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EXPLICITATION OF IMPLICIT EMOTIONS IN THE ARABIC TRANSLATION OF UZBEK LITERARY DIALOGUE: A STUDY OF BYGONE DAYS

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https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23570054

Abstract. This conference paper investigates how relatively implicit or underspecified emotional states in Abdulla Qodiriy’s Bygone Days are rendered more explicitly in its Arabic translation. The analysis focuses on two documented instances in which the target text introduces stronger or more differentiated psychological descriptors. The first involves an Uzbek expression of subdued discomfort translated through two explicit Arabic emotion labels with intensifiers; the second involves a description of withdrawal and pensiveness rendered partly as sadness. Using close reading and contrastive semantic-pragmatic analysis, the paper distinguishes emotional specification from emotional amplification and examines their consequences for characterization. The findings indicate that explicitation can improve immediate interpretability while narrowing the ambiguity through which the original invites readers to infer a character’s inner state. The study offers a practical distinction between informative clarification and interpretive intervention, without making claims about experimentally observed reader responses.

Keywords: Bygone Days; Arabic translation; implicit emotion; explicitation; characterization; literary pragmatics.

In literary narrative, emotional information is not always named directly. A narrator may describe silence, hesitation, distraction, or physical unease and leave the reader to infer its psychological significance. Translators face a choice between retaining this interpretive openness and rendering the emotional state more explicit. This choice is particularly consequential in historical fiction, where emotional restraint and indirectness help construct character.

This paper asks how emotional explicitation changes the degree of interpretive openness in the Arabic translation of Qodiriy’s Bygone Days. The objective is not to classify every translation shift, but to examine the relation between the semantic specificity of emotion words and the reader’s interpretive work.

The study uses qualitative parallel-text analysis of the Uzbek original and the Arabic translation Al-Ayyām al-Khawālī. Each pair is examined for (a) emotional categorization, (b) intensity marking, and (c) interpretive openness. The first criterion asks whether a diffuse state becomes a named emotion; the second asks whether degree modifiers increase its force; the third asks whether the translation leaves the same range of plausible interpretations. The quoted pairs follow the dissertation’s source–translation comparison and require final verification against the printed editions.

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For this study, specification means making a relatively general state more precise, whereas amplification means making its intensity stronger. Both may occur in the same translated segment, but they are analytically distinct. Neither necessarily proves a defect: the relevant question is how the shift affects narrative characterization and the distribution of inference between text and reader.

The Uzbek phrase “o‘zida bir turli o‘ng‘aysizlik sezdi” (Uzbek edition, p. 42) is rendered in Arabic as “شعر بارتباك شديد وحرج بالغ” (Arabic edition, cited p. 76). The source expresses a somewhat undefined feeling of awkwardness or discomfort. The target formulation separates this diffuse state into “ارتباك” (confusion or agitation) and “حرج” (embarrassment or constraint), each modified by a strong degree expression: “شديد” and “بالغ.”

Two operations are therefore visible. First, the Arabic text specifies the quality of the emotion by naming two psychological states. Second, it intensifies the state through explicit modifiers. This may make the character’s condition easier to identify, but it also reduces the original’s hesitant “bir turli” (“a certain kind of”) indeterminacy. The resulting narrative voice is more diagnostic and less suggestive.

A second example describes Otabek after a painful event: “Otabek tag‘in ham xayolchanlangan, tag‘in ham xomushligini ortdirgan edi” (Uzbek edition, p. 38). The Arabic translation includes “وصار أكثر شروداً وتفكيراً وأكثر حزناً” (Arabic edition, cited p. 68). The source describes growing pensiveness and withdrawal. The target retains cognitive absorption through “شروداً وتفكيراً” but also identifies the condition as heightened sadness, “أكثر حزناً.”

This is an interpretive clarification rather than a complete change of emotion. The context makes sadness plausible, but the Uzbek expression “xomushlik” can cover silence, reserve, and inwardness without naming a single affective category. Arabic “حزناً” narrows this range. The example therefore shows how explicitation may preserve the narrative direction while making the character’s internal state more determinate.

Across the two cases, emotional explicitation appears in two distinct configurations. The discomfort example combines semantic differentiation with intensity amplification. The withdrawal example combines retention of cognitive description with an explicit sadness label. These operations should not be collapsed into one general category of “stronger translation.” One primarily multiplies named affective components; the other selects an interpretation already suggested by context.

A useful evaluation question is whether the source expression intentionally leaves room for more than one reading. When it does, explicit naming may redistribute interpretive responsibility from the reader to the translator. Such a shift can support accessibility in the target language while altering stylistic subtlety. Assessment must therefore consider both the clarity gained and the ambiguity lost.

The Arabic translation of the two selected passages illustrates how implicit emotional signals may become explicit psychological descriptions. Emotional specification and intensity amplification should be analyzed separately, since they produce different consequences for characterization. The paper proposes three practical comparison criteria—emotional categorization, intensity marking, and interpretive openness—for evaluating such changes. The small sample supports a close-reading argument rather than quantitative generalization, and further work should test the criteria across a larger independently checked corpus.

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