The 'Explicitation Hypothesis' and Non-professional Translators: A Case Study*

Ula Al-Dabbagh
Petra University

Abstract

In an article entitled 'Shifts of cohesion and coherence in translation', Blum-Kulka (1986) introduced the 'explicitation hypothesis.' The hypothesis posits that translators add information in the target text that is implicit in the source text. This amplification, that produces translated texts that exhibit a higher degree of explicitness in comparison with the originals, takes place regardless of the differences between the language pairs involved in the act of translation. Therefore, explicitation is considered to be part and parcel of any translation activity whether conducted by professional or non-professional translators. This paper tries to test whether this hypothesis applies to the translations of non-professional translators by analyzing the work of fourth year students majoring in translation at the University of Petra, Jordan. The analysis of the students' translated texts has revealed that non-professional student translators 'spell out' information that is implicit in the source text, and hence produce translated texts that are more explicit than the original.