Dreaming the Original: Original and Translation as two Different Fictional Worlds

Renata Kamenická
Masaryk University

Abstract:

The paper explores the potential of using the theory of fictional worlds for analysis of explicitation in literary translation with a view to studying the translator's style, citing the example of *The Member of the Wedding* by Carson McCullers and its Czech translation by Jarmila Fastrová from 1969. The structurings of the intensional function in the original and in the translation are compared for the naming function, the authentication function and the saturation function (Doležel 1998). The latter is explored through application of Hallidayian language metafunctions (Halliday 1973, 1978, 1989) to provide an explicitation profile of the translator.

I would like to use this opportunity to act as both an intruder into literary discourse from the field of translation studies as well as an ambassador between the two areas of interest. My concern will be with the potential application of the theory of fictional worlds in translation studies, especially with regard to research in the so-called translation universals in literary texts, with a special focus on explicitation.

The history of translation universals in translation studies has been inseparably associated with explicitation. Explicitation emerged towards the end of the 1980s as one of the key candidates on the list of potential unconscious translator strategies leading to the production of texts differing from those created as non-translations in the same language (Klaudy 1998, Laviosa 1998, Laviosa 2002 and others).

Since then explicitation has been explored in both non-literary and literary texts along with simplification, normalisation, levelling out or convergence, with corpora as the main tool for this kind of analysis (Laviosa 2002; Mauranen 2004; Englund-Dimitrova 2005).

Although the explicitation hypothesis has been re-confirmed in a number of text types including the literary (i.e., explictation as a translation strategy has generally been found more frequent than its opposite, implicitation) (comp. Laviosa 2002, Øveras 1988), the study of this phenomenon has its blind alleys.

While studying explicitation through parallel corpora is extremely labour-consuming, researching explicitation through comparable corpora has been more or less restricted to isolated phenomena due to conceptual problems associated with establishing the overall level of explicitness and faced with the diversity and complexity of literary texts (comp. Olohan 2001, Baker and Olohan, 2000, Puurtinen 2004).

The now classical categorization of explicitation into obligatory (due to language system differences), optional (for stylistic reasons), pragmatic (due to cultural differences) and, finally, translation-inherent (due to the very nature of the translation process) (Klaudy 1993) has not proved very productive in empirical research. (Englund-Dimitrova 2005) The more recent developments in research of explictation (and other translation universals) in literary texts have centred around the concept of translator style, also referred to as style *of* translation, and have been contrasted with style *in* translation. (Baker 2000, Bosseaux 2001, Winters 2004)

The theory of fictional worlds as a branch of the theory of possible worlds is built around the seemingly simple idea of viewing fictional texts as performative speech acts endowed with the ultimate illocutionary force capable of bringing about a radical change in the world, namely creating a possible world with its fictional facts distinct from the actual one (Doležel 1998:150). It is somewhat surprising that translation studies has not, at least to my knowledge, adopted the theory of fictional worlds to its purposes yet. It is true, though, that the potential of the theory of fictional worlds has not passed unnoticed; impulses for its application to translation can be found in the final chapters of the books on fictional worlds by Doležel (1998) and Fořt (2005). Its interfaces with ontology and modern logics apart, the theory of fictional worlds may be said to provide a relatively simple and intuitive and yet subtle conceptual apparatus for the exploration of fiction, which proves to be testable and exploitable for prediction as well as simple and comprehensive enough at the same time.

The main charms that the theory of fictional worlds offers to translation research are, to my mind, conceptualization of fictional worlds as extensional entities, i.e. entities whose status is relatively independent of language, on the one hand, and the deep involvement with the intension, i.e. the meaning of a text arising from its texture, the exact wording of the text, on the other. It seems natural that the study of literary translation with its concern with evaluation of translation shifts at the micro-level in terms of macro-shifts (Leuven Zwart 1989, 1990) should embrace this approach. As far as the study of explicitation in literary texts is concerned, it should find the added benefit of the centrality of the concept of incompleteness of fictional worlds and implicitness most attractive.

Unfolding the potential that the theory of fictional worlds has to offer to translation studies, I will refer especially to Doležel's fictional semantics as explained in his *Heterocosmica* (1998) for his detailed conceptualization of the intensional level of construction of fictional worlds seems to be an invitation to do just that.

*

Some of the basic concepts of the theory of fictional worlds have already been mentioned. Since the task I have set myself is to show how the conceptual apparatus of the theory of fictional worlds can be applied to a particular literary text, in our case the novel *The Member of the Wedding* by Carson McCullers, I will start working towards the objective.

The Member of the Wedding is a story of a 12-year-old girl trying to fight the confusion of her age and find her place in the world, in a small town in the American South during WWII.

That sentence is a paraphrase expressing the extension of the novel – the component of the meaning of the text based on its relation to the world outside the language (Doležel 2003:255, transl. RK). Its counterpart, the text intension, the component of the meaning of the text grounded in the texture (Doležel 2003:255, transl. RK) is a much more complicated entity, which cannot be divorced from the exact wording of the text and can be studied only indirectly. Its study is the very task of fictional macrosemantics: it firstly apprehends the regularities of texture, secondly, derives the intentional structuring of the fictional world from these regularities, and, thirdly, reconstructs the extensional world structuring (Doležel 1998:143). This is how text extension and text intension complement each other: the fictional world has a double structuring; extensional fictional-world structuring generated by extensional restrictions, and intensional fictional-world structuring generated by the impact of an intensional function – a regularity of the text's texture projected into the fictional world (Doležel 1998:279-80).

Translated into the terms of the theory of fictional worlds, the requirement for dynamic equivalence implies that the fictional worlds constructed by SL and TL readers should be as close as possible. Although cultural differences may account for problems with rendering the extensional structure depending on the cultural gap, dealing with explicitation and especially translation-inherent explicitation, I will focus on the intensional level of meaning. It is evident that despite the inevitably different text intensions, the two intensional fictional-world structurings should be as close to each other as possible.

Speaking about the intensional structuring, Doležel discusses three basic intensional functions: the naming function, the authentication function and the saturation function. (Doležel 1998) As we return to *The Member of the Wedding*, I will deal with all of them.

The book is divided into three parts and in each of them, the main character is referred to by a different name. Frankie in Part 1 is very self-conscious and has strong feelings that she herself does not fully understand about the impending marriage of her brother, Jarvis, to a girl called Janice. She views the fact that their names begin with the same letter as a strange coincidence and her desire to belong is manifested in her preference for being called F. Jasmine in Part 2. The character of Frankie/F. Jasmine is an example of an entity introduced into the fictional world by way of an existential presupposition (Doležel 1998:175). The initial sentences of Part 1 and Part 2 are as follows:

> "It happened that green and crazy summer when Frankie was twelve years old."
> (Part 1, McCullers, 1)
> "The day before the wedding was not like any day that F. Jasmine had ever known."
> (Part 2, McCullers, 44)

The relative identity between Frankie and F. Jasmine is established inferentially, too – from the context, but the different reference leaves the extensional entity marked with its trace: F. Jasmine feels somewhat different about herself and the world and is contrasted with "the old Frankie". The frequency of both names in the texture is relatively high. F. Jasmine celebrates her transformation by making herself a couple of visiting cards saying *Miss F. Jasmine Addams, Esq.* and she insists that their housekeeper, Berenice, does not call her Frankie. Old Frankie's transformation continues in Part 3, where the character is called Frances. But this time, the emergence of the "renewed" fictional entity is construed in a different way:

> She said: "Farewell, old ugly house," as, wearing a dotted Swiss dress and carrying
> the suitcase, she passed through the hall at quarter to six. The wedding dress was in
> the suitcase, ready to be put on when she reached Winter Hill. (McCullers 134; Part 3)

It takes another ten sentences of the description of that particular morning and the character's mood and actions before she is referred to by the name, Frances. Even after that, the name is used sparingly; the character is mostly referred to by the personal pronoun, "she". Frances is not self-conscious about her name and identity any more; her true transformation, no matter how painful it is, has ousted her willed and laborious self-construal.

The percentages of reference by name in samples of initial 1,000 words of the three parts of the novel are 43%, 31% and 14% respectively, but the numbers do not tell the whole story; the distribution of these occurrences is another important factor. As far as introduction of the character's new self as a fictional entity is concerned, the weight of each particular reference depends on the position of the motif within the chapter quite heavily.

While in Chapters 1 and 2 the proper name is used 3 times within the first 5 sentences, the first mention of the character's name is only in sentence 12 in Chapter 3 – no matter that the character is referred to – by the personal pronoun – throughout the preceding texture.

We have seen that the intensional naming function with three values structures the heroine's development in the original of the novel, leaving a trace on the text extension. The question is, how about the Czech texture? The rough structuring is the same, but we discover that while the use of reference by proper name is virtually the same in Chapters 1 and 2 of the Czech translation, the first time the character is referred to by her name (Frances) in Chapter 3 is in sentence 3 (instead of being postponed to sentence 12) and the part of the texture corresponding to the first 1,000 English words contains 10 references by proper name instead of the 4 in the English texture. The subtler intensional structuring of reference to the main character is blurred by explicitation.

The importance of the intensional naming function in the English original is supported by other instances of reference, which I will mention but briefly. The other two characters that interact with the main character most frequently are the housekeeper and Frankie's young cousin. As fictional entities, they are introduced in a peculiar way; and to be able to appreciate it we need to know that the major setting of the novel is the kitchen in Frankie's home:

> She was in so much secret trouble that she thought it was better to stay at home – and
> at home there was only **Berenice Sadie Brown** and **John Henry West**. The three sat
> at the kitchen table, saying the same things over and over, so that by August the words
> began to rhyme with each other and sound strange. (McCullers, 1, emphasis RK)

Frankie's father as a fictional entity is introduced as Royal Quincy Addams. All these three rather formal references seem to be peculiar, given that they denote the three people closest to the heroine. This referential choice has to do with Frankie's preoccupation with names as an external sign of identity. To Frankie's eyes, a simple name will not do; a "proper proper name" is to be at least a threesome: hence F. Jasmine Addams.

The authentication function provides an answer to the two questions of how it is that "fictional entities owe their existence to the special kind of world-constructing text" and how "global features of the texture regulate the authentication function and affect fictional existence" (Doležel 1998:145). As the above-quoted extracts have made clear sufficiently enough, in Doležel's terms, *The Member of the Wedding* is a third person narrative exploiting the subjectivized *Er*-form, where authentication is mediated by the so-called graded authentication. The fictional domains of the "authentic" and the "non-authentic" are bridged by the domain of "relative fictional facts", construed by a performative speech act whose "conventional authentication force is weakened but not voided" (Doležel 1998:153).

And relative fictional facts represent an important semantic domain in the fictional world that we as readers generate on the basis of the text, in fact the most significant one. The texture attributable to the third person narrator is coloured by subjectivity; the narrator is an entity just beyond the borders of the fictional world whose vision and emotions are very much like Frankie's. To give just a few examples:

> It happened that *green and crazy summer* when Frankie was twelve years old. (McCullers, 1, emphasis RK)
> In June the trees were bright *dizzy green*, but later the leaves darkened, and *the town turned black and shrunken under the glare of the sun*. (McCullers, 1)
> At last *the summer was like a green sick dream*, or *like a silent crazy jungle under glass*. (McCullers, 1)

The fictional facts and events construed as "authentic" are not a very significant layer of the fictional world: Frankie's fictional hometown is one where hardly anything ever happens. The relative scarcity of Frankie's actions and accidents happening to her (accidents meaning unintentional acting here) is more than counterbalanced by the domain of relative fictional facts. There is a thin layer of "nonauthentic" fictional facts, too: Frankie's exaggerated accounts of words of praise spoken of her person by other fictional entities are immediately disclaimed by Berenice.

Before summing up the effect of explicitation on authentication in *The Member of the Wedding*, let us turn our attention to the saturation function for a while.

Incompleteness is one of the key properties of fictional worlds as extensional entities (Doležel 1998:169). The structure of fictional worlds is defined by fictional facts and fictional gaps. But implicitness is a general feature of any texture and its role in fictional worlds may be described as modulating the opposition between gaps and facts more finely (Doležel 1998:171). It will be our task to specify this "finer modulation" in *The Member of the Wedding* and decide whether and to what extent the translator's explicitation strategies interfere with this intensional structuring.

<div align="center">*</div>

As far as implicitness, explicitness and explicitation are concerned, Anthony Pym warns against the "assumption of any stable semantic content, particularly when that content is paradoxically held to be at once hidden and obviously available to all" as is often the case with explicitation (Pym, 2005). What is it, then, that gets explicitated in the Czech texture? We will assume that the translator had a choice what to explicitate if explicitate at all.

I analyzed substantial parts of the double English/Czech texture sentence by sentence. My framework, which I regarded as both providing a focus and flexible enough, was that of Hallidayian metafunctions of language – the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual – corresponding to the three types of semantic components of the speech situation (Halliday 1973, 1978, 1989).

My argument is that the frequency and distribution of these instances of explicitation across the Czech texture may be regarded as an explicitation profile of the translator with respect to this text.

Regularities of explicitation profiles of the same translator across different fictional texts might then be viewed as an important component of the style of that specific translator.

My analysis has shown that the category of explicitation between the English and Czech texture which is by far the most frequent is explicitation in consistence with the ideational function. A note of caution should be sounded at this point. When categorizing explicitation in a literary text, we have to be aware that there are two types of communicative situation: firstly, the situation of the third person narrator in a virtual space both within and beyond the borders of the fictional world, and secondly, the situations at the level the fictional characters. The narrator's speech act serves to inform the readers of the happenings within the fictional world while the communicative contexts of the speech acts with fictional entities as participants vary. An overwhelming majority of the very frequent occurrences of ideational explicitation were at the narrator level. They explicitated the processes being described:

> Frankie o ní [bratrově svatbě] ustavičně snila a obzvlášť poslední léto **ji vídala** jako skutečnou.
> Frankie had dreamed of it [her brother's wedding] constantly, and especially this summer **it was** very real.
> „Když jsem se tehdy opařila a **musela jsem se mazat** černou smradlavou mastí, tak se mě Helena Fletcherová zeptala, co to, že tak divně smrdím.
> "When I **had** those boils and that black bitter smelling ointment, old Helen Fletcher asked what was that funny smell I had."

Quite frequently, processes are sequenced and described as a succession of steps:

> Honem **kufřík zavřela, utáhla na něm řemínky** a přistrčila jej zpátky ke zdi.
> So she **strapped the suitcase** and pushed it back against the wall.

Or fictional objects involved in these processes are explicitated:

> Na psacím stole měla ještě dvě věci: levandulově nafialovělou mořskou lasturu a skleněnou kouli **s umělým sněhem**, jíž se mohlo zatřepat, až se v ní rozpoutala chumelenice.
> Before Frankie there were now two objects – a lavender seashell and a glass globe **with snow** inside that could be shaken into a snowstorm.

A very frequent subtype of ideational explicitation was filling in descriptive details about the physical situation, usually on the basis of conventional scenarios of action:

> John Henry **si klekl na podlahu** a pomodlil se – modlil se dlouho, ale ani slovem nahlas.
> John Henry **knelt down** to say his prayers and he prayed for a long time, not saying the words aloud.
> Pak si **lehl do postele** vedle Frankie.
> Then he **lay down** beside her.

Examples of interpersonal explicitation are far less frequent and, understandably, restricted to the level of characters' discourse. They explicitate the speaker's attitude:

> A to mě nebaví.
> Nothing to it.
> „Hm, **to je toho**!" okřikla ho Frankie.
> "**Hush**!" Frankie screamed suddenly.

Following J.R. Martin's interpretation of the discourse system of connectivity as part of

the ideational function, namely its logical component, we find that the relatively less frequent instances of explicitation of connectives, occurring on both levels of fictional discourse, contribute to ideational explicitation, too.

> „**Ale** já si nemyslím, že smrdíš," řekl.
> "I don't think you smell so bad," he said.
> **Jako** například **když** Jarvis poslední léto napsal, že si sem tam zaplave v moři a moskyti že štípou jako diví.
> For instance, this summer he mentioned once that he had been in swimming and that the mosquitoes were something fierce.

Textual explicitation, the third type of explicitation in the proposed model, affecting discourse systems for identification of entities being spoken about and structuring the flow of information into old and new, is rare in the translation apart from where it affects the naming function as shown above.

The conclusion of the analysis is that the type of explicitation strategy most typical of the translator in this particular text is explicitation in line with the experiential component of the Hallidayian ideational function of language, and that its frequency is very high. What are then the consequences of this explicitation tendency at the level of the fictional world, namely the traces left in this extensional structure by the authentication and saturation functions as rendered by the Czech texture?

The broad use of ideational explicitation interferes with both. Firstly, as far as the saturation function is concerned, we may demand in agreement with Bohumil Fořt that "the original text and the text of the translation should keep two basic structural resemblances: the *ratio* of explicit and implicit textual meanings should be preserved as closely as possible, despite the differing linguistic and cultural environments the texts are designed for, and the structure of their distribution in the text should remain the same, too (Fořt, 128, transl. RK). Neither of the two requirements is met in the Czech texture of *The Member of the Wedding*. The texture is "fleshed out" and this "flesh" is very much based on conventional scenarios. Secondly, ideational explicitation interferes with the authentication function, too, narrowing down the domain of relative fictional facts and depriving the fictional world of the novel of its ontological depth. The narrative voice creating the fictional world by her/his performative speech act is becoming more of a documentarist with a common sense, less "green", "crazy" and "afraid". The shift is from subjectivity and emotions, confused and strong, towards objective agency.

> Protože když ji napadla ta stará otázka – kdo vlastně je a **kde se na světě octne**, a proč tady v téhle chvíli stojí – když ji napadla tahle stará otázka, **už ji nezraňovala a nezůstávala nezodpověděná** [sic]. (McCullersová, 155-156)

> For when the old question came to her – who she was and **what she would be in the world**, and why she was standing there that minute – when the old question came to her, **she did not feel hurt and unanswered**. (McCullers, 43)

I hope I have managed to show how explicitation typology in literary translation can be approached and how a particular explicitation profile can be evaluated in terms of its consequences for intensional structuring of the resulting fictional world generated by the target language texture. Other combinations of translator explicitation profiles and fictional-world structurings will lead to other explicitation macroshifts in literary texts – and that is what we need to study in the future.

Works Cited:

Baker, Mona (2000): "Towards a Methodology for Investigating the Style of a Literary Translator," *Target* 12(2): 241-66.
Baker, Mona and Maeve Olohan (2000): "Reporting *that* in Translated English: Evidence for Subconscious Processes of Explicitation?," *Across Languages and Cultures* 1(2): 141-58.

Bosseaux, Charlotte (2001): "A Study of the Translator's Voice and style in the French translations of Virginia Woolf's The Waves," in Maeve Olohan (ed) *CTIS Occasional Papers*, Volume 1, Manchester, Centre for Translation & Intercultural Studies, UMIST, 55-75.

Doležel, Lubomír (1998): *Heterocosmica. Fiction and Possible Worlds*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Doležel, Lubomír (2003): *Heterocosmica. Fikce a možné světy*. Prague: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Karolinum.

Englund-Dimitrova, Birgitta (2005): *Expertise and Explicitation in the Translation Process*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Fořt, Bohumil (2005): *Úvod do sémantiky fikčních světů*. Brno: Host.

Halliday, M.A.K. (1973): *Explorations in the Functions of Language*. London: Edward Arnold.

Halliday, M.A.K. (1978): *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*. London: Edward Arnold.

Halliday, M.A.K. and R. Hasan (1989): *Language, Context and Text: A Social Semiotic Perspective*. Oxford: OUP.

Klaudy, Kinga (1998): "Explicitation." In: Baker, M. (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies*, London, Routledge.

Klaudy, Kinga (1993): "On Explicitation Hypothesis," in K. Klaudy, J. Kohn. (eds.), *Transferre necesse est... Current Issues of Translation Theory. In honour of György Radó*, Szombathely, Daniel Berzsenyi College Printing Press, 69-77.

Leuven-Zwart, Kitty M. van (1989): "Translation and Original. Similarities and Dissimilarities," in *Target*, 1 (2), 151-81.

Leuven-Zwart, Kitty M. van (1990): "Translation and Original. Similarities and Dissimilarities, II," in *Target*, 2 (1), 69-95.

Laviosa, Sara (1998): "Universals in Translation," in Baker, M. (ed.), *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies*. London: Routledge, 288-291.

Laviosa, Sara (2002): *Corpus-based Translation Studies. Theory, findings, applications*. Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi.

Martin, J.R. and David Rose (2003): *Working with Discourse*. London and New York: Continuum.

Mauranen, Anna and P. Kujamäki (eds.) 2004. *Translation Universals. Do they exist?*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

McCullers, Carson (1946): *The Member of the Wedding*. New York: Bantam Books. (1986 edition)

McCullersová, Carson (1969): *Svatebčanka*. In *Balada o smutné kavárně. Svatebčanka* (trans. Jarmila Fastrová). Praha: Odeon. 1985.

Olohan, Maeve (2001): "Spelling Out the Optionals in Translation: a Corpus Study." *UCREL Technical Papers* Vol. 13: 423-32.

Overas, Linn (1988): "In Search of the Third Code," *Meta*, XLIII, 4.

Pym, Anthony (2005): "Explaining Explicitation," in Krisztina Karoly and Ágata Fóris (eds.) *New Trends in Translation Studies. In Honour of Kinga Klaudy*. Budapest: Akadémia Kiadó. 29-34.

Puurtinen, Tiina (2004): "Explicitation of Clausal Relations," in A. Mauranen and P. Kujamäki (eds.), *Translation Universals. Do they exist?*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 165-176.

Winters, Marion (2004): "German Translations of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and Damned*: A Corpus-based Study of Modal Particles as Features of Translators' Style," in Ian Kemble (ed.) *Using Corpora and Databases in Translation,* Portsmouth: University of Portsmouth Press, 71-88.