

Klaudy K. 1996. Back Translation as a Tool for Detecting Explication Strategies in Translation. In: Klaudy K., Lambert, J., Sohár A. (eds.) *Translation Studies in Hungary*. Budapest: Scholastica. 99–114.

## **Back-Translation as a Tool for Detecting Explication Strategies in Translation<sup>1</sup>**

*Kinga Klaudy*

The paper describes an experiment aimed at detecting explication strategies in translation by using back-translation as an experimental tool. The Hungarian text of a speech made by the president of the Hungarian Republic on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Holocaust (Original Hungarian Text-OHT) was translated into English by an experienced professional translator (English Translation-ET) and translated back by translation-trainees (Back-translated Hungarian Text-BHT).

The purpose of the experiment was to discover, whether the explications (or in other words, the additional information) in the Hungarian-English translation disappear in the English-Hungarian back-translation or not. Also, if it is possible to detect the "traces" of explications made by the translator in the Hungarian-English translation after back-translating the text or not.

### **1. Definition and history**

Explication is a technique of making explicit in the target text information what is implicit in the source text. Explication (implication) strategies are generally discussed together with addition (omission) strategies (Vinay - Darbelnet 1958). Some scholars regard "addition" the more generic and "explication" the more specific concept (Nida 1964), while others interpret "explication" as the broader concept which incorporates the more specific concept of "addition" (Seguinot 1988, Schjoldager forthcoming). The two are handled as synonyms by Englund Dimitrova who uses the terms "addition-explication" and "omission-implication" (Englund Dimitrova 1993).

The concept of explication was first introduced by Vinay and Darbelnet. They include a glossary of translation techniques in their book, where under the entry of explication we find the following definition: explication is 'a process which consists of introducing information into the target language which is present implicitly in the source language, but it can be derived from the context or the situation' (1958:8). They give a definition of implication as well: implication is a 'process which consists of letting the target language situation or context define certain details which were explicit in the source language' (ibid:10). Defining the units of explication/implication as gains and losses they mention e.g. that due to the lack of gender in

---

<sup>1</sup> Written version of a lecture delivered at the *XIVe Congrès mondial de la Fédération internationale des traducteurs (FIT)* - 15 February 1996. Melbourne, Australia.

Hungarian, part of the meaning of the English personal pronoun 'she' is lost in Hungarian translation.

The concept of explicitation was further developed by Nida, without using the term "explicitation" itself. Nida deals with the techniques of adjustment used in the process of translating. The main techniques of adjustment in his work are: additions, subtractions and alterations. Nida gives the following types of additions: a) filling out elliptical expressions; b) obligatory specification; c) additions required because of the grammatical restructuring; d) amplification from implicit to explicit status; e) answers to rhetorical questions; f) classifiers; g) connectives; h) categories of the receptor language which do not exist in the source language; i) doublets. (1964: 227)

"Amplification from implicit to explicit status" in Nida's work is one of the various kinds of additions required in translation. It takes place, when 'important semantic elements carried implicitly in the source language may require explicit identification in the receptor language' (1964: 228). He lists several examples from Bible-translations to illustrate the range and variety of this type of additions. For example " ... *queen of the South*" (Luke 11: 31) can be very misleading when neither 'queen' nor 'South' is familiar in the receptor language... Accordingly in Tarascan one must say "*women who was ruling in the south country*" (1964: 229).

Throughout the 1970s and the 1980s most works published on the subject of "partial translation theories", especially in the field of "language-restricted, area-restricted and culture-restricted theories" (terms introduced by Holmes 1972) when discussing additions and omissions in translation refer only accidentally to explicitation or more broadly, to the transformation of implicit information into explicit information and vice versa, as one of the many reasons for additions and omissions.

Barkhudarov differentiates four types of transformations in translation: "perestanovka" ('transposition'), "zamena" ('substitution'), "dobavleniye" ('addition'), "opushcheniye" ('omission'). According to him, the most important reason for additions in translation from English into Russian are the elliptic nominal structures in English, that is the omission of certain semantic components in English surface structure which were present in the deep structure. As ellipsis is not characteristic of Russian, the omitted semantic components are reconstructed in the Russian surface structure: *pay claim - trebovaniye povisit zarplatu (demand to raise the pay)*; *gun license - udostovereniye na pravo nosheniya oruzhiya, ('license for right to carry weapon')* (1975:223).

A very detailed typology of lexical and grammatical transformations, including grammatical additions in Bulgarian-Russian and Russian-Bulgarian translation can be found in the work of the Bulgarian scholar Vaseva (1980). According to her additions are generated by the "linguistic asymmetry", that is by the necessity to express explicitly meanings in the target language that are contained implicitly in the source language. Cases of grammatical additions in Vaseva's work are explained by the so called "missing categories" and categories with different functions: Bulgarian has articles, while Russian has none; the possessive pronoun can be omitted in Russian, unlike in Bulgarian; the copula can be omitted in Russian but not in Bulgarian; the direct object can be - rarely - omitted in Russian, but never in Bulgarian etc. Besides the grammatical additions Vaseva shortly refers to the so called pragmatic additions as well, when concepts generally known for the source language audience may be unfamiliar for the target language audience and therefore they call for explanations in the translation.

Analyzing the basic problems of explicitation neither Barkhudarov nor Vaseva use the term explicitation itself, however the Russian term "eksplitsirovaniye" ('explicitation') was introduced by Komissarov in 1969. The terms "eksplitsirovaniye" ('explicitation') and

"implitsirovaniye" ('implication') became widely used in Russian translation studies in connection with the text-linguistic approach to translation (Kukharensko 1988, Chernov 1988, Gak 1988).

## **2. The explicitation hypothesis**

It was Blum-Kulka, who examined first systematically this phenomenon, introducing the term "explicitation hypothesis" (1986). Applying the concepts and terms of discourse-analysis, she explores the discourse-level explicitation, that is explicitation connected with shifts of cohesion and coherence (overt and covert textual markers) in translation. Shifts of cohesive markers can be partly attributed to the different grammatical systems of languages (for instance in English-French translation markedness for gender makes the French text more explicit), and partly to the differences in stylistic preferences for various types of cohesive markers (in English-Hebrew translation for instance, the preference for lexical repetition instead of pronominalization makes the Hebrew text more explicit). The author suggests that shifts on the level of cohesion may change the general level of the target text's textual explicitness.

The process of interpretation performed by the translator on the source text might lead to a TL text, which is more redundant than SL text. This redundancy can be expressed by a rise in the level of cohesive explicitness in the TL text. This argument may be stated as "the explicitation hypothesis", which postulates an observed cohesive explicitness from SL to TL texts regardless of the increase traceable to differences between the two linguistic and textual systems involved. It follows that explicitation is viewed here as inherent in the process of translation (1986: 19).

Critical remarks on Blum Kulka's explicitation-hypothesis were made by Seguinot in 1988. Firstly, she finds the definition too narrow, stating that 'explicitness does not necessarily mean redundancy' (108). Secondly, she points out, that "the greater number of words in French translation, for example, can be explained by well-documented differences in the stylistics of English and French." (ibid.) She would reserve the term "explicitation" for additions which can not be explained by structural, stylistic or rhetorical differences between the two languages.

According to her argumentation, addition is not the only device of explicitation. Explicitation takes place not only when 'something is expressed in the translation, which was not in the original (ibid), but also in cases when 'something which was implied or understood through presupposition in the source text, is overtly expressed in the translation, or an element in the source text is given a greater importance in the translation through focus, emphasis, or lexical choice' (ibid).

Seguinot examined translations from English into French and from French into English, and in both cases she has found greater explicitness in translation, which was the result of improved topic-comment links, the addition of linking words, and raising subordinate information into coordinate. The greater explicitness in both cases - according to her research - could be explained not by structural or stylistic differences between the two languages but by the editing strategies of the revisers.

In 1989 the Finnish scholar, Vehmas-Lehto brings up the issue of explicitation in her book on the quasi-correctness of Finnish journalistic texts translated from Russian. Examining the frequency of connective elements in translated Finnish texts in comparison with authentic

Finnish texts she argues: '...considering the many inevitable losses in cohesion which take place in the process of translation, one might ask whether the Finnish translations would be much worse even if they contained more connectives than the authentic Finnish texts' (204).

The author points out the greater explicitness of Finnish translation in comparison not with Russian originals but with authentic Finnish texts, thus suggesting an entirely new idea: translated target language texts are more explicit than authentic target language texts of the same register, because of the use of explicitation strategies.

According to Hewson and Martin implicating/explicating technique 'consists in shifting certain elements from the linguistic to the situational level and vice versa' (1991:104). They illustrate their argumentation by examples of drama-translations, where 'meaningful elements are transferred from situation into the staging text (stage directions) or integrated into character's words' (ibid).

In the 1990s explicitation research gained a new impetus partly from the corpora-studies (Baker 1993, 1995, Överås 1996) partly from the experimental study of consecutive and simultaneous interpretation. In the case of interpretation time pressure may make implicitation strategies (compression, condensation) more important than explicitation strategies (Englund Dimitrova forthcoming, Schjoldager forthcoming).

### 3. Types of explicitation

**Obligatory explicitations** are dictated by the differences in the syntactic and semantic structure of languages (Barkhudarov 1975, Vaseva 1980, Klaudy 1993, 1994, Englund Dimitrova 1993). The syntactic and semantic explicitations are obligatory because without them, no correct target language sentences can be created.

The most obvious cases of obligatory explicitations are caused by the so called "missing categories". As there is no definite article in Russian, and there is in English, all translation from Russian into English will contain a lot of pluses for this very simple reason. As there are no prepositions in Hungarian, but there are in Russian and English, all translations from Hungarian into English and Russian will contain a lot of pluses also for this very simple reason.

The next obvious reason for obligatory additions is the analytic or synthetic character of languages. Hungarian is a dominantly synthetic language: Hungarian nouns have no prepositions but they have long inflected case endings, which include the function of prepositions, possessive pronouns etc. (*kertemben* = one word in Hungarian, *in my garden*, *v moyom sadu* = three words in English and Russian). Hungarian verbs also have very complex conjugations, the personal pronoun, the accusative ending and sometimes the auxiliary verb are all included in the Hungarian verb form (*szeretlek* = one word in Hungarian, *I love you*, *ya lyublyu tebya* = three words in English and Russian). As English and Russian are dominantly analytic languages, all Hungarian noun and verb forms are decomposed in the process of Hungarian-English and Hungarian-Russian translation, and the target text will contain a lot of pluses for this reason. (cf. with the concept of "inherently-explicit" and "inherently-implicit" languages Seguinot 1998, Klaudy 1993).

While syntactic explicitations generally mean addition of plus elements in the target text, semantic explicitation consists of choosing more specific words in the target text. Due to the different linguistic structuring of reality certain concepts (body-parts, colors, kinship terms) have more detailed vocabularies in one language than in others. English *brother* and *sister* must be specified in Hungarian translation, where there are different terms for *younger brother* (*öcs*) and *younger sister* (*hug*) and for *older brother* (*báty*) and *older sister* (*n\_vér*).

**Optional explicitations** are dictated by the differences in the text-building strategies (cf. Blum-Kulka's cohesive patterns) and stylistic preferences between languages. They are optional, as grammatically correct sentences can be constructed without their application in the target language, but the text as a whole will be clumsy and unnatural (cf. translationese).

Optional explicitations are for example the additions of connective elements for the strengthening of the cohesion links at the beginnings of sentences or clauses, the use of relative clauses instead of long, left branching nominal constructions, the addition of emphasizees for the clarification of the sentence-perspective etc. (Doherty 1987, Vehmas-Lehto 1989).

**Pragmatic explicitations** that is the explicitation of implicit cultural information (Pym 1993) are dictated by the differences between cultures, between the generally shared knowledge (cf. Blum-Kulka's reference network) of the members of different cultural communities. Recognizing, that the target language audience does not share the same historical, geographic and cultural knowledge as the source language audience, translators often have to give explanatory translations. The simple mention of the name of a village, river, food or drink portant for the source language community, does not mean anything for the target language audience. In this case instead of *Maros* the translator should write *the river Maros, reka Maros*, instead of *Fertő* - the lake Fertő, ozero Fertő).

**Translation-proper explicitations** can be attributed to the nature of the translation process itself. Seguinot makes a distinction between 'choices that can be accounted for in the language system, and choices that come about because of the nature of the translation process'(1988:18).

In this case, the higher degree of explicitness in translated texts can be explained by one of the most general features of all translations, totally independent of specific language combinations or directions of translation: by the necessity to formulate ideas on the target language, that were originally conceived in the source language (Klaudy 1993).

#### **4. The validity of the explicitation-hypothesis**

The concept of translation-proper explicitations is related to the explicitation hypothesis according to which translations are always longer than the originals, regardless of the languages concerned (Blum-Kulka 1986, Seguinot 1988). The validity of this hypothesis can be proved by 'a large scale of empirical studies ... by examining different types of interlanguages, from those produced by language learners to the products of both non-professional and professional translators' (Blum-Kulka 1988:19).

It was stressed also by Toury (1991) that new results in explicitation research can be expected from the use of experimental methods in translation studies.

The experiment described in this paper is a small contribution to these empirical studies to justify or reject the explicitation hypothesis.

#### **5. The experiment**

In the course of the experiment, a Hungarian source text was translated into English, than back-translated into Hungarian with the aim to detect quantitative and qualitative gains and losses made in the process of translation and back-translation.

The corpus of the experiment consisted of three types of texts:

- (Text 1) OHT - Original Hungarian Text  
(Text 2) ET - Text translated from Hungarian into English  
(Text 3) BHT - Text back-translated from English into Hungarian

**Original Hungarian Text-OHT:** the Hungarian text was a public speech made by the President of the Republic of Hungary in 1995 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Holocaust. In terms of register membership, the field of the text was rethorical, the tenor formal and the mode not spontaneous monologue.

**English Translation-ET:** the Hungarian text was translated into English by an experienced professional translator, who was asked to make a written translation before the event for the members of the international press.

**Back-translated Hungarian Text-BHT:** the English translation was translated back by translator trainees of the Training Center for Translators and Interpreters at the University of Budapest. The students' first foreign language was English, all of them held a degree in English language and literature. The experiment was carried out in the second semester of their studies, in other words, they were not altogether unexperienced as translators either, though not fully fledged professionals.

The President of Hungary, Árpád Göncz, a very distinguished novelist and himself a very well known translator of contemporary English and American literature, would write his public speeches personally, and is well known for his literary style. This solemn speech is a good example of his style, elevated without being grandiose or bombastic. He makes use of a vocabulary unusually broad for a politician to express views and sentiments much beyond daily political exigencies. In other words, his style is to be analysed as belles lettres and not as a pragmatic political messages. Not only is his vocabulary unusually broad and varied, the ideas expressed original, but also the formulation of the sentences is full of rhetoric surprises. Structures are terse and curt, the Hungarian original hyperbolic, compressing sentences sometimes into a single, well selected word.

The translator of the text is not only an experienced translator, but a very fine author himself in his own right, well versed in styles of English and indeed, he produced a congenial version of the original. To achieve this, he was compelled, of course, to use explicitation on the large scale and enlarge on the original to convey all the allusions, compressions and hyperbolisms, the original makes use of. This in itself is an important factor in the growth in word-count from Hungarian into English, apart from obvious structural reasons.

### 5.1. The evidence of the word-count

Looking at the number of words in the three different corpora we can discover that:

(1) the English translation is longer than the Hungarian original (number of words increased from 491 to 835),

(2) back-translated Hungarian texts are shorter than the English text, but do not come even close to the length of the original Hungarian text (number of words decreased from 835 only to 600 in average and not to 491)

Evidently, not all the explicitations disappeared in the process of back-translation.

*Table 1.*  
*Number of words in the whole texts*

| <b>Text</b>                          | <b>Number of words</b> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Original Hungarian Text (OHT)        | 491 words              |
| English Translation (ET)             | 835 words              |
| Back-Translated Hungarian Text (BHT) | 600 words (average)    |

*Table 2.  
Number of words in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd sentences*

|              | <b>Original Hungarian Text</b> | <b>English Translation</b> | <b>Back-translated Hungarian Text</b> |
|--------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sentence     | Number of words                | Number of words            | Number of words (average)             |
| 1/1          | 4                              | 7                          | 4, 5                                  |
| 1/2          | 10                             | 18                         | 12, 6                                 |
| 1/3          | 10                             | 14                         | 10                                    |
| 2            | 21                             | 36                         | 26                                    |
| 3            | 21                             | 48                         | 32, 8                                 |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>66</b>                      | <b>123</b>                 | <b>85, 9 (average)</b>                |

The number of students in the experiment was six. Table 1. and table 2. shows the average number of words in the six trainees' translations. The text of the Hungarian original and the English translation will be appended to this article in their entirety, the six trainees's translation will be illustrated only by one part of the first sentence as follows:

*Table 3.  
Number of words in three clauses of the first sentence*

| <b>Text</b> | <b>Number of words</b> | <b>Examples</b> |
|-------------|------------------------|-----------------|
|-------------|------------------------|-----------------|

|         |            |   |
|---------|------------|---|
| OHT     | 10 words   | <i>... kevesen azok közül, akik félszáz éve átélték, amire ma emlékezünk, ...</i>   |
| ET      | 20 words   | <i>... amongst us a mere few of those, who were there and survived half a century ago the events remembered today</i><br>...                      |
| BHT/1.  | 17 words   | <i>... csupán néhányan vannak közöttünk, akik félszázaddal ezel_t tanúi voltak és túléltek azokat az eseményeket, melyekre ma emlékezünk, ...</i> |
| BHT/2.  | 14 words   | <i>... néhányan közülünk ott voltak és túléltek fél évszázaddal ezel_t az eseményeket, amelyekre ma emlékezünk, ...</i>                           |
| BHT/3.  | 17 words   | <i>... közöttünk csupán néhány olyan ember van, aki ott volt, és túlélte azokat az eseményeket, amelyekre ma emlékszünk, ...</i>                  |
| BHT/4.  | 12 words   | <i>... páran közülünk ott voltak és túléltek azokat az eseményeket, amelyekre ma emlékezünk, ...</i>  |
| BHT/5.  | 14 words   | <i>... köztünk néhányan ott voltak és túléltek a fél évszázaddal ezel_tti eseményeket, melyekre most emlékezünk, ...</i>                          |
| BHT/6.  | 11 words   | <i>... néhányan közöttünk ott voltak és túléltek a fél évszázada történt eseményeket, ...</i>   |
| BHT/av. | 15,3 words |   |

Quantitative evidence shows, that explicitations carried out in translation from Hungarian into English, do not entirely disappear in back translation from English into Hungarian. In connection with this phenomenon there are five questions to be answered:

- (1) What is the reason for the increase of the number of words in Hungarian-English translation?
- (2) Why is there no significant decrease in the number of words in English-Hungarian back-translation?
- (3) What types of explicitations are omitted in the process of back translation?
- (4) What types of explicitations are preserved in the process of back-translation?
- (5) Is it possible, that the tendency for explicitation is always stronger than the tendency for implicitations?

To answer these questions, the different types of explicitations (obligatory, optional, pragmatic, translation-proper) will be analysed from the aspect of their omission or preservation in the process of back-translation.

## 5.2. Omission of obligatory explicitations

Obligatory explicitations, that can be attributed to missing categories and to the synthetic or analytic character of languages disappear naturally in English-Hungarian back-translation. Hungarian, as mentioned before, is a synthetic language, rich in morphology and Hungarian verbs and nouns have a very complex inflection system. They are able to incorporate in one verb or noun form the most different functions (the function of pronouns, prepositions etc.) expressed in English analytically.

*Table 4.*  
*Obligatory explicitations*

| <b>Original Hungarian Text</b>  | <b>English Text</b>                       | <b>Back-translated Hungarian Text</b> |
|---------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| <i>barátaim</i>                 | <i>my friends</i>                         | <i>barátaim</i>                       |
| <i>jöttünk össze</i>            | <i>we have come together</i>              | <i>jöttünk össze</i>                  |
| <i>hogy megszülettek</i>        | <i>for having been born</i>               | <i>hogy megszülettek</i>              |
| <i>szembenézni a valósággal</i> | <i>to look into the face of the truth</i> | <i>szembenézni a valósággal</i>       |

As table 4. shows, phrases in the third column are identical with that of the first column, so the obligatory - structural - explicitations attributable to the synthetic character of Hungarian and the analytic character of English, are deleted by the translator trainees in the process of back translation.

## 5.3. Omission/preservation of optional explicitations

Optional explicitations, as mentioned earlier, are dictated by the differences in text building strategies between the two languages. Text building strategies can be very different in the case of analytic and synthetic languages. The synthetic Hungarian verb form is a very powerful cohesive device in the Hungarian text. One complex Hungarian verb form with its incorporated personal and possessive pronouns and with a build-in reference to the subject and the direct object is able to hold together a whole chain of sentences. With the preposition or postposition of the verbal affixes, the Hungarian verb is able to indicate the division line between the thematic and rhematic part of the sentence and may put the emphasis on any part of the sentence.

In translating from Hungarian, the cohesive abilities of the Hungarian verb should be replaced by other cohesive devices in English. The implicit connections between the sentences will become explicit and appear on the surface of the sentence. The more explicit the logic-links are, the more words are needed. The emphasis, that can be expressed by the inversion of the verb form in Hungarian, should be expressed by the addition of words in English.

Another reason for explicitation is the existence of long and complex noun forms in Hungarian, that can be translated very often also only by a whole independent clause in English.

- (1a) *Original Hungarian Text:*  
... hogy a közös **tennivaló** nem hiábavaló. (5 words)
- (1b) *English Translation:*  
... That our common **task, which we wish to fulfill**, will not be in vain.  
(14 words)
- (1c) *Back-translated Hungarian Text:*  
... hogy közös **feladatunk, amelyet végre akarunk hajtani**, nem lesz hiábavaló. (10 words)
- (2a) *Original Hungarian Text:*  
... **a mindenkori** kiszolgáltattak oldalán. (4 words)
- (2b) *English Translation:*  
... always on the side of the defenceless **whoever they may be**.  
(11 words)
- (2c) *Back-translated Hungarian Text:*  
... mindig a védtelenek oldalán, **bármik legyenek is azok**. (8 words)

Optional - textual - explicitations could and should have been deleted in the process of back-translation but, as we can see in the above examples, this is not the case here. Additional cohesive devices are not omitted, but more often preserved by the translator trainees. The "newborn" English clause (*whoever they may be*) could and should have been back-translated into a Hungarian noun phrase (*mindenkori*), translators however, very often are simply unable to find the fitting Hungarian noun, and therefore rather retain the more explicit version (*bármik legyenek is azok*).

#### 5.4. Omission/preservation of pragmatic explicitations

Pragmatic explicitations, as mentioned earlier, are dictated by the differences in the generally shared knowledge of the members of the different cultural communities. Recognizing, that the target language audience does not share the same historical, geographic and cultural knowledge as the source language audience, translators often have to give explanatory translations. This explanatory translations should have been omitted in the back-translation. The example below illustrates the omission of explicitation in the process of back-translation.

- (3a) *Original Hungarian Text:*  
... búcsúztattam **munkaszolgálatba** induló barátokat ... (4 words)
- (3b) *English Translation:*  
... said farevell to friends **mobilized to serve in the labour companies of the Army**, ... (14 words)
- (3c) *Back-translated Hungarian Text:*  
... búcsúztattam barátaimat, akik **munkaszolgálatba** indultak ... (5 words)

Preservation of additional pragmatic information can be also detected in back-translations. Pragmatic explicitations very often required, when translating or rather transferring proper names, especially names of prominent personalities of national culture, science or politics. There are four famous Hungarian personalities mentioned in Árpád Göncz's speech, all of them by family name only. Two of them, the composers Bartók and Kodály are well known all over the world, therefore the translator did not add any explicitation to their names. The two others - Radnóti and Pilinszky - are classics of modern Hungarian poetry, well known in Hungary, but not abroad. The translator added their given names, and these were preserved in the back-translations.

- (4a) *Original Hungarian Text:*  
Arról amit **Radnóti és Pilinszky** életté és költészetté ötvözött. (9 words)
- (4b) *English Translation:*  
Moulded into life and distilled into poetry by **Miklós Radnóti and János Pilinszky**. (13 words)
- (4c) *Back-translated Hungarian Text:*  
Ez az, amit **Radnóti Miklós és Pilinszky János** életté formált és költészetté nemesített. (13 words)

## 5.5. Omission/preservation of translation-proper explicitations

The last type of explicitations - translation-proper explicitations - as mentioned above, can be attributed to the nature of the translation process itself. In other words, to the necessity to formulate ideas in the target language, that were originally conceived in the source language. Sometimes, even the simplest things cause great difficulties in the target language, if the translator strives to express them with the same simplicity.

- (5a) *Original Hungarian Text:*  
Mert nincs kétféle emberség csak egy. **A közös**.
- (5b) *English Translation:*

Because there is only one kind of human decency. *The one we all share.*

- (5c) *Back-translated Hungarian Text:*  
Mert csak egyféle emberség van. *Amelyben mindannyian osztozunk.*

As the example (5a) shows, the second sentence of the Hungarian original is very short and dramatic. The translator lengthened the phrase (5b) and the trainees preserved this in the process of back-translation (5c). To find the simplest solution is of course not easy. To use fewer words in the target text to express the same idea expressed in the source text, requires the ability to condense your style. This ability generally comes only later in the life of a translator and is not characteristic of beginners. Another reason, why the trainees generally did not choose the shorter solutions, is the timidity of beginners, their fear to lose something, that can be important.

## 6. Conclusion

Summing up the results of this limited experiment, we can state, that explicitations made in the Hungarian-English translation were very often preserved in the English-Hungarian back-translation even in cases, where they could or should have been omitted or deleted. The results of the experiment suggest that the tendency for explicitation (additions) - in written translations - may be stronger than the tendency for implicitation (omissions).

## Appendix

### (Text 1)

#### *Original Hungarian Text*

Kedves Barátaim,

Emlékezni jöttünk ma össze: kevesen azok közül, akik félszáz éve átérték, amire ma emlékezünk, többen, akiknek a múlt közvetve kódolta sejtjeibe a történeteket. Az én számomra eleven seb ez a kor: bár sárga csillagot nem viseltem, nem hajtottak aknamezőre, nem éltem meg Auschwitzot, Bort. De naponta voltam tanúja osztálytársaim mind mélyebb megaláztatásának, búcsúztattam munkaszolgálatba induló barátokat, szemem láttára hajtottak fegyverrel ezreket az utolsó előtti állomásra. Láttam, mint szakadt ketté évek alatt egy társadalom, mint különült el kibékíthetetlenül s mindmáig tartón emberség és embertelenség. Ez a kor tanított meg rá, hogy hol az ember helye, ha igényt tart az "ember" névre: a mindenkori kiszolgáltatottak oldalán.

Barátaim: el kell hinnünk a hihetlent - félszáz éve milliók lakoltak kínhalállal azért, ami nem bűn: Hogy megszülettek, s annak születtek, aminek születtek. És tudomásul kell vennünk, hogy az idők végeztéig milliók - a jobbak hordozzák vezeklésül a büntudat terhét, azért, amit nem ők követtek el. Pedig egyetemes felelősség nem létezik: Istennek ki-ki maga tartozik számadással.

Ami megtörtént, sem meg nem történtté tenni, sem letagadni, sem mentgetni nem lehet. És feledni sem szabad: kötelesek vagyunk szembenézni a valósággal. Azzal a tízévi,

gyűlöletheadjárát és rettegés szülte döbrent, olykor részvétlen tétlenséggel, amivel százezrek nézték százezrek halálba vonulását, s azzal a keserű majdhogynem tehetetlenséggel, amivel a mindenre elszánt kevesek próbálták fékezni a halálgyár olajozott működését, hamisítottak jobbára mit sem érő papírokat és pecsétet, bújtatták barátaikat, rejtegették üldözöttek gyermekeit pincék mélyén, lakásokban elfalazva, kórházakban, rendházakban. Hogy az Endlösung ne Endlösung legyen. Vagy egyszerűen mert ott és akkor ezt parancsolta az emberségük. Mégis tisztelet-becsület illeti mindnyájukat. Mert az ő létük a reményforrás, hogy közös tennivalónk nem hiabavaló: útját kell állnunk, hogy bárhol, bármikor és bárki néppel megisméltődjk a hihetetlen. Ami – bármilyen gonosz is – szintén az emberi lélekben gyökerezik.

Azt mondják Európa azóta nem létezik. Hogy az volt a nulla-pont, valamiféle új időszámítás kezdete. Én nem hiszem: ahol a gonosz diktatúrát nem követte újabb gonosz diktatúra, Európa magára talált. Igaz, ez mindenütt eltartott vagy tíz esztendeig. S igaz: most, hogy megzökkent a gazdasági fejlődés folyamata, a gyűlölet elmetszett gyökeréből mintha új hajtás sarjadna. Európa innenső felén meg még az őszinte számvetés szándéka is várat magára. Márpedig amíg magunk is szembe nem nézünk önmagunkkal, belső békességre – a létfontosságú tisztulásra – hiába várunk.

Mert hadd mondjam ki: aki kereszténynek vallja magát, s erre nem vállalkozik, a benne lakó Krisztust csúfolja meg. Aki magyarnak, és erre nem vállalkozik, Bartók és Kodály élete példáját. Aki szíven viseli a kiszolgáltatott magyar kisebbségek ügyét, s erre nem vállalkozik, a szolgálata hitelét. Aki – mindent összevetve – embernek vallja magát, s erre nem vállalkozik, a tulajdon emberségét. S elveszti a jogát, hogy a rajta esett embertelenséget elítélje.

Mert nincs kétféle emberség csak egy. A közös. Hát erről van szó. Arról, amit Radnóti és Pilinszky életté és költészetté ötvözött. Azt hiszem többet nincs mit mondanom.

Köszönöm, hogy meghallgattak, s kérem, hogy soha, sehol mást ne tegyenek, csak hallgassanak a mindnyájunkban élő emberi hangra, ami olykor – valljuk be – igencsak halk: a lelkiismeretükre.

## (Text 2)

### **Text translated from Hungarian into English**

My dear friends,

We have come together to remember tonight: amongst us a mere few of those, who were there and survived half a century ago the events remembered today, more of those, whose bodily cells carry only indirectly the imprint of the past. That epoch for me is an open wound: though I did not have to wear the yellow star of David, was not driven to the mine fields in the war and did not see either Auschwitz or Bor. But I was witness day by day to the ever deepening humiliation of my schoolmates, said farewell myself to friends, mobilized to serve in the labour companies of the Army, and saw thousands driven at gunpoint to the train, which then took them to the final destination. It was before my own eyes that society was split in two, and I saw with my own eyes how human decency and inhumanity were divorced beyond reconciliation ever, to this very day. It was this epoch of history that taught me the lesson, where one has to stand, if one wishes to merit the name "human": always on the side of the defenceless, whoever they may be.

My dear friends; there is no way out, we have to cognize though it is beyond

comprehension - half a century ago millions had to atone with their lives for what is not a sin: simply for having been born and being what they were. And we have to acquiesce in the fact that millions - the better half - shall carry the burden of guilt in eternity for a sin they did not commit. Even though responsibility is never universal: each and every one of us is to make his reckoning with God himself.

What has come to pass, we shall never be able to undo - neither deny nor exculpate it. And we must not forget either: it is our duty to look straight into the face of truth. The passivity, of stunned or sometimes inert people, brought about by a ten year long campaign of hate and by fear, this passivity of hundreds of thousands of people, watching hundreds of thousands of their fellow countrymen marched away to death and also the bitter, near total helplessness of the dauntless few, who did everything in their power to slow down the smooth operation of the death-machine, by forging documents and rubberstamps, though they were mostly useless, by hiding their friends and concealing the children of the persecuted in the depths of cellars, mured up in their apartments or secreted away in hospital wards or behind the walls of convents.

So that the *Endlösung* should not be an *Endlösung*. Or only because then and there this was the order of human decency. And yet we owe them respect. All of them. Because they became the embodiment of hope, that our common task which we wish to fulfill will not be in vain: we must not allow that what is so inconceivable, repeats itself anywhere in the world and inflicts any of the peoples of mankind. We must block the way, because this inconceivable evil also stems out of the human soul.

Some say, since then Europe is no more. Also that it was a kind of point zero, the beginning of a new calendar. I do not think so: where ever the dictatorship of evil was not followed by another dictatorship of another evil, the continent of Europe did find her old self. True, it took her a good ten years in all countries. And it is equally true, that with economic development jerking, new sprouts seem to shoot from the old, once severed roots of hate. And at this end of Europe we are still waiting for even an honest stocktaking. Yet, until we are able to face ourselves, we cannot hope for our peace of mind - for the purification, which would be so vital.

Let me spell it out: anybody claiming to be a Christian yet eschewing this obligation, will mock and ridicule the Christ, who lives in him. Or if claiming to be Hungarian, yet avoiding this act, will betray the example set by Bartók's and Kodály's life. And who is compassionate with distressed Hungarian minorities, yet shuns this duty, will jeopardize the credibility of his service. Or in one word, anybody who wishes to call himself human, yet avoids this act, will endanger his own human nature. And will forfeit his right to condemn inhuman acts committed against himself.

Because there is only one kind of human decency. The one we all share.

This is the point.

Molded into life and distilled into poetry by Miklós Radnóti and János Pilinszky.

I think there is no more I could say.

Thank you for having listened to these words of mine. Finally, I beseech you to do no else ever, but listen to that human voice, which speaks in all of our souls, yet - let us admit - all too faintly sometimes: the voice of our conscience.

## References

Baker, M. 1993. *Corpus Linguistics and Translation Studies. Implications and Applications*. In:

- Text and Technology. In honour of John Sinclair.* ed. by M. Baker, G. Francis, E. Tognini-Bonelli. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 233-250.
- Baker, M. 1995. Corpora in Translation Studies: An Overview and Suggestions for Future Research. *Target* 7:2. 223-243.
- Barkhudarov, L. S. 1975. *Yazik i perevod.* Moscow: Mezhdunarodniye otnosheniya. Blum-Kulka, S. 1986. Shifts of cohesion and coherence in translation. In: *Interlingual and Intercultural Communication.* ed. by J. House, S. Blum-Kulka. Tübingen: Narr. 17-35.
- Chernov, G. V. 1988. Kontekstno-svobodnaya i kontekstno-svyazannaya implikativnost i problemi perevoda. In: *Tekst i perevod.* ed. by A. D. Shveitser Moscow: Nauka. 51-63.
- Doherty, M. 1987. Text connectors - a reading aid. *Babel* XXXIII. 212-217.
- Englund Dimitrova, B. 1993. Semantic change in Translation - A Cognitive Perspective. In: *Translation and Knowledge.* ed. by Y. Gambier, J. Tammola. Turku: University of Turku.
- Englund Dimitrova, B. (forthcoming) Omissions in consecutive interpretation: evidence of a decision component. In: *Professor Anders Sjöberg in memoriam.* Stockholm: Institute of Slavonic and Baltic Languages, Stockholm University.
- Gak, V. G. 1988. Tipologiya kontekstualnih yazikovih preobrazovaniy pri perevode. In: *Tekst i perevod.* ed. by A. D. Shveitser. Moscow: Nauka. 63-76.
- Hewson, L. - Martin, J. 1991. *Redefining Translation. The Variational Approach.* London and New York: Routledge.
- Holmes, J. 1972. The Name and Nature of Translation Studies. In: *Translated! Papers on Literary Translation and Translation Studies.* ed by R. van den Broeck. Amsterdam: Rodopi. 67-80.
- Klaudy, K. 1993. On explicitation hypothesis. In: *Transfere necesse est... Current Issues of Translation Theory. In honour of György Radó* ed. by K. Klaudy, J. Kohn. Szombathely: BDTF.
- Klaudy, K. 1994. *A fordítás elmélete és gyakorlata. Angol, német, francia, orosz fordítástechnikai példatárral (The Theory and Practice of Translation. With illustrations in English, German, French and Russian).* Budapest: Scholastica. 400 pp.
- Komissarov, V. N. 1969. Eksplitsirovaniye kak problema perevoda. *Problemi prikladnoy lingvistiki.* Moscow: TDVK.
- Kukhareenko, V. A. 1988. Eksplikatsiya sodержaniya teksta v processe perevoda. In: *Tekst i perevod.* ed. by A. D. Shveitser. Moscow: Nauka. 40-51.
- Nida, E. A. 1964. *Toward a Science of Translating.* Leiden: Brill
- Överås, L. 1996. *In Search of the Third Code. An Investigation of Norms in Literary Translation.* A Thesis Presented to the Department of British and American Studies at the University of Oslo.
- Pym, A. 1993. *Epistemological problems in Translation and its teaching.* Calceit, Teruel: Caminade.
- Seguinot, C. 1985. Translating implicitation. *Meta* 30. 295-298.
- Seguinot, C. 1988 Pragmatics and the Explicitation Hypothesis. *TTR Traduction, Terminologie, Rédaction* vol 1. no. 2. 106-114.
- Schjoldager, A. (forthcoming) An Exploratory Study of Translational Norms in Simultaneous Interpreting: Methodological reflections. In: *Selected Papers of the CERA Research Seminars in Translation Studies 1992-1993.* Leuven: Katholieke Universiteit.
- Toury, G. 1991. Experimentation in Translation Studies: Achievements, Prospects and Some Pitfalls. In: *Empirical Research in Translation and Intercultural Studies.* ed by S.

- Tirkkonen-Condit. Tübingen: Gunter Narr. 45-66.
- Vehmas-Lehto, I. 1989. *Quasi-Correctness. A critical study of Finnish translations of Russian Journalistic texts*. Helsinki: Neuvostoliitto Instituutti.
- Vaseva, I. 1980. *Teoriya i praktika perevoda*. Sophia: Nauka i isskustvo.
- Vinay, J. P. - Darbelnet, J. 1958. *Stilistique comparée du français et de l'anglais*, Paris: Didier.