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Catford's Shift Translation and the Assessment of a Persian Translation of *The Old Man and The Sea*

Rajabali Askarzadeh Torghabeh¹
Zohreh Mofrad¹

Abstract

In the process of translation, translators face different problems and to overcome these problems he/she uses different strategies and approaches. One of the inevitable phenomena in translation is translation shift. Shifts are changes that occur during the process of translation from SL to TL. Shifts are first introduced by Catford (¹). He presented two main types of translation shifts: Level shifts and category shifts. Category shifts are then divided into four subgroups: structure shifts, class shifts, unit shifts and intra system shift. This study is an attempt to investigate the realization of Catford's shift in Persian translation of *The Old Man and The Sea* by Faramarzi, shedding light on the areas where Persian is different from English. To this end, the selected parts from the original book, were compared and contrasted with the same parts in the Persian translation. The obtained results indicate that among sentences that include cases of shifts, unit shift with the frequency of is the most frequent type of shift. The investigation also shows that shifts are inevitable in some places during the translation process and this is because of different natures of languages and variations that exist among them. The findings of this study can provide guidelines for novice translators who need to gain the initial knowledge to take the preliminary steps. The results may introduce some usable hints on the application of the most frequent kinds of shifts in translation from English to Persian for university students majoring in translation studies.

**Key words:** Catford’s shift theory, level shift, category shift, structure shift, class shift, unit shift, intra system shift, *The Old man and the Sea*

¹. Introduction

The term translation can inspire different meanings and connotations. It can refer to the translation of general or technical texts with various themes and genres. It can also refer to the product of the process which is a text or it can be regarded as a term describing a process in a translator's mind that leads to producing a text on paper (Gentzler, ¹; Hatim & Munday, ¹; Munday, ¹). In the words of Shuttleworth and Cowie (¹), Translation is an incredibly broad notion which can be understood in many different ways. For example, one may talk of translation as a process or a product, and identify such sub-types as literary translation, technical translation, and subtitling; moreover, while more typically it just refers to the transfer of written texts, the term sometimes also includes interpreting. (p. ¹)

According to Nida "Translating consists in reproducing the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of language and secondly in terms of style"(¹, p. ¹). Catford also defined translation as "the replacement of textual

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material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL).

Translation is an effective phenomenon in everyday life. The role of the translator in this activity is of special importance. In transferring meaning from SL to TL, the translator faces many problems and to make amends for these problems he/she uses different strategies. Scholars analyze the translation process based on different theories. They may take into account the cultural aspects of the source language and target language or a linguistic-based approach proposed as translation shifts by Catford (Hosseini-Maasoum & Shahbaiki, 2014). One of the inevitable phenomena in translation is translation shift. Shifts are changes that occur during the process of translation from SL to TL. In contrasting texts in different languages translation shifts are observable everywhere. Newmark defined shifts (Catford's term) or transposition (Vinay and Darbelnet) as "a translation procedure involving a change in the grammar from SL to TL" (Newmark, 1988, p. 80). Shifts are first introduced by Catford (1966) as "departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL to the TL". He presented two main types of translation shifts: Level shifts and category shifts. Category shifts are then divided into four subgroups: structure shifts, class shifts, unit shifts and intra-system shift. This article aims at finding the realization of Catford’s category shifts in the Persian Translation of "the old man and the sea" by Ernest Hemingway translated by Mohammad Taghi Faramarzi. The ideal goal of this study however is to find the areas in which Persian is deviated from English and to pave the way for future studies which are to formulate manners for translating from Persian into English.

Review of literature

Since 1966, there have been a variety of linguistic approaches to the analysis of translation that have proposed detailed lists or taxonomies in an effort to categorize the translation process. One of the best known and most representative phenomena in translation process is "Shift in translation".

The term itself seems to originate in Catford's A Linguistic Theory of Translation (1966), where he devotes a chapter to the subject. Catford (1978, p. 70) follows the Firthian and Hallidayan linguistic model, which analyses language as communication, operating functionally in context and on a range of different levels (e.g. phonology, graphology, grammar, lexis) and ranks (sentence, clause, group, word, morpheme, etc.). As far as translation is concerned, Catford makes an important distinction between formal correspondence and textual equivalence, which was later to be developed by Koller (Munday, 2001):

- A formal correspondent is "any TL category (unit, class, element of structure, etc.) which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the "same" place in the "economy" of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL" (Catford, 1978, p. 70 as stated in Munday, 2001).
- A textual equivalent is "any TL text or portion of text which is observed on a particular occasion . . . to be the equivalent of a given SL text or portion of text". (Ibid)

Textual equivalence is thus tied to a particular ST–TT pair, while formal equivalence is a more general system-based concept between a pair of languages. When the two concepts diverge, a translation shift is deemed to have occurred. In Catford's own words (1978, p. 77; 2014, p. 141), translation shifts are thus "departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL to the TL". (Munday, 2014)

Catford considers two kinds of shift: (Ⅰ) shift of level and (Ⅱ) shift of category:
A level shift (Munday, pp. 73-82, 2000, pp. 141-3) would be something which is expressed by grammar in one language and lexis in another; this could, for example, be (Munday 2001):

Aspect in Russian being translated by a lexical verb in English: e.g. igrat’ (to play) and sigrat’ (to finish playing); or (ibid)

Cases where the French conditional corresponds to a lexical item in English: e.g. ‘trois touristes auraient été tués’ [lit. ‘three tourists would have been killed’] = ‘three tourists have been reported killed’ (ibid).

You can also consider the translation of معالم (Munday) in Arabic into Persian (دو معلم (مورد

Most of Catford’s analysis is given over to category shifts (Munday, pp. 75-82, 2000, pp. 142-3). These are subdivided into four kinds (Munday 2001):

(a) Structural shifts: These are said by Catford to be the most common form of shift and to involve mostly a shift in grammatical structure. For example, the subject pronoun + verb + direct object structures of I like jazz and j’aime le jazz in English and French are translated by an indirect object pronoun + verb + subject noun structure in Spanish (me gusta el jazz ) and in Italian (mi piace il jazz ) (ibid). Another example is the translation of a passive sentence in ST (the mall was waylaid by seven robbers) into an active sentence in TT (السّوق متهم را رأى كلاسيكية يكتمل نسخته).

(b) Class shifts: These comprise shifts from one part of speech to another. An example given by Catford is the English a medical student and the French un étudiant en médecine, where the English premodifying adjective medical is translated by the adverbial qualifying phrase en médecine (ibid). Another example is much larger quantities of stone translated into بیشتر سازگ جمع می کردن, where the English adjective is translated by an adverb.

(c) Unit shifts or rank shifts: These are shifts where the translation equivalent in the TL is at a different rank to the SL. ‘Rank’ here refers to the hierarchical linguistic units of sentence, clause, group, word and morpheme (ibid). An example is the English hence where the Farsi translation is (همین دلیل).

(d) Intra-system shifts: These are shifts that take place when the SL and TL possess approximately corresponding systems but where ‘the translation involves selection of a non-corresponding term in the TL system’ (Munday, p. 82, 2000, p. 142). Examples given between French and English are number and article systems, where, although similar systems operate in the two languages, they do not always correspond. Thus, advice (singular) in English becomes des conseils (plural) in French, and the French definite article la in ‘Il a la jambe cassée’ corresponds to the English indefinite article a in ‘He has a broken leg’ (ibid). Another example is the English histories where the Farsi translation is (تاریخانه).

The most detailed attempt to produce and apply a model of shift analysis has been carried out by Kitty van Leuven-Zwart (1989, 1990) of Amsterdam whose model takes some of the categories proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet and Levy and applies them to the descriptive analysis of translation, attempting both to systematize comparisons and to build in a discourse framework above the sentence level (Mundy, 2001; p. 73).

Catford was the first to use the term shift, but the most comprehensive taxonomy of translation shifts, based on their ‘translation procedures’, was set out by the Canadians Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet in their A Comparative Stylistics of French and English (1968/1992). While it is true that they approach the subject from the point of view of comparative or contrastive stylistics, using parallel non-translated as well as translated texts, they describe a detailed and systematic model for the analysis and comparison of a ST–TT pair (Hatim and Munday, 2004; p. 49).
Vinay and Darbelnet carried out a comparative stylistic analysis of French and English. They looked at texts in both languages, noting differences between the languages and identifying different translation strategies and ‘procedures’. Although their Stylistique comparée du français et de l’anglais (1995) is based solely on French and English, its influence has been much wider. Amongst others it has formed the basis for a work in the same series on French–German translation (Malblanc’s Stylistique comparée du français et de l’allemand, 1997) and two similar books on English–Spanish translation: Vázquez- Ayora’s Introducción a la traductología (1997) and García Yebra’s Teoría y práctica de la traducción (1997). (Munday, 1999)

Vinay and Darbelnet’s categorization of translation procedures is very detailed. They name two ‘methods’ covering seven procedures:

1. Direct translation, which covers borrowing, calque and literal translation, and
2. Oblique translation, which is transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation.

These procedures are applied on three levels of language:

i. The lexicon
ii. The grammatical structures and
iii. The ‘message’, which is used to refer to the situational utterance and some of the higher text elements such as sentence and paragraphs.

At the level of message, Vinay and Darbelnet discuss such strategies as compensation, an important term in translation which is linked to the notion of loss and gain. (Hatim and Munday, 2000; p. 9)

These translation procedures have influenced later taxonomies by, amongst others, van Leuven-Zwart (1999, 2001), who attempts a very complex analysis of extracts from translations of Latin American fiction. However, despite a systematic means of analysis based on the denotative meaning of each word, the decision as to whether a shift has occurred is inevitably subjective since an evaluation of the equivalence of the ST and TT units is required. (Hatim and Munday, 2000; p. 9)

Different studies have been done in this issue and scholars named the phenomenon differently. Larson (1995) named this phenomenon “skewing”. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995, 2000) used the term “transposition” as one of the four procedures of oblique translation and define it as "a change of one part of speech for another without changing the sense". (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995, as cited in Baker, 1997). They see this phenomenon as "probably the most common structural change undertaken by translators" (Hosseini-Maasoum & Shahbaiki, 2002).

According to Newmark (1988), shift consists of four types: The first type of shift is the change from singular to plural. A second type is required when a SL grammatical structure does not exist in the TL. Here there are always options. Thus for the neutral adjective as subject, there is a choice of at least: 'What is interesting is that...’; 'The interesting thing is that...’; 'It's interesting that...’; ‘The interest of the matter is that...’; The third type of shift is the one where literal translation is grammatically possible but may not accord with natural usage in the TL. The fourth type of transposition is the replacement of a virtual lexical gap by a grammatical structure (pp. 83–87) (Hosseini-Maasoum & Shahbaiki, 2002).

Newmark (1988) stated that transpositions illustrate a frequent tension between grammar and stress. Usually, the word order is changed unnecessarily, and it is sometimes more appropriate to translate with a lexical synonym, retain the word order and forgo the transposition in order to preserve the stress. For example, it is not appropriate to translate “completely false” as “There is absolutely no truth”. Transposition is the only translation procedure concerned with grammar, and most translators make transpositions intuitively.
However, it is likely that comparative linguistics research, and analysis of text corpuses and their translations, will uncover a further number of serviceable transpositions for us (p. ^\textsuperscript{AA}). Different scholars have been working on various aspects of this issue. (Hosseini-Maasoum \\& Shahbaiki, ^\textsuperscript{\texttrademark\texttrademark\textsuperscript{\texttrademark\texttrademark}})

Cyrus (^\textsuperscript{\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark}) in his paper describes an interdisciplinary approach, which brings together the fields of corpus linguistics and translation studies. It presents ongoing work on the creation of a corpus resource in which translation shifts are explicitly annotated. The resource described in his paper contains English source texts (parliamentary proceedings) and their German translations. The shift annotation is based on predicate-argument structures and proceeds in two steps: First, predicates and their arguments are annotated monolingually in a straightforward manner. Then, the corresponding English and German predicates and arguments are aligned with each other. Whenever a shift – mainly grammatical or semantic – has occurred, the alignment is tagged accordingly. (Hosseini-Maasoum \\& Shahbaiki, ^\textsuperscript{\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark})

Retnomurti and Imran (n.d.) in their work compare the translation of Indonesian Noun Phrases into English and describe the types of equivalence and shift in the English translation of Indonesian noun phrases. They classify the data into two main categories: the equivalence and shift. The equivalence is subcategorized into Textual equivalence: SL subject-NP is translated into TL subject-NP; SL predicate- NP is translated into TL predicate-NP; SL object-NP is translated into TL object-NP. Linguistic equivalence: SL plural-NP is translated into TL plural-NP; SL singular-NP is translated into TL singular-NP, and Dynamic equivalence. The result of this research shows that the shift occurs more than the equivalence, with the percentage of ^\textsuperscript{\texttrademark\texttrademark\textsuperscript{\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark}} and the equivalence with the percentage of ^\textsuperscript{\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\texttrademark\textrad
totally contain 83 shifts that are presented below. The type of shift in each sentence has been defined within Catford’s model.

(Source text, p. 130; target text, pp. 136-137):

1. He ate them all through May to be strong in September and October for the truly big fish.

class shift: pronoun to noun
structural shift 𐆜
class shift: adjective to noun 𐆜
unit shift: word to group 𐆜
intra system: singular to plural 𐆜

2. He also drank a cup of shark liver oil each day from the big drum in the shack where many of the fishermen kept their gear.

class shift: pronoun to noun 𐆜
structural shift 𐆜
class shift: adjective to noun 𐆜
unit shift: word to group 𐆜

3. It was there for all fishermen who wanted it.

class shift: pronoun to noun 𐆜
unit shift: phrase to clause 𐆜

4. But it was no worse than getting up at the hours that they rose and it was very good against all colds and gripes and it was good for the eyes.

class shift: pronoun to noun 𐆜
unit shift: phrase to clause 𐆜

5. Now the old man looked up and saw that the bird was circling again.

unit shift: phrasal verb to sentence 𐆜
unit shift: word to group 𐆜
unit shift: word to sentence 𐆜

6. No flying fish broke the surface and . . .

Intra-system: singular to plural 𐆜
But as the old man watched, a small tuna rose in the air, . . .
The tuna shone silver in the sun and after he had dropped back into the water another and another rose and they were jumping in all directions, churning the water and leaping in long jumps after the bait.

They were circling it and driving it.

If they don’t travel too fast I will get into them, the old man thought, and he watched the school working the water white and the bird now dropping and dipping into the bait fish that were forced to the surface in their panic.

After that he had a few matches and then no more.

He had tried a few practice matches with his left hand.

Class shift: pronoun to noun
Unit shift: word to group

Intra-system: plural to singular
Class shift: verb to noun
Unit shift: word to group

(Source text, p. 60; target text, pp.168-169):

11. After that he had a few matches and then no more.

12. He had tried a few practice matches with his left hand.
But his left hand had always been a traitor and would not do what he called on it to do and he did not trust it.

The sun will bake it out well now, he thought.

An airplane passed overhead on its course to Miami and he watched its shadow scaring up the schools of flying fish.

"With so much flying fish there should be dolphin," he said, and . . .

But he could not and it stayed at the hardness and . . .

The boat moved ahead slowly and he watched the airplane until he could no longer see it.

Class shift : noun to verb
Class shift : pronoun to noun
Unit shift : word to group

The boat moved ahead slowly and he watched the airplane until he could no longer see it.

But he could not and it stayed at the hardness and . . .

They should be able to see the fish well if they do not fly too high.

I would like to fly very slowly at two hundred fathoms high and see the fish from above.
Intra-system: singular to plural

41. In the turtle boats\(^1\) I was in the cross-trees of the mast-head and even at that height I saw much.\(^6\)

42. \(\text{وفتی در قاب حیوانات قیدی که بیش‌تر از مکر را، تا نوک دکل ها بالا می‌رفتم و حتی از آن بالا، خیلی از ماهی‌ها را می‌دیدم.}\)

Unit shift: phrase to clause \(^1\)
Unit shift: word to group \(^2\)

(Source text, p. 90; target text, pp. 197-198):

43. “Yes there is,” he said aloud.\(^7\)

44. So he did that \(^4\) with the tiller under his arm and the sheet of the sail under his foot.\(^8\)

Structural shift \(^1\)
Unit shift: word to clause \(^2\)

45. “Now,” he said. “I am still an old man. But I am not unarmed.”\(^9\)

Class shift: pronoun to noun

46. The breeze was fresh now and he sailed on well.\(^10\)

Class shift: pronoun to noun

47. He \(^1\) watched only the forward part of the fish and some of his hope \(^2\) returned.\(^11\)

Class shift: pronoun to noun \(^1\)
Class shift: noun to adjective \(^2\)

48. It is silly, \(^1\) \(^2\) not to hope, he \(^3\) thought.\(^12\)

Class shift: adjective to noun \(^1\)
Intra-system: singular to plural \(^7\)
Class shift: pronoun to noun \(^3\)

49. Besides I believe it is a sin.\(^13\)

Unit shift: word to group

50. There are enough \(^4\) problems now without sin.\(^1\)

Unit shift: simple sentence to complex sentence \(^1\)
Unit shift: word to group \(^4\)

51. Also I have no understanding \(^1\) of it.\(^14\)
I have no understanding of it and I am not sure that I believe in it.

I suppose it was even though I did it to keep me alive and feed many people.

But then everything is a sin.

It is much too late for that and there are people who are paid to do it.

But he liked to think about all things that he was involved in and...

You did not kill the fish only to keep alive and to sell for food, he thought.

You killed him for pride and because you are a fisherman.

Data Analysis
The main purpose of this study, as noted earlier, was to find the realization of Catford's shift in the Persian translation of "The Old Man and the Sea" by Mohammad Taghi Faramarzi. This paper analyzes different types of category shifts in translation. Three pages where multiplies of thirty were chosen and compared with their corresponding parts in Persian translation to discover which of them were used most frequently in such translations.

As shown in table 1, results indicate that among 87 sentences that include 124 cases of shifts, unit shift with the percentage of 43.77% is the most frequent type of shift, the second most frequent case was class shifts with the percentage of 37.77%. Next was intra-system with 9.73% and percentage of 4.14 with the least frequent being is structural shift.

Table 1. The frequency of translation shifts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of shift</th>
<th>Structure shift</th>
<th>Class shift</th>
<th>Unit shift</th>
<th>Intra-system shift</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>14 %</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows the distribution of shifts in different pages. Each page contains an average of 47 cases of shifts.

Table 2. Distribution of shifts in different pages.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST page number</th>
<th>Number of sentences</th>
<th>Number of shifts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Frequencies of different types of shifts in each pages of the case study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST page number</th>
<th>Structural shift</th>
<th>Class shift</th>
<th>Unit shift</th>
<th>Intra-system shift</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Conclusion
Shifts are first introduced by Catford (1966) as "departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL to the TL". He presented two main types of translation shifts: Level shifts and category shifts. Category shifts are then divided into four subgroups: structure shifts, class shifts, unit shifts and intra system shift.

This article aims at finding the realization of Catford’s category shifts in the Persian Translation of The Old Man and The Sea by Ernest Hemingway translated by Mohammad Taghi Faramarzi. The Ideal goal of this study however is to find the areas in which Persian is deviated from English and to pave the way for future studies which are to formulate manners for translating from Persian into English.

For this purpose, from the original book, selected pages were chosen and compared with corresponding parts in Persian translation to analyze the types and extent of shifts the translator had used.

The results indicate that among fifty-two sentences that include eighty-three shifts, unit shift is the most frequent type of shift. The investigation also shows that shifts are inevitable in
some places during the translation process and this is because of different natures of
languages and variations that exist among them, so the translator is forced to deviate from
the source text. Every language has its own linguistic characteristics and features, and that is why
there are different languages. To convey a message, each language has its own wording
system and forms, and these are to be changed when the same message is to be conveyed into
another language, and it is this process of change which is called translation.

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