LINGUOPRAGMATIC IMPLICITNESS IN TRANSLATED TEXTS: AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH LITERARY WORKS AND THEIR UZBEK TRANSLATIONS

Umida Erkinovna Karimova
e-mail: umidakarimova95@mail.ru

Abstract. This article examines linguopragmatic implicitness as a translation problem in the transfer of English literary prose and drama into Uzbek. Drawing on Gricean pragmatics, presupposition theory and relevance-theoretic accounts of translation, the study treats implicit meaning not as an optional stylistic layer but as a core component of the author's communicative intention. The material comprises fragments from works by Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, Oscar Wilde and O. Henry, compared with their Uzbek renderings. Using comparative, contextual and pragmatic analysis, the paper identifies the major types of implicitness — conversational implicature, presupposition, culturally conditioned implicitness and implicit evaluation — and describes the strategies translators use to handle them: preservation, explicitation, compensation, pragmatic substitution and omission. The findings suggest that the typological gap between analytic English and agglutinative Uzbek, with its rich inventory of particles, honorific forms and evidential markers, pushes Uzbek translators toward selective explicitation. Excessive explicitation, however, risks flattening irony and removing the interpretive effort that the original deliberately demands. The article argues for a relevance-oriented criterion of adequacy: a translation succeeds when it enables the target reader to recover comparable implicatures at a comparable cognitive cost.

Keywords: implicitness, implicature, presupposition, linguopragmatics, literary translation, explicitation, compensation, English–Uzbek translation, relevance theory.

1. Introduction

Literary communication rarely states everything it means. A novelist's irony, a playwright's understatement, a character's evasive reply — all of these rely on the reader's ability to infer what lies beneath the literal surface. For the translator, this hidden layer poses a double challenge: it must first be reconstructed in the source text and then re-encoded in a language whose grammatical and cultural resources for implying differ from those of the original. When the source and target languages are as distant typologically and culturally as English and Uzbek, the challenge becomes particularly acute.

Uzbek translation studies have accumulated a considerable body of research on the lexical, stylistic and cultural aspects of literary translation, beginning with the foundational work of G'. Salomov [10] and continued in later studies by Q. Musayev [8] and others. Pragmalinguistic research in Uzbekistan, developed by Sh. Safarov [9], M. Hakimov [5] and their followers, has in turn described the communicative and pragmatic categories of Uzbek discourse. Nevertheless, the specific question of how implicit meaning survives, transforms or disappears when English fiction is rendered into Uzbek has received comparatively little systematic attention.

The aim of this article is to identify the principal types of linguopragmatic implicitness in English literary texts and to analyse the strategies used to convey them in Uzbek translation. To achieve this aim, the study seeks to clarify the notion of linguopragmatic implicitness within modern pragmatics, to classify the implicit meanings found in the selected material, to determine the translation strategies applied to each type, and to evaluate the pragmatic adequacy of these strategies.

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2. Theoretical Background

The concept of implicitness is rooted in the distinction between what is said and what is meant. H. P. Grice's theory of conversational implicature showed that speakers routinely communicate more than they literally express, relying on the hearer's assumption that communication is cooperative [3]. When a maxim of Quantity, Quality, Relation or Manner appears to be violated, the hearer infers an additional meaning that restores the presumption of cooperation. In literary discourse, the deliberate flouting of maxims is one of the main sources of irony, humour and characterisation.

A second pillar is presupposition — background information that an utterance takes for granted rather than asserts. Presuppositions are triggered by definite descriptions, factive verbs, iterative expressions, change-of-state verbs and similar devices [7; 13]. Because such triggers are language-specific, a presupposition encoded lexically in English may require a grammatical or particle-based equivalent in Uzbek, or may even have to be rendered explicitly.

Relevance theory, developed by D. Sperber and D. Wilson [11] and applied to translation by E.-A. Gutt [4], reframes implicitness in cognitive terms. An utterance conveys a set of explicatures and implicatures, and the audience processes it in the expectation of optimal relevance, that is, adequate cognitive effects for justifiable processing effort. From this standpoint, translation is a form of interlingual interpretive use: the translator aims at a target text that resembles the original in relevant respects, including the ratio of explicit to implicit content. Gutt distinguishes between direct translation, which preserves the communicative clues of the original, and indirect translation, which adapts them to the cognitive environment of the target audience.

In this article, linguopragmatic implicitness is understood as the property of a text whereby part of its communicative content — evaluative, emotional, social or referential — is conveyed not through direct lexical or grammatical expression but through inference drawn from linguistic cues, context and shared background knowledge. The term «linguopragmatic» underlines that such meaning is anchored in specific language units (particles, modal words, word order, lexical choice, tense and aspect forms) while being activated by pragmatic factors. This definition allows implicitness to be treated simultaneously as a linguistic phenomenon and as a translation problem.

Translation scholarship offers a range of techniques relevant to implicit meaning. J.-P. Vinay and J. Darbelnet described explicitation and implicitation as complementary procedures [12]; S. Blum-Kulka formulated the explicitation hypothesis, according to which translated texts tend to be more explicit than their sources [2]; M. Baker discussed the ways translators handle non-equivalence at the level of implicature [1]; B. Hatim and I. Mason highlighted the translator's role as a mediator of intentionality [6]. These insights form the analytical toolkit of the present study.

3. Material and Methods

The empirical material consists of fragments from five English literary works of different genres and periods: Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice (1813), Charles Dickens's Oliver Twist (1838), Mark Twain's The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876), Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest (1895) and O. Henry's short story «The Gift of the Magi» (1905) [14–18]. The selection was guided by the density of implicit meaning in these texts, their popularity among Uzbek readers and the diversity of implicitness types they display, ranging from narrative irony to comic dialogue.

Each fragment was compared with its Uzbek rendering[1]. The analysis combined several methods: comparative analysis of source and target units; contextual and interpretive analysis to reconstruct the

[1] Bibliographic details of the Uzbek editions used: [translator, title, publisher, year — to be specified by the author].

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implied meaning; pragmatic analysis based on Gricean maxims and presupposition triggers; and a relevance-theoretic assessment of whether the target reader can recover a comparable implicature. Where several renderings were possible, literal and pragmatically adapted variants were contrasted to show how the choice of strategy affects the implicit layer of the text.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Conversational implicature and irony

The opening sentence of Pride and Prejudice is one of the most frequently cited examples of narrative irony in English literature: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" [14]. Read literally, the sentence states a general law. Its actual point, however, is the reverse: it is the families of marriageable daughters who are «in want» of a wealthy single man. The implicature arises from a flouting of the maxim of Quality — the narrator asserts something she does not believe — and is reinforced by the pompous, quasi-philosophical register of "universally acknowledged".

A literal Uzbek rendering such as «Katta boylik egasi bo'lgan bo'ydoq yigit, albatta, xotinga muhtoj bo'lishi hammaga ma'lum haqiqatdir» preserves the propositional content but tends to weaken the ironic tension, since an Uzbek reader unfamiliar with the marriage conventions of Regency England may take the statement at face value. A pragmatically sensitive variant retains the elevated register, for instance through the bookish formula «Hamma e'tirof etgan haqiqat shuki...», and relies on the subsequent narrative to activate the irony. Here the most appropriate choice is preservation of the implicature combined with register compensation: any explicit hint, such as the particle «go'yo», would destroy the effect by revealing the author's intention too early.

Wilde's comedy offers a different kind of implicature. Lady Bracknell's remark "To lose one parent, Mr. Worthing, may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness" [18] flouts the maxim of Relation: the misfortune of being orphaned is absurdly reinterpreted as a matter of personal negligence. The comic effect depends on the parallel structure and on the unexpected shift from "misfortune" to "carelessness". An Uzbek version such as «Ota-onadan birini yo'qotish, janob Uorting, baxtsizlik deb hisoblanishi mumkin; ikkalasini ham yo'qotish esa beparvolikka o'xshaydi» maintains both the syntactic parallelism and the lexical contrast baxtsizlik — beparvolik, so the implicature remains fully recoverable. The example shows that when an implicature is generated by structure rather than by culture, direct translation in Gutt's sense is both possible and preferable.

4.2. Presupposition

Presuppositions are particularly sensitive to grammatical differences between languages. Oliver Twist's famous plea "Please, sir, I want some more" [15] contains the iterative trigger "more", which presupposes that Oliver has already received a portion and implies that it was insufficient. The social implicature — a pauper child daring to address the workhouse master with a request — is intensified by the formulaic politeness of "Please, sir".

Uzbek conveys the iterative presupposition with the adverb yana, while the polite request is expressed through the imperative form and the address: «Iltimos, ser, yana ozgina bering». The limiting word ozgina adds a note of humility that is not lexicalised in the English sentence but is consonant with the pragmatic situation; in this way the translator compensates lexically for the loss of the English intonation pattern. At the same time, the borrowed address «ser» preserves the foreign social hierarchy, whereas replacing it with a native form such as «amaki» or «taqsir» would domesticate the scene and alter the power relations it implies.

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Change-of-state and factive presuppositions pose similar problems. English often encodes them in a single verb (stop, realise, regret), whereas Uzbek tends to use analytical constructions (…qilishdan to'xtadi, …ekanini angladi), in which the evidential form ekan explicitly marks the moment of discovery. Such grammatical explicitation is usually obligatory and does not in itself distort the implicit layer; the danger arises when translators additionally verbalise the emotional background that the original leaves to inference.

4.3. Culturally conditioned implicitness

Some implicit meanings are accessible only to readers who share the cultural background of the original. O. Henry opens «The Gift of the Magi» with the terse statement "One dollar and eighty-seven cents. That was all" [16]. The implicature of poverty is generated by the maxim of Quantity: the narrator gives an exact, meagre sum and pointedly refuses to elaborate. For the contemporary American reader the amount was immediately meaningful; for the Uzbek reader, especially today, it is not.

The translator therefore faces a choice. A purely literal rendering, «Bir dollar sakson yetti sent. Hammasi shu», keeps the laconic style but may leave the scale of poverty unclear. The particle-based variant «Bor-yo'g'i bir dollar sakson yetti sent» shifts the evaluative implicature into the explicit layer through the limiting expression bor-yo'g'i, thereby guiding the reader's inference while preserving brevity. A translator's note on the purchasing power of the sum is another option, but it moves information outside the fictional world and slows down the narrative. In our view, the particle-based solution offers the best balance between processing effort and recoverable effect.

Culturally conditioned implicitness also concerns forms of address and politeness. English "you" does not distinguish between intimate and respectful address, whereas Uzbek obliges the translator to choose between sen and siz, and often to use the honorific plural -lar in respectful reference. Each such choice makes explicit a social relationship that the original leaves implicit and recoverable only from context. In the dialogues between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy, for example, consistent use of siz reflects the formal distance of their early encounters, while any change in address in later chapters would signal a growing intimacy that English conveys by other means, such as tone and choice of topic.

4.4. Implicit evaluation and rhetorical questions

In The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Tom persuades his friend that whitewashing a fence is a privilege by asking: "Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?" [17]. The rhetorical question carries a negative implicature (no, he does not) and a manipulative one (therefore this is a rare and desirable opportunity). Uzbek possesses a rich inventory of particles that mark rhetorical questions — axir, nahotki, -mi and -ku with emphatic intonation — and the line can be rendered as «Axir, bolaga har kuni ham devor oqlash nasib qilavermaydi-ku?». The particles axir and -ku, together with the verb nasib qilmoq ('to be granted by fate'), make the implied evaluation more salient than in the original. This is a case of moderate explicitation that conforms to Uzbek conversational norms: a bare question without particles would sound unnatural in Uzbek dialogue and could lose its rhetorical force.

4.5. Summary of translation strategies

The analysis of the material makes it possible to generalise the correlation between types of implicitness and the strategies used to transfer them. These correlations are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of linguopragmatic implicitness and translation strategies in English–Uzbek literary translation

Type of implicitness	Source example	Main strategy	Pragmatic effect in Uzbek
Conversational	Austen: "It is a truth	Preservation +	Irony retained if no

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implicature (irony)	universally acknowledged…"	register compensation	explicit hints are added
Implicature generated by structure	Wilde: "…to lose both looks like carelessness"	Direct translation	Comic effect fully recoverable
Presupposition (iterative)	Dickens: "I want some more"	Lexical equivalent (yana) + compensation (ozgina)	Presupposition preserved; humility reinforced
Culture-specific implicature	O. Henry: "One dollar and eighty-seven cents"	Explicitation via particle (bor-yo'g'i)	Evaluation made accessible; brevity preserved
Implicit social relations	Austen: dialogues with "you"	Obligatory explicitation (sen / siz)	Social distance becomes explicit
Rhetorical question	Twain: "Does a boy get a chance…"	Particle-based explicitation (axir, -ku)	Evaluation more salient; dialogue sounds natural

The data indicate that explicitation is the dominant tendency in English–Uzbek literary translation, which is consistent with the explicitation hypothesis [2]. However, not all explicitation is of the same nature. Obligatory explicitation, dictated by the grammatical categories of Uzbek (forms of address, evidentiality, question particles), is a natural consequence of typological differences. Optional explicitation, motivated by the translator's wish to make the text «easier», is more problematic: it often deprives the reader of the pleasure of inference and turns irony into a plain statement. The translator should therefore distinguish between making implicit meaning accessible and making it explicit.

5. Conclusion

The study confirms that linguopragmatic implicitness is a central rather than peripheral element of the literary text, and that its adequate transfer is one of the key criteria of translation quality. In English fiction, implicit meaning is generated primarily by the flouting of conversational maxims, by presupposition triggers, by culturally loaded details and by rhetorical structures. Uzbek, with its developed system of particles, modal and evidential forms and grammaticalised politeness, provides translators with effective tools for conveying these meanings, but it also tends to push them toward explicitation.

Four practical conclusions follow from the analysis. First, implicatures based on structural patterns such as parallelism and contrast should be transferred directly, with the patterns themselves preserved. Second, ironic implicatures demand restraint: the translator should reproduce the register that generates irony rather than add explanatory signals. Third, culture-specific implicitness may justify moderate explicitation through native pragmatic markers, which is preferable to extratextual commentary. Fourth, obligatory explicitation caused by Uzbek grammar should be carried out consistently, since it shapes the reader's perception of character relationships throughout the text.

Future research could extend the corpus to contemporary English fiction, compare several Uzbek translations of the same work and test readers' interpretation of implicit meanings experimentally. Such work would provide an empirical basis for the relevance-theoretic criterion of translation adequacy proposed in this article.

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