

The Translation of Thai Standard Amplifiers into English

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This study aims to explore cross-language intensification in affirmative sentences by examining the translation of standard amplifiers, words that scale upward towards an assumed norm to emphasize a quality of any entities, from Thai into English. The data comprises 602 parallel concordance lines with 17 intensifying patterns, which were drawn from a corpus of eight works of fiction in Thai and their English translations translated by qualified translators. The analysis of the data found that in the English translation, English amplifiers (e.g. *very*, *really*) were found with the highest frequency, followed by intensified lexemes and comparative and superlatives respectively. The findings suggest that the tendency to transfer standard amplifiers was through lexical (TL amplifiers, intensified lexemes, emphasizing adjectives) and syntactic means (comparatives and superlatives, exclamatory constructions, and metaphors), and that the selection was made in accordance with the context. Compared with the Thai standard amplifier *maak2* ‘much-many’, the linguistic devices used in the English translations tend to reveal a stronger force of intensity. The findings can provide pedagogical implications in translations. They, for instance, can raise students’ awareness of the various linguistic forms used in transferring intensity expressed in the source text and also provide norms in translating amplifiers from Thai to English, which might be useful for students in translation programs. In addition, students may realize that if a literary work loses the expressivity of feelings or emotion, it becomes uninteresting and lacks vivacity, thus losing appeal to the TL reader.

Keywords: standard amplifiers, *maak2*, intensification

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1 Introduction

Amplifiers are defined as adverbs that perform a semantic function to “scale upwards from an assumed norm” (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik, 1985, p.590) such as *so*, *completely*, *extremely*, *fully*, *perfectly*, *quite*, *thoroughly*, *totally*, etc. They are linguistic devices that people use to express different degrees of their feelings and to catch the hearer’s attention in everyday life, and are widely used in a variety of situations, from formal speech to casual conversation. Consider the following example.

Nora: I say tis very mild the drink is very mild anyway.

Ellen: Oh very mild.

Nora: Yeah.

(Murphy, 2010, p. 111)

The underlined words are amplifiers and they are used to highlight the meaning of the utterances and feelings. They can help Ellen understand Nora’s feelings towards the drink; without these words, the taste or the degree of the drink may not be conveyed to the hearer (Ellen) who may be the drink seller. The amplifier *very*, when translated into Thai, can be conveyed through words such as มาก /maak2¹/, เหลือเกิน /lvva4 kqpn0/, จัง /cang0/ or even a vulgar word โคตร /koot2/ depending on the context e.g. time, participants (Poonlarp, 2009), thus suggesting that there is a range of possibilities in the translated version. In a similar vein, translating the Thai amplifiers into English is likely to involve a range of linguistic devices. The example shows how มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’ has been translated into English.

ST: ชีวิต เขา อามัพ มาก
chii0wit3 khaw4 aa0phap2 maak2
 ‘Life his **unfortunate very**’
 TT: “He’s had *such an unfortunate life*.”

(Asokesin, 2014, p. 13)

In the translated text, the noun phrase *such an unfortunate life* was used to transfer the amplifier มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’ in the ST to intensify the feeling of the speaker toward the life of the person being mentioned. Instead of providing a more literal and standard translation using *very* or *so*, the

¹ The phonetic transcription of the Linguistic Research Unit of Chulalongkorn University (LRU) system (Schoknecht, 2000) was employed to ease the process of transcribing Thai phonetic transcription for computer input. The system deviates from IPA, i.e., ng=/ŋ/, c=/tɕ/, ch=/tɕh/, or vowels, i.e. x=/ɛ/, @=/ɔ/, and double letters represent length of vowels. Number 0-4 are used to mark the 5 tones, i.e., 0=mid, 1=low, 2=falling, 3=high, 4=rising conforming to the traditional names of Thai tones.

noun phrase *such an unfortunate life* has been opted for, producing a stronger degree than the ST. This indicates that in transferring intensification, various kinds of linguistic representations can be used to intensify the feeling or emotion.

While research has been carried out on the study of English amplifiers across languages such as English and Spanish (e.g. Baños, 2013), English and German (Meng, 2008), English and Thai (Poonlarp, 2009; Sirijanchuen, Poonlarp, & Rangponsumrit, 2011), studies on the translation of amplifiers from Thai to English seem to be lacking. Findings from previous research have shown how amplifiers, despite being a small element in language, help to add emotivity not only in daily life but also in literary works, as well as contribute to expressive linguistics. And while it has generally been taught in Thai-to-English translation classes that a Thai amplifier should be rendered into English through an English amplifier, such as *very*, *so*, *really*, etc., the authors felt that the choice of other linguistic devices were equally possible, yet these options have not been explored or mentioned in textbooks. To bridge this gap in the literature, this paper, therefore, looks at linguistic realizations used in translating amplifiers from Thai into English. Through the use of a corpus, the authors were able to work with authentic data and uncover patterns in translating amplifiers, and as a result, would be able to offer some guidelines to translation teachers/trainers as to how to deal with these linguistic elements.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Intensification

Scaling upward or downtoning degrees of feelings and emotions can be done through the process called *intensification*. Partington (1993) highlights its communicative value, noting that intensification is used as a vehicle for impressing, praising, persuading, insulting, and generally influencing the listener's reception of the message.

The phenomenon of intensification is regarded as multifaceted aspects--having a variety of different features (e.g. cross-linguistic and contrastive perspectives) (Napoli & Ravetto, 2017). Linguistically, intensification involves a wide range of studies: from typical diachrony to social linguistics and stylistic studies. Indeed, the topic of intensification has always been of interest to many diachronical linguists such as Bolinger (1972), Ito & Tagliamonte (2003), Partington (1993), Peters (1994), Quirk et al. (1985), thus providing insights into the mechanisms of linguistic change (Wang, 2016). Other researchers (e.g. Biber et al, 2004; Bolinger, 1972; Conrad & Biber, 2000; Greenbaum, 1969; Quirk et al, 1985; Paradis, 2003; Stenström, 1999; Stenström et al, 2002) have conducted

stylistics studies concerning the differences in the use of intensifiers across different registers. A case in point can be seen in Diani (2008)'s study which examined *really* as an emphaser in spoken and written academic discourse. Studying intensification from collocational perspectives has also been conducted extensively, as in the works of Bäcklund (1973), Altenberg (1991), Kennedy (2003), etc.

Intensification has been found to be realized through four processes: phonological, morphological, lexical, and syntactic processes (Poonlarp, 2009). As regards phonological process, intensification can be realized through the stretching of the vowel sound, higher pitch, or increased stress to intensify and emphasize meaning. For example, in 'The new dress is *ni::ce*,' the sound of the word *nice* is lengthened to show that the new dress is really nice. Another process which is one of the most common ways to intensify one's speech is lexical, through lexical choices such as the use of adverbs of degree (e.g. *very, so, really*), emphasizing adjectives (e.g. *terrible* pain), intensified lexemes (e.g. using *gorgeous* instead of *very lovely*), metaphors (e.g. using *was still a green* meaning that someone who have had very little experience of life or a particular job. Syntactic processes involve the use of repetition and exclamatory constructions; for example, "*How dark it is!*" introduces a scale of darkness to an extreme degree. As Calpelstrati (2017) notes, "intensification is a broad phenomenon that offers many different ways to intensify a language unit." (p.309).

Words that can be used to downtone or intensify the expressive or emotive meaning are called *intensifiers*. Quirk and Greenbaum (1976) proposed three categories of intensifiers: emphasizers, amplifiers, and downtoners. Amplifiers can be further divided into maximizers and boosters, while downtoners are subcategorized into compromizers, minimizers, and approximators. Their classification is shown below.

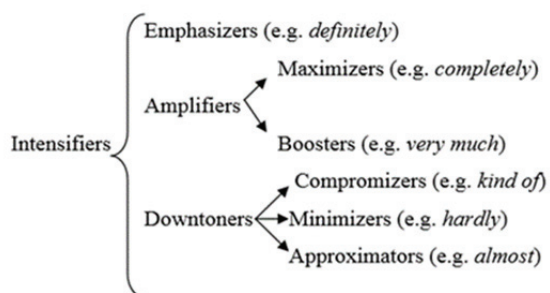


Figure 1. Classification of intensifiers

From the figure, amplifiers include maximizers which can denote the upper extreme of the scale, and boosters which denote a high degree and a high point on the scale. Boosters are an open class, which allows new

expressions to replace older ones that have become dull and uninteresting (Quirk et al., 1972). The term ‘amplifier’ itself has been called differently by scholars albeit similar in its core meaning, e.g. intensifiers (e.g. Allerton, 1987; Dahl, 2004; King, 2016; Poonlarp, 2009), boosters (Bolinger, 1972), upgrading intensifiers (Cacchiani, 2009), and upwards intensifiers (Pintarić & Zrinka, 2014). To avoid terminological confusion, the term ‘amplifier’ was adopted in this research.

There are several research that explore intensifiers from various perspectives such as cognitive linguistics (e.g. King, 2016; Mandler & Cánovas, 2014), syntax (e.g. Aijmer, 2016), corpus-based study and genre (e.g. Lee, 2014; Martínez, 2016; Wittouck, 2011), and translation (e.g. Baños, 2013; Mahmood, 2015; Meng, 2008; Pintarić, 2012; Pintarić & Zrinka, 2014; Poonlarp, 2009). Since this current study focuses on the translation of amplifiers, only research on translation are discussed. For example, Meng (2008) analysed the usage of the intensifier “quite” in two English novels *Wuthering Heights* and *Pride and Prejudice*, and examined the different translation strategies that are used to translate the intensifier “quite” in the Chinese translated versions of the two novels, and found that the degree and meaning of “quite” are decided by the boundedness of its modifying heads. The findings also suggest that it is impossible to produce exact translations of the amplifier “quite” because of its vague nature and the boundedness of its modifying heads in different situations. The complexity of the degree of “quite” requires translators to make decisions according to the specific situations. Baños (2013) who explored how intensifiers in the TV series *Friends* have been dubbed into Spanish, indicates that adverbial intensifiers were most frequently translated by means of degree adverbs in the target language, followed by omission and use of morphological resources as intensifiers (e.g. prefixes and suffixes). Most degree adverbs are standard and typical intensifiers found in written texts (e.g. *muy/tan* and *mucho/tanto*) rather than in colloquial conversation. The findings have shown that adverbial intensifiers (such as ‘very’, ‘so’, ‘really’, ‘totally’, ‘pretty’, etc.) are also common in fictional dialogue and were translated into the Spanish language by using degree adverbs e.g. adverbial intensifiers, and downtoners; lexical-semantic resources e.g. intensified lexemes, metaphors; and exclamative clauses, etc.

There are few works on the translation of intensifiers. The most relevant is by Poonlarp (2009) who explored intensifiers translated from English into Thai, focusing on *so*, *very*, and *really*. She found that three linguistic processes were used in translating the intensifiers: the lexical processes (e.g. intensifiers and metaphorical expressions), the morpho-syntactico-phonological processes (e.g. repetition and combinatory structures); and lastly the phonological processes in the final particles. Since there has been no study on the translation of Thai intensifiers into English to date, this article looks at the translation of Thai amplifiers into English focusing on มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’.

2.2 The amplifier maak2 ‘much-many’

According to the definition given by The Royal Institute Dictionary of Thai (1999), the semantic characteristic of มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’ is an expression of quantity, whereas its part of speech is an adverb used to modify verbs, as in กินมาก /kiin0 maak2/ ‘eat-a lot’ and nouns, such as คนมาก /khon0 maak2/ ‘people-many’. Such usage can be said to have been extended to modification of quality e.g. สวยมาก /suuj4 maak2/ ‘beautiful much’ although this usage has not been mentioned in the Royal Institute Dictionary of Thai (1999 from now on, RIDT). มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’ can collocate with an adjectival verb and if it is used with a mass noun, it means ‘much’ (Diller, 1994). In fact, the word is viewed as the equivalent of the English intensifier *very* due to its grammaticalization and its ability to co-occur with almost every verb, adjective, adverb, and noun in Thai (Poonlarp, 2009). The co-occurrence patterns can be exemplified as follows:

Table 1. The Co-occurrence Patterns of the Amplifiers มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’

Co-occurrence patterns	Examples
verb + มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’	ST: ผม <u>ผิดหวัง</u> เขา มาก <i>phom4 phit3wang4 khao4 maak2</i> ‘I <u>disappoint</u> him <i>very</i> ’ TT: I was so disappointed in him.
adjective+มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’	ST: ท่าน เป็น คน ที่ <u>น่านับถือ</u> มาก <i>taan2 pen0 khon0 tii2 naa2nap1tvv4 maak2</i> ‘She is human who <u>admirable</u> <i>very</i> ’ TT: I found her extremely admirable.
noun + มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’	ST: Ja เป็น คน มี <u>เพื่อน</u> มาก <i>caa4 pen0 khon0 mii0 phvvan2 maak2</i> ‘Ja is human have <u>friends</u> <i>a lot</i> ’ TT: Ja had many friends.

From the table above, the underlined words in each structure are elements being intensified and the italicized words are Thai amplifiers used to intensify them. It can be seen that the Thai amplifiers มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’ can be used with verb, adjective, and noun. The amplifier ‘very’ in English, on the other hand, occurs only with an adjective and adverb, but never with a noun. มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’ can also co-occur with other intensifying expressions to signal a strong degree, such as จริงๆ /cing0 cing0/

² สวย /suuj4/ is regarded as a kind of verb called ‘adjectival verb’, which is a verb behaving like ‘adjectives’ (Prasithratsint, 2000).

‘really’, เที่ยว /chiiaw0/ ‘once’, ทีเดียว /thii0 diaw0/ ‘once’ (Poonlarp, 2009).

The word มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’ can be referred to as a *standard amplifier*, as it has been used too often so that people may not be aware of its expressiveness. Poonlarp (2009) regards this kind of amplifier as “conventionalized, as it has attained an institutional status, but at the same time has lost emotional emphasis.” (p.103). Consequently, it becomes an ordinary scalar construction in Thai.

The Thai amplifier มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’ involves a metaphorical extension, having undergone a crossover in the semantic field, from modification of concrete description (quantity) to intensification of abstraction (quality) and from other semantic fields grounded in human experience, which perhaps explains its metaphorical nature (Poonlarp, 2009). However, it is usually treated as a “dead metaphor” because it has been used so often that people may not be aware of its metaphoricity and this may bring about the loss of emotive effect in an actual use. In other words, the amplifier มาก /maak2/ has been used repeatedly and extensively, so it has lost emotive expression.

2.3 Translation

According to Nida and Taber (2003) “Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style”. (p.12). From this definition, translation not only involves a change of forms such as the actual words, phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, etc., be it spoken or written, but also the transfer of meaning of the source language into the receptor language. In other words, translation is the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalence or closest equivalent textual material in another language (Catford, 1965; Wilss, 1977, as cited in House, 2016; Nida & Taber, 1982; Newmark, 1988).

Hatim and Munday (2004) point out that translation can be seen from two different perspectives: 1) a ‘process’, which refers to the activity of turning a ST into a TT in another language, and 2) a ‘product’, i.e., the translated text.). Regarding this concept, this research is the product-based translation study.

Regarding the strategies of translation, two major polarities have long been discussed: word-for-word translation and sense-for-sense translation. The first is regarded as “literal translation” which is to render each word in the TL by following nearly the form of the SL. For literal translation, many translation scholars suggest similar translation strategies with different terms. Catford (1965:25), for instance, proposes *rank-bound* translation involving the selection of TL equivalents of the same rank (i.e. morpheme, word, group, clause, or sentence). This has to do with “using TL equivalents which are not appropriate to their location in the TL text, and which are not

justified by the interchangeability of SL and TL texts in one and the same situation.” (ibid). Rank-bound translation can perhaps be equated with word-for-word translation.

While literal translation may not be applicable in all cases, a freer strategy may be opted for. “Non-literal translation” or “free translation” deals with reproducing the general meaning of the SL in the TL. In the free translation strategy, the translated text can be translated freely without regarding the structures of the original text (Supol, 1998). Free translation may be called *sense-for-sense* as the former has been used pejoratively to refer to bad translation (Poonlarp, 2009). Therefore, most studies on translation seem to have inclined towards the translation based on transferring the meaning of the SL to that of the TL without distortion despite the mismatches in terms of forms between the two languages (Techacharoenrungrueang, 2017:44).

Prior to the act of translating, there are various factors that translators need to take into consideration. That is, they need to understand lexical and structural meanings as well as contextual factors e.g. the linguistic context. Then they translate with appropriate TL forms and closest meaning to the SL text. Techacharoenrungrueang (2017) nicely captures the complexity of the task: “Translation is, of course, said to be a complicated task due to the lack of isomorphism between meaning and form; that is, under a particular circumstance, there is no one-to-one relationship between meaning and form.” (p. 44). A case in point can be seen from the adverb *badly* presented below.

He *needs* the money *badly*.
He *treats* his servant *badly*.

Both *badly* modify verbs (needs and treats), but the first one functions as an intensifier and the second one is a manner of adjunct (Greenbaum, 2012). These two words are similar in form, but they exhibit different functions and meanings. Techacharoenrungrueang (2017) stresses that “the selection of a particular word needs to be done carefully as words having the same meaning may not be exactly the same. This is because each word can imply or suggest the additional or special meaning in accordance with the socio-cultural context, i.e. language registers, naturalness, and appropriateness of language use.” (p. 44).

3 Research Method

To investigate the linguistic devices used in the translation of the Thai standard amplifier มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’, this research analyzes concordances containing the term มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’ and its variants.

The method used in selecting the samplings, as well as collecting and analyzing the data is presented in the following.

3.1 Samplings

Eight Thai fictional writings were selected for this study: 1) *Prachatipati Bon Sen Khanan (Democracy, Shaken and Stirred)*, 2) *Luk Isaan (A Child of the Northeast)*, 3) *Wela Nai Khuad Kaew (Time in a Bottle)*, 4) *Khwamsuk Khong Kati (The Happiness of Kati)*, 5) *Poon Pid Thong: Gold-pasted Cement*, 6) *Phan Ma Ba (Mad Dogs & Co)*, 7) *Laplae-Kaengkhoi (Brotherhood of Kaeng Khoi)*, and 8) *Roi Wasan (A Walk through Spring)*. The SL texts totaled 3,020 pages and the English translation 3,432 pages with approximately 950,000 words. The Thai works of fiction were purposively selected based on three criteria: 1) they are all expressive texts; 2) the translation is well-qualified since they were translated by professional and qualified translators; and 3) most of these fictional writings received the S.E.A. Write Award written by well-known authors.

3.2 Data collection

To collect the data, Thai sentences containing standard amplifiers were manually extracted from the books and put into the Microsoft Excel. Then, the source text was paired up with the target sentence to find the amplifiers that match the ST. Examples are provided below.

SL Text	TL Text	Fic.	SL Amplifiers	Ling.express	Elements being intensified (Thai)	Elements being intensified (Eng.)	Linguistic realization
"ค่ะ... เก่งมาก" (179)	"Isn't she Phet?" "Certainly, very smart." (207)	PPT	มาก	very	เฟ็	smart	booster
คุณสายจี่ชอบก่อกวนเพราะลูกคนนี้น่ะมากนะคะ (55)	She's got only one son and I think he's really terrible. He's hurt his mother badly. (66)	PPT	มาก	badly	ก่อกวน	hurt	booster
คุณพวกนี้เก่งมากนะพ่อ (35)	"Papa, those Vietnamese are so smart." (58)	CN	มาก	so	เฟ็	smart	booster
สู้เก่งมาก (19)	You were very good, (33)	CN	มาก	very	เฟ็	good	booster
"นั่งลง เก่งมาก..." (66)	"Sit down. That was very good."	CN	มาก	very	เฟ็	good	booster
ถ้าหาได้ถึงสามตัวก็นับว่าเก่งมาก (114)	You must have been very clever to get them." (174)	CN	มาก	very	เฟ็	clever	booster

Figure 2. The spreadsheet showing how the data are structured.

The figure above shows the SL text and the TL text with fictional work's names (PPT stands for *Poon Pid Thong* and CN stands for *Child of the Northeast*), SL amplifiers, TL linguistic expressions, elements being intensified of both Thai and English, linguistic realizations, and intensification processes. These data were ordered respectively and were analyzed.

It should be noted here that only the affirmative sentences were selected. The reason for selecting only affirmative sentences as the object of study is primarily because these constructions carry emotive intensity on the

part of the speaker, while constructions such as comparative sentences, questions, and negation, may not convey intensity and the English translation may yield results other than amplification. To illustrate, comparative constructions (e.g. *มากกว่า* /maak2 kwa1/ ‘more than’) simply indicate the comparison of two elements rather than vouch for the speaker’s emotive intensity, and are usually translated with comparative marker ‘than’. In negative sentences, the degree of intensity is unclear and difficult to gauge, and the sentences may even have a downtoning effect rather than intensification, while questions are generally directed at the hearer rather than express the speakers’ strong feelings.

A total of 602 concordance lines with 17 amplifying patterns have been identified and extracted. The data saturated as they reached to the very limited variation.

Table 2. List of Thai Standard Amplifiers

Thai amplifiers	Number of tokens
	Frequency
มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’	545
มากๆ /maak2 maak2/ ‘much-much’	25
มากเลย /maak2 lqj0/ ‘much-beyond’	20
หลาย /laaj4/ ‘much-many’	12
อย่างมาก /jaang1 maak2/ ‘much’	11
หลายๆ /laaj4 laaj4/ ‘much-many’	10
เป็นอันมาก /pen0an0maak/ ‘much’	10
มากนัก /maak2 nak2/ ‘much-so much’	9
มากที่สุด /maak2 thii0diiaw0/ ‘much-once’	8
มากเหลือเกิน /maak2 lvva4 kqqn0/ ‘much-exceedingly’	6
มากจริงๆ /maak2 cing0cing0/ ‘much-true-true’	5
มากเดียว /maak2 chiiaw0/	2
มากๆเลย /maak2 lqj0/ ‘much-beyond’	2
อย่างมากๆ /jaang1 maak2 maak2/ ‘much-much’	2
เป็นอย่างมาก /pen0jaang1 maak2/ ‘much’	2
เยอะมาก /jq3 maak2/ ‘much-a lot’	2
มากขนาดนี้ /maak2 kha0naat1nii3/ ‘much-this size’	1
มากมายนัก /maak2maaj0/ ‘much-much-so much’	1
มากเท่ามาก /maak-thao1-maak2/ ‘much-equal-much’	1
Total	602

3.3 Data analysis

The data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Qualitative analysis was applied to the elements being intensified in both Thai and English as well as the intensifying expressions. Linguistic analysis was carried out on the data extracted in a bottom-up manner. Quantitative analysis was used to find the frequency of occurrence and percentage. That is, the frequency count was used to find the numbers of tokens, and percentage was used as a statistic device to find the average numbers and to rank them as ordinal data.

4 Results and Discussions

The findings reveal six types of linguistic expressions in English involving lexical and syntactic processes as shown in Table 3. The classification was made based on the different levels of language, that is, word level and clausal level. What occurs at word level (e.g. TL amplifiers, intensified lexemes, emphasizing adjectives) is classified as lexical processes, and those that involve elements larger than word are generally classified as syntactic processes.

Table 3. Linguistic Realizations of Thai Standard Amplifiers in the English Translations

Processes	Linguistic realizations	Frequency	Percentage
Lexical	TL amplifiers	284	47.17
	Intensified lexemes	73	12.12
	Emphasizing adjectives	16	2.65
Syntactic	Comparative and superlatives	39	6.47
	Exclamations	9	1.49
	Metaphors	8	1.32
	N/A	173	25.55
Total		602	100

Table 3 reveals all linguistic realizations that the translators used in translating the 602 concordance lines containing standard amplifiers. The frequency and percentage of occurrences in the table shows that the most

common linguistic realization (almost 50% of the total) is the TL (target language) amplifiers (e.g. *very, so, really*) followed by intensified lexemes (12.12%) comparative and superlatives (6.47%), and exclamations (1.49%) respectively. Nearly 26% of amplifiers were omitted in the translated text. It can be observed that the translators used a great deal of lexical intensification, which suggests that they may be effective devices in transferring the Thai amplifiers, which may suit to the contexts and structures in the TL as well as provide natural languages to the translated text. Intensifying elements were also found to be realized through syntactic processes including comparative and superlatives (6.47%), exclamatory constructions (1.49%) and metaphors (1.32%), but only to a small extent. They, however, can show significant and surprising aspects of intensification of Thai amplifiers in English. These intensifying devices were illustrated below with a selection of examples from the corpus.

4.1 Lexical processes

This class subsumes the use of the TL amplifiers, intensified lexemes, emphasizing adjectives.

4.1.1 TL amplifiers

The findings revealed that English amplifiers were used with the highest frequency (47.17 %) to transfer Thai amplifiers. These amplifiers can be classified into three main categories: boosters, maximizers, and downtoners as proposed by Quirk et al. (1972). Boosters which denote a high degree include the amplifiers *very, so, really, a lot, very much, badly, greatly*, etc. Among these amplifiers *very* is the most frequently found followed by *so, really, very much* and *a lot* respectively. Maximizers which denote the upper extreme of the scale consist of *quite, extremely, absolutely, tremendously, totally*, and so on. The maximizer *quite* was found most followed by *extremely* and *absolutely*. For downtoners, which reduce the force of the utterance, the minimizer *hardly* was found but only to a small extent. Examples (1), (2), and (3) show the use of English amplifiers *so, extremely, and tremendously* used in rendering the standard amplifier *maak2* ‘much-many’ in the ST respectively.

- (1) ST: Yuan0 phwak2 nii3 kheng1 maak2 na?2 phaw2
 ‘Yuan these DEM³ smart **very** PAR father’
 TT: “Papa, those Vietnamese are **so** smart,”

³ The following abbreviations represent some grammatical aspects: ASP for ASPECT, RLTV for relative pronoun, DEM for Demonstrative, PAR for PARTICLE, RECIP for RECIPROCAL, COMP for COMPLEMENTIZER “that”, NEG for negation, and DA for derogatory appellative.

(2) ST: ท่าน เป็น คน ที่ น่า นับถือ มาก
thaan2 pen0 khon0 thii2 naa2 nap2tvv4 maak2
 ‘He be human RLTV should respect **very**’

TT: “Oh, yes...I found her **extremely** admirable,”

(3) ST: พวก ย่า ชอบใจ กัน มาก
Phuuak2 jaa2 ch@@p2caj0 khan0 maak2
 ‘These grandmother like RECIPIENT **very**

ที่ อาจารย์ ให้ เกียรติ กัน
thii2 aa0caan0 haij2 khiiat khaan0
 ‘RLTV teacher give honor RECIPIENT’

TT: It pleases the grandmas **tremendously** that he observes proper etiquette of showing respect and consideration for them.

In the above examples, it is worth noting that the amplifiers used to convey the character’s feelings have a higher degree than the source text amplifiers. This phenomenon was also found in Poonlarp (2009)’s study. For example, the intensifier *very* was conveyed into Thai using expressions equivalent to the English maximizers ‘extremely’ (e.g. ที่สุด /thii2 sut1/ ‘at the edge’, สุดยอด /sut1 j@@t2/ ‘top’ or go beyond the boundary’ เหลือเกิน /lvva4 kqan0/ ‘excessively’).

In examples (2) and (3), *extremely* is equal to ‘exceedingly’ and ‘super’, and *tremendously* means to a very great amount. According to Cambridge Online Dictionary, these two words obviously show much stronger intensity than the source text *maak2* ‘much-many’. This shows that *very* has lost much of its emphatic force and tended to be replaced by other forms to retain the ST intensity. The three amplifiers (*so*, *extremely*, *tremendously*) are much more intense in meaning than the ST amplifier. The amplifier *so*, for instance, is more intense and “presumes that the listener or reader will be sympathetic to the speaker’s evaluation of the situation” while *very* simply express ‘high degree’ (Poonlarp, 2009, p.50).

4.1.2 Intensified lexemes

Intensified lexemes refer to words containing an element of evaluation superimposed on the main meaning (Ullmann, 1956, as cited in Poonlarp 2009, p. 44). This lexical mechanism is called differently e.g. enrichment (Eggins & Slade, 1997), lexical metaphorizations or connotation-loaded lexemes, e.g. the intensity of the word *jabber* is stronger than the word *talk*, as in “What are you *jabbering/talking* about?” (Volek, 1987, as cited in Hübler, 1998), intensified lexemes (Baños, 2013). In other words, this kind of linguistic realization refers to the use of extreme adjectives or strong verbs (e.g. *furious*, *love*) for the Thai amplifiers with the word being intensified (e.g. โกรธมาก /khroot1 maak2/ ‘angry-very’, ชอบมาก /ch@@p2/ ‘like-very’).

- (4) ST: แม่ โหมโห มาก ที่ พ่อ ดูถูก เอา
Mxx2 moho4 maak2 thii2 phaw2 duu0thuuk1 ?aw0
 ‘Mom **upset very** RLTV father insult take’
 TT: “Ma was **furious** that Pa could be so dismissive,”
- (5) ST: “ลูกสาว เธอ สวย ดี น่ารัก มาก”
Luuk2saaw4 thq0 suaj4 dii0 narak2 maak2
 ‘Daughter your beautiful good **lovely very**’
 TT: “Her daughter looked **gorgeous**.”
- (6) ST: “แหม... คน เดี่ยวนี้... ร้าย มาก นะคะ คุณอา”
Mxx4 khon0 diew4nii3 raj3 maak2 nakha khunaa0
 ‘DA people right now **mean very** PAR aunt’
 TT: “Well, people are **cruel** these days, Auntie,”

From the examples (4), (5), and (6), it can be observed that the translators used intensified lexemes to increase the force of feeling to the extreme level without the help of amplifiers. This phenomenon is also found in Baños (2013). In the sentence ‘The taste is good.’ instead of intensifying the adjective ‘good’ using common intensifiers, the translator conveyed this utterance by using an adjective that is already intensified-- *delicioso* (delicious) instead of just *bueno* (good). According to Baños, “this strategy is common in colloquial conversation both in Spanish and in English and the use of intensified lexemes seems an appropriate strategy to reduce the text and achieve isochrony without losing the emphasis of the original.” (p. 538). In a similar vein, Leech and Svartvik (1994) also state that in familiar speech some adjectives and adverbs e.g. ‘good’ or ‘nice’ have little meaning so other adjectives such as ‘terrific’ or ‘fantastic’ are employed. This intensification process also demonstrates a stronger emphatic force than the source text. For example, instead of intensifying the feeling ‘โหมโห’ /*moho4*/ ‘upset’ in (4) by using an adverbial amplifier e.g. *very, so, really*, etc., the translators opted for the strong adjective *furious* instead of *very angry*. The adjective *furious* is superimposed since it means *extremely angry* (Collins COBUILD Online Dictionary), which is considered exceeding the degree of the standard amplifier *maak2* ‘much-many’. Similarly, the word *cruel* also signifies the extreme degree. According to Cambridge Online Dictionary, *cruel* carries the meaning of “*extremely* unkind and unpleasant and causing pain to people or animals intentionally”. Therefore, instead of using ‘very mean’ *cruel* was selected due to its strong degree.

4.1.3 Emphasizing adjectives

In addition to adverbs of degree that are used to modify the intensity of feelings, emphasizing adjectives are also found to be used. They are used to emphasize nouns and they occur in the attributive position. In the examples below, the adjectives *real, great, and whole-hearted* substitute the Thai standard amplifiers มาก/*maak2*/ ‘much-many’ and หลายๆ/*laaj4 laaj4*/ respectively.

- (7) ST: ผม นี่นะ เป็น คน โง่
phom4 nii2nal pen0 khon0 ngo2
 ‘I me be human fool’
 ใน ด้าน ความอ่อนไหว แล้วยิ่ง โง่ มาก
nai0 dan2 khwam@@n1waj4 lxxw3 jing2 ngo2 maak2
 in side sensitivity also more fool **very**
 TT: I’m a fool. When it comes to sensitivity, I’m a **real** fool.
- (8) ST: ใจซื่อ มือสะอาด ผม นับถือ มาก
jai0svv2 mvv0 saaj0 phom4 nap2tvv4 maak2
 ‘heart-honest hand clean I respect **very**’
 TT: I have **great** respect for your clean heart and hands.
- (9) ST: อย่างนั้น ก็ ขอบใจ หลากๆ
jaang1nan3 kh@@2 kh@@p0jai0 laaj4laaj4
 ‘then so thank **very-very**’
 TT: then the caravan offered its **whole-hearted** thanks to these good people.

In examples (7), (8), and (9), the adjective *real* was used to intensify the foolishness of the speaker, while *great* was used to increase the emphasis of respect, and *whole-hearted* was used to intensify the feeling of gratitude towards the villagers who offered food and tools for finding fish in the river. The possible explanation for this phenomenon is that the structures of the target text do not allow the use of amplifiers because the words being intensified are nouns, so adding adverbs to increase intensity may not be possible. In (8), the word โง่ /ngo2/ ‘fool’ is a verb in Thai, but became a noun when it was rendered to English. In this regard, to put emphasis on respect, an adjective may be more appropriate. As a result, this linguistic device was used in intensification and it forms a noun phrase in the target text, which is different from the source text’s structures where the words being intensified by amplifiers are verbs, not nouns.

4.2 Syntactic process

The syntactic process concerns the use of syntactic structures including comparatives and superlatives, exclamative clauses and metaphors.

4.2.1 Comparatives and superlatives

In addition to degree adverbs and lexical-semantic resources, comparatives and superlatives are also found. Comparison is used to express the notion that a person, thing or situation has more or less of a quality. That is, it can mark a gradable adjective for comparative or superlative degree. Since the meaning of comparative and superlative involves a degree, comparison can be used for intensification (Wouden & Foolen, 2017). In this study, 6.47% of the translation involves comparatives and superlatives. Although this is

not a large number, it shows significant linguistic features in transferring intensifiers from the ST. In fact, it is normal in everyday communication, especially in conversation, to use graded adjectives without mentioning the other entity in the comparison as can be seen below.

- (10) ST: เขา เป็น สูตินรีแพทย์ ที่ หล่อ อารมณ์ ดี
Khao4 pen0 su4ti0narii0phxxt2 thii2 l@@1 aarom0 dii0
 ‘He is obstetrician RLTV handsome mood good
 มี อธิยาศัย ซึ่ง ทำให้ คนไข้ อบอุ่น
mii0 aathayasaj4 svng2 tham0haj2 khon0khaj2 opluun1
 ‘have courtesy RLTV make patient warm
 อย่างมาก
jang1maak2
 ‘very’

TT: He was a handsome obstetrician who was funny and friendly. His personality helped his patient feel **more** secure.

- (11) ST: บิดา และ มารดา เลี้ยง ของเขา
Bida0 lx2 maan0da0 liiang3 kh@@ngkhao4
 ‘Father and mother feed POSS
 ดู แก่ และ ทรวดโทรม ลงไป มาก
duu0 kx1 lx2 sut2som0 long0 paj0 maak2
 ‘seem **old** and decline down **very**’

TT: His father and stepmother looked **older than** the last time they had met.

- (12) ST: ทิดฮอด ร้อง ขึ้น ว่า ดี หลาย
Thid Haat3 r@@ng3 khvvn2 wa2 dii0 laaj4
 ‘Tid-hod say up RLTV **good very**’

TT: Tid-hod said that it was **the best** gift he could think of.

Examples (10) and (11) show the use of comparative (more, older) and superlative (the best) in rendering the intensifier มาก /maak2/ and หลาย /laj4/. These structures show or are related to the commitment of the speaker about the degree of security, age, and quality respectively. The first two examples used comparatives with the periphrastic forms *more* and the inflected form *-er than* to convey the standard amplifier มาก /maak2/ and more formal standard amplifier อย่างมาก /jang1maak2/; while, superlatives (the best) in the example (12) was used with หลาย /laj4/. The use of this linguistic device may be due to the constraint of the target text’s words. For example, to translate the example clause as ‘to make his patients feel very warm’ will produce a different meaning in the target text, thus the translator used the comparative *more* to indicate that the patients feel more secure when they met a kind doctor, rather than an unfriendly doctor. It is worth mentioning that the translator translated not at the lexical level but the phrasal level. Comparative constructions, therefore, not only observe similarity or dissimilarity but also contain intensifying constructions which convey

stronger degree of feelings (König, 2017; Wouden & Foolen, 2017).

4.2.2 Exclamatory constructions

The exclamatory construction is another linguistic feature found in transferring the Thai amplifier มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’. According to Downing and Locke (2006), exclamative clauses are sometimes considered an emotive element superimposed on the declarative rather than as a distinct mood. This type of amplification involves the interrogative words *what* and *how* and shares the scalar basis of adjectival degree modification (Siemund, 2017). This category was rarely found in the data (1.49%) but it can show strong emotive intensity as can be seen from examples (13)-(15).

(13) ST: “อู๋ยตาย สะดวก มาก จริง ๆ”
 uuj3taj0 sa0duak maak2 cing0cing0
 ‘Oh convenient very really’

TT: “**How convenient!**”

(14) ST: เช้า วันนี้ แม่ ของ คุณ สวย มาก
 chaw3 waan0nii3 mxx2 kh@@ng4 khuun0 suuj4 maak2
 ‘morning today mother POSS Koon beautiful very’

TT: “**How beautiful** his mother looked this morning.”

(15) ST: อากาศ สดชื่น มาก
 aa0kaat1 sot1chvvn2 maak2
 ‘air fresh very’

TT: “**And what a day.**”

The use of exclamative clauses is probably motivated by the speech act or the type of utterance. In (13), the speaker interjected, which may motivate the translator to use an exclamative construction beginning with *How* i.e. “how convenient!”. In (14) and (15), on the other hand, the source texts are affirmative statements, which are not involved in the exclamative sense. Instead of translating with the same form as the source text (e.g. Koon’s mother was *very* beautiful this morning.); however, the translators conveyed them to the English language in the form of exclamatory constructions as in (13) “*How beautiful* his mother looked this morning.”. This kind of form are examples of what Elliot (1974) called ‘absolute’ exclamations, which “express particularly strong emotional response” (ibid: 241). The use of interjections may indicate the intensification of positive expressiveness, as Quirk et al. note that *how* and *what* in exclamations are almost equivalent to the amplifier *so*.

According to Quirk and Greenbaum (1973)’s view on adjectives and interrogative ‘how’, “the word is used as a pro-form for degree intensifiers of the adjective or adverb in questions and exclamations” (p. 256), for example, *How efficient is he? How beautiful she is!*, but not for the adjectives that scale measurement e.g. *tall, old*, etc. That is, the exclamatory

constructions restrictively co-occurred with particular semantic classes of adjectives that refer to a quality signifying value on a scale, in this case, *convenient* and *beautiful*. In informal or familiar forms of English, emphatic content or intensification can be realized through exclamation (Biber et al., 1999; Leech & Svartvik, 1994; Quaglio, 2009, as cited in Baños, 2013). Therefore, in addition to the common amplifiers (e.g. *very*), exclamation is a linguistic choice in the intensification process.

4.2.3 Metaphors

Metaphors are personal imaginative insight which transcends the existing semantic limits of the language that enlarges the hearers' or readers' emotion in intellectual awareness (Dagut, 1976). Using metaphor for intensification can also make the TL readers see a concrete picture for an abstract concept in the SL text. In other words, metaphor expressions allow conceptual mappings from concrete to abstract domains (Paradis, 2008). In everyday spoken language, metaphorical forms somehow have become a normal way of expressing a certain meaning and they are commonplace in the language of fiction. Examples are given below.

- (16) ST: คุณ นึก อาย และ กลัว มาก
khuun0 nuk1 aaj0 lx3 khuaa0 maak2
 'Koon think shy and **fear very**'
 TT: Koon **felt a knot in his stomach.**"
- (17) ST: คุณ ดีใจ มาก
khuun0 dii0caj0 maak2
 'Koon **happy very**'
 TT: He **couldn't believe his ears,**
- (18) ST: “สมมุติ ว่า ไข่ ห้อง นั้น
som4muut2 waa2 aj2 h@@ng2 nan3
 'suppose RLTV DA room DEM'
 ไม่ ใส่ กุญแจ คัดล็อก สายยู
maj2 saj1 kun0cx0 khl@@ng3 saj4 juu0
 'NEG wear key hook hasp'
 ก็ เข้า ได้ สบาย มาก
kh@@2 khaw2 daj2 sa0baj0 maak2
 so enter get **easy very**'
 TT: If the room isn't secured, **it's a piece of cake.**

In (16) and (17), the intensification conveyed by metaphors are associated with the body: stomach and ears. they are regarded as metonymic-based metaphors (quoted from Kövecses, 2018), i.e. to understand the degree of intensity in terms of physical experiences and physiological reactions (e.g. *couldn't believe his ears, felt a knot in his stomach*). It is also worth noticing that, from the examples above, the

metaphors *felt a knot in his stomach* (shy and afraid very much), *couldn't believe his ears* (happy very much), *a piece of cake* (very easy) were used to transfer not only the standard amplifier มาก /maak2/ 'much-many' but also the entire verb phrase. That is, the unit of translation has been extended to phrasal level. Metaphors can reflect thoughts among people from different cultures through language use (Techacharoenrungrueang & Luksaneeyanawin, 2014). When used in the translation, metaphors allow the readers to grasp the feelings of the characters, and thereby understand the characters better. In contrast, if the translators simply conveyed the intensity by using amplifiers e.g. *very* or *so*, the emphatic force may be rendered but the feelings of the readers may not vivid and the content in this context may be dry.

5 Discussion

From the findings in terms of lexical process, TL amplifiers are the most preferred choice among the translators followed by intensified lexemes and emphasizing adjectives respectively, while linguistic realizations derived from the syntactic process are comparatives and superlatives, exclamatory constructions, and metaphors respectively. This result is compatible with previous studies which found that 'really', 'very' and 'so' are the most common adverbial intensifiers in English (Biber et al., 1999; Ito & Tagliamonte, 2003). The findings in this study reveal similar intensification processes with previous studies that Thai amplifiers tend to be transferred to the English language through lexical process e.g. amplifiers. Baños (2013)'s findings also show that adverbial intensifiers are most frequently translated by means of degree adverbs in the target language and most of them are standard and typical intensifiers. It can be explained that since the data in the source texts are standard amplifiers, the translated texts mostly employ standard or common amplifiers as well. It is worth noting, however, that other linguistic forms of intensity e.g. intensified lexemes, exclamatory constructions, metaphors, demonstrate a stronger force of intensity than the Thai standard amplifier maak2 'much-many', which in the translator's view may have lost emotional emphasis.

The degree of Thai amplifiers in the target text is also worth mentioning. That is, the intensity of some translated amplifiers was enhanced (e.g. *extremely*). However, according to Poonlarp (2009)'s viewpoints on degree of intensification, "the transfer of intensification is considered acceptable as long as the translation suggests the linguistic devices used function to scale upward a quality." (p.273). However, there are some translated amplifiers that have weaker intensity than the ST e.g. *hardly*, which Poonlarp (2009) says would not be considered appropriate as the effect is contrary to that of the ST.

6 Conclusion

The present study investigated the linguistic realizations of the translation of standard amplifiers in Thai through a corpus of eight fictional works in Thai, most of which were translated by highly-qualified translators. The findings revealed that there are various linguistic representations. Apart from common amplifiers (e.g. *very*, *really*, and *so*) Thai amplifiers were translated into English through various linguistic realizations such as through metaphors, intensified lexemes, and comparatives and superlatives, and it is interesting to note that in some cases the target text features words with a higher degree than the source text (e.g. using *extremely* for *maak2* ‘very’). The study also supports the idea of previous studies (Poonlarp, 2009) that มาก /maak2/ ‘much-many’ is primarily quantity that has long been extended to modification of quality. It can be concluded that standard amplifiers in Thai can be realized to English through a number of linguistic expressions, and they are employed based on the target structures and translator’s decision due to the aspect of fictional genre that allow creativity to be used. Therefore, this study is limited in its scope to a specific genre of fictional works, so other genres e.g., movies subtitles, animation, academic texts, and document genres should be studied in the future to see how they are used, how they are different or similar from the fictional works, and why they are used.

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