
Effect of Metapragmatic Awareness on the Translation of Humor in an EFL Context

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims at investigating the effect of translation students' metapragmatic awareness at the level of theory on the quality of their humor translations. For this purpose, an experimental study was designed with 50 junior students majoring in English translation during their oral translation course. They were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The experimental group received instruction mainly on the implication of Grice's conversational maxims within the incongruity-resolution theory of humor framework. They learned how violating the maxims might lead to incongruity in the jokes and that such an incongruity must be felt in their translations. The General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) was also briefly explained to increase their sensitivity towards the outcome of their translation. The control group, on the other hand, continued their usual course of oral translation. Both groups participated in pre-and post-tests of humor translation. Statistical analysis of the results using independent samples t-test for both pre-and post-tests revealed significant improvement in the quality of the experimental group's translations, yet the results also indicated their partial success in recognizing the violated maxims. The findings suggested the usefulness of explicit theoretical knowledge in the quality of the translation students' task and had the practical implication that since higher quality translation can result from the instruction on metapragmatics, it can be included in the translation students' syllabus.

Keywords: Grice conversation maxims; Humor; Incongruity-resolution theory; Metapragmatic awareness; Translation competence

INTRODUCTION

Translation of humor is felt to be a challenging task due to its qualitative difference from other types of translation. This can be experienced in practice as well as when analyzing linguistic and cultural features of humor, as humorous texts are expected to carry total or at least partial visible humorousness and funniness (Vandaele, 2002). Norrick and Chiaro (2009, p.185) define humor as 'different

types of utterances which have made participants laugh, consequently, may be regarded by participants as humorous'; however, such common-sense definitions are of less value for humor translators, for creating the same feeling in the audience requires a comprehensive consideration of the humorous texts including linguistic and contextual features. Therefore, humor translation is not as simple as it may seem at first, especially for inexperienced translators like translation students. In

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addition, Attardo (2002) believes such definitions are too simple to use for translation of humor, and sticking to a dichotomous translation framework of the literal and free translation will lead to a one-dimensional focus on semantic level and consequently is inadequate. He believes that translators should have a more comprehensive view when translating humor and should render the texts at the discourse level. It implies translation with special attention to illocutionary and perlocutionary acts in addition to linguistic structures, which requires the development of cultural awareness (Allami & Boustani, 2017) and meta-competencies as well as competencies in the translation practitioners (Azizinezhad et al., 2019). Similarly, Norrick (1989) asserts that 'humor depends not only on some funny stimulus, but also on the audience, the situation, and the cultural context' (Pavlicek & Pöchhacker, 2002, p.118). As a result, it can be concluded that humor translation, like any other complex task, needs to be theory-informed. Such a need is more felt when it is to be done in academic contexts and by the people known as translation practitioners.

It seems sensible to make translators familiar with the complexities and theories of translation and have the expectation of fruitful results, yet selecting the appropriate theory or theories, having enough practice and training the translators must not be less complex than humor definition and translation. Brock (2017) believes that, due to its complexity, understanding humor can only be possible via integrating its many perspectives and theories. There are at least several theories viewing humor translation with its different types and samples from different perspectives which may bring advantages to translators, such as incongruity theory, relief theory,

superiority and aggression theory, and General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH).

The present study, hence, was an attempt to attract translation students' conscious attention to discursal and pragmatic levels of humorous texts to develop their translation competence and consequently enhance their translation quality. With the belief that translation practice should be theory-informed, at first incongruity theory was explained and exemplified regarding violating Grice conversational maxims in humorous texts, and later the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) was briefly explained. Like many other studies focusing on the effect of explicit instruction of rules and concepts including pragmatics, the study hypothesized that higher levels of attention would result in their better and deeper reflection and retention and consequently enhance humor understanding, appreciation and translation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As far as it is believed that success in translation relies on competent translators (Hurtado Albir, 2017), in the following section, first of all, translation competence is defined with special attention to the status of pragmatic competence. Then theories of humor supporting the focus on pragmatic aspects are briefly defined. Grice conversational maxims are elaborated and exemplified concerning incongruity-resolution theory, and finally, some literature in support of pragmatic explicit instruction is offered.

Translation competence

Defined as the 'integration of various types of capabilities and skills (cognitive, affective, psychomotor or social) and declarative knowledge (*know what*)' (Hurtado Albir, 2007, p.167), translation competence (TC) is believed to be

comprised of several sub-competencies an efficient translator needs to acquire for rendering a text from one language into another successfully (Robert et al., 2017). From the attempts done to uncover the components of TC, the PACTE research group has had an eminent contribution in doing empirical and experimental research since 1997. They believe that ‘TC (a) is expert knowledge; (b) is predominantly procedural knowledge, i.e., non-declarative; (c) comprises different inter-related sub-competencies; and (d), includes a particularly important strategic component’ (PACTE, 2014, p.88), and sub-competencies include bilingual, extra-linguistic, knowledge of translation, instrumental, strategic and psycho-physiological components (Hurtado Albir, 2017).

Bilingual competence can be explained in detail as having communicative and comparative language ability of two distinct languages as elaborated by Bachman (1990). Based on her definition, language competence is comprised of two sub-competencies of organizational and pragmatic competence. The first item, organizational competence, is comprised of grammatical and textual competencies referring to the ability to comprehend and produce elements of language from linguistic to textual and from sounds to texts. In other words, it refers to the ability to analyze and combine smaller units of language (from sounds or letters) to make larger units of language (texts). Knowledge of maintaining cohesion and rhetorical organization is perceived as textual competence, while vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and phonology/graphology are sub-components of grammatical competence. Pragmatic competence, on the other hand, is comprised of illocutionary and sociolinguistic competencies, concerning

‘the relation between signs and their referents’ (ibid. p.89). Illocutionary competence refers to the knowledge of perceiving language functions, and sociolinguistic competence is composed of sensitivity to dialects or varieties of a language, sensitivity to register, sensitivity to naturalness, and knowledge of referents and figures of speech.

In general, pragmatic competence is comprised of sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge, so bilingual competence means how signs or linguistic elements of two languages are used within their own cultural or social contexts for certain referents (Kargar et al., 2012); however, as Pavlicek and Pöschhacker (2002) state, bicultural competence of the translator is necessary but not necessarily sufficient for humor translation.

As the main concern of the paper was developing translation competence through explicit pragmatic instruction, it was worth seeing the place of such instruction with reference to the components of TC. First of all, as mentioned earlier in this section, TC is expert knowledge. Pragmatic instruction seems to enhance pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge, though it may not necessarily be obtained or explained by every bilingual. Second, the PACTE group asserts that TC is primarily procedural and not declarative (Hurtado Albir, 2017). If so, elaborating pragmatic knowledge may appear useless, since the main purpose of pragmatic instruction is to elaborate declarative knowledge, yet by such a distinction, they must mean translators as experts need enough practice and experience to change such declarative knowledge to procedural knowledge in its psycholinguistic point of view. Third, TC is comprised of several sub-competencies, one of which is pragmatic competence. Strategic competence which is related to the way a translator solves situational problems

of translation must be different from person to person depending on their experience and strength in different sub-competencies. One hypothesis in this research, hence, could be that pragmatic instruction can also enhance strategic competence, although there was no direct attempt to test this.

Theories of Humor

According to Krikmann (2006), theories of humor can traditionally be classified into three categories- superiority, release, and incongruity theories. Knowledge of such theories is usually the result of attempts to define what humor is and view it from different angles; however, as Brock (2017, p.10) believes, 'complexity of humor can only be covered by integrating many perspectives and theories'. Such theories can also help translators as extra-linguistic sub-component of TC. On the other hand, recent theories like the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) try to provide more practical and sounder frameworks for humor appreciation, translation, and evaluation (Attardo, 2010). As awareness at the level of theory was intended in this paper, incongruity and GTVH theories were selected as more widely used frameworks to observe how the translators' explicit theoretical knowledge may affect the quality of their translation, and they are more elaborated here.

Theories of superiority, disparagement, criticism, or hostility usually explain how the negative attitude of the producer or user of humor including his/her sense of superiority over others, disrespect, aggression, and criticism toward certain political, ethnic, or gender groups are represented in humor. From the pragmatic and sociolinguistic point of view, such instances contain 'face-threatening act usually against a character or another person from whom we feel sufficiently distant to allow amusement at their expense'

(Brock, 2017, p.8). Understanding and rendering such humorous texts require sociopragmatic knowledge of the contexts they are used in.

Theories of release, relief, or relaxation, rooted basically in Freudian beliefs, focus on the psychological effects of humor on the recipient, as 'Freud considers humor as one of the so-called substitution mechanisms which enable to convert one's socially tabooed aggressive impulses to acceptable ones and thus avoid wasting additional mental energy to suppress them' (ibid. p. 28).

Theories of incongruity-resolution define humorous texts as texts with at least two planes, scripts, schemes, or simply possibilities for cognitive processing, while the intended meaning is the one which is less 'accessible', 'salient' or 'pre-primed', and the humorousness of the text lies in discovering the hidden plane in the 'resolution' phase (Krikmann, 2006, p.27). Although the resolution of the perceived incongruity is seen as cognitive processing, the incongruity can be in the areas of phonology, morphology, semantics, syntax, text genres, social norms, pragmatic functions, etc. Incongruity theories must have useful implications for the translators as they tackle both linguistic and extralinguistic sources of humorousness as well as focus on the perception of humor as a cognitive act. Both of them are essential for maintaining humorousness while rendering them into a target language.

Attardo (2002) proposes that drawing on six hierarchically ordered parameters, the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) provides a subtle ground for humor translation and evaluation. The parameters include Language (LA), Narrative Strategy (NS), Target (TA), Situation, Logical Mechanism, and Script Opposition (SO). Language (LA) refers to 'the knowledge resource containing all the information

necessary for the verbalization of the text' (ibid. p.176). In other words, any language has the potential to convey humorousness using words and structures. The next knowledge resource, Narrative Strategy (NA) 'deals with the fact that any narrative joke will have to be cast in a given type of narrative' including a simple narrative, a dialogue, a riddle, etc (ibid. p.178). When translating a text, a loyal translator must tend to maintain the NA of the original text. Target (TA) is the knowledge resource for 'the names of the groups or individuals with the stereotypes attached to each', and is 'optional' in the sense that some humorous texts may lack it (ibid. p.178). The implication for a translator is that having adequate ideological, cultural, or social information about the TA of a text is the prerequisite of sensing its humorousness. The situation of a humorous text refers to what a joke is about or 'prop of the joke'; needless to say, a translator requires the knowledge to activate the accurate and relevant script in the target language (ibid. p.179). Logical Mechanism, as Attardo (2002) suggests, 'embodies the resolution of the incongruity in the incongruity-resolution model' (p.179) and presupposes 'a local logic, i.e. a distorted, playful logic that does not necessarily hold outside of the world of the joke'. Every translator needs to understand the LM underneath each humorous text to be able to appreciate and translate it. Raskin (2012) asserts that LM can be viewed as violating each of the Gricean conversational maxims in a joke. Therefore, in this study, it was hypothesized that learning how maxims are violated in each humorous text may help translation students maintain the humorousness of the translated texts and hence enhance their translation quality. The last knowledge resource, in his framework, is Script Opposition (SO), which means that each humorous text is compatible with

two different or opposite scripts, and the underlying one is surprisingly the more far-fetched.

As it was believed that the mentioned theories embrace the principle-based translation practice, Attardo's (2002) practical recommendations from the GTVH approach to humor translation were considered as the basic framework of the present study. First, if possible, all six knowledge resources should be considered in translation. Second, if this is not possible, give up the lower-level knowledge resources (from LA to SO) for the sake of saving pragmatic purposes. He stresses that the translation success should be judged at the 'perlocutionary level', as 'the perlocutionary goal of humor appreciation is, of course, universal' (p.189).

Gricean Maxim in Jokes

Grice (1989) proposed a formula to be observed by the participants of any conversation as 'make your conversational contribution such as required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction on the talk exchange in which you are engaged' (p.26) and labeled it as the Cooperative Principle (CP). Four conversational maxims were the by-product of this general rule including maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. In the same book, Grice defines his maxims as (p.28):

1. Quantity: I expect your contribution to be neither more nor less than is required.
2. Quality: I expect your contribution to be genuine and not spurious.
3. Relation: I expect a partner's contribution to be appropriate to the immediate needs at each stage of the transaction.
4. Manner: I expect a partner to make it clear what contributions he is making and

to execute his performance with reasonable dispatch.

Attardo (2010, p.272) showed how the maxims are *violated* in particular types of jokes:

1. Quantity: "Excuse me; do you know what time it is?"

"Yes."

2. Relation: "How many surrealists does it take to screw in a light bulb?"

"Fish!"

3. Manner: "Do you believe in clubs for young men?"

"Only when kindness fails."

4. Quality: "Why did the vice president fly to Panama?"

"Because the fighting is over."

Attardo (1993) summarized different functions of humor and tried to solve the paradox of CPs violation of jokes but remaining communicative and concluded that 'if the joke is [communicatively] successful, despite its maxim-violating status, some positive information may be conveyed by the text' (p.556).

For novice translators like translation students, it may be beneficial to remind them how incongruity in the joke may result from the maxim violations, and the present study attempted to see whether it could help them maintain the same incongruity in the translated text and offer the target language listeners the same incongruity-resolution challenge. However, Attardo (2010) reminds us that the mentioned examples do not mean that each humorous text contains or must contain at least one violation sample. In addition, it should also be mentioned that locating the present incongruity or CP violation may require any of the six mentioned knowledge resources of GTVH theory.

Metapragmatic Awareness

Though, as mentioned before, TC is mostly the expert's procedural knowledge, it is believed that novice translators need declarative knowledge of how languages work both at linguistic and pragmatic levels. In other words, translation at the practical level should be theory-based and principle-informed. GTVH theory also emphasized the importance of higher-level knowledge resources for analyzing how well a translation is done. In addition, explicit pragmatic instruction has proved to be fruitful for enhancing both sociopragmatic and prgamalinguistic competencies as Takahashi (2010) showed it through a meta-analysis of 49 implicit and explicit interventional studies. Relying on Schmidt's (1995) noticing hypothesis and the distinction he makes between surface attention and understanding, Leech (2016) and Takimoto (2007) demonstrated that understanding speech intentions demand raising awareness on the relationship between forms and meanings. Therefore, enhancing the translation students' awareness at the pragmatic level of the texts was the focus of attention and the targeted variables in this study.

Therefore, the study attempted to answer the following research questions:

Q1. Does explicit pragmatic instruction enhance translation students' metapragmatic awareness at the level of theory?

Q2. Does metapragmatic awareness at the level of theory improve the quality of their humor translations?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The present study was conducted with 50 juniors majoring in English translation. Their first language was Persian. They were both male and female students enrolled for an oral translation course in two intact

classes. The two groups were chosen mainly due to their availability. They were randomly assigned to control and experimental groups, each one consisting of 25 participants. Their age ranged from 22 to 27.

Instruments

Two translation tests, each including 20 short humorous texts, were used as the pre-test and post-test for the data collection procedure. The texts were selected from the corpus of some books of American English jokes. Both tests consisted of four subparts, each part violating only one of the Gricean Maxims. Four university linguistic professors with Ph.D. degrees read the first draft of the tests. Some modifications were made according to their suggestions. They finally confirmed that 40 items of pre-and post-tests violated the assumed maxims. For both control and experimental groups, pre-test required EFL learners' translation. Post-test had the same directions except for the experimental group who were asked to distinguish the violated Gricean maxims being violated in each of the humorous texts.

Procedure

Data collection took place at the beginning and in the middle of the oral translation course. In the pre-test session, students of both control and experimental groups were asked to translate each humorous text. After the pre-test, theories of translation as described in the literature review were primarily discussed, and then the instruction on Gricean maxims and the way they can be applied to the translation of humor was taught to the experimental group during the last 15 minutes of five sessions. It was believed that mastering all theories and applying all principles when rendering a text requires more experience and translation expertise, while the

participants of the study were still translation students. We also regarded the time limit we faced for instruction and emphasized how violating maxims may lead to incongruity in humorous texts. Meanwhile, the control group continued their usual classes. After treatment sessions, all students were able to name, define and exemplify the four Gricean maxims, and they showed their interest and ability to locate them in the jokes during the instruction sessions. Then post-test was given to both groups, but this time the experimental group had an additional item for each humorous text; they were asked to mark the violated maxims.

RESULTS

The obtained data addressed the effect of metapragmatic awareness on humor translation. The participants' translations were scored by two scorers trained for this purpose. Both of them had more than five years of experience in teaching different translation courses. Although the evaluation was holistic, it was informed by the principles of GTVH theory as discussed in a two-hour session by the scorers before they started their evaluation task. They used a 5-point rating scale ranging from one (unsatisfactory) to five (Excellent). Interrater reliability estimated by using KR-21 was high (.88), so the average of their scorings was used for data analysis. The internal reliability indices of pre-and post-tests were estimated by using Cronbach's alpha, and they were 0.85 and 0.78 respectively.

In the beginning, an independent samples t-test was used to investigate the difference between the quality of humor translation of control and experimental groups as represented in the scorers' evaluation. Table 1 indicates the results.

Table 1***Descriptive statistics and t-test of humor translation pre-test***

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t	Df	Level of sig.
Control	25	62.88	11.47	-0.212	48	0.833
Experimental	25	62.24	9.79			

The results of the independent sample t-test suggested no significant difference between the means of control and experimental groups about their ability to translate humorous texts. To examine the

effect of metapragmatic knowledge on the learners' translation, another independent samples t-test was applied to the results of the post-test (Table 2).

Table 2***Descriptive statistics and t-test of humor translation post-test***

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t	Df	Level of sig.
Control	25	50.9	8.02	-2.56	48	0.014
Experimental	25	58.40	12.20			

As indicated in the table, there was a significant difference between the means of the groups in favor of the hypothesis that metapragmatic awareness had the potential to improve EFL learners' humor translation. The means of post-tests of both

groups were less than their pre-tests suggesting that the post-test was more challenging than the pre-test.

Table 3***Descriptive Statistics of EG Maxim Recognition***

maxims	number	percentage
Quantity	92	19
Quality	51	10
Relevance	180	36
Manner	177	35
Total	500	100

For further investigation of the effect of treatment, as mentioned before, participants of the experimental group were asked to mark the maxims violated in each humorous text, while they were unaware of the fact that there was an equal proportion for each violated maxim. Table 3 shows the students' responses. According to the table, participants of the experimental group were not completely successful in recognizing the target maxims being violated by the humorous texts. While in terms of quantity, each maxim was equally violated (25% for each maxim); they only marked 19% for quantity and 10% for quality, 6% and 15% less than their real percentages respectively. However, most of the texts were treated as violating maxims of relevance and manner, 36% and 35% respectively. They wrongly assumed that 11% of texts violated the maxim of relevance, and nearly the same mistake had been made for the maxim of manner.

DISCUSSION

The quantitative analysis aimed at finding the effect of metapragmatic awareness on EFL learners' translation of humor. Independent samples t-test showed no significant difference between the means of the pre-tests of the groups; however, a significant difference was observed between the means of the control and experimental groups at the end of the study. This may suggest that instruction on the maxims can improve EFL learners' humor translation. The observation that participants of the experimental group outperformed the other group may be attributed to their metapragmatic knowledge of Gricean maxims when translating humorous texts; however, their lack of complete success in identifying the violated maxims suggested that their improvement could not be made by their pragmatic knowledge enhancement, yet it

can be inferred that instruction had made them more conscious of the presence of some sort of incongruity in the texts and that their success in translation depended on maintaining it in their translation. The following examples from the participants' responses indicate how much they were successful in doing this task:

- 1) "Say you love me. Say it! For heaven's sake, say it!"
"It!"
- 2) Young lady (at counter): I want to see some gloves."
Clerk: "What kind, kid?"
Young lady: "Sir, how dare you!"
- 3) Q: Which one is faster, heat or cold?
A: Heat, because you can catch the cold.

Although it is not so difficult to understand the first example which violates the maxim of quantity, its translation into Persian seems to be problematic because 'say it' and 'say' can be translated into the same word in Persian, 'begoo (=say)'. To create a similar effect in Persian, pragmatic knowledge suggests that the target text should violate the same maxim, so in the case of the example, the translator's task is to find a proper script in which the maxim of quantity is violated. The following translations, made by two of the participants of the experimental group with correct maxim identification, seemed successful:

"begoo ke dostam dari. begoo ino! begoo be khoda!"

(say that you love me. Say it! say for heaven's sake!)

"be khoda!"

(for heaven's sake!)
 "begoo mano dostam dari, begoo dige!
 be khatere khoda begoo dige.
 (say me you love me, say come on!
 for sake God say come on.)
 begoo ino."
 (Say this)
 "ino"
 (this)

The second example may be difficult to translate because the word 'kid' can be interpreted as both 'child' and 'kid size' in English but not in Persian, so the maxim violated in this example is the maxim of manner. Pragmatic knowledge implies that translation of the text should violate the same maxim. The following example from the participants' responses shows this.

khanoom javan: bebakhsid mishe
 dastkeshatoon ro bebinam?
 (lady young: excuse me possible
 your gloves I see?)
 foroushände: bra che seni mikhaid,
 bache?
 (salesperson: for what age want,
 kid?)
 khanoom javan: agha, ba che jorati ba
 man intor sohbat mikonid?
 (lady young: sir, with what dare
 with me in this way speak?)

In addition, the following is an example of a failed translation with wrong maxim identification for the same text:

khanoom javan: mitonam
 dastkeshatoon ro bebinam?

(lady young: can I your gloves
 see?)
 foroushände: che no dastkeshi
 mikhaid, bachegoone khobe?
 (salesperson: what kind gloves
 want, kid size good?)
 khanoom javan: agha chetor jorat
 mikoni ba man injoori harf bezani!
 (lady young: sir how dare have
 with me this way speak!)

Similarly, the third text violates the maxim of manner because the word 'catch' may mean 'take hold of something' or be considered as an inseparable part of the expression 'catch cold'. The difficulty of translation of this text into Persian is the result of the fact that in Persian 'cold (disease) is eaten' rather than 'caught'. The framework of the study implies that translators should create a Persian framework in which the same maxim is violated. The following translations by two participants of the experimental group with correct maxim recognition seem successful to do this.

"kodam yeki khoshmazetare, sarma ya garma?"
 (which one more delicious, cold or heat?)
 "sarma, choon bishtere adama sarma mikhoran."
 (cold, because most people cold eat.)

"kodam yeki tondtar mire?"
 (which one more quickly moves?)

"garma, choon mishe sarma ra gereft va khord."

(heat, because possible cold catch and eat.)

The following example shows a participant's failed attempt to translate the text and to identify the violated maxim:

"be nazaret kodom yek saritar ast, garma ya sarma?"

(in your opinion which one more quick is, heat or cold?)

"garma, chon mitooni sarma ra bekhori."

(heat, because you can cold eat .)

It seemed that incongruity was correctly identified, but it was not held in the Persian version due to the differences between the concept of 'catching a cold' in Persian and English. Leibold (1989) and Schmitz (2002) believe that in the translation of humorous texts, the translators should find similar texts in the target language that can create the same humorous effect. In this study, it seems that the experimental group was consciously aware of this fact and tried to apply it in their translation. Instruction on pragmatic knowledge or metapragmatic awareness, as Ifantidou (2011) asserts, helps learners to clarify the link between linguistic indices and pragmatic effects through reflection.

Independent samples t-tests of the results, based on individual maxims being violated, indicated that the overall performance of the experimental group was better than the control group. In addition, in order to ensure the effectiveness of the instruction on pragmatics, the participants' responses to the 'maxim recognition' section were analyzed. The results showed their partial success to recognize the maxims being violated, although they could define and exemplify violation of maxims at the end of the instruction. This suggests

that they knew there must be a kind of incongruity in humorous texts and tried to find it and maintain it in the course of translation (Afghari & Allami, 2007; Suls, 1972). It seemed they were successful in finding some sort of incongruity and finding resolution; however, it was not consistent with our theory or intention that the incongruities were the result of violating the maxims. The experimental groups' success may also be due to their sensitivity to the LM component of GTVH theory that every translator needs to recognize the logic or incongruity underneath each humorous text to be able to render the same LM in the target language. It may also suggest that longer instruction might have led to better maxim recognition and translation. In other words, the results suggested that a small amount of explicit pragmatic instruction at the level of theory may only catalyze the formation of procedural translation knowledge and paves the way for professionalization in translation. Vandaele (2002, p.169) concludes that 'these theoretical contributions may help students and professional translators alike to evaluate their translation after reproduction' by being 'a basis for comparison, justification, or evaluation'. Nonetheless and as mentioned before, TC is basically procedural knowledge and is also composed of other components needed to be considered in training translation students.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed at investigating the effect of explicit pragmatic knowledge or metapragmatic awareness on EFL learners' humor translation. Two groups participated in the study, but only one of them, the experimental group, took instruction on pragmatic knowledge. It was on the basis of the theory proposed by Attardo (2010) that

humorousness can be explained in terms of the Gricean maxims violated in the texts. In line with the hypothesis, the participants of the experimental group showed more improvement than the control group. The findings of the study emphasized the role of explicit instruction in developing TC and that it may speed up the process of procedural knowledge formation. The findings provided confirmatory evidence for including pragmatic theories as well as translation theories in translation students' syllabus. Moreover, as Vandaele (2002, p.169) suggests humor theories can be a 'useful practical complement to the translator intuition'. However, the results indicated that short-term pragmatic instruction may not be adequate for the formation of procedural knowledge needed for the professionalization in translation. Examining the participants' responses revealed that developing sensitivity and tendency to regard pragmatic aspect of translation can enhance the quality of humor translation, yet it did not rule out the place of mentoring, practice, and experience translation students require during the course of their professionalization.

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Biodata

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Appendix

Sample items of the post-test

- 1) Teacher: "If you have six apples and I asked for three, how many would you have left?"
Johnny: "Six".
- 2) "You can't sleep in my class."
"If you didn't talk so loud I could."
- 3) "I've eaten beef all my life, and now I'm as strong as an ox!"

"That's funny, I've eaten fish all my life and I can't swim a stroke."

- 4) Young lady (at counter): I want to see some gloves."

Clerk: "What kind, kid?"

Young lady: "Sir, how dare you!"

- 5) "Didn't I meet you in Toledo?"

"No, I never was in Toledo."

"Neither was I. It must have been two other fellows."

- 6) "Say you love me. Say it! For heaven's sake, say it!"

"it!"

- 7) "Say, mother. How much am I worth?"

"Why, you're worth a million to me, dear."

"Well, then, could you advance me a quarter?"

- 8) Teacher (to little girl learning to write):

"But where is the dot over the i?"

"It's in the pencil yet!"

- 9) "Johnny, if you eat more cake, you'll burst.

"Well, pass the cake and get out of the way."

- 10) Teacher (answering the phone):

You say Billy Smith has a bad cold and can't come to school? Who's speaking?

Voice (with assumed hoarseness): This is my father.

- 11) A: Look at your face I know what you had for breakfast

B: What was it?

A: Eggs.

B: No, that was yesterday.



12) “Did you tell Mr. Jones that he is father for triplets?”

“No, he’s still shaving.”

13) Doctor: I can do nothing for your complaint. It is hereditary.

Then send the bill to my father.

14) Teacher: “Now, Johnny, what did Spartacus exclaim when Brutus stabled him?”

Johnny: “Ouch!”

15) The new employee stood before the paper shredder looking confused.

“Need some help?”

a secretary walking by asked.

“Yes,” he replied, “How does this thing work?”

“Simple,” she said, taking the fat report from his hand and feeding it into the shredder.

“Thanks, but where do the copies come out?”

16) Q: Which one is faster, heat or cold

A: Heat, because you can catch the cold?

17) “You look very funny wearing that belt.”

“I would look even funnier if I didn’t wear it.”

18) A man went to apply for a job.

After filling out all of his application, he waited anxiously for the outcome.

The employer read all his applications and said, “ we have an opening for people like you.”

“Oh, great.” he said

“What is it?

“It’s called the door!”

19) “My husband got angry last night and told me to go to the devil.”

“What are you going to do about that?”

“I’m going straight home to mother.”

20) Judge: You’re charged with throwing your mother-in-law out of the window.

Jones: I have done it without thinking, sir.

Judge: Yes, but don’t you think how dangerous it might have been for anyone passing at the time?