This pronoun functions as an object of the sentence and has a reference of "clothes" which is mentioned in the previous sentence. Thus translating the implicit English pronoun into implicit Arabic pronoun as (ha) in the word (tatakhyluha) is acceptable and understood because it is mentioned in the previous sentence.

Data 12. a "but when they reached the corridor which ended with the portrait of the fat lady, they found it jammed with students" (p.173).	Data 12. b Walakin endama wasalu ela soorat alsayedeh albadeneeh wajadoo zuhaman min altalameeth hunak. (p. 167)
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In this example, the object pronoun "it" which signifies an inanimate object has an implicit meaning and a reference of "the corridor" which is mentioned in the previous sentence. Here the translator opted for implicit translation by omitting the object pronoun; however, the translator translated the pronoun by an adverb (hunak) that means there in Arabic. Therefore, the translation of the target text became understood from the context.

Data 13. a "Hagrid seem to have lost his Confidence " (p. 15).	Data 13. b yabdu ana Hagrid qad faqada theqatuhu benafseheh. (p. 15)
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The example 13.a has an implicitness of a possessive pronoun "his confidence". The pronoun has a reference of "Hagrid's confidence". The translator opted for keeping it implicit. In 13.b. the form of the cohesive device which is identified as an "object pronoun" takes another form in the target language. Here, the possessive pronoun "his" takes the form of (hu) in the word (theqatuhu), so the translation is clear and captured in the target language.

Data 14. a "For another, he really wanted to do his homework , but..." (p. 7).	Data 14. b Kama yuhebu tadeyat wajebatuhu almadrasyeh. (p. 3)
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The example 14.a. has an implicitness of a possessive pronoun "his homework" which functions as an object pronoun. The pronoun refers to Harry's homework. The translator opted for translating it implicitly as (wajebatuhu). In 14.b the object pronoun takes another form in Arabic language. Here, the possessive pronoun "his" takes the form of (hu), so the translation is clear and captured in the target language.

Data 15. a "It was nearly midnight, and he was lying on his front bed" (p. 7).	Data 15. b Kan alwaqtu muntasafa alyel taqreeban waqad istalqa Harry ala firashihi. (p. 3)
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The sentence has a personal pronoun "he" which has an implicit referent and a reference of "Harry". Translating this pronoun implicitly will confuse the reader because the referent is not mentioned in the previous sentence. It has a far-distant referent, so the only solution is to be translated explicitly in Arabic. The translator opted for this choice in rendering the personal pronoun "he" into "Harry". Therefore, this translation is clear and captured easily in the target language.

5. Discussion

The researchers can now draw the various threads together and try to test the hypotheses of the research. The study conducted has shown that most of the English implicit reference data are translated into Arabic implicitly because the system of the target language allows that. In other words, both English and Arabic languages can use the implicit reference in the form of personal pronouns. This conclusion validates hypothesis number one.

As for the second research hypothesis of selecting a procedure of translation and a type of equivalence that are considered favorable options in rendering implicit English reference in literary texts, the examples have shown that the translator tends to use the first option of literal translation approach in the translation process and hence translate the source language implicit references into implicit references in the target language. This amounts to saying that this translation alternative can be considered to be the default situation which is expressed in the absence of any restrictions which oblige translators to resort to the other translation alternative options. This result came in line with Beekman (1974) who prefers literal translation if it serves to convey the correct meaning. As a result of this technique, it can be said that formal equivalence is preserved in case of implicit reference because it is the closest possible match of form and content between the source language and the target language. As Nida (1964) puts it, "... focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content" (p. 159). The result of the present study, however, came inconsistent with Bassnet (1980), who comments that "Literal translation, where the emphasis on word-for-word translation, distorts the sense and syntax of the original" (p. 81).

6. Conclusion

The conclusions of this study of implicit reference are as follows:

- 1) An implicit meaning can be translated implicitly if the entailment of references is clear and understandable; if the target language has grammatical system which allows it; if the implicit meaning is familiar and comprehensible by the target readers.
- 2) An implicit meaning should be translated explicitly if it causes ambiguity or vagueness in the target language.

7. Suggestions and Recommendations

7.1 Suggestions for Further Research

- 1) A contrastive study of implicit reference in both English and Arabic might be conducted by investigating the differences and similarities of both languages.
- 2) The present study has investigated the translation of implicit reference from English into Arabic. Another research could be conducted to investigate the other direction.

7.2 Recommendations

In light of the results of the study, the researchers offer the following recommendations:

- 1) This study can be a useful guidance in having a field research about measuring the tendency of translating implicit reference, whether the tendency lies in translating it explicitly or implicitly.
- 2) More attention should be paid to the subject of implicit reference by allocating parts of a text book to throw light on the problem.

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