

Implicature Shifts in the Translation of King Abdullah II's Political Speeches from English into Arabic

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Abstract

Implicature refers to what people suggest or imply in their speaking or writing, beyond explicit statements. Translators are tasked with preserving the speaker's or writer's intended meaning rather than imposing their own interpretation. Changes in the intended meaning during translation can lead to implicature shifts, which pose challenges for readers of the target text. This study examines the implicature aspects of translating King Abdullah II's political speeches from English into Arabic, focusing on the influence of these shifts and the variations that occur in the translated texts. A mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques, was adopted to analyze implicature shifts using three selected speeches and their translations. The analysis, guided by Grice's theory of implicature, coded the shifts into categories such as addition, omission, explicitation, and substitution, presented in figures and tables. The findings revealed that these shifts reflect a tendency to avoid flouting conversational maxims and enhance clarity and politeness. A preference for explicit over implicit meanings was observed, which sometimes altered the intended meaning of the original text. This study highlights the critical role of implicature in translation and underscores the importance of preserving the communicative intent of the source text to avoid unintended shifts in meaning.

Keywords: implicature, shifts, source text, target text, conversational maxims

1. Introduction

Political speech translation is a challenging process that calls for careful consideration of contextual, linguistic, and cultural elements. Translating implicature—the capacity of language users to express meaning beyond the literal interpretation of their words—is one of the main difficulties in translating political speeches. Audiences worldwide closely follow the speeches of King Abdullah II of Jordan, a well-known political figure in the Middle East. Therefore, it is crucial that his speeches be translated accurately into Arabic, particularly when translating from English to Arabic. However, many challenges arise when translating implicatures in King Abdullah II's political speeches. Because Arabic and English have different linguistic, cultural, and historical backgrounds, translating implicature calls for a thorough comprehension of these backgrounds. Moreover, translating political speeches involves more than just changing words; it also entails capturing the original speech's intended meaning, tone, and subtleties. Implicature is essential to communicating these facets of meaning, and translating it necessitates giving careful thought to the speech's original context.

Despite its importance, the shift of implicature in political speech translation is often overlooked, posing a serious risk of misrepresentation. Inaccurate translation of implicature can lead to misunderstandings of the speaker's intended political stance, distort diplomatic messaging, and influence public perception in unintended ways. In the case of King Abdullah II—a key figure in regional and international diplomacy—such shifts may affect how his positions and values are received by Arabic-speaking audiences. Therefore, the accurate translation of implicature in his speeches is not only a linguistic concern but also a political one.

Even though implicature is crucial when translating political speeches, not much is known about it, especially when

translating from Arabic to English. By examining implicature shifts in the translation of King Abdullah II's political speeches from English into Arabic, this study seeks to address this critical issue and contribute to the growing field of political discourse translation.

This study intends to advance our knowledge of the difficulties and nuances associated with translating implicature in political discourse by analyzing the implicature shifts in the translation of King Abdullah II's speeches. The findings will provide valuable insights for translators, interpreters, and scholars by highlighting the political and communicative consequences of mistranslating implicatures in political contexts.

This research focuses specifically on the Arabic translation of King Abdullah II's speech before the European Parliament, using it as a case study to explore the broader implications of implicature shift in political translation. The research questions guiding this study are:

- i. What types of implicature shifts occur in the Arabic translations of King Abdullah II's political speeches?
- ii. What translational strategies lead to these implicature shifts?
- iii. What linguistic, cultural, or ideological factors explain the use of these translational strategies?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Pragmatics and Translation

In recent years, a lot of research has been done in the fields of pragmatics and translation. The study of pragmatics, or language in context, acknowledges how important context is in determining meaning (Levinson, 1983; Sperber & Wilson, 1995). Conversely, translation entails conveying meaning from one language to another (Bassnett, 2014). The difficulties of translating implicature, a crucial pragmatics concept, are brought to light by the intersection of pragmatics and translation. Implicature refers to the strength of word users to associate semantic verbalizations with dependent facts, thereby helping productive communication (Grice, 1975). Studies have proved that implicature shifts can happen in translation, superior to changes in aim and potential unclear or inadequate communication (Gutt, 1991; Hatim & Mason, 1997). These shifts can be from differing factors, containing educational and linguistic distinctness's, dependent factors, and the interpreter's understanding of the source theme (Baker, 2011).

The translation of implicature can be greatly impacted by linguistic and cultural variations.

Grice (1975) pointed out that there are four basic maxims of conversation principles based on the efficient cooperative use of language. Levinson (1983) clarifies depending on Grice's theory (1975) that the maxims of conversation principles are:

Quality: giving the contribution only what you know to be true.

Quantity: making a useful contribution to the required information. Say what you need just no more and no less.

Relation (relevance): Your contribution must be relevant. Manner: (A) Be brief; (B) Be orderly; (C) Avoid obscurity and (D) Avoid ambiguity.

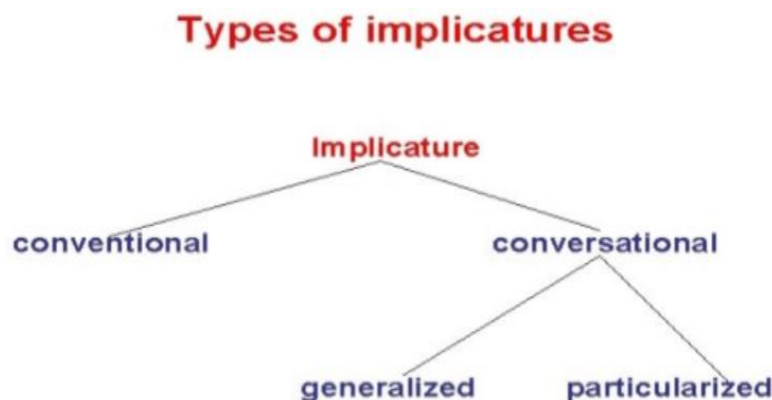


Figure 1.1. Conversational Implicature Types (Grice, 1978)

According to Figure 1.1 above, conversational implicature has several types such as particularized, standard, and generalized implicature. Particularized conversational implicature occurs once a conversation takes place in a particular context. On the other hand, standard conversational implicature depends on receivers' presumptions where senders are being cooperative via noticing the conversational maxims whereas generalized conversational implicature does not depend on specific features of the context. Conversational implicatures need more attention from a translator part to

clarify how varied maxims operate in SL and TL and how the intended meaning was generated by a translator (Malmkjær, 2005; Baker, 2011; Morini 2013). This study compares the SL (English) and the TL (Arabic) in terms of implicatures and conversational maxims such as quantity, quality, relation, and manner. The comparison examines the translation and the pattern of the shifts in the implied meaning between the ST and the TT.

According to a study by Morini (2013), Italian translators frequently make implicit implicatures explicit in the source text, which alters its meaning. In translation, implicature is also greatly influenced by contextual elements, including the speaker's intention, the audience, and the environment. For instance, a study conducted by House (2006) discovered that in order to translate implicatures accurately, translators must take into account the context in which the source text was created.

Another element that may affect implicature translation is the translator's interpretation of the original text. For example, a study by Pym (2010) discovered that different translations can result from translators' widely differing interpretations of implicatures.

The literature review emphasizes how difficult it is to translate implicature and how translators must take contextual, linguistic, and cultural aspects into account. Additionally, it highlights the significance of how implicatures are interpreted by translators and the possibility of implicature shifts during translation. These results have important ramifications for translation theory and practice, especially when it comes to translating from Arabic to English.

2.2 Review of Relevant Recent Studies

The complexities of translating implicature in diverse contexts have been the subject of recent research, with a particular emphasis on political discourse. The difficulties that come up when navigating implicature in this context were clarified, for example, a study by Al-Sharif (2017), which examined the translation of implicature in Arabic-English political discourse.

This body of research also includes contributions from other studies. For instance, studies have demonstrated that implicatures can be changed or eliminated during translation, and that a number of variables, such as linguistic and cultural variations, can affect this process. Furthermore, the idea of "allusive implicature" has been investigated in relation to political discourse, emphasizing the ways in which politicians employ implicature to elicit specific reactions from their audience and convey nuanced meanings.

The implicature shifts in the Arabic translation of Barack Obama's speeches were examined in another study by Al-Shehari (2019). The results showed that implicature shifts can happen during translation, changing the meaning and possibly causing misunderstandings. Investigating implicature shifts in translation is crucial, especially in political discourse, as this study shows.

Ersan (2020) explored the translation methods employed in political speeches, focusing on the English translation of President Joko Widodo's inaugural address. The research highlights the challenges of translating political speeches, including the need to balance accuracy with cultural sensitivity. Ersan's study demonstrates the importance of considering the cultural and contextual nuances of the target audience in translation.

Gumul (2021) suggested that implicature shifts in translating political speeches can reflect translators' personal opinions and biases. This underscores the importance of translator awareness and cultural sensitivity in translating political speeches. Translators must be mindful of their own biases and strive to convey the intended meaning of the original text.

Hamza and Nordin (2023) figured that Trump consistently deviated from Leech's politeness maxims, which emphasize the importance of minimizing cost and maximizing benefit in social interactions. These deviations were strategically employed to convince people that his opponents are unacceptable, influence the crowd, and ruin rival's image. This study provided a unique insight into the linguistic strategies employed by politician known for his unconventional communication style.

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The complexities of implicature shifts in translation, especially when it comes to political speeches, have been clarified by recent studies. The complexities of implicature shifts in translation have been examined in two noteworthy studies, one by Ahmad Ayyad (2024) and the other by Bing Xiong (2023), which have offered insightful information about the difficulties and approaches involved.

With an emphasis on metaphors, political terms, cultural sentences, and idioms in political texts, Bing Xiong's study, "A Study on Strategies in Chinese-English Political Translation and Interpretation," explores the translation techniques

used in Chinese-English political translation. According to the research, when the metaphors in the source and target texts do not agree, translators frequently employ paraphrasing; when they do, they employ direct translation (Xiong, 2023). This study emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend the linguistic and cultural subtleties of translating political speeches, as implicature shifts can have a big impact on the text's meaning and interpretation.

In his research paper "Contested Naming Practices in the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict," Ahmad Ayyad looks at the conflict's disputed naming practices from a translation standpoint. Despite not being solely concerned with implicature shifts, this study emphasizes the importance of cultural sensitivity in translation and the necessity for translators to understand the political and cultural environments in which they work (Ayyad, 2024). The study draws attention to the difficulties in translating political speeches, as naming conventions and implicature changes can significantly affect how the text is understood and communicated.

By highlighting the necessity of sophisticated translation techniques that consider the nuances of language and culture, both studies make a substantial contribution to our understanding of implicature shifts in translation. The results of these studies, especially when it comes to political speeches, have significant ramifications for translators, interpreters, and academics involved in translation studies. These studies lay the groundwork for future investigations into the complexities of implicature shifts in translation by emphasizing the difficulties and tactics associated with translating implicatures.

Furthermore, the idea of "allusive implicature" has been investigated in relation to political discourse, emphasizing the ways in which politicians employ implicature to elicit specific reactions from their audience and convey nuanced meanings.

By analyzing the implicature shifts in the Arabic translation of King Abdullah II's address to the European Parliament, the current study seeks to expand on these findings. This study aims to advance our knowledge of the difficulties in translating implicature in political discourse by examining this particular context.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Grice's theory of conversational implicature, which posits that speakers often convey meaning beyond the literal interpretation of their words. Grice's theory distinguishes between conventional and conversational implicatures, with the former referring to implicit meaning derived from linguistic conventions and the latter emerging from the dynamic interplay between speaker, listener, and context.

Grice's belief identifies between two types of implicatures: Conventional implicatures concern absolute meaning came from semantic traditions. These implicatures are based on the rules and standards of sound use and are usually shared by speakers of the alike sound. Conversational implicatures, on the other hand, arise from the vital interaction between talker, hearer, and circumstances. These implicatures are generated established me's intention, the hearer's deduction, and the framework in which the ideas takes place.

The idea of pragmatics, which acknowledges the critical role that context plays in forming meaning, is also incorporated into the study. Pragmatics emphasizes that meaning is negotiated and constructed through the interaction of speaker, listener, and context rather than being fixed or determined only by the linguistic form.

This study's theoretical framework is predicated on the notion that implicature shifts in translation can result in meaning changes and possible misunderstandings. Implicature shifts refer to the changes that occur when implicatures are translated from one language to another. Cultural and linguistic differences, contextual factors, and the translator's interpretation of the original text are some of the reasons for these changes.

There are important ramifications for translation theory and practice from this study's theoretical framework. It underlines how crucial it is to take implicatures and contextual elements into account when translating, and how translators must be mindful of the possibility of implicature shifts during the translation process. Translators can more successfully negotiate the challenges of translating implicatures and create more accurate and useful translations by comprehending how implicatures are created and understood in communication.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques to provide a comprehensive analysis of implicature shifts in the translation of King Abdullah II's political speeches from English into Arabic. This integrated approach facilitates a deeper understanding of how implicatures are transferred across languages and how such shifts impact meaning in the target text (TT).

3.1 Data Selection

Three political speeches originally delivered in English by King Abdullah II were selected for analysis. These speeches were purposefully chosen based on their political significance, the presence of rich pragmatic content (especially

implicatures), and their availability in both English and Arabic on the Official Website of the Royal Hashemite Court. One of these speeches was delivered before the European Parliament in Strasbourg, which is known for its complex rhetorical and diplomatic implications.

The Arabic translations used in this study are official translations provided by the Royal Hashemite Court, ensuring a high level of authenticity and formal equivalence. The corpus is composed of parallel texts (source text [ST] and target text [TT]), which allow for a direct comparison of implicature across languages.

3.2 Quantitative Phase

In the quantitative phase, implicature shifts were identified, coded, and quantified using a systematic coding framework adapted from pragmatic translation theory. The total number of implicature instances in the ST was counted, and each instance was compared with its equivalent in the TT. Frequencies and percentages of implicature shifts were calculated, and graphical representations (e.g., bar charts and pie charts) were used to illustrate their distribution.

3.3 Qualitative Phase

The qualitative phase involved in-depth analysis of five representative examples of implicature shifts. These examples were selected based on their frequency, relevance, and illustrative value. An exploratory approach was used to categorize the types of shifts, identify linguistic or cultural triggers, and assess their potential impact on the intended message. An explanatory approach was then employed to interpret how and why these implicature shifts occurred in the translation process.

3.4 Reliability and Coding Procedures

To ensure the reliability of the coding process, two independent coders, both with advanced training in pragmatics and translation studies, annotated the data. Inter-coder reliability was calculated using Cohen's Kappa, which yielded a value of 0.82, indicating a high level of agreement. Disagreements were discussed and resolved through consensus.

4. Findings

This study investigated translation shifts in implicatures, using an analytical framework grounded in Grice's (1975) theory of conversational implicature. The analysis was conducted at the micro level, examining how implicatures were rendered in the target text (TT) across three political speeches by King Abdullah II. Various features were considered, including types of conversational implicature, the nature of the shifts, and the linguistic or cultural factors that may have contributed to these shifts.

The findings show that implicatures in the source texts (STs) are often reduced, modified, or made more explicit in the TT. According to Grice's theory, implicature arises when the intended meaning goes beyond what is explicitly stated. However, in many instances, the translators opted for explicit expressions rather than preserving the original implicit meanings, leading to pragmatic shifts in the TT.

These shifts were primarily due to the translators' attempt to avoid flouting conversational maxims, especially the maxims of quality, relation, and manner. The most prominent types of shifts observed were implicature loss and addition, followed by explicitation and substitution.

Table 1. Implicature Shifts in the King Abdullah II's Speech.

1. "The defining feature of the past decade has been people finding their voices. Millions across the world have poured onto the streets, marched, occupied, sat down, sat in, tweeted, podcast, hashtagged what they want—loud and clear."	"ان السمة التي ميزت العقد الماضي، هي أن الشعوب تمكنت من إسماع صوتها، فالملايين تدفقوا إلى الشوارع في جميع أنحاء العالم، وعبروا عن مطالبهم بصوت واضح في مسيرات واحتجاجات واعتصامات وتغريدات وتسجيلات اليودكاست الصوتية ووسوم [هاشتاغ] وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي."
2. "What happens in the Middle East has a way of making itself felt everywhere around the world."	"ان ما يحدث في الشرق الأوسط يترك أثره على كل مكان حول العالم."
3. "I have said that it countless times and in countless ways but I still say it again and again."	"لقد قلت هذا مرارا، وبطرق عديدة. لكنني سأقوله مرة أخرى، وأكرره مراراً ومرات."
4. What if we see a re-emergence of ISIS?	"ماذا لو شهدنا عودة داعش"
5. Syrian becomes staging ground for attack against the rest of the world.	"وأصبحت سوريا نقطة انطلاق لهجمات ضد بقية العالم"

In Table (1), the analysis examines the translation shifts in King Abdullah II's speech, highlighting five notable examples. The first example illustrates the translator's failure to convey the true meaning of the king's speech, where he emphasized the liberation of people from fear and cowardice. Instead, the translator provided a literal translation, neglecting the intended implicature. The second example reveals the translator's omission of the king's emphasis on the Middle East's importance as a global pillar. The Arabic translation failed to convey the need for attention and support, highlighting the translator's adherence to a literal translation. The third example demonstrates the translator's inability to convey the king's frustration with the lack of progress on critical issues, particularly Palestine. The translator's literal

translation ignored the king's intended meaning, which emphasized the need for action. In the fourth example, the English original implicitly warns against the danger of ISIS's reemergence, while the Arabic translation presents it more as hypothetical scenario. The final example highlights the translator's failure to convey the king's warning against complacency in the Syrian issue. The translator neglected to mention the king's explicit statement, which emphasized the potential consequences of inaction. These implicature shifts may affect the audience's interpretation of the king's message, potentially altering their perception of the urgency and gravity of the situation.

Table 2. Shifts Kinds in the Translation of King's Speech

Shifts kind in Implicature	Shifts Number
Implicature substitution	3
Implicature explication	5
Implicature loss and addition	9
Total	17

As illustrated in Table 2, the translation of King Abdullah II's speech exhibits notable pragmatic shifts between the ST and the TT. These shifts manifest through various forms, including deletion, modification, and augmentation. The most prominent shifts observed in this study are implicature loss and addition, which significantly impact the original meaning of the ST. The findings indicate that certain implicatures are lost in translation, while others are added to the TT. These shifts occur to produce a functionally equivalent text, ensuring that the TT conveys the intended meaning of the ST.

Table 3. Percentage of Implicature Shifts in the Translation

Implicature Shift in the Translation	Percentage of Implicature Shift
Implicature substitution	7%
Implicature explication	9%
Implicature loss and addition	19%

Table 3 reveals that implicature loss and addition account for the highest average of shifts, at 19%. Conversely, implicature substitution constitutes the lowest rate, at 7%. Implicature explication occupies the second position, at 9%. The translator's substitution of certain words and phrases in the ST with polite alternatives is a notable phenomenon, driven by the importance of politeness in Arabic word choice, which often takes precedence over accuracy and relevance (Al-Qinai, 2008).

5. Discussion

The study's findings make significant contributions to our understanding of translation dynamics, notably by advancing our knowledge of implicature shifts in translation, highlighting the crucial role of cultural and contextual factors in shaping translation outcomes, and underscoring the importance of translator awareness in navigating the complexities of cross-cultural communication.

The Arabic translation of King Abdullah II's 2020 speech before the European Parliament exhibited notable pragmatic shifts. These shifts are evident in the translator's conveyance of the king's intended meaning, tone, and emphasis. The translator's decisions impacted the implicature and inference of the original message, as seen in the toned-down emphasis on the Middle East region's importance in the Arabic translation. This shift may have altered the audience's interpretation of the king's message.

Adjustments were made to accommodate cultural and contextual differences between the European Parliament audience and the Arabic-speaking audience. However, these adjustments may have resulted in a loss of nuance and accuracy in conveying the king's intended meaning. Despite these shifts, the translator generally preserved the overall meaning and tone of the king's speech, maintaining the emphasis on international cooperation, dialogue, and understanding.

The pragmatic shifts in the Arabic translation highlight the complexities and challenges of cross-cultural communication. Translators must navigate these complexities to convey the intended meaning and tone of the original message while considering the cultural and contextual nuances of the target audience.

The translator's decisions to omit or add implicatures are influenced by various factors, including the absence of equivalent expressions in the TT, differences in rhetorical devices, and structural changes. In some instances, the translator may omit specific words, phrases, or figures of speech that do not have the same impact on the TT readers. These strategic decisions aim to facilitate effective communication and ensure that the TT resonates with the target audience.

This practice aligns with Grice's theory (1975), which suggests that translators should convey the intended message by substituting words or phrases with conversational implicature (Baker, 2011). The reasons for implicature substitution

are multifaceted, including translators' struggles to grasp the author's intended message, leading to shifts in meaning. Additionally, equivalence in the TT may have a negative impact on readers, prompting translators to make adjustments. Furthermore, translators may modify the text to conform to Arabic politeness standards (Almanna, 2014).

The translator also tends to explicitate implied meanings, particularly in figurative language used in the king's political speech. This approach is adopted to clarify metaphorical meanings and avoid ambiguity, allowing readers to engage with the text more effectively. However, simplification and clarification may compromise the original text's value and intended purpose, highlighting the delicate balance translators must strike between clarity and fidelity to the source text. Ultimately, the translator's decisions reflect a nuanced understanding of the complexities of cross-cultural communication and the need to navigate multiple considerations to produce an effective translation.

6. Conclusion

This study breaks new ground by applying a pragmatic-translation model to the analysis of political speech translation between English and Arabic, yielding valuable insights into the intricacies of this complex process. The findings reveal that implicature shifts inevitably occur in Arabic translations of the king's speech, creating a discernible gap between the source language and target language. By exploring the underlying reasons for these shifts, this study sheds light on the profound impact of cultural differences on translation, highlighting the need for translators to navigate these differences with sensitivity and nuance.

As noted by Klaudy (2005), translation is not a matter of altering the original content, but rather rephrasing it using alternative terms that convey the intended meaning. Munday (2016) similarly observes that translators employ a range of strategies to mitigate communication risks and avoid ambiguity, ensuring that the translated text resonates with the target audience. This study contributes meaningfully to the development of a pragmatic translation model, specifically designed for English-Arabic translation. By providing a robust framework for analyzing pragmatic elements in political speech translation, this model enhances our understanding of the complex interactions between language, culture, and context.

One of the key strengths of this study is its avoidance of overgeneralization, instead providing specific, contextualized findings that underscore the importance of cultural awareness in political translation. The results drive home the need for translators to recognize cultural differences and comprehend implied messages, lest they risk misrepresenting the original intent and tone. As a foundational study, this research offers a clear model for future researchers, particularly in literary translation, and provides a versatile toolkit for descriptive studies investigating internal translation processes between English and Arabic.

The new study has several limitations, though. Its exclusive concentration on political communication might not adequately represent the more general difficulties in other genres, such as media, legal, or literary translation. Furthermore, the findings may not be as broadly applicable as they may be because the corpus is restricted to a particular context—the King's speeches. Future research should examine how implicature shifts appear in various domains and apply the suggested model to a larger variety of texts. Further information about how pragmatic features are understood and modified across cultural boundaries may also be obtained by including translator interviews or reception studies.

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