

Isolating Intensification in English Literary Discourse into Vietnamese

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ABSTRACT

Intensification is a category of language much discussed by a lot of linguistics, however, this category is specifically identified just in the position of Martin and White (2005). This is, it is divided into two infused and isolated lexical-grammatical classes, of which isolating intensification is known as the markers which raise or lower the level of intensity of a certain individual item as qualities or processes. How isolating intensification is explored through the lens of translation is still left untouched. This paper aims to find out the encoding of meaning embodied in isolating intensification. Or rather, it explores how the nuance of meaning of isolating intensifiers and maximisers is when being rendered into Vietnamese. The study was operated using qualitative method and basing on 400 samples extracted from four literary works in English namely *Wuthering Heights* by Brontë, *The Man of Property* by Galsworthy, *The Moon and Sixpence* by Maugham and *Vanity Fair* by Thackeray, and their equivalents in Vietnamese. The research results show that there are adjustments of up-scaling and down-scaling, or losses of level of intensity when these intensifiers are translated into Vietnamese. The findings help learners and translators be aware of the changes occurring in the process of translation so that they can apply them to learning and using this point of language effectively.

Keywords: isolating intensification; English literary discourse; translation; nuance of meaning

1 Introduction

Intensification, in nature, shows the inclination towards the up-scaling or down-scaling of intensity in terms of qualities and processes towards attitude that the speaker or writer wants to express. However, when it comes to communicating across languages, and in this case, conveying intensification from English into Vietnamese, it is not always the case that this level of intensity might experience some sliding up or down the scale. As claimed by Munday (2012, p. 157), ‘sources of graduation are subject to considerable shifting’. This shifting can result from the presence of certain markers or linguistic means which have been made implicit or explicit via translation. In other words, the translator might have to resort to certain strategies so as to preserve what is known as ‘the equivalent effect in translation’ (Nida, 2004).

However, via the lens of translation, the nuance of intensification can be rendered into Vietnamese in ways which are similar or dissimilar to that expressed in the source language (SL) text, which means that any efforts to render the meaning of intensification might experience certain transformations in lexical, syntactical or stylistic terms. Regarding terms of lexical features, we can see nuances of intensification via translation, or rather the level of intensity embodied in intensifiers can be slided up, or can be slided down, or even can be omitted in the Vietnamese translation. As for terms of syntactic features, it is understandable for the cases of changes in the Vietnamese translated versions because it is undeniable that English and Vietnamese are not always syntactically identical in language type as well as language structure. It is an evident thing that because English is an inflectional language and tends to move closer to analytic languages whereas Vietnamese is an isolating one (Lieber 2010), finding one-to-one formal correspondent in



translating isolating intensifiers is not always an evident thing, which means literal translation is not always a way of rendering intensification meaning. Therefore, various strategies might have been utilized, and shifts in rendering the language of intensification as graduation from English to Vietnamese can become a norm in the act of translation. As Munday (2012) aptly puts it,

The focus is on informational knowledge to cover gaps in the translator's knowledge or the lack of semantic correspondence between languages. Where it is impossible to gain expert input or where the ambiguity of the ST cannot be resolved, the translator may select the most neutral TT rendering in order to control risk (p. 156).

2 Literature Review and Theoretical Background

2.1 Literature Review

Intensification was explored in the period from 1950s to 1990s by structural linguists and grammaticians from traditional to modern grammar such as Francis (1958); Greenbaum (1970); Benzinger (1971); Quirk et al. (1972/1985); Bolinger (1972); Backlund (1973); Labov (1984); Alexander (1988); and Richards et al. (1992). These linguists look at this category at the grammatical class termed as qualifiers, adverbs of degree, intensifying elements or intensifiers. These signals for intensification are put in strictly grammatical rules. To be more specific, qualifiers are termed to signal intensifiers which modify adjectives and adverbs, and indicate the degree to which the meaning of the adjectives and adverbs (Francis, 1958; Benzinger, 1971). Francis (1958) distinguishes a group of function words so-called qualifiers from adverbs expressing degree while Alexander (1988) distinguishes adverbs of degree from intensifiers which are considered the same by Bolinger (1972); Backlund (1973); Quirk et al. (1985). Like Alexander (1988), Richards et al. (1992) mention intensifiers as adverbs used to modify gradable adjectives, adverbs, verbs or ed-participles. Besides, Greenbaum (1970) defines intensifiers as degree intensifying markers or as intensifying elements by Benzinger (1971); Quirk et al. (1972, 1985).

In terms of function, intensification takes the role of emphasis or create additional force (Benzinger, 1971; Quirk et al., 1972, 1985) or increase a force on an intensity scale (Benzinger, 1971; Bolinger, 1972; Backlund, 1973; Quirk et al., 1985). This means that intensifiers are presented to 'heighten and strengthen meaning in a way that could be measured by a semantic differential scale' (Benzinger, 1971, p. 7). Likewise, intensifiers by Bolinger (1972) are used for 'any device that scales a quality, whether up or down somewhere between the two' (p. 7). Noticeably, most of these authors refer intensification to modifiers as adverbs except for Quirk et al. (1972, 1985) and Benzinger (1971). As for Quirk et al. (1972, 1985), signals for intensifiers can be adverbs and some intensifying adjectives while Benzinger (1971, p. 2) states that "intensification is not always signaled by a specific grammatical element". Compared with what the linguists mentioned, the concept of intensification by Benzinger (1971) further develops because the author shows fifteen devices used for signaling intensification, of which contains qualifiers, hyperbole, exaggeration, exclamations, repetitions. However, intensification is used to emphasize degree of values or on some positive degree of a quality (Benzinger, 1971). The function of up-scaling or down-scaling in processes has not been discussed yet by the authors. Noticeably, the authors consider intensification the isolating class which is termed by Martin and White (2005), and unlike Martin and White (2005), the infusing class excludes in the category of intensification. Moreover, there has not been any research on isolating class through the lens of translation, especially considering the nuance of meaning of intensification via the Vietnamese translation.

2.2 Theoretical background

According to Martin and White (2005, p. 141), isolating intensification determines the up-scaling or down-scaling of isolated and individually items which solely performs the level of intensity; and "the sense of

up/down-scaling is fused with a meaning which serves some other semantic function". They modify a particular type of function words, specifically considered pre-modifiers of adjectives or adverbs called isolating intensifiers.

Martin and White (2005) look at the language of intensification in a broader perspective and get it out of the rules of grammar. To functional approach, intensification is no longer understood purely as markers of intensity but it is the meaning conveying intensification. Therefore, the signals for intensification are expanded to the lexical category such as adjectives, adverbs, verbs or nouns. The meaning of intensification comes before their forms of expression appear. However, the limit of Martin and White (2005)'s framework is that the linguists mention the category of intensification generally.

3 Methods and Data Collection

The study was conducted using qualitative method to analyze materials and the data collected; basing on 400 samples extracted from English literary works namely *Wuthering Heights* by Brontë, *The Man of Property* by Galsworthy, *The moon and Sixpence* by Maugham and *Vanity Fair* by Thackeray. The data were chosen and narrowed based on the concept of isolating intensification by Martin and White (2005). The data were analyzed based on the theoretical framework of intensification by Martin and White (2005) and of changes in translation by Munday (2012). Firstly, the data collected were isolating intensifiers. Secondly, these intensifiers are considered and sorted into four groups: (i) ones preserving their level of intensity; (ii) ones up-scaling their level of intensity; (iii) ones down-scaling their level of intensity; (iv) ones losing their intensity. Lastly, a quantitative calculation will be established and a description of each type will be carried out so as to draw conclusions.

4 Findings and Discussions

4.1 The Rendering of Isolating Intensification into Vietnamese

As earlier mentioned, isolating intensification found in English literary discourse is often realized via intensifiers as adverbs which can slide upwards or downwards the cline of qualities or processes; or rather, they modify adjectives, other adverbs and verbal processes. These intensifiers operate by the mechanism of adjusting 'how feelings are graded towards the lower valued end of a scale of intensity or towards the higher valued end' (Martin & White, 2005, p. 48). Via the lens of translation, this category of isolating intensifiers can be transferred in various ways through which we can see the level of intensity being preserved or adjusted in a way that 'the equivalent effect' of translation is maintained (Nida, 2004). The adjustment of the level of intensity can fall into (i) raising the level of intensity; (ii) lowering the level of intensity; or (iii) omitting intensity. The findings show that variances exist in the Vietnamese translation of this category of intensifiers as illustrated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: *Distribution of manifestation of Isolating Intensifiers in Vietnamese Translation*

Manifestation via Translation	Freq.	%
Preservation of Intensity	244	60.8
Loss of Intensity	69	17.2
Down-scaling of Intensity	51	12.7
Up-scaling of Intensity	36	9.3
Total	400	100%

Data from Table 4.1 shows the distribution of the four nuances of isolating intensifiers when being rendered into Vietnamese. Of which, the tendency towards preserving the level of intensity indicated by intensifiers comes out top with 244 cases coded, making up 60.8%. Followed is the omitting of intensity occupying 17.2 percent (69 cases). The translation descending degree of intensity obtains a relatively low score with just 12.7 percent (51 cases) and the lowest is the translation ascending the degree of intensity being at 9.3 percent (37 cases). These figures might well indicate that English isolating intensifiers are rendered into Vietnamese in varying ways with varying degrees of intensity.

4.1.1 Preserving the Level of Intensity

As just mentioned, of the four nuances of isolating intensification when being translated into Vietnamese, the case of preserving the level of intensity is the most popular with 60.8 percent. This proves that there is the adjustment of the level of intensity embodied in isolating intensifiers but the preservation of its intensity is the priority via the lens of translation. With the level of intensity embodied in English isolating intensifiers being preserved via translation, it is evident that the degree of intensity remains more or less the same. It means that when rendering the meaning of intensification into Vietnamese, the translator wishes to preserve the value of up-scaling or down-scaling of qualities or processes by which he/she could convey the speaker's or writer's evaluation on entities or propositions. In other words, the obvious content of propositions over 'interpersonal markers' is fully conveyed as a priority by the translator (Munday, 2012, p. 65).

However, given the fact that the semantic meanings of intensification are unchanged, the syntactic structure of the Vietnamese translated versions may or may not experience certain levels of transformation, or shift. Clearly, cases where the syntactic structure of isolating intensifiers show little or no change in the Vietnamese translation may be because the meaning of intensification has been literally rendered with 'the closest structural equivalents' (Newmark, 1988), or rather, the lexical correspondents as in [1]-[3].

[1] I only want it to be quite understood that if I give him a free hand, ... (MP_E, p. 114)

[VP → Int_Max + V]

Cháu chỉ muốn bác hoàn toàn hiểu cho rằng nếu cháu cho hẳn toàn quyền,... (MP_V, p. 226)

[VP → Int_Max + V]

[2] ... he was rather ashamed of his champion. (VF_E, p. 40)

[AdjP → Int + Adj]

... nó có vẻ hơi ngượng vì kẻ bệnh vực nó. (VF_V, p. 76)

[AdjP → Int + Adj]

[3] I suppose you're perfectly contented with yourself. (MP_E, p. 165)

[AdjP → Int + Adj]

Tôi tin rằng anh mãn nguyện lắm với anh rồi. (MP_V, p. 332)

[VP → V + Int]

It is apparent that the English maximiser 'quite' modifying 'understood' in [1] is converted into its Vietnamese corresponding maximiser 'hoàn toàn', which fully expresses the meaning indicated by its original English intensifier. Similarly, 'rather' modifying the adjective in its adjective phrase 'rather ashamed of his champion' is turned into a Vietnamese intensifier denoting a low intensity 'hơi' modifying the

adjective. For cases where the meaning of intensification experiences some alterations in structure via translation, we can see shifts occur via the manipulation of translation strategy that the TL text is translated literally, it may also be transposed, as commented by Vinay and Darbelnet (2004, p. 88), or labelled as Literal Transposition in the position of Le (2014) as in [3].

Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 illustrate the meaning of intensification being preserved via the Vietnamese translation of intensifiers denoting processes and those denoting qualities.

Table 4.2: Vietnamese equivalents of English isolating maximisers modifying processes

Isolating Intensifiers	Vietnamese Equivalents	Examples
highly, greatly	vô cùng	highly disgusted → vô cùng ghê tởm
exceedingly	cực kì	liked exceedingly to act → cực kì ham đóng vai
completely, entirely, quite, altogether, utterly, fully	hoàn toàn	quite fairly successful → hoàn toàn thành đạt
exceedingly, quite, terribly, altogether	lắm	depressed me exceedingly → làm tôi buồn lắm
greatly	quá, hết sức, tột cùng	greatly perturbed → hết sức hoang mang; suffer greatly → đau khổ tột cùng
extremely	lắm lắm, cực kì	have them extremely → đọc sách của tôi lắm lắm
completely	cực, hẳn, bằng	completely rendered → cực khéo
entirely, perfectly	luôn, hẳn	perfectly recovered → khỏi hẳn
quite	hẳn, quá, bằng	quite forgetting → quên bằng
totally	bằng	totally forgotten → quên bằng
absolutely	đứt khoát	absolutely forbade → dứt khoát cấm

Table 4.2 depicts Vietnamese equivalents of English isolating maximisers modifying processes found in the data. These equivalents are the very Vietnamese maximisers denoting the highest intensity. Most of them the particles such as vô cùng, cực kì, hoàn toàn, lắm, hết sức, tột cùng, dứt khoát, luôn and a few adjectives served as post-modifiers of verbs namely bằng or hẳn according to Vietnamese Dictionary (Hoàng, 2016). Additionally, the English isolating maximisers reflect the diversification in meaning attached to the context when translated into Vietnamese, for instance, great being translated into vô cùng, quá, hết sức, tột cùng;

quite being converted into *hoàn toàn, lắm, hẳn, quá, hết, bằng*; or completely being rendered into *hoàn toàn, cực, hẳn*. Here, it is interesting to note that the intensifiers preserve the level of intensity but their meaning of connotation may not be always the same. For example, quite is converted into *lắm* or *hoàn toàn*; obviously, both these Vietnamese equivalents reach the absolute value of intensity but *lắm* is modulated as a change of viewpoint (depressed me exceedingly → *lắm* tôi buồn lắm). Noticeably, these maximisers cannot translate into such Vietnamese maximisers as *tuyệt, trọn vẹn* or *tuyệt đối* because the adjectives as maximisers cannot modify verbs or verbal processes according to Vietnamese Dictionary by Hoàng (2016).

Table 4.3. Vietnamese equivalents of English isolating intensifiers modifying qualities

Isolating items	Vietnamese equivalents	Examples
extremely	cực kì	extremely slight → cực kì mảnh dẻ
completely, entirely, quite, utterly, perfectly, thoroughly, absolutely	hoàn toàn	perfectly right → hoàn toàn đúng; quite strong and healthy → hoàn toàn khỏe mạnh, cường tráng; absolutely desperate → hoàn toàn tuyệt vọng
quite, perfectly, greatly, extremely, enormously	lắm	extremely talkative → rôm chuyện lắm
absolutely, perfectly	tuyệt đối	perfectly silent → tuyệt đối im lặng absolutely certain → tuyệt đối tin chắc
perfectly	trọn vẹn, cực kì, tuyệt	perfectly miserable → cực kì khổ; perfectly beautiful → tuyệt đẹp
quite	quá sức, hết sức, hẳn, vô cùng	beat quite quick → đập nhanh quá sức
fully	hết sức	fully worthy → hết sức xứng đáng
exceedingly	quá sức, hết sức	exceedingly liberal → phóng khoáng quá sức
entirely	dứt khoát	
utterly, extremely	hết sức	
fairly	có phần, khá	fairly prosperous → khá phát đạt;
rather	khá, một chút	rather beautiful → khá đẹp
slightly, a bit, rather, somewhat	hơi	rather thin → hơi gầy; somewhat upset → hơi lúng túng
very	rất, quá	very talented → rất có tài
somewhat	có phần	somewhat difficult to fit → có phần khó đoán

Table 4.3 describes Vietnamese equivalents of English isolating intensifiers modifying qualities. These equivalents are the very Vietnamese intensifiers modifying adjectives such as *cực kì mảnh dẻ* (extremely slight); *tuyệt đối im lặng* (perfectly silent); *khá đẹp* (rather beautiful); *rất có tài* (very talented). Like isolating maximisers up-scaling verbal processes, the isolating intensifiers manifest the diversification of meaning when rendered into Vietnamese, for example, extremely being rendered into *cực kì, lắm*; quite being translated into *lắm, quá sức, hết sức*; perfectly being converted into *hoàn toàn, lắm*; somewhat being turned into *có phần, hơi*; or rather being transferred into *khá, một chút, hơi*. Unlike maximisers upgrading

processes, these English isolating maximisers cannot transfer into *hẳn, hết, bằng* and *dứt khoát* because these Vietnamese maximisers are used to modify just verbal processes according to Vietnamese Dictionary (Hoàng, 2016).

Briefly, the preserving of the level of intensity via the Vietnamese translation of isolating intensifiers is the conserving of the semantic meanings of intensification. This means that the English isolating intensifiers and maximisers are rendered into the Vietnamese corresponding ones without any slight adjustment of the nuance of meaning. Besides, the function of the category of intensifiers as modifiers may be syntactically maintained to ensure the rendering of the meaning of intensification followed by the principle of ‘the closest structural equivalent’ (Newmark, 1988).

4.1.2 Up-scaling the Level of Intensity

Via lens of translation, we realize that there is an adjustment to the increasing of level of intensity embodied in isolating intensifiers. This can be explained that the sliding up of intensity can occur when the translator wants to ‘produce a more natural TT’ (Munday, 2012, p. 157). This can be understandable and acceptable because the translator wants to make some changes in accordance with contexts. As already mentioned in Section 4.1, the sliding of intensity up operated via the translating makes up quite a small number just 36 cases (out of 400 cases). This proves that intensification embodied in intensifiers increased in the TL translation is not popular. It is easily understandable and acceptable because, as investigated by Munday (2012, p. 65), intensification is not found being ‘increased in any’ as expected via the research on evaluation in translation by the author. Importantly, it can be stated that most of the cases found in the data occur with the intensifier ‘very’, which determines the median level of intensity, whose nuance can reach the highest value of intensity in Vietnamese equivalents known as Vietnamese maximisers - *lắm, tuyệt, vô cùng, lắm ạ* and *lắm cơ* in the Vietnamese translation, as illustrated in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Vietnamese equivalents of English isolating intensifiers when being up-scaled in translation

Isolating items	Occurences	Vietnamese equivalents	Examples
very	16	<i>lắm, vô cùng, tuyệt, lắm cơ, lắm ạ</i>	very old → <i>già lắm</i> ; very wet → <i>vô cùng ẩm ướt</i> ; very convenient → <i>vô cùng tiện lợi</i> ; very agreeable → <i>tuyệt đẹp</i>
fairly	3	<i>đứt, hẳn</i>	fairly beaten → <i>thua đứt</i> fairly in → <i>hẳn trong</i>
Total	19		

[4] The following evening was very wet: indeed, it poured down till day-dawn; ... (WH_E, p. 424)

Int + Adj

Chiều hôm sau trời vô cùng ẩm ướt: thật ra, mưa suốt từ sáng tới tối. (WH_V, p. 345)

Int + Adj

[5] Don't provoke him against me, Catherine, for he is very hard. (WH_E, p. 332)

Int + Adj

Cô đừng chọc cho ông ấy giận tôi, Catherine à, vì ông ấy dữ lắm! (WH_V, p. 270)

Adj +Int

[6] ... a very agreeable portrait (WH_E, p. 84)

Int + Adj

bức chân dung tuyệt đẹp (WH_V, p. 75)

Int_Max + Adj

As we know, very in [4], [5] and [6] is an intensifier referring to a median level of intensity or called a 'neutral indicator of strength' (Munday, 2012, p. 65) but in the interpreting into Vietnamese, the nuance of very is adjusted in the ascending scale reaching absolute values like vô cùng in [4], lắm in [5] and tuyệt in [6]. Although the shading of intensive meaning can be slid up, the structure of the TL text remains the same as that in the SL text, namely very wet → vô cùng ẩm ướt (AdjP → AdjP); very hard → dữ lắm (AdjP → AdjP); very agreeable → tuyệt đẹp (AdjP → AdjP). Besides, it can be realized that very upscales the degree of intensity of the adjective wet and hard which need to be attached to its contexts 'poured down till day-dawn' and 'don't provoke him against me'. Thus, it can be concluded that the Vietnamese translation of the intensifier - very which transforms its level of intensity into a higher value can be reasonable and acceptable.

Additionally, it is understandable that the up-scaling of the degree of intensity by isolating intensifiers when rendered into Vietnamese is operated mainly via using the strategy of Modulation which is the 'variation of the form of the message due to the change in the point of view' according to Viney and Darbelnet (2004, p. 89). The change in the viewpoint is seen via the transformation of the connotation meaning from the neutral intensity to high intensity, this is, rất is modulated into vô cùng, lắm and tuyệt in the TL text. Besides, modulation can accompany by other translation strategies such as Explicitation, Implication or Transposition. [7] is as an example of modulation and explicitation.

[7] ... but while I was at school, I have embroidered for you a very beautiful pair of braces. (VF_E, p. 21)

Int + Adj

... nhưng hồi còn ở trường, em đã thêu cho anh một đôi quai đeo quần đẹp lắm cơ. (VF_V, p. 47)

Adj + Int_Max

Obviously, we can see the change of viewpoint in the TL translated text in [7]. lắm cơ is modulated with a shift of connotation meaning which its nuance of meaning is increased thanks to the expansion to the particle 'cơ'. This added element reflects a type of Explicitation.

In short, through the analysis of the data, the adjustment towards the raising of intensity of isolating intensifiers in the Vietnamese translation is not a common occurrence. Just some cases with the intensifiers being very and fairly are found in the data. These intensifiers are as the neutral indicators of intensity but they become the Vietnamese equivalent maximisers via the lens of translation. The increasing of their intensity in translation is accompanied by the transformation of connotation meaning seen as the case of modulation.

4.1.3 Down-scaling the level of intensity

Like up-scaling the level of intensity, the adjustment of the decreasing level of intensity of isolating intensifiers can also occur via lens of translation. The sliding down the level of intensity is considered as a 'reduction in force' by Munday (2012, p. 65). As introduced in Section 4.1, 51 instances (equivalent to 12.7%) lessen intensification in the TL texts. The number proves that down-scaling the level of intensity is relatively popular in the TL translation of isolating intensifiers.

Table 4.5: Vietnamese equivalents of English isolating intensifiers when being down-scaled in translation

<i>Isolating items</i>	<i>Occurences</i>	<i>Vietnamese equivalents</i>	<i>Examples</i>
<i>quite, extremely</i>	6	<i>quá</i>	<i>quite masters me</i> → <i>keoẻ quá</i> ; <i>extremely pleased</i> → <i>keoỏi quá</i>
<i>quite, greatly, absolutely, entirely, highly, perfectly, extremely, utterly, thoroughly</i>	30	<i>rất</i>	<i>quite contented</i> → <i>rất bằng lòng</i> ; <i>entirely surprised</i> → <i>rất ngạc nhiên</i> ; <i>perfectly happy</i> → <i>rất sung sướng</i>
<i>very, perfectly, quite</i>	11	<i>thật</i>	<i>very strange</i> → <i>thật kì lạ</i> <i>quite seriously</i> → <i>thật nghiêm chỉnh</i>
<i>quite</i>	1	<i>chí</i>	<i>quite right</i> → <i>chí phải</i>
<i>very</i>	3	<i>hơi</i>	<i>very hesitating</i> → <i>hơi khúm núm</i>
Total	51		

Data from Table 4.5 shows that most of the cases are isolating maximisers which fall from the highest level of intensity to neutral level of intensity in the Vietnamese translation. This is, such isolating maximisers as quite, greatly, absolutely, entirely, highly, perfectly, extremely, utterly, thoroughly (30 cases) are rendered into *rất*; quite and extremely (6 cases) converted into *quá*, which denote neutral level of intensity into Vietnamese. Besides, a few cases of very (3 cases) are transferred into *hơi* in Vietnamese denoting low level of intensity. Interestingly, such maximisers as very, perfectly, quite (11 cases) have its nuances changed in the TL texts into *thật* and *thật sự* termed as ‘focus’ of graduation which is not scalable (Martin & White, 2005, p. 137). See examples,

[8] ..., and I absolutely require to know which you choose. (WH_E, p. 151)

Int_Max + V

... và anh rất muốn biết em chọn ai. (WH_V, p. 127)

Int + V

[9] Miss Sedley was greatly puzzled how to act. (VF_E, p. 10)

Int_Max + Adj

Cô không biết nên chọn đường nào. Cô Sedley rất bối rối. (VF_V, p. 31)

Int + Adj

[10] She was smiling, perfectly calm... (MP_E, p. 96)

Int_Max + Adj

Nàng mỉm cười rất bình tĩnh. (MP_V, p. 190)

Int + Adj

[11] She began singing very low, till his fingers dropped from hers, and his head sank on his breast. (WH_E, p. 54) Int + Adj

Cô bắt đầu hát thật khẽ... (WH_V, p. 51)

Foc + Adj

It is interesting to note that when isolating intensifiers are translated into expressions of focus in the TL texts, the strategy of translation used is modulation as in [11]. It is the shift of viewpoint in the Vietnamese translated version, or rather it reflects a conversion in the category of graduation from a modifier of force ‘very low’ to an expression of focus ‘thật khế’.

Remarkably, down-scaling the level of intensity is no longer the shifting from a high degree to a lower degree but there is a ‘reduction in force’ as stated by Munday (2012). The reduction can be understood as the drop of meaning as an implicitness. We can see the case of [12] as an illustration. Here, the strategy of translation used is implicitation via which the maximiser thoroughly is dropped in the TL text. However, the dropping results in a decrease of intensity of the maximiser which should be translated into *hẳn* in Vietnamese.

[12] Her ankle was thoroughly cured. (WH_E, p. 65)

Cổ chân cô bé đã lành. (WH_V, p. 61)

In summary, when isolating intensifiers are lessened their intensification in translation, there are four possibilities. One is that maximisers can slide down from the highest level of intensity to neutral level of intensity with the most frequency of cases. The second is that not many cases of isolating intensifier like very can fall from the highest level of intensification to level of median. The third is that some intensifiers are converted into markers of focus which are out of intensification. The last is the drop of meaning of intensification into qualities or processes in the TL text.

4.1.4 Loss of Intensity

Unlike the case preserving level of intensity embodied in isolating intensifiers, isolating intensification can be omitted when being translated into Vietnamese. As represented in 4.1, it is apparent that the loss of intensity in the interpreting into Vietnamese occurs with a relatively large number with 69 instances making up 17.2 percent. This shows that isolating intensifiers omitted via the Vietnamese translation is very popular placed after the preserving of their intensification. It can be justified that the preserving of isolating intensification in translation is seen as a priority of ‘propositional content over interpersonal markers’ (Munday, 2012, p. 65). By contrast, the omitting of intensification in translation neglects interpersonal markers in the proposition.

[12] ... movements were **very** **languid** ... (WH_E, p. 79)

cử chỉ **Φ** **chậm chạp**. (WH_V, p. 79)

Int-downgrade

[13] **somewhat** **military** look to his face (MP_E, p. 7)

khuôn mặt lão **Φ** có **tướng** nhà binh (MP_V, p. 7)

Int-upgrade

[14] ... of what so **utterly** perplexed me (MP_E, p. 20)

cái điều **Φ** **làm tôi rối rắm** (MP_V, p. 20)

Int-downgrade

Interestingly, when intensification is omitted, this can result in down-scaling or up-scaling of qualities and verbal processes. If intensifiers take the function of up-scaling qualities or processes in the SL text, when omitted they will lessen qualities or processes in the TL text, and vice versus. This is exemplified via the samples [12]-[14] where *very* and *utterly* in [12] and [14] are used to refer to an increase of intensity of the qualities - languid and military. But when being omitted in the Vietnamese translation, there is a transformation from raising qualities to lowering qualities in the TL translated version. On the contrary, somewhat in [13] is used to imply a decrease of intensity of the process - perplex but when it is omitted in the Vietnamese translated version, lowering intensity turns into raising intensity.

To sum up, isolating intensifiers can be lost their intensity in the Vietnamese translation. The omitting of these elements can lead to the increase or decrease of degree of intensity based on the function of intensifiers set up in the proposition.

5 Conclusion

The paper shows that there are four various nuances of meaning through the Vietnamese translation of isolating intensifiers. The first is that intensification can be preserved, and this occurs because there is not any adjustment of intensity via lens of translation. This possibility gains the largest numbers among the remaining ones. The number proves that the translator leans towards fully conveying the meaning of interpersonal markers. This is, English isolating intensifiers and maximisers are transferred into their Vietnamese corresponding maximisers. However, sometimes, there may be some certain changes of connotation meaning although the level of intensity remains the same, at the same time it is also acceptable some slight alterations in structure because the syntactic functions of intensifiers are not changeable.

The second is the adjustment of intensity can make intensifiers raise their intensity to the higher level. However, this possibility is an uncommon tendency in the Vietnamese translation of intensifiers in English literary discourse. The popularity is still the translating of the neutral modifier - *very* which is slip up at the absolute value like *vô cùng, lắm, tuyệt*. Noticeably, the adjustment of intensity can make a modulation as the addition of the connotation meaning to the TL text.

The third is the adjustment of intensity can make intensifiers decrease their intensity to the lower level. The dominance is the sliding down of maximisers from the highest value of intensity to the median degree of intensity while the possibility towards isolating intensifiers is very low. It can be added that some intensifiers like *very, perfectly, quite* can be converted into modifiers of focus - *thật*. Moreover, the adjustment of the lessening of intensity of isolating intensifiers, sometimes, can create a drop of meaning as an implicitness. This means that the dropping does not make the nuance of meaning lost but that makes meaning of intensifiers melt into qualities or processes in the TL text.

The last is that the adjustment of intensity can make intensifiers omit their intensity in the TL text. The adjustment has become a far more frequent tendency than expected reaching 17.2 percent. It is very interesting to note that the loss of intensifiers in the TL text is not the complete loss of intensity. By contrast, the translator wants to neglect interpersonal markers so as to increase or decrease intensification in qualities or processes. This means that when an intensifier used to upgrade quality or process is lost, the quality or process will be downgraded. In the different vein, when an intensifier used to lower intensification in qualities or processes is lost, the quality or process will be raised.

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