

An Explication ‘Syndrome’: A Corpus-based Investigation of Explicating Shifts in the Translation of the Concessive Conjunction ‘*Although/Though*’

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This corpus-based study provides a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the translation of a conjunctive marker in a specially designed English-Arabic corpus. Adopting a Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)-based approach, the author analyses bilingual concordance output for the English hypotactic conjunction *although/though*, highlighting some interesting patterns of structural ‘explication’ in translation, whether directly related to the conjunction itself or observed within its immediate cotext. With the concept of ‘explication’ being redefined from an SFL perspective, this study highlights some structural explicating tendencies in the translated corpus, assessing whether those tendencies can justifiably be regarded as translation-specific explicating shifts, i.e. not attributable to the translator’s style, source language/text, or target language requirements. The study demonstrates how structural explication is often associated with an upward shift on the grammatical rank-scale, together with other patterns of expansion and reinforcement of conjunctive markers, which do not seem to be necessitated by any structural requirements in the target language. This study also shows how potentially explicating shifts tend to occur in concomitant clusters, an explication ‘syndrome’, as it were, whereby information is repackaged into looser, more easily processable constructions. The present study contributes to addressing a conspicuous gap in theory-driven corpus-based research focused on translation-specific features in Arabic translated texts. Furthermore, the conception of explication adopted in this study constitutes a departure from the taxonomic approach characteristic of a large body of literature on explication, which often engenders a flat model of description and classification with vague overlapping categories.

Keywords: Arabic, corpus, explication, Systemic Functional Linguistics, translation