



SILENCE MADE VISIBLE: EXPANSION STRATEGY FOLLOWED IN *THE BLUE STING*

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Abstract

This study makes a comparison between Syed Shamsul Haq's Bangla novel *nil damśan*, the source text, and *The Blue Sting*, the target text translated by Kabir Chowdhury, to locate the instances where the inherent silences – as termed by Ortega y Gasset – of the source text are made visible in the target text. Based on the Liberation War of Bangladesh, the novel tells the story of a Kazi Nazrul Islam who was arrested by Pakistani soldiers mistakenly as his famous namesake, the rebel poet. They exercised all sorts of brutal methods of interrogation on the victim who finally faced death as boldly as the rebel poet would do in a similar context. In this study, the silences captured in the target text are expressed in terms of Nida and Taber's concept of expansion. The comparison between the source text and the target text reveals that, among the four categories of syntactic expansions, the acts of "filling out of ellipses" are prominently visible; "identification of the participants in events" and "identification of objects or events with abstracts" are considerably visible, but "more explicit indication of relationals" is not visible in the translation. As for the three categories of lexical expansions, the use of "semantic restructuring" is prominent while that of "classifiers" and "descriptive substitutes" is quite considerable in *The Blue Sting*. The findings imply that there is enough scope for a translator to show their competence through their acts of capturing the source text silences and making them visible and hence accessible to the target readers.

Keywords: Translation, Silence, Syntactic expansion, Lexical expansion, Bangladeshi novel

Introduction

One of the reasons why translation is considered a difficult task is the presence of silence in every language. In fact, silence "actively participates in the act of translating" (Ordóñez López, 2008, p. 46). According to Ortega y Gasset (1937/2004), not all the aspects of our thoughts can be well expressed in language; we refrain from expressing many things and keep them silent because language does not allow them to be expressed (p. 57). He states, "... each language is a different equation of statements and silences. All peoples silence some things in order to be able to say others" (p. 57). Steiner (1975) also mentions that language serves the purpose of communication only when it includes and puts emphasis on "what is not said in the saying, what is said only partially, allusively or with intent to screen" (229). Steiner's views on language are applicable to translation also. The splendour of translation is that it tries to capture the unsaid aspects or the silence that the language of a source text (ST) possesses. Put differently, a translator performs splendour when they locate the silence embedded in the ST and make it visible in the target text (TT) so that the text becomes accessible to the target readers. Ortega y Gasset asserts that the translator in a translation tries to say in the language of the TT the things that the language of the ST tends to keep silent (p. 57). For doing this, the translator, as pointed out by Hasanat (2019), enters within the emptiness or vacuum to understand it with their "rhetoricity and historicity" (p. 93).

Ortega y Gasset's idea of capturing the silence in translation corresponds to the concept of expansion put forth by Nida and Taber. In fact, when the silence of an ST is captured, it creates expansion in the TT. Expansion phenomena are quite unavoidable in the act of translation (Firmansyah & Setiarini, 2023, p. 171). According to Nida and Taber (1982), expansion is the legitimate process of incorporating redundancy; it is the tendency that makes good translations "somewhat longer than the originals" (p. 163). In reality, according to Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1995), all translations – be they good or bad – tend to be longer than the STs depending on the prudence or

the ignorance of the translators (p. 193). However, as mentioned by Nida and Taber, a good translator tries not only to capture the explicit aspects of the ST but also to “make explicit in the receptor language what could very well remain implicit in the source-language text” (p. 163). Though these implicit aspects of the ST do not pose difficulty to its original readers because they have the necessary background to understand those aspects, they appear as stumbling blocks to the TT readers if they are not properly explicated (p. 163). Expansions, in other words, make the TT receivable to the TT readers.

Nida and Taber have divided expansions into two groups: syntactic and lexical. Syntactic expansions are the expansions required by any type of syntactic structure of TT to accommodate the information implicit in the ST (p. 166). Such expansions are subdivided into four categories: (i) identification of the participants in events, (ii) identification of objects or events with abstracts, (iii) more explicit indication of relationals, and (iv) filling out of ellipses. On the other hand, lexical expansions are the increase of lexical items in number in the translated version. Such expansions are subdivided into three types: (i) classifiers, (ii) descriptive substitutes, and (iii) semantic restructuring.

The process of translation begins with the translator’s familiarisation with the ST (Borg, 2023, p. 9). The more the familiarisation, the more the possibility of capturing the silences of the ST. In this study, the ST concerned is *nil damśan* (1981), a popular Bangla satirical novel by Syed Shamsul Haq (1935-2016). A versatile and prolific writer, Shamsul Haq was widely known as a *sabyasāci lekḥak* (ambidextrous writer) because of his ability to write in different forms and genres (Huq, 2022). His novel *nil damśan* artistically portrays how the pursuit of freedom in national life and the political manifestation of the nation’s collective identity can influence an ordinary person to become extraordinarily rebellious (“nāṭ-maṇḍalē,” 2018). This novel has been adapted into a Bangla play and staged on various occasions. It has also been adapted into a Bangla TV show (“saiyād hakēr,” 2022). A novel that deals with the Liberation War of Bangladesh, the most glorious chapter in the nation’s history, and has been adapted into a play and a TV show for Bangla-speaking audience, *nil damśan* naturally invites an investigation into the way how it is presented to the global readership through English translation, especially how the silent aspects of the ST are made visible for them. Two translated versions of this novel are available in English: Kabir Chowdhury’s *The Blue Sting* (2009) and Saugata Ghosh’s *Blue Venom* (2015). The present study takes Kabir Chowdhury’s version as a test case for that investigation and makes an ST-TT comparison to find out whether and to what extent the expansions mentioned earlier are made by Kabir Chowdhury in his translated version for capturing the ST silences.

The Story of *The Blue Sting* in Brief

After Bangabandhu’s call for non-cooperation in March, 1971, Nazrul, the protagonist of the novel *The Blue Sting*, sent his wife and children to Jafargunj. After the military crackdown in Dhaka, he wanted to go to Jafargunj to meet his family members. When he reached the Mirpur bridge, Pakistani soldiers searched him and found a newspaper clipping in his pocket. A flag of Bangladesh was printed on it and the slogan *jay bāmlā* meaning “Victory to Bengal” was written at the top of the flag. The flag was followed by an English translation of the first few lines of Kazi Nazrul Islam’s poem *tōrā sab jāyādhvani kar* meaning “Rejoice all of you.” The soldiers asked Nazrul what his name was. As his name matched with the name of the poet written towards the end of the poem, they took him to be the rebel poet himself and arrested him immediately.

Nazrul was kept in a poorly lit room. Nothing outside the room was visible. He spent a whole night there without any sleep. The next morning, he was taken to another room where three officers were waiting for him. Their conversation started with seemingly cordial talks but soon Nazrul found himself in a maze and failed to keep track of the questions. He was asked what the reason for his going to Jafargunj was, whether he had attended the meeting at the Race Course Grounds on March 07, 1971, and whether he wrote poetry. The last question embarrassed Nazrul because poetry was something alien to him. The officers asked Nazrul to tell them the full name of Jinnah. He could only recall “Mohammad Ali Jinnah” and forgot to mention the title “Qaide-Azam.” He was then asked whether he had ever written any poem on Qaide-Azam and the ideology of Islam. He replied that he had never felt the urge to write any poem at all. The interrogators were not ready to believe that a poet like Nazrul wrote so many poems without any internal urge. At this point, Nazrul said that they were making mistakes. On the contrary, they were confident that they were not. They asked him similar questions again and again. At one point of the interrogation, Nazrul broke down. The officers could not believe that a poet like Nazrul who sounded so bold in his poems could break down in that way.

Soon one of the officers showed him the piece of paper cut out from the newspaper. Nazrul instantly understood that they had mistaken him for the rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam. He tried to convince them that the

soldiers had made a silly mistake. Instantly, they started showering a series of stinging slaps on both sides of his face. After every slap, one of the officers said, “We make no mistake. Do you understand, poet, we never make any mistake” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 29). Continuous slaps made Nazrul unconscious. He fell from his chair. Then a fierce kick was given at his belly. The kick made his body curve like a bow. Then the body became still.

When he came to his senses, he found himself lying in the same room. A new officer with a mild smile on his lips entered the room. He expressed his sorrow over the way a poet like Nazrul was beaten. He immediately summoned a soldier to take off Nazrul’s handcuffs. He told Nazrul that he was a great fan of poets and tried to ensure him that he wanted to facilitate his release. The only thing Nazrul needed to do to get released was to sign a statement before he left. The statement was written from the first-person singular perspective of the poet Kazi Nazrul Islam telling the Bengalees to give up arms and to help the army. As Nazrul was not the poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, he decided not to sign it. The officer snatched away the pen and the paper from Nazrul’s hand and left the room with the same smile. After his departure, two soldiers entered the room and showered blows and kicks on him until he became unconscious.

When Nazrul came to his senses again, he tried hard to urinate but not a single drop of urine came out. Two soldiers took him to another room and made him sit on a chair placed at the center of that room. A new officer entered the room and asked him whether he was having any difficulty. Nazrul faintly asked for water which was immediately given to him. Hardly had he taken a sip when the glass was removed from before his face. He was again asked whether he would sign the statement. Nazrul could possibly get released simply by putting his signature on the paper but a second person from within him was asking him not to do so. That person was providing him with the necessary strength to tolerate all sorts of torture.

The interrogation started again. He was asked whether he had not incited the Bengalees to take up arms and revolt against the Pakistani rulers. He was also asked whether he had not written war-songs for the Bengalees. Nazrul sat motionlessly without giving any reply. The interrogator then extinguished his burning cigarette pressing it on Nazrul’s hand. Two soldiers then started dragging him grabbing his hair. Blows and kicks also followed.

Nazrul had to face another session of interrogation. This time psychological torture came in the form of complex questions that made Nazrul shout, “Kill me! Please kill me!” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 46). Then he was again asked to put his signature on the paper. But that second person from within him whispered into his ears that if he signed his name, it would mean the name of the rebel poet. Immediately the pen dropped from his hand and he became unconscious again. At first water was splashed on his face to bring him to his senses. Then the soldiers dragged a long water pipe into the room, held Nazrul fast on the floor, shoved the pipe into his mouth and let the rush of water enter into his stomach. When his stomach began to blow up, they removed the pipe and pressed his belly with their feet to make water come out through his mouth, nose and ear. They did the same thing again. This time Nazrul remained unconscious for a long time and started hallucinating about his first love, wife and children.

Afterwards, a doctor entered the room. Nazrul saw him getting an injection syringe ready. As that moment an officer appeared and stopped the doctor from injecting him. The officer informed Nazrul that the injection contained a cancer virus in it. He said that he could not allow a poet like Nazrul to die in that way; he wanted that Nazrul would live and continue to write poems. All he needed to do was to write a short poem that would bring people back to the right path. The officer left a pen and a few sheets of paper and expected to come the next day to collect the poem. The poem was supposed to be published in all the newspapers in big bold type.

Before his final encounter with the officers, Nazrul met the poet Kazi Nazrul Islam in his hallucination. The poet had the same crazy fierce face, the same long wavy hair, the same sturdy shoulders, the same haunting dark eyes and the same uncertain smile. They kept looking at each other. The effect of this hallucination is clearly reflected in Nazrul’s final encounter with the interrogators. Nazrul showed extraordinary courage with the officers who were unable to make him write any poem. Consequently, the soldiers broke his knees and elbow joints. They pressed his chest with their boots so hard that blood gushed out of his mouth. They pulled at his long hair frantically and uprooted them. He was still alive when his body was thrown in a wild dump surrounded by some banana trees. Lying on the earth he saw some people digging a large hole in that wild dump. When his body was pushed into that hole, his eyes were wide open.

Expansions Made in *The Blue Sting*

The ST-TT comparison reveals that the translator has captured the silences that exist in *nīl damśān* and made them visible in *The Blue Sting* by making both syntactic and lexical expansions.

Syntactic Expansions Made in *The Blue Sting*

The instances where the translator has followed the strategy of syntactic expansions in *The Blue Sting* as a way of making ST silences visible to the TT readers are discussed below:

Identification of the Participants in Events

Sometimes the ST does not mention the source of a direct speech and sometimes it drops the doer or the subject of a particular event that takes place in the ST. In such cases, a translator identifies who the doer or the subject or the source is, so that possible ambiguity can be resolved in the TT. It is termed by Nida and Taber as the “identification of the participants in events.” There are numerous instances in *The Blue Sting* where this task is done by the translator. For example, the original Bangla expression *āj natun dīnti parēche* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 95) meaning “New duty is assigned today” is translated as “He has been newly deputed” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 9). In the TT expression, the participant “He” referring to a Pakistani soldier in a grey uniform is identified in the event of keeping an eye on Nazrul.

In some occasions, third-person plural pronouns are used to identify the participants in events. For example, the ST expression *bhōrē kichu kbētē diyēchila?* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 97) meaning “Was anything given in the morning to eat?” appears in the TT as “Did they give you any breakfast?” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 11). Here, the pronoun “they” referring to some soldiers attending Nazrul outside the torture cell is identified as the participants in the supposed event of serving him breakfast. Then, the expression *antarikatā take sparśa karē* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 97) literally means “The sincerity touches him” but is translated as “Their sincere concern touched him” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 11) where the possessive “Their” refers to the Pakistani soldiers who are identified as the participants in the event of showing genuine concern for Nazrul.

Nazrul is also identified as a participant in different textual events. For example, he is identified as the participant in the hypothetical event of becoming a liar or a traitor in the expression “But now we see that you are a mighty liar, a great traitor” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 29). This TT expression is the translated version of the ST expression *etabarā mithyebādi, ēta barā dēśadrōhī* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 114). In the ST expression, it is not mentioned who the liar or traitor is but it is clarified in the TT. Then, he is identified in the probable event of writing a poem in the expression “The man wants to know if Nazrul has written the poem” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 59) which is the translation of the expression *lōktā jantē cāy, kabitā hayēche?* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 140). The ST expression literally means “The man wants to know whether the composition of the poem is finished.” That means the doer “Nazrul” is silent in the ST but is made visible in the TT.

Identification of Objects or Events with Abstracts

There are occasions when a translator expands an expression by exploiting contextual clues and associating different objects and events with abstract expressions. Such type of expansion is termed by Nida and Taber as the “identification of objects or events with abstracts.” Numerous instances of such acts of identification are found in *The Blue Sting*. Examples are given below:

- i. The sentence *ōparē basē āchē tinjan apbisār* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 96) is translated as “Three officers sat on the other side of the tables” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 10). The tables are not mentioned in the ST but they are identified with the abstract idea expressed through the word *ōparē* meaning “on the other side.”
- ii. The expression *najrul tarātari bādha diyē othe* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 101) is translated as “Nazrul quickly interrupted the officer” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 15). Here, “the officer” is silent in the ST but is identified as the direct object to the verb “interrupted.”
- iii. An ST fragment *kinbār janyē nay* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 104) is translated as “I did not want to buy any flag” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 18). Here, “any flag” is an expansion identified as the object to the verb “buy.”
- iv. Saleha’s utterance *bābār nā hay takār darkār, tāi mukh phutē apnākē balen nā* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 122) is translated as “Father needs money, that is true, and so he does not point out to you this obvious fact” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 39). Here, the expression “this obvious fact” referring to Nazrul’s

- natural inability to take music lessons is an expansion identified as the object to the phrasal verb “point out.”
- v. The expression *najrul jānē nā kī karē edēr sē bōjbābē* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 123) is translated as “Nazrul did not know how he could convince them that they were wrong” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 41). Here, the direct object “that they were wrong” is identified with the act of making somebody convinced.
 - vi. An ST fragment *āpnārāi balchēn* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 142) is translated as “It’s you who are saying that I am poet Nazrul Islam, not me” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 61). In this case, the object to the verb *balchēn* or “saying” is silent in the ST but is identified in the TT as “that I am poet Nazrul Islam.”
 - vii. The question *tumī likhbē nā?* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 143) is translated as “Won’t you write a poem?” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 62). Here, the object to the verb *likhbā* or “to write” is silent in the ST but it is identified in the TT as “a poem.”

More Explicit Indication of Relationals

Sometimes the relationship between two or more persons or things is kept silent or not clearly stated in the ST. Such a silent or an unclear relationship is clarified by the translator through syntactic expansion. This type of expansion is termed by Nida and Taber as “more explicit indication of relationals.” However, the use of this kind of expansion is not found in *The Blue Sting*.

Filling Out of Ellipses

Sometimes some ST expressions are deeply concentrated or elliptical. Though may be permitted by the linguistic norms of the source language (SL), such ellipses may not be accepted by those of the target language (TL). In such cases, the translator has to capture the silence inherent in them and fill out those elliptical expressions to make them explicit to the TT readers. This type of syntactic expansion is termed by Nida and Taber as “filling out of ellipses.” Shirinzadeh & Tengku Mahadi (2014) also mention that every language uses ellipsis but their patterns vary from language to language (p. 44). In *The Blue Sting*, the translator has filled out or explicated such elliptical or implicit expressions of the ST at different places. In fact, the TT is replete with such explications. Examples are as follows:

- i. The verb “shone,” implicit in the ST, is supplied in the very first sentence of the TT. In this case, *gharēr bbetarē bādāmi alō sārādin* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 95) is translated as “THROUGHOUT the day a brown light shone inside the room” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 9).
- ii. The expression *beriyē āsbār par sainiktī ābār tākē kbōcā dēy* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 96) is translated as “After he came out of the washroom the soldier again gave him another shove” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 10). Considering the textual context, the noun phrase “the washroom” is supplied in the TT.
- iii. The expression *šyā nan, sunni* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 98) is translated as “Not Shia. He was a Sunni Muslim” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 12). Here, the word “Muslim” is added after “Sunni” to clarify that the latter is a sect within Islam.
- iv. Considering the textual context, a single-word ST expression *katādin!* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 99) meaning “How long!” is explicated as “When did you get married?” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 13). In this case, the question is asked to Nazrul by one of the interrogators to supplement the previous question, “Are you married?” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 13).
- v. An ST fragment *rēskōrs māyḍānē* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 99) meaning “at the Race Course Grounds” is expanded to “The meeting at the Race Course Grounds” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 13) where “The meeting” is the silence captured.
- vi. An incomplete ST expression *āpni gīyechilen?* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 103) is translated as “Did you? I mean, did you go to such meetings?” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 17) where “to such meetings” is an expansion.
- vii. The expression *manē hay, tār pēchan thekē ēktānē kē yēna cēyārtā sarīyē niyēchē* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 108) is translated as “It seemed to him that the chair he was sitting on had suddenly been pulled away from there” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 23). Here, the expression “he was sitting on” along with “suddenly” is silent in the ST but is captured in the TT.
- viii. The expression *prēsīdēt ājī ghōṣānā karē kṣamatā hātē tulē dijē calē yācbēn* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 109) is translated as “... the President would make an announcement that very day and go back to Karachi after handing over power to Sheikh Mujib?” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 24). Karachi, the place where the

President is going to, and Sheikh Mujib, the person to whom the President is going to hand over the power, are not stated in the ST but are clarified in the TT considering the historical context.

- ix. The ST expression *bhay karchila amar bauyer janya ar chelemeyer janye* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 112) is translated as “I did not fear for me. I was afraid for my children. For my wife” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 26). Here, the expression “I did not fear for me” is an ST silence made visible in the TT.
- x. The expression *cokhe ke isara kar se du'jankē* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 124) is translated as “He signalled something to the two soldiers standing in the room with his eyes” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 41). Here, *du'jan* meaning “two men” is expanded as “the two soldiers standing in the room.”

Some other instances where ST ellipses are filled out in the TT are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Additional Instances of ST Ellipses Filled Out in the TT*

ST expressions	TT expressions
<i>sarkari?</i> (p. 99)	A government <i>servant?</i> (p. 13)
<i>besarkari</i> (p. 99)	<i>No, I work in</i> a private organization (p. 13)
<i>tar kathā nay</i> (p. 104)	<i>I am not asking you</i> about him (p. 18)
<i>gulir šabdē</i> (p. 110)	Sound of gun shots <i>woke me up</i> (p. 25)
<i>abar sei praśna</i> (p. 111)	The question was again <i>hurled at him</i> (p. 26)
<i>pakēṭ thekē berōy kalam</i> (p. 118)	... a pen from the pocket <i>of the officer</i> (p. 35)
<i>sē darōjā dbarē basē paṛē</i> (p. 122)	He held on to the door ... and sat <i>on the floor</i> (p. 39)
<i>darōjā khulē jāy</i> (p. 123)	<i>Suddenly</i> the door opened (p. 40)
<i>abāk bayē cokh khōlē sē</i> (p. 127)	He stared <i>at the officer</i> with amazed eyes (p. 45)
<i>orā kintu ābar pāni dēbē</i> (p. 131)	They will again give you the water <i>treatment</i> (p. 49)
<i>amākē</i> (p. 132)	<i>You have forgotten</i> me (p. 50)
<i>ōdēr dāk śunlām</i> (p. 135)	I heard their voices <i>some time ago</i> (p. 54)
<i>ēgōyē jābār kabitā</i> (p. 136)	A poem <i>that will inspire people</i> to go forward (p. 55)
<i>achē. āmi dekhtē pācchi, achē</i> (p. 138)	I can see it ... I can see <i>that it is all written out there</i> (p. 57)
<i>kiser thekē?</i> (p. 141)	<i>Freed from what?</i> (p. 61)

Note. Italicized expressions in the column “TT expression” are the acts of “filling out of ellipses.”

Lexical Expansions in *The Blue Sting*

The instances where the translator has followed the strategy of incorporating lexical expansions in *The Blue Sting* are discussed below:

Classifiers

Classifiers, according to Nida and Taber (1982), are borrowed words, semantically redundant in nature, attached to an expression to make the readers understand the form and function of the expression (p. 166). They have given the examples of the translation of “Jerusalem,” “linen,” and “Pharisees” as “city Jerusalem,” “cloth linen,” and “sect Pharisees” respectively, where “city,” “cloth,” and “sect” are the examples of classifiers. The use of classifiers is also found in *The Blue Sting*. For example, the expression *patākā* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 115) is translated as “Bangladesh flag” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 31) where “Bangladesh” classifies “flag.” Then, the expression *dirgha ānūl diyē kbāmchē dbartē cāy sē māṭi* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 144) is translated as “He tried to clutch at the loose earth with his long fingers” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 63) where *māṭi* meaning “earth” is translated as “loose earth.” Here, “loose” classifies “earth.”

Possessives used as classifiers also contribute to the lexical expansions in the TT. For example, the expression *lokṭi cōyār tēnē bichānār kāchē basē* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 135) is translated as “He pulled up a chair and sat close to Nazrul’s bed” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 54). Here, *bichānā* meaning “bed” is translated as “Nazrul’s bed” where the possessive “Nazrul’s” classifies “bed.” Similarly, the expression *magajēr koṣē koṣē chandaṭā charōyē paṛē* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 140) is translated as “The rhythm of the poem scattered into all the cells of Nazrul’s brain” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 59) where *magaj* meaning “the brain” is translated as “Nazrul’s brain.” Here, the possessive “Nazrul’s” classifies the “brain.” Then, the expression *cal, syarkē dekhe āsi* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p.122) is translated as “Let’s go and visit my music teacher” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 38) where the possessive “my” along with the noun “music” classifies “teacher.”

In some occasions, some metonymic ST expressions are explicated in the TT by using the original expressions as the classifiers to the persons they actually stand for. For example, expressions *du'jan khaki* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 123) and *ghartā bhare jāy khaki pōśakē* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 142) are translated as “Two Khaki-clad soldiers” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 40) and “... the room fills with Khaki-clad soldiers” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 62) respectively. On the first occasion, *khaki* is translated as “Khaki-clad soldiers” where “Khaki-clad” is used as the classifier of “soldiers.” On the second occasion, *khaki pōśak* meaning “khaki uniform” is translated as “Khaki-clad soldiers.”

Descriptive Substitutes

According to Nida and Taber (1982), descriptive substitutes are the use of different lexical items to describe the form and/or function of a particular event or object. In most of the cases, descriptive substitutes are longer than the original expressions (p. 166). Such substitutes are also used by the translator in *The Blue Sting*. For example, the expression *ṭhābar* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 97) *haoyā* meaning “to perceive” is described in the TT as being able “to keep track” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 11). Then, *bat* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 98), a culture-specific word referring to a special kind of market held once or twice a week in rural Bangladesh, is described as “market days” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 12). Next, the expression *aiēssi* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 112) which is the transcription of the abbreviation “ISc” is elaborated as “Intermediate science examination” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 27). The word “examination” is silent in the ST but it is made visible in the TT. After that, the expression *ṭantān* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 120), an onomatopoeic Bangla expression associated with pain, is described as “a sharp stab of pain” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 36). Then, the word *sargam* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 121) meaning “musical notes” is described as “the basic lesson and the scale” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 38). Finally, the expression *ait hayē* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 139) is translated as “with ... back on the bed” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 59). On all the occasions, the TT expressions have a greater number of words than the ST expressions concerned.

Semantic Restructuring

Sometimes some ST expressions are so condensed that their meanings are affected when translated literally (Nida & Taber, 1982, p. 166). Such condensed expressions of the ST require considerable expansions to restructure them semantically and to accommodate them in the language of the TT. Such expansions are termed by Nida and Taber as semantic restructuring. In *The Blue Sting*, there are a number of occasions where the translator has followed this strategy.

Semantic restructuring is sometimes done in the TT considering the context that the ST provides. For example, the expression *sēkhanē kī achē?* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 98) literally means “What things are there?” or “What things are found there?” but is semantically restructured as “What do you have there?” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 13) to make the meaning close to that of the ST expression. Then, the expression *chēlēmejedēr jānyē ēkṭā ṭēbil ghārī achē* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 110) literally means “there is a table clock for the children.” The Bangla expression textually gives the clue that Nazrul came to know about the time from there. To incorporate this clue and to make the meaning clear, this expression is restructured as “I had a table clock. My children used that, I noticed the time on my table clock” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 25).

The use of extra-textual context for semantic restructuring is also there in *The Blue Sting*. For example, the ST expression *sāt tārikhē sēkh mujib miṭim karēchilen* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 99) is translated as “Sheikh Mujib had called a meeting there on the seventh” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 13). The expression *miṭim karā* may mean either “to arrange a meeting” or “to participate in a meeting.” However, this ambiguity is resolved by the translator in the TT expression “called a meeting” where the historical context is used.

The translator has used semantic restructuring to tackle linguistic untranslatability also. For example, the expression *yē* used in the ST expression *biskit pārē raila yē* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 100) is quite untranslatable. It is used in Bangla to turn a statement into a polite question. The rest of the expression *biskit pārē raila* means “the biscuit is/was left untouched.” The entire expression may also be used to request a visitor to have all the biscuits served to them without leaving any leftovers. To avoid this ambiguity, the ST expression is restructured by the translator as “But you did not take the biscuit?” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 14).

Though not untranslatable, some colloquial ST expressions are modified in the TT to bring the meaning intended in the original expressions. For example, if translated literally, the expression *baśir sābēbēr kathā naʿ* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 104) would be “not the words of Mr. Bashir” which would not give the meaning intended in the ST. So, it is restructured semantically as “I am not asking you about Mr. Bashir” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 18). In this occasion, the modifications seem subtle if compared to the modification of the expression *kī manē halō?* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 109). It means “What came to your mind?” but is entirely restructured as “And what decision did you arrive at?” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 23). A similar modification is found in the translation of the ST expression *kautukēr ālō* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 124). It literally means “the light of a joke” but is considerably modified as “A mischievous smile” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 42).

Sometimes the tone of the ST expressions is captured in some TT expressions to convey the intended meaning. For example, the expression *ēkṭi kabitā ami likbba nā* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 141) is translated as “No, I won’t write even one poem” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 61) to capture the inner message of the ST expression. “No” is added at the beginning of the TT expression and “even” is added after “write” to capture the tone of negation and to bring the meaning close to the original expression. If “even” were not added, the TT expression concerned would mean that Nazrul is interested in writing plural poems. The same strategy is followed in case of translating another ST expression *ēkṭi kabitā naʿ* (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2015, p. 141) which appears in the TT as “No. Not even one poem” (Shamsul Haq, 1981/2009, p. 61).

Conclusion

Silence is made visible by Kabir Chowdhury in *The Blue Sting* using different expansion strategies of syntactic and lexical expansions. As for the syntactic expansions, the most prominent strategy as exhibited in his translation is the act of filling out of elliptic ST expressions. He has mainly used textual clues for this purpose. The acts of identifying the participants in events and those of identifying objects or events with abstracts are amply present in his translation. As for the identification of the participants in events, the most frequent identification is that of the third-person singular and plural pronouns referring respectively to a particular Pakistani soldier and the soldiers in general. Apart from this, Nazrul, the protagonist, is also identified in different places. As regards the identification of objects or events with abstracts, objects are more identified than events. The remaining type of syntactic expansion, namely “more explicit indication of relationals” is not found in the translation. As for lexical expansions, all three types – classifiers, descriptive substitutes and semantic restructuring – are used in *The Blue Sting*. In the case of classifiers, mainly possessives are used. Apart from this, some metonymic ST expressions are explicated using the ST expressions as the classifiers to the persons they actually stand for. As for descriptive substitutes, they are used to clarify culturally charged words, to tackle Bangla onomatopoeic expressions and to describe the linguistic items that are absent in the TL. As regards semantic restructuring, the translator has relied on both textual and extra-textual clues to tackle linguistic untranslatability, to capture the tone of some of the ST expressions, to bring the meaning close to the original expressions and to convey the meaning intended in the ST expressions.

All the expansions – both syntactic and lexical with all their sub-categories – have made the translation clear and easy to understand. If not captured properly, some of the implicit aspects of the ST could easily bewilder the TT readers and keep them constantly guessing. Capturing these instances of silences and making them visible through expansions, the translator – using the words of Ortega y Gasset – has made the ST accessible to TT readers.

Pure addition of any lexical item or any piece of information is not included in this study because they do not belong to the concept of expansion. Also, the instances of contraction made in the TT are not included in it because they are radically different from expansion. Though excluded from the scope of this study, the instances of both addition and contraction in *The Blue Sting* deserve to be investigated in the future.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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