

Has Henry Softened the War in *A Farewell to Arms*? A Translational Perspective on Hedging

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Abstract: *This paper provides an empirical investigation of shifts in hedges in an Arabic translation of A Farewell to Arms (1929). The results reveal a tendency to add rather than omit hedges. This is associated with several discourse effects, such as a move toward an increased level of awareness of information quality and relevance, greater attenuation/mitigation, more politeness, improved interpersonal relations, increased reinforcement, greater speaker responsibility/commitment, higher cognitive and emotional involvement, and stronger textual relations in the translated narrative. These effects reflect a more cooperation/dynamic role on the (literary) translator's part during his second verbal materialization and re-narration of the original story. The addition of relevance hedges points to an explicitation pattern that improves the text's readability and reflects the translator's mediating voice in the translated narrative. The increased attenuation and reinforcement are indicative of a movement toward standardizing (appropriating) a war novel that has a less emotive style to an emotionally remote (Arabic) reader, pushing for more universalized interpretations and more normalized literary translations. Such movements, which cannot be linked at least in this study to any sociopolitical factors (e.g., language status, power relations), are better regarded as visible traces pointing to the translators' (conscious or subconscious) orientation toward a greater literary uniformity and more cross-cultural/universal understanding.*

Keywords: attenuation, English-Arabic fiction translation, hedges, reinforcement, standardization

1. Introduction

In *A Farewell to Arms*, Lieutenant Frederic Henry and his fellow drivers get attacked and badly injured, and when a medical sergeant asks Frederic about another injured driver, he replies "He is dead *I think*". As to his relationship with Catherine, Frederic narrates "I wanted to be *really* married." While the phrase "*I think*" in the first utterance serves to *attenuate* (i.e., downtone, de-intensify or weaken) Frederic's proposition on one hand, the word "*really*" in the second utterance reinforces (i.e., emphasizes, intensifies or boosts) his proposition on the other. Both "*I think*" and "*really*" are called *hedges*. The use of a hedge like "*I think*" is generally associated with such pragmatic/discourse effects as *uncertainty*, *vagueness* and *attenuation*, while "*really*" with *emphasis*, *intensification* and *reinforcement*, which are all constitutive features of any natural human communication. Hats off to George Lakoff's paper 'Hedges: A study in meaning

criteria and the logic of fuzzy concepts' (1972/1973) that popularized the term of hedges. He (1973: 471) defined hedges as expressions whose function is "to make things *fuzzier* or *less fuzzy*" (emphasis mine). Drawing upon the tenets of Paul Grice's theory of Cooperative Principle (CP) (1975), Grundy (2013: 101) defines hedges as metalingual comments or glosses on the degree to which a speaker adheres to conversational maxims (rules for conversation). For some other accounts, hedges (more particularly *attenuating* hedges) convey *mitigation/politeness* and therefore function at the (Hallidayan) *interpersonal* level (e.g., Brown and Levinson 1987; Schneider 2010).

This paper will investigate the use of hedges in an Arabic translation of Ernest Hemingway's war novel *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), adopting earlier accounts, including Lakoff (1973), Grice (1975), Prince, Fraser and Bosk (1982), Brown and Levinson (1987), and some more recent accounts that refined the notion of hedges, most importantly Caffi (2007), Fraser (2010), Schneider (2010) and Grundy (2013). The goal is to explore what a translational perspective on hedges can contribute to *pragmatic competence* in a socio-cultural context (cf. Fraser 2010: 15), and more particularly to the *interpersonal component* of systemic functional models to (literary) translation (e.g., Hatim and Mason 1990/2013, 1997; House 1997; Munday 2008). Assuming a *deconstruction* view of authorship and hence upgrading a (literary) translator to the status of an author (House 2016: 20-21), the paper will *describe* the regularities of the *non-obligatory translational shifts* (cf. Toury 2012: 80) in hedges, hoping to contribute to the current research into the translator's *discursive presence, style, narrative voice* and *authorial role* (Munday 2008: 13-14, see Boase-Beier 2018). The present paper assumes that translation is no longer a *semiotic* process (where signs of a particular code are simply replaced by those of another code), but a *socially* situated act (Mason 2014: 36-37) and a *re-narration* activity involving a translator actively and creatively participating in constructing events (Baker 2018: 179-180). Given such concepts of translation, the analysis of translational shifts in hedges is hoped to give insight into the translator's role in meaning-creation and event-construction processes. Such analysis can also contribute to *pragmatics-oriented* translation models that concern *how* a speaker (e.g., be it an author, narrator or character) communicates a communicative value via a text (cf. Şerban 2013: 219-221). Finally, the paper will try to link the findings to some larger frameworks of analysis, most importantly those of *stylistic* approaches to translation (Boase-Beier 2018), *sociocultural* approaches to translation (Tymoczko 2002; Bassnett 2011; Toury 2012; Mason 2014), translation and *globalization/intercultural communication* (House 2016) and translation *norms/universals* (e.g., explicitation, standardization or normalization) (Baker 1996; Blum-Kulka 1986/2000; Toury 2012).

2. Literature review

2.1 Hedges: A conversational analysis perspective

2.1.1 Grice's theory of Cooperative Principle (CP)

The English philosopher and linguist Paul Grice (1913-1988) in *Logic and Conversation* (1975) was the first to employ the notions of *speech maxims* and *cooperation* to analyze language. He (1975: 43-45) proposed that for successful communication, speakers abide by certain maxims when expressing a meaning while listeners, relying on their shared background and through inferencing, cooperate with speakers to arrive at the intended meaning. Grice's view is that communication involves a joint behavior, where speech participants cooperate to achieve certain communicative goals (e.g., to exchange information) (see Lambrou 2014: 141-142; Warner 2014: 367-368). According to Grice (1975: 45-47), listeners presuppose that speakers adhere to certain maxims. These include the maxim of quantity (make your contribution as informative as it requires), the maxim of quality (say only truthful information), the maxim of manner (be clear), and the maxim of relation (keep your contribution related to the topic of conversation). Grice argues that speakers usually comply with (observe) these maxims, but if they deliberately and ostensibly (to the listener's knowledge) do not comply with (flout) them, listeners cooperatively ignore the literal meaning and appreciate the implied meaning. If I say "I am dead" after a long day at work, I flout the maxim of quality (by saying something untrue) and expect my listener to cooperate with my utterance by skipping the literal meaning and inferring the implied meaning (I am very tired). This implied meaning is referred to by Grice (1975: 44) as *implicature* (cf. implying). Grice also argues that speakers may sometimes *violate* maxims by surreptitiously (without the listener's knowledge) breaking a maxim, such as in lies (e.g., when you tell a traffic officer that you have not run a red light while you actually have).

2.1.2 Hedges and Gricean maxims

Daily conversations involve not only situations where a speaker observes, flouts or violates a maxim, but also situations where a speaker signals his/her recognition of a certain maxim by using a metalinguistic expression, termed as a *hedge*, especially when risking violating a maxim (Kortmann 2020: 185-186). You can for example state that "Sugar is the main reason for cancer", but if you are reluctant to make this bold statement, you may precede it with a hedge on the maxim of quality such as "I think" or "to my knowledge" (e.g., *I think* sugar is the main reason for cancer). If you do not know the exact quantity of cigarettes you smoke everyday, you may rather say "I smoke *about* a pack of cigarettes" than "I smoke a pack of cigarettes". The use of such hedges as "I think" and "about" signals to the listener that the speaker is aware of the maxims (quality and quantity) and that his/her sentence may or may not comply with these maxims. Hedges on the maxim of relevance include expressions that signal a shift in the topic (e.g., by the way, anyway), while hedges on the maxim of manner include phrases that indicate the clarity of an utterance (e.g., in a clearer way, more clearly). As Grundy (2013: 101) suggests, these hedges on Grice's maxims do not add semantic content to the utterances; they are rather a comment on the degree of compliance with conversational maxims on the part of

the speaker; they reflect how accurate, informative, relevant, and clear our utterances are.

2.1.3 Functions and discourse effects of hedges

Lakoff, who is credited with introducing the concept of hedges, pointed out that some hedges can restrict the truth value of language utterances and make natural language concepts have *fuzzy* rather than clearly defined boundaries (1973: 471), such as “technically” in “He is technically a teacher”. Such hedges can *attenuate* (limit or de-emphasize) the category membership of a certain expression. Lakoff also talked about another group of hedges that can *reinforce* (boost or emphasize) the category membership of an expression, such as “certainly”, “really”, “of course” and “very” (e.g., He is *certainly* the new teacher). However, there has been much focus in the previous literature on attenuation, as it has been suggested that hedges are more frequently used for attenuation than reinforcement (Schneider 2010: 256). Prince et al. (1982: 85) described *plausibility* hedges that convey doubt and uncertainty (e.g., *as far as I know*, the panel meets every Monday) and *attribution* hedges that attribute the responsibility of an utterance to a party other than the speaker (e.g., *according to Dr. Mehmet Oz*, dieting can have damaging side effects). Brown and Levinson (1987: 145-147) talked about hedging as a communicative strategy that maintains interpersonal relationships, particularly *politeness* (see Bousfield 2014: 128-130). They argued that hedges on Grice’s maxims form a special *speech act* (cf. Austin 1962) that avoids or mitigates the imposition on the listener’s negative face. The expression “I believe” in “I believe you must stop smoking” is a hedge on the maxim of quality which functions as a device through which the speaker minimizes threats to the listener’s face. Claudia Caffi in her book *Mitigation* (2007) also describes hedging as a mitigating device that lessens a speaker’s commitment to the content of a sentence and leaves vagueness in its interpretation (see Schneider 2010: 253-254; Shakeeb and Taqi 2021: 610).

More recently, Bruce Fraser in *Pragmatic Competence: The Case of Hedging* (2010) considers hedging as a pragmatic aspect that *attenuates* the semantic value or effect of a certain expression. He (2010: 15-16) argues that failing to hedge appropriately may result in impolite, offensive, inappropriate utterances. Fraser (2010: 20) describes two types of hedging. The first is a *propositional hedging*, which expresses a lack of commitment to the semantic membership of a certain expression, like the word “almost” in “Jack’s new car is *almost* 4 meters long”, which signals the speaker’s lack of commitment to the assumption about the length of Jack’s new car. The second is a *speech act hedging*, which indicates a lack of commitment to the *illocutionary force* (the speaker’s intention in producing an utterance, like ordering, apologizing, regretting, etc.) of the speech act of an utterance. An example is “I think” in “*I think* you have to leave now”, which expresses the speaker’s lack of commitment to the directive illocutionary force (i.e., requesting) of the utterance (see Bousfield 2014: 121-122).

Fraser (2010: 29-33) also talks about the situations in which hedging is often used. First, he argues that hedging is used when the speaker wants to give negative

ideas or suggestions (e.g., *It would be a good idea if you could wait a few extra weeks to proceed with your application*). Second, hedging is used when the speaker wishes to evade responsibility for the truth of an utterance that may convey bad news to the listener (e.g., *The ultrasound image shows a lump in your breast*). Third, hedging is used in situations where the speaker asks about sensitive issues (e.g., *As far as I remember, your father lost his job due to misconduct*). Fourth, the speaker may hedge his/her utterance to express powerlessness and to trigger sympathy (e.g., *It looks that I cannot lift this bag*). Also, hedging can be used to sound modest and open for disagreement (e.g., *I am not aware of all details, but the accident may have happened due to over-speeding*). For Fraser (2010: 25-29), hedging is most often associated with certain discourse effects such as vagueness, evasion, and politeness.

The study of hedges contributes to the analysis of conversational rules involved in meaning-generation processes in both literary and non-literary texts. While early theories of hedges (as well as those of speech acts and conversational implicature) had been first developed to account for simple spoken exchanges, their significance and validity for the linguistic analysis of literary works become an undebatable issue (cf. Black 2006: 27-28; Warner 2014: 369). Literary works involve fictional characters who normally produce language exchanges that are mimetic of those of real-life people, and these exchanges can also be analyzed using the same linguistic theories tools that are used for any real-life language exchanges (Leech and Short 2007: 294-297; Bousfield 2014: 119).

2.2 Hedges: A translational perspective

2.2.1 Hedges as a component of pragmatics and stylistics-oriented translation models

The concepts of conversational maxims and maxim hedges have been used in the methodology of many descriptive translation studies that concern the extra-textual factors affecting meaning-creation operations in translation (e.g., Schäffner 1998; Morini 2013; see Bruti 2020: 433). These concepts have been among the elements of *pragmatics-oriented* translation models that primarily investigate *how* speech participants communicate via texts and how they (intentionally or unintentionally) reflect their communicative goals, interests, emotions and (linguistic and cultural) identities in their speech (cf. Şerban 2013: 219-221). For such models of translation, the analysis of communicative rules underlying human interactions is quite complicated, and therefore demands an analysis of not only the linguistic structure but also many interpersonal, social and even psychological factors (see Ying and Zhao 2018: 111).

Hedging as a dynamic feature of communication and as an aspect of pragmatic competence further complicates the process of translation and increases the burden on translators. Hedges constitute the *conversational* part of an utterance, and their interpretation largely requires an inference based on shared contextual/cultural *presuppositions* (cf. Stalnaker 1973). Thus, the cross-cultural transfer of hedges may require *cultural contextualization*, a thick description of the

original context (Appiah 2012: 341; see Hermans 2020: 590), or *explicitation* (explanation) of culture-specific presuppositions (Blum-Kulka 2000: 306). Transferring hedges may also require *re-contextualization*, by taking them out of their original context and placing them within a new set of relationships and culturally conditioned expectations of the target audience (House 2016: 66).

The study of hedges can enrich the stylistic approaches to translation (e.g., Boase-Beier 2018). Hedges enable speakers and writers to negotiate certain meanings, attitudes and interests, and their use conveys to listeners/readers certain discourse effects, such as indeterminateness, vagueness, evasion and politeness. So, the linguistic analysis of hedges in a specific text not only helps describe meaning-negotiation processes but also contributes to the study of style, the distinctive manner of speaking or writing (cf. Warner 2014: 368-369). If we assume that translators strive for a stylistic equivalence that leaves “an impression of the social identities that are indexed in the source” (Angermeyer 2020: 536), the pragmatic functions of hedges may need to be reproduced in the translated text. If we also assume that a good translation, compared to the original, needs to evoke an *equivalent perlocutionary effect* (cf. Hickey 1998) and elicit a similar level of reader *engagement/involvement* (Boase-Beier 2018: 201-202), hedges should be used in translation in the same way as in the original.

2.2.2 Empirical/descriptive findings on the translation of hedges

A few studies have empirically examined the translation of hedges (e.g., Schäffner 1998; Miššiková 2008; Abualadas 2020a). Christina Schäffner (1998) studied hedges, such as “I think”, “for all I know”, “roughly” and “kind of”, in political texts translated from English into German and vice versa. She found that some hedges are used in the original to relieve writers/speakers of some of the commitment to, or responsibility for, their statements, or to mitigate potential negative effects on the recipients. Schäffner (1998: 199-200) however concluded that hedges function interpersonally (pragmatically) and therefore build on the reader/hearer’s background knowledge and his/her ability to draw the relevant implicature. Miššiková (2008) analyzes maxim hedges, such as “I think”, “I believe”, “I don’t mean that”, “I am going off the point” and “perhaps”, in the English novel *Junk* (by Melvin Burgess) and its Slovak translation. She finds that hedges have sometimes been deleted or substituted, but in many cases have been preserved in the target text. She argues that hedges reflect interpersonal attitudes, mainly uncertainty with respect to the original speaker’s level of commitment to the truth of his/her utterances. Similar to Schäffner (1998), Miššiková emphasizes that translating hedges calls for a pragmatic interpretation that is based on a contextual presupposition. However, both Schäffner (1998) and Miššiková (2008) do not provide any *systematic* findings regarding the *habitual* use of hedges in translation. Systematic descriptions are important for the identification of what translations actually *do* rather than what they should do, which is ultimately important for “testing, refuting, and especially modifying and amending the theory” of translation itself (Toury 2012: xi, emphasis removed).

Some systematic conclusions on the use of hedges in literary translation can be found in Abualadas (2020a). He analyzes the use of Grice's conversational maxims in the English novel *Animal Farm* and its two Arabic translations. Though hedges have not been the main concern in his study, his findings indicate that the Arabic versions, compared to the original, tend to add extra maxim hedges that do not exist in the original. Abualadas (2020a: 637) argues that this tendency suggests a greater level of awareness of speech maxims and more consideration of politeness on the part of speaking characters. An example is the translation of Boxer's utterance "we have won back what we had before" into Arabic as "*the whole issue* is that we won back what we had before", where the new hedge "*the whole issue*" both expresses Boxer's awareness of the maxim of quantity and softens his opinion in the utterance, appearing more polite than he actually is in the original. Abualadas' study has relied only on Grice's (1975) theory of Cooperative Principle and ignored more recent and influential accounts that refined the concept of hedges and researched more broadly their uses and discourse effects (e.g., Caffi 2007; Fraser 2010; Schneider 2010). As his study is not mainly concerned with hedges, nearly most of the theoretical classifications made in the present literature review (more importantly attenuating vs. reinforcing hedges) have been neglected. These theoretical classifications, as the discussion section of the present study will show, are important for both arriving at a precise description of hedges and linking the findings to larger frameworks of analysis.

3. Corpus and methodological issues

The corpus of this study consists of Ernest Hemingway's war novel *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) and its most recent and most popular Arabic translation Mounir Baalbaki (2006). The original novel narrates the story of Frederic Henry, an American lieutenant serving in the Italian ambulance corps during World War I, who falls in love with Catherine Barkley, a British volunteer nurse, who works in Italy. Hemingway uses a distinctive writing style due to his journalist experience (see Bloom 2010: 31-35). He most often uses simple and short declarative statements to report the immediate events and vivid details of the story and uses a *painterly* style that perfectly paints a mood for his audience. "Spare", "lean" and "plain" are actually among the most frequent words used to describe Hemingway's style in this novel.

A Farewell to Arms is selected for this study because it provides a natural/typical environment for much hedging. The original narrative teems with negative thoughts and attitudes toward war and its atrocities (cf. Wyatt 2015: 63-66), which is a situation where hedges may be a normal choice to attenuate any unwelcome effects on readers (Fraser 2010: 30). The original narrative also involves a subjective first-person reporting of events loaded with spontaneous and immediate reactions/emotions. The use of hedges in this type of narration may be a typical or natural option to reduce any unnecessary responsibilities or conflicts (see Schneider 2010: 255). The original novel contains forty-one chapters, but to allow

for a more *contextualized* analysis, only the first twenty chapters (amounting approximately to 35,000 words) will be analyzed. As hedges are *dynamic* in their nature and their interpretation depends highly on the situational context and co-text (Fraser 2010: 23), a thorough quantitative and qualitative research into their use can be feasible only within a focused corpus.

Adopting a *descriptive* and *shift-oriented* approach (Toury 2012), the study compares the translation with the original, tracing any translational shifts (i.e., variations) in hedges. The study adopts *shifts* as a point of departure for description as they are what differentiate translated from untranslated texts and guide the search for the defining characteristic of the so-called *third code* (Frawley 1984: 168) (i.e., the language of translation, as distinct from that of non-translations). Adopting a *bottom-up* shift analysis, the study will first describe how the shifts operate at the *microstructural* level and then progress to their potential effects at the *macro* (discoursal) level (cf. Leuven-Zwart 1990; see Pym 2014: 65-66). Quantitative analysis will be used to identify regularities both in the shifts and the translational behaviors/strategies that underlie the shifts. The aim of analysis here will be to reveal the overall trends of shift and try to explore the (causal) relationship between any *textual* features (e.g., the source and target text's linguistic structures and stylistic choices) and *contextual* features (e.g., power relations, socio-cultural environment, translator's attitudes or ideology). Examples will be given during the discussion to illustrate frequent translational shifts and behaviors, where an English gloss of the Arabic translation is also given to enable English readers to trace the shifts and follow the discussion.

4. Analysis of hedges in the ST and TT

The study has made a systematic comparison between the hedges used in the original and what corresponds to them in the translation. The comparison has revealed 107 cases of translation shift. To maintain the focus of the current descriptive analysis, which ultimately aims at establishing the *regularities of norms* (cf. Toury 2012: 64-65), only *recurrent* translational behaviors will be discussed in greater detail. Firstly, the shift can go in two different directions: either to (i) add hedges or (ii) remove hedges via translation (see Table 1 below). The numerical data in Table (1) indicate that *addition* shifts occur far more frequently than omission shifts. Upon closer examination, *quality* and *relevance* hedges are found to be more frequent in the addition shifts than quantity and manner hedges (see Table 2 below).

The 69 addition shifts have mostly involved the insertion of expressions that do not exist in the original. These shifts have included expressions that limit information quality and *attenuate* speaker commitment, such as “it seems”, “it looks”, “as it appears”, “I believe” and “I think” (henceforth referred to as *attenuating shifts*). Observe the following examples (italics are used for emphasis while underlining is used to point to the selected English-Arabic translated text).

Table 1. The shifts in the translation of hedges

Type of shift	Occurrences
1 adding hedges via translation	102
2 omitting hedges via translation	5
total	107

Table 2. The maxim hedges added in translation

Type of maxim	Occurrences
1 quality	69
2 relevance	28
3 quantity	3
4 manner	2
total	102

- ST** (source text): He said that if the thing went well he would see that I was decorated. I said I hoped it would go well but that he was too kind. (Hemingway 1929: 49-50)

TT (target text): ولكنني أعتقد أنه لطيف أكثر مما ينبغي. (Baalbaki 2006: 67)

[**Gloss:** But *I think* he is much nicer than he should be.]
- ST:** The X-ray was taken at the Ospedale Maggiore and the doctor who did it was excitable, efficient and cheerful. It was arranged by holding up the shoulders, that the patient should see personally some of the larger foreign bodies through the machine. The plates were to be sent over. (Hemingway 1929: 101)

TT: ورتب كل شيء بحيث يكون في ميسور المريض أن يرى بنفسه، عن طريق رفع كتفيه، بعض الأجسام الغريبة الكبرى كما تبدو في الآلة. وقال الطبيب إنه سوف يبعث إلينا بالصورة. (Baalbaki 2006: 135)

[**Gloss:** Everything was arranged so that the patient himself can see, by holding up his shoulders, some of the larger foreign bodies as they appear in the machine. The doctor said that he will send us the picture]

In example (1), Frederic arrives at the front and meets a major who promises Frederic that he will be awarded a medal when the war finishes. Frederic says that he hopes so, but his utterance “but that he was too kind” implicates that the major may have gone far in his expectations and that he said what he said only because he is too kind. As the example shows, the translation adds the parenthetical clause “I think”, which is a hedge on the maxim of quality. This phrase not only reflects that Frederic is aware of the maxim of quality in his speech but also *attenuates* his commitment to his proposition on the major. In (2), after Frederic is injured in his leg and sent to the hospital, the doctor who examines him sends him for an X-ray. Frederic narrates that he can see, through the x-ray machine, some of the large foreign bodies in his injured leg and adds that the x-ray plates will be later sent over

to him. Similarly, the translation uses a new *plausibility* hedge, “as they appear in the machine” and a new *attribution* hedge, “The doctor said”, which convey a level of doubt and attribute the responsibility of the information to a party other than Frederic, limiting his commitment to the information about his X-ray.

The addition shifts have also included expressions that enhance information quality and *reinforce* speaker commitment (henceforth referred to as *reinforcing shifts*), such as “really”, “actually”, “without a doubt”, “certainly” and “of course”. See the following examples.

3. **ST:** I sent a couple of army Zona di Guerra post-cards, crossing out everything except, I am well. That should handle them. Those post-cards would be very fine in America; strange and mysterious. This was a strange and mysterious war zone ... (Hemingway 1929: 38)

TT: ولا ريب في أنها سوف تلقى نجاحاً كبيراً في أمريكا، فهي غريبة وغامضة. والواقع أن هذه المنطقة الحربية كانت غريبة وغامضة، (Baalbaki 2006: 54)

[**Gloss:** and *without a doubt*, they would achieve great success in America, they are strange and mysterious. And *actually* this war zone was strange and mysterious]

4. **ST:** “Will you tell her how sorry I am?”
“Yes, I will.” (Hemingway 1929: 44)

TT: طبعاً، من غير شك. (Baalbaki 2006: 60)

[**Gloss:** *Of course, without a doubt*]

5. **ST:** Rinaldi was talking with the other nurse. They were laughing. “What an odd thing—to be in the Italian army.” (Hemingway 1929: 18)

TT: إنه لمن العجيب حقاً أن تكون في الجيش الإيطالي. (Baalbaki 2006: 27)

[**Gloss:** It is *really* strange to be in the Italian army]

In (3), Frederic narrates that he sent some postcards home. He considers himself a stranger in a strange war zone and hopes he was fighting with the British army rather than the Italian. The translation here inserts two hedges, “without a doubt” and “actually”, which improve Frederic’s utterance in terms of its quality as well as his commitment to its truth value. Compared to the original, this improved information quality and speaker commitment in the translated text can intensify Frederic’s feelings and emotions in the event. In (4), Frederic goes to the hospital to see Catherine, but instead of Catherine he finds Helen, a close friend to Catherine. Helen tells Frederic that Catherine is not fine, and he asks her to tell Catherine that he feels very sorry for her, to which Helen replies “Yes, I will”. Helen’s reply is translated into Arabic as “Of course, without a doubt”. Similarly, the translation adds the two reinforcing expressions “of course” and “without a doubt”, maximizing Helen’s commitment to the truth value of her response and increasing

her sympathy with Frederic in the event. In (5), when Catherine first meets Frederic, she wonders and questions why he, as an American person, joined the Italian army. Like (3) and (4), the translation here inserts the reinforcing hedge “really”, which both expresses her commitment to her utterance and emphasizes her antipathy in the narrated event.

As Table (2) shows, 28 cases of shift involve the addition of a hedge on the maxim of relevance. These shifts have most often involved the addition of a hedging expression that indicates a change in the topic of conversation or comment on the way an utterance can be related to the current discourse, such as “anyway”, “anyhow”, “well”, “in spite of that” and “even though”. Observe the following examples.

6. **ST:** Meyers’ information was good but I hated to ask him because sometimes he did not answer, and always you could see it hurt him to tell you, but he felt obligated to tell us for some reason and he hated less to tell Crowell. (Hemingway 1929: 136)
TT: وكان كرهه لتزويد كروويل بمعلوماته أقل على كل حال. (Baalbaki 2006: 181)
 [Gloss: and his aversion to revealing his information to Crowell is lesser anyway.]
7. **ST:** She went out. God knows I had not wanted to fall in love with her. I had not wanted to fall in love with anyone. But God knows I had and I lay on the bed in the room of the hospital ... (Hemingway 1929: 100)
TT: لكن الله يشهد أنني وقعت برغم ذلك في حبها. لقد استأقبت هناك على سرير المستشفى. (Baalbaki 2006: 134)
 [Gloss: but God certifies that *in spite of that*, I had fallen in her love. I lay there on the bed of the hospital.]

In (6), Frederic, Catherine and Crowell, an American soldier who has been wounded in the eyes, bet on a horse race. They meet Meyers, a local man who always wins his bets on horses. Frederic narrates here that Meyers does not like to give any winning tips to anybody and adds that Meyers “hated less to tell Crowell”. In this context Frederic’s utterance “he hated less to tell Crowell” tends to express concession. The translation inserts the hedge “anyway”, which provides readers a comment on the relevance of the utterance to the present context. In (7), Frederic says that he had never wanted any love affair with any woman but he had when he saw Catherine. The original utterance already contains the concessive conjunction “but”, yet the translation decides to further strengthen the relevance of the utterance to the current discourse by adding the hedging expression “in spite of that”.

5. Discussion: Macro features of shift

The numerical data in Table (1) and (2) suggest that there are two main trends of shift: (i) a trend to *add* rather than remove maxim hedges via translation and (ii) a trend to add *quality* and *relevance* rather than quantity and manner hedges via

translation. First of all, the greater use of hedges points to a greater lexicalization of the narrator/speaking characters' strategic recognition of Grice's maxims while conversing in the translated text. The narrator and characters in the translated text not only exchange information but also tend to *comment* on the level of their adherence to the assumed speech maxims (cf. Grundy 2013). While Frederic for instance expresses his full responsibility for the truth of his speech in “*without a doubt, they would achieve a great success in America*”, he does not in “*some of the larger foreign bodies as they appear in the machine*”. Since quality and relevance hedges are far more frequent in the addition shifts, one can legitimize the conclusion that quality and relevance concerns are more strategic and central to *relational* (informational) and *pragmatic* (interpersonal) aspects of fictional interactions (cf. Schneider 2010: 254).

The analysis has shown that the addition shifts have involved both *reinforcing* (intensifying/emphasizing) and *attenuating* (de-intensifying/weakening) expressions (cf. Lakoff 1973, see Schneider 2010: 256). But upon closer examination, reinforcing shifts are found to be more frequent than attenuating shifts. Out of 69 quality hedges, 48 shifts (about 70% of total shifts) suggest reinforcement, while only 21 (about 30%) suggest attenuation. Attenuating shifts can theoretically suggest a greater level of *evasion, indirectness* and *mitigation* on the part of the speaker (Caffi 2007; Fraser 2010), hence a greater consideration/linguistic realization of interlocutor's *face needs* (Brown and Levinson 1987). This points to an *increased level of politeness* and thus an improvement in the (Hallidayan) *interpersonal function* (House 1998: 63) in fictional interactions in the translated text. Reinforcing shifts can however suggest a lesser level of evasion, but a greater level of responsibility and commitment on the speaker's part (Schneider 2010: 256), thus more emphasized propositions and a greater *cognitive/emotional involvement* on the part of the narrator and speaking characters in the translated text (cf. Boase-Beier 2018, see Abualadas 2020b).

The trend to add rather than remove maxim hedges via translation can also indicate a level of *cooperation* on the part of the translator. In addition to his dynamic interpretive role in the text, it signals his tactic awareness of speech maxims during his second linguistic *materialization* of the source text (Levý 2011: 28). This can only support the assumption that translation is no longer a pure semiotic act (a replacement of signs of a particular code by those of another code), but a socially situated act (cf. Mason 2014: 36-37) in which the translator, as a communicator, negotiates messages, attenuates or reinforces propositions and expresses commitment or uncertainty during his/her representation of the semantic values of the original. Translation entails a *re-narration* or *retelling* activity that involves a translator actively and creatively participating in constructing events rather than transferring accurately purely linguistic structures from one language to another (Baker 2018: 179-180). This process of narrativization may leave traces of the translator's lexicalization of his attitudes toward the operating speech maxims.

The tendency of the shifts toward more *reinforcement* than *attenuation* can give rise to certain hypothetical assumptions. Compared to the original, the

translated fiction brings more speaker commitment, certainty and emphasis to the performed speech acts (see Abualadas 2020c: 68-70). The translated fiction tends to *decrease* rather than *increase* the level of vagueness/fuzziness/uncertainty of the narrator and characters' propositions. Unlike a speaker in a translated political text whose hedges tend to attenuate his/her commitment to and responsibility for the propositions conveyed, *distancing* him/herself emotionally from the proposition to avoid criticism (Schäffner 1998: 188), a speaking character in a translated fictional text tends to reinforce commitment and responsibility, *approximating* him/herself to the propositions conveyed. This movement toward a greater reinforcement in the translated fiction can actually have the side-effect of increasing the narrator and speaking character's *emotional involvement/immersion/empathy* in the narrated event (cf. Toolan 2016: 37-38, see Abualadas 2019).

Attenuating shifts can be looked at as an instance of *standardization* (Toury 2012) or *normalization* (Baker 1996). The original text is loaded with negative ideas and emotions toward war and its related events (Wyatt 2015: 63-66), which is a situation that *normally* requires the use of hedges to mitigate any negative or unwanted effects on the audience. The original story involves a first-person narration, which often contains spontaneous emotions, immediate reactions and highly subjective viewpoints on the part of the narrator and speaking characters. For this type of narration, it may seem more normal or typical to opt for more attenuation to evade responsibilities or avoid conflicts. Thus, attenuating shifts express a movement to improve the translated text's *politeness* patterns and *interpersonal* relations, which is not only a constitutive characteristic of natural human interactions but also a feature increasingly becoming inherent in any *communication across languages and cultures* (House 2016: 124).

Reinforcing shifts may also reflect a standardization orientation. The writing style of *A Farewell to Arms* is most often characterized as *journalistic, simple, direct, understated* and *without emotion* (cf. Bloom 2010: 30-31). Therefore, since reinforcement is associated with an increased level of emotional involvement on the part of the narrator and characters (see examples 3 and 4), the reinforcing shifts can here suggest a movement toward a language or style that is more emotionally expressive than the original. If we assumed that the normal *function* of a narrative text is more of *expressing* personal emotions and attitudes than of *informing* an audience about something (cf. Reiss 2000: 163), reinforcing shifts would express a move toward standardizing the original writing style via translation.

Attenuating and reinforcing shifts suggest a general standardization tendency. Yet we cannot assume that this tendency is related, as put forward by Toury, to *power* and *prestige* relations between cultures. Toury (2012: 306-307) argues that standardization occurs more frequently when the target language/culture is of more international status and dominance than the source. Since English is widely considered more dominant and has more status than Arabic, Toury's socio-political factors do not seem to be in operation in this standardization pattern. But it may be more reasonable to look at this standardization pattern as textual traces of the translator's attempts to *appropriate* a novel of war, for an Arabic reader who

may be disinterested in or emotionally remote from that war, pushing for a more *universalized interpretation* (cf. Kershaw 2018: 205-206). Today, the increased global demand for literary exchanges may entail “a drive towards uniformity and leveling of difference” (Viswanatha and Simon 2002: 163), in which war texts are more normalized/neutralized for international readers (Tymoczko 2002: 35; see Hamdan et al. 2021: 93-94).

Finally, the addition of relevance hedges (e.g., “anyway”, “in spite of that” and “even though”, see examples 6 and 7) involves an *explicitation* of potential implicit logical links between propositions, resulting in an improved textual *coherence* and a faster/easier *discourse processing* in the target text (cf. Blum-Kulka 2000: 302-305). The grammaticalization of such links not only improves textual interrelatedness but also facilitates *comprehension* and *readability* of the target text (Saldanha 2008: 32). The addition of relevance hedges may then be seen as visible traces pointing to the translators’ *mediating presence* in the target text (Munday 2008: 14), which is often attributed to their conception of translation as *mediation* between different languages and cultures (Saldanha 2008: 32).

6. Conclusion

The present descriptive study has analyzed the shifts in *hedges* in an Arabic translation of *A Farewell to Arms*. The findings point to a tendency to *add* rather than *omit* hedges via translation, with more orientation to using *quality* and *relevance* rather than quantity and manner hedges. This suggests a greater level of *awareness* of Gricean maxims, with greater consideration for information quality and relevance, on the part of the narrator and speaking characters. Compared to the original, there is also more frequent use of *attenuation/mitigation* (cf. Caffi 2007; Fraser 2010) in the translated narrative, suggesting a drive toward more *politeness* (Brown and Levinson 1987) and enhanced *interpersonal relations* (House 2016). There is also more frequent use of reinforcing expressions, which pushes for a greater level of *responsibility* and *commitment* (cf. Schneider 2010), hence more *cognitive/emotional involvement* or *empathy* (cf. Toolan 2016; Boase-Beier 2018) on the part of the narrator and speaking characters in the translated fictional interactions.

The tendency toward more frequent hedges suggests more *cooperation* (cf. Grice 1975) and a more *dynamic role* (Hatim and Mason 2013) on the part of the translator during his *second verbal materialization* (Levý 2011) or *re-narration* (Baker 2018) of the original. This supports the view of a translator as a *second author* of the text (cf. House 2016) and translation as a *social practice* where a translator *negotiates* meanings and *reinforces* relations within a certain context (Mason 2014). The move toward a greater attenuation may reflect the translator’s (intentional or unintentional) attempt to *normalize/neutralize* (Baker 1996) any possible negative effects on the target reader. The reinforcement pattern can also reflect the translator’s (intentional or unintentional) attempts to *standardize* (Toury 2012) a *less emotive style* (cf. Bloom 2010) of a *text type* whose conventional *function* is to convey feelings and emotions (Reiss 2000).

The movement toward a greater attenuation and reinforcement in the translated narrative, which is indicative of a general standardization/normalization pattern, may also reflect a drive toward *appropriating* a war text to a psychologically and emotionally distant audience (Tymoczko 2002), pushing for a text with a more *universalized* interpretation and *international* appeal (Viswanatha and Simon 2002; Kershaw 2018). The insertion of new relevance hedges into the translated narrative points to an *explicitation* pattern that improves text's *coherence* (Blum-Kulka 2000) and *communicability* or *readability* (Saldanha 2008), which all reflect the translator's *mediating voice* in the translated narrative (Munday 2008) and his view of his job as an *interlinguistic and intercultural mediator* (Saldanha 2008). Finally, since the findings show more orientation toward reinforcement than attenuation, the study calls for more empirical investigation into reinforcement, not only in literary translations but also in other text types or genres, as reinforcement has often been ignored as a part of hedging and laid aside in much of the empirical research into hedges (Fraser 2010: 22).

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