

# Translation in the Digital Age



## *Translation 4.0*

*Edited by*

Carsten Sinner

Christine Paasch-Kaiser

Johannes Härtel

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Carsten Sinner, Christine Paasch-Kaiser  
and Johannes Härtel

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Translation in the Digital Age: Translation 4.0

Edited by Carsten Sinner, Christine Paasch-Kaiser and Johannes Härtel

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# INTRODUCTION

CARSTEN SINNER AND  
CHRISTINE PAASCH-KAISER  
LEIPZIG UNIVERSITY, LEIPZIG

We all know these are difficult times for humanities and the arts, and particularly for translation studies. In some countries, academic institutions dedicated to the training of translators and interpreters and to research in translation studies are asked at regular intervals (or whenever governments have to find new ways of reducing costs) why translators and interpreters have to be trained at a university instead of being taught at technical colleges. Some institutes have had to close, reduce the courses they offer or fuse with other institutions and see their foci in teaching and research reduced to an auxiliary (sub)discipline.

The view that translation, interpreting and translatology face major challenges is something most scholars in the area of translation studies will probably have heard in debates or read in articles on translation. New technologies allow new ways of investigating our profession, analysing the process of performing these acts of linguistic mediation, or the outcome of our work, and even make it possible to take a fresh look at old data, such as the impact of translation on Portuguese society in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, or the role of interpreters during wars that took place long before it was possible to tape them. But apart from a certain improvement in terms of research possibilities, what else does the future hold for translation and interpreting?

Over the last few years scholars have commented in different fora on translation and interpreting on the need for a (more) future-oriented translatology, or reflected on what the future might bring. The base line of these discussions can be summarised in one sentence: “What the future holds for translation is basically uncertain”. The same holds true for calls for papers for various conferences on digitalisation and translation that have been organised in recent years.

We could perhaps say this is normality for the future. But it is different from slogans such as “the future will be great” or “the future will be



difficult”. We simply don’t know, but we can guess, and we have to be prepared.

In a survey undertaken in preparation for the LICTRA congress *Translation 4.0: Translation in the Digital Age* held in Leipzig in March 2017, in 2015 we asked students for their opinion on how translation technologies already permeate our lives and how this might challenge the profession of translators and interpreters. Some respondents mentioned devices such as “wearable translators” that thrilled them—and made them doubt about the future of human translators.

Quite a few of those “wearable translators” are more “interpreters”, working with spoken language, rather than translators, and from the marketing campaigns one can tell that most of the devices we find on the market are for the (basic) needs of people travelling for business or leisure. In the case of some of the devices, the marketing clearly targets these groups, as the explanation for one of them in an advert about using the product “for guests” clearly shows: “[A] service for travel[-]related businesses whose patrons are tourists. Provide unique travel experiences by renting out ili to international guests” (Ili Translators 2017). At the same time, Japanese hotels are experimenting with voice-translating equipment in lifts, breakfast rooms, restaurants, etc. The combination of voice recognition, machine translation, and services attached to that is only one of the many aspects related to the ongoing digitalisation of our lives. In this context, we have to consider the social dimension, and the concern about the possible “superfluity” of human labour in the system. The public discourse reveals a general concern that digitalisation could render “human” jobs obsolete, while experts are debating to what extent this will be comparable with the “restructuring” of work processes during the Industrial Revolution.

The label *Translation 4.0* should actually be understood as programmatic, as expressions such as *Industry 4.0* or *Internet 4.0* are often used to refer to the increasing application of Internet technology to facilitate communication between humans, machines and products. Yet, during the preparation for the 2017 LICTRA congress, some colleagues asked us where we were “right now”, whether we were sure about “4.0”, and similar questions.

In 2016, a book on *Dolmetschen 3.0*, ‘interpreting 3.0’, edited by Ursula Gross-Dinter, was published, its aim to present new technologies and methods and to comment on their impact on interpreting, for example, on interpreting quality. The main issues addressed, explicitly mentioned by the editor as aspects to be dealt with in the volume, were the following:

- How and to what degree will new technologies change the profession of interpreters?
- What development steps has conference technology gone through and which are the most interesting ones right now?
- What trends deriving from the new technologies can be discerned in simultaneous and consecutive interpreting?
- What techniques will accompany the establishment of the emergent “speech-to-text interpreting”?
- How will these changes impact the process and product of interpreting?

While translation studies scholars ponder Interpreting 3.0, as in this example, in other areas we get the impression that we have already arrived at level 4.0. The key-note speech at the 2017 *tekomp* conference was held by a futurologist, Erik Händeler, who spoke about “Digitalisierung und Industrie 4.0: Warum es jetzt um den Menschen hinter der Technik geht” (tekomp 2017), i.e. ‘Digitalisation and Industry 4.0: Why it is now all about the humans behind the technology.’ Meanwhile, also in 2017, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research stated that we find ourselves on the verge of another industrial revolution: Industry 4.0 (BMBF 2017).

Following the development of the World Wide Web to *Web 2.0*, *3.0*, and *4.0*, today—in 2019—, we find, parallel or practically simultaneously, the usage of *Industrialisation 3.0* and *4.0*, *Business 3.0* and *4.0*, *Translation 3.0* and *4.0*, *Interpreting 3.0* and *4.0*, and there are even instances of *Industrialisation 5.0*.

With the numbers *4.0* and especially *5.0*, authors often point at an uncertain future in our relations with technologies, and, as the following example from 2019 shows, this uncertainty is closely related to the worries regarding the future of human translators mentioned before. The International Translation Studies conference hosted by the German Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators (BDÜ) in Bonn in November 2019 addresses the theme “Translation and Interpreting 4.0 – New Ways in the Digital Age”, and in their Call for Papers, the organisers explain that

[...] we find ourselves in the midst of fundamental upheaval affecting all sectors, with artificial intelligence, Big Data, the Internet of Things and blockchain applications being just a few examples of the concepts brought about by digitalisation. Not only are these technologies changing the manner in which customers of translators and interpreters work, how they produce and use language content, how they procure language services: they are also altering how translators and interpreters themselves work, and how they interact with their customers. As a consequence, quite a few

business models pursued by freelance translators and interpreters, language service providers or corporate language services— which have been working reasonably well so far—will turn out to be a thing of the past in the foreseeable future. (BDÜ 2019)

Obviously, the way of counting in this field of translation studies has nothing to do with the way software producers market the different versions of their products. It follows the pattern of Web 1.0, 2.0, etc., echoing the way the numbers refer to certain stages of development, with new forms that can be seen as the result of developments and expansion of existing formats (Fast 2013: 39). Therefore, the descriptors for the different stages of the World Wide Web work well to illustrate what Industry 4.0 or Translation 4.0 might be.

Röher (2016: 49-53) gives a very concise overview of the development of the World Wide Web to become Web 3.0: Web 1.0 more or less corresponds to the years 1990 to 2000, Web 2.0 from 2001 to 2010, and Web 3.0 covers the period since 2010. (ITW: s. v. Web). The early years of the WWW were characterized by static web sites which could be only used in a rather passive way as they could not be actively co-shaped or influenced (Fast 2013: 38). But in Web 1.0, which obviously was not called this at the time, there were already discussion forums, online shops and other applications which allowed users to do more than just “receive” passively. The transition to Web 2.0 was fluid and we cannot accurately date its beginning. The name *Web 2.0* was coined by the editor and software developer Tim O’Reilly, who in 2004 organised a conference called *Web 2.0 Conference* (Schmidt 2009: 11). He sees the bursting of the dot-com bubble as a turning point in the development the WWW (O’Reilly 2005: 1). Web 2.0 is characterised by communality in the sense that every individual person contributes to shaping it, often without even being aware of the fact, for example, through setting links, leaving customer evaluations in online shops, etc. Another important aspect of Web 2.0 is database management (O’Reilly 2005: 3), which is essential as dynamic websites draw their data directly from a database in order to be individualised depending on users’ requests. Software becomes more a service than a product (O’Reilly 2005: 4), and begins to function as a secondary interface, as Röher (2016) points out. O’Reilly (2005: 4) calls this the “end of the Software Release Cycle” and “the perpetual beta”, referring to constant updating and adjustment in response to user behaviour. O’Reilly (2005: 4) also describes the idea of “Lightweight Programming Models” which allow existing systems and web-services to be loosely linked in order to generate an even more attractive experience for their respective users. User-friendly interfaces are a very important

basis for using these websites and the basis of participation in and self-representation on the WWW. In Web 2.0., everyone is potentially both maker and user, and the idea that everyone can participate, especially people without commercial interests (Beck 2007: 5), and the concept of user-generated content (cf. Schmidt 2009: 16) are frequently mentioned whenever Web 2.0 is a topic of discussion. Social networks are therefore seen as the quintessence of Web 2.0. Other applications, such as the integration of real-time communication into websites—for instance chats—(Beck 2007: 9) provide evidence for the tendency towards a quicker and easier exchange of information. The success of Web 2.0 is at least partly explained by the improvement of connectivity and faster data transfer in many parts of the world (Schmidt 2009: 14). Actually, many of the applications seen as typically “2.0” did in fact already exist before the boom but were only intensively used after the turn of the Millennium. Web 3.0, sometimes also called the semantic web, is based on something called a semantic network. The automatic derivation of conceptual links, interpretative connections, is in the centre of this new web generation. *Information* is no longer the key, it is all about *knowledge* composed of semantically linked information. These links are based on ontologies that define clear semantic relations between the individual elements, are automatically produced and are machine readable (Ultes-Nitsche 2010: 7-8). Referring to Berners-Lee, Hendler and Lassila (2001), Ultes-Nitsche (2010: 7) gives the simple equation “Web 2.0 + Semantic Web = Web 3.0”. In other words, the characteristics of Web 2.0 survive, but thanks to the development of ontologies, there are new possibilities for cross-linkages and a better exploitation of the web’s possibilities. A simple example is tagging, allowing individual web contents (Ultes-Nitsche 2010: 10) to be marked by attributing tags, descriptors, to them, thus classifying them according to subject, category or group. Actually, perhaps because the term *Web 3.0* is not as popular as *Web 2.0* was, descriptions and definitions vary quite considerably. While Ultes-Nitsche (2010) believes the core of Web 3.0 is the optimisation of processes in everyday life, from finding recipes or checking availability and comparing prices of hotel rooms online, others, such as Mörike (in 2010), believed that even the semantic search is a vision that has not yet been achieved. In fact, the development was faster than the experts predicted: only a few years later, even popular search engines like Bing and Google are actually called *semantic search engines* (cf. Horch, Kett & Weisbecker 2013: 128-131).

In 2016, Röher still states (2016: 53) that to judge from the vague descriptions of a next “stage of web culture” or expressions such as “what some people call Web 3.0” (Newitz 2008: no page) which are frequently

used in relevant publications, it becomes clear that Web 3.0 is not a neatly defined and circumscribed space.

And yet, at the same time, we could already find people who claimed there was a Web 4.0, such as Tamblé (2014), who explains that—at least from an economic perspective—Web 4.0 was the next evolutionary step of added value in Economy 4.0. She claims that, to her, the “version number” 4.0 means that “new technologies or [artificial?] intelligence and [new ways of?] communication enable us to cooperate even more comprehensively in networks, and that networks can describe the interaction of humans and machines or, for example, the more classical interaction of companies and customers” (translation C. S.).

Some definitions of Web 4.0 (as well as those of Web 3.0) clearly overlap with those of Industry or Economy 4.0. After the first Industrial Revolution around 1800, there was a second Industrial Revolution consisting in automatisisation, production lines, etc.; the term Industry 3.0 was coined when computer technology with electronically controlled machines entered factories in the mid-1970s. In modern “smart factories”, all the different components are somehow linked, robots “control” themselves, production lines order their own supplies and so on. Some argue that this is Industry 4.0, while other authors believe the current stage is still based on micro-electronics from an earlier phase. The far-reaching intertwining of industry, production, service, consumption, and Web/Internet is seen as the birth of Industry 4.0, or, for some authors, Internet 4.0, or just Economy 4.0.

When we put *Translation 4.0* in the title of the LICTRA congress, we did this not only to reference the role of translation and interpreting in this 4.0-structure of industry, internet, consumption, etc., but also as a provocation and defence regarding the role translation that will play in all our futures.

More and more frequently, we find the terms *Industry 4.0* and *Internet 4.0* used as synonyms in order to refer to the increasing use of Internet technology to facilitate communication between humans, machines and products. The technological building blocks of this world are cyber-physical systems, and the Internet of Things, in the sense of the development whereby the computer as a stand-alone device will lose much of its importance, and we see a movement towards a network of identifiably different “intelligent” physical objects—things—built up in a structure that is similar to or is a development of the Internet.

If we accept that the ongoing digitalisation of production and communication, and of the way we live our lives, goes further than what

Industry 3.0 and Web 3.0 brought us, then we understand the 4.0 in the LICTRA congress title and in the title of this volume.

We believe that despite all possible reservations regarding the accuracy of definitions and the range of the respective innovations, Industry/Web/Internet 4.0 and therefore also Translation 4.0 are clearly at least in a process of formation, if they are not already present. That is why we put the analysis of major current and future problems deriving from the “digital revolution”, if we can call it that at all (however, this is not the place to analyse the different points of view regarding what amounts to a revolution in sciences, industries, communication, etc.), at the core of LICTRA 2017. However, we not only wanted to look into developments in translation and interpreting per se, but also to explore the consequences of digitalisation for research. We can now use modern technologies in order to find out more about the effects of translations in the past, for example. So, as well as looking into the future, we also wanted to allow a renewed look, to “revisit” research on classical questions using new technologies, and to take into account the effects this new dynamic and these rapid technical developments will have on translation itself and on the constantly developing avenues of T&I research. And we wanted the conference participants to look at the impact that the ever changing role of translation has on society, be it through growing visibility or through the widely dreaded “globalisation” of content and ways of saying and doing things.

This volume presents a peer-reviewed selection of the contributions in English to LICTRA 2017; the German texts are published elsewhere (Sinner, Paasch-Kaiser & Härtel 2019 and Schmitt 2019).

The volume opens with a section on interpreting, with articles by Ena Hodzik and Mir Saeed Mousavi Razavi dealing with aspects of simultaneous interpreting using state-of-the-art technology and approaches, and a contribution by Chaowei Zhu and Junlan Li on medical interpreting. The section after that deals with the construction and exploitation of corpora and empirical databases and with corpus-aided or corpus based research into translation studies. Contributions from Andy Stauder and Michael Ustaszewski focus on translation research based on corpora and meta-corpora/data bases, while Marcello Giugliano introduces databases as research tools for image analysis in his investigation of the interface between imagology, translation studies and digital humanities. Irina Pasenkova analyses decisions made by translators regarding lexicon—using the example of verbs of speaking in English and Russian—and Shirin Ohadi Esfahani uses parallel corpora to investigate

verb-noun collocations in English and Persian. In the next section, on evaluating translation products, Milan Potočár analyses the evaluation of legal translations between so-called smaller languages, Alireza Akbari aims to objectively score students' translation drafts in Persian using the preselected items evaluation (PIE) method, and Yasamin Khosravani presents a simplified model for assessing the quality of subtitles. Subtitles are also the topic of the next contribution, by Andrea Heilke, who compares the inclusion of deaf and hard-of-hearing through subtitling in Germany, the UK and Spain, broadening the view of this volume to the social level of research in the era of globalisation and digit(al)isation. Finally, three articles examine how to deal with aspects that could be subsumed as approaches dealing with problems of cultural and linguistic adaptation: Mengye Han and Laura Santamaria Guinot present their work on pairs of original and translated *microtitles* in animated films translated from English to Chinese with particular focus on their phatic function, Alba Rodríguez-García analyses *blended translation strategies* for Europhone African writing, and María Teresa Sánchez-Nieto studies two cases of translator's agency by analysing a German and an English translation of a Spanish novel using corpus techniques to compare the translation.

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# TRANSITIONAL PROBABILITY EFFECTS ON PREDICTION DURING SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING FROM GERMAN INTO ENGLISH

ENA HODZIK

NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY-LOUAIZE, ZOUK MOSBEH

## Abstract

The effect of transitional probability on predictive processes during simultaneous interpreting as online spoken language processing was investigated during a shadowing task in German and two simultaneous interpreting tasks from German into English performed by English-German bilinguals. As revealed by speech latency measurements, transitional probability only had an effect on prediction during shadowing but not during SI when asymmetrical sentence structures were used in the source and target languages, i.e. head-final German sentences and head-initial English sentences. However, when the source and target languages employed symmetrical structures, i.e. head-initial sentences, an effect of transitional probability on prediction was observed during SI. These results highlight the importance of language specificity, as reflected in sentence structure, during SI from German into English. At the same time, this study shows how applying psycholinguistic methodology to an investigation of simultaneous interpreting as an online language processing task can reveal something about the mechanisms underlying sentence processing during SI.

**Keywords:** *simultaneous interpreting, predictive processes, syntactic asymmetry, contextual constraint, transitional probability*

## 1 Introduction: Predictive Processes during Simultaneous Interpreting

This study investigates the effect of transitional probability (TP), i.e. the statistical likelihood with which words appear together in a language, on

predictive processes during simultaneous interpreting from German into English. Simultaneous interpreting (SI) constitutes the oral translation of speech from one language, i.e. the source language, into another, i.e. the target language. Interpreters have to perform a multiplicity of tasks during SI, such as listening to and analysing the source language and producing the translation into the target language, all the while engaging their working memory and switching their attention from one task to another, which imposes a heavy cognitive load (Seeber 2011). One way of attempting to circumvent this load is by anticipating or predicting upcoming words, ideas and messages during SI.

An important factor that has been thought to influence prediction, or anticipation as it is often termed in the SI literature, is the difference in sentence structure or word order between the source language and the target language (Wilss 1978, Jörg 1995, Gile 2009). For example, when interpreting from German head-final sentence structures, where the main verb is placed at the end of the sentence, into English head-initial sentence structures, where the main verb is always placed in second position in the sentence, interpreters often predict the verb, and sometimes even produce it in the English output before it becomes available in the German input.

Earlier SI studies make a distinction between two types of anticipation: linguistic and extralinguistic (Lederer 1981). The first is assumed to rely more on the TP between words in a language (Gile 2009). For example, words that form an idiomatic expression or a collocation have a high probability of appearing together. Therefore, when interpreting “to reach a decision”, “decision” could be anticipated upon hearing “to reach” due to the high TP between the two words, which comprise a collocation in the English language. Extralinguistic anticipation is based on semantic cues or meaning paired with background knowledge about the world. In the case of SI in conferences where it is carried out, background knowledge constitutes knowledge about the place of the conference, the topic of discussion, the speaker, the audience, etc. (Gile 2009).

According to Van Besien (1999), anticipation occurs based on semantic associations created between the to-be-anticipated word and words in the preceding context. Other studies provide evidence in support of linguistic anticipation. For instance, Wilss (1978: 348) found that upon hearing *namens* (“on behalf of”), which is part of a frequently used German expression when thanking somebody for something: *Namens... darf ich ...danken* (“on behalf of...I would like to thank...”), the interpreter anticipates *danken* based on the high probability that it will follow *namens* in German. Setton (2005) characterises such connecting devices as primary pragmatic factors that lead to anticipation during SI.

Such devices, along with extralinguistic cues like world or background knowledge on the respective topic of discussion, are used incrementally to draw inferences and anticipate what will follow in the unfolding speech (Setton 1999, 2005). This suggests that SI is much more than a transcoding of highly probable lexical items and that some degree of deverbalisation is always necessary.

However, it is precisely this incremental or piecemeal nature of language processing that leads to TP effects on prediction during SI, as the present study will show. Studies that look at the ability to predict words during reading show that TP effects rely on a lower level of input processing than semantic effects in the context as a whole (McDonald and Shillcock 2003a, 2003b). In line with such studies, the general ability to draw inferences based on the preceding context and statistical information (i.e. TP) was taken into account in the present study by measuring the latency (Marslen-Wilson 1992) between the source language input and the target language output during SI (i.e. SI latency), rather than the ability to anticipate words and actually produce them in the output before they become available in the input. Consequently, the terms prediction and predictive processes will be used rather than anticipation.

Because SI is essentially a bilingual language processing task and the main goal of the interpreter is to transfer the meaning or sense from one language into another, although to a varying degree according to the interpretation of opposing theories, it is not very surprising that semantic cues would have an effect on the analysis of the input that leads to prediction during SI. Nonetheless, one effect of TP on the prediction of words during SI is much less obvious. In a previous study (Hodzik & Williams 2017) investigating the types of cues that trigger predictive processes during shadowing, i.e. within language repetition, in German and during SI from German into English, it was found that contextual constraint or the semantic and syntactic cues in the context as a whole have an effect on the prediction of the sentence-final verb during shadowing in German and during SI from head-final German sentences into head-initial English sentences. By contrast, TP only had an effect on prediction during shadowing but not during SI.

The asymmetry in word order between the source (German) and target (English) sentences in the SI task was posited as a possible account of the findings in Hodzik and Williams (2017). The conversion of word order from head-final in the source language into head-initial in the target language may have caused a delay in interpreting, which in turn may have led to a lack of TP effect on SI latency.

Another factor that was considered to account for the obtained results was the degree of literalness in the translation of the TP pairs (collocations and non-collocates) used in the study. While some of the pairs (e.g. *das Versprechen halten*) had more literal translations based on the literal meaning of the words they were comprised of, i.e. *das Versprechen* (“the promise”) + *halten* (“to keep”) = *das Versprechen halten* (“to keep the promise”), others like *eine Entscheidung treffen* (“to reach a decision”) had non-literal translations, i.e. *eine Entscheidung* (“a decision”) + *treffen* (“to meet”) = *eine Entscheidung treffen* (“to reach a decision”).

According to Paradis (1994), frequently co-occurring words or phrases, such as collocations and idioms, can be transcoded, rather than translated via conceptual mediation, through direct connections between the collocations in the source language and their translations in the target language. On the other hand, non-collocates or words that do not appear together frequently in a language are more likely to be translated through a language-independent concept.

Direct connections between words in the two languages are said to result in faster word translation times than conceptually mediated word translation (Kroll & Stewart 1994). Speed of translation is also affected by semantic factors like concreteness of meaning, among others, which is very much related to the abovementioned literalness of translation. Concrete words have been found to be translated faster than abstract ones (De Groot et al. 1994). If transcoding is posited for frequently co-occurring words or phrases, then these should be translated faster than non-collocates, provided that their translation is mediated by a language-independent concept. In addition, the speed of translation should also depend on the literalness of translation.

Some SI authors—in-line with the so-called *interpretive theory* of SI—believe that transcoding is a signature of unskilled interpreting (Lederer 1981, Seleskovitch 1984) because the task of the professional interpreter is to *deverbalise* the source speech for the purpose of accessing the language-independent message or sense and transferring this message into the target speech. Others believe that during SI, due to the time constraints imposed on them, interpreters cannot always afford to analyse each segment in the source language up to the conceptual level before producing its translation in the target language (Gile 2009). The debate concerning transcoding and its application to SI will be addressed in the present study in light of the findings obtained.

The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of TP on prediction during SI from German into English as reflected in latency measurements between the source and target languages. Effects of TP on prediction have

previously been established in monolingual language processing tasks, during reading in English (McDonald and Shillcock 2003a, 2003b; Frisson et al. 2005) and during shadowing or within-language repetition of speech in German (Hodzick and Williams 2017). The present study aimed to investigate the effect of TP and its relation to sentence structure. Consequently, two SI tasks were carried out, the first involving asymmetrical sentence structures between the source and target languages and the second involving symmetrical sentence structures between the source and target languages.

## 2. Experiment I: Simultaneous Interpreting from German Head-Final Sentences into English Head-Initial Sentences

### 2.1 Method

*Participants.* Twenty-seven native speakers of English who speak German at an advanced level participated in the SI task in Experiment I. The participants' level of German was determined with a language background questionnaire including the length of study and degrees obtained in the L2. These participants were also students at the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages at the University of Cambridge. They had studied German for eight years on average prior to the experiment and had taken A-level or university exams in German.

*Materials.* Sixty-four noun-verb pairs, half (32) with high TP e.g. *das Versprechen halten* ("to keep the promise") and half (32) with low TP, e.g. *die Kontrolle halten* ("to keep/maintain control"), were used in this experiment. Between high and low TP pairs the verb was kept the same and the noun changed, so that factors such as frequency, length, etc. of the target word (i.e. the verb in the TP pair) would not affect data within an experimental item.

TP in German was computed based on co-occurrence frequency information obtained from the DWDS (*digitales Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*). Because both forward and backward TP have been found to affect predictability (McDonald & Shillcock 2003b), the two parameters were computed for each TP pair. This confirmed consistently high or low mean forward and backward TP values for each noun-verb pair, depending on which group it was in. The rationale for ensuring consistency between the forward and backward TP values of any given pair was that both values contribute to TP as a cue for prediction.

Forward and backward transitional probabilities were computed for each TP pair using the equation  $p[\text{verb}/\text{noun}] = \text{frequency}[\text{verb},$

noun]/frequency[noun]<sup>1</sup> for forward TP values and  $p[\text{noun}|\text{verb}] = \text{frequency}[\text{verb, noun}]/\text{frequency}[\text{verb}]$ <sup>2</sup> for backward TP values (McDonald & Shillcock 2003b, Perruchet & Peereman 2004). The co-occurrences of the English translations of the German noun-verb pairs were computed as well with the equation  $p[\text{noun}|\text{verb}] = \text{frequency}[\text{verb, noun}]/\text{frequency}[\text{verb}]$  for forward TP values and  $p[\text{verb}|\text{noun}] = \text{frequency}[\text{verb, noun}]/\text{frequency}[\text{noun}]$  for backward TP values (McDonald & Shillcock 2003b; Perruchet & Peereman 2004).

The mean number of occurrences of the noun-verb combinations in the DWDS corpus was 560.7 (range: 43-4300) for the high TP pairs and 164.1 (range 13-1008) for the low TP pairs,  $t(31) = 3.665$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . The mean forward TP values were 0.05375 for high TP pairs and 0.03583 for low TP pairs. The mean backward TP values were 0.02544 and 0.00699 for high TP pairs and low TP pairs respectively.

Forward and backward transitional probabilities were also computed for the English translations of the high and low TP pairs based on frequency information obtained from the BNC (British National Corpus). The mean number of occurrences for the translations of high TP pairs was 204.3 (range 7-1318) and 37.5 (range 2-60) for translations of low TP pairs,  $t(31) = 3.132$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . Forward TP values were 0.01268 and 0.00578 for translations of high and low TP pairs respectively. Backward TP values were 0.02923 for translations of high TP pairs and 0.00484 for translations of low TP pairs.

In addition to TP, literalness of translation was incorporated in the experimental design. This was determined based on translations of the TP pairs in German-English dictionaries, such as the *Oxford Essential German Dictionary*, the *Collins Concise German-English Dictionary*, the *Langenscheidt Standard German Dictionary: German-English*, and the *Oxford Collocations Dictionary*. The purpose of using multiple dictionaries as sources was to make sure that the same translation was provided in different dictionaries for the same TP pair. Literal translations constituted the first meanings (Davidson 1986) or translations provided in the dictionaries. All translations that followed the first were categorised as non-literal translations.

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<sup>1</sup> In descriptive terms, the probability that the verb will follow the noun is equal to the frequency of co-occurrence of the noun and the verb in the corpus divided by the frequency of occurrence of the noun in the corpus.

<sup>2</sup> In descriptive terms, the probability that the noun will precede the verb is equal to the frequency of co-occurrence of the noun and the verb in the corpus divided by the frequency of occurrence of the verb in the corpus.

The high and low TP pairs with literal and non-literal translations were used to create four experimental conditions: sentences containing a high TP pair with a literal translation (1 or H-l); sentences containing a low TP pair with a literal translation (2 or L-l); sentences containing a high TP pair with a non-literal translation (3 or H-n); and sentences containing a low TP pair with a non-literal translation (4 or L-n). Each sentence employed the German *Perfekt* tense, following a V2 or head-final structure, so that the main verb or the carrier of the meaning, which was also the target word, would be placed in sentence-final position in German.

- (1) Er hat das Versprechen gehalten. (H-l)  
He has the promise kept  
“He kept the promise.”
- (2) Er hat die Kontrolle gehalten. (L-l)  
He has the control kept  
“He kept control.”
- (3) Sie haben eine Entscheidung getroffen. (H-n)  
They have a decision reached  
“They reached a decision.”
- (4) Sie haben eine Vereinbarung getroffen. (L-n)  
They have an understanding reached  
“They reached an understanding.”

The frequency of the nouns preceding the verbs, which was also taken from the DWDS corpus, was controlled so that in half of the sentences the noun was more frequent in the high TP condition than in the low TP condition and in the other half the noun was more frequent in the low TP condition than in the high TP condition. Moreover, in half of the sentences the noun was more frequent in the TP pairs with literal translations than in the ones with non-literal translations and in the other half the noun was more frequent in the TP pairs with non-literal translations than in TP pairs with literal translations. Furthermore, the nouns in the noun-verb TP pairs appeared with an indefinite (3 and 4), a definite (1 and 2) or zero article and the number of each was controlled for between experimental conditions, so that the number of nouns with definite, indefinite and zero article was the same between sentences with high TP pairs and sentences

with low TP pairs and between sentences containing TP pairs with literal translations and sentences containing TP pairs with non-literal translations.

The 64 target sentences were recorded with a native speaker of German using a recording device (TASCAM HD-P2 portable stereo audio recorder) and saved as separate sound files. These sound files were then divided into two sets so that each participant heard 32 target sentences in each experimental condition and one version of each experimental item. Within each set, sentences were presented in a fixed random order. Filler sentences like (5) were introduced after each target sentence.

(5) Sie schrieb den Brief.

She wrote the letter

“She wrote the letter.”

*Procedure.* The experimental items were presented auditorily on a computer with Superlab 4.5. Participants were instructed to simultaneously interpret each sequence as they heard it and as close as possible to the original. The participants’ interpreting output was recorded using a recording device (TASCAM HD-P2 portable stereo audio recorder) connected to the computer through two channels, so that the original input was recorded on one channel and the participants’ output on the other channel.

*Analysis.* The data analysis was carried out in Audacity 2.0.2. Latency was measured between the onset of the sentence-final verb in the input and its translation (in sentence-second position) in the interpreted output, i.e. SI latency. SI latency was expected to be significantly shorter for items with literal translations than for items with non-literal translations. Furthermore, significantly shorter SI latency was also expected for high TP items than for low TP items.

## 2.2 Results

Figure 1 shows the mean SI latency between the target word in the original input and its translation in the interpreted output.



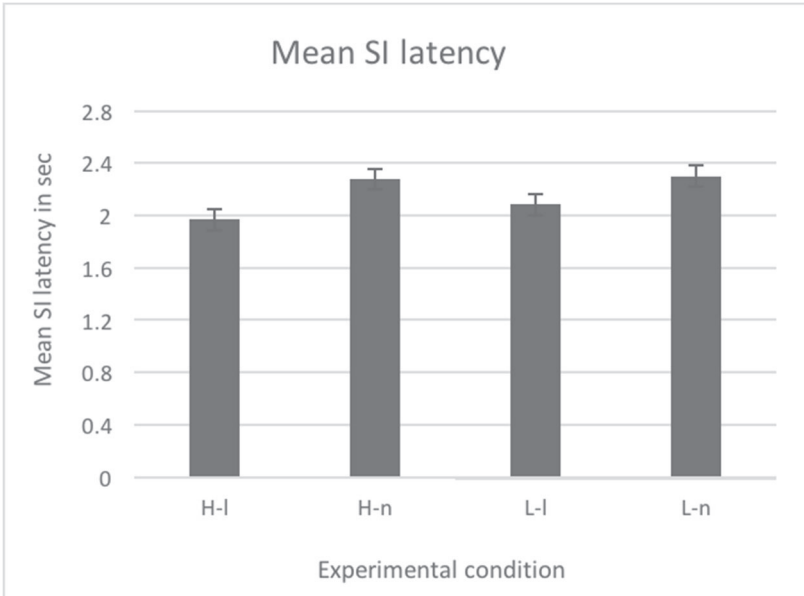


Figure 1. Mean SI latency across participants ( $n=27$ ) per experimental condition. H-l: high TP, literal translation; H-n: high TP, non-literal translation; L-l: low TP, literal translation; L-n: low TP, non-literal translation.

A subject analysis, with TP and literalness as within-subject factors, revealed a main effect of literalness on SI latency,  $F_1(1, 26) = 17.864$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . However, the effect of TP on SI latency was not found to be significant,  $F_1(1, 26) = 1.458$ ,  $p = 0.238$ . Moreover, no interaction was observed between TP and literalness,  $F_1(1, 26) = 0.993$ ,  $p = 0.328$ . An item analysis of variance was also carried out with TP as a within-item factor and literalness as a between-item factor. The item analysis did not show a significant effect of TP,  $F_2(1, 30) = 0.152$ ,  $p = 0.700$ . Moreover, the interaction between TP and literalness was not significant,  $F_2(1, 30) = 1.075$ ,  $p = 0.308$ .

An SI task was then conducted with symmetrical sentence structures in the source (German) input and target (English) output. For this purpose, the same German head-final sentences that were used as experimental materials in Experiment I were converted into SVO sentences in Experiment II. This allowed for a comparison between the results obtained in the two experiments.

### 3 Experiment II: Simultaneous Interpreting from German Head-Initial Sentences into English Head-Initial Sentences

#### 3.1 Method

*Participants.* Nineteen native speakers of English who speak German at an advanced level participated in Experiment II. These participants had the exact same profile as the participants in Experiment I, but they had not previously taken part in Experiment I.

*Materials.* The same experimental materials were used as in Experiment I, only for this experiment they were converted from head-final into SVO sentences. For this purpose, the tense was changed from *Perfekt* to *Präteritum* (equivalent to Past Simple) in German. In *Präteritum* the main verb is used in its finite form in simple declarative sentences (such as the ones used in this experiment) and placed in second position in the sentence, just like in English.

This resulted in the same four experimental conditions: (1) from above was converted into (1') - sentence containing a high TP pair with a literal translation (H-l); (2) became (2') - sentence containing a low TP pair with a literal translation (L-l); (3) became (3') - sentence containing a high TP pair with a non-literal translation (H-n), and (4) was changed into (4') - sentence containing a low TP pair with a non-literal translation (L-n).

(1') Der Mann hielt das Versprechen. (H-l)

The man kept the promise  
“The man kept the promise.”

(2') Die Frau hielt die Kontrolle. (L-l)

The woman kept the control  
“The woman kept control.”

(3') Die Frau traf eine Entscheidung. (H-n)

The woman reached a decision  
“The woman reached a decision.”

(4') Die Leute trafen eine Vereinbarung. (L-n)

The people reached an understanding  
“The people reached an understanding.”

The pronouns (“er”= “he”; “sie” = “she/they”; see (1) – (4)) used in Experiment I were substituted with noun phrases (“der Mann” = “the man”; “die Frau” = “the woman”; “die Leute” = “the people”; see (1') – (4')) for the purpose of maintaining the number of words in the sentences, and consequently the processing load, the same between experiments.

The co-occurrence frequency information of the verb-noun pairs was the same as in Experiment I, since the same pairs were used. Forward TP constituted the statistical likelihood that the noun will follow the verb, since the noun followed the verb in this experiment, and it was computed using this equation:  $p[\text{noun}|\text{verb}] = \text{frequency}[\text{verb, noun}]/\text{frequency}[\text{verb}]$ . Backward TP represented the statistical likelihood that the verb will precede the noun and it was computed with the equation  $p[\text{verb}|\text{noun}] = \text{frequency}[\text{verb, noun}]/\text{frequency}[\text{noun}]$  (McDonald & Shillcock 2003b, Perruchet & Peereman 2004). The mean forward TP values were 0.02544 for high TP pairs and 0.00699 for low TP pairs. The mean backward TP values were 0.05375 and 0.03583 for high TP pairs and low TP pairs respectively. Since the word order remained the same for the English translations, the same co-occurrence frequency and forward and backward TP information applied as in Experiment I.

The total of 64 sentences were recorded with a native speaker of German and saved as separate sound files. These sound files were then divided into the same item sets as in Experiment I and the same filler sentences were reused as well.

A very important difference between Experiment I and Experiment II was in the target word. In Experiment II this was the sentence-final noun, which followed the verb rather than preceding it as it did in Experiment I. Consequently, SI latency was measured between parallel words, i.e. the noun in the source input and the noun in the target output. This meant that, unlike Experiment I, where the target word (i.e. the verb) was maintained the same and the noun preceding it varied between high and low TP pairs, in Experiment II the target word (i.e. the noun) varied and the verb was the same for high and low TP pairs. As previously mentioned, the frequency of the nouns was controlled, so that this factor would not influence the results obtained in Experiment II.

*Procedure.* The same procedure was used as in the SI task in Experiment I.

*Analysis.* The same software (Audacity 2.0.2) was used to analyse the data. SI latency was measured between the onset of the target word (the sentence-final noun) in the input and the onset of its translation in the output. An effect of literalness on SI latency was expected, where latency would be significantly shorter for items with literal translations than for

items with non-literal translations. SI latency was expected to be significantly shorter in items with high TP than in items with low TP.

### 3.2 Results

Figure 2 shows the mean SI latency between the target word in the original input and its translation in the interpreted output for each experimental condition.

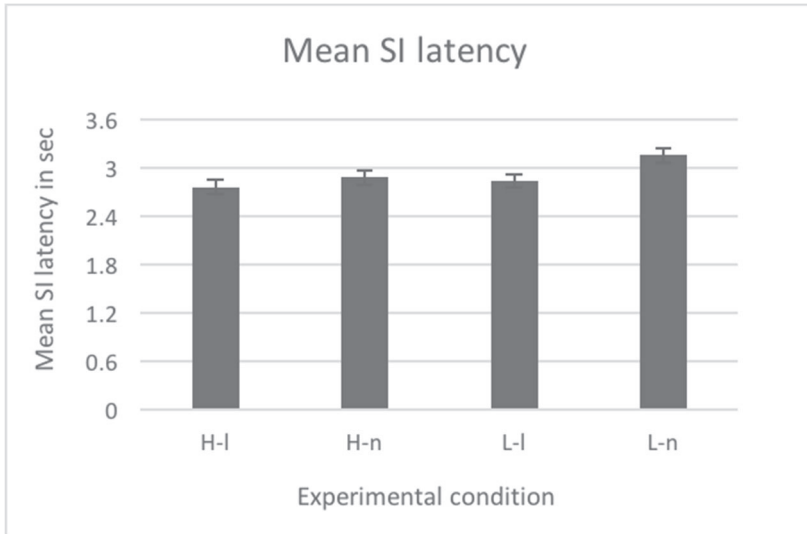


Figure 2. Mean SI latency across participants ( $n=19$ ) per experimental condition. H-l: high TP, literal translation; H-n: high TP, non-literal translation; L-l: low TP, literal translation; L-n: low TP, non-literal translation.

A subject ANOVA, with TP and literalness as within-subject factors, revealed a main effect of TP,  $F_1(1, 18) = 5.110$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . A main effect of literalness was also found in the subject analysis,  $F_1(1, 18) = 9.383$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . The interaction between TP and literalness was not significant,  $F_1(1, 18) = 2.296$ ,  $p = 0.147$ . By contrast, the item analysis did not show a significant effect of TP,  $F_2(1, 29) = 2.893$ ,  $p = 0.100$ . Finally, the interaction between TP and literalness was not found to be significant,  $F_2(1, 29) = 0.005$ ,  $p = 0.943$ .

The following discussion will attempt to provide an account for the results obtained in Experiments I and II.

## 4 Discussion

As in Hodzik and Williams (2017), in the present study TP was not found to affect latency during SI involving asymmetrical sentences in the source and target languages. However, a TP effect was observed in a subject analysis of the data obtained during SI involving symmetrical sentences in the source and target languages. The effect of TP on SI latency seems to be somewhat tied to the sentence structure of the language pair involved in the SI task. This finding lends support to language-specific processing of the input during SI, which may have caused a delay in interpreting or a cost in processing, overriding any effect of TP on interpreting latency during SI between asymmetrical sentence structures.

As previously mentioned, studies looking at translation in bilinguals and interpreters distinguish between *transcoding* and conceptually mediated *translation* (Paradis 1994, de Groot & Christoffels 2006). The translation of frequently co-occurring words or phrases, such as high TP pairs or collocations, could employ transcoding, rather than translation via language independent concepts, due to direct memory connections between the word or phrase in the source language and its translation into the target language (Paradis 1994). When highly frequent words or expressions, such as high TP pairs, are transcoded, they are said to be processed in the source language and produced in the target language as language-specific multiword units or chunks, rather than as multiple words, without accessing the language-independent concepts behind those chunks (Kroll and Stewart 1994, Paradis 1994). By contrast, low TP pairs are more likely to be translated as multiple words by accessing the language-independent concepts behind them.

It is possible that the effect of TP on latency during SI involving asymmetrical sentence structures was cancelled out or overridden by a delay in SI caused by the breakdown of the high TP pair, which constitutes a chunk in the input, into two separate words before its production in the output. From this, it follows that there is a delay in the SI of high TP pairs in the experiment with asymmetrical syntactic structures caused by the conversion of word order. The delay does not occur for high TP pairs during SI involving symmetrical syntactic structures, because the word order does not have to be converted between the input and output. Moreover, there is no delay in SI of low TP pairs because they are translated differently from high TP pairs.

It is important to note that during both SI between asymmetrical sentence structures and SI between symmetrical sentence structures, high TP pairs are processed and produced as chunks. Nonetheless, where the

two SI tasks differ is in the translation, or rather interpreting, route which is direct between high TP pairs during SI between symmetrical sentence structures, and mediated by the conceptual level during SI between asymmetrical sentence structures. It has to be underlined that even though the translation of high TP pairs is direct, their meaning is still accessed during processing. The translation of low TP pairs, on the other hand, takes the conceptual route both during SI between symmetrical sentence structures and SI between asymmetrical sentence structures.

The present findings indicate that syntactic structure, and in particular the difference between the syntactic structure of the source language and that of the target language, determine whether TP will affect interpreting latency or not. However, the syntactic differences between languages alone could not provide an account for the results on TP obtained in the present study. Within-language lexical patterns and how these reflect on translation had to be considered as well.

Based on the results obtained during SI between German and English involving syntactically asymmetrical sentence structures and during SI between syntactically symmetrical German and English sentence structures, language-specific sentence structure or word order does affect interpreting latency. This study provides findings in support of language-specific processing or analysis of the input during SI as well as language-specific interpreting of commonly used phrases, such as high TP pairs or collocations, which is in contradiction with the notion that the analysis of the input during SI is largely language-independent and therefore does not take into account the specificities of the source and target languages.

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# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IRANIAN SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING TRAINEES' PROGRESS RATE AND THEIR MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

MIR SAEED MOUSAVI RAZAVI  
ALLAMEH TABATABA'I UNIVERSITY, TEHRAN

## Abstract

The present quasi-experimental research has addressed the possible relationship between Iranian simultaneous interpreting (SI) trainees' rate of progress and their multiple intelligences. The 35 participants received interpreting training during two academic semesters. Two SI tests (a pretest and a posttest) were administered and then rated by three judges. A standard test of multiple intelligences based on Gardner's (1983) theory was also administered. As to the first five intelligences, no statistically significant correlation was found (verbal-linguistic: -0.03, logical-mathematical: 0.178, visual-spatial: 0.26, musical-rhythmic: 0.06, bodily-kinaesthetic: 0.02) while the remaining three were observed to correlate significantly with SI progress level (interpersonal: -0.49, intrapersonal: 0.482, naturalist: 0.446). The results indicate that contrary to general belief, verbal-linguistic intelligence does not play a role in one's progress in SI as linguistic factors seem to be overshadowed by non-linguistic ones in this realm. Rather, it is intrapersonally intelligent people as well as those who enjoy a high degree of naturalist intelligence who make the most promising candidates for interpreter training courses. If corroborated by other research findings, the results of this study can have important implications in devising/revising curricula for interpreter training programmes, course descriptions and class material, as well as in developing efficient selection procedures for prospective interpreter trainees.

**Keywords:** *simultaneous interpreting, multiple intelligences, interpreter training*

## 1 Introduction

Speaking of the necessary requirements of a good professional interpreter, Russo & Pippa (2004: 410) quote Gerver *et al.* (1984)<sup>1</sup> and Lambert (1992)<sup>2</sup> as saying:

Basic pre-requisites of a good professional interpreter are: profound knowledge of active and passive languages and cultures, ability to grasp the original meaning quickly and to convey the essential meaning of what is being said, ability to project information with confidence, coupled with good voice, wide general knowledge and interests and, finally, ability to work as a member of the team.

It is quite clear from this observation that it takes more than a good linguist to be a good interpreter; apart from having an in-depth knowledge of the two languages and cultures, it is important to be quick at understanding and conveying meanings, to have a good voice, to be confident, to have general knowledge and enthusiasm and to have good teamwork skills.

## 2 Interpreting Competence, Non-Linguistic Factors

There is no denying that interpreters need to have a perfect mastery over the two languages from and into which they work. However, there is certainly more to interpreting than meets the eye. As Seleskovitch (1999: 59) holds, language skills “should not be mistaken for interpretive skills”. Gile (2009: 220) holds that “major interpreting schools in the West wish to establish a strong distinction between interpreting training and language training”. Many other scholars (Davidson 2000<sup>3</sup>, Peterson 2000<sup>4</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Gerver, David *et al.* (1984): “Selecting trainee conference interpreters,” *Journal of Occupational Psychology* 57, 17-31, as quoted in Russo & Pippa (2004: 410).

<sup>2</sup> Lambert, Sylvie (1992): “Aptitude testing for simultaneous interpretation at the University of Ottawa,” *The Interpreters’ Newsletter* 4, p. 25-32, as quoted in Russo & Pippa (2004: 410).

<sup>3</sup> Davidson, Donald (2000): “Testimony of Foreign Language Capabilities: Capitol Hill Hearing Testimony before the Senate Governmental Affairs”. USA: Federal Document Clearing House, as quoted in Shaw, Grbic & Franklin (2004: 88).

<sup>4</sup> Peterson, R. (2000): “Metacognition and recall protocols in the interpreting classroom”. In Cynthia Roy (ed.): *Innovative practices for teaching sign language interpreters*. Washington DC: Galluadet University Press, 132-152, as quoted in Shaw, Grbic & Franklin (2004: 88).

Seleskovitch & Lederer 2002<sup>5</sup>) have also identified “second language mastery and interpretation as discrete areas of skill”. There are definitely other skills and capabilities which interpreting requires. “When practising, a simultaneous or consecutive interpreter needs to acquire specific neurophysiological and cognitive strategies that go beyond the mere knowledge of languages.” (Daró 1994: 253)

Similarly, Chernov's (2004: 200) account of simultaneous interpreting as “a specific type of professional interlingual activity performed in extreme linguistic and *psychological* conditions, in an environment hostile to the simultaneous interpreter” (emphasis added) obviously points to the inseparable link between SI competence and/or performance on the one hand and the realm of psychology on the other.

All this is enough to make one believe that the qualities shaping one's intellect and intelligence are likely to have an influence on their success rate in the course of training to be an interpreter. In what follows, we will touch upon the theory of multiple intelligences proposed by Howard Gardner.

### 3 Multiple Intelligences

The investigation of intelligence is, without doubt, one of the most controversial issues in the history of psychology. There have been different experts each approaching the issue of human intelligence from their own perspective and contributing to the present-day frame of knowledge. Spearman, Thurstone, Cattell, Sternberg, Guilford (cited in Ghanavati 2008), to name a few, are among the most outstanding ones. However, we will only be dealing with one of the most renowned theories in this field, that is, the theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) proposed by Gardner (1983).

He goes against the conception of intelligence as a unitary entity, but rather stresses that human cognitive competence may be better accounted for as a group of skills, talents and mental abilities, which he calls *intelligences*. Gardner (cited in Richards & Rodgers 2001) argues that all people possess these different intelligences, but that they differ in the degree of strength in each of the intelligences and their combinations. All these intelligences may be improved through practice and training. Therefore, any approach to teaching/learning that is based on the theory of

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<sup>5</sup> Seleskovitch, Danica / Marianne Lederer (2002): *Pédagogie Raisonnée de l'interprétation* (2e édition corrigée et augmentée). Paris/Luxembourg: Didier Érudition/OPOCE, as quoted in Shaw, Grbic & Franklin (2004: 88).

MI naturally acknowledges and focuses on the individual learners' differences and tries to cater for them.

Below is a brief account of the main qualities typically associated with these intelligences according to Gardner (1999):

*Verbal-linguistic*: good at reading, writing, listening, and speaking, keen on reading literary works, playing language-based games, writing poems and stories, and learning new words.

*Logical-mathematical*: working with figures and numbers, solving mathematics-based puzzles, and analysing other people's behaviour.

*Visual-spatial*: a good visual memory, working best with charts, pictures, maps, and diagrams.

*Musical-rhythmic*: remembering melodies, noticing rhythm and musical patterns.

*Bodily-Kinaesthetic*: using body language to express emotions and communicate ideas, playing sports, learning by doing rather than learning through reading or listening.

*Interpersonal*: interacting with other people, good at cooperative group work and organising other people.

*Intrapersonal*: focusing on the self and understanding one's own feelings, strengths, and weaknesses, self-esteem, concentration, internal motivation, self-confidence and strength of character.

*Naturalist*: interacting with one's environment, keen on outdoor activities.

## 4 Research Question and Hypothesis

**(Q.)** Is there any significant relationship between the trainees' multiple intelligences scores and their performance in the task of SI?

**(H<sub>0</sub>.)** There is no significant relationship between the trainees' multiple intelligences scores and their performance in the task of SI.

## 5 Method

### 5.1 Participants

On the outset, the group of participants consisted of 48 senior students doing an undergraduate degree in the field of English Translation at Allameh Tabataba'i University in Tehran. They were both male and female (to control the age factor), aged 20–25. Those who had an average

score lower than 14 or higher than 18 (on a scale of 0–20) in their previous translation-specific courses as well as those who scored lower than 5 or higher than 8 in a mock IELTS test were left out. Thus, 35 participants remained in the study.

## 5.2 Training

The participants completed two courses under the titles “Interpreting 2” and “Interpreting 3”, which are part of their academic programme in order to be awarded a bachelor’s degree in English Translation. Every course lasted one academic semester, that is to say, about four months, and there was one session (two hours) of contact on a weekly basis. So the training took two semesters (approximately one year), measuring a total of 64 hours of training in class.

## 5.3 SI Pretest and Posttest

To assess the participants’ performance and progress in SI, two audio texts in English were chosen to be interpreted into Persian by the subjects, one at the beginning of the experiment (pretest) and the other at the end (posttest). The texts were at the same level of difficulty and contained grammar and vocabulary simple enough for beginner interpreters to cope with.

## 5.4 MI Test

A standard test of multiple intelligences based on Gardner’s (1983) theory of MI was administered to the subjects. Comprising 8 sections, the test contained a total of eighty yes/no questions. The test was retrieved from: [http://www.nedprod.com/Niall\\_stuff/intelligence\\_test.html](http://www.nedprod.com/Niall_stuff/intelligence_test.html).

## 5.5 Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

Before the administration of the SI tests, the participants were provided with sufficient, clear instructions in advance as to how to carry out the task of interpreting. The participants were taken into a separate room where maximum care was taken to ensure that the environment had the fewest possible distractions.

The recorded interpreting sessions were then rated according to how well the trainees had managed to cope with the challenges posed by this specific mode of interpreting. In order to avoid subjectivity, along with the

researcher himself, two other raters, both practising interpreters, were asked and paid to rate the trainees' performance. The scores were given on a scale of zero to one hundred and the raters were advised to adopt a holistic approach.

The MI test was administered towards the end of the training period and the results were obtained. Finally, the trainees' rate of progress in SI (the difference between their pretest and posttest scores) was correlated with their scores on the MI test.

## 6 Results and Discussion

### 6.1 Interrater Reliability

There were 70 SI sessions (35 subjects each taking a pretest and a posttest) to be scored by three judges. To ensure consistency among the raters, the following interrater reliability formula (Hatch & Lazaraton 1991: 533) was used:

$$r_{tt} = \frac{n r_{ABC}}{1 + (n - 1)r_{ABC}}$$

In the above formula,  $r_{tt}$  stands for the reliability of all the judges' scores,  $n$  is the number of judges, and  $r_{ABC}$  is the average correlation among the three raters. The value of  $r$  proved to be equal to a Pearson correlation between 0.79 and 0.80, which is much bigger than 0.25 (the cut-off value for  $p$ : 0.05 and  $df$ : 60) indicating that the scores were consistent.

### 6.2 MI and SI Scores Correlation

The difference between the pretest and posttest score (the trainees' progress rate), as well as the score in each of the subsets of the MI test were expressed on a percentage basis. These numerical values were tabulated separately for each of the intelligences and the formula for Pearson's product-moment correlation (Hatch & Lazaraton 1991, 434) was utilised. The critical value required to reject the null hypothesis was 0.3494 ( $df$ : 30 and  $p$ : 0.5).

### 6.2.1 Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence and SI Progress Rate

The correlation coefficient measured  $-0.03$ , indicating a negligible negative correlation, much smaller than the critical value, meaning that there is no statistically significant relation between the participants' verbal-linguistic intelligence and their SI progress rate.

It is beyond doubt that translating, and by the same token interpreting, is *basically*, though not solely, a linguistic operation (Catford 1965). Both translating and interpreting involve working with at least two languages. Languages are the raw material translators and interpreters work with. Therefore, it would be more than natural to assume that one's verbal-linguistic intelligence may play a major part in their translation/interpretation potentials.

This can be a striking finding that goes against general intuition. We know that this type of intelligence is often associated with being "word-smart", or even "book-smart". It involves and is strengthened by the kind of knowing which happens through linguistic channels. It consists of the ability to think in words and to use language to express and appreciate complex meanings. All this seems to be conducive to being or becoming a good translator. This is where we need to contemplate a little more over the possibilities behind this finding.

Ghanavati found a moderate correlation (0.41) between her participants' linguistic intelligence and their translation quality. Although she fails to mention whether or not the correlation observed is statistically significant, she claims that "these two variables have a moderate relationship" (Ghanavati 2008: 108).

A rather strong justification that can be brought up here relates to the inherent differences between translating and interpreting. We know for a fact that the conditions under which translating takes place are totally different from those of interpreting. This may be the key to explaining the contradiction between our results and those of Ghanavati. An interpreter's performance is affected greatly by factors such as time constraint, stress management, self-confidence, public speaking ability, quickness to react to unpredicted situations and composure, to name a few (see Al-Salman & Al-Khanji 2002, Chiang 2010, Moser-Mercer 1994, Russo & Pippa 2004, Shaw, Grbic & Franklin 2004). Only as one example, Mack (2001, as cited in Lee 2011: 148) "asserted that the awareness that one's work is accessible to a huge public can have a psychological impact on the interpreter". All these, which are absent in normal translating conditions, may override the element of linguistic intelligence. In other words, to perform well as an interpreter, it does not suffice to be "word-smart",

rather one would probably need to be “work-smart”.

Along the same lines, Szuki (1988: 110), who worked on the vocational aptitudes of translators and interpreters, contends that there are “great differences between translators and interpreters”. These differences may explain why Ghanavati’s results are different from ours.

### **6.2.2 Logical-Mathematical Intelligence and SI Progress Rate**

The correlation coefficient measured 0.178, indicating a slight positive correlation much smaller than the critical value, meaning that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two measures.

This finding goes very well with the general intuitive judgment. No layman would expect an interpreter to be good at mathematics or expect a mathematician to have potentials for interpreting. Nevertheless, the picture is not that simple and clear-cut. Logical-mathematical intelligence normally involves the ability to work out patterns, to think logically, and to reason. It also means being good at deduction, induction and making inferences.

Looking back at interpreting, one of the most important and frequently-occurring interpreting strategies is anticipation (Van Besien 1999). What does good anticipation rely on? The ability to make logical inferences quickly. This is where logical-mathematical intelligence could be of help. Being able to follow others’ lines of thought and argument, and to see the connections between propositions is also important for interpreters. Therefore, the researcher would not be at all surprised if the results pointed to a correlation between these two measures.

To provide further evidence, Bahremand (2008) found a strong correlation (0.81) between reasoning ability and translation quality. In her test of the subjects’ reasoning ability, three different types of reasoning were included: verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning, and abstract reasoning (Bahremand 2008: 68). Although reasoning ability is not to be considered synonymous with multiple intelligences, they do share a great deal; logical-mathematical intelligence could be the MI counterpart for numerical reasoning.

### **6.2.3 Visual-Spatial Intelligence and SI Progress Rate**

The correlation coefficient was recorded at 0.26, indicating a slight positive correlation, which is non-significant. Visual-spatial intelligence is normally associated with creating mental images of things, and working well with graphs, charts, photos, etc. One would not expect such mental



abilities to come in useful in SI. However, living in a world that is increasingly focused on multimedia, where presentation of information is becoming more and more dependent upon videos and images, people with a strong visual intelligence can have better prospects of success. Along the same lines, it can be inferred that this intelligence may play an important role in consecutive interpreting; there is almost no lecture these days that is not accompanied by some kind of visualisation, e.g. slides, footage, etc. This, however, is a question that is worth being investigated by future research.

#### **6.2.4 Musical-Rhythmic Intelligence and SI Progress Rate**

The correlation coefficient is 0.06, indicating a slight positive correlation much smaller than the critical value. Thus the null hypothesis is proved correct. To discuss this finding, we should remember that people with strength in this intelligence are good at comprehending auditory input. Spoken language appeals to them more as they have a good taste for the tone, rhythm, and musicality of spoken language. Gardner (1983) believes this intelligence is parallel to linguistic intelligence and allows people to create, convey, and comprehend meanings made of sounds. This is supported by our findings as well. The correlations found between each of these two intelligences and SI progress rate are very close to one another (see the discussion in 6.2.1 above).

#### **6.2.5 Bodily-Kinaesthetic Intelligence and SI Progress Rate**

The correlation coefficient was 0.02, indicating a negligible positive correlation far smaller than the critical value, hence, non-significant. People with this intelligence have a preference for non-verbal rather than verbal communication. If they are to learn something, they would prefer to engage in active *learning by doing* rather than reading about it, listening to it, or analytically thinking or reasoning about it. They most efficiently comprehend input that results from moving, doing, touching, and exploring.

It follows logically that this type of intelligence does not help one meet the necessary requirements, mostly mental and cognitive, of the tasks of interpreting and translating. Their preference for physical pursuits rather than cognitive ones puts them at an obvious disadvantage for any job that primarily draws upon cognitive capabilities.

Nonetheless, a note of caution should be sounded here: even though primarily a mental task, SI seems to put great physical demands on the

practitioner. That is why after an SI session, interpreters, especially novices, complain about being extremely “tired” or even “lethargic”. This signals the interconnection between the body and the mind. So the fact that no relation was found between SI progress rate and bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence should not be taken to mean that physical health, strength, and energy are irrelevant.

### **6.2.6 Interpersonal Intelligence and SI Progress Rate**

The correlation coefficient measured  $-0.49$ , which is greater than the critical value. Thus, there is a statistically significant relationship between the two measures. The lower one is the degree of interpersonal intelligence, the higher was their rate of progress in SI.

To be able to discuss this second “seemingly” unexpected finding, we should recall the important implications of having a strong interpersonal intelligence. It involves the ability to understand people, work with them, and interact with others efficiently. People with this intelligence have an inclination towards doing teamwork and tend to organise things and other people. They are sensitive to and care about others’ behaviour and feelings. They are outgoing, have many friends, and tend to socialise.

For reasons not yet definitely clear to the researcher, it appears that people normally believe that interpreters enjoy a high level of interpersonal skills. This may be due to the fact that interpreting is basically a form of communication; not only is an interpreter supposed to be good at communicating ideas to other people, but also they should be able to make possible, and facilitate communication among others.

Before becoming an interpreting trainer, the researcher, too, was under the same impression. However, personal experience in class did not prove that intuition to be right. Those with strong interpersonal skills did not outperform others. So, the negative correlation found in this study did not surprise the researcher. The intuition could be justifiable when talking about communication in its normal circumstances. We know for a fact that SI imposes certain constraints upon the interpreter. Such constraints mean that communication here is taking place under “special” conditions. That may be the reason why the outward inclination of those with a strong interpersonal intelligence may prove to be distractive rather than helpful. We should also remember that although the relation is statistically proven, the magnitude of the correlation is not very big (the overlap between the shared variances is a moderate 24%).

Another explanation may lie in the difference(s) between SI and Consecutive interpreting (CI). A high interpersonal intelligence is likely to

be useful in what consecutive interpreters do; they have to go on stage, act as a speaker, be seen and heard just like the speaker, and communicate with the audience. Simultaneous interpreters, however, seclude themselves in the booth and communicate with the audience only through their voice; they are not seen by the audience and do not need to make eye contact with people, nor do they perform any other requirement of “normal” social communication.

### 6.2.7 Intrapersonal Intelligence and SI Progress Rate

Strongly connected, as one would expect, to the results of interpersonal intelligence were the results of intrapersonal intelligence. These can, to some degree, be considered as opposites—not “exact” opposites but depicting a degree of contrast. The correlation coefficient measured 0.482, which is exactly what one would expect in view of the correlation coefficient in the interpersonal section (-0.49): the value is almost the same but the direction opposite; the higher one’s degree of intrapersonal intelligence, the higher their rate of progress in SI.

A strong intrapersonal intelligence means a tendency to focus on one’s self, rather than on others, and hence an awareness of one’s feelings, strengths, weaknesses, and behaviour in general. Intrapersonally intelligent people are good at setting objectives for themselves and achieving them. They favour any activity that helps them expand their conscious understanding of themselves. They normally focus inwards rather than outwards, and as a result have strong characters, self-esteem, and self-confidence.

These people are mentally focused, have a high level of concentration, and have more control over themselves and their mental abilities. And “concentration is considered by far the most important non-linguistic feature as it must surely be the effort *sine qua non* upon which other simultaneous efforts must pivot.” (Chiaro & Nocella 2004: 289) Elsewhere, Moser-Mercer (2000: 349, as quoted in Shaw, Grbic & Franklin 2004: 73) claims that “indeed concentration, or lack thereof, is the single most important determiner of success or failure in interpreting.” Given that interpreting is a constant process of solving challenging problems (Riccardi 1998, as quoted in Arumí Ribas 2012) requiring exceptional mental and cognitive capabilities, the positive correlation found is easy to explain.

This finding is also in line with the findings reported by Zareai (2010). He found a “moderate correlation” (Zareai 2010: 70) between self-esteem and interpreting quality ( $r = 0.556$ ). Although his study focused on CI

while ours focused on SI, it is interesting that the results are in complete agreement with each other, suggesting that self-esteem helps boost quality in both SI and CI.

### **6.2.8 Naturalist Intelligence and SI Progress Rate**

The correlation coefficient measured 0.446, indicating a statistically significant, positive correlation; the higher one's degree of naturalist intelligence, the higher one's rate of progress in SI. Given the qualities associated with naturalist intelligence (a tendency to get involved with one's surroundings, notice subtle differences, embark on outdoor activities and field trips), a relationship between this intelligence and SI quality seems very unlikely. Therefore, the rejection of the null hypothesis came as a surprise that is very difficult, if not impossible, to explain.

One possible, though not very strong, explanation can be the reason we discussed in 6.2.5 above. These are normally healthy individuals possessing a considerable degree of physical as well as mental energy and liveliness. These qualities can come in very useful to an interpreter who has to deal with the great physical and mental demands of the strenuous task of SI. Under the heading "personality traits", Moser-Mercer (1994: 61) lists "stress tolerance" and "resilience" as two important parameters used in aptitude testing procedures in interpreting. Al-Salman and Al-Khanji (2002: 608) even make an explicit mention of "physical endurance and good nerves" as qualities necessary for an interpreter. However, this is but a tentative explanation for our finding, which needs to be (re)tested by future researchers.

## **7 Conclusion**

The present paper is an attempt to investigate the possible relationship between the subjects' scores on a multiple intelligences test and their rate of progress in SI. It was revealed that there is no significant correlation between the first five intelligences and the SI progress rate (verbal-linguistic: -0.03, logical-mathematical: 0.178, visual-spatial: 0.26, musical-rhythmic: 0.06, bodily-kinaesthetic: 0.02). Lack of correlation between linguistic intelligence and SI performance, which was somewhat contrary to expectation, was justified by the fact that the non-linguistic factors affecting SI overshadow the linguistic ones. The other three intelligences were found to have significant correlations with SI progress rate (interpersonal: -0.49, intrapersonal: 0.482, naturalist: 0.446). All the confirmed correlations were moderate in magnitude. Two out of three

were positive, i.e. the higher the subjects' level of intrapersonal and naturalist intelligence, the higher their SI progress rate. The other one was negative, meaning that the lower the participants' interpersonal intelligence, the higher their SI progress rate.

The fact that interpersonal intelligence correlated negatively while intrapersonal intelligence correlated positively with SI progress rate was justified using three arguments: (1) communication takes place in SI under "extraordinary" circumstances with extreme mental constraints as opposed to communication in "normal" conditions; (2) the setting in which SI takes place is remarkably different from that of CI. While the CI setting may be more likely to require higher interpersonal intelligence, SI setting has proved the opposite; and (3) certain non-linguistic features (e.g. concentration, confidence, resilience, strong determination, and mental focus), which are associated with intrapersonal intelligence, are believed to play a vital role in interpreting (see Chiaro & Nocella 2004, Shaw, Grbic & Franklin 2004).

The findings of this study provide further proof that an interpreting trainee's progress is not only affected by external factors, such as the trainer, the training material, etc., but also by internal factors, such as the degree of different intelligences they possess. As a result, it is important that individual differences among trainees in the same class be taken into account by the trainer when designing classroom activities. On a higher level, it is also necessary that these differences be borne in mind when designing interpreting programmes, course descriptions, and teaching materials. What is more, the criteria used in selection procedures for both prospective interpreters and prospective interpreting trainees can also be influenced by the results of this study and other similar ones. This can increase efficiency of selection procedures and guarantee a higher rate of future success.

It should also be remembered that our findings are the outcome of a small-scale study. Thus, to overcome the limitations faced, such research projects need to be duplicated in other settings. With the results of various studies of the same nature put together, one can draw more reliable, generalisable conclusions.

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# INFORMATION MANIPULATION IN THREE NON-CONDUIT ROLES IN MEDICAL INTERPRETING: A PROCESS-BASED ANALYSIS

CHAOWEI ZHU AND JUNLAN LI  
WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY, WINSTON-SALEM

## Abstract

Medical interpreters have long been expected to interpret like a conduit and deliver information without distortions. Recent years have witnessed a growing research attention to medical interpreters' non-conduit roles. This paper aims to review three information-related non-conduit roles sometimes assumed by medical interpreters, namely gatekeeper, co-interviewer, and co-diagnostician. In all three roles, medical interpreters take the liberty of filtering, seeking or offering information in addition to the information sought or given by providers. This paper brackets the three roles together as information-manipulating roles, arguing that medical interpreters become active information controllers and givers when assuming these roles. Current literature on these three roles is reviewed and reasons behind the assumption of these roles are discussed following a sequential order of an interpreted medical encounter. This paper has the potential of increasing awareness of information-manipulating behaviours among medical interpreters and healthcare administrators alike. An incremental information management model is also proposed to help cope with information manipulation in medical interpreting.

**Keywords:** *medical interpreting, conduit, interpreter role, incremental intervention*



## 1 Medical Interpreters' Roles

### 1.1 Conduit Role

The study and practice of healthcare interpreting has predominantly highlighted the language skills, information accuracy, and non-intervention of medical interpreters. "The classical metaphor is the conduit, or the ghost, i.e., a thing or a non-person that helps communication to occur without distortions" (Leanza 2010). The conduit role expects medical interpreters to work like a vocal translation machine and interpret verbatim et literatim, without involving any human emotion or personal judgement, and to remain "invisible". The conduit role regards medical interpreters as passive instruments. It therefore "reflects a utilitarian view of the interpreter's role. By this we mean that interpreters are conceptualized as instruments in the process, providing utility without influencing the content or dynamics of provider-patient communication" (Hsieh & Kramer 2012).

The conduit role requires medical interpreters to deliver messages in a neutral, accurate, and faithful way. Due to the nature of interpreted communication, the conduit metaphor has been at the core of healthcare interpreting. In recent years, a growing number of researchers have pointed out the deficiencies of the conduit role. For example, "although the conduit model provides prescriptive guidelines for interpreting behavior, it has been criticized as inadequate on a number of points." "The conduit model provides neither a complete description of interpreter work in clinical settings nor adequate grounding for ethical decision making in interpreter practice" (Dysart-Gale 2005). Other researchers claim that the conduit role may "compromise the quality of care by silencing patients' and interpreters' voice, objectifying interpreters' emotional work, and exploiting patients' needs" (Hsieh & Kramer 2012). Hsieh asserts that "successful bilingual health communication relies on more than an interpreter's linguistic skills. The interpreter's ability to coordinate and negotiate other speakers' communicative goals and identities is crucial to the effectiveness and appropriateness of provider-patient interactions" (Hsieh 2006). Accordingly, more researchers (e.g., relevant research conducted by Angelelli and Hsieh) have argued that attention should also be drawn to medical interpreters' non-conduit roles in and non-lingual contributions to interpreted communication. The new trend highlights the need for medical interpreters to take the initiative to recognise and overcome non-linguistic barriers in provider-patient communication and encourages medical interpreters to overcome these barriers in a skilful and active way to guarantee smooth communication.

## 1.2 Non-Conduit Roles

Following the new research trend, a number of “non-conventional roles” have been identified focusing more on the non-lingual aspects of interpreters’ jobs. Some of these new roles include: informant and advocate roles (Kaufert 1999); collaborator and excluder roles (Hatton & Webb 1993); cultural informant and advocate bilingual professional roles (Jalbert 1998); covert co-diagnostician and institutional gatekeeper roles (Davidson 2000); institutional therapist and patient advocate roles (Drennan & Swartz 1999); detective, multi-purpose bridge, diamond connoisseur, and miner roles (Angelelli 2004); therapy conduit role (Miller *et al.* 2005); system agent, lifeworld agent, and integration agent roles (Leanza 2005); co-diagnostician, professional, manager and advocate roles (Hsieh 2006, 2008); and pendulum or oscillating roles (Brisset, Leanza & Laforest 2013). The literature review shows that some of these newly-identified non-conduit roles are frequently adopted by medical interpreters at work.

In contrast to the passive conduit role, medical interpreters are more active contributors to the interpreted communication process when assuming non-conduit roles. For example, when commenting on the four roles proposed by Angelelli in 2004, Leanza points out that “these [new] metaphors show an active, engaged interpreter far removed from the images of a transparent ghost or passive conduit” (Leanza 2010). The same is true for some other non-conduit roles which depict medical interpreters as either advocating actively for limited language proficient (LLP) patients (e.g., informant, patient advocate, visible role, lifeworld agent, etc.), or for providers or healthcare organisations (e.g., institutional therapist, co-diagnostician, gatekeeper, etc.), in an attempt to smooth communication and promote understanding between the two parties. In a sense, the newly-identified non-conduit roles prove the fact that medical interpreters find themselves constantly struggling “between provider and patient (e.g., pendulum or oscillating roles)” (Brisset, Leanza, & Laforest 2013), rather than merely functioning as an invisible conduit.

## 2 Three Information-Manipulating Roles: A Review

Roughly speaking, the newly-identified non-conduit roles for medical interpreters can be divided as either culture-related roles or information-related roles (i.e., medical interpreters may alter, add or omit information delivered both consciously and unconsciously). Over the years, more culture-related non-conduit behaviours and roles (e.g., advocate, bridge, cultural broker roles, etc.) of medical interpreters have gradually been

recognised and accepted by researchers and practitioners alike. For example, in Avery's (2001) interpreter roles model, medical interpreters can take incremental intervention measures and act as a cultural broker and an advocate when needed, so as to ensure successful communication and better understanding between providers and patients.

By comparison, the information-related non-conduit roles, to a large extent, have been largely neglected or stigmatised due to the fact that they are in conflict with the code of ethics for medical interpreters. However, is it common for medical interpreters to alter, add, or omit information in interpreted medical events? In research conducted by Angelelli in California, she finds that in only 4% of the interpreted medical communication was the interpreter truly invisible as a conduit (Angelelli 2004), which means that non-conduit roles are the norm rather than the exception. Since it is not likely that all the 96% non-conduit behaviours are culture-related, it is safe to assume that information-related non-conduit behaviours and roles are likely to be quite common among medical interpreters.

Compared with culture-related non-conduit roles, medical interpreters assuming information-related roles often take advantage of their unique bridging position in interpreted communication and "manipulate" the information flow. For example, some medical interpreters were found, during the process of medical encounter, to "shape...create those messages in the name of those for whom they speak" (Davidson 2000). Other researchers have reported that medical interpreters consistently assume roles that "influence the process and content of the provider-patient interactions." (Hsieh 2006).

Although medical interpreters' information-manipulating behaviours may lead to serious consequences, these behaviours are hard to detect. So far, researchers have found that in interpreted medical events, medical interpreters, out of a variety of different motives, may assume several information-related non-conduit roles, in which medical interpreters take the initiative to filter, seek or offer healthcare information in addition to the information sought or given by providers. Here filtering "refers to a sender's purposely manipulating information so the receiver will see it more favorably." (Robbins & Judge 2012: 353) A medical interpreter choosing to tell a provider what he/she feels the provider wants to hear is a typical information-filtering behaviour. In other words, when assuming an information-manipulating role, a medical interpreter switches from a passive information decoder and deliverer into an active information processor and creator. By doing so, the interpreter takes advantage of his/her unique position in interpreted communication to filter existing

information, seek new information, or even add information of his/her own. Hence this paper coins the term of “information-manipulating roles” to describe the above three roles, namely gatekeeper, co-interviewer, and co-diagnostician roles.

Below, we will first review and define these information-manipulating roles. A process-based analysis is then adopted to explore when and why interpreters assume these roles. The last section of this paper focuses on how to increase the awareness of the potential harm of these roles among medical interpreters and healthcare providers alike, and how to better cope with information-manipulating behaviours.

To begin with, what is a gatekeeper? According to Davidson and Hale (Davidson 2000, Hale 2008), when interpreters act as a gatekeeper, although they do convey part of the information provided by both providers and patients to the other side of the communication, they also interpret selectively by changing, deleting or originating some information. Freelancers don't expect themselves to act as a gatekeeper (Tipton & Furmanek 2016), but many staff interpreters do in fact work as a gatekeeper through which patients must pass to receive medical care. By doing so, medical interpreters make sure to keep patients “on track” thanks to their position as institutional insiders within the hospital hierarchy, and help shorten the providers' interview (Davidson 2000). In this role, interpreters interpret the information that they want to interpret, delete the information that they don't want to interpret, or offer their own opinion or information to either providers or patients (Hale 2008). We hence define the gatekeeper role as the role interpreters assume to keep patients on track by regulating patients' information-providing behaviour and filtering information to be delivered.

Similar to the gatekeeper role, co-interviewer is a role that medical interpreters play when they partner with providers in the interviewing phase. In some extreme cases, instead of interpreting, medical interpreters even run the interview by themselves (Davidson 2000). When an interpreter acts as co-interviewer, the provider accepts the transfer of power to the interpreter (Davidson 2000, Tipton & Furmanek, 2016). An interpreter may originate the communication with the patient before a provider arrives, seek information from the patient, then report to the provider the information he/she wants to report and delete the information that he/she doesn't think is necessary or that the provider may not like to hear, such as some “irrelevant” input from the patient or a story of how a disease is gradually developing (Foucault 1963, Mishler 1984, Kleinman 1988, Davidson 2000). After the provider joins the communication, the interpreter continues to co-interview the patient or take charge of the

interview by making comments upon or discussing the patient's symptoms/treatment with either the provider or the patient. The co-interviewer role sometimes begins with some forms of interaction with the patient before the physician arrives (Davidson 2000). Interpreters often spend a significant amount of time with patients alone so "it is important to examine interpreters' roles and functions both inside and outside of medical encounters." (Hsieh 2006) Based on the above literature review, the co-interviewer role can be defined as the role that interpreters assume when they take initiatives to interact with patients to seek information with or without the presence of a provider.

Both the gatekeeper and the co-interviewer roles show that interpreters actively seek and process information to be delivered. By comparison, when assuming the co-diagnostician role, no matter whether it is the "invisible" co-diagnostician type mentioned by Davidson (2000: 401), or the "far from invisible" type proposed by Zorzi (2012: 239), an interpreter chooses to interpret in a selective manner, seek information from patients, and actively offer healthcare related suggestions (Davidson 2000, Hsieh 2007, Zorzi 2012). By doing so, medical interpreters actively contribute to formulating the diagnosis and influence the information flow of a medical encounter. Hsieh identifies five strategies corresponding to co-diagnostician behaviours including "(a) assuming the provider's communicative goals, (b) editorialising information and provider's utterances for medical emphases, (c) initiating information-seeking behaviors, (d) participating in diagnostic tasks, and (d) volunteering medical information to the patients" (Hsieh 2007: 926). To a large extent, the co-diagnostician role "overlaps with providers' responsibilities and functions." (Hsieh 2007) Interpreters allow themselves to assume "the same (symbolic) position as the health care provider" (Leanza 2005). Hence, we can define the co-diagnostician role as that of medical interpreters who voluntarily offer information related to diagnosis and/or treatment to patients.

### **3 Three Information-Manipulating Roles: A Process-Based Analysis**

According to the *National Code of Ethics for Interpreters in Health Care* issued by The National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NICHHC 2004), "interpreters need to deliver the complete package [...] Interpreters must not omit from, add to, or distort the speaker's message; even offensive remarks and gestures, body language, and tone of voice must be interpreted." It is clear that information-manipulating behaviours are not

acceptable. However, the question remains as to why information-manipulating roles are still adopted by medical interpreters? Below, we will examine different stages of an interpreted medical event and discuss the specific role(s) medical interpreters may assume at each stage.

In addition to the usual three stages of an interpreted event in the medical setting, namely pre-event, event, and post-event, Zhu (2015) proposes to add an in-between event, defined as the time interval between an LLP patient’s previous healthcare visit and the next visit. During the in-between event stage, providers may reach out to the LLP patient for feedback or recovery updates with the help of an interpreter. The in-between event sometimes serves as an important indicator of interpreting service quality: if an LLP patient comes back for treatment for the same symptom soon afterwards or if they go to another provider because of the same symptom, this is likely to indicate that the healthcare service (including interpreting service) is somehow not satisfactory. Medical interpreters may assume some or all of the above three information-manipulating roles at each stage.

Specifically, at the pre-event stage, before providers arrive, an interpreter may have a short moment to give patients a briefing on how to interact with the providers (gatekeeper). The interpreter may even start interviewing the patient (co-interviewer); at the event stage, the interpreter may assume all three roles by taking the initiative to filter, seek, or offer information (gatekeeper, co-interviewer, and co-diagnostician roles); at the post-event, after provider’s departure, some interpreters may have the chance to talk briefly with patients and even offer some “experience-based” healthcare advice (co-diagnostician); at the in-between event, similarly to the event stage, when helping providers seek feedback from LLP patients, interpreters may assume all the three roles to manipulate information on both sides.

Interpreted medical encounter stage	Interpreters’ possible information-manipulating roles
Pre-event	gatekeeper, co-interviewer
Event	gatekeeper, co-interviewer, and co-diagnostician
Post-event	co-diagnostician
In-between event	gatekeeper, co-interviewer, and co-diagnostician

**Table 1. Medical interpreters’ information-manipulating roles at different stages of an interpreted medical event**

## 4 Information Manipulation: Causes and Consequences

As shown above, at each of the four stages, medical interpreters may assume one or all the three information-manipulating roles to actively filter, seek or even offer information, rather than interpreting the information exchanged in a *verbatim et literatim* manner. The question is, what makes medical interpreters decide to assume these roles, despite the fact that they are contradictory to interpreters' codes of ethics? As proposed by Davidson (2000), time pressure is likely to be a main reason: medical interpreters are motivated to help providers keep the medical event short and effective by ensuring patients are on track and by seeking the exact information needed for treatment purposes; this is what medical interpreters do as gatekeepers or co-interviewers. This assumption may be particularly true for staff medical interpreters. Another reason is perhaps the ambiguity of patients' communicative goals (Tracy 2002), making medical interpreters feel obliged to intervene by means of "modifying" information provided by patients to help providers get a clearer picture of what is happening. In some cases, the healthcare team member identity (Hsieh 2007) motivates medical interpreters (particularly staff interpreters) to take the initiative to seek information and offer suggestions. Leanza (2008) also argues that medical interpreters sometimes act like a co-diagnostician for the purpose of providing emotional support to patients.

Furthermore, medical interpreters are always very important yet often ignored participants of interpreted medical events. In a sense, the above three roles reflect that medical interpreters are eager to be an active contributor of the medical encounter (both unconsciously and consciously), rather than remaining invisible and functioning as a mere conduit. For example, Davidson points out that the co-diagnostician role indicates that medical interpreters are "active participants in the process of diagnosis" (Davidson 2000).

Other possible reasons why medical interpreters assume information-manipulating roles may include, but are not limited to (1) experienced medical interpreters being likely to be very experienced with certain symptoms and diseases so that they know how to seek relevant information from patients, what information to send to providers, and even what healthcare advice a patient needs; (2) medical interpreters offering additional advice to patients out of need for authority or simply out of sympathy; and (3) due to the lack of monitoring and evaluation of the interpreting processes and outcomes in most interpreted medical encounters, medical interpreters finding they may add, omit or change information without being penalised.

Manipulating information can lead to serious consequences. First of all, such information-manipulating behaviours on the part of medical interpreters are obvious violations of the code of ethics for medical interpreting (Dysart-Gale 2005). Additionally, when medical interpreters change information provided by patients or offer incorrect advice to patients, their behaviour is likely to lead to potential clinical consequences (Flores *et al.* 2003). Moreover, information-manipulating roles can damage provider-patient relationships and the primary speakers' identity management. (Hsieh 2007). In some extreme cases, information-manipulating roles (particularly the co-diagnostician role) may even lead to potential legal consequences if the patient took inappropriate advice offered by a medical interpreter and eventually decided to file a lawsuit against the health facility for which the interpreter works.

## **5 Discussions: Incremental Information Management Model**

Now the question is how to deal with information-manipulating behaviour among medical interpreters. There is the possibility that interpreters manipulate information without even realising it. Hence there are both unconscious and conscious information-manipulating behaviours. For the former, the key is to arouse interpreters' awareness of the potential harm caused by information-manipulating roles and minimise or even eliminate unconscious information-manipulating behaviour. For the latter, medical interpreters not only need to increase their awareness of the consequences of information-manipulating roles, but also need to improve their handling of information-related issues in medical encounters. More importantly, appropriate mechanisms need to be established to monitor medical interpreters' information-manipulating behaviour and interpreters need to be held accountable if violation leads to negative consequences.

How to eliminate the three information-manipulating roles? As described above, at each stage of interpreted medical encounters, medical interpreters may "manipulate" information. Medical interpreters may do so either consciously or unconsciously, with either good or bad intentions. Therefore, solutions can be threefold: first, at all four stages, appropriate supervision and awareness-arousing measures need to be taken to guarantee that purposeful information-manipulating behaviour is detected and punished, while unconscious manipulation behaviour is noticed and eliminated. Purposeful information manipulation for the sake of better communication must be regulated and improved. Some examples of supervision measures may include the following: after obtaining informed



consent from all parties involved, healthcare organisations using medical interpreters may require the recording of all interpreted medical encounters for the purpose of improving interpreting service quality; medical interpreters can team up to help each other better follow information-related interpreting rules in code of ethics; workshops on interpreting services procedure and quality may be organised regularly to help providers better understand interpreters' jobs (as well as to better supervise interpreters' performance), and to increase everyone's awareness of potential harm and legal consequences unconscious/conscious information manipulation can cause; surveys on interpreting services can be conducted on a regular basis to help administrators better monitor interpreters' performance, as well as to provide good feedback to medical interpreters regarding their job performance.

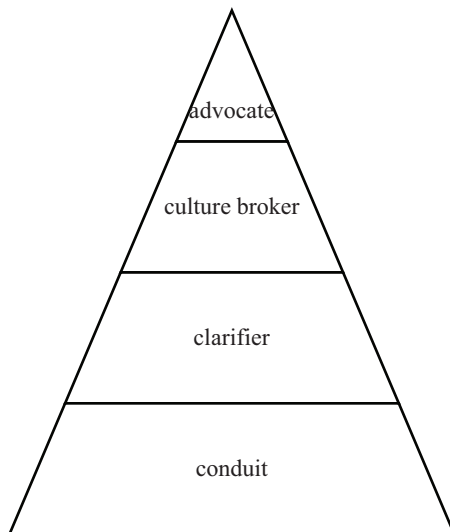


Figure 1. Interpreter incremental intervention model (Avery 2001)

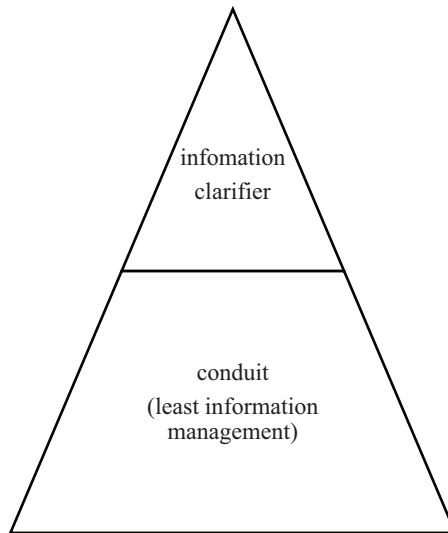


Figure 2. Medical interpreter incremental information management model

Second, based on the above process-based analysis, specific rules need to be established (or implemented more rigorously) to make sure interpreters do not interact with LLP patients without providers' presence, to avoid information-manipulating behaviours at the pre-event and post-event stages. Meanwhile, more attention needs to be paid to the event stage, for most interpreters' information-manipulating roles are likely to occur at this stage. Corresponding anti-information-manipulating measures (as above) need to be implemented more rigorously at this stage. Likewise, for healthcare organisations that have an in-between event stage, their administrators and providers are advised to pay close attention to possible information-manipulating behaviours among medical interpreters.

Third and most importantly, the key to eliminating information-manipulating behaviours lies in increased awareness and improved self-discipline among medical interpreters. Drawing on interpreters' incremental intervention model proposed by Avery (2001), this paper develops a similar incremental information management model to serve as a guideline to help medical interpreters better deal with information-related issues at work. The goal is to help medical interpreters change from unconscious/conscious information manipulation to purposeful information management.

Simply put, in the incremental intervention model for interpreters proposed by Avery (2001), it is suggested that interpreters take only the smallest incremental intervention measures (i.e., assuming non-conduit roles) until it becomes absolutely necessary (Figure 1). Under those circumstances, interpreters are allowed to assume the roles of clarifier, cultural broker, or even cultural advocate if needed. Likewise, medical interpreters should not manage information until it becomes unavoidable. For example, if an LLP patient becomes completely lost in a medical encounter or if the patient grumbles repeatedly in an illogical way, an experienced medical interpreter may have to intervene in order to keep the patient on track or to help the patient express himself/herself clearly (information clarifier). However, the medical interpreter should not assume the information clarifier role directly unless such an intervention becomes a must, or unless providers specifically ask the interpreter to do so. Even under such circumstances, medical interpreters should also take incremental steps and give the “off-track” patient concise and brief reminders, while at the same time still trying to stay faithful to the information given by the patient, by means of lowering the register, paraphrasing, summarising, or politely asking the patient to clarify or repeat the information provided. By doing so, the interpreter delivers information provided by the LLP patient in an incremental and minimally intervening manner (information management), rather than taking the liberty of filtering, adding, deleting, or changing the information provided by LLP patients. Medical interpreters committed to information management go the extra mile when handling information barriers to guarantee successful communication and better understanding in provider-patient interactions in an incremental and minimally intervening manner. As a result, rather than acting as gatekeeper, co-interviewer, and co-diagnostician, medical interpreters need to remind themselves constantly to remain a conduit for the most part, and to only “chip in” as an information clarifier and reminder when needed and reassume the conduit role immediately once the information barrier is overcome (Figure 2). Meanwhile, specific rules should be made crystal clear that co-interviewer and co-diagnostician roles may be allowed under no circumstance for medical interpreters.

## 6 Conclusions and Contributions

The main conclusions of this short paper are: (1) gatekeeper, co-interviewer, and co-diagnostician roles should be considered unacceptable in medical interpreting, as interpreters manipulate information rather than

orally translating information when assuming these roles; (2) when encountering information-related difficulties (e.g., unclear information, irrelevant information, or self-contradictory information, etc., particularly from the side of LLP patients), medical interpreters need to assume a clarifier role, and interpret faithfully after receiving clarification from the speakers; (3) although not without its problems and concerns, the conduit role should still be the dominant role a medical interpreter needs to assume when interpreting. Non-conduit roles, no matter whether they are culture-related or information-related, should only serve as supplements to the conduit role. The incremental intervention approach is recommended only when assuming non-conduit roles becomes unavoidable.

This paper has several contributions to existing research on the roles of the medical interpreter: first, the current paper brackets gatekeeper, co-interviewer, and co-diagnostician roles together as information-manipulating roles and points out that when assuming these roles, medical interpreters become positive information givers rather than passive information deliverers in a medical event. This argument may help draw more research attention to these three commonly adopted non-conduit roles among medical interpreters and increase awareness towards the potential harm of these roles among medical interpreters and administrators alike. Second, the current paper conducts a process-based analysis on the occurrence of each of the three information-manipulating roles at different stages of an interpreted medical event. Such an analysis may have the potential of helping healthcare administrators formulate explicit rules and regulations to monitor and eliminate possible interpreter information-manipulating behaviours at each stage. Finally, the current paper proposes an incremental information management model as a guideline for medical interpreters to better deal with information-related dilemma at work, which can serve as a starting point for exploring more non-conduit interpreter roles in the future.

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# CORPORA IN TRANSLATION STUDIES: WHY DO WE NEED THEM AND WHAT CAN CURRENT RESOURCES (NOT) OFFER TO US?

MICHAEL USTASZEWSKI  
AND ANDY STAUDER  
UNIVERSITÄT INNSBRUCK, INNSBRUCK

## Abstract

Apart from the obvious benefits corpora have had on methodological innovation in Translation Studies, corpus-based research holds the potential to narrow existing gaps between translation theory and translation practice on the one hand and between conflicting positions within Translation Studies on the other. Although a wide range of translation-oriented corpora is available nowadays, the development of new resources that cover the most varied types of translation activity may help to further advance Translation Studies as an academic field and increase its relevance to the translation industry, including the translation technology segment.

**Keywords:** *corpora, methodology, translation theory, translation practice, translation technology*

*“Those who have handled the sciences have been either Empiricists or Rationalists. Empiricists, like ants, merely collect things and use them. The Rationalists, like spiders, spin webs out of themselves. The middle way is that of the bee, which gathers its material from the flowers of the garden and the field, but then transforms and digests it by a power of its own.”  
(Bacon 1620/1996: 105)*

## 1 Introduction

In Translation Studies (TS), Francis Bacon’s metaphor on the preferable methodological approach to scientific inquiry has repeatedly found

expression in calls for more rigorous and objective research. Empirical research has indeed become more influential, allegedly leading to an “empirical turn” (Snell-Hornby 2006). Although this turn seems not yet to be fully reflected in academic output (Sun 2014: 182), bibliographic analyses reveal that corpus-based research has had an impact on the discipline in recent years (Zanettin, Saldanha & Harding 2015). Most recently, quantitative data analysis is gaining momentum, thus promoting methodological innovation (e.g. Ji *et al.* 2017; Mellinger & Hanson 2017). These trends show that the value and potential of data-driven research has been recognised in the TS community. Therefore, we are not going to reiterate the epistemological benefits of empirically basing translation research on authentic language data rather than on introspective or anecdotal evidence as the sole source of evidence in rationalism, since this issue has been extensively discussed elsewhere from the perspective of corpus linguistics (e.g. McEnery & Wilson 2004: 1–27). Instead of stating *that* corpus research holds the potential for further advances in TS, our goal is to discuss *why* we believe this is the case. To this end, in section 2 we analyse how corpora may contribute to bridging existing gaps within TS (see 2.2) as well as between theory and practice, including the translation technology market (see 2.3). Based upon these considerations, in section 3 we enquire to what extent current resources are suitable for narrowing these gaps. Section 4 summarises our findings and gives an outlook on further research.

## 2 Why Do We Need Corpora?

### 2.1 The Obvious Answer

A sensible yet superficial answer reads as follows: the qualitative and quantitative study of large amounts of authentic translation data, especially in combination with advanced analytics beyond basic frequency and descriptive statistics (e.g. techniques from data mining, information retrieval or natural language processing), may help to pinpoint recurring patterns in and general characteristics of translated language (Baker 2000), to improve generalisability of research findings (Chesterman 2004), to test hypotheses (Saldanha & O’Brien 2014: 62), to generate hypotheses (Goethals 2007), or to identify latent structures in linguistic data hardly or not perceptible to human inspection (Moisl 2015). All this may deepen our understanding of translation and make TS more compliant with the scientific method (Künzli 2013).



A more profound answer takes an analysis of the current state of TS as a starting point. Sun (2014) has identified an alarming disciplinary fragmentation characterised by competing research approaches on the one hand and a growing gap between translation theory and practice on the other. Among the perspectives for consolidation, Sun names the integration of theories and methods from other disciplines as well as more intense interaction between theory and practice. We believe that the potential of corpus-based TS for contributing to these two trajectories and thus for reconciling competing research approaches on the one hand and for narrowing the theory-practice gap on the other has not yet been fully exploited, as will be discussed in the following two subsections, which aim to highlight the need for corpora in TS.

## **2.2 Potential to Reconcile Competing Research Approaches**

### **2.2.1 Redefining the Object of Study**

A large part of the disciplinary fragmentation boils down to the multitude of partly competing definitions of translation, which makes it hard to find common ground across existing culture-bound conceptualisations and scholarly theories of translation. In view of the absence of clear-cut inner and outer conceptual boundaries, Halverson (1999) proposed viewing translation as a prototype category along a continuum from translation to non-translation. From the perspective of corpus building, such definitions are vague, because they lack criteria that help to decide whether a given text sample is representative of the target population of translations. The difficulty to define the outer conceptual boundaries is most likely one of the reasons why there are no general-purpose but only specialised corpora that “do not aim to represent translated texts in general but only specific translated genres or text types” (Zanettin 2011: 19).

Specialised corpora limited to a (small) subset of translation types avoid (re-)defining the core concept of translation. By contrast, a shift towards universal and open-ended translational corpora (see 3) will inevitably require researchers to intensify the debate about the definition of translation. Although at first sight it may appear that this will divide conflicting positions even further, there is also a chance for reconciliation. The reason for this is that the availability of large multilingual general-purpose data repositories covering a wide range of types of translations, language pairs, subject domains, etc. may spur empirically informed judgments about the translational status of different kinds of text production processes. More specifically, general-purpose corpora may

serve as a gateway to refining conceptual boundaries, both inner and outer ones, to studying less commonly investigated translation types (e.g. localisation, post-editing, crowd translation, non-professional translation, relay translation, etc.) and to re-examining the specificities of prototypical instances of translation as compared to less typical ones. All this may eventually lead to the development of empirically derived typologies of translation with reduced theoretical bias. The importance of such typologies should be obvious in view of the fact that the concept of translation is not stable through time (Zanettin 2013: 108) or across sociocultural contexts (Sun 2014: 168).

### **2.2.2 Methodological Consolidation**

The influence of both empirical and cultural studies approaches resulted in an “empirical vs. non-empirical dualistic mindset” (Sun 2014: 177) in TS. Nevertheless, there is shared ground between empirical and non-empirical research: both need to ground hypotheses in previous research (= theory), both need to comply with the principles of logical reasoning and both need to embed their findings, explanatory or predictive models within the larger context of what is known in the field. In the same vein, qualitative and quantitative empirical methods are not mutually exclusive (Olohan 2004: 86; Saldanha 2009: 5). Cognitive translation process research for instance has convincingly shown that triangulation (Alves 2003; Hansen 2010) improves the quality, validity and reliability of research and is therefore regarded as a desirable best practice (Shreve & Angelone 2010: 6). In triangulation, the complementary use of qualitative and quantitative methods plays a prominent role. This comes as no surprise, since in linguistics there is increasing awareness that “[q]ualitative ideas may inspire quantitative research, and quantitative methods may substantiate qualitative investigations” (Kelih *et al.* 2013: 3). In the end, quantitative research is not only about computing statistics; quantitative data always need to be compared with the initial (often qualitatively derived) hypotheses as well as interpreted and put into the context of theory. Furthermore, the scope of quantitative methods is continuously expanding: cluster analysis, a predominantly exploratory data analysis technique, has recently become more popular in corpus linguistics (Moisl 2015). It is very useful for hypothesis generation, especially when dealing with quantities of data that are too large or complex to be interpretable by human inspection (*ibid.*: X). Given that the body of translation data is constantly growing, innovative exploratory techniques are of great value for translation research.

On the whole, neither empirical research in general nor quantitative research in particular is incompatible with other methods; on the contrary, they are most useful when employed in multi-method and multi-perspective research designs. The optimistic conclusion to be drawn at this point is that the investigation of corpus data may bring together translation scholars from various thematic, methodological and theoretical backgrounds. Such tendencies can already be observed; in cognitive TS, for example, there have been numerous studies integrating process and product data (e.g. Alves *et al.* 2010; Hansen 2010). Similarly, corpus-based interpreting research is on the rise (Setton 2013), hence fostering exchange between the translation and interpreting research communities.

A factor not to be neglected when discussing the potential benefits of corpus-based approaches is that the number of available corpora is growing, thereby providing data for a wider range of research interests. In addition, the next generation of corpus analysis tools will have better scalability to handle larger amounts of text, will incorporate more sophisticated analysis techniques and will become more easily accessible through user-friendly interfaces (Anthony 2013). This will help to lower the barrier to corpus-based research. In sum, we fully agree that “what the future holds for corpus-based translation studies is the promotion of rich, varied, multilingual and interdisciplinary work, which will lead the way towards greater unity in the field of translation studies, fully respecting the diversity of each perspective involved” (Laviosa 2013: 26).

## **2.3 Potential for Bridging the Theory-Practice Gap**

### **2.3.1 Overcoming the Gap between Academia and the Industry**

Unlike many other disciplines in the humanities, in TS the object of study is deeply rooted in practice. It is first and foremost the craft and trade of (professional) translators that constitutes the ontological basis of scholarly activity. Nevertheless, there is a growing gap between theory and practice insofar as theory partly lacks usefulness to practitioners. Among the reasons for this alienation, Sun (2014) names (1) theory’s focus on literary translation, (2) theory’s reluctance to pursue prescriptive approaches and (3) theory’s disregard of business practices. Let us briefly discuss how corpus-based approaches may mitigate each of these.

While non-literary translation comprises the lion’s share of commissioned translations in the language industry, translation theorists mainly focus on literary translation, which has been measured in terms of research output, too (Zanettin, Saldanha & Harding 2015). The majority of

corpus data is also literary, though mainly due to legal restrictions. Efforts in compiling non-literary corpora are likely to pay off, since such corpora are not only useful translation aids for practitioners but also yield research findings with more direct relevance to the translation industry.

“Relevance” is the key term that leads to the second reason: Whereas mainstream theories are predominantly descriptive, translators turn to theory mainly in search of knowledge that will assist them in producing better translations, i.e. prescriptive guidelines for informed translation decisions. In the end, pre- and descriptive approaches are not incompatible; if certain strategies are found to lead systematically to quality products and client satisfaction, they may be formulated as guidelines for practitioners (Sun 2014: 184). Therefore, in order to raise theory’s usefulness to practice, purely descriptive approaches should be abandoned. As pointed out by Stauder (2018), pure descriptivism may be objective, but it often lacks relevance because it tends to overlook issues of translation quality, i.e. whether translations attain their communicative goals. From a philosophical perspective, relevance is an important criterion of scientificity, with social relevance becoming increasingly important (Shaw & Elger 2013). Consequently, judgements about translation quality according to sound and objective criteria should be a concern of translation theory, and corpora are obviously *the* source for studying quality.

As for the third reason (and closely related to practical relevance), translation scholars partly theorise about translation with insufficient or even without consideration of real-world business practices that impose constraints on how translators work. Professional translation is no longer a solitary activity but embedded in complex project workflows. Even more importantly, translation has turned into a form of human-machine interaction (Carl *et al.* 2011). It is a trade in constant and rapid transition governed by economic principles and the ongoing digitalisation. Corpora that not only collect product data but also capture as many parameters of the production process as possible may improve our understanding of translation, including the specificities of translation in the digital.

### **2.3.2 Overcoming the Gap between Translation Theory and Translation Technology**

Machine translation (MT) and translation memory (TM) systems are by far the most important translation technologies. Driven by advances in artificial intelligence, especially in deep learning, MT is becoming more and more powerful (e.g. Wu *et al.* 2016). Consequently, MT is becoming

more widely accepted in the language industry (Bowker 2015: 92). Given these advances, MT plus post-editing is likely to overtake TMs as the primary production environment (Joscelyne *et al.* 2017: 5). Still, translation technology suffers from serious shortcomings. The inherently difficult nature of translation (Arnold 2003) aside, an insufficient grounding in translation theory contributes to the limitations of present-day MT. On the one hand, automated quality metrics that incorporate linguistics and translation theory and that are time and cost efficient and thus applicable to practice hold the potential to stimulate the progress of MT. On the other hand, the MT and TS communities should collaborate more closely in order to learn how to better use available translation data rather than only gathering more and more data (Way & Hearne 2011). Along this line of research, there is increasing evidence that apart from sheer size, the kind and quality of training data has an influence on MT performance (e.g. Kurokawa, Gouette & Isabelle 2009; Lembersky, Ordan & Wintner 2012; Moorkens *et al.* 2014). Such findings highlight the limitations of pure engineering and computer science approaches. Or, as Way and Hearne put it in their call for more collaboration between the MT and translation communities: “In order to make progress in SMT, we need to make explicit the phenomena which occur in real translated data and model these phenomena more effectively” (2011: 236). It goes without saying that the prerequisite for such an endeavour are corpora of the most varying cases of translation and detailed information about the included texts.

### 3 What Can Current Resources (Not) Offer to Us?

Nowadays, there is a wide range of corpora that offer data for the most varying purposes, ranging from data-driven translation research to the development of translation technology. What corpora should offer to us, i.e. the criteria for corpus building, is discussed in detail in any introduction to corpus-based TS (e.g. Mikhailov & Cooper 2016; Olohan 2004) and is hence not to be reiterated here. Instead, we focus on two aspects with room for improvement.

In the first place, contrary to monolingual corpora, translation-oriented corpora are much more limited in terms of number of available resources and size (Mikhailov & Cooper 2016: 1–2). Since the number, type and quality of available corpora directly affect the validity and reliability of corpus-based TS (Hu 2016: 229), it is of paramount importance to build new, large resources. This is especially true in view of the potential of corpora for serving as a bridge between theory and practice (see 2.3),

because the “datafication” (Wang 2015) is an irreversible trend in the translation industry.

In the second place, the diversity of corpora should be increased. Already more than a decade ago, Olohan (2004: 191) recognised that a wide range of corpus data is needed “to study translation and translation processes more generally”. Although corpus-based TS has come a long way since then, a review of influential translation-oriented corpora (e.g. Hu 2016: 77–81; Mikhailov & Cooper 2016: 197–213) reveals the predominance of certain texts, especially literary translations. While there are good reasons for studying corpora of literary translations, one must recall that for the most part the translation industry involves non-literary translation (see 2.3.1). It is therefore important to continue expanding the scope of research to cover as diverse a range of languages, periods, text types, genres, subject domains, translation types, text production settings, translator profiles and data sources as possible. In doing so, corpus builders should avoid focusing mainly on the “centre” of translation activity while ignoring the “periphery” (Olohan 2004: 190). In the context of recent developments in translation this means that the emergence and growing importance of “new” forms of translation (localisation, post-editing, crowd translation, non-professional translation, relay translation, to name but a few) need to be included in corpora. No less important, in a globalised and multilingual world, more corpora for non-Western and less-resourced languages need to be developed. A promising avenue for the promotion of corpus diversity is the construction of open-ended general-purpose corpora. Such corpora may be conceived as expandable and growing repositories of real-world translations that do not follow predetermined schemes for sampling texts from a specific domain or genre or of certain translation types, but that provide functionality for dynamically incorporating any text representative of translation in general (see 2.2.1). According to Zanettin (2011: 19), no attempts have been made to create general-purpose translational corpora, which is consistent with more recent corpus surveys (Hu 2016: 77–81; Mikhailov & Cooper 2016: 197–213) and our own review of existing resources. This blank spot on the map has inspired the creation of *TransBank*, a universal repository of translation data (Stauder & Ustaszewski in this volume; Ustaszewski & Stauder 2017) with the goal of promoting TS as outlined in section 2 of this paper. At first glance, it may appear that the large-scale collection of translations without a predefined sampling scheme that aims at corpus balance resembles the ant’s behaviour in Sir Francis Bacon’s metaphor cited at the beginning of this paper, and thus fails to advance science. However, the key to avoiding the pitfall of uninformative text collections

is by adding useful metadata. This gives structure to the collection and allows for the compilation of subcorpora, i.e. groups of texts according to certain criteria defined by corpus developers or users (Mikhailov & Cooper 2016: 8). Furthermore, metadata help to restore the original communicative context of corpus texts (Burnard 2005: 31). Translation-specific metadata include, for example, information about the author and audience of the source text, the intended purpose and audience of the target text, the profile of the translator, as well as the circumstances of target text production. Based on this kind of information, it is possible to extend research from the language-systemic level to the cognitive, socio-cultural or technological factors that influence translation. There are several corpora that provide a wealth of information of this kind, e.g. the CroCo corpus ([http://fedora.clarin-d.uni-saarland.de/croco-gecco/croco/index\\_en.html](http://fedora.clarin-d.uni-saarland.de/croco-gecco/croco/index_en.html)) or the MeLLANGE Learner Translator Corpus (<http://corpus.leeds.ac.uk/mellange/ltc.html>), but they are the exceptions rather than the norm and subject to other restrictions, like for example limited size.

## 4 Conclusion

Although still in its early days, corpus-based TS has been recognised as an approach with the potential to unify opposing perspectives (Olohan 2004: 8–9). Sun's (2014) analysis of the disciplinary fragmentation highlights the fact that TS is still in urgent need of reconciliation. The availability of large, multilingual corpora covering the most varied types of translation may help to narrow existing gaps, both within TS and between theory and practice. Although the construction of corpora is a time-consuming and costly endeavour, the development of new resources will be beneficial to TS and further spur the methodological and theoretical innovation of the past years. This, in turn, may open novel and exciting approaches to corpus building and data-driven research at the interface of TS, the translation industry and language technology. In this multidisciplinary scenario, translation research aims to steer the metaphorical middle course regarding scientific inquiry suggested by Francis Bacon in the initial quote.

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# TRANSBANK: A META-CORPUS FOR TRANSLATION RESEARCH

ANDY STAUDER AND  
MICHAEL USTASZEWSKI  
UNIVERSITÄT INNSBRUCK, INNSBRUCK

## Abstract

Corpora have become a major staple of linguistic research in recent years. In terms of translation, corpus-based methodologies have had an impact on the industry, less so, however, on translation *studies*. Data-driven methodologies could help make real-world translation phenomena clear and sound theoretical models that are capable of explaining them possible. The TransBank project aims to provide a large, open, and expandable collection of translated texts and their original texts, aligned at the sentence level. The main innovative feature is the ability to compile and download parallel sub-corpora on demand, tailored to the requirements of specific translation research questions, by using faceted search technology. The key to such flexible corpora compilation is a comprehensive and precise set of metadata labels that help capture the relation between translated texts and their originals, including their circumstances of production. This tag set is the basis of a universal repository of empirical translation resources that combines the advantages of pre-existing, separate data collections. In short, the goal of the project is to make reusable, open and empirical data available for translation research.

**Keywords:** *translation corpus, metadata, alignment, data-driven, search technology*

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Motivation

Corpus-based methodologies have become a major staple of linguistic research in recent years, ranging from grammar topics to lexicology, socio-linguistics, and applied linguistics. Data-driven and quantitative approaches (cf. Oakes 2012) have had an impact on the field of translation as well, however, mainly from a computer science perspective and with regard to predominantly practical problems and industry. The results of these trajectories include translation memory, terminology management, statistical and, most recently, neural machine translation systems.

A large piece of the puzzle that still appears to be missing in this picture is data-driven approaches with a focus on aspects of translation as a complex language operation rather than a (simplistic) data problem that can be solved with brute force. To put it succinctly, the main problem to be addressed by the project presented in this vision paper is the lack of data-driven tools that help make explicit real-world translation phenomena (cf. Way & Hearne 2011) and provide sound theoretical models capable of explaining them (cf. i. a. Mikhailov & Cooper 2016). This would benefit not only translation studies as a discipline in the tradition of the humanities, but also other translation-related fields, such as machine translation, computer-aided translation and the language industry. This paper discusses a two-year research project for which funding has been obtained from the Austrian Academy of Sciences. At the time of writing, the project's preliminary stage has just been completed and it is to be officially launched shortly.

## 1.2 Goals

A translation is characterised by the highest level of intertextuality to be found in any kind of text because it is always a reproduction of another text; as such, it is mostly judged and/or examined with regard to the relation it bears to its original. The project aims to provide a tool that helps define this relation with a precise, generally valid and translation-specific set of metadata labels, which is to be applied to a corpus that consists solely of translations and their respective original texts. Thus, the project's main goals are:

- The compilation of an open-ended collection of translations and their original texts: a translation bank, which is not a finished sum

- of texts, but a growing resource for translation-related research;
- The definition of a finite set of metadata labels that mainly capture the distinctive features of translations as highly intertextual language material;
  - Labelling the data in the translation bank using the defined metadata set;
  - Making the resource available to the general public as well as to the research community, in a highly usable and interoperable form.

### 1.3 Related Work

In the following, the authors would like to include a number of notable examples of bilingual or multilingual corpora, all of which cover a number of aspects of translation, but mostly do not present a complete picture.

#### European Parliament Proceedings Parallel Corpus 1996-2011 (EuroParl)

Given its large size and sentence-aligned architecture, EuroParl (cf. Koehn 2005) has been highly influential, especially for statistical machine translation. However, it includes a rather limited variety of text types and provides relatively little translation-specific metadata. In contrast to the EuroParl corpus, the discussed project aims to include a much larger variety of text types and to focus much more on metadata, thus making the corpus structure more flexible, and open towards a variety of research questions in the field of translation.

#### MeLLANGE Learner Translator Corpus

This corpus (cf. MeLLANGE 2007) is a notable representative of learner corpora; it highlights didactic aspects accordingly, and does not include professional translations, but rather translations produced by translators in training. As opposed to a wide range of other corpora, its size is comparatively small (about 12,000 words). The focus, however, is on data quality rather than quantity, as the data are annotated on various levels. In other words, metadata play a more important role and translation-specific aspects are explicitly addressed.

#### TEC (Translational English Corpus)

TEC (cf. Baker 2003) aims to investigate the language of translated English and contains written texts translated into English from a variety of

source languages. One restriction here is that the translations are always in English, so it is a unidirectional corpus. A further limitation is that it does not include source texts. However, it features a useful set of translator-related metadata (e.g. gender, nationality, and occupation), defining translations to a significant extent, in which the authors are considered as well.

### BYU Wikipedia Corpus

Released in early 2015, the monolingual BYU Wikipedia corpus (cf. Davies 2015) contains 1.9 billion words from 4.4 million web pages and can be searched with various queries, including categories such as part of speech, collocates, frequency etc. Its most interesting feature is the ability to quickly create “virtual corpora” for specific subject domains. These can then also be searched for with the provided web interface, but cannot be downloaded free of charge.

### Dutch Parallel Corpus

The last corpus to be discussed here (cf. Paulussen 2013) is a balanced, high quality parallel corpus that covers Dutch, English and French, with translations both from and into Dutch. It features an even richer metadata set than the corpora mentioned previously. It is a balanced, non-dynamic corpus, which makes it useful for a wide range of research.

Further resources of note in the community, which also have a number of features that are interesting for our research project, include ParFin (cf. 2013), ParRus (cf. 2012), the Oslo Multilingual Corpus (cf. Johansson 2002), GENTT (cf. Borja & Ordóñez 2012) and MUST (cf. Granger & Lefer 2018); the discussion of which would, however, go beyond the scope of this paper.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Data Selection and Collection

TransBank is to impose no restrictions regarding language pairs and directions, text types, subject domains, translator experience and education, time period of production, etc. The only common criterion for selection is that texts to be included must be texts advertised or perceived as translations, paired with their respective originals. This means, on the one hand, that the translation bank is to be a dynamic text resource, similar

to a translation memory, which is open-ended by definition. On the other hand, the translation bank is to be similar to a classical bilingual corpus, which aims to collect a large number of texts or text segments that help find solutions to research questions. It goes beyond both of these types of text resources in so far as it constitutes a kind of meta-collection: the strong emphasis on metadata allows for selective search and sorting operations that make it possible to generate sub-corpora on demand, suitable for a wide range of potentially very specific possible research questions.

Of course, this would mean a limitless, overwhelming quantity of texts that would qualify for being included in the bank, so there must at least be a well-defined starting point. For this purpose, the authors have outlined a data harvesting plan, which includes a pre-selection of data sources and search directions, taking into consideration aspects such as legal and copyright status, availability, and pre-existing metadata. Strategically, the harvesting plan is subdivided into two major components: a retrospective one and a prospective one, both to be explained in the next sections. Also, it should be mentioned that the authors do not aim to achieve a balanced collection of texts, as opposed to classical corpora, because the authors consider this a limiting factor since language use and distribution of text types in the real world are in themselves unbalanced and dynamic.

The selection of new data is to be carried out by the staff processing them.

### **2.1.1 Copyright Issues and Data Protection**

Whenever dealing with large amounts of data, especially against the background of an open-access-oriented project, one major concern is the legal status of the material collected. Therefore, a two-pronged approach is to be adopted in this project. Firstly, the authors have roughly assessed and taken into consideration possible legal problems further downstream when pre-selecting the material listed in the harvesting plan.

Secondly, when the project has started, every starting source (i.e., everything pre-selected for the rough data harvesting plan in the first step) and additional sources gathered are to be carefully examined in terms of legal aspects. This means that during this step the legal status and rights concerning works are to be reviewed in detail. As has been mentioned, data collection itself is also to be performed with the help of a dual strategy, outlined in the following two sub-sections. Rights clearance is to be outsourced to a legal professional.



### 2.1.2 Retrospective Data Collection: Legacy Data

This component consists in enriching existing bilingual or multilingual text resources with metadata. The data are to be sourced based on the harvesting plan and any further resources found further downstream. This includes existing corpora and individual texts along with their translations.

### 2.1.3 Prospective Data Collection: New Data

“New data” is understood to mean translations for which the respective translators are prepared to provide metadata corresponding to our label set right from the start. This means that in this context the main issues will not be analytical metadata creation, but negotiations with practitioners and quality control. This approach will also enable the team to gather significant quantities of non-literary texts, i.e. text types often underrepresented in translation-related corpora: this is a very important aspect of real-world translation data, as the bulk of everything that is translated by the industry is non-literary.

### 2.1.4 Data Harvesting Plan

As has been mentioned, the data harvesting plan (see Table 1) is a rough tool that is to provide a starting point for collecting data. It contains a number of pre-selected promising resources that are to be processed during the project and that are likely to lead to the finding of further sources. There are several types of resources and in Table 1, one example of each is to be included.

Legacy Data	New Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bibliographies: Index Translationum (cf. 2014)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- international bibliography of book translations</li> <li>- rich index of bibliographical metadata for translated books</li> <li>- contains at least a few useful metadata labels, such as the original and target language and subject; but mostly standard bibliographical information</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language service providers: hubs for freelance translators for a broad range of language pairs, subject domains and text types               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ideal partners for gathering real-world translations and metadata: highly valuable metadata following our specifications that are gathered before or during the production process of the translations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online text collections: Project Gutenberg (cf. 2016)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- contains texts themselves and not only metadata</li> <li>- most material in the public domain: legally unproblematic but most of the works not very recent</li> <li>- cross-checks with the Index Translationum could yield a substantial number of titles and their translations and the texts themselves.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Existing corpora: Europarl             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- very few metadata, but sentence-aligned</li> <li>- good candidate with large quantities of text to be enriched with metadata</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other online resources: WikiProject Medicine             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sub-project of Wikipedia (one of the most widely-used bodies of text in NLP (natural language processing)), dedicated to translation of medical texts</li> <li>- Wikipedia user profiles contain many useful details such as biographical data or native language(s)</li> <li>- cross-referencing profiles and Project Medicine translations with version history of translated articles makes it possible to collect a large number of original texts and their translations along with valuable metadata</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- prerequisite: informed consent of both the client(s) and the translator(s) involved;</li> <li>• Translator Training Institutions             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- for a universal empirical translation bank, learner-generated data must not be left out</li> <li>- authors' affiliation with the translation studies department of the University of Innsbruck, which grants access to large number of student translations</li> <li>- student translations could be labelled with metadata before and during translation process</li> <li>- same method could be applied to partners in academic network</li> <li>- informed consent of teacher(s) and student(s) required</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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**Table 1. Data harvesting plan**

## 2.2 Data Processing

### 2.2.1 Labelling

Data labelling is one of the core activities of the project. As has been mentioned, this is to be done by applying a metadata set, which is to be defined during the project. The metadata are to include all aspects relevant to the production of the translation, such as language pair, text type, subject domain, translator experience and education, time period of production etc. One aspect that is certainly not going to be labelled is translation quality, as this is an issue that has still not been resolved by the scientific community: the translation bank would provide a valuable, reusable resource for tackling this research question; i.e., translation quality is not to be labelled because there is no reliable and agreed means of assessing it: labelling it in spite of this would be problematic in terms of data quality and would harbour the danger of bias. A separate subset of the labels will have to be defined for source texts as they, too, have a number of key features relevant to translation, e.g. their year of publication, whether they are translations themselves (resulting in intermediary translation) etc.

Data labelling, and this cannot be stressed enough, will be the basis for faceted search applications and for generating sub-corpora for very specific research questions, by overcoming the inherent limitations of static text collections.

### 2.2.2 Alignment

Alignment is a necessary condition for being able to study translation phenomena as the sentence level constitutes a manageable, neatly defined translation unit, for machines as well as humans. Of course, this does not mean that the sentence is the only possible translation unit, but it is, in terms of data processing as well as cognition, the most convenient one. Even if there is some debate as to the justification of the sentence as a translation unit in the scientific community, for the purposes of this project the decision is a practically motivated step that must be taken.

As a compromise between data quality on the one hand and processing speed on the other, semi-automated alignment has been chosen. This is to include ways to deal with complex alignment situations, such as cross-alignment when the sentence orders in the source and target text differ.

### 3 Data Storage and Access

Data storage is to be provided in the form of TMX files for the aligned text and METS as a container format, for storing the metadata. The web-based search and presentation platform is to provide output options for data download, which can be generated via XSLT from the above XML formats: plain text of source and target texts, and TEI compliant XML files for those who want to label data *within* the texts as well, as opposed to our metadata *about* the texts. Also the TMX/METS files will be available for download.

The platform will allow for faceted search operations, which can be used for compiling and downloading specific sub-corpora. This means that search parameters can be combined instead of only being used in a mutually exclusive manner, as is the case with fixed, separate (sub-) corpora. The combination is not only one of various labels for one group of texts, but for two: users have to choose a combination of metadata labels for the *source texts* on the one hand and for the relevant *target texts* on the other. The search mask will therefore be two-sided. For example, users will be able to compile a parallel corpus which fulfils the criteria shown in Table 2.

<b>Source texts (included in download [yes] / [no])</b>	<b>Target texts (included in download [yes] / [no])</b>
[published from (1938) to (1945)] [published in (Austria)] [fictional]	[DE-EN language pair] [female translator] [translation into (native language)]

**Table 2. Search example**

As can be seen, users can also choose whether source texts, target texts or both are to be included in the downloadable package, i.e., corpora consisting of only source texts or only target texts are an option too: both of which not necessarily monolingual. This makes it possible to generate comparable corpora as well, e.g. by searching for all original texts from a certain subject domain in various languages, without considering the translations included in the bank. The search engine to be used is the Lucene-based Elasticsearch.

## 4 Expected Outcomes and Outlook

While sharing a number of features with each of the resources listed under 1.3, the combination of features, together with a new way of accessing translation data via the envisaged web platform, provides a genuinely new tool for promoting data-driven, empirical translation research: the main innovative feature is the ability to compile and download parallel or comparable sub-corpora on demand, tailored to requirements regarding specific questions of translation research. Such studies may include, for example, diachronic issues such as translation-induced language change, the impact of translation technology on linguistic features of written text, contrastive questions regarding differences between text-type norms and conventions across languages, or cognitive research interests in connection with the differences between texts produced by trainees and experienced practitioners.

Also, the openness, dynamic nature, and high data quality provided by the semi-automated alignment of the collection will yield a sufficiently large text quantity and data quality for making use of the collection within the framework of big data approaches, with significant implications for translation technologies and natural language processing (NLP), including machine translation. Also, the ability to generate *comparable* sub-corpora (see Section 3) is well in line with a very recent and current trend in the field of data-driven linguistic research and NLP (Sharoff *et al.* 2013). The quantitative goal of the project is to collect approximately ten million words (tokens) within the two years of the project duration. A high likelihood of success of the project is assured through using reliable, tried and tested technologies and standards for a new approach to accessing empirical data for translation research.

The aforementioned openness and dynamic operation are two features that are to be provided well beyond the end of the project duration, as TransBank is to be maintained and expanded after the project, too. The rate of growth in that phase will depend on the funding that can be attracted by then. The authors hope to build up an extensive community of users by that time, who will also contribute text material, the quality of which is, however, always to be checked by project members. Any translation data are welcome, especially those with rich existing metadata. This paper is also seen as a call for participation, and the authors welcome anyone who wants to approach them regarding the sharing of data at <https://transbank.info/join>.

In summary, what TransBank is aiming to provide is a collection of reusable, open, empirical data for translation research.

## Acknowledgements

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INTERFACE BETWEEN  
IMAGOLGY, TRANSLATION STUDIES  
AND DIGITAL HUMANITIES:  
WORKING WITH A DATABASE AS  
A RESEARCH TOOL FOR IMAGE ANALYSIS

MARCELLO GIUGLIANO

LEIPZIG UNIVERSITY, LEIPZIG / UNIVERSITY OF BERN, BERN

**Abstract**

The article describes the first part of an ongoing research project that aims at combining the frameworks of Imagology and Translatology from the methodological perspective of the Digital Humanities. After describing the criteria for the design of a database of North American canonical authors translated into Spanish, it tests the efficacy of the database as a tool of imagological investigation by using it for a distant reading analysis of a particular case study. Finally, it draws its conclusions by highlighting the advantages of a macro approach to the study of images of a national identity in literary translations in a target culture.

**Keywords:** *Imagology, Digital Humanities, Literary translation in Spanish, North American Literature, Online Library Catalogues*

**1 Introduction**

The present article describes the first part of an ongoing research project concerning the role that translations of canonical texts of the North American literary system have played in the formation, consolidation, diffusion or disruption of the image of the United States in Spain. The study is a reflection on the potential advantages of an approach that interconnects three research areas: Translation Studies (TS), Imagology and Digital Humanities.



Imagology and TS share a number of features. They are both interdisciplines since they rely on other disciplines, such as linguistics, textual analysis, psychology, and ethnology, for the analysis of their research objects (translations and images). Furthermore, both translations and images are relational concepts, since they are usually defined in relation (and often in opposition) to other objects. A translated text always implies a source text and, in an analogous way, a self-image (or auto-image) of a person, a group or a culture always implies the presence of a yardstick by which the self-image can be defined—the image of the Other.

Like Imagology and TS, the field of Digital Humanities is also interdisciplinary since it refers to “new modes of scholarship and institutional units for collaborative, transdisciplinary, and computationally engaged research, teaching and publication” (Burdick *et al.* 2012: 122). The use of digital tools in humanities research would not by itself be enough to justify labelling a project as belonging to this field. What makes it possible to include my study within this area of research is the use of digital tools, such as online catalogues and databases, in order to achieve a macro perspective of translational and imagological phenomena that can function as a starting point for close readings and interpretations. The combination of the macro and the micro is a fundamental feature of research in Digital Humanities that “is capable of ‘toggling’ between views of the data, zooming in and out, searching for large-scale patterns and then focusing in on fine-grained analysis” (Burdick *et al.* 2012: 39). At the same time, research in this field also contributes to testing its limits and to prompting new theoretical and methodological reflections.

## 2 Terminological Clarifications, Objectives and Research Questions

### 2.1 *Distant Reading of the Database*

The first part of my research project is concerned with the design and analysis of a database in which information extracted from online catalogues has been collected. The main hypothesis of this part of the project is that by gathering a significant amount of data on Spanish translations of North American literary texts from online catalogues, by organising them in an Excel database and by analysing them, it should be possible to identify broad translational patterns, above all within the area of translation reception, translation policies and publishing policies. In Digital Humanities, this approach is known as *distant reading*, that is “a form of analysis that focuses on larger units and fewer elements in order to

reveal patterns and interconnections through shapes, relations, models, and structures” (Burdick *et al.* 2012: 38). As Burdick clarifies:

Distant reading is [...] not just a ‘digitization’ or a ‘quickener’ of classic humanities methodologies. It is, rather, a new way of doing research wherein computational methods allow for novel sets of questions to be posed about the history of ideas, language use, cultural values and their dissemination, and the processes by which culture is made (Burdick *et al.* 2012: 39).

In my case, the distant reading of a database may produce new research questions on the interconnection between Imagology and TS.

## 2.2 What is an Image?

Since the article focuses mainly on the presentation of a database of North American authors and their translations into Spanish, imagological issues will be touched upon only briefly. The information provided by the database will not be conclusive enough, at this stage of research, for a detailed description—that is, a close reading—of the main features of the image of the United States in Spain. Nevertheless, it is necessary to clarify beforehand a number of terms, such as the notion of “image”, that have already been mentioned and will be mentioned later on in the article. The definition of “image” is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, it is not uniform but can be composed of contradictory elements, without being pansemic (Pageaux 1995:147). For example, the image of the United States from a European perspective after WWII comprised both positive and negative features. The United States was often represented as a land of freedom of expression and of opportunities, but also as a country where capitalism, individualism and competitiveness ruled. Secondly, the concept of “image” is also difficult to define because it often overlaps with, and partly encompasses, notions like cliché, stereotype, imagotype and prejudice.<sup>1</sup> For our research, we adopt the definition of image as “an interferential configuration of the mental images, textual and non-textual representations and practice patterns which are constituted within a given socio-historical context” (Blažević 2012: 105).

In Imagology, a distinction is made between the notion of *auto-image*, or *self-image*—that is, the image of one’s own identity that a culture, group or individual represent in discourse—and that of *hetero-image*—that

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<sup>1</sup> For a distinction between the notions of image, stereotype and cliché see Ditzel (2006: 53-56) and Beller and Leerssen (2007: 297, 342-344, 429-434).

is, the image of the Other. Both auto- and hetero-images are discursive representations in which the nationality represented is also called the *spected*, and the perspectival context in which the discourse is generated is called the *spectant* (Beller & Leerssen 2007: xiii–xiv). Other names have been suggested to describe the same or similar concepts.<sup>2</sup> Giugliano and Alsina (forthcoming) propose a modification of the dominant terminology so that it is possible to differentiate the auto- (or self-) image from the *allo-image*, the image of the Other. Within the category of *allo-image*, they distinguish the *hetero-image*, which is defined through a negative opposition to the self-image, and the *homo-image*,<sup>3</sup> the image of the Other that is characterised by a relationship of affinity to the auto-image. This terminology will be used in the present study.

### 2.3 Objectives and Research Questions

The first objective of this study consists in describing the structure of the database, explaining the criteria for the selection of the data, and justifying the choice of the categories of which it is comprised. The second objective consists in testing the efficacy of the database for my research purposes. In order to achieve the second goal, I will draw on a case study carried out by Hernández Socas and Giugliano (2019).

The achievement of these objectives should also provide an answer to a number of research questions. The first question concerns the possibility of applying distant reading methods of analysis to the field of Imagology and the extent to which these methods are effective for the description of images of national identities. The second question focuses on online bibliographical catalogues as suitable sources for this kind of research.

## 3 Modelling the Database

### 3.1 Design Criteria

The structure of the database was planned in view of the general objective of the whole project, that is, the description of the *allo-image* of the United States in Spain and the role played by translations of canonical texts of North American literature in the process of image formation. Before

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<sup>2</sup> For an overview of the various taxonomical proposals see Ditze (2006: 33-36).

<sup>3</sup> The term *homo-image* was first used by Sorge (1998: 23) as the image that “der eigenen Befindlichkeit, den subjektiven Werthaltungen entsprechenden Elemente in einem Wirklichkeitsausschnitt erschließt, z.B. im Land, die zu einer positiven, eine Identifikation erlaubenden Wertung führen.”

presenting the main design criteria of the database, it seems important to clarify concisely why the whole research project focuses on literary translations. It may be argued, in fact, that this approach overshadows the central role that other media, such as radio, cinema, television and, in recent years, the Internet, the World Wide Web and various social media networks, play in the formation and rapid diffusion of certain clichés, stereotypes and other mental representations that may form a cultural image. By focusing on literary texts, I am not denying the importance of these media. However, literary texts often play a central role in the genesis of certain cultural images that are later adopted by popular media. As Leerssen points out, “the roots of national movement lie with writers and intellectuals, the ideological pathfinders of the later political activists” (Leerssen 2012:58).<sup>4</sup>

### 3.2 Sources

The first step towards a successful database design involved the definition of the criteria for a) the selection of the translated authors, and b) the sources for the extraction of the data.

Regarding the selection of the authors, I focused on translations of canonical works of North American literature published in Spain from 1900 to the present. This criterion allowed me to delimit my field of investigation but introduced a number of difficulties that had to be tackled before proceeding to the data extraction. Firstly, by limiting the scope of research to canonical North American authors, I had to solve the problematic issue of canonicity as applied to a literary text.<sup>5</sup> How was I to decide which authors should be included in or excluded from the database? I decided to adopt an “external” principle, that is, a principle that did not rely on my own evaluation of a literary work as the grounds for including the text within the canon. I chose to regard as canonical all North American authors whose work has been published by the Library of America (LOA). This had the advantage of providing me with an easily accessible list of North American writers, which would be the starting point for the compilation of the database. I am aware that the external criterion of selection described above does not solve the problem of value

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<sup>4</sup> See also Ditze (2006: 24) and Firchow (1986: 186), for whom “Literature is not merely reflective; it is also active”, among others.

<sup>5</sup> The controversy around the notion of “the Canon” cannot be summarised here. I refer to Kolbas for an overview on the contemporary debate (2001: 11-58). See also Fowler’s broadly accepted distinction of six kinds of canons (1979) and Harris’s (1991) enlargement of the categories and problematisation of the concept.

judgement implied in any selection; rather, it shifts the accountability of the decision from my own evaluation criteria to those adopted by the LOA. Moreover, my choice does not solve the problem, implicit in every choice, of the value of what remains outside the selection. Nevertheless, as I will show, my decision found its justification in the values and objectives evinced by the mission statement of the LOA. It also finds support in analogous approaches adopted for the description of canons in different cultural contexts.

### 3.2.1 The Library of America

The LOA is a well-known American non-profit organisation and publishing house. Its mission and culture seem to be particularly relevant for the imagological perspective of the study<sup>6</sup>. The heading of the *Overview* section of the LOA's website reads: "A unique undertaking: To celebrate the words that have shaped America" ([www.loa.org/about](http://www.loa.org/about), retrieved 10.10.17). Its goal is "to curate and publish authoritative new editions of America's best and most significant writing, including acknowledged classics, neglected masterpieces, and historically important documents and texts." Furthermore, reference to the canonicity of the works that are published can be found in one of the running subtitles on the *Overview* page: "Publishing the boundaries of the American literary canon" (see also Image 1).

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<sup>6</sup> Details of its history and mission, as well as of the authors that have been published so far, can be retrieved from its website [www.loa.com](http://www.loa.com).



## Library of America

<b>CURATOR</b>	A champion of America's great writers and timeless works, Library of America guides readers in finding and exploring the exceptional writing that reflects the nation's history and culture.
<b>PUBLISHER</b>	From poetry, novels, and memoirs to journalism, crime writing, and science fiction, the more than 300 volumes published by Library of America are widely recognized as America's literary canon.
<b>NON-PROFIT</b>	With contributions from donors, Library of America preserves and celebrates a vital part of our cultural heritage for generations to come.

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Image 1. Library of America

In the same *Overview*, under the headline “Why Library of America?”, the editors discuss the question of the American identity:

“America is hard to see,” poet laureate Robert Frost famously wrote. Although in this poem Frost alluded to Columbus’s difficulty in navigating toward these shores, his words resonate with the continued challenge of clearly understanding a nation so diverse and so complex.

How, then, do we gain a true view of America? Taken together, the writings of the Founders, the poems of Frost and Walt Whitman, the novels and stories of Mark Twain and Edith Wharton, the slave narratives of Frederick Douglass and William Wells Brown, the essays of Henry David Thoreau, James Baldwin, and Susan Sontag, the speeches and letters of Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt, the lyrics of Cole Porter and Ira Gershwin, and many other exceptional works of American writing begin to reveal the country’s multi-faceted identity. ([www.loa.org/about](http://www.loa.org/about))

This paragraph seems to indicate the presence of a self-image of the United States behind the LOA’s mission and its selection of published literary works, which is particularly relevant for a study like the present one that deals with the representation of the image of the USA in translation and the potential changes that occur when a self-image in a source culture necessarily turns into an allo-image in the target culture.

Finally, in the *History* section of the *Overview* page, reference is made to the LOA’s model, the prestigious *Pléiade* series, which is generally considered a valid source for the establishment of the literary canon in the francophone culture. This reference to a well-known analogous case provides an additional justification for the selection criteria adopted in my study.

### 3.2.2 The online catalogues

For the database, I limited my selection to publications of translated North American literature that has appeared in the Spanish publishing market in book format. This formal constraint explains the exclusion from the database of any translations of poems, stories and novels that appeared in journals, newspapers or magazines. By limiting my research to the book format, I aim to achieve two goals. On the one hand, I have reduced the scope of my study. Had I not done so, I would have embarked on a field of research amounting to the reception of the whole of North American literature in Spain during the twentieth century, which is clearly unfeasible. On the other hand, the choice of the book format allowed me to rely for data extraction on three well-known and relatively reliable online catalogues that are commonly used for this kind of quantitative research:

1. The online catalogue of the Spanish National Library (*Biblioteca Nacional de España* - BNE), which receives and stores copies of all the books published in Spain (bne.es).
2. The *Index Translationum*, a UNESCO database of translated books (unesco.org/xtrans/).
3. *Worldcat*, “the world’s largest network of library content and services” (books, CDs, music) (worldcat.org).

Since the catalogue of the BNE provides bibliographical records to both the *Index Translationum* and *Worldcat* (Martínez Serrano and Vázquez Pedrazuela 2015: 10–11), it can be considered the most important source of the database and one that seems to provide the highest amount of detail regarding publications. I have drawn on the other two catalogues and, occasionally, on other sources, like REBIUN (a network of university libraries), whenever the records of the BNE’s catalogue presented data that needed disambiguation or clarification. Cross-referencing the three catalogues has allowed me to create a database in a systematic and relatively exhaustive way. Nevertheless, both while completing the database and, later on, during its practical use in a case study, I came across a number of difficulties that may point to the understandable limits of humanities research that relies solely on these sources. I shall make reference to these limitations during the description of the main categories that make up the database.

## 4 The Database

### 4.1 Structure

Information extracted from the online catalogues is organised in an Excel table, as shown in Image 2:



Autor	Traductor 1	Título original	Título traducido	Fecha	Edición	Editorial	Fuente	Comentarios
Adams, Abigail	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones
Adams, Henry	Hernández Arias, José Rafael	Mont Saint Michel and Chartres	Mont Saint Michel y Chartres	2016	1era	Alba	Index Translationum	Ensayo sobre arquitectura
Adams, Henry	Alcortza, Javier	The education of Henry Adams	La educación de Henry Adams	2001	1era	Alba	Index Translationum	Ensayo sobre vida rural
Adams, Henry	López Gavilán, Juan	The dynamo and the Virgin	La dinamo y la Virgen: oración a	1996		Universidad de León	Index Translationum	Ensayo sobre vida rural
Adams, John	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones	No hay traducciones
Agee, James	Frieyro, Alicia	Cotton tenants	Algodoneros: tres familias de arr	2014		Capitán Swing Libros	Index Translationum	Ensayo sobre agricultur
Agee, James	Dolores Prado, María	David Wark Griffith	David Wark Griffith	1984		Museo de Bellas Artes	Index Translationum	Ensayo sobre vida rural
Agee, James	Giralt Corina, Pilar	Let us now praise famous men	Elogiemos ahora a hombres famo	1993	1era	Sex Barral	Index Translationum	Ensayo sobre vida rural
Agee, James	Giralt Corina, Pilar	Let us now praise famous men	Elogiemos ahora a hombres famo	2008	1era	BackLit	Index Translationum	Ensayo sobre vida rural
Agee, James	Giralt Corina, Pilar	Let us now praise famous men	Elogiemos ahora a hombres famo	1994		Círculo de Lectores	Index Translationum	Ensayo sobre vida rural
Agee, James	Pujol i Vallis, Núria	Agee on film	Escritos sobre cine	2001		Paídos Ibérica	Index Translationum	Recoge una selección de
Agee, James	¿?	A death in the family	Una muerte en la familia	1986		Plaza&Janés	Index Translationum	Selección de obras Prem
Agee, James	¿?	A death in the family	Una muerte en la familia	2015		Alianza Editorial	Index Translationum	
Agee, James	Criado, Carmen	A death in the family	Una muerte en la familia	2007		Alianza Editorial	Index Translationum	
Agee, James	Criado, Carmen	A death in the family	Una muerte en la familia	2009		Alianza Editorial	Index Translationum	
Agee, James	¿?	Los Premios Pulitzer de la novela	Los Premios Pulitzer de la novela	1990		Plaza&Janés	Index Translationum	Selección de obras Prem
Agee, James	¿?	A death in the family	Una muerte en la familia	1995		Bruguera	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Agee, James	¿?	A death in the family	Una muerte en la familia	1971		Ethusa	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Agee, James	¿?	The morning watch	Vigilia	2009		Alianza Editorial	Index Translationum	
Alcott, Louisa May	Rossell Pesant, Manuel	Those little women	Aquellas mujeres	1900		Mareu	Biblioteca Nacional Esp	1era edición?
Alcott, Louisa May	Scholz, Victor	Las cinco mejores obras de Luisa May Alcott	Las cinco mejores obras de Luisa	1900		Mareu	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Alcott, Louisa May	Venzotta, Javier de	Little men	Hombrecitos	1900		Ediciones Reguera	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Alcott, Louisa May	Ballester Escalas, R.	Little men	Hombrecitos	1900		Mareu	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Alcott, Louisa May	Sepúlveda, María	Más cosas de Mujercitas	Más cosas de Mujercitas	1933	3a	Juventud	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Alcott, Louisa May	Sepúlveda, María	Little women	Mujercitas	1933		Talleres gráficos de la	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Alcott, Louisa May	Sepúlveda, María	Little women	Las cuatro hermanitas/Mujercit	1934		Juventud	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Alcott, Louisa May	Sepúlveda, María	Little men	Hombrecitos	1935		Juventud	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Alcott, Louisa May	¿?	An old-fashioned girl	Una muchacha anticuada	1944		Hyma	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Alcott, Louisa May	¿?	Little women	Mujercitas	1948		2a Molino	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Alcott, Louisa May	Zengotta, Javier de	Little men	Hombrecitos	1949		Ediciones Reguera	Biblioteca Nacional España	
Alcott, Louisa May	Sepúlveda, María	Little women	Mujercitas	1949		Juventud	Biblioteca Nacional España	

Image 2. Structure of the database

The database is divided into a series of rows and columns. Each row represents a bibliographical record<sup>1</sup> extracted from the catalogue. The database is made up of 5510 records (which, despite a first revision, may still contain a limited number of repetitions and should be regarded as an approximate total).

Each of the columns represents a specific category that is labelled in bold (in Spanish in Image 2) at the top of the Excel table. The main categories are:

1. *Author*
2. *Translator*
3. *Source text title*
4. *Target text title*
5. *Year*
6. *Edition*
7. *Publishing House*
8. *Source*
9. *Comments*

Additional categories are:<sup>2</sup>

- *Translator 2, 3 etc.*, in the case of cooperative translations or for books with different texts by different translators.
- *Uncertain date*, for texts for which we could not establish a precise date of publication using the information provided by the catalogues.
- *Publishing house 2, 3 etc.*, for records in which more than one publishing house is mentioned at the same time.

For each category, the option of a filter has been introduced in order to facilitate the selective retrieval of specific pieces of information. By using filters, we also achieve a visual overview of the data we are looking for in the database. For example, we may decide to extract from the database all entries that refer to translations of a particular North American author

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<sup>1</sup> The term *bibliographical record* has been defined in a variety of ways (see Ríos Hilario 2005: 35-38 for an overview). In the present study, we use it to refer to a collection of informational elements organised in a logical way and representing a bibliographical document (books, other publications and any document of human communication).

<sup>2</sup> The additional categories (not visible in Image 2) have been added in order to achieve a higher degree of information granularity. They are not relevant to the present study.

(Faulkner) in a specific time segment (from 1939 to 1975), published by a specific publishing house (Seix Barral). This approach has made it possible to cross-reference information and has revealed hidden patterns in the publishing history of specific translations and adaptations, as I will show later on.

I shall describe each category individually. Even though most of the labels used to describe the content of each column are semantically clear, I ran across cases of terminological inadequacy during the compilation process that led in some instances to a partial reformulation of the column labels.

## 4.2 Authors

Category 1 contains a list of North American canonical authors and is the key element of the whole database. The column includes 236 authors.<sup>3</sup> The name of each author is repeated in a different row of the Excel document whenever a new record has been entered. Thus, for example, we find fourteen entries for James Baldwin, each of which refers to a different publication, which may be a new translation of one of his works or a new edition of the same translation. In this way, we can sketch a selection of authors based on the number of entries for each of them in the database. Table 1 gives us an overview of the authors whose name appears most often in the database and who are, therefore, potentially more relevant for our research. Not all of the authors appearing in the database have been translated into Spanish, even though they have been published by the LOA. In this case they still appear in the database but are marked as untranslated.

By using our filters, we can start by excluding from our search those authors who have not been translated.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, in order to simplify the analysis, we only consider authors who are represented by more than 5 entries (Table 1), justifying this selection with the hypothesis that the higher the number of occurrences of authors' names in the database, the greater their popularity in the target culture.

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<sup>3</sup> The database is being updated in order to include recent publications.

<sup>4</sup> This selection does not imply any value judgement. In imagological research the absence of an author, a theme, etc., can be as significant as its presence. However, the analysis of canonical untranslated North American authors falls beyond the scope of the present quantitative analysis.

Agee, James	14
Alcott, Louisa May	506
Anderson, Sherwood	20
Ashbery, John	15
Baldwin, James	14
Barnes, Djuna	15
Bellow, Saul	62
Bierce, Ambrose	53
Bishop, Elizabeth	6
Bly, Robert	9
Bowles, Jane	8
Bowles, Paul	63
Brautigan, Richard	9
Burroughs, William S.	44
Carver, Raymond	29
Cather, Willa	11
Chandler, Raymond	174
Cheever, John	28
Chopin, Kate	7
Cooper, James Fenimore	87
Crane, Stephen	29
Dick, Philip K.	87
Dos Passos, John	54
Dreiser, Theodore	10
Eliot, Thomas Stearns	18
Emerson, Ralph Waldo	21
Faulkner, William	94
Ferlinghetti, Lawrence	6
Fitzgerald, Francis Scott	33
Franklin, Benjamin	16
Galbraith, John Kenneth	34
Ginsberg, Allen	16
Goodis, David	15
Hammett, Dashiell	108
Hawthorne, Nathaniel	102
Hearn, Lafcadio	34
Huxley, Aldous	89
Irving, Washington	199
Jackson, Shirley	8
James, Henry	138

James, William	28
Kerouac, Jack	39
Kesey, Ken	11
Le Guin, Ursula K.	72
Leonard, Elmore	63
Lewis, Sinclair	76
London, Jack	338
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth	8
Lovecraft, H. P.	136
Malamud, Bernard	25
Maxwell, William	9
McCullers, Carson	19
McDonald, Ross	77
Melville, Herman	215
Miller, Arthur	37
Miller, Henry	66
Milozs, Czeslaw	15
Nabokov, Vladimir	51
Paine, Thomas	7
Palmer, Michael	19
Plath, Sylvia	22
Poe, Edgar Allan	326
Porter, Katherine Anne	10
Pound, Ezra	15
Rich, Adrienne	7
Singer, Isaac Bashevis	56
Sontag, Susan	51
Stein, Gertrude	15
Steinbeck, John	111
Stevens, Wallace	14
Stowe, Harriet Beecher	87
Thoreau, Henry David	39
Thurber, James	6
Tocqueville, Alexis de	30
Tuchman, Barbara	15
Twain, Mark	510
Updike, John	62
Vonnegut, Kurt	39
Walcott, Derek	12
Welty, Eudora	14

Wescott, Glenway	6
West, Nathanael	9
Wharton, Edith	78
Whitman, Walt	60
Wilder, Laura Ingalls	10
Wilder, Thornton	27
Williams, Tennessee	34
Wilson, Edmund	11
Wright, Richard	9

**Table 1. List of authors with more than 5 entries**

By arranging the list in descending order based on the number of entries for each author, we can start identifying those writers who may have had a significant presence in the Spanish editorial market, as seen in Table 2:

<b>Author</b>	<b>Entry</b>
Twain, Mark	510
Alcott, Louisa May	506
London, Jack	338
Poe, Edgar Allan	326
Melville, Herman	215

**Table 2. Top five authors per number of entries**

The fact that a particular translation done by a particular translator is not confined to a single database entry means, to give an example, that we are not dealing with 510 different translations of Mark Twain's work but, possibly, with the publication of a number of different editions of a particular translation, whether under the auspices of the same publishing house or not. This piece of information is important as it reduces the total number of unique translations. Nevertheless, the number of editions of the same translation may still provide information about the popularity of a certain work or author and should not be disregarded. Furthermore, even at this initial stage of the analysis, it seems significant that those authors who appear to have been published more often and who are consequently more frequently represented in the Spanish publishing market, are writers usually associated with children's literature. From an imagological and translational perspective, this observation prompts various hypotheses.

Numerous studies (Oittinen 2000, Ben-Ari 2000, Lathey 2010, among others) have pointed out that children's literature in translation is more likely than literature for adult readers to undergo stylistic and thematic manipulation, or downright censorship, so that it might perpetuate dominant ideologies in the target culture and cause changes in the way certain characters or a certain literary style is perceived. Ultimately, manipulation of this kind may alter the image of a given source text author in the target culture. The broad array of changes that a children's book may potentially be subject to during the process of linguistic transfer, such as abridged adaptations for younger readers or intermodal translations like comic strips, also stretches the conceptual definition of translation. This observation may prompt hypotheses, which specific studies would need to verify, regarding the contribution of children's literature in translation to the diffusion of ideological discourses and how these discourses are represented in the allo-image of the United States in Spain.

Finally, during the process of data collection, I became aware of a shortcoming of this category. By using source text authors as the starting point for my data collection, I was excluding all anthologies of North American literature in translation that had been published in Spain, since they would be published under the name of their translators/editors. Anthologies, however, can provide the first channel of diffusion for a particular literature or a particular generation or school of authors in a target culture. In Spain, for example, Augusti Bartra's translation into Spanish of an anthology of North American contemporary poets (*Antología de la poesía norteamericana*, 1952<sup>5</sup>) not only contributed to the diffusion of North American contemporary literature in Spain, but also acknowledged the coming of age of a literature that, until that moment, had seldom been considered as English-language literature in its own right, independent of a British literary context. It is easy to imagine that this anthology has played a significant role in the formation of the allo-image of the United States in Spain, even though initially confined largely to literary circles. The dilemma prompted by the exclusion of the anthologies from the database highlights one of the limits of distant reading and should be taken into account during the close-reading phase of the project. Nonetheless, it does not invalidate the current methodology.

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<sup>5</sup> In 1951 Bartra had already published the Catalan translation of the anthology (*Una antología de la lírica nord-americana*). Textual evidence proves that the Spanish translation should not be considered a retranslation from Catalan (Ruiz Casanova 2007: 204-205).

### 4.3 Translator

The label *Translator* given to Category 2 leads to two conceptual problems. First, even though all entries refer to literary works that have undergone an interlinguistic transfer from English (and/or any other language, in the case of indirect translations) into Castilian Spanish, this type of transfer cannot always be described as a *translation* but can also correspond to an intramedial interlinguistic adaptation. The label *Translator* should then be modified to “*Translator/Adapter*”, but even this change does not completely solve the problem due to the lack of a clear conceptual delimitation.<sup>6</sup> In order to overcome this impasse, I decided to refer to the information included in the catalogue. According to the cataloguing principles of the BNE, each entry reproduces the information from the title page of the book. Depending on whether the cataloguers have labelled the text as a translation or an adaptation (see Image 3), its linguistic intermediary will be entered in the database as either a translator or an adapter.

#### Detalles de la obra

Guardar

Ver signatura/s [Registro del catálogo](#)

Petición anticipada

**Retrato de una dama [Texto impreso]**

James, Henry 1843-1916

Solicitar reproducción

**N.º depósito legal:**

B 25305-1996 Oficina Depósito Legal Barcelona

Solicitar en préstamo

**ISBN:**

84-406-6172-X

interbibliotecario (acceso para bibliotecas)

**CDU:**

820(73)-31\*18"

**Autor personal:**

James, Henry (1843-1916)

**Título uniforme:**

[The portrait of a lady. Español]

**Título:**

Retrato de una dama [Texto impreso] / Henry James ; [traducción, Noemí Sánchez]

**Edición:**

1ª ed.

**Publicación:**

Barcelona : Ediciones B, 1996

**Descripción física:**

568 p. ; 24 cm

**Título de serie:**

(Colección Lagunas ; 9)

**Nota tit. y men. res:**

Traducción de: The portrait of a lady

**Autor:**

Sánchez, Noemí

Image 3. Translation label

<sup>6</sup> On the problematic definition of the notions of translation and adaptation, see Gambier (1992); Sanders (2006: 17-25); Perteghella (2008) and Delabastita (2008) among many others.



On many occasions, however, the bibliographical register does not mention whether we are dealing with a translation or an adaptation, so that we can only infer this from other contextual features (basically, its format, the number of pages and the presence of illustrations). For example, an edition of *Moby Dick* in Castilian Spanish that appears to be only thirty pages long is clearly an adaptation, even though no indication of this is given in the catalogue entry. This ambiguity reflects the theoretical controversy about the distinction between adaptation and translation. Due to the complexity of the matter, I decided to keep the label *Translator* as general name for Category 2 on the grounds that it implies a broad notion of translation encompassing what is commonly understood by both translation and adaptation. Conversely, for the study of specific authors, I decided to opt for the more specific label *Translator and Adapter* (see Hernández Socas and Giugliano, 2019). Finally, the category *Translator* also includes entries in which translators' or adapters' names are not indicated due to this information having not been provided in the original publication.

The number of translators recorded in Category 2 amounts to approximately 1642. The figure is approximate since it may include two separate entries for the same translator if the latter appears under a pseudonym.

The analysis of this category can be simplified if we take into account only those names that appear in at least 10 database entries. By applying this filter, we are able to reduce the list to 76 names. We can further simplify our distant reading of the data by taking into account only the top twenty translators/adapters in the database, as shown in Table 3.

<b>Translators / Adapter</b>	<b>Entry</b>
Anonymous	543
López Muñoz, José Luis	59
Calleja Gutiérrez, Fernando	54
Manzano, Carlos	42
Cortázar, Julio	37
Álvarez Flórez, José Manuel	34
Sarró, Gloria	33
Criado, Carmen	31
Bosch Vilalta, Andrés	30
Prika, D.	28

Antolín Rato, Mariano	27
Ferrer Aleu, José	27
Gómez de la Serna, Julio	27
Lara, José Antonio	27
Villa-Real, Ricardo	26
Álvaro Garrido, José Antonio	25
Lendínez, Martín	24
Torres Oliver, Francisco	24
Horne, Matilde	23
Fibla, Jordi	22

**Table 3. Top twenty translators/adapters**

Selection based on the frequency of translators' names in the database may be justified by assuming that a particularly prolific translator has translated numerous literary works, or that a successful translation has appeared in different editions and has even had various publishers, which would be reflected in the database by the number of entries. By applying these filters, we are able to highlight translational phenomena at a macro level. In our "top twenty" list, we observe that the "anonymous translator" occupies the first position in terms of number of entries (543). This fact immediately draws attention to the notorious invisibility of translators (and adapters), especially when the source text belongs to the canon of children's literature, which, being a peripheral subsystem within the literary system, is more likely to undergo acts of manipulation and appropriation (Lathey 2010). In fact, if we combine this piece of information with the category Author, we realise that, among the first 10 authors whose translators are anonymous (Table 4), the first three writers are always associated with children's literature (Alcott, Twain, London).

	<b>Number of records</b>
Alcott, Louisa May	162
Twain, Mark	103
London, Jack	56
Irving, Washington	50
Stowe, Harriet Beecher	44
Melville, Herman	37

Steinbeck, John	14
Hawthorne, Nathaniel	10
James, Henry	8
Whitman, Walt	6

**Table 4. Top 10 list of authors translated by Anonymous**

#### 4.4 Remaining Categories

The remaining categories of the database were relatively unproblematic. Categories 3 (*Source Text*) and 4 (*Target Text*) refer respectively to the English title of the source text and its translation in Spanish. We may hypothesise that a number of entries refer to indirect translations into Spanish. In these cases, it would not be correct to regard the English text as the source text of the translation. However, since these occurrences are relatively rare and not always explicitly stated, we have preferred to enter the title of the “original” in Category 3, adding information about possible indirect translation in Category 9 (*Comments*).

Category 5 (*Year*) indicates the year of publication as it appears in the catalogue. This column is particularly important since, by cross-referencing information provided there with information from other categories, one can achieve either a diachronic overview of a particular aspect of the database (for example, the most translated North American author from 1900 to 1950, the most active translator in the 1960s, etc.) or can focus on a synchronic analysis of a selection of elements (for example, all translations of North American literary works in 1990). The first perspective would make it possible to identify potential translation trends; the second might be of use when drawing a connection between certain translational phenomena and a given political, economic or social event. A slightly problematic aspect of this category stems from the way in which the catalogue of the BNE handles books that contain no information about their year of publication. In these cases, the catalogue notes the century in which the book was published in the general list and indicates the lack of specific information about the year of publication in the individual entry (see Image 4, where the acronym *S.a.* stands for *sin año* [without a year / no year]).

1.  Guardar

Aquellas mujercitas [Texto impreso]  
Alcott, Louisa May 1832-1888  
JZ76162  
1900

2.  Guardar

Las cinco mejores obras de Louisa May Alcott [Texto impreso]  
Alcott, Louisa May 1832-1888  
7/26833  
1900

3.  Guardar

Hombrecitos [Texto impreso]  
Alcott, Louisa May 1832-1888  
VC2175/24  
1900

4.  Guardar

Hombrecitos [Texto impreso]  
Alcott, Louisa May 1832-1888  
JZ76161  
1900

**Detalles de la obra**

Guardar

Petición anticipada  
Solicitar reproducción

Solicitar en préstamo  
interbibliotecario (acceso para  
bibliotecas)

Ver signatura/s **Registro del catálogo**

**Aquellas mujercitas [Texto impreso]**  
Alcott, Louisa May 1832-1888

**CDU:** 087.5:82  
Alcott, Louisa May (1832-1888)

**Autor personal:**  
[Good wives. Español]

**Título uniforme:**  
Aquellas mujercitas [Texto impreso] / (Adaptación de  
Manuel Rosell [i.e., Rosell-Pesant])

**Título:** Barcelona : Martel, [S.a.]

**Publicación:** 246 p., 1 h. : grab. ; 20 cm  
(Colección Juvenil Colette ; v. 15)

**Descripción física:** Rosell Pesant, Manuel

**Serie:**

**Autor:**

Image 4. Bibliographical record

As becomes clear from Image 4, this approach can lead to research errors.

Finally, Figure 1 provides an overview of the number of database records for each year in the period between 1904 and 2016.

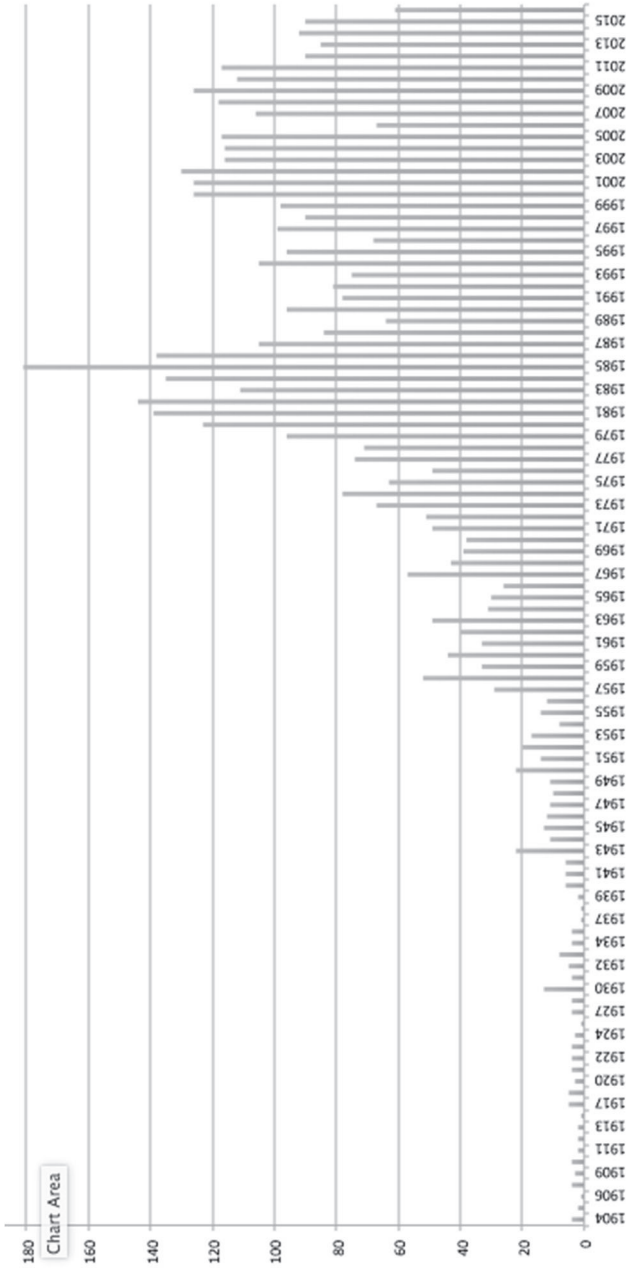


Figure 1. Bibliographical records per year

As can be seen, the figure allows me to single out peaks of translation in the 1980s and again at the beginning of the 21st century. It is a good example of how distant reading may contribute to research outside the field of Digital Humanities. In fact, the patterns apparent in the figure prompt questions and generate hypotheses that can be tackled by focusing research. We may ask ourselves, for example, what sociocultural or political events caused an increase in the translation of North American literature in Spain starting in 1980, and what relationship can be established between these translation peaks and the perception of North American culture in the 1980s. Furthermore, we can study whether there is a connection between this translation pattern and the fact that, from 1987 onwards, publishers were required to include the name of the translator on the reverse side of the title page of the book, in accordance with the *Ley de propiedad intelectual*. These questions could be answered by more specific studies on the period in question.

Category 7 (*Publishing House*) is an important field for each record. By combining the information provided in this category with that from other categories, such as *author*, *year* and *translator*, we can achieve a number of important objectives such as an outline of the publishing history of a particular author or work, possible agreements between publishing houses, publishing policies etc. The database contains the names of around 851 different publishing houses. Due to the period of time being examined, which spans more than a century, we might be dealing with publishing houses that no longer exist or were merged with others. An example of this is the story of the Espasa-Calpe publishing house. It was founded in 1925 following the merger of two existing publishing houses: Espasa, founded by Pau and Josep Espasa i Anguera in 1860, and Calpe, founded in 1918 by Nicolás María de Urgoiti (Sánchez Marroyo 2003: 207). The house was purchased by Planeta Group in 1991 and continued its publishing activity within this group under the name Espasa. These changes are reflected in the database where it is referred to in three different ways:

- a. As Calpe: two registers in connection with the translation of two works by Lafcadio Hearn, translated into Spanish by Pablo Inestal in 1921 and 1922.
- b. As Espasa-Calpe: 53 registers from 1927 to 2008.
- c. As Espasa: one register dated 2016.

Table 5 shows a list of the top 15 publishing Houses in terms of the highest number of bibliographical records in the database.

<b>Publishing House</b>	<b>Nr. of records</b>
Bruguera	399
Alianza Editorial	204
Plaza & Janés	149
Círculo de Lectores	146
RBA	112
Planeta	108
Orbis	89
Debolsillo	87
Seix Barral	84
Anagrama	82
Alfaguara	79
Edhasa	76
Valdemar	64
AFHA Internacional	59
Mateu	58

**Table 5. Top 15 publishing Houses**

In Table 5 appear well-known publishing houses from the Spanish publishing industry. It is also significant that important publishers, such as Espasa-Calpe, Cátedra and Lumen, appear lower in the table. This overview prompts questions about the role of these publishers in the diffusion of North American literature in Spain, about the relevance that certain literary subsystems, such as children's literature, in which Bruguera (number 1 in the list) specialised, can play in this process of diffusion, and about their contribution to the definition of allo-images of North American culture.

Category 8 (*Source*) was added in order to allow me to go back to the source of information whenever I had to correct inconsistencies or to allow future users of the database to identify the online catalogue from which information is retrieved.

Finally, Category 9 (*Comments*) was added in order to record any difficulties relating to ambiguous information, missing data and

cataloguing errors that I might find during the compilation of the database.<sup>1</sup>

## 5 Testing the database

In order to test the potential advantages of a distant reading of the database and to verify to what extent this reading could supplement a closer approach in the future, a pilot study was planned. In cooperation with Dr. Elia Hernández Socas, I studied the reception in Spain of the translation of *Little Women* (1968) and *Those Little Women* (1969)<sup>2</sup> by Louisa May Alcott. The study (Hernández Socas & Giugliano, 2019) uses the database as a starting point and takes its cue from the fact, evident from Table 2, that the leading North American authors in terms of the total of bibliographical entries are usually described as belonging to the subsystem of children's literature, and that Alcott is second in terms of publications, even though she is more specifically related to this subsystem than Mark Twain, who is the first author on the shortlist. The results of the study not only shed light on the complex history of the reception of *Little Women* (*Mujercitas*, in Spanish) in Spain<sup>3</sup> and prompt hypotheses concerning the imagological value of these translations (see Giugliano and Hernández Socas, 2019), but they also highlight the strong and weak points of the database as a tool for distant reading methods applied to imagological research. I shall start by describing the weak points, which led to a conceptual revision of some parts of the database.

First, the study highlighted a problem relating to the need for a distinction between the categories of translation and adaptation and the related concepts of translator and adapter, which has already been described in section 4.2. The issue becomes even more intricate if we take into account the large number of entries that are labelled neither as translations nor as adaptations. Not all publications of *Mujercitas* are translations. On the contrary, most of them are adaptations. We can surmise, by taking into account contextual information in the catalogue,

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<sup>1</sup> In the database, I have corrected unambiguous mistakes such as missing accents and capital letters and incorrect transcription of titles. Conversely, any element that raised unresolved ambiguities in the entry has been left unchanged.

<sup>2</sup> Since both novels are often published as a single book titled *Little Women*, I will use this title to refer to both parts.

<sup>3</sup> This history, which exceeds the scope of the present article, concerns publishing houses, their publishing policy in relation to the translation and adaptation of children's literature and the visibility of translators and adapters. See Hernández Socas and Author (2019) for more details.



such as the number of pages for each publication and the presence of illustrations, that the majority of the anonymous publications are adaptations. From the point of view of the compiler of online catalogues such as the BNE's, there is no contradiction or ambiguity here, since the information represented in the register reflects the text that is found on the title page of the book. From a descriptive point of view, therefore, the information provided in the catalogue could be indicative of publishing policies. However, these policies can often lack clarity and be intentionally misleading. This fact should be taken into account when we analyse data from the online catalogues collected in the database. In our case, this finding led us to change the label of Category 2 from *Translator* to *Translator/Adapter*. Moreover, we also preferred to use the general term *interlingual transfer* whenever we referred to data retrieved in the database that might include both translations and adaptations.

The analysis of the case study also highlights one of the strong points of the database, namely the possible cross-referencing of data by using the filter function provided in the Excel table in order to combine information about authors, translators, translated works and publishing houses during a chosen period of time and identifying potential translation trends and patterns. This potential, which had been inferred even before the completion of the database, becomes evident after the analysis of the reception of *Mujercitas*. One example is the use of filters for the selection of certain translators/adapters, including anonymous translators, and for their interconnection with the category *Publishing Houses*. The combined use of these filters makes it possible to describe the complex history of the publication of a translation of *Mujercitas* by a mysterious translator known as "E.M.", which was first published in Spain by Molino Publishing House from 1948 to 1984 (though a first edition had appeared in Argentina in 1943), in editions that did not always mention the translator, and acquired by three other publishing houses (Edimat, RBA and Mare Nostrum) (Hernández Socas & Giugliano, 2019). As a result, a translation dated 1948 was still being published as late as 2014 by Edimat, though no mention is made of the translator or of the original translation date. It seems reasonable to argue that it would have been more difficult to identify these connections between publishing houses had we not made use of the database and its filter function.

Finally, another strength of the database is the very way in which it is structured. The results of the case study analysis suggested changes that were fed back into the database with only minor adjustments. This fact points to the potential that the database has for improvement, enlargement and development.

## 6 Conclusions

In this article, I have described the structure of a database created as part of a research project that aims at combining the fields of Imagology and Translation Studies within the framework of Digital Humanities. The database contains information on canonical North American authors translated into Castilian Spanish in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Firstly, I have presented the main criteria that determined the selection of the authors to be included in the database and the digital sources from which data was retrieved. Furthermore, I have described, problematised and attempted a justification of the choice of the main categories of information included in the database. I have also reflected on the specific function that each category might have in the description of the allo-image of the United States in Spain, which is the ultimate objective of the project. Additionally, I have commented on a number of conclusions reached by a case study (Hernández Socas & Giugliano, 2019) that tests the effectiveness of the database as a tool of imagological research in translation.

During the description of the database and the presentation of the case study, conceptual and practical problems have been highlighted, such as the distinction between the status of translators and adapters, the presence of anonymous translations in the catalogue, and the dating criteria applied by the BNE in the case of works with unknown years of publication. By using the case study, I could answer my first research question, which focused on the database's main advantages and shortcomings as a research tool in Digital Humanities. The use of filters, which made it possible to combine different categories according to set parameters in order to acquire a practical overview of the resulting information, represents one of the advantages of this kind of quantitative research. The overview acquired highlights patterns (for example, use of the same translation by different publishing houses over the years), often related to translation and publishing practices, which may have consequences for the formation or consolidation of certain features of a given image of national identity. The discovery of hidden patterns or general trends brings us to the limits of the use of a database in distant reading for our research purposes. In fact, these trends and practices prompt hypotheses that cannot be verified by relying solely on the distant reading enabled by the database but call for a more detailed study of each individual case.

In relation to the second research question, on the suitability of online catalogues for this kind of research, the description of the advantages and shortcomings of the database has prompted a number of conclusions.

Firstly, the online catalogues represent a fundamental and relatively reliable source for our research and for any similar quantitative research. Had we not had access to these catalogues, especially to the BNE's, the database would have demanded even greater efforts in terms of time and material. Secondly, by drawing almost exclusively on the online catalogues mentioned above, our database implicitly adopts their cataloguing criteria. This fact can be problematic, as these criteria may not always suit our objectives. The fact, for example, that the BNE's catalogue categorises a book as a translation or an adaptation solely on the basis of information acquired by referring to its title page indicates that the catalogue relies on principles established by publishing houses. As we have seen, these principles are not always transparent and may be intentionally ambiguous. However, the structure of the database has demonstrated flexibility so that it seems possible to adapt it to specific research aims without disrupting the overall design of the database itself.

## Bibliography

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# TRANSLATION STARTS WHERE THE DICTIONARY ENDS: WHAT ENGLISH MANNER OF SPEAKING VERBS LOST, KEPT AND OBTAINED

IRINA PASENKOVA  
UNIVERSITY OF POMPEU FABRA, BARCELONA

## Abstract

What types of equivalence do translators use when they transform English verbs of speaking with the components of manner and non-standard speech like *mumble*, *lisp*, *stammer* into Russian? Solutions chosen by translators showed that there is a dependence between the manner of speaking component (MoSC), the component of non-standard speech (CoNS) and the type of equivalence used. When original components are kept, *one-to-one equivalence* is used. In the case that the MoSC and the CoNS are kept, but their quality is changed, *one-to-many / one-to-part-of-one equivalence* is preferred by translators. If the MoSC and the CoNS are lost, it means that the translation has a *nil equivalence*. Information encoded in the English verbs with the MoSC and the CoNS is sometimes enlarged by the Russian translators, when they add an aspectual nuance regarding the original verb.

**Keywords:** *verbs of speaking, equivalence, manner of speaking component, component of non-standard speech*

## 1 Introduction

We examined the sphere of the English verbs of speaking (VoS) with 2 components: the manner of speaking component (MoSC) and the component of non-standard speech (CoNS), and their translations from English into Russian, thus being the first study to compare the two languages regarding these aspects. We analysed the following aspects:

1. The parallel corpora (ABBY Lingvo Live, Russian National Corpus (RNC), a Collection of Multilingual Corpora compiled at the Institute of Formal and Applied Linguistics (UMC-ÚFAL)) to collect the samples;
2. The Qualia Structure of James Pustejovsky (1998) to compare semantic-pragmatic features;
3. The types of equivalence suggested by Otto Kade (1968).

The following points will be analysed:

- a. information on the number of translations of the verbs being studied and the presentation of the meanings conveyed by these English MoS verbs;
- b. information on the MoSC and the CoNS: whether these components are kept, lost or whether new components are added in the translation process;
- c. information on the different ways in which English and Russian conflate manner in the MoS verbs, to analyse the solutions used by the Russian translators.

There are several linguists who began to compare English VoS with the MoSC. For example, Rojo and Valenzuela (2001) and Mastrofini (2013) analysed whether the MoSC is lost or kept when English VoS are translated into Spanish or Italian. They checked the findings of Slobin (1996: 195) who affirms that satellite-framed (S-F) languages (such as English) normally employ in translation a larger number of manner verbs than verb-framed (V-F) languages (such as Italian and Spanish). Rojo and Valenzuela (2001) and Mastrofini (2013) found that the MoSC and, consequently, the semantic information transferred by the MoS verbs, were mainly kept and even added in translations from English into Spanish and Italian.

Another question is the component of manner itself. In accordance with Talmy's (2000) languages typology, English is a S-F language where manner is encoded in the verb root. Spanish and Italian belong to the group of V-F languages, where manner is encoded outside of the verb root.

English and Russian relate to the same group of languages (S-F), where manner is encoded in the verb root. It was natural to suppose that we would find more similarities than differences between samples of the source text (SST)<sup>1</sup> and samples of the target text (STT)<sup>2</sup> regarding the

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<sup>1</sup> SST stands for all samples of the source texts analysed in this paper.

semantics of the verbs under study. Thus, we decided to examine how the semantic information encoded in the English MoS verbs is converted and decoded in Russian: whether it is lost, kept or added in translations.

The choice of the English MoS verbs was restricted by the component that we specified as one more element of speech, the CoNS. The CoNS relates to the sphere of non-standard realisation of speech parameters: articulateness, phonation, rhythm, volume, pitch, timbre and tempo. We looked for verbs that describe an irregularity of the speech organs, and the number of the verbs chosen for the study was limited to 11 verbs: *mutter, mumble, gabble, jabber, rumble, babble, burr, lisp, stammer, stutter*.

Unlike Rojo and Valenzuela (2001) and Mastrofini (2013), we have not examined these verbs in novels or similar works, but in various samples of bilingual parallel corpora (ABBYY Lingvo Live, RNC, UMC-ÚFAL). We consider that when a text is analysed, a researcher deals with only one or several authors that have the definite and often enormous (but not unlimited) scope of used lexical units (LUs). Depending on the purpose of the research, such lexical space can be reasonable and enough. In the case of our study, however, the principle “the more the better” works: the use of various samples taken from different corpora helps create a more objective “picture” of the semantics of a verb / LU / multi-word construction after the translation.

For this reason, we used samples of different parallel English-Russian corpora. Even though the samples are extracted from various fields (mass media, academic periodicals, fiction, non-fiction, etc.), we found out that the samples with the verbs under study mainly belong to fiction, oral speech and mass media, because of the non-formal character of the verbs’ semantics.

## 2 Translation Starts where Dictionaries End

### 2.1 Dictionaries End

The remark *translation starts where dictionaries end* means that the semantic features of the verbs presented in the dictionary entries can be partly kept, transformed (sometimes significantly) or even lost in translations. In order to follow such transformations of semantic features, we started with dictionaries (CED, M-WD, OALD, OALDCE). They were useful for clarifying the basic semantic features of the verbs under study.

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<sup>2</sup> STT stands for all samples of the target texts analysed in this paper.



However, as soon as the monolingual corpora (BNC, ULC) were examined, these features began their transformations.

The transformation of a verb's characteristics is displayed with the Qualia Structure<sup>3</sup> of the *Generative Lexicon Model* (GLM) (Pustejovsky 1998) and its roles (*constitutive*, responsible for the object's parts; *formal*, describing the object's properties; *telic*, naming the object's purpose; and *agentive*, stating the object's origin).

For example, the English MoS verb *mumble* kept two physical parameters (*quietly*, *indistinctly*) and adopted a new one (*distinctly*) when we compared its features in dictionaries and monolingual corpora, (SST). The *formal* role (*say*) was kept, while the features of the *telic* role (*impossibility to transfer information*) and *agentive* role (*uncertainty*) were lost, and new features appeared. In the case of the *telic* role, the new characteristic was *excitedly*, while the feature of the *agentive* role turned into *discontent*, as illustrated in table 1.

Part of GLM Struct.	Roles	Verb's Meaning (Diction-s)	Verb's Meaning (Monoling. Corp., SST)
Qualia Struct.	Const.	<i>quietly</i> <i>indistinctly</i>	<i>quietly</i> <i>indistinctly/</i> <i>distinctly</i>
	Formal	<i>say</i>	<i>say</i>
	Telic	<i>impossible to</i> <i>transfer</i> <i>information</i>	<i>excitedly</i>
	Agent.	<i>uncertainty</i>	<i>discontent</i>

**Table 1. Transformations of the English MoS verb *mumble* (dictionary – monolingual corpora)**

As we have seen, the dictionaries end. Does translation start?

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<sup>3</sup> The Qualia Structure is taken into consideration as a research tool, as it explains the “set of properties or events associated with a lexical item which best explain what that word means” (Pustejovsky 1998: 77) and serves to better illustrate both “semantic-pragmatic and physical auditory components that specify the speaking event underlying a MoS predicate” (Mastrofini 2013: 8). For this reason, the Qualia Structure is chosen to describe the semantics of the VoS with the CoNS and MoSC.

## 2.2 Translation Starts

Further transformations of the semantic features of the same verb *mumble* occur in the STT. The comparison of the features in the SST and the STT is shown in table 2.

Part of GLM Struct.	Roles	Verb's Meaning (SST)	Verb's Meaning (STT)
Qualia Struct.	Const.	<i>quietly indistinctly/distinctly</i>	<i>quietly indistinctly/distinctly non-standard pausation monotonously</i>
	Formal	<i>say</i>	<i>Say/move/think</i>
	Telic	<i>excitedly</i>	<i>nervously be frightened feel uncertainty</i>
	Agent.	<i>discontent</i>	<i>discontent disapproval</i>

**Table 2. Transformations of the English MoS verb *mumble* (SST – STT)**

It is displayed that in the STT, the physical features of the *constitutive* role were kept (*quietly, indistinctly/distinctly*) and 2 new features appeared (*non-standard pausation, monotonously*). The object's properties of the *formal* role increased from 1 (*say*) to 3, thus adding 2 new properties (*move, think*). The *telic* role, i.e. the object's purpose, was changed regarding both quantity and quality. The number of characteristics increased from 1 to 3: the meaning *excitedly* of the SST was modified to *nervously, be frightened, feel uncertainty* in the STT. The *agentive* role kept the feature *discontent* and the feature *disapproval* was added in the STT.

Using the Qualia Structure of Pustejovsky (1998), we compared the semantic features of the verbs under study given in dictionaries and monolingual corpora and the semantic features of the verbs/LUs/phrases to those obtained after translations. As a result, we have two subjects that are not very similar.

For instance, in the SST, a *stammering* person can be defined as *representing the speaking act with the presence of impediments expressing*

*excitement and being in an unstable state of emotion.* In the STT, a *stammering* speaker is characterised as *representing the act of saying/feeling, a person who pronounces loudly or quietly, distinctly or indistinctly, with repetition of vowels and consonants, with interruption of speech and who is excited, angry, horrified, uncertain or embarrassed, in other words, he/she is in an unstable state of emotion and feels discontent.*

Table 3 contains the translations of the verbs *mumble*, *slur* and *stammer* as examples of transformations in the STT. We classify the results of these transformations in accordance with the types of equivalence, *lexical equivalence*, proposed by Kade (1968).

Verbs under study	Translations of the verbs under study into Russian
mumble	a. <i>myamlit'</i> "mumble"
	b. <i>vorchat'</i> "grumble", <i>burchat'</i> "grumble"
	c. <i>tsedit'</i> "speak through clenched teeth"
	d. <i>zapnut'sya</i> "stumble"
	e. <i>perezhivat'</i> "relive"
	f. <i>vorochat'sya</i> "toss and turn"
slur	a. <i>govorit' zapletayushchimsya yazykom</i> "speak in a thick voice, be tongue-tied"
	b. <i>khryukat'</i> "oink"
	c. <i>nevnyatno ob'yavit'</i> "declare indistinctly"
	d. <i>posovetovat'</i> "advise"
	e. <i>vynesti na obshchiy sud zamanchivoye predlozheniye</i> "submit for consideration a tempting offer"
	f. <i>zamyat'sya</i> "falter out"
stammer	a. <i>zaikat'sya</i> "stammer"
	b. <i>sheptat'</i> "whisper"
	c. <i>tsedit'</i> "speak through clenched teeth"
	d. <i>krichat'</i> "shout"
	e. <i>izvinit'sya</i> "apologise"
	f. <i>v velikom uzhasе</i> "horror-stricken"

**Table 3. Translations of the English MoS verbs (SST – STT)**

Translations of *mumble* show that in case (a) the verb kept its initial sense and, consequently, the MoSC and the same CoNS, so this is *one-to-one equivalence* (Kade 1968): *myamlit'* "mumble". Translations (c) and (d), *tsedit'* "speak through clenched teeth" and *zapnut'sya* "stumble", are cases

of *one-to-many equivalence*; the MoSC was kept and another CoNS that describes another feature, non-standard interruption of speech, was adopted. Two translations of *mumble* (b), *vorchat'* “grumble”, *burchat'* “grumble”, illustrate *one-to-part-of-one equivalence*; the MoSC was kept, the CoNS disappeared. *Nil equivalence* can be seen in the other translations (e) and (f) as the MoSC and the CoNS were lost in the STT: *perezhivat'* “relieve”, *vorochat'sya* “toss and turn”.

Translations of the verb *slur* are distributed into the types of equivalence as follows: (a) *govorit' zapletayushchimsya yazykom* “speak in a thick voice, be tongue-tied” applies to *one-to-one equivalence*; (b) *khryukat'* “oink” belongs to *one-to-many equivalence*; (c) *nevnyatno ob'yavit'* “declare indistinctly”, (d) *posovetovat'* “advise” and (e) *vynesti na obshchiy sud zamanchivoye predlozheniye* “submit for consideration a tempting offer” belong to *one-to-part-of-one equivalence*, and (f) *zamyat'sya* “falter out” is a case of *nil equivalence*.

Transformations of *stammer* can be assigned to different types of equivalence. Translation (a) *zaikat'sya* “stammer” belongs to *one-to-one equivalence*, translations (b) *sheptat'* “whisper” and (c) *tsedit'* “speak through clenched teeth” to *one-to-many equivalence*; translation (d) *krichat'* “shout” represents *one-to-part-of-one equivalence*; and *nil equivalence* is found in translations (e) *izvinit'sya* “apologise” and (f) *v velikom uzhase* “horror-stricken”.

### 3 Transformations of the Verbs under Study

#### 3.1 Quantity: 155 or 73

The translations of the verbs under study show that in most cases, there are more variance in Russian translations found in the corpora. To be more precise, Russian translators used 155 LUs and collocations to represent the meaning conveyed by 11 English MoS verbs.

Of course, not all English MoS verbs with the CoNS show the same number of variants of translation:

- a. The verbs under study that have the lowest number of variants of translation are *burr* with only 4 different variants of translation, *rumble* with 7 translations, and *lisp* and *jabber* with 10 translations each;
- b. The verbs that have a medium number of translations are as follows: *gabble* was translated with 12 different LUs/collocations, there were 15 translations each of *stutter* and *babble* in the corpus,

and *mutter* and *slur* have 18 translations each (cf. for the stem *babble*: table 5 in appendix 1);

- c. The most productive verbs in terms of number of translations are *mumble* (22 LUs/collocations) and *stammer* (24 LUs/collocations).

However, in some cases the same translations are used for different English verbs. Thus, for example, *bormotat'* “mutter” becomes one of the translations for the following verbs: *mutter*, *mumble*, *gabble*, *jabber*, *rumble*, *babble*, *stammer*, *stutter*; the verb *vorchat'* “grumble” appears in translations of *mutter*, *mumble*, *jabber*, *rumble*, etc. If we exclude these duplications, the total number of translations of the 11 English MoS verbs accounts to 73.

### 3.2 Quality: Loss or Gain of Information

To analyse the solutions used by the Russian translators and to investigate the possible loss or gain of information due to the different way in which English and Russian convey manner in MoS verbs, we divided the Russian translations found in the corpus into the following five groups:

1. MoS verbs / derivatives / phrases, keeping the same CoNS;
2. MoS verbs / derivatives / phrases, not keeping the same CoNS but adopting another one;
3. MoS verbs / derivatives / phrases, not keeping the same CoNS;
4. VoS / derivatives / phrases, keeping neither the MoSC nor the CoNS;
5. Other verbs (not VoS) / LUs / phrases, keeping neither the MoSC nor the CoNS.

The fact that we specified the CoNS and then found out that this component can accompany MoS verbs (Pasenkova 2009) made it possible to estimate the accuracy of translations of English MoS verbs: 3 out of these 5 groups of solutions used by Russian translators have references to the CoNS. If the same CoNS is kept, then the accuracy of translations is the highest. Keeping the CoNS but with a different type of speech imperfection, dissimilar to the original, indicates that the exactness of the translations is rather high, and in those cases where the MoSC is retained but the CoNS is not kept, the precision of the translations is lower.

This idea is exemplified by the translations of the verb *slur* as illustrated in table 4. The numeration of the column TS (*translation solutions*) stands for the translation solutions numbered 1–5 that were mentioned above:

TS	Translations	%
1.	<i>govorit' zapletayushchimsya yazykom</i> “speak in a thick voice, be tongue-tied”, <i>s trudom vygovarivat'</i> “pronounce with difficulty”	32%
2.	<i>nevnyatno vygovarivat'</i> “utter indistinctly”, <i>bormotat'</i> “mumble”, <i>promychat'</i> “moo”, <i>khryukat'</i> “oink”, <i>govorit' bessvyazno</i> “speak incoherently”, <i>drebezzhashchiy golos</i> “a quavering voice”, <i>govorila vsyo medlennye, a potom yeyo golos zamer</i> “spoke more slowly and slowly, and then her voice died”, <i>nevnyatno ob'yavit'</i> “declare indistinctly”	43%
3.	<i>poperkhnulsya i toroplivo dobavil</i> “choked and added hastily”, <i>govor</i> “dialect or speech with an accent”, <i>napevnost' govora</i> “melodiousness of speech”	10%
4.	<i>govorit' bez osobogo ubezhdeniya</i> “speak without special persuasion”	3%
5.	<i>posovetovat'</i> “advise”, <i>rassuzhdat'</i> “reason”, <i>vynesti na obshchiy sud zamanchivoye predlozheniye</i> “submit for consideration a tempting offer”, <i>zamyat'sya</i> “falter out”	12%

**Table 4. Results of Russian translations of the English MoS verb *slur* grouped according to the different translation solutions adopted, and percentage of the general number of samples**

### 3.3 Quality: from *One-to-one Equivalence* to *Nil Equivalence*

The division of the Russian translations found in the corpus into 5 groups complies with the types of equivalence suggested by Otto Kade (1968). Such compliance made it possible to track all transformations of the two main components of our research, the MoSC and the CoNS, in more effective way:

1. *One-to-one equivalence*: MoS verbs / derivatives / phrases, keeping the same CoNS;
2. *One-to-many equivalence*: MoS verbs / derivatives / phrases, not keeping the same CoNS but adopting another one;
3. *One-to-part of one equivalence (with MoSC)*: MoS verbs / derivatives / phrases, not keeping the CoNS;
4. *One-to-part of one equivalence (without MoSC)*: VoS / derivatives /

- phrases, keeping neither the MoSC nor the CoNS;
5. *Nil equivalence*: other verbs (not VoS) / LUs / phrases, keeping neither the MoSC nor the CoNS.

In the following, we will present the samples from the corpora used in our research to illustrate these types of equivalence.

Sample (1) is a classic example of one-to-one equivalence, as the translator keeps the component of speech imperfection presented in the SST. The author accentuates the wrong pronunciation: “a burring of rs”. This specific feature is also described in the STT: the MoSC and the CoNS are kept.

- (1) He mounted the steps and came toward her and, even before he spoke, revealing in his tones a twang and a *burring* of rs unusual in the lowlands, Scarlett knew that he was mountain born. (RNC, *Gone with the Wind*. Margaret Mitchell, M.).

Поднявшись по ступенькам веранды, он направился к Скарлетт, но еще прежде, чем он открыл рот и Скарлетт услышала его гнусавый выговор и *картавое* «р», необычное для обитателя равнин, она уже поняла, что он — из горных краев. (НКРЯ, *Унесённые ветром*. Маргарет Митчелл, пер. Т. Кудрявцевой, 1982 г.).

After rising the stairs of the veranda, he went to Scarlett, but even before he opened his mouth and Scarlett heard his twang and *burring* “r”, unusual for the inhabitants of the plains, she had understood that he is from the land of mountains (Our back-translation of sample 1).

Sample (2) shows a one-to-many equivalence. The non-standard pausation in the SST was highlighted with *stumble* in the STT; the MoSC is kept, the CoNS is changed to another one.

- (2) In a voice that quavered a bit he asked me why did I say that? I had been “no end kind” to him. I had not even laughed at him when—here he began to *mumble*—“that mistake, you know—made a confounded ass of myself.” (RNC, *Lord Jim*. Conrad, J.).

Слегка дрожащим голосом он спросил меня—почему я это сказал? Я был “так добр” к нему. Я даже не посмеялся над ним, когда... тут он *запнулся*... “когда произошло это

недоразумение... и я сваял такого дурака.” (НКРЯ, *Лорд Джим. Джозеф Конрад*, пер. А. Кривцовой, 1926 г.).

In a voice that quavered a bit he asked me why did I say that? I had been “so kind” to him. I had not even laughed at him when—here he *stumbled*—“when this misunderstanding had occurred—and I made a fool of myself.” (Our back-translation of sample 2).

The characteristics of one-to-part-of-one equivalence (with MoSC) concern the MoSC that is kept and the CoNS (*indistinctness*) that is lost:

(3) He *slurred* that *over*—“Or me? Why not me?” (RNC, *The Sun Also Rises*. Hemingway, E.).

Он *поперхнулся* и *торопливо прибавил*:—Или со мной? Почему не со мной? (НКРЯ, *Фиеста (И восходит солнце)*. Эрнест Хемингуэй, пер. В. Топер, 1935 г.).

He *choked* and *added hastily*—“Or with me? Why not with me?” (Our back-translation of sample 3).

Another group is the one-to-part-of-one equivalence (without MoSC). Although the component of speaking is kept in the following sample (4), the MoSC and the CoNS are lost. The meanings of the verbs in the SST and the STT are different: there is nothing in common between *to jabber* and *to address* concerning their semantics.

(4) He knew us by our countenances to be Englishmen, and *jabbering* to us in his own language, swore we should be tied back to back and thrown into the sea. (ABBYU Lingvo Live, *Gulliver's Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World*. Swift, J.).

По нашей наружности он признал в нас англичан и, *обратившись* к нам на своем языке, поклялся связать спинами одного с другим и бросить в море. (ABBYU Lingvo Live, *Сказка бочки. Путешествия Гулливера*. Джонатан Свифт, пер. А. Франковского, 1987 г.).

He knew us by our appearance to be Englishmen, and *addressing* to us in his own language, swore to tie backs to one another and throw into the sea. (Our back-translation of sample 4).



The MoSC and the CoNS are lost in sample (5), which exemplifies how the main property of *stutter, say*, is changed into *move* with *otvernut'sya* (*turn aside*).

- (5) Peabody flushed deep red, *stuttered*. (ABBY Lingvo Live, *Immortal in Death*. Robb, J. D.).

Пибоди вспыхнула и *отвернулась*. (ABBY Lingvo Live, *Яд бессмертия*. пер. Н. Робертс, А. Кабалкина, 2001 г.).

Peabody flushed and *turned aside*. (Our back-translation of sample 5).

### 3.4 Other Transformations

Furthermore, the English MoS verbs underwent changes that we divided into two subgroups: phrases and metaphors.

The first subgroup, verbs transformed into phrases during the translation process, contains the following structures:

- a. V+Adv. (e.g. *govorit' vpolgolosa* “say quietly”);
- b. Adv.+V (e.g. *bystro progovorit'* “say quickly”);
- c. Adv.+V+Adv. (e.g. *tikho proiznesti pro sebya* “pronounce to oneself quietly”);
- d. V+N (e.g. *razrazit'sya rugatel'stvami* “burst into curses”);
- e. Adv.+V+N (e.g. *chotko vygovarivaya kazhdyy slog* “clearly enunciating each syllable”).

It can be seen that the semantics of the MoS verbs is mainly kept during the translation process: e.g. *gabble*, which in the SST has the meaning *talk quickly so that people cannot hear you clearly or understand you* (OALD), is transformed in the STT to *bystro progovorit'* (*say quickly*), *naspekh prochitat'* (*read hastily*).

- (6) “Oooh. Well, actually, as luck would have it I'm ever so close, so if you just pop out to the NatWest opposite I'll meet you there in five minutes,” she *gabbled*. “Super, darling. Bye!” (RNC, *Bridget Jones's Diary*, Fielding, H.).

—О-о-о. По счастливой случайности, я совсем близко. Если ты просто перескочишь на другую сторону Нат-Вест, я тебя там встречу через пять минут, — *быстро проговорила* мама.

—Отлично, дорогая! Пока! (НКРЯ, *Дневник Бриджит Джонс*. Хелен Филдинг, пер. А. Москвичевой, 2000 г.).

“Oooh. By happy coincidence, I'm close to you. If you just pop out to the other side of the Nat West, I'll meet you there in five minutes,” *said* mother *quickly*. “Excellent, darling! Bye!” (Our back-translation of sample 6).

However, sometimes the semantic value of the MoS verb can be changed considerably. For example, *stammer*, that is, *speak with difficulty, repeating sounds or words and often stopping, before saying things correctly* (OALDCE), obtains a characteristic *chotko* (*clearly*) in the STT:

- (7) Beaming with satisfaction he *stammers out*: “Himmelstoss is on his way.” (ABBYU Lingvo Live, *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Remarque, E. M.).

Сияя от радости, он *произносит*, *четко выговаривая каждый слог*: – Химмельштос едет к нам. (ABBYU Lingvo Live, *На западном фронте без перемен*. Ремарк, Эрих Мария, пер. Ю. Афонькина, 1959 г.).

Beaming with joy, he *says, clearly enunciating every syllable*: — “Himmelstos is coming to us.” (Our back-translation of sample 7).

The second subgroup, metaphoric transfer of the verbs, concerns the translations that help keep semantic features, or the impression of similarity of semantic features, in the STT. For instance, we found the following translations using metaphors: *babble* the truth: *vyplesnut'* pravdu “spill out the truth”, *jabber*: *treshchat'* “crack”, *slur*: *mychat'* “moo”.

In sample (7), the semantic features of *gabble* (*quickly, with excitement and without sense*) (OALD) are kept in the translation *kudahtat'* “cackle”. It attaches an additional characteristic received from its prime meaning and carries a negative connotation. The heroine cannot understand why she is being talked about by everyone: it irritates her. The irritation becomes stronger in the STT due to a metaphor:

- (8) Why should everybody *gabble* about me like a bunch of guinea hens? (RNC, *Gone with the Wind*. Margaret Mitchell, M.).

И почему все *кудахчут* по поводу меня, точно куры? (НКРЯ, *Унесённые ветром*. Маргарет Митчелл, пер. Т. Кудрявцевой, 1982 г.).

And why is everyone *cackling* about me like hens? (Our back-translation of sample 8).

#### 4 MoSC, CoNS: with and without them

The quantity of translations that kept the MoSC and the CoNS considerably exceeds the number of translations that lost these components in the STT. Figure 1 presents the comparison of data on the MoSC and the CoNS.

It is evident that the largest group is the one that kept the MoSC in the translations: from 100% in the translations of *gabble* to 74% in the translations of *babble*. The CoNS is also kept in a significant number of translations, but its quantity is lower. For example, while MoSC is kept in 100% of translations of *gabble*, the CoNS appears only in 80% of its translations.

Moreover, it was found that although the MoSC and the CoNS were kept in most cases in the STT, the CoNS was not always the same in comparison with the SST. For example, the original CoNS of *lisp*, “to pronounce the sibilants [s] and [z] imperfectly especially by turning them into [θ] and [ð]” (M-WD), appears only in 20% of translations (*shepelyavit'* “lisp”, *prishepetyvat'* “say with [ʃ] instead of some other sounds”). 40% of its translations have another CoNS, adopted (*syusyukat'* “be syrupy, use baby talk”, *lepetat'* “prattle/babble”, *kartavit'* “burr”, *zaikat'sya* “stutter”). This concerns all 11 verbs under study.

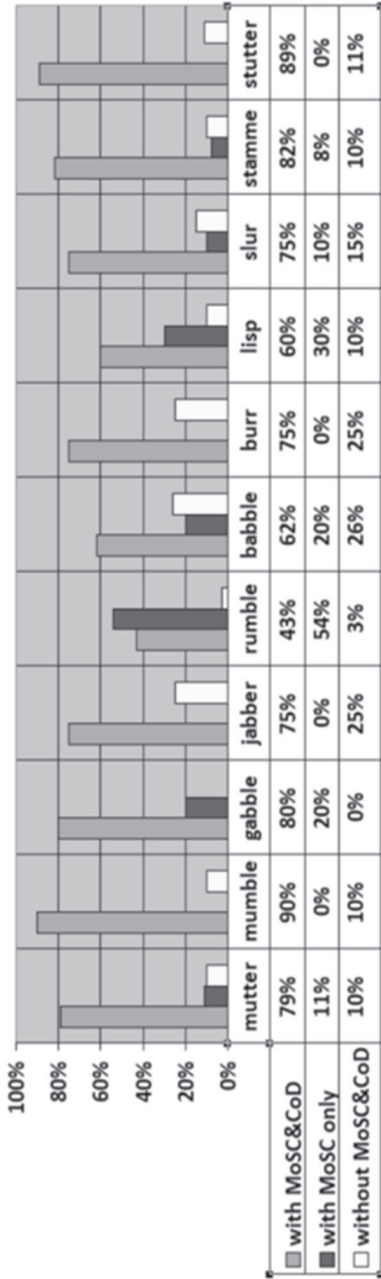


Figure 1. Results of Russian translations of English MoS verbs regarding retention or loss of the MoSC and the CoNS, and percentage of the general number of samples

## 5 Concluding Remarks

This study analyses the way in which the information conflated in the English MoS verbs can be kept, lost or added in the translation process between S-F languages like English and Russian, where manner is encoded in the root.

According to the research, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- a. Russian employs *a larger number* of MoS verb types than English;
- b. In the majority of cases, Russian conflates the MoSC in a way similar to English, but the MoSC depends on the CoNS: *a different CoNS = a different MoSC*;
- c. When translators encode the MoSC and/or the CoNS in an adjunct construction, they either *keep the original* characteristics of the SST or *emphasise physical and/or pragmatic features* of the speech;
- d. The information encoded in the English MoS verbs is *sometimes enlarged* by Russian translators, adding an aspectual nuance regarding the original verb.

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## Appendix 1

<p>1. You Elenes <i>babble</i> far too much. Although her voice was that of a little girl, her words and inflections were peculiarly adult. <i>The Ruby Knight</i>, Eddings, David (1990).</p>	<p>1. Вы, эленийцы, <i>болтаете</i> (<i>babble</i>) слишком много, и от других ждете того же,—странно было слышать взрослую речь из уст маленькой девочки. <i>Рубиновый рыцарь</i>. Дэвид Эддингс, пер. В. Мещеряковой, А. Суругиной (2001).</p>
<p>5. That's when Tom Quillan came on and started to <i>babble</i> about the whole town going up in flames and no water.</p>	<p>5. Тут как раз в эфире появился Том Квиллан и начал <i>кричать</i> (<i>to shout</i>), что весь город горит, а воды нет.</p>

<i>Carrie</i> , King, Stephen (1974).	<i>Кэрри</i> . Стивен Кинг, пер. А. Корженевского (1974).
6. I stared at the vampires disbelievingly while they <i>babbled</i> on about how amazing Seth's feat had been. <i>Succubus Dreams</i> , Mead, Richelle (2008).	6. Пока вампиры <i>восхваляли (eulogised)</i> «подвиг» Сета, я смотрела на них с удивлением. <i>Сны суккуба</i> . Райчел Мид, пер. И. Шаргородской (2010).
12. He's all twisted up and <i>babbling</i> . <i>All flesh is grass</i> , Simak, Clifford D. (1965).	12. Его всего скрючило, и он что-то <i>лопочет (is prattling)</i> . <i>Всякая плоть—трава</i> . Клиффорд Саймак, пер. Н. Галь (1967).
13. Maybe she was <i>babbling</i> , Raen. <i>The Eye of the World</i> , Jordan, Robert (1990).	13. Может быть, она <i>бредила (was delirating)</i> , Раин. <i>Око мира</i> . Роберт Джордан, пер. Т. Велимеева, А. Сизикова (1996).
17. If I'm not listening to my orphans <i>babble</i> about their kidnapped friends, I'm listening to you talk about things like elevators. <i>The Ersatz Elevator</i> , Lemony Snicket (2001).	17. Если в кои-то веки я не слышу <i>трескотню (rattle)</i> моих сирот об их похищенных друзьях, я вынуждена слушать твои речи о таких устаревших предметах, как лифт. <i>Липовый лифт</i> . Лемони Сникет, пер. А. Ставиской (2005).
18. It took almost ten minutes to get away from them all. At last, Hagrid managed to make himself heard over the <i>babble</i> . "Must get on-lots ter buy." <i>Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone</i> , Joanne Kathleen Rowling (1997).	18. Понадобилось минут десять, чтобы освободиться от желающих пообщаться. Наконец, Огриду удалось перекричать <i>гвалт (hubbub)</i> . —Пора—куча дел. <i>Гарри Поттер и Волиебный камень</i> . Дж. К. Роулинг, пер. М. Спивак (2001).
20. By the bathing pool! The boys began to <i>babble</i> . Only Piggy could have the intellectual daring to suggest moving the fire from the mountain. <i>Lord of the Flies</i> , William Golding (1954).	20. Можно у бухты! Все <i>заговорили разом (started to speak together)</i> . Только у Хрюши могло хватить дерзости ума на то, чтоб предложить новый костер на берегу. <i>Повелитель мух</i> . Уильям Голдинг, пер. Е. Суриц (1985).
25. He heard the man with the gun <i>babbling</i> out of sight: "Such an honour, father." <i>The Power and the</i>	25. Он услышал, как человек с ружьем <i>бормочет (was muttering)</i> где-то рядом: "Такая честь, отец".

<i>Glory</i> , Graham Greene (1940).	<i>Сила и слава</i> . Грэм Грин пер. Н. Волжиной (1970-1980).
26. ... <i>babbling</i> the truth for the first time in his life, baring himself mercilessly to Melanie who was at first utterly uncomprehending, utterly maternal. <i>Gone with the Wind, Part 2</i> , Margaret Mitchell (1936).	26 ...впервые в жизни <i>выплескивая (spilling out)</i> правду, безжалостно обнажая себя перед Мелани, которая сначала ничего не понимала и держалась с ним по-матерински. <i>Унесённые ветром, ч. 2</i> . Маргарет Митчелл, пер. Т. Кудрявцевой (1982).
29. On the instant he was thinking how natural and unaffected her manner was now that the ice between them had been broken. And how she went on <i>babbling!</i> <i>An American Tragedy</i> , Theodore Dreiser (1925).	29. И Клайд подумал, как просто и естественно держится она теперь, когда лед между ними сломан. А как она <i>щебетала (twittered)!</i> <i>Американская трагедия</i> . Теодор Драйзер, пер. Н. Галь, З. Вершининой (1948).
31. Now on this occasion she went <i>babbling</i> on as if he were broken-hearted, in need of her greatest care and tenderness, although he really wasn't at all; and for the moment she actually made him feel as though he was. <i>The Financier</i> , Theodore Dreiser (1912).	31. Вот сейчас она <i>нашептывала ему слова любви (was whispering the words of love)</i> , словно он уже совсем пал духом и нуждается в ее материнской заботе и нежности, хотя горести отнюдь не сломили его; но на мгновение ему показалось, что он и вправду сломлен. <i>Финансист</i> . Теодор Драйзер, пер. М. Волосова (1944).
32. "By the Bull that bought me," said Mowgli, who was trying to get at the shoulder, "must I stay <i>babbling</i> to an old ape all noon?" <i>The Jungle Book: Mowgli Stories</i> Rudyard Kipling (1894).	32. —Клянусь буйволом, который выкупил меня,—сказал Маугли, снимая шкуру с лопатки,—неужели я потрачу весь полдень на <i>болтовню (tittle-tattle)</i> с этой старой обезьяной? <i>Книга Джунглей: рассказы о Маугли</i> . Редьярд Киплинг, пер. Н. Дарузеса (1955).
35. Emboldened by this, the Captain reiterated his demand to the rest, but Steelkilt shouted up to him a terrific hint to stop his <i>babbling</i> and betake himself where	35. Ободренный этим, капитан повторил свои требования и остальным, но Стилкилт угрожающе крикнул ему снизу, чтобы он перестал <i>нести чушь</i>



<p>he belonged. <i>Moby-Dick</i>, Herman Melville (1851).</p>	<p>(<i>talking nonsense</i>) и убирался туда, откуда пришел. <i>Моби Дик</i>. Герман Мелвилл, пер. И. Бернштейна, (1961).</p>
<p>36. The brothers hoisted him into it, bathed him, shaved him, and anointed his blistered skin, while Francis <i>babbled</i> deliriously about something in a burlap loincloth, addressing it at times as an angel and again as a saint, frequently invoking the name of Leibowitz and trying to apologize. <i>A Canticle For Leibowitz</i>, Walter M. Miller, Jr. (1960).</p>	<p>36. Братья подняли его, обмыли, побрили и смазали обожженную кожу, а Франциск <i>метался</i> (<i>tossed about</i>) в горячке, вспоминал кого то в холщовой набедренной повязке, обращался к нему то как к ангелу, то как к святому, часто зывал к Лейбовичу и пытался оправдаться. <i>Страсти по Лейбовичу</i>. Уолтер Миллер, пер. С. Борисова (1999).</p>
<p>39. Now the shell was no longer a thing seen but not to be touched, Ralph too became excited. Piggy <i>babbled</i>: “a conch; ever so expensive. I bet if you wanted to buy one, you'd have to pay pounds and pounds and pounds... he had it on his garden wall, and my auntie...” <i>Lord of the Flies</i>, William Golding (1954).</p>	<p>39. Наконец можно было потрогать раковину, и теперь-то до Ральфа дошло, какая это прелесть. Хрюша <i>тараторил</i> (<i>jabbered</i>): ... рог, жуть какой дорогой... Ей-богу, если бы покупать, так это тьму-тьмущую денег надо выложить; он у них в саду на заборе висел, а у моей тети... <i>Повелитель мух</i>. Уильям Голдинг, пер. Е. Суриц (1985).</p>
<p>40. “We want to be rescued; and, of course, we shall be rescued”. <i>Voices babbled</i>. The simple statement, unbacked by any proof but the weight of Ralph's new authority, brought light and happiness. <i>Lord of the Flies</i>, William Golding (1954).</p>	<p>40. —Мы хотим, чтоб нас спасли; и нас, конечно, спасут. Поднялся <i>веселый говор</i> (<i>merry sound of voices</i>). Мало же им оказалось надо для радости—голое, не подкрепленное ничем утвержденье,—такой теперь был у Ральфа авторитет. <i>Повелитель мух</i>. Уильям Голдинг, пер. Е. Суриц (1985).</p>
<p>44. I felt I wanted whitebait and a cutlet; Harris <i>babbled</i> of soles and white-sauce, and passed the remains of his pie to Montmorency, who declined it, and, apparently</p>	<p>44. Мне хотелось отбивной и сардин, Гаррис <i>вслух мечтал</i> (<i>dreamed aloud</i>) о рыбе под белым соусом; он отдал остатки своего пирога Монморанси,</p>

<p>insulted by the offer, went and sat over at the other end of the boat by himself. <i>Three Men in a Boat (To Say Nothing of The Dog)</i>, Jerome K. Jerome (1889).</p>	<p>который от них отказался и, явно оскорбленный таким угощением, перешел на другой конец лодки, где и уселся в полном одиночестве. <i>Трое в лодке, не считая собаки</i>. Джером К. Джером, пер. М. Донского, Э. Линецкой (1958).</p>
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**Table 5. Fragment of the study's corpus of the English MoS verb babble with samples of Russian translations (15)**

# INTERPRETING VERB + NOUN COLLOCATIONS IN PERSIAN WITH LEXICAL FUNCTIONS

SHIRIN OHADI ESFAHANI  
UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG, LEIPZIG

## Abstract

Collocation has been considered an inseparable element of the vocabulary of every language. There are cross-linguistic differences in the meaning concepts and structures of collocations. The concept of *Lexical Functions*, introduced in 1965 by Mel'čuk and Zholkovsky (Mel'čuk 1996: 38), represents the formal relations of every lexical unit in a language. More specifically, Lexical Functions characterise “semantic and combinatorial features of every lexical unit” (Atkins and Rundell 2008: 151).

In the present study, efforts have been made to investigate the verb + noun collocations in Persian with Lexical Functions. The collocations have been extracted from a part of an English-Persian parallel corpus collected from specialised texts in the field of Economics. The aim of the paper is to describe verbal collocations in the Persian language, selected from the collocation category of verb + noun collocations analysed with Lexical Functions. As was seen in the examples, most of the verbal constructions in the Persian language are expressed by collocations consisting of a light verb preceded by a complement. Taking the specific verbal structure of the Persian language into consideration, interpreting verb + noun collocations with Lexical Functions seems a challenging task.

**Keywords:** *collocation, base, collocate, Lexical Functions, specialised collocation.*

## 1 Introduction

The present paper is part of a long-term research project that investigates the translation strategies applied in the translation process of collocations used in the LSP texts in the field of Economics. The data have been selected from a part of an English-Persian parallel corpus collected from

specialised texts in the above-mentioned field. While searching for theoretical perspectives on collocations, I came across the subject of Lexical Functions (henceforth LF) introduced in 1965 by Mel'čuk and Zholkovsky. Mel'čuk (1996: 96) has offered his observations on LFs for different languages, namely German, French, Polish, Somali, Arabic and Chinese. Therefore, efforts have been made to investigate the collocational structures of verb + noun collocations with LFs in the field of Economics in Persian. While doing so, the constituents of collocation, collocation approaches and the concept of LFs have been explained. Additionally, examples of verb + noun collocations in Persian that have been analysed with LFs have been provided. The examples are followed by clarifications and the concluding remarks.

## 2 Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 On Collocations

Collocations have generally been defined in the middle of a continuum in which free combinations are at one end of this continuum and idiomatic expressions are at the other (Fontenelle 1994: 3). Among the taxonomy of word combinations, collocations and idioms have been the most controversial subcategories in terms of transparency, categorisation and elements. The meaning of a collocation is easily understandable in comparison with that of an idiom: the meaning of a whole idiom cannot be predicted from its parts. As noted by Orliac (2008: 379), at least one constituent or element of a collocation is associated with literal meaning. More precisely, the transparency of a collocation results from the base, i.e. the constituent that determines its co-occurrence with another component, i.e. the collocater. As stated by McKeown and Radev (2000: 512), “the base bears most of the meaning of the collocation and triggers the use of the collocator”. In other words, the base is used in its literal meaning and the collocater is selected due to the base (Hausmann 2007: 218).

Although collocation has been an established linguistic phenomenon in linguistic theory for a long time now, little attention has been dedicated to it. As Bartsch (2004: 27) describes in detail, there are different reasons for this: one of the reasons is that there is no consensus regarding the definitions offered for the term *collocation*. Another reason is that collocation cannot be ascribed clearly to the field of syntax nor to the field of semantics. As Altenberg (1991: 127) and Bartsch (2004: 27) put it, the concept of *collocation* has vague aspects in linguistic theory. In more detail, since it has been considered a “borderline phenomenon” (Bartsch

2004: 27), categorising it as part of syntax or semantics has been a challenging task. The definition given by McKeown and Radev (2000: 507) also shows the same point: “Collocations [...] cover word pairs and phrases that are commonly used in language, but for which no general syntactic and semantic rules apply”.

However, it is admitted that the concept of collocation in the disciplines of language learning and teaching, translation, etc. has been considerably important. As van der Wouden (1997: 44) notes, “linguists cannot afford to leave collocations aside”. As mentioned by Mel’čuk (2003: 26), collocations are crucially important, because they are present in all texts. For example, Kjellmer (1987: 140) states: “in all kinds of texts, collocations are indispensable elements with which our utterances are very largely made”. Similarly, Mel’čuk (1998: 24) remarks: “collocations make up the lion’s share of the phraseme inventory, and thus deserve our special attention”.

## 2.2 Collocations as Prefabricated Phrases

*Collocations as prefabricated phrases* is identified as one the features of collocation (Seretan 2011: 15). As early as 1985, Hausmann declared that collocations are prefabricated units, which he labels “Fertigprodukte” or at least “Halbfertigprodukte” (Hausmann 1985: 118).

Mel’čuk (2012: 37) mentions *collocation* as a subcategory of phrasemes or non-free phrases; Mel’čuk (1998) also states “[the phraseme—in particular, the collocation] cannot be constructed (...) from words or simpler phrases according to general rules of L[anguage], but has to be stored and used as a whole” (Mel’čuk 1998: 24). The same idea has been expressed by Granger (1998: 145), who refers to collocation as a type of prefabricated pattern. As Sinclair (1991: 109) puts it, the open-choice principle and the idiom-choice principle are two distinctive principles whose definitions clarify that collocations are associated with the idiom-choice principle: “The principle of idiom is that a language user has available to him or her a large number of semi-preconstructed phrases that constitute single choices” (Sinclair 1991: 110), and he states further on, “[...], semi-preconstructed phrases that constitute single choices, [...] might appear to be analysable into segments” (1991: 115).

## 2.3 Collocation Approaches

Despite the ambiguous status of collocation, the lack of an agreed definition and the inconsistency of points of view, two main approaches to

the concept of collocations have been discussed: (i) the semantically-based approach (e.g. Benson, Benson & Ilson 1986, Mel'čuk 1998, Hausmann 1989); (ii) the frequency-oriented approach (Sinclair 1991, Kjellmer 1994):<sup>1</sup>

- (i) Semantically-based approach: in the words of Siepman (2005: 410), “this approach assumes a particular meaning relationship between the constituents of a collocation”. Mel'čuk (1998), Hausmann (1989) and Benson, Benson and Ilson (1986) are considered the main followers of the approach. On the basis of the semantically-based approach, collocations are composed of two constituents, i.e. *base* and *collocate*, in which the latter is determined on the basis of the former, respectively. This perspective has been called “phraseological” by Nesselhauf (2005: 12).
- (ii) Frequency-based approach: in this approach, the concept of *frequency* is of prime importance; as its name suggests. It means that “collocations are evaluated on the basis of how often they appear in texts” (Buendía Castro 2013: 98). According to Nesselhauf (2005: 11), frequency is considered the determining point of distinction in occurrences of words. The statistical approach is associated with the notion of frequency. Therefore, Firth (1957), Halliday (1966) and Sinclair (1991) adopt a statistical view. This perspective has been called the “statistically oriented approach” (Herbst 1996: 380) and also “frequency-based approach” (Nesselhauf 2005: 12). In this perspective, collocation is considered the habitual co-occurrence of words within the collocational span: “collocation is the cooccurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text. The usual measure of proximity is a maximum of four words intervening” (Sinclair 1991: 170).

### 3 Lexical Functions

The concept of Lexical Functions was introduced into the theoretical framework of the Meaning-Text Theory (MTT), which was proposed by Mel'čuk in the 1960s (Gelbukh & Kolesnikova 2013: 19).

As mentioned before, collocations have been introduced as the prominent typology of phrasemes. LFs represent formal relations of every

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<sup>1</sup> According to Seretan (2011: 11), most of these definitions are on the basis of the frequency-based or statistical approach.

lexical unit in a language. According to Seretan (2011: 19), they are “relations that are established between lexical items on the basis of the meaning to express; this meaning is denoted by the name of the LF itself”. According to Mel’čuk (1998),

The term *function* is used in its mathematical sense:  $f(x) = y$  and the adjective *lexical* indicates that  $f$ ’s domain of definition as well as the ranges of  $f$ ’s values are both sets of lexical expressions (Mel’čuk 1998: 31–32).

Gelbukh and Kolesnikova (2013: 6) describe the term *function* from a mathematical point of view: “Mathematically, a function is a mapping from one object to another such that one object necessarily corresponds to another object”.

For example, the word combination of *to carry out a survey* represents the LF of *Oper*. The function represents the meaning of doing an action. The *Magn* function designates the meaning of intensification, which is expressed in a combination like *fully representative*. *Oper* and *Magn* are Latin abbreviations of *operare* and *magnus*, which are used as names of LFs. Gledhill (2000: 10) notes that “for Mel’čuk a collocation is a semantic function operating between two or more words in which one of the words keeps its ‘normal’ meaning”.

According to Gelbukh and Kolesnikova (2013: 13), “Lexical Function is a powerful theoretical instrument for collocations systematization and analysis”. The concept of LFs is an apparatus which can be applied to the analysis of a collocation in terms of its form and meaning (Gelbukh & Kolesnikova 2013: 5). Thus, they describe LFs, applying the concept of collocation:

We can define lexical function as a semantic and structural relation between two constituents of a collocation: the base, a word used in its typical meaning, and a collocate, a word semantically dependent on the base (Gelbukh & Kolesnikova 2013: 6).

Therefore, as mentioned before by Hausmann (1985), the base is autosemantic and is called the “keyword” and the collocate, which is selected depending on the base, is called the “value” of the LF (Gelbukh & Kolesnikova 2013: 6):

Lexical Function (*keyword*) = *value*

For instance, in the collocation *to carry out a survey*, the base is *a survey*, and the collocate is *to carry out* and in the collocation *to give a speech*, the

base is *a speech*, and the collocate is *to give*. Both examples are collocations which have the same semantic element, i.e. “to perform”, “to carry out”. The semantic element of *to perform* is designated by *Oper*:

*Oper (a survey) = to carry out*

*Oper (a speech) = to give*

Additionally, a multilingual example provides a clear illustration of LFs:

Eng. *Magn (rain) = heavy*

Ger. *Magn (Regen) = starker*

Fr. *Magn (pluie) = forte*

Per. *Magn (bārān) = šadid*

There are restrictions on the co-occurrence of lexical combinations in different languages; a lexical combination in one language sounds completely natural, while the same combination is considered unacceptable in another language.

#### 4. Data Procedure

As defined by Orliac (2008: 379), “(...), specialized collocations describe regular associations between terms in a particular field”. The following are examples of verb + noun collocations collected from an English-Persian parallel specialised corpus in the field of Economics: *to generate income*, *to avoid tax*, *to boost economy*, *to give up employment*, etc.

The examples given in Table 1 are the most frequent verb + noun collocations in which the noun is a specialised economic term and is regarded as the base. The verb that has been extracted on the basis of the base is considered the collocate. Based on the derived terms, a related word sketch is created with the application of Sketch Engine, which provides concise information concerning their collocational structures and shows which ones occur more frequently with the selected nouns (i.e. bases of the collocations).



No.	LF	Gloss	Keyword	Value	Collocation in Persian and the interpretation with LFs
1	<i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i>	to carry out; to perform; to experience	<i>kālā</i>	<i>towlid/ kardan</i>	( <i>towlid/kardan/e/kālā</i> : production/doing/ <i>ezafe</i> construction/commodity)  <i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i> ( <i>kālā</i> “commodity”) = <i>towlid kardan</i> “[to] produce” ( <i>māliyāt/vosul/kardan</i> : tax/collecting/doing)
2	<i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i>	to carry out; to perform; to experience	<i>māliyāt</i>	<i>vosul/ kardan</i>	<i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i> ( <i>māliyāt</i> “tax”) = <i>vosul kardan</i> “[to] collect” ( <i>tasbit/kardan/e/nex</i> : stability/doing/ <i>ezafe</i> construction/ <i>nex</i> )
3	<i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i>	to carry out; to perform; to experience	<i>nex</i>	<i>tasbit/ kardan</i>	<i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i> ( <i>nex</i> “rate”) = <i>tasbit kardan</i> “[to] stabilise” ( <i>kāheš/dādan/e/tavarrom</i> : reduction/giving/ <i>ezafe</i> construction/inflation)
4	<i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i>	to carry out; to perform; to experience	<i>tavarrom</i>	<i>kāheš/ dādan</i>	<i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i> ( <i>tavarrom</i> “inflation”) = <i>kāheš dādan</i> “[to] reduce” ( <i>daryāft/kardan/e/bahre</i> : receiving/doing/ <i>ezafe</i> construction/interest)
5	<i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i>	to carry out; to perform; to experience	<i>bahre</i>	<i>daryāft/ kardan</i>	<i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i> ( <i>bahre</i> “interest”) = <i>daryāft kardan</i> “[to] receive” ( <i>enteqāl/dādan/e/dārāee</i> : transfer/giving/ <i>ezafe</i> construction/asset)
6	<i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i>	to carry out; to perform; to experience	<i>dārāee</i>	<i>enteqāl/ dādan</i>	<i>Oper<sub>1</sub></i> ( <i>dārāee</i> “asset”) = <i>enteqāl/dādan</i> “[to] transfer”

Table 1. Examples of Lexical Functions in Persian

*Oper* is a Lexical Function that denotes the meaning of “to carry out”, “to perform” (Gelbukh & Kolesnikova 2013: 26). The numerical subscript represents the relation of the syntactic constituents. Here, it means that the agent is the subject of the verb and the argument is its object. Most verb structures in Persian are expressed by compound verbal structures that include a light verb (Dabirmoghaddam 1997), namely *dādan* “to give” and *kardan* “to do”, which is part of a compound verb that has little semantic content and the meaning is expressed by the nominal complement; in the examples mentioned the meaning is denoted by the base. As can be seen in the examples, most of the verbal constructions in the Persian language are expressed by collocations consisting of a light verb (*kardan* “to do”; *dādan* “to give”) preceded by a complement (*towlid* “production”; *vosul* “collecting”; *tasbit* “stability”; *kāheš* “reduction”; *daryāft* “receiving”; *enteqāl* “transfer”). The analysis shows that the verb constituent is itself a collocation that consists of a light verb and a complement. Taking the specific verbal structure of the Persian language into consideration, interpreting verbal collocations in the Persian language with Lexical Functions seems a challenging task.

## 5 Concluding Remarks

To sum up, collocation, despite its fuzzy status in linguistic theory, being a borderline phenomenon between the levels of syntax or semantics, and the lack of an agreed definition, has been treated as a “central feature of language” (Rundell 2010: vii) which contributes to the naturalness and fluency of language. In other words, collocation is an important piece of language due to its widespread presence in all texts. As indicated, the majority of verbal structures in the Persian language are compound verbs, which are made of light verb constructions with little semantic content; therefore, their meaning is represented by a nominal complement (Dabirmoghaddam 1997). Taking the specific verbal structure of the Persian language into consideration, there are complexities regarding the application of LFs for interpreting verb + noun collocations in the Persian language. Therefore, the application of the system in the present lexicographic project can provide invaluable information, but at the same time seems challenging to deal with.

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# OBJECTIVISED EVALUATION OF LEGAL TRANSLATION BETWEEN SMALLER LANGUAGES

MILAN POTOČÁR

COMENIUS UNIVERSITY, BRATISLAVA

## Abstract

This paper points out the problematic understanding of evaluation reliability in the context of legal translation between smaller languages. It highlights the possibility of increasing the objectivity by using the partially automatised *PIE model* (Segers & Kockaert 2016), which eliminates the subjective aspects of the evaluation using a calibration method based on the statistical processing of a large number of translations. Since this approach cannot be fully implemented into the conditions of the Slovak legal translation with its low number of translators, the article presents the evaluation *method of consensus ratio* as an alternative, in which the translation is assessed according to the degree of consensus between the reference elements selected by the evaluators. The method objectivises the evaluation when the evaluators select the evaluated items independently from each other.

**Keywords:** *legal translation, evaluation models, PIE model, consensus rate*

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Translation Evaluation in the Context of Slovak Legal Discourse

In recent years, Slovak legal translation has seen a significant growth in demand, which has been proven by an increase in volume of all interpreting and translation services (Štefková & Matejková 2015). In the field of juridical and administrative process, all EU member states are not

only obliged to guarantee legal proceedings in each member state's language, but also to maintain the relevant quality expectations of adequate required interpreting and interpreting services that form part of the rights of all EU citizens as a direct consequence of the EU Directive 2010/64/EU (Orlando 2015: 5). Therefore, interpreters and translators face the challenge of responding to the demand of several state authorities and other contracting entities.

For an applicant to be included in the list of legal translators and interpreters entitled to pursue the profession, he or she must pass examinations, which include both linguistic and theoretical competence as well as basic knowledge of the law and ethics code (of the Slovak Republic). Despite these high general expectations, the clearly formulated call for the training of translators in these areas is focused only on partial and theoretical knowledge. Correcting these deficiencies at the preparatory level were the initiative of the project *TransIus – Conventions on standards of translation in juridical discourse*, which had the main goal of applying a general theoretical base to the language situations that are present in the Slovak law and in legal translation requests (Štefková 2013a: 124–127). Apart from theoretical research, the project challenged organisations to increase the quality of education in main practice-oriented areas such as corpus analysis, and to formulate a standardised conceptual framework in the Slovak language and in the working languages of project partners.

The method presented in this paper deals with the evaluation process of the legal texts between languages of lesser diffusion, with a focus on the combination Dutch-Slovak. This is a good example of a culturally distant translation that remains widely represented on the legal translation market, as shown in the statistical research presented by Matejková and Štefková (2015).

## 1.2 Obstacles in the Evaluation of Legal Texts

To practise as a certified legal translator, the candidate is required to have at least five years of active translation activity and to pass an examination procedure. The aim of this procedure is to ensure that the certified legal translations are produced by experienced translators who are not only familiar with the language and translation technology, in accordance with the generally applicable translation standard PN-EN 15038, but also with the legal system as terminology specialists in the source and target culture.

Adequate procedures for translation by legal translators are defined by the acceptance criteria (EULITA 2013), although each commission may

select the most appropriate form and use it to assess translations at their own discretion (Hertog et al. 2001, Orlando 2015).

Despite the fact that objectivity is one of the central concepts of admission examinations, from the perspective of an impartial observer, each evaluation setting is associated with a certain degree of subjectivity by the evaluators or the assessing jury (Štefková 2013b: 21–23). The main reason for this generalisation is that not only facts and deciding elements are included in almost all forms of text evaluation, but also each evaluator's impressions of quality, which are influenced by individual preferences, values or even prejudices. Still, even a strict focus on the facts is no guarantee of objectivity, since in this case the concrete weight reflection or an expression of importance does not provide an evident outcome.

The assessment of legal translation is a particularly challenging task for the evaluator, because, in spite of a relatively high social request to provide the highest translation quality, there are no clearly defined rules for an objective assessment of translation and translation services. In the context of Slovak legal translation, the reason for the absence of standardised criteria could be the low number of certified translators in most of the language combinations with Slovak, as well as a general cultural distance in most translated texts. This results in a low level of terminological equivalency and in ambiguousness of the specific translation solutions for problems arising from the differences between the law systems of the source and target languages (Štefková 2013a: 124–127). Another circumstance that contributes to the relevance of this problem is the fact that in almost all linguistic combinations with Slovak, compared to more frequent language combinations, a significantly smaller number of certified translators and candidates are available for the admission tests (www1 2017). This often forces translations to take place without defined rules and in culturally unclear communication situations (Potočár forthcoming).

From the perspective of the success of the translation—traditionally understood as the fulfilment of the purpose of the target text, as expressed in the Skopos theory (Reiss & Vermeer, 1984)—the legally binding language forms an insurmountable barrier, which blocks a complete terminological and interpretative transfer into the new system. In terms of establishing quality criteria for translations, we can only speak of an approximative approach (Štefková 2013b: 24) in the usage of suitable terminological pairs. In such cases, it is difficult to prove to independent parties whether the text is in its best possible form or if the chosen variant can at least be regarded as acceptable. In order to achieve these goals,



interdisciplinary communication is needed, as the translator is not often provided with sufficient resources in the less frequent language combinations (Hrehovčík 2006: 24–26; Štefková 2013a: 22). However, from the perspective of evaluation methodology, this approach may lead to a topic overlap, which shifts the focus from assessment to competence, thus the actual text perception remains an extremely subjective matter.

## 2 Objectivity in the Evaluation

### 2.1 Achievability of the Objectivity

A fair evaluation method is ideally characterised by a high degree of objectivity, transparency and efficiency. Out of these main objectives of translation models, objectivity is the one that generally remains a disputable topic. From the perspective of the common and well-founded opinion that complete avoidance of subjective factors in the evaluation is impossible, the central area in the research of translation evaluation in a legal context shifts from the search for “the most objective evaluation form” to “the aspects that can be evaluated at all” (Jacobson 2009: 53–61). Responding to this key issue, each evaluation process strongly depends on the purpose in the specific situation, either as *normative* (Anckaert et al. 2009: 76–79), *reflective*, or a *didactic* tool (Nord 1995, 2006; Hansen 2006).

The very first step to objectivity is deciding the relevant aspect of the translation. The text can be seen either through the text-creating process as a *product* or attention can be paid to the *translation process* by controlling the adequacy of the translation tools used and maintaining correct procedures. Other forms of control can also take place for non-textual aspects, primarily as a demonstration of *competence* and professionalism when providing the *translation service* (Kockaert & Segers 2014).

Although all the evaluation aspects mentioned are closely related to each other, one of the major conditions for objectivity is to focus on one particular aspect, which in the case of the admission exams is the text as a product, without the explicit necessity of knowing the circumstances or the translator’s background, which may be informative about the other evaluation aspects referenced. This means that, in an objective assessment, the external factors that are not directly linked to the translated text should not affect the evaluation. The level of the translator’s competence can thus be appraised secondarily, based on the assumptions from the source text (ST) and target text (TT) perception only. Despite this limited focus, the translated legal text may not be understood simply as a linguistic transfer

(Catford 1978), but rather as a certain mirror of the much more complex competence-related disciplines (Prieto Ramos 2011). From the perspective of the text as *parole*, it is not determinant whether the translator was under stress or if he/she is a student or an experienced translator, since the external factors can only serve to set limits for an acceptable number of errors and other quality requirements.

## 2.2 Possibilities and Limits of Assessment Models

Provided that the evaluation focuses on the text, the specific output may be either written assessment, point ratings, or assessment matrices (Potočár 2016: 159–161). All these forms have to correspond to the basic translational approach, which may be either *holistic* or *analytic*, depending on whether the jury evaluates the text according to the overall impression or according to attempts to justify the key quality elements (Lee-Jahnke 2001). Evaluation models often combine the basic approaches by evaluating the text analytically at some levels (such as terminology) and holistically focusing on other macro-textual aspects. Similarly, the assessment outcomes may deliver either a *qualitative* description of the text features or it can be reflected into a *quantitative* point evaluation. In this way, the reference evaluations represent a specific form, which sets up the algorithm to highlight the key items in the translation that are “responsible” for the general text quality. By regarding the time efficiency, evaluation unambiguity, and other practicalities, each of the forms has certain pros and cons; however, in the case of the admission examination, the model has to follow the main criterion of increasing objectivity.

The *holistic evaluation* is quick and easily applicable and very sufficiently expresses the full-text attributes (Al-Qinai 2000; Hansen 2006). The basic problem is that it is subjective by nature, as relying on the evaluators’ impressions and putting blind trust into his/her competencies shifts the evaluation object into other non-textual levels.

Although the *analytical approach* promises to consider the text priorities, subjectivity can be almost completely avoided due to the significant presence of the text priorities according to individualised preferences. Through this, the specific setting of each mistake type and degree may have a crucial impact on the general results, which, in spite of its transparency, can still be seen as a very sensitive matter. The prevailing trend in the field of evaluation models is a *negative approach*, which highlights faults and other text defects. From the perspective of objectivity, this technique is not ideal, as there is a risk that the assessment

highlights the subjectively selected aspects even more, or classifies their weight based on certain personalised rules (Potočár, forthcoming).

### 3 Evaluation Methods

#### 3.1 Objectification in the Evaluation Process

The evaluation process can be divided into three main phases: 1. selection of evaluated aspects, 2. determination of acceptability, and 3. data processing into a summary. The general feature of every method is that the most important step of the evaluation process is the starting phase, which decides “what is important” and “how important it is”. On the other hand, at this point the external factors may play a significant role, which often takes reviewers’ attention away from a more objective view of the translation itself. Eventually, clearly defined key aspects of the evaluated text in the first phase have a huge impact on the further steps of the evaluation as well, since the evaluator is able to concentrate more on the determination of the acceptability of the translated solutions (Potočár, forthcoming).

The majority of the evaluation models are based on priorities expressed in classification tables or evaluation matrices, which mainly reflect the subjectively reasoned preferences. In this context, a more objective way of evaluation identifies the specific aspects responsible for the quality and sets up their importance in the ST before viewing the TT. At the same time, tying the evaluation to a single object may minimalise the impact factors related to the text quality only indirectly, which may cause positive or negative prejudices in the assessment.

#### 3.2 Statistical Calibration

The statistical PIE method (2017) derives from Segers and Van den Poel’s theory (2007) created on the basis of the method of *benchmark items* (translated from the Dutch expression *ijkpuntmethode*), which originates from an analytical assessment of a relatively small number of evaluated items with a dichotomous definition of correct solutions (approximately 10 reference items per 200 items of text). As the first step of the assessment, the evaluator’s task consists of selecting items in the ST that are going to be evaluated. The benchmark item (translated from the Dutch expression *ijkpunt*) can be defined as a term, phrase, settled verb phrases, or another expression which may cause problems and prove important for the quality of the TT. This method avoids the negative approach in the evaluation,

since it does not only focus on finding errors, but rather evaluates the pre-defined number of aspects that are considered essential for the given text type. On the other hand, an evaluator's selection of the reference items can be criticised as increasing the impact of his/her subjective preferences, which leads to an attempt to maximise the number of reference items in the next version of the method.

The current version using the reference items, the PIE model, is the result of an effort to maximise the objectivity of the evaluated items' pre-selection process by using computer-assisted selection of reference items instead of the individualised human factor. A set of correct translations are defined for each item. However, an important element, designed to avoid the randomness of the automatic selection, is the progressive selecting of valid items by statistical calibration based on the success of the tested persons through the *d-index* and *p-index* (Kockaert & Segers 2014).

The *p-index* determines the relevant difficulty of the items. The calibration of the extreme values assumes that if the reference item is too simple (the selected threshold is that 90% or more of the translations are correct) or too difficult (30% or fewer of the translations are correct) the result is not included in the final calculation (Segers & Kockaert 2016).

The *d-index* shows how informative the translators' qualities are. A group of the best and most successful translators are defined alongside a worst extreme group. An item is filtered out as non-valid if it does not statistically correlate with the difference between the group of best and worst translators (Segers & Kockaert 2016).

After integrating the two indices, a lower number of calibrated reference items remain valid and reliable items that may deliver a corresponding weight in the overall assessment. The metrics manage to objectivise the selection of the evaluated elements and aspects that deserve the evaluator's attention. The decreased number of items considered is also helpful in the next phase, as it enables a deeper analytical focus on a smaller range of terminological issues.

Although the method, like its previous versions, can be very time-efficient when assessing a high number of translations between large language combinations (English, German, French, Spanish, Dutch, etc.), when assessing smaller numbers of translations it may become a time-consuming complication without significant improvement in the field of objectivity. In terms of Slovak legal translation, we may even assume that such a statistical method is practically inapplicable, since most of the language combinations do not deliver the sufficient number of 10-15 candidates during a single testing round (Potočár, forthcoming).

### 3.3. Method of Consensus Rate in Benchmark Items

#### 3.3.1. Calibration of the Evaluated Items

The process of selection of reference items in the ST also forms the basis for the draft of a method applicable to a low number of tested translations, by observing the degree of consistency between the independent selections of several evaluators. In practical implementation, this means a return to the original method of *benchmark items*, but it also implies eliminating the subjective factors in the selection of the reference items by using the progressive point evaluation.

This method tries to avoid the initial problem of the low number of candidates or tested translators by increasing the number of evaluators, who independently select the elements in the ST. Since it is not inevitably necessary to be a sworn translator in the given language combination in order to recognise a difficulty in the ST, the method in its test phase examines the diversity in the elements selected by the evaluators with different professional profiles (qualification, experience, and language combination). The basic assumption is that a higher number of evaluators contributes to an increase in evaluation validity, considering that legal specifics in the ST present a major problem in the translation into other languages. The individual selection itself only takes a few minutes, as the evaluators simply have to highlight the evaluated items which they consider to be key elements for the quality of the translation. At the same time, the evaluators have the option of suggesting a set of possible or incorrect solutions in order to contribute to the discussion on terminological acceptability.

#### 3.3.2 Consensus Rate

The weight of the selected elements progressively reflects the consensus rate achieved. This means that the greater the number of evaluators identifying the same item as a key element, the greater the weight of that item. Applying this principle, a point marked by 4 out of 5 evaluators will be multiplied by 0.8 (= 4/5), a point marked by 2 will be multiplied by 0.4 (= 2/5), and so on. Furthermore, a possible calibration allows us to filter out the items whose consensus rate is very low (for example, two evaluators out of a large number of evaluators) or nil.

In the example below, the reference item 2 is rated as being the most important, as all four evaluators have identified it as important for quality. On the other hand, only one evaluator chose *item 3*, so it is of less importance within the general evaluation. When assessing acceptable

translations of each item, their score is obtained through fractional values expressing the degree of consensus (Potočár, forthcoming).

Reference item	Evaluator 1	Evaluator 2	Evaluator 3	Evaluator 4	Consensus rate
<i>Item 1</i>	X	X			2/4
<i>Item 2</i>	X	X	X	X	4/4
<i>Item 3</i>		<del>X</del>			<del>1/4</del>
<i>Item 4</i>	X		X	X	3/4
<i>Item 5</i>		X		X	2/4
....					

**Table 1. Example of the consensus rate matrix**

### 3.3.3 Evaluation of the Evaluator

This model also assesses each evaluator's ability to select appropriate elements to set each item's weight. The suggested way to do so is to measure his/her probability of selecting the items in accordance with the selection of the other evaluators. The weight of such an evaluator rating can again influence the final weight of the individual items, and helps to avoid the possible individualisation of the selected elements.

By applying this principle to the previous example, the recalculated weight of an item selected by the first evaluator is expressed as:

$$0.75 = \frac{\text{item 1 } (2/4 = 0.5) + \text{item 2 } (4/4 = 1) + \text{item 4 } (3/4)}{3} \quad (\text{consensus rate})$$

3 (total amount of items selected by this evaluator)

The total *reference item weight* is produced by multiplying the consensus rate and the weight of the reference item, which already includes the evaluator's rating. For example, item 1 =  $(0.75 + 0.375) * (2/4) = 0.5$ .

This procedure automatically de-emphasises the elements selected by a low number of evaluators (items 1, 3 and 5 in the example below) and adds weight to the elements chosen by a large number of evaluators (such as items 2 and 4 in the example below).

Reference item	Evaluator 1	Evaluator 2	Evaluator 3	Evaluator 4	Consensus rate	Item weight
Item 1	0.75	0.375			2/4	0.56
Item 2	0.75	0.375	0.875	0.75	4/4	2.75
Item 3		<del>0.375</del>			<del>1/4</del>	0.09
Item 4	0.75		0.875	0.75	3/4	1.78
Item 5		0.375		0.75	2/4	0.56
....						
Evaluator rating	0.75	0.375	0.5	0.75		

**Table 2. Evaluator rating**

### 3.3.4 Further Phases of the Assessment Process

The determination of the acceptability of a translation solution, like statistical methods, is decided by the commission, which can simplify and objectivise the process by using terminology databases. In both cases, the lower the amount of reference items, the more space it provides for a deeper analysis. Another alternative simplification in the area of generally problematic correctness determination is the application of the evaluator rating, providing information about his/her ability to meet the consensus, which can be useful for a discussion regarding the correctness of the translated solution.

The calculation of the overall results is very effective as the values automatically express the translation quality in percentages. The result is greatly influenced by specific formulae, the form of which is also chosen in an argumentative way. All of this helps to reach the main goal of reducing the weight of the individual subjective choice as much as possible.

## 4 The Evaluation Method's Validity

The evaluation method, like the text, can become an object of assessment by defining the factors that improve objectivity. Although the selection of evaluated elements can take place without the intervention of the individual human factor, the objectivity achievement methodology remains a problematic topic, as the presented forms rely on specifically

defined formulae of calculation respective to a pluralistic subjective selection of evaluators. A presumption of no possible objectivity might lead to the generalisation that every attempt at objectification is based on subjectively defined criteria. From this point of view, objectivity as a main goal of the assessment model seems to remain an unachievable milestone.

Still, the elimination of personal opinions can increase the assessment validity in terms of the main research focus on the situation of smaller language combinations, usually expected to be highly influenced by the subjective impressions of a specific evaluator or another translator. In order to shift the objectivity from the individual competence issues to the text productive process, the reduction of subjective criteria at all stages stays in the finding of mutual text priorities according to multiple individualised values and evaluation perspectives (Potočár, forthcoming).

Monitoring the consensus rate in giving points to the reference items can provide answers in several different ways. The most crucial aspect is the variability between the items selected by different evaluators, who are either potential assessment commission members or are competent in the specific field of translation. The degree of differences helps to define the individual preferences of the perceptions of text-forming priorities, as well as providing information about the reliability of the evaluators' selection.

A key issue in the verification of the method's impact is that of the potential discrepancies of the results of this method contrasted with the results reached by the commission using "conventional" and holistic methods or with the results from the assessment achieved by other evaluation models. As in the search for the intersections between individual evaluation criteria, we may assume that the subjective assessment is not automatically incorrect and does provide a reference value. Therefore, even the most objective way of assessment might show smaller deviations from the results of the other forms, although this does not necessarily mean the others are incorrect.

## 5 Conclusion

This article demonstrates objectivity to be a problem when applying any form of evaluation to legal translation, since the different perspectives highlight various quality features. Therefore, the central focus of the ongoing presented research tries to examine the consensus rate between the independent evaluators' text priorities. This comparative approach helps to underline the requirements for the evaluator's language and competence profile, and to verify the hidden evaluation process.



The implementation of any new model delivers new results that can be seen both as “more objective” but also as a target of criticism. Thus, the improvement of the evaluation validity requires us to observe the discrepancies with the “traditional” or ad hoc evaluation that was performed by the committee during previous tests. Similarly, the calculation of the consensus rate helps to prove or to refute the reliability of the results of tests in the past. Still, only the usage of the method may show the impact of emphasising these aspects in the results, and its influence on time-efficiency as well as practicality for all parties involved in the evaluation process.

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# DOCIMOLGY AND CALIBRATION IN TRANSLATION EVALUATION: THE TWO INTERTWINING FACTORS IN THE PRESELECTED ITEMS EVALUATION METHOD

ALIREZA AKBARI  
UNIVERSITY OF ISFAHAN, IRAN

## Abstract

Translation evaluation aims to scrutinise and mark students' drafts on the basis of specific translation theories (Mobaraki & Aminzadeh 2012). Translation evaluation focuses on aspects such as translation process, translation, translator and linguistic and paralinguistic competences (Kockaert & Segers 2017). This research paper aims to objectively score translation drafts using the preselected items evaluation (PIE) method. The PIE method was applied for languages such as Dutch, German, and French. This research tried to test this translation evaluation method for the Persian language (different language combination). The text type used in the empirical study on which this research paper is based was a political text type. Compared to holistic methods of scoring, the final results of this research clearly showed that the PIE method scored translations more objectively based on its parameters.

**Keywords:** *translation evaluation, preselected items evaluation (PIE) method, holistic method, political text type*

## 1 Introduction

Translation evaluation is an attempt to scrutinise and mark students' drafts on the basis of specific translation theories (Mobaraki & Aminzadeh 2012). It concentrates on aspects such as translation process, translation, translator, linguistic and paralinguistic competences (Kockaert & Segers 2017, Akbari & Segers 2017) and situatedness (Muñoz Martin 2010). In educational and professional contexts, translation evaluation practice can

be carried out in accordance with a criterion-referenced approach and can be evaluated based on some kind of assessment grid. Nevertheless, these are unable to adequately diminish the degree of subjectivity in translation evaluation. Besides, the system of scoring, which is prone to be impacted by the contrast effect (e.g. halo effect), threatens the reliability of a translation test. Through translation evaluation, one can determine, on the one hand, the suitability, readability, and usability of the translated text, and, on the other hand, cultural, linguistic, and technical competences of a translator.

This research paper aims to objectively score translation drafts using the preselected items evaluation (PIE) method. While the PIE method has been applied for languages such as Dutch, German, and French within legal, cultural, and medical contexts, this research aims to test this translation evaluation method for the Persian language. The text type used in the empirical study on which this research paper is based is a political text type. The purpose of the PIE method (as a criterion-referenced translation evaluation method) is to score translation drafts objectively, which is lacking from available translation evaluation methods such as holistic and analytic methods. Last but not least, the PIE method underwrites an objective and see-through evaluation for “certification” and “hiring purposes” (Kockaert & Segers 2012, 2014).

## **2 State of the Art**

### **2.1 Holistic Method of Translation Evaluation**

The holistic method is considered an objective and accurate method of assessment. Nevertheless, this method of assessment has a limited range of resilience regarding an evaluator’s intuition/impression, the error types, and a number of translation errors that translation students make. As a matter of fact, this method has been described differently by translation instructors/scholars. Bahameed (2016: 144) has pointed out that the holistic method is appropriate and reasonable; however, it does not have a sufficient degree of objectivity and flexibility due to its dependence on an evaluator’s appreciation and impression. For instance, an evaluator considers one translation excellent and acceptable; while another evaluator considers the same translation poor and unacceptable. This shows that evaluators do not consider any particular criteria when scoring translations holistically (Kussmaul 1995: 129). On the other hand, the proponents of this method justify it by explaining that:

It is logically fine due to the fact that [the holistic method] causes failure case to be within the reasonable range when compared to the error analysis method that is accused of eating the students' marks and resulted in the failure rate to reach at least one-third out of the total (Bahameed 2016: 144).

Simply put, this method of assessment is more lenient towards students (Akbari & Gholamzadeh 2017: 63). In this light, the holistic method raises the issue of subjectivity in evaluation process and diminishes the degree of objectivity in return.

## 2.2 Analytic Method of Translation Evaluation

The analytic method of assessment (also called evaluation grids method) is associated with error analysis. The evaluation grids method is applied in order to make an evaluation more consistent and reliable (Schmitt 2005). Compared to the holistic method of assessment, the analytic method is more reliable and valid (Waddington 2001: 136). Throughout this method, a grader provides a grid which includes a number of error levels and types. A great amount of care is needed to increase the number of error levels and error types. This is mainly on the grounds that an increase in levels and types of errors can reduce the functionality and practicality of the analytic method of assessment. As a matter of fact, the analytic method assesses the quality of a translation by inspecting text segments (e.g. individual words, paragraphs, etc.) in terms of pre-conceived criteria such as addition, omission, meaning/sense, and so forth. In this direction, Eyckmans, Anckaert and Segers (2009) provide a framework for the analytic method:

<b><i>SENS</i></b> <b>(Meaning or Sense)</b>	<i>Toute altération du sens dénotatif: informations erronées, non sens... J'inclus dans cette rubrique les oublis importants, c'est-à-dire faisant l'impasse sur une information d'ordre sémantique.</i> (Any deterioration of the denotative sense: erroneous information, nonsense, important omission.....)	<b>-1</b>
<b><i>CONTRESENS</i></b> <b>(Misinterpretation)</b>	<i>L'étudiant affirme le contraire de ce que dit le texte: information présentée de manière positive alors qu'elle est négative dans le texte, confusion entre l'auteur d'une action et celui qui la subit.....</i>	<b>-2</b>

	(The student misinterprets what the source text says: information is presented in a positive light whereas it is negative in the source text, confusion between the person who acts and the one who undergoes the action.....)	
<b>VOCABULAIRE</b> (Vocabulary)	<i>Choix lexical inadapté, collocation inusitée</i> (Unsuited lexical choice, use of non-idiomatic collocations)	-1
<b>CALQUE</b> (Calque)	<i>Utilisation d'une structure littéralement copiée et inusitée en français</i> (Cases of literal translation of structures, which are unusual in French)	-1
<b>REGISTRE</b> (Register)	<i>Selon la nature du texte ou la nature d'un extrait (par exemple, un dialogue): traduction trop (in)formelle, trop recherchée, trop simpliste...</i> (Translation that is too (in)formal or simplistic and not corresponding to the nature of the text or extract)	-0.5
<b>STYLE</b> (Style)	<i>Lourdeurs, répétitions maladroites, assonances malheureuses...</i> (Awkward tone, repetition, unsuited assonances)	-0.5
<b>GRAMMAIRE</b> (Grammar)	<i>Erreurs grammaticales en français (par exemple, mauvais accord du participe passé, confusion masculin/féminin, accords fautifs...) + mauvaise compréhension de la grammaire du texte original (par exemple, un passé rendu par un présent...) et pour autant que ces erreurs ne modifient pas en profondeur le sens.</i> (Grammatical errors in French (for example, wrong agreement of the past participle, gender confusion, wrong agreement of adjective and noun,...) + faulty comprehension of the grammar of the original text (for example, a past event rendered by a present tense,...), provided that these errors do not modify the in-depth meaning of the text)	-0.5

<b>OUBLIS (Omission)</b>	<i>Voir SENS</i> (See sense/meaning)	-1
<b>AJOUTS (Addition)</b>	<i>Ajout d'informations non contenues dans le texte (sont exclus de ce point les étoffements stylistiques).</i> (Addition of information that is absent from the source text (stylistic additions are excluded from this category))	-1
<b>ORTHOGRAPHE (Spelling)</b>	<i>Erreurs orthographiques, pour autant qu'elles ne modifient pas le sens.</i> (Spelling errors, provided they do not modify the meaning of the text)	-0.5
<b>PONCTUATION (Punctuation)</b>	<i>Oubli ou utilisation fautive de la ponctuation. Attention : l'oubli, par exemple, d'une virgule induisant une compréhension différente du texte, est considéré comme une erreur de sens.</i> (Omission or faulty use of punctuation. Caution: the omission of a comma leading to an interpretation that is different from the source text, is regarded as an error of meaning or sense)	-0.5

**Table 1. Analytic method of assessment (Eyckmans, Anckaert & Segers 2009)**

Table 1 shows the values of pre-conceived criteria. For instance, if a student makes a punctuation error, an evaluator deduces half a point (-0.5) from the overall score. This is also true for addition or omission errors which deduce -1 from the total score. Previously published findings on the analytic method of assessment reveal that in application of the analytic method, the degree of rater variability is diminished through “limiting assessment criteria to construct-irrelevant ones” (Harsch & Martin 2013: 285) by means of decreasing the need to value criteria (Eckes 2005, East 2009, Barkaoui 2011). As a matter of fact, the analytic method of assessment helps “overcome shortcomings such as halo effects or ratings based on a mainly impressionistic judgment often reported for holistic scores” (Harsch & Martin 2013: 285). This method of assessment is also subjective and needs more time compared to the holistic method. Furthermore, evaluators do not always agree with one another on different analytical rating scales.



## 2.3 The Preselected Items Evaluation (PIE) Method

### 2.3.1. Evolution of the PIE Method

The PIE method is a system designed by Hendrik J. Kockaert and Winibert Segers (2012; 2014), which is highly suitable for a summative assessment. The PIE method is based on the number of preselected items determined in an evaluation and it is a calibrated and dichotomous method. The preselected items in the PIE method are selected based on the item difficulty (p-docimology) and item discrimination (d-index) for which the “correct and erroneous solutions are determined” (Akbari & Segers 2017).

### 2.3.2 P-docimology: Item Difficulty

Probability docimology (hereafter p-docimology) alludes to the percentage of participants who answer an item correctly. To calculate the p-docimology, the number of participants answering an item correctly is divided by the total number of participants answering that item. According to Sabri (2013: 4), the ideal range of p-docimology is between 0.20 and 0.90. Any item which is placed within this range is considered an optimal item. P-docimology can be calculated through the following formula:

$$\text{P-docimology} = \frac{\text{the number of participants answering an item correctly}}{\text{the total number of participants}}$$

### 2.3.3 D-index: Item Discrimination

According to Ary et al. (2010: 211) “the item discrimination index shows the extent to which each item discriminates among the respondents in the same way as the total score discriminates”. Item discrimination (hereafter d-index) is considered a point biserial correlation (a type of correlation coefficient applied when one variable is binary) which ranges from -1 to +1. In order to calculate d-index, we have to observe the following principle:

If the test and a single item measure the same thing, one would expect people who do well on a test to answer that item correctly, and those who do poorly to answer the item incorrectly. A good item discriminates between those who do well on a test and those who do poorly. Two indices can be computed to determine the discriminating power of an item, the discrimination index, *d*, and discrimination coefficient (Matlock-Hetzel 1997: 3).

In the PIE method, d-index is applied to see which items discriminate higher groups of scorers from lower groups of scorers. The discrimination coefficient involves every single person taking a test in spite of the fact that only 27% of the higher scorers and 27% of the lower scorers within a normal distribution are included in the discrimination index (Sabri 2013: 4). Wiersma and Jurs (1990: 145) argue that “27% is used because it has shown that this value will maximise differences in normal distributions while providing enough cases for analysis”. To calculate d-index, we have the following formula:

$$\text{D-index: } TG \left( \frac{27}{100} \right) - BG \left( \frac{27}{100} \right)$$

Where TG refers to the top group of scorers and BG to the bottom group of scorers.

<b>D-index Range</b>	<b>Items' Value</b>
0.40 and above	Very good items
0.30 – 0.39	Good items
0.29 – 0.20	Fair items
0.19 and less	Poor items

**Table 2. D-index range (Kockaert & Segers 2017: 159).**

Last but not least, translation brief relevancy, domain specific, and test specific criteria are three factors that are characterised within the PIE method (Kockaert & Segers 2017).

### **3 Methodology**

#### **3.1 The Condition and the Description of the Research on PIE for the Persian Language**

This research was undertaken in 2016. To apply the PIE method for the Persian language, a total number of 20 translation students participated in an empirical research project. They were enrolled in the fourth year Bachelor level English (L2)-Persian (L1) translation courses at the University of Isfahan, Iran. They were all native Persian speakers (L1) with an average age of 21. To be allowed to translate the political source text, they had to have passed the necessary courses in journalistic, economical, and political translations. The participants were asked to

translate a short piece of text from English (L2) into Persian (L1). Even though the participants varied in their level of the English language, the standard preconception was that it was by and large a good benchmark, as the registration in their study programmes required proof of passing mandatory credits such as journalistic and economic translation courses. The translation assignment was carried out in class hour under the supervision of the researcher. In order to evaluate the PIE method, an excerpt (236 words) from the *Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action* (the international agreement on the nuclear programme of Iran, Vienna, 14 July 2015) (Fars News Agency 2015) between Iran and the P5+1 (China, United Kingdom, United States, Russia, France, and Germany) was selected. The participants were given 90 minutes to translate the source text. They were allowed to access their computers to use whatever electronic references they wished, since this research tried to ensure that heuristic competence was included within the translation performance.

### 3.2 Procedures

The translation drafts were handed over to four professional translation evaluators who were asked to commonly score based on PIE method stages. Having preselected items and calculated p-docimology (between 0.20 and 0.90) and d-index values (0.30 and above), these evaluators calculated scores. The d-index of each preselected item was calculated to identify items with good and very good d-index values.

## 4 Testing PIE Method: a Case Study

### 4.1 Phase I: Preselection of Items

As mentioned, four translation experts (evaluators) were recruited to commonly score the end products (translations). Each evaluator had 10 years of experience in translation assessment and evaluation. Based on their experience, the evaluators preselected the number of items with respect to grammar (structural points), spelling, vocabulary, style, addition, omission, and other aspects which might be sources of errors within the source text. The evaluators were provided with three representative translations of the source text that gave them access to a wide range of correct equivalents of the preselected items when scoring translations. The translation students, however, were not aware which items had been preselected.

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Preselected Items by Evaluators</b>
[ITEM1]	certain agreed limitations
[ITEM2]	enrichment-related activities
[ITEM3]	specific research and development
[ITEM4]	for the first 8 years
[ITEM5]	gradual evolution
[ITEM6]	reasonable pace
[ITEM7]	for exclusively peaceful purposes
[ITEM8]	voluntary commitments
[ITEM9]	to be submitted
[ITEM10]	Iran's Safeguards Agreement
[ITEM11]	phasing out
[ITEM12]	up to a total installed uranium enrichment capacity
[ITEM13]	will be stored
[ITEM14]	continuous monitoring
[ITEM15]	in a manner that
[ITEM16]	as laid out
[ITEM17]	will not engage in
[ITEM18]	testing of up to 30
[ITEM19]	after eight and a half years
[ITEM20]	as detailed

**Table 3. Preselected items by the evaluators.**

#### 4.2 Phases II and III: Identification of Correct Answers and Calculation of P-Docimology

Table 4 illustrates the p-docimology of the preselected items, which is calculated by dividing the number of correct answers by the total number of participants.

Items No.	P-docimology	Items No	P-docimology
[ITEM1]	17/20=0.85	[ITEM11]	17/20=0.85
[ITEM2]	18/20=0.90	[ITEM12]	12/20=0.60
[ITEM3]	11/20=0.55	[ITEM13]	16/20=0.80
[ITEM4]	16/20=0.80	[ITEM14]	14/20=0.70
[ITEM5]	13/20=0.65	[ITEM15]	15/20=0.75
[ITEM6]	15/20=0.75	[ITEM16]	16/20=0.80
[ITEM7]	16/20=0.80	[ITEM17]	15/20=0.75
[ITEM8]	15/20=0.75	[ITEM18]	14/20=0.70
[ITEM9]	14/20=0.70	[ITEM19]	16/20=0.80
[ITEM10]	15/20=0.75	[ITEM20]	15/20=0.75

**Table 4. P-docimology and number of correct and incorrect answers.**

According to Sabri (2013) and Segers and Kockaert (2017), p-docimology should be higher than 0.20 and lower than 0.90, showing that the item is neither too difficult nor too easy. In this research, the p-docimology for the selected items was fixed between 0.55 and 0.90; item 3 had the lowest p-docimology (very difficult) and item 2 had the highest one (very easy). The average p-docimology of the selected items was 0.75.

### 4.3 Phase IV: Calculation of the Scores (Holistic Scoring)

Table 5 displays the scores of the twenty participants as follows:

Participant No.	Holistic Scores/20	Participant No.	Holistic Scores/20
[PAR 1]	16/20	[PAR 11]	15/20
[PAR 2]	16/20	[PAR 12]	18/20
[PAR 3]	14/20	[PAR 13]	18/20
[PAR 4]	19/20	[PAR 14]	13/20
[PAR 5]	8/20	[PAR 15]	11/20
[PAR 6]	16/20	[PAR 16]	18/20
[PAR 7]	15/20	[PAR 17]	18/20
[PAR 8]	14/20	[PAR 18]	16/20
[PAR 9]	13/20	[PAR 19]	18/20
[PAR 10]	13/20	[PAR 20]	15/20

**Table 5. Scores of the participants.**

According to Table 5, the lowest score belonged to participant 5 and the highest one to participant 4. The mean, mode, median, and the standard deviation of the scores were 15.20, 18, 15.50, and 2.675 respectively. Table 6 indicates the discriminatory power of the twenty preselected items. To calculate the d-index, this research applied the method of extreme group to identify top group (TG) and bottom group (BG) of scorers. Therefore, as explained, only “the upper (27%) and the lower (27%) scorers” (Wiersma and Jurs 1990) are included in the discrimination index. Among the 27% of higher scorers were the participants 4, 12, 13, 16, 17, and 19, and among the lower ones were the participants 5, 9, 10, 14, and 15.

<b>Preselected Items</b>	<b>d-index</b>	<b>P-docimology TG – P-docimology BG</b>
[ITEM1]	0.03	(5/6) – (4/5)
[ITEM2]	0.20	(6/6) – (4/5)
[ITEM3]	0.63	(5/6) – (4/5)
[ITEM4]	0.60	(6/6) – (4/5)
[ITEM5]	0.40	(6/6) – (3/5)
[ITEM6]	0.40	(6/6) – (3/5)
[ITEM7]	0.23	(5/6) – (3/5)
[ITEM8]	0.43	(5/6) – (2/5)
[ITEM9]	0.43	(5/6) – (2/5)
[ITEM10]	0.43	(5/6) – (2/5)
[ITEM11]	0.43	(5/6) – (2/5)
[ITEM12]	0.23	(5/6) – (3/5)
[ITEM13]	0.40	(6/6) – (3/5)
[ITEM14]	0.80	(6/6) – (1/5)
[ITEM15]	0.20	(6/6) – (4/5)
[ITEM16]	0.60	(6/6) – (2/5)
[ITEM17]	0.40	(6/6) – (3/5)
[ITEM18]	0.23	(5/6) – (3/5)
[ITEM19]	0.06	(4/6) – (3/5)
[ITEM20]	0.23	(5/6) – (3/5)

**Table 6. D-indices of the selected items (regardless of docimological impact).**

According to d-index criteria (d-index: 0.19 or less as poor items, 0.20 to 0.29 as fairly good items, 0.30 to 0.39 as good items, and 0.40 or higher as very good items), the d-index of items 1, 2, 7, 12, 15, 18, 19 and 20 was docimologically unwarranted due to their values being inferior to 0.30. However, Table 7 illustrates the docimologically justified items with regard to optimal p-docimology and d-index values.

<b>Selected Items</b>	<b>p-docimology</b>	<b>d-index</b>
[ITEM3]	0.55	0.63
[ITEM4]	0.80	0.60
[ITEM5]	0.65	0.40
[ITEM6]	0.75	0.40
[ITEM8]	0.75	0.43
[ITEM9]	0.70	0.43
[ITEM10]	0.75	0.43
[ITEM11]	0.85	0.43
[ITEM13]	0.80	0.40
[ITEM14]	0.70	0.80
[ITEM16]	0.80	0.60
[ITEM17]	0.75	0.40

**Table 7. Accepted items (docimologically justified items).**

#### **4.4 Phase V: Recalculation of Scores**

On the basis of the twelve docimologically accepted items, the evaluators recalculated the scores.



<b>Participant No.</b>	<b>Scores/20</b>	<b>Recalculation of Scores</b>
[PAR 1]	16/20	9/12 (15/20)
[PAR 2]	16/20	10/12 (16.66/20)
[PAR 3]	14/20	8/12 (13.33/20)
[PAR 4]	19/20	12/12 (20/20)
[PAR 5]	8/20	2/12 (3.33/20)
[PAR 6]	16/20	10/12 (16.66/20)
[PAR 7]	15/20	7/12 (11.66/20)
[PAR 8]	14/20	9/12 (15/20)
[PAR 9]	13/20	7/12 (11.66/20)
[PAR 10]	13/20	5/12 (8.33/20)
[PAR 11]	15/20	10/12 (16.66/20)
[PAR 12]	18/20	9/12 (15/20)
[PAR 13]	18/20	12/12 (20/20)
[PAR 14]	13/20	8/12 (13.33/20)
[PAR 15]	11/20	5/12 (8.33/20)
[PAR 16]	18/20	11/12 (18.33/20)
[PAR 17]	18/20	12/12 (20/20)
[PAR 18]	16/20	9/12 (15/20)
[PAR 19]	18/20	10/12 (16.66/20)
[PAR 20]	15/20	10/12 (16.66/20)

**Table 8. Recalculation of scores.**

According to the recalculation of the final scores, the lowest and highest scores corresponded to participants 5 and 4, and 13, and 17, respectively. The mean, mode, median, and standard deviation of these participants were  $8.75/12 = 14.58/20$ ,  $10/12 = 16.66/20$ , 15, and 4.179 respectively. The consequence of the recalculation of the scores was most critical for participant 5, going from 8/20 to 2/12 (3.33/20). This was due to the fact that participant 5 had correctly translated the preselected items 2, 7, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18, and 19. However, six of these items (2, 7, 12, 15, 18, and 19) were docimologically unjustified and thus were not accepted after the calculation of p-docimology and d-index values.

## 5 Conclusion

### 5.1 Limitations of the Research

One of the limitations of the present research is the small number of participants. Care must be taken to carry out research with proportionately small numbers of participants. Another limitation of this research is that the translation assignment was carried out with paper and a pen. It is of utmost significance to provide an environment by permitting participants to conduct their translation assignments with computer platforms, since conducting the PIE method is a time-consuming activity when done manually.

### 5.2 Implications of the Research

The PIE method has the potential to be employed in advanced and web-based translation quality platforms (translationQ, evaluationQ, revisionQ, etc.) which automate the objective revision of translation drafts using error correction and feedback memory by detecting optimal items (good p-docimology and d-index) within a source language. Web and cloud-based platforms allow a translator to revise and score translations objectively by means of adding new errors along with optimal corrections in the course of a revision phase. These platforms can save a great deal of time and support the translator in scoring translations objectively, in turn.

In conclusion, this research paper introduced and tested a translation evaluation method called Preselected Items Evaluation (PIE) which was appropriate for summative assessment. This evaluation method tries to detect competent students (top group of scorers) by means of five stages. This method as a criterion-referenced assessment method identifies a number of preselected items which have optimal p-docimology and d-

index values. To put it in a nutshell, the “PIE method increases reliability with test validity and the correlation among the scores on the translation test” (Akbari & Segers 2017: 20).

### 5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

Further studies should be conducted to solve specific scientific aspects of the PIE method. These scientific aspects can be discussed as follows:

- (1) ***Optimal range of p-docimology***: as explained, p-docimology refers to the ratio of the participants answering an item correctly to the total number of examination participants. It can range between 0.0 and 1.0 and there are two theories regarding the most appropriate range depending on the inclusion (Feldt 1993) or the exclusion (Sabri 2013) of the guessing an item possibility. By the inclusion of the guessing parameter, Feldt (1993) has pointed out that the optimal range of p-docimology is between 0.27 for an item that is too hard and 0.79 for an item that is too easy. By the exclusion of the guessing parameter, Sabri (2013) has noted that the optimal range is between 0.20 and 0.90. Further studies and research are needed to investigate which theory is more accurate;
- (2) ***Ideal length of the source text***: the length of the source text must be neither too long nor too short to ensure its reliability (the degree to which the length of a text produces consistent results) and validity (the extent to which the PIE method measures what it is intended to measure). A method to determine the appropriate length of the source text should be established;
- (3) ***The ideal number of preselected items***: the preselection of a high or low number of items in a source text could be detrimental. The assessment of a great number of items could be highly time-consuming, lessen the objectivity of an evaluator due to fatigue and increase score inflation. Few preselected items may also render scores unreliable as a result of the sample size effect;
- (4) ***Typology of items***: there are no definite criteria to objectively identify and preselect the types of items to be included (e.g. linguistic items, extralinguistic items and professional items) when applying the PIE method.

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## Appendix

### Selected Source Text

Iran's long term plan includes certain agreed limitations on all uranium enrichment and uranium enrichment-related activities including certain limitations on specific research and development (R&D) activities for the first 8 years, to be followed by gradual evolution, at a reasonable pace, to the next stage of its enrichment activities for exclusively peaceful purposes, as described in Annex I. Iran will abide by its voluntary commitments, as expressed in its own long-term enrichment and enrichment R&D plan to be submitted as part of the initial declaration for the Additional Protocol to Iran's Safeguards Agreement. Iran will begin phasing out its IR-1 centrifuges in 10 years. During this period, Iran will keep its enrichment capacity at Natanz at up to a total installed uranium enrichment capacity of 5060 IR-1 centrifuges. Excess centrifuges and enrichment-related infrastructure at Natanz will be stored under IAEA continuous monitoring, as specified in Annex I. Iran will continue to conduct enrichment R&D in a manner that does not accumulate enriched uranium. Iran's enrichment R&D with uranium for 10 years will only include IR-4, IR-5, IR-6 and IR-8 centrifuges as laid out in Annex I, and Iran will not engage in other isotope separation technologies for enrichment of uranium as specified in Annex I. Iran will continue testing IR-6 and IR-8 centrifuges, and will commence testing of up to 30 IR-6 and IR-8 centrifuges after eight and a half years, as detailed in Annex I.

# SIMPLIFYING THE TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF SUBTITLES: INTERPERSONAL ELEMENTS IN FOCUS

YASAMIN KHOSRAVANI  
UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG, LEIPZIG

## Abstract

This paper is an excerpt from my PhD thesis “Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) of Subtitles: Framework for the Evaluation of Persian Subtitles of English Movies Focusing on Semiotic Model of TQA for Poetry Translation and Appraisal Theory”, which is now under publication (Khosravani 2017). It simplifies the quality assessment of subtitles and is the continuation of a previous study named “Translation Quality Assessment: A Model for the Evaluation of Persian Subtitles Regarding the Omission of Interpersonal Elements of Language” (Khosravani & Bastian 2015), which was based on systemic functional linguistics. In the previous study, the first 500 subtitles of the film *Prisoners* together with two Persian translations of them were analysed using appraisal theory as the theoretical framework focusing on the omission of interpersonal elements in the translations. The result was a set of guidelines that could be useful for future models of translation quality assessment and could help subtitlers who are involved with the English translation of Persian texts. As the process of counting and listing the interpersonal elements is time-consuming for the users, the present research is an attempt to simplify this process using Visual Basic programming. For this purpose, 100 subtitles of the film *Houdini* have been selected as the data and have been analysed accordingly. The result is a semi-automated tool for counting and listing the interpersonal elements in subtitles.

**Keywords:** *Translation quality assessment (TQA), Subtitles, Omission, Interpersonal Elements*

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Translation Quality Assessment

As an inevitable part of translation studies, translation quality assessment is, according to Hunston (1994: 191) an “essential component of discourse”. According to Birot (2008: 4), the main purpose of evaluation is not to determine how good or bad a piece of work is, but rather to “construe the overall value of a given message which eventually leads to construction of the perspective of the agent behind the message”. Soon after the introduction of the science of translation by Nida (1964), several scholars provided models and guidelines for the evaluation of subtitles. Nida & Taber (1969), Reiss (1989), Vermeer (1989), Nord (1997), Toury (1995) and Chesterman (1997) are examples of authors who have contributed to this field; another contribution is Munday’s (2012) recent work on translation quality assessment regarding the application of appraisal theory to the translation of subtitles. The system of appraisal as a part of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) was introduced by Martin and White (2005), which is based on the Hallidayan (2006) framework of interpersonal meaning.

## 1.2 Appraisal System

According to Martin (1994: 28) the system of appraisal is a cover term for three other systems, which are “resources for moralizing, amplifying, reacting emotionally (affect), judging (judgment) and evaluating authentically (appreciation)”.

The system of appraisal explores, describes and explains how language is used to manage interpersonal relationships. It explores the reaction of the reader of the text in case of agreement or disagreement with what is said or written.

Halliday (2006) introduces three metafunctions of language as the main elements of systemic functional linguistics. These are ideational, interpersonal and functional. As opposed to the ideational function, which refers to “language as reflection”, the interpersonal function (interactive and personal) refers to “language in action” (Halliday 1994: 30). The textual function refers to the organisation of a text by using thematic structure and cohesive devices (Halliday 1994: 30). The function that mainly deals with the relationship between the writer/speaker and the reader/listener is the interpersonal function, which, according to Halliday (1994: 30), is divided into three subcategories: mood, modality and evaluation, termed by



Thompson and Hunston (2000: 55). These subcategories refer to what is meant by the appraisal system.

The appraisal system is technically defined as “one of the major discourse semantic resources construing interpersonal meaning” (Martin and White 2005: 34). The other resources include involvement and negotiation, which are not covered in the present research. The following illustration summarises the system of appraisal:

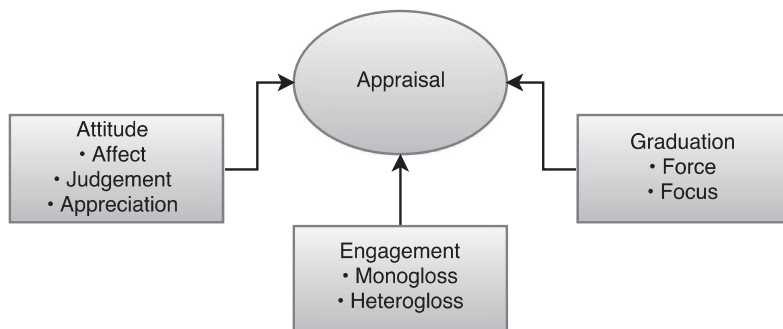


Figure 1. The system of appraisal

The elements of the appraisal theory according to Martin and White (2005) can be explained as follows.

**1. Attitude** consists of three elements, named affect, judgement and appreciation. Attitude is the first subtype of appraisal and “is concerned with our feelings” (Martin and White 2005: 35).

**Affect** refers to the expression of our emotional responses and, according to Thompson (2014: 81), is the most “natural” way of talking about our feelings.

Examples: *angry, happy, sad, fast, slow, etc.*

**Judgement** is the evaluation of behaviour, ethics, capacity, and tenacity.

Examples: *brave, honest, polite, stingy, etc.*

**Appreciation** refers to the evaluation of the phenomena and processes; according to Munday (2012: 323), it also refers to aesthetics, taste, worth, etc.

Examples: *lovely, pleasant, beautiful, authentic, etc.*

**2. Graduation** refers to the force and focus of a word or structure.

**Force** refers to the elements adjusting the intensity of the text.

Example: *That angel is my tutor.*

**Focus** refers to the words or expressions that control the “prototypicality” or make the message “sharp” or “blare”.

Example: *She is a real friend.*

**3. Engagement** can be summarised using the following figure taken from Martin and White (2005: 134):

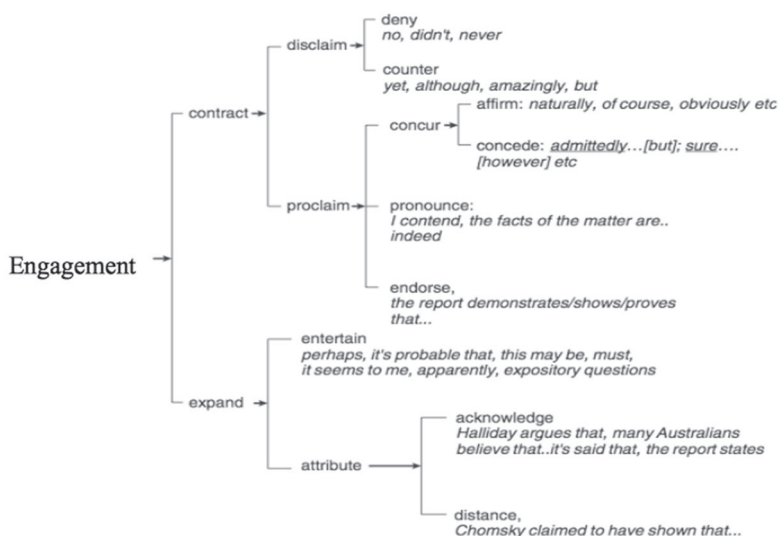


Figure 2. Summary of engagement

## 2 Subtitling and the Omission of Interpersonal Elements

### 2.1 Automating the Process of Counting Omissions

As part of audiovisual translation, subtitling and its evaluation are an important subfield of translation studies. Nowadays, because of the increasing number of fan subtitlers, more and more subtitles are being produced that need to be evaluated, and at least with reference to a specific guideline.

In Iran, dubbing is more common than subtitling and for this reason, less attention has been paid to the evaluation of subtitling in this country. In a

previous study, titled *Translation Quality Assessment: A Model for the Evaluation of Persian Subtitles Regarding the Omission of Interpersonal Elements of Language* (Khosravani & Bastian 2015), this problem was dealt with and some guidelines were provided for the quality assessment of Persian subtitles of English-language films. The focus of the study was on the omission of interpersonal elements in Persian subtitles of English films and the result was a set of guidelines, which is thought to be useful for translators and critics. The guidelines could also be applicable to the models of TQA for subtitles. The process of counting and listing the interpersonal elements in the previous study was a time-consuming process, which is why the idea of automating this process using Visual Basic programming has been put into practice in the present study. The details will be explained in the following sections.

## 2.2 The Previous Study

The previous study focused on the application of the appraisal theory to a total of 1250 subtitles taken from two films (*Prisoners* and *Houdini*) and two Persian translations of each film. Cases of omission of interpersonal elements were analysed and tentative reasons for them were proposed. The process is summarised in the following chart:

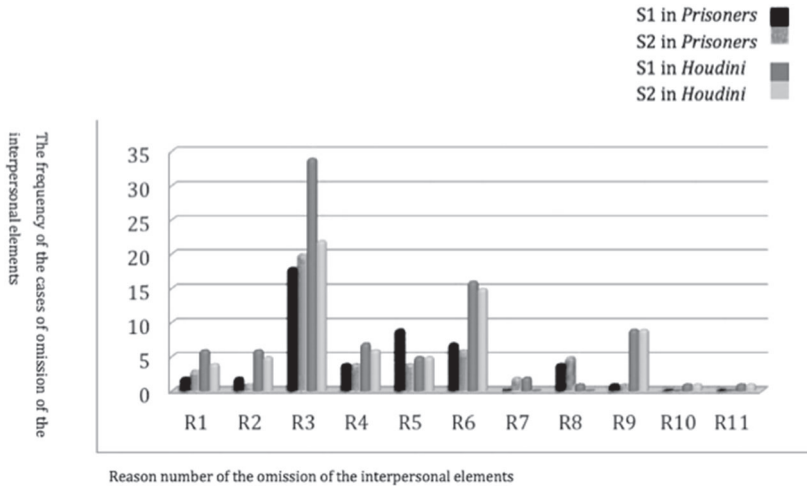


Figure 3. Comparison of the frequency of tentative reasons for omission of the interpersonal elements in *Prisoners* and *Houdini* in the two translations (Khosravani 2017: 178)

Rn refers to the tentative reason for omission of the interpersonal element; various reasons are listed as follows:

R1	Lack of word or structure in TT (target text)
R2	Being uncommon in TT
R3	Tendency towards simple structure or lexis
R4	Translator's lack of creativity
R5	Style of the translator
R6	Carelessness of the translator
R7	Omission at the expense of preserving the meaning
R8	Total omission of the sentence
R9	Clarification of the text
R10	Translator's lack of knowledge
R11	Orthographic mistake

**Table 1. Tentative reasons for the omission of the interpersonal elements (Khosravani & Bastian 2015: 241)**

### 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 Data Collection

For the present study, the first 100 subtitles of the film *Houdini* and two counterpart Persian sets of subtitles (one existing on the market and the other being ranked highest by the online viewers) were selected as the data. The subtitles often included interpersonal elements and their omission in the Persian translation (see Khosravani 2017). Two sets of subtitles were selected to compare the translations done by professional translators on the one hand and fan-subtitlers on the other.

#### 3.2 Data Procedures and Analysis

The data are analysed using the framework of appraisal; cases of omission of interpersonal elements are distinguished in both English and Persian subtitles. To simplify the process of analysis, some functions are modified in Excel, and Visual Basic programming is used. For the analysis of the translations, the English subtitles and their corresponding translations are inserted into a table. The interpersonal elements within the English subtitles are then identified and marked by the analyser programme. Moreover, the analyser determines the tentative reasons why the interpersonal elements are omitted in each translation. Table 2 is an example of such a table for two

different translations. English subtitles are inserted in column 1 (attitude, engagement and graduation as interpersonal elements are identified and marked by different colours); corresponding translations can be found in columns 2 and 6, and the reasons for the omission of interpersonal elements in columns 3 to 5 and 7 to 9. “NO” stands for “No Omission” and buttons marked by the rectangle are used as the user interface for automatically processing the analysis result (Khosravani 2017: 180).

The interpersonal elements can be automatically extracted and separated in subtitles using the analyser programme. This automated process helps the analyser to investigate each element separately as well as helping them to compare the frequency of elements in the subtitles and count them automatically. For further statistical analysis, the frequency of each omission reason occurring within different translations is counted by the same programme, and a chart is created based on this information. This can help the analysers to compare the frequency of omission of special interpersonal elements in translation and can make it possible for them to see which tentative reason is hidden behind the omission of such elements, helping them to avoid such omissions by suggesting some tips as criteria for the translators. The chart also helps the analyser to refer directly to a specific element in a text, since it presents the number of subtitles in which the interpersonal element exists. The figures 4 and 5 depict a part of the analysis (Khosravani 2017).

English Subtitle	Persian Subtitle	Attitude Omission	Engagement Omission	Graduation Omission	Persian Subtitle 2	Attitude Omission	Engagement Omission	Graduation Omission
1 00:00:00,578 → 00:00:01,778 <->Henry<->	هری	NO	NO	NO	هری	NO	NO	NO
2 00:00:02,783 → 00:00:04,230 <->Can you hear me?<->	صدای تو میشنوی؟	NO	NO	NO	صدای میشنوی؟	NO	R4, R4, R2	NO
3 00:00:11,171 → 00:00:14,707 <->One way or another (expression: non-core structure) provoked attitude, we all (intensity, force) graduation: want to escape.<->	شده میزنه بخوار تو حور شده افروز افروز کنیم	NO	NO	NO	ای حور ایس، صدای من میخورد افروز کنیم	NO	NO	NO
4 00:00:18,179 → 00:00:22,181 <->When ordinary (appreciation) direct attitude life shackles (non-core lexis) provoked attitude (force) graduation us.<->	وقتی زینگی روز در دست بریاون رو میشنوی	NO	NO	NO	وقتی در غی و بند زینگی میخورد افروز میگیریم	NO	NO	R3
5 00:00:22,299 → 00:00:25,184 <->we need to (proclaim, pronounce) engagement, get away (non-core lexis) provoked attitude, (force) graduation. <->	میخون میخوانم افروز شده افروز کنیم	R2	NO	R2	ایلید کس در بریم	NO	NO	NO
6 00:00:25,302 → 00:00:28,137 <->Get away (repetition force) graduation: from boredom.<->	از بیخفت افروز کنیم	NO	NO	NO	از بیخفت افروز کنیم	NO	NO	NO

Table 2. Generated for the analysis of translations using Visual Basic Programming (Khosravani 2017: 180)

A	B	C	D	E	F
Attitudes	In Caption	Engagements	In Caption	Graduations	In Caption
One way or another (expression: non-core structure) provoked attitude	3	we need to (proclaim, pronounce) engagement	5	all (intensity, force) graduation	3
ordinary (appreciation) direct attitude	4	But not me (denial) engagement	9	(force) graduation	4
shackles (non-core lexis) provoked attitude	4	Unlike (denial, disclaimer) engagement	11	(force) graduation.</b>	5
get away (non-core lexis) provoked attitude	5	don't	12	Get away (repetition, force) graduation	6
alive (affect) attitude	10	life (denial, disclaimer) engagement	12	From (repetition, force) graduation	7
Hell of a way to make a living (expression, non-core structure) provoked attitude	14	They say (acknowledge, attribute) engagement	15	From (repetition, force) graduation	8
		But (denial, disclaimer) engagement	18	(force) graduation	14
				whole (intensifier, force) graduation	16
				almost (focus) graduation	19

Figure 4. Separation of interpersonal elements using the developed programme (Khosravani 2017: 182)

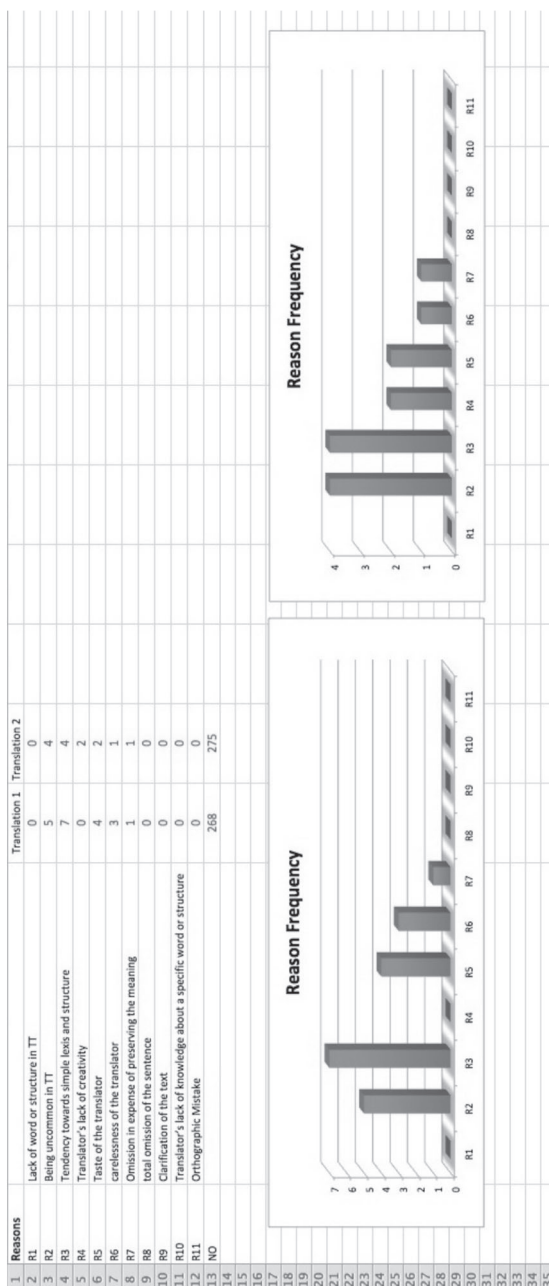


Figure 5. Frequency of interpersonal elements omission reasons within the two translations (Khosravani 2017: 182)



## 4 Concluding Remarks

The application of a semi-automated programme using Visual Basic for analysing 100 subtitles of the film *Houdini* proved that it can be used as a quick tool for counting the interpersonal elements.

It can provide a list of interpersonal elements together with the subtitle number in which they occur, for further reference by the evaluator. It is also possible for the evaluator to make a comparison of the work of the translators to see the frequency of the reasons for the omission of the interpersonal elements in their work. Finally, it is an advance in the TQA of subtitles, which can also be extended to texts other than subtitles (Khosravani 2017).

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# SUBTITLING FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING: THE SITUATION IN GERMANY, THE UK AND SPAIN

ANDREA HEILKE  
UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG, LEIPZIG

## Abstract

Over the last few years, there have been many complaints about the lack of subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing in Germany. This article compares the situation in Germany to that in Spain and the UK, to see what can be done to improve the status quo.

Subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing play an important role when it comes to media accessibility. In Germany, there is considerable room for improvement in this regard. This article considers the heterogeneous target group and the ongoing debate on how subtitles should ideally be displayed. It then looks at the different situations in Germany, the UK and Spain when it comes to relevant laws, availability and standardisation of subtitles as well as the reception by the target groups. The UK and Spain are far ahead of Germany in all respects, which suggests that clear legal requirements are needed as well as a standard with the aim of achieving greater homogeneity and improving the situation in Germany.

**Keywords:** *Accessibility, subtitling, deaf and hard of hearing, sign language, comparison*

## 1 Introduction

For many people, the first association with the word “film” is moving images. However, in most sound films a great deal of information is transmitted through auditory information. This includes dialogue and music but also all kinds of sounds that can be crucial to understanding the action. One example would be a scene in which everybody suddenly drops

to the floor. The reason for this would only become clear if we could hear the gunshot that had just been fired off-camera. Only when we have all of the information that is necessary in order to understand the plot, will we be able to really enjoy a film.

People who are deaf or hard of hearing have no, or very limited, access to auditory information in films and television. They have to rely on sign interpreting and subtitling in order to fully understand what is happening on-screen. In Germany, deaf people have been demanding more and better subtitles that are targeted to their specific needs for several decades. This article: (i) gives a brief overview of the characteristics of subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing (also called SDH subtitles) and their very heterogeneous target audience; and (ii) looks at the current situation in Germany and compares it with the UK and Spain, two countries that offer a comparatively large percentage of SDH subtitles. The aspects in focus in this comparison are legislation (i.e., relevant laws and the rights that deaf and hard of hearing people have to subtitles), availability (the percentage of subtitled television broadcasts in each country), standardisation and reception. The aim of this comparison is to assess whether there are lessons that can be learned from the UK and Spain in order to improve the situation in Germany.

## **2 Characteristics of Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

### **2.1 Intralingual Language Transfer**

Subtitles for hearing people are generally created to make a film in one language accessible to an audience that speaks a different language. The transfer that happens in this case is (mostly but not exclusively) from spoken text to written text as well as from one language into another. This subtitle type is called “interlingual”. SDH subtitles, on the other hand, are (not always but most commonly) created in the same language as the film for which they are made. As mentioned by Jüngst (2010: 123), the transfer that happens in this case is intralingual and primarily from spoken text to written text, a process that can also be seen as a form of translation. This can also involve shortening and rephrasing the text to make it easier to understand or to avoid exceeding a certain character limit.

## 2.2 Visibility

SDH subtitles can be displayed in such a way that they are always visible with the viewer having no influence on this. In this case, they are referred to as open subtitles. An example is the case of subtitles in the cinema that are displayed on the screen. SDH subtitles on television, however, are usually closed subtitles. This means that they are generally not visible but have to be activated, e.g., using teletext or a set-top box. Closed subtitles are also commonly found on DVDs. A more recent approach is special glasses, such as the Access Glasses by Sony<sup>1</sup> that use holographic technology to project subtitles so that they appear superimposed on the image.

## 2.3 Sound Description and Speaker Identification

Subtitles that are targeted to a hearing audience can be closed or open and they might in some cases be interlingual. However, they hardly ever contain descriptions of sound effects and do not usually identify the person who is speaking. Those two aspects are very important for SDH subtitles.

There are different strategies that can be used to identify the speakers. One possibility is to have subtitles preceded by names, initials or possibly symbols. However, the main problem with subtitles tends to be the limitation of characters that can be used within a specific time frame. Another strategy that is employed frequently and that avoids adding extra characters is to use different colours for the individual speakers and to introduce those at the beginning of the film. The subtitles should also include suprasegmental information if it is important for the plot and cannot be deduced from the image, e.g., if there is an ironic undertone or if a person is whispering or shouting.

Sound effects and music are often denoted in capital letters or brackets. Another option that is suggested by the Spanish subtitling standard UNE 153010 (2012: 8) is to place them in the upper right corner of the screen. If possible, these subtitles should be placed in a way that they are not covering any important visual information, e.g., existing open subtitles.

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<sup>1</sup> More information on this device can be found under the following link: [https://pro.sony.com/bbsccms/assets/files/mkt/digicinema/brochures/EntAccessGlasses-DI-0272\\_2.pdf](https://pro.sony.com/bbsccms/assets/files/mkt/digicinema/brochures/EntAccessGlasses-DI-0272_2.pdf)

### 3 The Target Audience

From a medical point of view, it is easy to classify the severity of hearing impairment. The European study group EU Concerted Action on Genetics of Hearing Impairment defines several degrees of hearing loss corresponding to the range in decibels that a person is still able to hear. According to this classification, mentioned by Streppel *et al.* (2006: 8) in the publication *Hörstörungen und Tinnitus* by the Robert Koch Institut, a person with a residual hearing level of 70 to 95 dB has severe hearing loss and a person with a residual hearing level of 95 dB suffers from profound hearing loss.

Residual hearing in dB is, however, not the only significant factor when it comes to hearing loss. Depending on training and individual coping strategies, different individuals with the same degree of residual hearing might not need the same amount of assistance and can differ in their ability to understand spoken language. In this respect, one important aspect is the stage of language acquisition at the time when a person loses their hearing. Pre-lingual deafness occurs when children are born deaf or lose their hearing before they have acquired spoken language. Post-lingual deafness occurs when a person loses their hearing after the acquisition of spoken language. In cases of pre-lingual deafness, the first language often will be the sign language that is commonly used in this person's country or region. People with post-lingual deafness might learn a sign language, but it will usually not be their first language.

According to the FAQ section on the website of the German Federation of the Deaf (Deutscher Gehörlosen-Bund), there are approximately 80,000 people in Germany with profound hearing loss and an additional 140,000 people with so little residual hearing that they need the assistance of sign language interpreters. The British charity Action on Hearing Loss states in their fact sheet *Facts and figures on hearing loss, deafness and tinnitus* (2016: 4) that “an estimated 900,000 people in the UK [...] have severe or profound levels of deafness (hearing loss of at least 70 dB in their better ear).” The Spanish national institute of statistics INE does not define hearing loss in dB. Instead, the degree of hearing loss is determined by the sounds that a person is still able to hear. In 2008, a survey conducted in Spain concluded that approximately 975,900 persons living in private homes were suffering from hearing loss that was severe enough to cause difficulties in understanding spoken language. While there are different definitions of hearing loss and possibly numerous cases that are not included in those statistics, those figures show that thousands of people in Germany, Spain and the UK suffer from a degree of hearing

impairment that makes it difficult or even impossible for them to understand spoken language without written text or sign language interpreters.

## 4 Sign Language

The most obvious difference between sign language and spoken language is that sign language uses gestures and facial expressions to communicate instead of spoken or written words<sup>2</sup>. In a number of sign languages, all or some words are also mouthed, e.g., in German Sign Language (DGS). Another important aspect is that sign language is simultaneous and spatial while spoken language is linear and temporal. This means that, while in spoken language one word follows the next, sign language can convey information simultaneously, making use of the space around the signer.

There are many misconceptions when it comes to sign languages, such as the idea that there is only one international sign language, that they consist solely of pantomimic gestures, or that their grammar closely follows that of spoken language. In fact, so far approximately 130 different sign languages have been identified worldwide, and according to estimates made by the linguistics organisation SIL International, the actual number might exceed 400. Many of those have developed independently of each other and can be grouped in language families that are in some cases quite different from those that are made up of spoken languages. For instance, Henri Wittman lists Polish (1991: 285) and possibly also Israeli (1991: 283) sign language as part of the German Sign Language Family, while Austrian sign language is not related to this group. British Sign Language (BSL) and American Sign Language (ASL) are not related to each other either. As Schermer explains:

Many people think that BSL and American Sign Language (ASL) must be related to each other because spoken English is used in both countries. This is not the case. ASL is in fact related to French Sign Language (LSF) (Schermer 2016: 281).

Differences between sign language and spoken language families already lead to the conclusion that the grammar of a sign language will likely be different from the grammar of the spoken language of the same region. In

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<sup>2</sup> There are also ways to transcribe sign language, commonly referred to as sign writing. Examples can be found on the following websites:

<http://www.signwriting.org>

<http://www.gebaerdschrift.de>

German spoken language, for example, the common word order would be subject – verb – object, but it could also be object – verb – subject as it is a synthetic language that allows for some variety in the word order. DGS, on the other hand, generally uses the structure of subject – object – verb.

## 5 Verbatim or Edited Subtitles?

As the previous chapter shows (albeit very briefly), there are a number of significant differences between spoken language and sign language in general, and of course even more in the direct comparison of specific languages. Considering that spoken language is only the second language for many people with pre-lingual hearing loss, there has been much debate about the way SDH subtitles should be presented.

As SDH subtitles are in a foreign language for some of the addressees and there are different levels of competence when it comes to understanding spoken language, there have been a number of voices in favour of edited subtitles. The aim is to make them easier to understand and also to reduce the number of characters that are required and thus be more flexible with display times. Strategies for editing subtitles to this end could include, for instance, leaving out redundant words or rephrasing sentences using less complex grammatical structures. Pereira Rodríguez (2008) suggested in her lecture *Traducción para os medios audiovisuais* at the Universidade de Vigo (Spain) giving preference to grammatical aspects that are used both in the sign language and the spoken language of a country (or in this case more precisely in Spanish Sign Language and Spanish) when creating SDH subtitles.

Advocates of verbatim subtitles, however, claim that this can lead to censorship and argue that nobody should presume the right to decide what information is suitable for the deaf addressees and what should be left out or toned down, e.g., when it comes to swear words or crude language. Another argument in favour of verbatim subtitles is that they are helpful for people who rely primarily on lip-reading or who suffer from a milder degree of hearing loss and only resort to subtitles when they have missed individual words. Verbatim subtitles can also help people with a sign language as their first language to become more familiar with the grammatical structures and expressions of spoken language. Disadvantages of verbatim subtitles are that they often require longer display times and that, if the aim is the exact reproduction of the spoken words, they cannot always be complete due to restrictions in space and time.



In their position paper *Positionspapier zur Untertitelung im Fernsehen* on SDH subtitles that was published in 2005, the German Federation of the Deaf and the organisation Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund claimed that all concerned parties desire subtitles that are complete and true to the original, without the content being simplified in any way, which will enable them to distinguish personal styles of speech, including informal language and swear words, and which should also help to extend the vocabulary of the recipient. Toma Kubiliute, a founding member of the German action group *Wir brauchen Untertitel*, states in the group's introductory video: "Unser Ziel ist ganz klar 100 % Untertitel. Wir verlangen, dass wir höchste Qualität der Untertitel bekommen in Form von 1:1 Übersetzung". (Our aim is clearly 100% subtitling. We demand subtitles of the highest quality in the form of 1:1 translation.) She thus equates subtitles of high quality with verbatim subtitles.

Neves (2008: 136), on the other hand, points out that "verbatim subtitles may have such high reading rates that they will be difficult to follow" and that there are different needs among the addressees of SDH subtitles as they consist of a very heterogeneous group that would actually require different sets of subtitles for the same spoken text. She concludes:

Equal opportunities only come with the respect for difference, and that is what must be aimed at. Hard of hearing viewers and (capital) Deaf viewers will certainly have different expectations and needs, so, if people with different degrees of hearing loss, linguistic profiles and reading skills are only given one set of subtitles, equal opportunities will never be attained.

## 6 The Situation in Germany, the UK and Spain

### 6.1 Germany

#### 6.1.1 Legislation

As Germany is a member of the UN and the EU, there are two directives that are relevant for the subtitling situation in this country. The first one is article 9.1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006: 9):

1. To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to [...] to information and

communications, including information and communications technologies and systems [...]. These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility, shall apply to, inter alia:

[...]

b. Information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services.

2. States Parties shall also take appropriate measures to:
  - a. Develop, promulgate and monitor the implementation of minimum standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services open or provided to the public;
 

[...]
  - f. Promote other appropriate forms of assistance and support to persons with disabilities to ensure their access to information.

Chapter III, article 7 of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive 2010/13/EU (2010: 15) states the following:

Member States shall encourage media service providers under their jurisdiction to ensure that their services are gradually made accessible to people with a visual or hearing disability.

The *Rundfunkstaatsvertrag* (Interstate Broadcasting Agreement) requests the public service broadcasters to offer accessible media within their technical and financial capabilities beyond what they are currently offering. However, broadcasters are not obliged to reach any specific targets.

### 6.1.2 Availability

According to a statistical survey that was published by the group *100% Untertitel-Pflicht für alle*, a total of 27.15% of all television broadcasts in Germany was subtitled in October 2016. The total average of the public service broadcasters was 46.09%, with the leading public service broadcasters ARD and MDR with 96.38% and 84.56%, respectively. The private broadcasters only achieved a total of 7.16%. Among them, ProSieben was first with 34.83% and RTL II second with 24.68%.

### 6.1.3 Standardisation

Just as there are no provisions on the percentage of subtitles that should be provided, there are also no mandatory standards to establish how subtitles should be displayed. It is left to the broadcasters what their subtitles look like. In 2015, the public service broadcasters ARD, SRF, ZDF and Austrian broadcaster ORF agreed on a number of guidelines as a basis for the creation of their subtitles. Those guidelines determine for instance that there should be a maximum of two lines with 37 characters each with a minimum display time of 1 second and a guide value of 13-15 characters per second. They also define the colours that should be used to identify the speakers and that the subtitles should be as close as possible to the original text, including swear words, technical terms, etc.

### 6.1.4 Reception

The website *untertitelrichtlinien.de*, supported by several organisations for deaf people, claims that while there are attempts to offer more subtitles, quality is often neglected, and it demands standards for the creation of subtitles as a countermeasure. In 2016, a study was carried out by the media authorities in Germany with the aim of analysing the use of media by people with disabilities. Group surveys that were conducted as part of this study showed that there is much dissatisfaction about the quality of the available subtitles. One point of critique was that subtitles were not synchronous with the spoken text, especially with live subtitling.

The biggest problem, however, is still the absence of subtitles from many television programmes. There are numerous organisations and action groups campaigning for more subtitles on television, e.g., *Wir brauchen Untertitel*, *100% Untertitel-Pflicht für alle* and *Aktion Untertitel*. As one person states in a protest video by the group *Wir brauchen Untertitel*: “Ehrlich gesagt, ich habe das Gefühl, dass wir ein Entwicklungsland haben.” (To be honest, I feel like this is a developing country.).

## 6.2 United Kingdom

### 6.2.1 Legislation

While the UK is part of the UN and (currently) the EU, and therefore of the same supranational legal framework as Germany, there is also a British law, the Communications Act of 2003, that specifies the target values for

SDH subtitling with the Office of Communications (Ofcom) in charge of setting specific targets for the broadcasters and monitoring the implementation. The ratio of subtitling, signing and audio description that needs to be achieved depends on the channels' audience share and their ability to afford the required services. The required percentage is clearly indicated and is raised in one-year increments.

### **6.2.2 Availability**

According to Ofcom's *Television access services report 2016*, approximately 83% of all domestic television programmes were subtitled in 2016, with most broadcasters exceeding the prescribed target and a number of them, including most BBC channels, offering 100% subtitles. As the report states:

The BBC channels that missed their 100% subtitling target by less than 0.1% did so due to technical and/or operational outages which meant that some subtitling was not successfully transmitted. These channels were BBC One and BBC Two (Ofcom 2017: 3).

### **6.2.3 Standardisation**

The British Communications Act specifies not only the percentage of subtitling that needs to be achieved but also contains an annex with a set of best practices for the creation of subtitles. Those include position, number of lines (three can be used if they do not obscure the picture), the designation of "non-speech information" and speed. They also suggest editing subtitles only where this is necessary to avoid delays:

...the aim should be to synchronise speech and subtitling as closely as possible. Subtitle appearance should coincide with speech onset and disappearance should coincide roughly with the end of the corresponding speech segment. If necessary, subtitling may be edited conservatively if this is necessary to avoid long delays between speech and subtitling (2003: 12).

### **6.2.4 Reception**

A survey that was carried out in 2013 by the organisations Action on Hearing Loss, UK Council on Deafness and Sense in 2013, showed that a number of viewers were not happy with the quality of subtitles. Problems that they mentioned were:

- Delays between speech and subtitles
- Inaccuracies in subtitles
- Missing subtitles
- Provision of live subtitles on pre-recorded programmes
- Subtitles covering important information or peoples' mouths (essential for lip reading)
- Customisation of subtitles including placement, colours, size, background
- Problems with subtitle delays when recording subtitles
- Incorrect or different words used in subtitle compared with words actually spoken, editing of information (2013: 2)

In October 2013, Ofcom announced regular audits of subtitles to identify where improvement was necessary. However, the BBC article that reports this decision also states: “In the past, viewers have made clear that, although pre-prepared subtitling is generally of good quality, the quality of live subtitles is often poor.” This suggests that the issues mentioned above are also mainly referring to live subtitling.

## 6.3 Spain

### 6.3.1 Legislation

Like the UK, Spain has a law that regulates the minimum amount of subtitling on television. Article 8 of the *Ley General de la Comunicación Audiovisual* from 2010 determines that people with hearing or visual impairment have the right to accessible audiovisual media in accordance with the technical possibilities. It also states that hearing-impaired people have a right to 75% subtitling and two hours of signing per week. By 2013, all commercial broadcasters were to reach 75% and the public service broadcasters 90%.

### 6.3.2 Availability

According to the Spanish National Commission on Markets and Competition (CNMC), in 2015 (2016: 11–29) only two channels of the Spanish public service broadcasting corporation RTVE provided over 91.43% of their programmes with subtitles and thus reached the target of 90% for the public service channels. The other RTVE channels reached between 77.25% and 79.14%.

The private corporation Atresmedia reached between 70.90% and 94.56% in the same year with two channels falling short of the target of 75%. Private broadcaster Mediaset reached over 75% across all channels. While the CNMC mentions three more private channels that failed to achieve this target in 2015, in general there is a high percentage of subtitled television programmes across both the public service and private channels.

### 6.3.3 Standardisation

The Spanish institution for standardisation AENOR has developed the standard *UNE 153010:2012 Subtitulado para personas sordas y personas con discapacidad auditiva* that specifies in detail how subtitles should be displayed. The introduction of the document (2012: 4) states that its aim is to establish a set of minimum requirements to ensure the quality of the subtitles and to promote a certain amount of homogeneity of SDH subtitles.

Some of the aspects that are treated in minute detail are display times, speaker identification, colours to be used and the designation of music and sounds. It also determines that subtitles should be verbatim as long as time permits.

### 6.3.4 Reception

In 2015, the Spanish centre for subtitling and audio description CESyA announced the reopening of a task group that should establish quality indicators to help evaluate subtitles in Spanish television. This was a response to repeated complaints by deaf and hard-of-hearing people about subtitle quality. As Tamayo (2015: 380) concludes in a study that focuses specifically on subtitles for children, no channel completely complies with the standard *UNE 153010* and there is a lack of homogeneity in how the subtitles are displayed.

## 7 Conclusion

When looking at the figures in the subchapters on availability, Germany performs very poorly in comparison with the UK and Spain. Even if we allow for potential inaccuracies or different methods in determining the percentages, there is still a large gap between the approximate 46% that public service broadcasting in Germany has to offer (with private broadcasters in a much lower range) and a total average of 83% in the UK, with the BBC channels providing 100%, and most Spanish channels

offering over 70%. It is evident that there is a direct link between relevant laws and the efforts that are made by broadcasters, especially in the private sector, to provide SDH subtitles. There is also an evident difference between the attempts that are made to standardise subtitles and thus also to provide minimum requirements in order to achieve subtitles of a certain quality. While there is an extensive standard in Spain and a relatively detailed document by the British Office of Communication that provide guidelines for the creation of subtitles, there have only recently been some efforts by a few German-speaking broadcasters from the public service sector to achieve a certain uniformity in how their subtitles are being displayed. There are still complaints by deaf and hard-of-hearing people in the UK and Spain when it comes to the quality of subtitles. Considering the heterogeneity of the target group, it will never be possible to achieve a perfect set that will suit everybody. Furthermore, constraints in time and budget will hardly ever allow for different sets of subtitles for the same programme in order to satisfy different needs. However, for a large proportion of the German TV programmes, there are no subtitles of which the quality could be criticised.

An important place to start, in order to improve the current situation, is the establishment of laws that regulate accessibility and grant hearing-impaired people the right to at least a certain percentage of subtitling. The next important step would be to work out a standard in order to ensure the quality of subtitles, which would take into account the needs and desires of the target group, and to charge an authority with the task of monitoring the compliance of the broadcasters, similar to Ofcom. If those prerequisites could be fulfilled, there would be a good chance that Germany could close the gap between itself and the UK and Spain and offer the accessibility that the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities seeks to facilitate.

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# WHAT WAS THE ORIGINAL NAME OF THIS MOVIE? WHEN FOREIGN MARKETING IMPOSES ITS OWN RULES

MENGYE HAN  
UNIVERSIDADE DE VIGO, VIGO  
AND LAURA SANTAMARIA GUINOT  
UNIVERSITAT AUTÒNOMA DE BARCELONA, BARCELONA

## Abstract

This study focuses on the paratranslation of movie titles. Based on the discourse of paratranslation, the concept of *movie microtitle* has been developed as the iconotextual unit of the title, image and tagline on a movie poster. As movie titles are designed to attract the attention of the public, i.e. to fulfil their phatic function, this article examines the importance given to this function during the process of translation. The following parameters, which act on both linguistic and iconic levels, have been enumerated to analyse the accomplishment of the phatic function: the rhetoric figures, the implication of viewers and the contrast of colour between the title and the background of the image, etc. In the corpus, among the 22 pairs of original and translated microtitles of animation movies, which were translated from English to Chinese and included only films that were released in mainland China between 2008 and 2012 (inclusive), more than 90% of both the original and the translated microtitles achieved the phatic function. It is also revealed that the preference for the above-mentioned parameters barely varies in the original movie microtitles compared to the translated ones. To conclude, the arbitrariness of meaning changes during the translation of movie titles could be due to the priority given to the maintenance of the phatic function.

**Keywords:** *audiovisual translation, animation films, movie microtitle, phatic function, paratranslation, English, Chinese*

## 1 Phatic Function in Movie Titles

Film titles condense the content or hide parts of the film to arouse the public's interest about the movies. Despite their importance in relation to the commercial success of films, these titles, however, have not gained comparable recognition in Translation Studies.

In view of the fundamental role of film titles in making profit from the box office, our premise is that title makers of both the original films and the translations give importance to the functions that the corresponding titles fulfil. Having in mind the original and target receivers respectively, we considered that the functional model of Nord for titles of books and other written texts could be applied to analyse the movie title (from now on, MT) translation. Nevertheless, the model needed some modifications given that MTs have their own characteristics, which are different from titles of books and other written texts.

In Nord (1990, 1994, 1995), it is specified that titles, being genuine texts, fulfil six textual functions as acts of communication, namely, distinctive function, metatextual function, phatic function, referential function, expressive function and operative (appellative) function.

With the phatic function, on which this article focuses, a title establishes and maintains contact with the target audience, i.e., catches the attention of its receivers and remains in their memory for some time. To address ways in which one can fulfil this function, Nord has developed different arguments, claiming that a title should “llevar las características formales típicas de los títulos de la cultura terminal”<sup>1</sup> (Nord 1990: 156), or that “La realización de la función fática depende de la longitud de los títulos”<sup>2</sup> (Nord 1994: 91) or that it depends on “its [the title's] length and mnemonic quality” (Nord 1995: 274).

In order to examine the importance of the phatic function, we will present our own proposal, which includes several formulas of analysis, such as the use of rhetoric figures, the implication of viewers and the application of colours in contrast between the title and the background of

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<sup>1</sup> “[...] bring the formal characteristics typical of the titles of the receiving culture” (our translation).

<sup>2</sup> “The performance of the phatic function depends on the length of the titles” (our translation).

the image. Our proposal takes into consideration not only the linguistic level but also the iconic level of MTs, as we will clarify in the analysis.

## 2 Paratranslation

A key moment in which the public pays close attention to a MT is when the movie posters are presented during the advertising campaign. The movie poster allows and requests that the iconic aspect of MTs is particularly accentuated through the use of different letter types and colours. However, at the same time it requires that MTs interact with other elements on posters to create an inextricable whole. The concept of *paratranslation* provides firm and sufficient support in this study.

Genette (1982, 1987) proposed and studied the notion of paratext, stating that paratext, delimited in the literary context, is labelled as an auxiliary text that informs about the text in the form of a book. Starting from Genette's notion of paratext, in the doctoral thesis by Garrido Vilariño (2004: 304), the term *paratranslation* was coined: "Se a traducción le, interpreta e traslada textos; a Paratraducción le, interpreta e traslada paratextos"<sup>3</sup>.

Paratranslation has extended the field of application of the concept of paratext, surpassing the context delimited exclusively in literary books, gaining a new enlarged definition:

[...] le paratexte est l'ensemble des productions verbales, iconiques, verbo-iconiques ou matérielles qui entourent, enveloppent, accompagnent, prolongent, introduisent et présentent le texte traduit de sorte à en faire un objet de lecture pour le public prenant des formes différentes selon le type d'édition [sur papier ou à l'écran]<sup>4</sup> (Yuste Frías 2010: 290).

As in paratranslation, it is key in our research to underline the importance of translating images. According to the new definition of paratext, any image that accompanies a text is a paratext. Translating the image is not an easy task because the image is not transferable but instead it is a cultural product whose meaning changes according to the space-time location (Yuste Frías 2013: 84). In absence of universality, the image in translation

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<sup>3</sup> "If the translation reads, interprets and translates texts; Paratranslation interprets and transfers paratexts" (our translation).

<sup>4</sup> "[...] the paratext is the set of verbal, iconic, verb-iconic productions or materials that surround, envelop, accompany, prolong, introduce and present the translated text in order to make it an object of reading for the public taking different forms depending on the type of edition [on paper or on screen]" (our translation).

requires the translator to have sufficient cultural competence to read, interpret and paratranslate it.

### 3 Movie Microtitle (MMT)

Nord (1990: 154) points out that the complete form of a title includes, in addition to the title itself, the author's name, bibliographic data of the publication, dedications, epigraphs, etc. Based on this consideration, a complete MT also covers the director's name, the names of the actors, the bibliographic data of production and distribution and the taglines, among other elements. Such full titles appear on movie posters, in movie advertisements through mass media and when the film is shown in cinemas.

Among these sources, the present study pays attention to movie posters because they offer the greatest accessibility to the audience. Firstly, since movie posters are free of charge to be looked at when displayed on advertising panels or on cinema billboards, the consumption of advertisement entails no economic expense. Secondly, movie posters are characterised by their permanence and durability, given that they are displayed for about ten days or more to announce the release of the films and that they are present during the whole time the movies are on in the cinema.

A movie poster is composed of numerous elements, among which the title itself, the image and the taglines can be grouped together, because they make public the subject or the content of the film, while other elements offer more bibliographic information. From the translation perspective, the translation of the set of these three elements is also more difficult in comparison to that of other elements, which mainly consists of translating proper names. Since the title itself, the image and the taglines build a cohesive whole, we call this unit movie microtitle (from now on, MMT).

The *image* refers to the picture on movie posters, excluding the icons integrated in the title and the different logos of the producers, distributors, collaborative media, previous films, etc. As for *tagline*, no academic definition has been found within film studies or in the literature on advertising, but numerous related discussions by movie experts can be identified.<sup>5</sup> Based on such discussions, we have formulated the following definition: taglines are concise and attractive phrases or sentences printed on

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<sup>5</sup> For example, the definition given by Filmsite (2020), which indicates that “Taglines (often called slogans) are catchy, enticing short phrases used by marketers and film studios to advertise and sell a movie (create “buzz”), and to sum up the plot, tone or themes of a film”.

posters to advertise the films, which have a close relationship to the theme or content of the film and exclude the title of the film and quotations from the film. It should also be borne in mind that taglines are not an element that always appears on posters. Therefore, when a movie poster in our corpus does not have a tagline, the MMT of the film refers to the title and the image.

## 4 Corpus and Analysis

Our corpus is composed of MMTs of animated *fenzhangpian* (分账片) “box office split movies”<sup>6</sup>, which were originally produced in English and translated into Chinese and which were shown publicly in mainland China between 2008 and 2012. Films imported only in the form of CD, DVD, BD, etc. or by television channels have been excluded as they usually use forms of promotion other than movie posters. Additionally, we have excluded three regions of China that have independent film industries with their own system of importation of foreign films: these are Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau. To collect the MMTs and to ensure cohesion in the study of poster characteristics, we have only considered the last version of the posters used during the advertising campaign of each movie.

The process of data collection was divided into two phases. First, we assembled a catalogue of animated *fenzhangpian* and then we filed their corresponding original and translated posters to compile the MMTs.

For the cataloguing of the films, we resorted to publications on the film industry, like *Contemporary Cinema*, *Chinese Film Market* and *Journal of Beijing Film Academy*, and to relevant online resources, such as Mtime<sup>7</sup>, Entgroup<sup>8</sup>, etc. We performed cross-checks to guarantee the accuracy of our catalogue. Additionally, to determine if a movie is an animation film, as certain confusion had arisen on the definition of this genre, we relied on

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<sup>6</sup> Currently, foreign films screened in cinemas in mainland China can be grouped into two main types: *fenzhangpian* (分账片, “movies (*pian* 片) with shared (*fen* 分) box office (*zhang* 账)”) and *maiduanpian* (买断片, “movies (*pian* 片) completely (*duan* 断) bought (*mai* 买)”). The first type is characterised by the box office split, and its profits are shared among the original production company, the Chinese distributor, the cinema chains and the cinemas. On the other hand, the distribution rights of the second type, *maiduanpian*, are bought by the Chinese distributors, who have complete control of the profits (Han and Santamaria, 2018: 110–111).

<sup>7</sup> Mtime is a non-academic film database, whose app is the most used among Chinese cinema applications.

<sup>8</sup> Entgroup is a relevant company dedicated to the construction of an open platform of macro-data on film and television.

the classifications given by two major movie databases: Mtime and IMDb (Internet Movie Database). As a result, we created a list of 24 animated *fenzhangpian*, which allowed us to go to the next step: cataloguing their corresponding original and translated MMTs.

For this purpose, we gathered these from the following amateur web sites with extensive databases: IMPAwards<sup>9</sup>, Mtime, Douban<sup>10</sup>, IMDb, MoviePosterDB<sup>11</sup>, movieposter.com<sup>12</sup> and g-film<sup>13</sup>. When either an original or a translated poster could not be found, this film was excluded from our corpus.

After this process, we had registered 22 pairs of original and translated posters, which contain the corresponding MMTs (Han 2016: 355-376).

The first step in our analysis was to find out how each MMT achieved the phatic function, by examining the application of several relevant formulas. The next step was to look at the original MMTs and the translations as two individual groups in order to summarise their outstanding characteristics in relation to the phatic function. We looked in detail at how the phatic function was fulfilled and the percentage of realisation of each formula was calculated. Finally, we examined what happened in the process of translation of the MMTs.

The means or formula to achieve the phatic function reviewed are the following:

#### a. Rhetoric figures

As MMTs are iconotextual units, both the linguistic and the iconic rhetoric figures are taken into consideration. Durand (1970: 70) points out the existence of non-verbal figures as he discerns “dans l’image publicitaire, [...] toutes les figures classiques de la rhétorique”<sup>14</sup>.

We find the classification of Subiela Hernández (2010: 272–298, 319) on rhetoric figures adequate for the current study. Like Durand (1970: 73–

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<sup>9</sup> IMPAwards has a large collection of movie poster images online.

<sup>10</sup> Douban is a Chinese social network service, which allows its users to record data and create content about books, films and music.

<sup>11</sup> MoviePosterDB is a database of movie posters, which are uploaded by registered users.

<sup>12</sup> Movieposter.com is a company whose business is developed around the posters (posters of all types, including cinema and theatre posters, etc.).

<sup>13</sup> G-film is a website which exhibits annual catalogues of films shown in mainland China from 2002 to the present.

<sup>14</sup> “[...] in the image of the advertisement, [...] all the classical figures of the rhetoric” (our translation).



75), Subiela Hernández (2010) elaborated this classification according to two variables, namely, “[l]a operación que se realiza entre las proposiciones de la figura”<sup>15</sup> (2010: 85–86), which may be the adjunction, deletion, substitution or exchange, and “[l]a naturaleza de la relación existente entre las diferentes proposiciones de la figura”<sup>16</sup> (2010: 86). Since his proposal is rooted in the classic rhetoric, it is applicable for the analysis of the verbal rhetorical figures in English. Furthermore, we can also use it to analyse the iconic figures, as Subiela Hernández has already demonstrated in his research. By omitting the derived sub-figures originally listed, the adapted classification contains 23 rhetoric figures, such as repetition, antithesis, paradox, ellipsis, metaphor, etc.

However, it is necessary to have another classification for the study of the verbal figures in the translated MMTs in Chinese, because this Asian language has its own linguistic characteristics that are different from those in the English language. For this purpose, the classification given by *Xiandai Hanyu* (Huang and Liao 2007), a handbook on Chinese grammar for university education, has proven useful. The book contains 20 figures, for example *bini* (比拟) “personalisation”, *fanwen* (反问) “rhetoric question”, *paibi* (排比) “parallelism”, *shuangguan* (双关) “double meaning”, etc.

#### b. Implication of viewers

This parameter includes, at the linguistic level, the use of the imperative mode, the first and second person in singular and plural, the gerund or other grammatical elements that include the viewers, and at the iconic level, the appearance of the expressions or gestures of the characters directed to the poster onlookers. Regarding the iconic perspective, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 122) argue that, in the images, the visual configuration of the direct looks of the represented participants towards the spectator, together with the gestures of these in the same direction, “[...] acknowledges the viewers explicitly, addressing them with a visual ‘you’”.

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<sup>15</sup> “The operation that takes place between the propositions of the figure” (our translation).

<sup>16</sup> “The nature of the relationship between the different propositions of the figure” (our translation).

### c. Contrast of colour between the title and the background of the image

According to Subiela Hernández (2010: 122), the contrast of colour “[...] aportará elementos con mayor capacidad de impacto y atracción”<sup>17</sup>.

This study takes into consideration two types of contrast of colour. One is the tone of colour, i.e., the juxtaposition of two distanced colours in the colour circle, and the other is luminosity, produced by using two colours that have a dramatic difference in the quantity of light contained, whenever only one colour is dominant.

The colour circle could be divided into infinite colours, but we use the classification of colours by Heller (2008). This author has defined 13 colours since “en un sentido psicológico, cada uno de estos trece colores es un color independiente que no puede sustituirse por ningún otro [...]”<sup>18</sup> (2008: 18). Among these 13 colours, except white, gold, silver, grey and black, which are not included in the colour circle, according to the location in the colour circle of the other 8 colours, we can summarise that the contrastive colours are yellow-blue, yellow-violet, orange-blue, orange-violet, red-blue, red-green, violet-green and blue-green.

We had to exclude the contrast of luminosity, because it is likely that the digitalised posters in our corpus differ from the original paper posters in terms of luminosity due to the process of digitalisation itself. However, we do include two colours that are contrastive in terms of luminosity. These colours are black, the total lack of light, and white, the sum of light, which can be distinguished with our own eyes.

### d. Other parameters

There are two parameters that need to be mentioned: exotic elements (like typical Chinese landscapes that seem exotic for a Western audience), and recognisable figures that have appeared in former films or in other types of productions (such as well-known video game characters who appear on film posters, as they form part of the films).

We consider that a MMT accomplishes the phatic function if at least one of the above-mentioned formulas has been used, and accordingly the results of our analysis are the following:

On a global basis (see Table 1), 90.91% of the original MMTs have accomplished the phatic function, except *Battle for Terra* and *Brave*, and

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<sup>17</sup> “[...] gives elements a greater capacity of impact and attraction” (our translation).

<sup>18</sup> “[...] in a psychological sense, each of these thirteen colours is an independent colour that cannot be replaced by any other [...]” (our translation).

this number rises to 95.45% for the translated MMTs, since the only exception is *Brave*.

Phatic function	Source (English)	Target (Chinese)
Percentage of accomplishment	90.91%	95.45%

**Table 1. Presence of phatic function**

As shown in Table 2, when taking a closer look at each parameter, the statistics are as follows: among the 20 original MMTs that have achieved the phatic function, 80% have resorted to rhetoric figures, except *Bolt*, *Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole*, (*Toy Story*) 3<sup>19</sup> and *Rise of the Guardians*; 15% have used contrast of colour between the title and the background of the image, namely *Monsters vs. Aliens*, *How to Train Your Dragon* and *Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted*; 70% have made use of the implication of viewers, except the MMTs of *Monsters vs. Aliens*, *Up*, *Shrek: The Final Chapter*, *The Smurfs*, *Ice Age: Continental Drift* and *The Lorax*; and finally 65% have applied other parameters.

In comparison, among the 21 translated MMTs that have achieved the phatic function, 85.71% have resorted to rhetoric figures, except *Monsters vs. Aliens*, *Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole* and *Rise of the Guardians*; 14.29% have used contrast of colour between the title and the background of the image, namely *Monsters vs. Aliens*, *How to Train Your Dragon* and (*Toy Story*) 3; 76.19% have made use of the implication of viewers, except MMTs of five movies, which are *Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs*, *Up*, *How to Train Your Dragon*, *Cars 2* and *Brave*; and finally 57.14% have applied other parameters.

Parameters	Source (English)	Target (Chinese)
Rhetoric figures	80%	85.71%
Contrast of colour	15%	14.29%
Implication of viewers	70%	76.19%
Others	65%	57.14%

**Table 2. Parameters of phatic function**

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<sup>19</sup> The MTs cited in this article are those used on the corresponding posters, so they may differ from their official versions. But to facilitate understanding, we have put in brackets the difference between these two versions.

Furthermore, an interesting phenomenon relating to the length of the titles has been found. As shown in Table 3 and Table 4, while the English titles prefer to use one or two words to make them easy to memorise through a short pattern of words, the translated titles have a marked tendency to use four or five Chinese characters. This manifest style of Chinese titles is rooted in the Chinese literary tradition. The preference for four characters is influenced by the use of a typical Chinese syntagmatic structure, *sizige*, which consists of four-character/syllable phrases. The 2 + 2 structure of *sizige* is, according to the linguist Lü Shuxiang (1963), an important rhythmic tendency in Chinese, which has been followed by all four-character Chinese titles in our corpus. Moreover, the preference for five characters comes from two of the most cultivated poetic forms in the Tang and Song Dynasty: *wuyan lüshi* and *wuyan jueju*. Each verse of these two poetic types is composed of five Chinese characters with the rhythm of 2 + 3, which was followed by 9 of the 10 Chinese titles of five characters, except for 守护者联盟 / *Rise of the Guardians* whose rhythm is 3 + 2.

Number of English words	Percentage of original titles
1	22.27%
2	22.73%
3	13.64%
4	18.18%
5	9.09%
6	4.55%
8	4.55%

**Table 3. Number of words in English titles**

Number of Chinese characters	Percentage of translated titles
3	14.29%
4	28.57%
5	47.62%
6	9.52%
8	4.76%
10	4.76%

**Table 4. Number of characters in Chinese titles**

## 5 Conclusions

Movie titles printed on posters are one of the most striking elements for the public in general and are presented to them not only as linguistic texts but also as iconic units with different fonts, colours, etc. Developed from the notion of paratext, which emphasises the translation of paratexts as iconotextual units, paratranslation vindicates the legitimacy and relevance of combining the movie title with the tagline and the image on the poster because only the hermeneutical analysis between these verbal and iconic codes can build an entire imaginary. Therefore, we have outlined a new concept, movie microtitle (MMT), to refer to the title, tagline and image printed on the poster of a given film as a whole, which is the object of our analysis.

This study has proven the viability and importance of analysing the translation of animation movie titles from English to Chinese from a functional perspective, but focusing only on one of the six functions proposed by Nord, the phatic function. We have seen the need to complement the model of Nord to include the iconic dimension of these movie titles into the analysis, since the movie titles have their own characteristics that differ from the titles of books and other written texts.

With regard to the specific elements that contribute to the fulfilment of the phatic function, we have clearly listed them at the beginning of the analysis with the following prominent novelties: first, we introduced the iconic dimension to the elements pointed out by Nord, like the non-verbal rhetoric figures; second, we put forward for the first time new elements which have an impact at the non-verbal level, such as the formula of colour contrast between the title and the background of the image.

Based on the results of the analysis, the original MMTs and the translated ones present an almost identical percentage of accomplishment of the phatic function. This confirms that people in charge of translated MMTs give the same importance to the phatic function as their English-speaking colleagues do when creating the original MMTs.

Regarding the application of different parameters to achieve the phatic function, the original and translated MMTs prefer, firstly, to use rhetoric figures, secondly, to involve viewers, and, thirdly, to employ contrast of colour between the title and the background of the image. Therefore, creators of MMTs and translators do not act on a purely linguistic level. Besides, the percentage of the elements used is almost the same in the original MMTs as in the translated MMTs.

Observable differences were revealed at a more detailed level when we examined the number of letters or characters used in the corresponding

titles. We discovered that the Chinese literary tradition has left its mark in the translated titles as these have shown a great preference in using four or five characters. Nevertheless, in both cases the phatic function was accomplished.

As a final conclusion, we have shown there is no cultural distance between English and Chinese in relation to the phatic function when translating MMTs of animated films.

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2008

*Bolt* / 闪电狗

*Kung Fu Panda* / 功夫熊猫

2009

*Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs* / 冰川时代3

*Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa* / 马达加斯加2

*Monsters vs. Aliens* / 大战外星人

*Up* / 飞屋环游记

2010

*The Squeakquel* / 鼠来宝：明星俱乐部

*Battle for terra* / 塔拉星球之战

*How to Train Your Dragon* / 驯龙高手

*Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole* / 守卫者传奇: 猫头鹰王国

*Shrek: the final chapter* / 怪物史瑞克4

(*Toy Story*) 3 / 玩具总动员3

2011

*Cars 2* / 赛车总动员2

(*Kung Fu Panda*) 2 / 功夫熊猫2

*Rio* / 里约大冒险

*The Smurfs* / 蓝精灵

2012

*Brave* / 勇敢传说

*Ice Age: Continental Drift* / 冰川时代4

*Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted* / 马达加斯加3

*Rise of the Guardians* / 守护者联盟

*The Lorax* / 老雷斯的故事

*Wreck-it Ralph* / 无敌破坏王



ALIENATING, NATURALISING  
OR *GLOCALISING*? :  
TOWARDS BLENDED TRANSLATION  
STRATEGIES FOR EUROPHONE  
AFRICAN WRITING

ALBA RODRÍGUEZ-GARCÍA  
UNIVERSITÉ GASTON BERGER, SAINT LOUIS

**Abstract**

In an increasingly globalised literary panorama, the consumption of translated literary works is growing in comparison to the dissemination of original works. Europhone African literatures are growing exponentially, and their kaleidoscopic nature presents particular translation challenges. New strategies and approaches still need to be developed to avoid forcing the so-called minority source literatures and cultures to conform to the standards of the majority target ones. This work is based on the hypothesis that traditional Western translation approaches and dichotomies such as the well-known *alienating vs naturalising* dichotomy seem reductive and somehow too limited to properly deal with these literatures. Our objective is therefore to improve the textual and contextual treatment that those source texts endure: it is time to embrace otherness. In this sense, this paper provides a general description of some specific features of such texts, analyses the pertinence and shortcomings of the translation trends and strategies most commonly applied, and proposes a blended or *glocalised* approach to meet the challenges of this kind of translation.

**Keywords:** *translation, Europhone African Writing, otherness, alienating vs naturalising, glocalised approach*

## 1 Introduction

Many studies have been produced over the past few decades on the work of African authors from the current and postcolonial eras. These studies reveal that these texts are a by-product of the crossroads between Africa and Europe, embedded in a highly creative linguistic hybridity, situated in an in-between (Batchelor 2008: 52) space, framed in a third code (Bhabha 1994) and considered to be translation per se (Bandia 2003: 129). *Europhone African prose*<sup>1</sup> possesses its own idiosyncrasies, making translations of such texts particularly interesting, since Western translators and target text (TT) readers have had little exposure to African paradigms and so are less aware of them. In parallel, the fields of translation and postcolonial studies have converged in a new, relatively independent field known as postcolonial translation studies. This interdisciplinary area has produced a great deal of work due to the intrinsic difficulty involved in translating such texts. In this sense, the cultural turn in translation studies of the 1980s and 90s, along with subsequent studies on cultural aspects in translation and later postcolonial studies, have demonstrated beyond any doubt that the social and cultural realities of any community have a great impact and weight in its literature, and therefore in its world view. Therefore, understanding linguistic and extralinguistic features is more crucial than ever, since their kaleidoscopic nature produces texts whose intrinsic and distinctive traits and challenges require both highly specific knowledge and the development of new and creative translation strategies. As Gyasi (1999: 82) stated: “if the translation of African literature from African languages into European languages is no easy task, the translation of this literature from one European language into another presents even more problems”.

This paper provides a general description of some specific features of such texts, analyses the pertinence and shortcomings of the translation strategies most commonly applied, and proposes a blended or *glocalised approach*<sup>2</sup> to meet the challenges of this kind of translation. Our aim is to contribute to a greater understanding of the particular case of translations of Francophone African writing into Spanish, in order to improve the

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<sup>1</sup> Literary works that are written in European (colonial) languages, commonly English or French; a controversial classification which has generated much debate since 1962, when the first African Writers Conference was held in Makerere University of Kampala (Uganda).

<sup>2</sup> An approach that is intended to result in a *global* TT (understandable by the foreign TT readers) while remaining *local* (maintaining the idiosyncratic nature of the source text (ST)).

textual and contextual treatment of those source texts. Our study will be done in three steps: first we will provide a general description of the linguistic and extralinguistic specificities of this literature, which present challenges to the translation praxis. Secondly, we will address the well-known *alienating vs naturalising* dichotomy commonly applied to those texts in order to analyse their applicability and shortcomings. Thirdly, we will illustrate and justify our standpoint with some fragments of *Riwan ou le chemin de sable* (1999), explaining the translation issues that arise with such a text and proposing a *glocalised* approach to their translation into Spanish, in order to overcome these issues. Finally, we will draw some conclusions, which, in our view, would be helpful to tackle the translation challenges presented by these African texts. The final objective is to achieve faithful and culturally respectful literary postcolonial target texts (TTs), in response to Batchelor's (2013: 11) claim:

While the concept of translation is one to which postcolonial theory has often had recourse, offering, as it does, a useful metaphor or metonym for many of the processes explored within the framework of postcolonial studies, the issue of translation proper is only now coming to the fore.

## 2 Europhone African Literatures at a Glance

One of the main linguistic characteristics of most of these productions is their hybridity: the Europhone language used is Africanised (Woodham 2006: 120), that is, adapted and modified by African users in an appropriation exercise of the coloniser languages. The linguistic structures, the metaphors and the intuitively transcribed pronunciation of African language systems turn the texts into pieces of supreme linguistic creativity. The authors manipulate the colonial language from the linguistic-cognitive perspective of their vernacular tongues, producing new linguistic forms: a new language. This explains why Chinua Achebe (1997: 348) claimed at the first African Writers Conference held in Makerere: "I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit new African surroundings".

The issue of orality is another main characteristic. Briefly explained, it is when writers imprint the oral traditions of their cultures in their work: the expression patterns, the narrative flow, the textual organisation, the space and time jumps, the oral techniques, the role of the *griot*<sup>3</sup>, etc. This

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<sup>3</sup> A member of a class of travelling poets, musicians and storytellers who maintain a tradition of oral history and literature in West Africa

orality underlies their written literary productions, leading Norman Rush<sup>4</sup> to state about Ken Bugul's *Le baobab fou* (1984):

(...) one must be willing to acclimate, to hold in mind the awareness that the correct referents for its style are the forms of African oral public art - village storytelling, griot performances, praise-poems (...) all the tropes that are so much more commonly part of successful oral performance than they are of printed fiction.

We will also highlight another important feature: the consideration of these original texts as somehow translations (Niranjana 1992, Tymozcko 1999). Source texts (STs) are already considered TTs built up from minority languages and cultures, for example, Wolof or Igbo<sup>5</sup>, but expressed in the so-called hegemonic ones, mainly French and English. They are considered a by-product, a place where both linguistic and extralinguistic boundaries are transported and relocated. In Bandia's words (2003: 129):

It has been said that postcolonial texts are themselves translations often based on multiple linguistic and cultural systems. This has led to the characterization of postcolonial translations as rewriting, thereby highlighting the specificity of this kind of translation practice.

Since the linguistic features of the ST are quite distant from those of the TT (the languages to which they are translated), we directly relate to what Berman (1985: 45) identified as *travail sur la lettre* or "work on the letter" to be able to deal with them in our translation praxis. This does not refer to a literal word-by-word translation, but rather to simply respecting the linguistic features of the ST, since they carry a great deal of information and weight in this particular case, as Berman (1985: 79) said: "Nous partons de l'axiome suivant: la traduction est traduction-de-la-lettre, du texte en tant qu'il est lettre (...) L'effacement des vernaculaires est donc une grave atteinte à la textualité des oeuvres en prose".

Obviously, the cultural significance of extralinguistic features is another main characteristic<sup>6</sup>. These texts are deeply embedded with African *culture-specific items* (CSI) relating to different cultural

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<sup>4</sup> Rush, Norman (1991): "The Woman in the Broken Mirror". *The New York Times* <<http://www.nytimes.com/1991/12/15/books/the-woman-in-the-broken-mirror.html>>.

<sup>5</sup> Vernacular African languages from Senegal and Nigeria respectively.

<sup>6</sup> Certainly in other textual typologies as well.

paradigms<sup>7</sup> that are frequently alien to the Western public. Even if these CSI are sometimes expressed in French or English, Western translators are generally unaware of the allusions made by such references. Not being familiar with those CSI, their translation can lead to meaningless fragments in the TT.

Another common pragmatic feature is represented by the asymmetrical power relations that surround the content and writing. Most of the literature produced by African authors after the independence period (and still today) is charged with deep political and social (dis)content and with the still complicated relationships between colonisers and colonised peoples. This critical and conscious writing, whether turned into alienation or appropriation, needs to be addressed in order to let the subaltern speak (Spivak 1988).

Last but not least, even if seemingly collateral, we must pay attention to the publishers, audiences and literary canons to which this writing was and still is exposed. Writer Ladipo Manyika (2016) recently claimed:

The gatekeepers of African writing remain firmly rooted in the West – African publishers typically must buy, rather than sell, the rights to books (...) This means that frequently they are forced to adapt their manuscripts to what the editors consider best for the target public.

This means that these texts are usually subjected to Eurocentric literary canons; the authors and their work are frequently under the strict policies of European publishers; their work is mainly published for a Western audience, and their quality and reliability are judged by Western literary critics. As a result, STs have forced footnotes or endnotes explaining concepts, scripted words, definitions of vernacular terms, etc. which are not part of the *real* source texts<sup>8</sup> and whose addition may not correspond with the will of the authors. All of these issues present challenges to the translation praxis.

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<sup>7</sup> Because culture is a highly complicated, divisible concept, we use the word *paradigm* to try to differentiate the different spheres the CSIs might be related to within the general concept of culture.

<sup>8</sup> In an interview dated 2015, Ken Bugul declared that in most of the cases it is the will of the publisher that prevails regarding the linguistic appearance of the texts; STs are manipulated to some extent for what western editors think the public they address can or should consume.

### 3 Translation Issues

The most common practices and strategies used to translate these kaleidoscopic texts into hegemonic languages are classic Western procedures. It would be impossible to summarise all of them in this paper, so we will focus on Schleiermacher's (1963) widely known dichotomy between *alienating* vs *naturalising* or *foreignising* vs *domesticating* (Venuti 2004) strategies. Because this dichotomy seems somewhat problematic for the translation of Europhone African texts, we will analyse fragments of these texts and their translation into Spanish and propose a *glocalised* method to mitigate the shortcomings of the translation strategies when applied to the specific texts we are dealing with.

As we know, the *alienating* or *foreignising* strategy aims to move the target reader towards the ST and the author. To achieve this, the translator tries, as far as possible, to maintain the original linguistic and pragmatic features of the ST in the TT, in an attempt to preserve the originality of the work. The reader will face some strangeness on different levels: some forced linguistic conventions will appear; some unknown cultural items will be presented; some vernacular elements might stay the same, etc. In the opposite strategy, called *naturalising* or *domesticating*, it is the ST and author that are moved toward the reader. The translation tries to adapt the source production to the target audience, depending on their capacity to understand a linguistically and culturally alien ST. It is widely held that the first option, where the reader is moved toward the author and the ST, and where the idiosyncrasy and identity of that ST is translated and palpable in the TT, is more appropriate.

#### 3.1 A Problematic Dichotomy

In our opinion, this dichotomy presents some shortcomings when translating African literatures written in Europhone languages into other Europhone languages. First of all, strictly interpreting this dichotomy as a pure opposition does not seem to us adequate for solving the challenges involved in this kind of translation practice. This inadequacy is also reinforced by other Western trends. Charles Nama (1990: 76) claimed more than twenty years ago:

Analyses also prove that most of the Western-oriented, linguistic-bound translation theories have certain shortcomings and as such are not useful to African texts. Their major weakness is the absence of socio-cultural factors which impinge on works produced by African artists.

Secondly, we believe that the line separating alienating strategies from naturalising ones is somewhat blurred. We do agree with most scholars that any translation that tends to move the ST towards the TT for an easier comprehension, thereby reducing the CSIs of the ST to the cultural paradigms of the target readers, is undoubtedly a naturalising tendency. Conversely, a foreignising tendency would imply not moving the ST towards the target readership, thus producing a TT that is incomprehensible, or much more difficult to understand, for the target readers. But ultimately it is the degree to which a strategy is (or is not) applied to the TT that determines the tendency (*alienating* or *naturalising*) of the *ad hoc* translation practice applied to the fragment, since, with some very specific exceptions<sup>9</sup>, any strategy can be strictly labelled as *alienating* or *naturalising*, *per se*.

On the one hand, strategies such as endnotes, footnotes, embedded texts, explanatory prefaces, maps, appendices, glossaries, etc., (which are commonly assumed to be foreignising procedures) could be considered naturalising if used in an orthodox or excessive way in these kinds of translations. In our view, heavily adapting an ST to the target language (TL) and target culture (TC), using strategies to ensure the target reader's best comprehension, can perpetuate the domination of majority languages, cultures and translation practices over minority ones. Certainly not to the point of a strict domesticating approach, where extreme domination takes place, but it is still a concern. Through these clarifying strategies, the translator unconsciously tempers and resolves any feature that might eventually present the target-language reader with strangeness in an attempt to embrace otherness. This runs the risk of becoming an unconscious exercise in explaining, making less exotic, or justifying the realities of a minority production so that the majority can understand the subaltern (Spivak 1988). In other words, in an exercise of affirmative action, the Western translator comes to save the cultural and linguistic weirdness of the African expression, which is considered ethnocentric and reductive on the part of Westerners. Moreover, the problem of a strict foreignising strategy (already criticised by Tymoczko 2006: 454, among others)<sup>10</sup> is that it will not result in a translation, but in something else. All the paratextual material added will give rise to what Kwame Appiah (1993: 818) called *thick translation*, and although he views it as a strategy

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<sup>9</sup> Few strategies can be clearly labelled as *alienating* (for example, loan words like *griot* in the TT) or naturalising (such as translating *griot* with analogies like *troubadour*).

<sup>10</sup> See also Kjetil Myskja's (2013) article entitled "Foreignisation and resistance: Lawrence Venuti and his critics".

embracing otherness, we see it as a way to “suit the exotic demands of an international audience” (Bandia 2008). In our view, *thick translation* is highly explicative, justifying and exoticising, somehow perpetuating the weirdness of the alien paradigm. We have to be very careful, since this attitude in translation may present several problems and serious limitations to a deontological praxis of our discipline.

On the other hand, the problem of strict domesticating is that most of the idiosyncrasy of the ST will be lost in translation. Much has been written about the shortcomings of this tendency, so we will not discuss it in depth here. This tendency is not only considered reductionist and Eurocentric as Venuti (2004) and many other scholars argue, but also inadequate for pursuing our translation objectives. TT readers will not be able to approach the text, nor the language and culture from which the text originates; therefore the ST is marginalised and deemed incomprehensible, coming from another world and not approachable by any means by the West.

### 3.2 Toward a Blended Approach

With this in mind, and not being comfortable with applying any of the strategies mentioned *stricto sensu*, we propose a *glocalised* method as a middle option. This approach does not attempt to strictly naturalise or alienate any fragment or text, but rather to negotiate and oscillate between both tendencies in order to provide a successful treatment of both the source and target linguistic and extralinguistic features explained above. It consists in juggling the use of loan words, literal translations, phonetic adaptations, transposition of elements, etc. (considered here as alienating) with *la lettre* (Berman 1985), while also using analogical equivalences, paraphrases, footnotes, syntactic modifications, prefaces and glossaries (considered here as naturalising). The result will aim at conveying to the target readership the ST’s third space, hybridism and linguistic idiosyncrasy, since the general system of syntactic articulation, the cognitive sequencing, the presence of orality, the voices in vernacular languages and other inherent characteristics will find their place in the TL/TC. This approach will allow us to avoid a Eurocentric praxis, a reductionist approach and an excessively exotic treatment, effectively *glocalising* the text: maintaining its local features while making it approachable by a global audience. This will ultimately lead us to “a cultural compromise and a balanced focus on both source and target audience-orientation” (Young 2009), which is more appropriate for the



type of translation we are dealing with than any strict dichotomy or translation choice.

In this sense, we cannot forget that African writers know they are writing in Europhone languages for a mostly Western audience, the one capable (both in economic and literacy terms) of reading their productions wherever they circulate<sup>11</sup>. In this sense, if they consciously do not explain every single concept of their novel, if they do not footnote every single vernacular expression and do not justify every single feeling, should translators do this, and if so, for what purpose? Thus, an ethical dilemma arises: these authors somehow want their public to face that “unknown vernacular”, “incomprehensible syntactic articulation” and “never heard before paradigm” in an exercise of exposing themselves and their inner, crossroad world view. In deontological terms we believe the translation praxis should be as inventive as that of the writer of the ST, and that the underlying *skopos* of the authors should be considered. Thus, tackling these challenges with a blended approach seems to us to be a good place to start. As Bandia (2006: 359) pointed out:

Although the Euro-African text can subvert the dominance of Western colonial discourse over African traditional discourse, its translation into another European language can undo that subversion through the structures of dominance embedded in the language. Hence, the desire to decolonize through translation does not only contend with the colonial desire to dominate, but also with the inherent characteristic of language to signify according to its own signifying structures.

### 3.3 Source Text Analysis: *Riwan ou le chemin de sable* (1999)

Bearing this in mind, here we will illustrate the challenges that the translation of the specific features of Europhone African literary texts analysed above present, and the extent to which the blending trend we propose would be helpful to tackle them. We will show here some extracts from *Riwan ou le chemin de sable* (1999), written by the acclaimed Senegalese female writer Ken Bugul and winner of the *Grand prix littéraire de l'Afrique noire* in 2000. Each extract is compared to its Spanish translation<sup>12</sup> *Riwan o el camino de arena* (2005) carried out by Nuria Viver Barri, and to my translation proposal.

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<sup>11</sup> As we know, these texts circulate much more in Europe or North America than in Africa.

<sup>12</sup> Entitled *Riwan o el camino de arena*, published by Ediciones Zanzibar.

### a. Hybridism

ST: Le serigne fut «gardé», Dianké se réveilla dans la stupeur (1999: 222).

TT: El Seríñe fue guardado, Dianké se despertó sumido en el estupor (2005: 251).

Proposal: Y *guardaron* al Seríñ. La ciudad de Dianké se despertó consternada

Wolof language is manifested in the participle *gardé* (“keep”) which is a literal translation of the Wolof words *denc* or *rob*, euphemisms used to avoid direct references to death. There are numerous Wolofisms in the French spoken in Senegal, used in some ways as a cultural weapon by its speakers. We propose maintaining the image of the Wolofism by marking its translation in italics. Furthermore, instead of *serigne*, which is the French phonetic transcription of the Wolof word *seríñ* (Islamic spiritual leader), we choose to empower the vernacular by correctly scripting it, also because it is closer phonetically to the original than the French transcription. Moreover we will add *ciudad* (“city”) to help the reader understand the Wolof noun Dianké, which refers to the village where the *Seríñ* died.

### b. Orality

ST: Bissimila\*, et chez vous? Comment vont les parents? Bissimila. Ah Sokhna Rama, bissimila. Et la famille? Bissimila. Ainsi de suite, pendant un bon moment (1999: 55–56).

TT: Bissimila, y la familia? ¿Cómo están los padres? Bissimila. ¿Y la familia? Bissimila. Y así sucesivamente, un buen rato (2005: 75–76).

Proposal: *Bissimilah*. ¿Y los tuyos? ¿Qué tal los parientes? *Bissimilah*. ¿Y la familia? *Bissimilah*. Y así, sucesivamente, saludando a la senegalesa durante un rato.

Regarding the Arabic word *bissimilah*, we propose rendering the correct transcription with italics in the TT. The constant repetition of the concept “family” (*chez vous*, *parents* and *famille*) is very illustrative of common African oral greeting formulas (long, repetitive and concerning all the relatives), where the insistence serves to emphasise the interest and respect that is felt towards the interlocutor. This can be transmitted to the TT reader through a paraphrase, which would do justice to the cultural custom and oral path of the fragment, like for example *saludando a la senegalesa* (“greeting in the Senegalese way”).

## c. Writing as translation

ST: Ce n'était pas la fille de la Badiène ou du Nidjiay (1999: 44).

TT: No era hija de la badiène o del nidiay (2005: 64).

Proposal: No era la hija de la tía Bayén ni del tío Niyái.

The Wolof words *bàjjen* and *nijaay* have significant cultural importance, since, in addition to describing close relatives, they designate key figures in the social fabric of the Wolof family. The author writes these words in capital letters and explains them on pages 38 and 43 of the ST. This is due to the crucial importance of the roles of the “paternal aunt” and “maternal uncle”, who are in charge of many important family issues in the Wolof family. We propose keeping them in italics and capitals, but transcribing them according to Spanish phonetic patterns, and preceded by the nouns *aunt* and *uncle*, respectively, to provide a hint to the TT readers.

## d. Cultural Specific Items

ST: Un serigne devait avoir son village, son lieu, son daar, son daara (1999: 101).

TT: Un Seríñe tenía que tener su aldea, su lugar, su daar, su daara (2005: 122).

Proposal: Un seríñ debía tener su aldea, su lugar, su escuela coránica: su *daara*.

The *daara* are Koranic schools that initiate Muslim children into the religion of Allah. The *seríñ* (“spiritual leaders”) usually have a *daara*, in which they teach and indoctrinate their proselytes with the message of the Prophet. This is a very important religious reference that might be completely unnoticed by TT readers if they are not familiar with it. We propose scripting it in Wolof with italics and explaining the concept with a short paraphrase like *su escuela coránica* (“his Koranic school”).

## e. Power relations

ST: Celles qu'on disait allées à l'école des *Autres* (1999: 35).

TT: Que habían ido a la escuela de los *Otros* (2005: 54).

Proposal: Que habían ido a la escuela colonial de *los Otros*.

This fragment makes a clear reference to the coloniser, the *Other*: France as a representative of the West. The author plainly wants to differentiate the Senegalese who were schooled in the French colonial system and all

this entails in terms of power relations, from those Senegalese who were schooled in the African system. In this sense, we think that a good option could be to add the hint “colonial”. Moreover, italicising and capitalising *los Otros* (“the Others”), in order to visually highlight the difference made, allows the reader to perceive the feeling of alienation that French acculturation implied.

f. Western literary canon, publishers and audience.

TO: Je crois que c’est du riz à la sauce pâte d’arachides (1999: 29).

TM: Creo que arroz con salsa de cacahuets (2005: 48).

Proposal: Creo que *maafe*, arroz con salsa de cacahuets.

Here we have a paraphrase instead of the Wolof term *maafe*, which is a dish of rice with peanut sauce, typical and popular in Senegal. The author found herself forced to somehow domesticate her ST<sup>13</sup> (we have never heard a Senegalese say “today we are eating rice with peanut sauce”, but “today we are eating *maafe*”, just as a Spaniard would not say “today we are eating cold tomato soup”, but rather “today we are eating *gazpacho*”). In our proposal we dare to opt for an addition, incorporating into the TT the Wolof word *maafe*, which designates the dish paraphrased by the author.

## 4 Conclusion

Europhone African writing has a very specific and kaleidoscopic nature, both linguistically and extralinguistically, which presents exciting challenges to translation studies. Traditional Western theories and strategies seem to be reductive and not always pertinent for this kind of translation. The *alienating/naturalising* dichotomy presents shortcomings when dealing with these texts for several reasons: classifying strategies as being either domesticating or foreignising is imprecise and only the degree to which these strategies are applied would give us the trend of the *ad hoc* praxis. Furthermore, strictly applying any of them would result in an inadequate TT. A blended approach that provides a balance and negotiation between both strategies is needed in order to produce a successful TT. Continuing to develop more balanced translation

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<sup>13</sup> In different encounters and interviews with Ken Bugul, reference has been made to the different manipulations her texts have suffered on the part of the editors. See: <<http://hdl.handle.net/10553/21688>>

approaches and illustrative works would help to tackle the praxis these texts are subjected to and will help translators find further and more creative possibilities. Thus, the balanced method proposed here, based on *glocalising* the TT, appears to be a reliable treatment and a useful tool for the challenges that the translation of this literature may represent. This balanced approach seeks to be a more comprehensive model that will combine some tenets of traditional Western procedures, mixing *a priori* opposite strategies and different aspects from the interdisciplinary fields of postcolonial and cultural studies. All this aims to avoid Eurocentric praxis, reductionist approaches, excessively domestic or exotic re-expressions and fake representations of the STs we are dealing with. The final objective is to achieve faithful and culturally respectful literary postcolonial TTs.

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UNDERSTANDING TRANSLATOR'S  
AGENCY THROUGH A DOUBLE  
TRANSLATION COMPARISON:  
THE GERMAN AND ENGLISH  
TRANSLATIONS OF ARTURO PÉREZ-  
REVERTE'S *EL MAESTRO DE ESGRIMA*

MARÍA TERESA SÁNCHEZ-NIETO  
UNIVERSIDAD DE VALLADOLID, VALLADOLID

**Abstract**

The aim of this case study is to document two cases of *translator's agency* on the basis of translations of a Spanish novel by Arturo Pérez-Reverte, *El maestro de esgrima* (1988), into German—*Der Fechtmeister* (1996)—and into English—*The Fencing Master* (1999). To that end, we first concentrate on the translation products and describe both translations by means of a double translation comparison. The translation comparison is carried out at three different levels: that of narrative substance, that of narrative characters, and that of narrative lexis (speech-act report verbs and gesture-report verbs). Corpus techniques are used as an aid for the translation comparison. In a second step, the translators as agents are situated at the centre of our attention and we describe their career and extratextual agency. The relations both translators established to other translating agents when working on their translations of *El maestro de esgrima* are, as far as possible, documented via published and self-prompted interviews. Finally, causal mechanisms explaining the differences in the two translation products under study are advanced as hypotheses.

**Keywords:** *translator's agency, translator's visibility, ANT-Theory, nexus model, translator's networks, corpus techniques*

## 1 Theoretical Framework

Searching for explanations for the complex net of relationships encountered between translations and their source texts and trying to relate those differences to the issue of translational behaviour is one of the main goals that has been established by scholars such as Toury and Chesterman for the discipline of Translation Studies (Koskinen 2010: 182).

Translating, as a human practice, involves agency, understood here as the translators' work, activities, roles, and self-perception (Paloposki 2010: 88). Although agency is based on an "individual combination of experience, talent, creativity and initiative" (Paloposki 2009: 191), we nevertheless believe—like Paloposki (2009:190)—that translation "is not separate from any other human action: the role of the social and the role of the individual vary and they are negotiated each time anew in new circumstances".

Agency models in Translation Studies help us gather and interpret data that might have influenced the translators' decision-making process. These models are to a great extent based on Latour's sociological model, labelled *actor-network theory* (ANT), and are not as extended as those rooted in the competing Bourdieusian model.<sup>1</sup> In the following, we draw on Buzelin (2005: 195–197) to describe the ANT model.

The ANT model is "symptomatic of the repatriation of anthropology in Western societies and the development of a poststructuralist thinking that would place greater emphasis both on agency and on the analysis of the dynamics of science and power" (Buzelin 2005: 195). ANT has its roots in two ontological claims: (1) products have a hybrid character, thus, in order to account for this, one should focus rather on the processes behind those products; (2) it is impossible to predict how "artefacts are produced, altered and transformed" (Buzelin 2005: 196), or—for an even stronger reason—how actors behave. The first key concept is that of **Actor-Network**, which encompasses "anything that can induce, whether intentionally or not, an action" (Buzelin 2005: 197), that is, it involves human and non-human actors; that makes actor-networks different from social networks. Further, actor-networks differ from technological networks in that they are not necessarily stable. Actor-networks have to be studied from the inside, "to observe how actors make their decisions and interact while still unsure of the outcome" (Buzelin 2005: 197). The

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<sup>1</sup> Buzelin (2005) provides an excellent account of the differences between both models and of their respective influences on Translation Studies. As for ANT, see Abdallah (2010) and the studies featured in *Meta* 52/4 (2007), guest edited by H. Buzelin and D. Folaron.



second key concept in ANT is what happens to be labelled **Translation**, meaning

the way in which the various actors engaged in production/innovation processes (actors whose primary interests are not necessarily the same) interpret their own objectives into each other's language so as to ensure everyone's proper participation (or the dismissal of some actors if necessary), and the continuation of the project until fulfilment (Buzelin 2005: 197).

Quite importantly, Buzelin (2005: 197) highlights that “**explanations** are no longer found in contextual ‘macro-level’ or structural determinants, but in the network itself, or, more precisely, in its length and structure”.

ANT strives to “‘move beyond deterministic models that trace organisational phenomena back to powerful individuals, social structures, hegemonic discourses or technological effects’ and instead seek out ‘complex patterns of causality rooted in connections between actors’” (Jansen & Wegener 2013: 15 after Whittle & Spicer 2008: 616). However, the limits of this approach have been indicated as well, one of them being the “specific (and almost exclusive) emphasis on description, which risks getting lost in the concrete and generating data that has anecdotal value but little explanatory power” (Jansen & Wegener 2013: 16).

Although our case study is not exclusively designed on the basis of ANT—as we have both gathered data and looked at the translation process *a posteriori*—the following elements of ANT and agency-based models in Translation Studies might prove useful for interpreting our data:

- First, the placement of translating agents at the centre of our attention in what Koskinen (2010) calls the *nexus model*. This model tries “to establish the kind of relations [the translating agent, i.e. the translator *or* any other mediator] enters into and how these relations interact with each other [...] in a network of constantly shifting relations” (*id*, 180).
- Second, the fact that agency-based models allow for psychological and cognitive approaches to interpreting the data (Koskinen 2010: 178, 182).
- Third, the types of agency Paloposki (2009) adapts from Koskinen (2000: 99) as types of visibility: Textual agency is “the translators’ voice in the text, [...] her/his footprints, so to speak, be they deliberate manipulation, stylistic preferences or habits (...) or functionalist-oriented adaptation or anything in between” (Paloposki 2009: 191). Paratextual agency is “the translators’ role

in inserting and adding notes and prefaces” (Paloposki 2009: 191) and is related to Toury’s operational norms—“the translators’ ‘scope’ or decisions [...] concerning [...] the textual make up and verbal formulation” (Paloposki 2009: 206). Finally, extratextual agency concerns “the selection of books to be translated, the use of different editions and intermediary translations” (Paloposki 2009: 191), “comparison and compilation, especially in adapting, reworking and editing classics” (Paloposki 2009: 199), as well as “the role of translators in ‘speaking out’, publicizing their translations, explaining their methods and strategies, and the like”; “the translator’s role may also extend to the whole of the book market (selection and availability of books), and in this way be formative of audience tastes” (Paloposki 2009: 191, referring to Milton 2003). Extratextual agency is related to Toury’s (1995) concept of preliminary norms.

- Finally, the nature of the explanations provided by agency models: in Koskinen’s (2010) *nexus model*, the relations between the different translating agents are interpreted in order to see whether they might turn to causal mechanisms that explain certain text surface traits in our translations, but not necessarily in a linear way. This model allows for several mechanisms (pertaining to different spheres, such as the social, cultural, cognitive, or psychological) acting simultaneously in the same or different directions.

## 2 Methodology

After placing the source text in its context of production, we will retrospectively study the translation products to look for traces of translators’ textual agency and then interpret those in the light of subsequent data on translators’ extratextual agency and the networks they have worked within. This data has been gathered from the translators themselves and from other translating agents involved in each of the translation networks implied, either through (a) published interviews or (b) interviews on request.

Our first dataset is thus the translation products themselves, observed by means of a double translation comparison (ES-DE and ES-EN). A series of phenomena (anchors) were selected to model the problem-solution pairs, (i) located with corpus techniques,<sup>2</sup> and (ii) studied

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<sup>2</sup> Working with the digitalised versions of the novel and its German and English translations (see References for details), we created two alignment files with the

quantitatively and qualitatively with linguistic and stylistic tools. Selected phenomena pertain to different levels: narrative substance, narrative characters, and lexis.

The interviews requested of and conducted with different translating agents (the translators, a lector, and a series manager) constitute our second dataset and provide retrospective data on (a) the translation process and translation practices, (b) networks, and (c) norms and norm conflicts.<sup>3</sup> The conditions of the interviews could not be kept constant due to accessibility constraints concerning the interviewees. Thus, some interviews took place via Skype (Peter Prange), some on the phone (Roman Hocke), some via e-mail (Margaret Jull Costa<sup>4</sup>), and some in a mixture of these forms (Claudia Schmitt: e-mail and Skype).

### 3 The Author and the Novel in the Context of the Spanish Literature of the 1980s and 1990s

Arturo Pérez-Reverte is a very prolific bestselling Spanish author, born in the Mediterranean town of Cartagena in 1951. He worked for more than 20 years as a journalist and war correspondent for the Spanish broadcast company Radiotelevisión Española, a job he gave up in 1990 in order to devote himself completely to writing as a freelance author.

Pérez-Reverte sees himself as a writer of popular fiction who supplies his readers “with quality narrative that refers to their own cultural environment and to their memory” (Pérez-Reverte 2000: 364–65, my translation). His concept of the novel genre is a traditional one:

Establishing a narrative problem based on action, on thought, or on a combination of both of them, and solving the problem with the aid of the most effective tools (plot, characters, style, structure) the author is able to use in his work (Pérez-Reverte 2000: 362, my translation).

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ES-DE and ES-EN translations, respectively, with Farka's freeware *LF aligner* (output: xlsx), manually revised them, and created copies of them for annotation and further qualitative analysis.

<sup>3</sup> Our study differs with respect to other retrospective studies such as Paloposki's (2009) in that (a) our translators are still alive, and (b) we do not resort to archival correspondence, but to declarations by the translators themselves. Focusing on living translators, our study differs from others such as Abdallah's (2010) in that we do not observe translators' work directly.

<sup>4</sup> In the case of Margaret Jull Costa, an important number of interviews by other interviewers were readily accessible online (see Sections 5 and 6). We proceeded by accessing the interviews, reading and assessing them for our purposes, and then designing our interview with the questions that remained unanswered.

He defends the ludic purpose of literature, and often positions himself openly against the “tormented romantic narrator”, as well as against “modern writers that serve stifling moral or political responsibilities” (Sanz Villanueva 2003: 17, my translation).

Arturo Pérez-Reverte publically acknowledges his wish to sell as many books as possible—in his view, an ambition any serious writer should have (Sanz Villanueva 2003: 17). He regards the bestseller as equivalent to popular entertainment or the adventure novel, rooted both in the European popular novel of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the language of the cinema. For him, the bestseller is an absolutely legitimate genre, as long as the product is well executed (Pérez-Reverte 2000: 362).

Pérez-Reverte began publishing in the late 1980s. The historic novel in Spain was then experiencing a golden age thanks to the stimulus provided by the Spanish translation of Eco’s *The Name of the Rose* and the new edition of Cortazar’s Spanish version of Yourcenar’s *Mémoires d’Hadrien* (Belmonte Serrano 2002: 57). Many historical novels of the late 1980s and 1990s in Spain also evinced traces of the detective genre. Moreover, the novelists applied history to interpret the reality surrounding them (Belmonte Serrano 2002: 49, 56). Both characteristics apply to Pérez-Reverte’s second novel, *El maestro de esgrima*. He understands the historical novel not as a means of evading our current circumstances, but rather—in the Renaissance and Galdosian sense—as *magister vitae*, i.e., as a genre where the issues tackled become universal as a result of their temporal distance (Sanz Villanueva 2003: 19).

## 4 Description

### 4.1 Narrative Substance: Added and Omitted Segments in the Translations

While manually revising the ST-TT bitext of the translation files (s. Doval et al., 2019, for details on the alignment rationale), we placed *non-translated segment* tags (*n\_t\_s*) in the respective cells of the ST (left-hand) column for any non-translated segment of the ST. Similarly, if any added segment was found in the TT, *added segment in translation* tags (*a\_s\_t*) were placed in the corresponding cells of the ST (right hand) column. This procedure enabled us to then count the omitted and added segments in both translations.

Comparing the results quantitatively, we observed a total of 146 segments which had no counterparts in the German translation, whereas only 14 segments were missing in the English translation. Similarly, we

found 25 segments added in the German TT with no counterpart in the Spanish ST, whereas no added segment could be found in the English ST.

Of all the ST segments without translations in the German TT, 67.7% of the ST segments without German counterparts were sentence-long or longer—38.5% were periods consisting of main and subordinate clause(s) and 29.2% main clauses—, whereas 13% non-translated ST segments corresponded to subordinate clauses and 13.7% to phrases, the remaining 5.5% corresponding to other syntactic categories. In the case of the added segments in the German translation, 80% were sentence-long or longer, 4% subordinate clauses and 12% phrases (others: 4%).

As for the English translation, 84.6% of the ST segments missing a translation were sentence-long or longer—23.1% comprised main plus subordinate clause(s), 61.5% main clauses—whereas only 15.4% were phrases.

This first analysis suggests a German translator with a high degree of textual agency, in any case much higher than the textual agency of the English translator. A content analysis of the missing and added segments in the respective TTs (s. Table 1) points to certain patterns of added vs. omitted segments in the translations.

	N_T_S in <i>Der Fechtmeister</i>		A_S_T in <i>Der Fechtmeister</i>		N_T_S in <i>The Fencing Master</i>	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
characters' personality traces	26.1%	42	4%	1	0%	0
characters' feelings	19.3%	31	0%	0	28.5%	4
characters' thoughts	19.3%	31	28%	7	21.4%	3
details of a character's action	11.2%	18	12%	3	14.3%	2
action's physical surroundings	8.1%	13	4%	1	7.2%	1
dialogue turns	6.8%	11	4%	1	14.3%	2
historical events	6.8%	11	48%	12	0%	0
flashbacks	2,5%	4	0%	0	0%	0
other	0%	0	0%	0	14.3%	2

**Table 1. Content analysis of the missing and added segments in the respective TTs**

The first three categories (all of them referring to the characters' inner world) account for the largest number of non-translated segments in both translations. This is not very surprising, given that Pérez-Reverte's novel can be understood as a character's novel. The narrative sequence's underlying tension results from the evolution of Astarloa's personality. He progressively becomes aware of the moral values surrounding him (money, power), and they threaten to overwhelm his personal values (virtue, honour). Nevertheless, the number of non-translated segments in the German translation are eye-catching. Added segments providing more details about a character's action might point to a German translator prone to a higher textual agency by means of a more explicit explanation. Finally—and again in the case of the German translation—although the numbers in the category “historical events” are not as high as the previous ones, the (im)balance between non-translated ST and added TT segments is remarkable. This data again suggests the German translator had a high degree of textual agency and followed a clear strategy. This was not the case for the English translator. Examples (1a) to (1e) pertain to the first chapter and its German and English translations; examples (1a) and (1b) appear consecutively, as well as (1c)–(1e).

- (1a) ES Su cese [*el del marqués de Los Alumbres*], a los tres meses de ocupar el cargo, coincidió con el fallecimiento del titular de la cartera, su tío materno Vallespín Andreu. <br> **a\_s\_t**  
 DE Allerdings war drei Monate später der Minister – sein Onkel Vallespín Andreu – gestorben, <br> **ebenso plötzlich wie der verhaßte General Narváez.**  
 EN His dismissal, after three months in the post, coincided with the death of the minister, his maternal uncle Vallespín Andreu.
- (1b) ES **a\_s\_t**  
 DE Königin Isabella hatte über Nacht die zuverlässigsten Stützen ihres Regimes verloren. Statt nun nachzugeben und das allgemeine Wahlrecht zuzulassen, Pressefreiheit und einen Haufen anderer Dinge, nach denen das Volk verlangte, hatte sie González Bravo als starken Mann eingesetzt, denn bei der allgemeinen Unzufriedenheit befürchtete die Königin eine Verschwörung der Generäle am Hofe. Umsturzversuche hatte es bereits gegeben; General Juan Prim hatte sie angezettelt und saß deswegen in London im Exil. Andere Verschwörer saßen in Frankreich, in Afrika

oder in Festungshaft, und sie alle warteten darauf, die Königin und ihre Leute zum Teufel zu jagen – nein, als sein Onkel starb, war es Luis de Ayala zu heiß geworden in der Regierung.

EN 0  
[...]

(1c) ES En las tertulias, todas las conversaciones giraban en torno al calor y a la política:

DE An den Stammtischen sprach man ausschließlich über's Wetter und über die Politik.

EN When people met, they spoke only of the heat or of politics.

(1d) ES se hablaba de la elevada temperatura a modo de introducción y se entraba en materia enumerando una tras otra las conspiraciones en curso, buena parte de las cuales solía ser del dominio público. Todo el mundo conspiraba en aquel verano de 1868. El viejo Narváez había muerto en marzo, y González Bravo se creía lo bastante fuerte como para gobernar con mano dura. En el palacio de Oriente, la reina dirigía ardientes miradas a los jóvenes oficiales de su guardia y rezaba con fervor el rosario, preparando ya su próximo veraneo en el Norte. Otros no tenían más remedio que veranear en el exilio; la mayor parte de los personajes de relieve como Prim, Serrano, Sagasta o Ruiz Zorrilla, se hallaban en el destierro, confinados o bajo discreta vigilancia, mientras dedicaban sus esfuerzos al gran movimiento clandestino denominado La España con honra.

DE n\_t\_s

EN They would begin by talking about the unusually high temperatures and then begin enumerating, one by one, the current conspiracies, many of which were public knowledge. In that summer of 1868, everyone was plotting. Old Narváez had died in March, but González Bravo believed himself strong enough to govern with a firm hand. In the Palacio de Oriente, the queen cast ardent glances at the young officers in her guard and fervently said the rosary, already preparing for her next summer holiday in the north. Others had no option but to spend their summer away; most of the really important figures, like Prim, Serrano, Sagasta, and Ruiz Zorrilla were in exile abroad, either confined or under

discreet surveillance, while they put all their efforts into the great clandestine movement known as Spain with Honor.

- (1e) ES Todos coincidían en afirmar que Isabel II tenía los días contados<br>a\_s\_t<br>, y mientras el sector más templado especulaba con la abdicación de la reina en su hijo Alfonso, los radicales acariciaban sin rebozo el sueño republicano.
- DE Die Tage Isabellas II. waren gezählt, da waren sich alle einig, <br>aber wie würde es Prim anstellen zurückzukehren? Wer wäre mit von der Partie, und auf wessen Seite würden sich die Aufständischen schließlich schlagen?<br> Während das gemäßigte Lager auf eine Abdankung der Königin zugunsten ihres Sohnes Alfons spekulierte, liebäugelten die Radikalen unverhohlen mit der Republik.
- EN They all agreed that Isabel II's days were numbered, and, while the more moderate sector speculated about the queen's abdicating in favor of her son, Alfonso, the radicals openly nurtured the republican dream.

## 4.2 Narrative Characters: Modelling the Focalisation

In *El maestro de esgrima*, Pérez-Reverte employs a character novel, revolving about the evolution of the main character—Jaime Astarloa, the old fencing master—as a consequence of the events he is involved in, events that make up the story. The narrated story takes the form of a subsequent narration, performed by a heterodiegetic narrator (as he is not present in the story he tells). The point of view adopted by the narrator is that of zero focalisation, resorting to a narrator-focaliser who has access to Jaime Astarloa's memories, which he then presents to the reader in great detail in the course of the narration. All these aspects can be traced in the first sentence of the first chapter:

Mucho más tarde, cuando Jaime Astarloa quiso reunir los fragmentos dispersos de la tragedia e intentó recordar cómo había empezado todo, la primera imagen que le vino a la memoria fue la del marqués (*EMDE*, chapter 1) [Much later, when Jaime Astarloa wanted to piece together the scattered fragments of the tragedy and tried to remember how it all began, the first image that came to his mind was of the marquis (...) (*TFM*, chapter 1)].



But a critical eye soon makes out that the narrator-focaliser cannot indeed fully account for a zero focalisation, as there are some characters' thoughts that the narrator recognises he does not to have full access to. This becomes evident in the use of the verb *parecer* ("seem") in the following example (our cursive):

- (2a) ES La proximidad de la joven, su aplomo que casi rozaba el descaro, aquella vitalidad *que parecía desprenderse de su atractiva figura*, producían en él una turbación extraña (EMDE, chapter 3).

The use of the verb *parecer* ("seem") in its past forms *parecía(n)/pareció/perecieron* ("seemed") and other related lexical elements to signal an "imperfect" zero focalisation—especially the conjunctive phrase *como si* ("as if")—appear to be a stylistic trace of Pérez-Reverte in this novel, as the quick contrasts summarised in Table 2 show:

Taking a look at the equivalent TT segments in the German and the English translations, slight differences can be appreciated.

- (2b) DE Die Nähe der jungen Frau, ihr fast schon unverschämtes Selbstbewußtsein, die Vitalität, *die von ihrem attraktiven Körper ausging*, all das rief eine seltsame Verwirrung in ihm hervor.
- EN The nearness of the young woman, her utter self-assurance that bordered almost on impudence, the vitality *she seemed to exude*, produced in him a strange confusion.

	Pérez-Reverte's <i>El maestro de esgrima</i>	Mendoza's <i>El enredo de la bolsa y la vida</i>	Vázquez- Montalbán's <i>Tatuaje</i>
<i>como si</i>	1.38	0.44	0.04
<i>parecía</i>	0.89	0.35	0.91
<i>pareció</i>	0.42	0.14	0.30

**Table 2. Normalised frequencies (instances p. 1000 words) of verb *parecer* and *como si* in *El maestro...* and two detective novels by contemporary Spanish authors**

The systemic-functional Appraisal Theory (Martin & White 2005) gives a Bakhtinian account of texts as instances of heteroglossia and dialogism. In texts, language users “negotiate meanings with actual and potential audiences” (White 2001: 16), “directly address[ing] or at least implicitly acknowledg[ing] a certain array of more or less convergent and divergent socio-semiotic realities” (White 2001: 17). The devices under study receive the following explanation in the theory:

meanings such as ‘I think ...’, ‘probably’, ‘It seems...’, ‘Apparently ...’ etc. are not construed as evasions of truth values but rather as resources by which the speaker ‘opens up’ their potential for interacting with the heteroglossic diversity.” [...] [A]ppearance’, serves a similar rhetorical function to probabilise. It ‘opens up’ the potential for negotiating the heteroglossic diversity by reference not to probability but by foregrounding and making explicit the evidential process upon which all propositions rely (White 2001: 24).

Examples 2 (a,b) might point to the conclusion that the German translator produced a less heteroglossic narrator than the Spanish and English ones. Aligning the Spanish ST to its German and English translations to build a parallel trilingual corpus allows for a detailed analysis of this aspect, with the results summarised in Table 3. The renderings of *parecer* (“seem”) and *como si* (“as if”) are far more monoglossic in the German than in the English translation. The German translator has recreated a narrator-focaliser which performs the zero focalisation in a more perfect way than the narrator in the Spanish ST does, as he has more extensive access to the characters’ thoughts and intentions. As a consequence of this higher level of monoglossia, in the German translation the narrator assumes an ideological function less frequently, as he does not *comment* on his perceptions of the characters’ thoughts as often as the Spanish narrator does, but presents them more often as facts, creating a more distanced narrative mood. Once more, the textual agency of the German translator is much more evident than that of the English translator.

<b>Der Fechtmeister (DE)</b>		<b>The Fencing Master (EN)</b>	
heteroglossic renderings of <i>como si</i>	71 out of 97 (73.2%)	heteroglossic renderings of <i>como si (as if)</i>	92 out of 97 (94.8%)
heteroglossic renderings of <i>parecer</i> <sup>5</sup>	38 out of 93 (40.9%)	heteroglossic renderings of <i>parecer</i> <sup>6</sup>	81 out of 93 (87.1%)
monoglossic renderings of <i>como si</i> <sup>7</sup>	32 out of 97 (33%)	monoglossic renderings of <i>como si</i>	5 out of 97 (5.2%)
monoglossic renderings of <i>parecer</i>	31 out of 93 (33.3%)	monoglossic renderings of <i>parecer</i>	12 out of 93 (12.9%)

**Table 3. Monoglossic renderings of *parecer* and *como si* in the DE and EN translations**

### 4.3 Translation Techniques in Speech-Act Report and Gesture Report Verbs

Speech-act report verbs have been studied in corpus-based literary studies in translation criticism work—see Ruano (2015)—and in corpus-based stylistics—see Winters (2007). We study these verbs for the purpose of finding additional “footprints” of translator’s textual agency (see Section 1). To this end, the concept of translation techniques—also known as *translation strategies* or *shifts*—seems useful. Hurtado (2001: 249) defines *translation techniques* as the verbal procedures employed by translators to achieve translation equivalence; translation techniques are, thus, directly observable in the translation product.

Speech-act report verbs (SARV) appear in reported direct speech acts, which Winters (2007: 414) defines as consisting “of a reported clause, which appears in inverted commas, and a reporting clause”.

<sup>5</sup> *Als/als ob + Konjunktiv I/II, scheinen, jd. sieht etwas an jdm., jd. erinnert an etw., etw. deutet darauf hin, dass, jd. zeigt sich irgendwie (adj.), jd. wirkt irgendwie (adj.), jd. macht einen [bestimmten] Eindruck, jd. klingt irgendwie (adj.), offenbar, müssen + Infinitiv Perfekt.*

<sup>6</sup> *As if, seemed to/seemed, evident in, appeared + adj. / looked + adj., a kind of + noun, perhaps, must + past infinitive.*

<sup>7</sup> Both in the case of *como si* and *parecer*: non-translated segments, *Indikativ, nominalisations.*

As the novel does not contain much dialogue, and in order to gather more data for this aspect of our translation comparison, we decided to add to our study what we have labelled “gesture report verbs” (GRV). These pertain to what Austin (1962: 76) calls *accompaniments of the utterance*, i.e., one among several more primitive devices “used with greater or less success to perform the same function” as explicit performative verbs (1962: 73).

We may accompany the utterance of the words by gestures (winks, pointings, shruggings, frowns, etc.) or by ceremonial non-verbal actions. These may sometimes serve without the utterance of any words, and their importance is very obvious (1962: 76).

The verbs in the Spanish text were identified with the help of Anthony’s (2014) *AntConc*.<sup>8</sup> A total of 163 instances of 55 different SARV and GRV verbs or verb phrases with the main characters as the subject were singled out. In a second step, the equivalent expressions of these verbs were searched for in both the ES-DE and ES-EN aligned corpora using Anthony’s (2017) *AntPConc* and the techniques used in each translation were identified. In the German translation, in 56 instances the translator had additionally intervened, that is, they used a technique other than the *coined equivalent*. As expected, the English translator only intervened 17 times, generally with techniques that “neutralised” the translation—elisions (29.4%), generalisations (23.5%), simplifications (23.5%)—whereas the German translator performed amplifications (16%), modulations (33.9%), simplifications (26.6%), and generalisations (26.6%).

- (3) ES    parpadeó el maestro de esgrima [EMDE, chapter 5]. / El anciano parpadeó [EMDE, chapter 7].  
 DE    Der Fechtmeister blinzelte **verlegen**/[...] blinzelte **betreten**. (amplifications)  
 EN    Don Jaime blinked. / Don Jaime blinked.

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<sup>8</sup> To locate both SARV and GRV we (1) tagged the Spanish texts with *AntTag* (Anthony, 2015) and (2) searched in *AntConc* (2014) for the tag *\_VLFIN* in different intervals to the right and left of the characters’ names (*Jaime Astarloa* and co-references *el maestro, don Jaime*, etc.; *Adela Otero* and co-references *ella, la joven*). To recall those cases where the SARV or GRV are used without an explicit subject (i.e., between dashes or followed by a period or semicolon), the search string *\_DASH \*\_VLFIN .FS|\_DASH \*\_VLFIN ,\_\*|\_DASH \*\_VLFIN ;\_\*|\_DASH \*\_VLFIN—\** was used.

- (4) ES [...]el maestro de esgrima [...] estuvo a punto de expresar su desconcierto en voz alta [EMDE, chapter 8].  
DE Der Fechtmeister [...] war drauf und dran zu **verneinen**. (modulation)  
EN He [...] was about to express his confusion out loud.
- (5) ES —Mi querida señora —dijo serenamente, con una helada cortesía—. [EMDE, ch. 2].  
DE »Verehrte Dame«, sagte er [**n\_t\_s**] in eisigem Ton, [...] (elision)  
EN “My dear lady,” he said [**n\_t\_s**], icily polite. (elision)

## 5 Translators' Profiles and Extratextual Agency

To provide a background against which the descriptive data above can be interpreted, we will take a look at the translators' careers, their translation production, their statements about literary translation, and their relationships to other translating agents in translation networks in general, and specifically when translating *El maestro de esgrima*.

After spending almost every summer of her childhood in Spain with her parents and obtaining her high school certificate (*Abitur*) in Stuttgart, Claudia Schmitt studied German, Spanish, and Italian for the teaching profession at the University of Tübingen. Once she completed her first state examination, she moved to Italy, where she had personal contacts. She was well acquainted with Ulrich Mihr, who provided translation, typesetting, lecturing and proofreading services to German publishing houses, and to Peter Prange,<sup>9</sup> who worked closely with Roman Hocke, at that time first lector and publisher of the Weitbrecht Edition, later Weitbrecht Verlag, for the editor Hansjörg Weitbrecht (owner of the Thienemann group). Thanks to those contacts, she began to translate from Italian in 1991 as a way of earning a living (Schmitt, p.c.<sup>10</sup>). She combined her first translations (mainly light fiction by Sveva Casati Modignani) with her teaching activity at the University of Naples. She also translated Hebrew folklore (Elena Lowenthal), historic novels (the trilogy *Alexandrós* by Valerio Massimo Manfredi), biographies (Emina Cevro-Vukovic), autobiographical writings (Helga Schmitt) and crime novels

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<sup>9</sup> Peter Prange would himself become a bestselling author in 1999 with the family novel *Das Bernstein-Amulett*.

<sup>10</sup> All of Claudia Schmitt's, Roman Hocke's, Peter Prange's and Margaret Jull Costa's personal communications (“p.c.”) are taken from my interviews with them.

(Gianrico Carofiglio). As for Spanish, she translated three novels by Pérez-Reverte, beginning in 1995 with *El club Dumas* (which was met with a very positive review in the Spanish teachers' journal *Ecos*), followed by *El maestro de esgrima* in 1996 and *La piel del tambor* in 1999. She stopped translating in 2007 to devote herself completely to teaching.

Margaret Jull Costa spent some summers in Spain after leaving school at 18 and went to university only when she was 23, taking a degree in Spanish and Portuguese. The latter she learned ab initio at university (Doll 2009). Her first experience of translation took place during a Spanish preparation course for entering university, and it was “love at first sight” (Doll 2009) while translating a passage of *Nada* by Carmen Laforet. She remembers feeling “immense pleasure in the process of turning [Laforet’s] Spanish words into [her] English words” (Gordon 2011). This perception was reinforced during her courses at university. One of her teachers, Phillip Polak, “encouraged me to think of becoming a professional translator” (Doll 2009).

I didn't start translating professionally until 1984, when Bill Buford, then editor of GRANTA, asked me to translate a short piece by Gabriel García Márquez. I subsequently did various other short pieces for GRANTA, and Bill gave me various publishing contacts, none of which bore fruit initially, until, in 1987, Andrew Motion (who was working at Chatto & Windus at the time) wrote to ask if I would do a sample translation of EL HÉROE DE LAS MANSARDAS DE MANSARD (translated as THE HERO OF THE BIG HOUSE) by Álvaro Pombo. He liked my sample, I translated the novel and haven't stopped translating since (Gordon 2011).

According to the catalogue of the British Library (as of August 2016), Margaret Jull Costa has translated almost 40 works by Spanish and Latin American authors (Bernardo Atxaga, Alberto Barrera, Jesús Carrasco, Rafael Chirbes, Medardo Fraile, Vlady Kocioncich, Julio Llamazares, Javier Marías, Arturo Pérez-Reverte, Álvaro Pombo, Juan José Saer, Antonio Tabucchi, Luisa Valenzuela, Ramón del Valle-Inclán, and Álgela Vallvey), and 40 works by Portuguese and Brazilian authors (Sophia Andresen, A. Lobo Antunes, Luís Cardoso, Paulo Coelho, Teolinda Gersão, Lúcia Jorge, Michel Laub Diogo Mainardi, Fernando Pessoa, Eça de Queirós, Mário de Sá-Carneiro, José Saramago, and Luís Fernando Veríssimo).

Margaret Jull Costa has been awarded several prizes for her translations: the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award in 1997 for her translation of Marías' *A Heart so White*, three Oxford-Weidenfeld Translation Prizes (in 2011 for Saramago's *The Elephant's Journey*, in

2008 for Eça de Queirós's *The Maias* and in 2000 for Saramago's *All the Names*), the PEN/Book-of-the-Month Club Translation Prize (for *The Maias*), and the 2017 Best Translated Book Award (for Lúcio Cardoso's *Chronicle of the Murdered House*, translated with Robin Patterson). Furthermore, "in 2013 she was appointed a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature; and in 2014 she was awarded an OBE for her services to literature" (University of Leeds, 2015) and she has received an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from the University of Leeds. Gabriela Saldanha has taken M. J. Costa's translating style as an object of study (for example, in Saldanha 2011).

The extratextual agency of Margaret Jull Costa (see definition in Section 1) is noteworthy. She actively collaborates with the publishing industry, e.g. as a panellist for ICEX writing reviews about Spanish new fiction books to be introduced to UK publishers (see ICEX Londres 2013), or directly bringing it to the attention of a publisher, as was the case with the first of the Shola's books by Bernardo Atxaga (Hahn 2015). The publisher Christopher MacLehose acknowledged that he owed to her, and other translators at The Harvill Press, "the impetus to have acquired some of their best authors" (MacLehose 2005: 110–11). Moreover, M. J. Costa has publicly launched some of her translations (School of Modern Languages 2014) and mentored new translators—like Robin Patterson—through a British Centre for Literary Translation programme (The Millions 2017). Further proof of her considerable extratextual agency can be found in her work as an editor for several anthologies and readers. She is now capable of selecting the books she wants to translate:

A publisher will write to me and ask if I would be interested in translating a certain book. Now, that is, that I'm 'illustrious'! Initially, they wouldn't write to me at all. Ideally, I try only to translate writers that I like, whose work I admire, although it doesn't always work out like that (Gordon 2011).

Undoubtedly, those instances of extratextual agency that render a translator most visible as such (i.e. as a translator) are their public statements about his/her views on translating and the process of translation. M. J. Costa has openly "spoken out" about literary translation and the publishing landscape in the Anglo-Saxon countries (e.g. in Doll 2009; Dunne 2009; Esposito 2010; Gordon 2011; Hahn 2015; ICEX Londres 2013; Sanches and Berkobien 2013; The Millions 2017). For her, a good translation is "a truly bilingual text, one that combines the writer's and the translator's voice" (Doll 2009). She is attracted to writers "who have a superb grasp of their own language" because she "can trust

absolutely that they know what they're doing" (Sanches and Berkobien 2013). This relationship of trust, besides the flexibility of English as a language, explains her approach to authors who make use of long, sprawling sentences, like Javier Marías oder José Saramago:

I very rarely, if ever, break them up into shorter sentences, that would be a complete betrayal of his style. I keep pretty much to the same word order and, insofar as it's possible, given the differences in the two languages, the same cadence too. I translate the books one sentence at a time and go back over that sentence again and again until it makes syntactic sense and has the right, convincing rhythm, then I move on to the next one (Esposito 2010).

Remarking that "foreignisation" and "domestication" are not her own terms, she thinks that domesticating and explaining are "the translator's cardinal sin", admitting though, that "a translator inevitably moves back and forth" between both approaches, and that the translator's own imagination and language and his/her experiences are "the conduit" [...] any translated text has to pass through (Gordon 2011).

## **6 Translators' Networks: Rendering Pérez-Reverte's *El Maestro de Esgrima* into German and English**

*La tabla de flandes* (1990), Pérez-Reverte's third novel and first bestseller in Spain, was his first to be translated into English (*The Flanders Panel*, 1993) and into German (*Das Geheimnis der Schwarzen Dame*, Rowohlt, 1994). The attention of publishing houses was then drawn to those works with high sales in Spain in the years after 1993, i.e. *La piel del tambor* (1995), which appeared the same year in its English translation (*The Seville Communion*, The Harvill Press) and *El club Dumas* (1993), translated in 1995 into German as *Der Club Dumas* (Edition Weitbrecht), and in 1996 into English (*The Dumas Club*). Pérez-Reverte's second novel, *El maestro de esgrima* (1988), would not appear in Germany until 1996, and in the UK until 1999, probably as a result of the editors looking for "other", "secondary" products of well-selling authors.

In the UK, all of the English translations mentioned appeared in The Harvill Press, then under the lead of the editors Christopher MacLehose (since 1984) and Guido Waldman. The Harvill Press specialised in literature in translation, with more than 300 titles translated in the 20 years



MacLehose was publisher there.<sup>11</sup> He sees translation houses as “builders of bridges” between cultures (MacLehose 2005: 103).

As MacLehose explains in Wroe (2012), crime fiction was the petrol that kept The Harvill Press going, allowing other authors with less general interest to also be translated into English. *The Fencing Master*, thus, fit quite well into its programme.

The Edition Weitbrecht (later Weitbrecht Verlag) was a subsidiary company of the Thienemann-Verlag, founded by Hansjörg Weitbrecht in 1981. This small publishing house focused on fiction and specialised books. Roman Hocke, who would work for Weitbrecht for 17 years, first as a reader and then as a publisher (up until 1999, shortly before it was sold to the Sweden Bornier group and integrated into the Piper group as *Imprint Piper Fantasy*), made quite a success out of *Die Bibliothek von Babel*, a series including Borges' favourite literary works, introduced with a foreword by Borges himself. Weitbrecht had a very defined programme specialising in fantastic literature in a broad sense, meaning:

[...] nämlich alles, was eben nicht ausdrücklich realistisch ist, Werke also, die unsere Realitätswahrnehmung zusätzlich verformt und etwas Besonderes zum Ausdruck gebracht haben [anything that was not specifically realistic, i.e., works which contributed to our perception of reality and expressed something special] (Hocke, p.c., my translation).

In Hocke's own words, Pérez-Reverte's works of that time represented “eine tolle spielerische Art [...], mit Phantasie umzugehen [a great, playful way of dealing with fantasy]” (Hocke, p.c., my translation).

Claudia Schmitt, living at that time in Spain, was made aware of Pérez-Reverte by her husband, who had read *La tabla de flandes*; its translation rights, however, had already been sold to Rowohlt. When *El club Dumas* was published in 1993, she suggested it to Hocke as something that would fit quite well into Weitbrecht's programme (Schmitt, p.c.). Hocke managed to acquire the translation rights for Weitbrecht from Pérez-Reverte's agent, making the case for Weitbrecht as an “exclusive boutique” that invested in hard covers rather than paperbacks and represented a higher exploitation level. The translation was commissioned to Claudia Schmitt (Schmitt, p.c.).

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<sup>11</sup> Two years after the Random House Group purchased all the shares in The Harvill Press Ltd., Christopher MacLehose founded the MacLehose Press, which “translated books from 19 languages in its first five years” (Wroe 2012). MacLehose (2005) is an invaluable testimony documenting his view on translating and translators.

In her early translations, Schmitt used to work in a team. She would be in charge of the main performance of translation, with somebody at her side, usually an author, in charge of the stylistic polishing (Hocke and Schmitt, p.c.s.). In the case of *Der Club Dumas*, she worked with the German author Irina Liebmann, a friend of hers whose poetic style she admired, because it “left aside anything unessential” (Schmitt, p.c.). Together, and with the blessing of Pérez-Reverte, they accomplished some reorganisations of the narrative substance while rendering *El club Dumas* into German (particularly in the first chapters), in order to produce a text “that would be more attractive to the German reader”. Pérez-Reverte was grateful and stated that he hoped Claudia Schmitt would continue to be the translator of his works into German (Schmitt, p.c.). Peter Prange, who would become a well-known author some years later with *Das Berstein-Amulett*, was entrusted by Hocke with the organisational details of the translation of *El maestro de esgrima*. Besides commissioning a translator—Claudia Schmitt—the task involved editing the translation. Once more, a close relationship linked the translator and editor, this time tracing back to their student days at the Institute of Romance Languages in Tübingen. Prange himself was bringing in his previous experience in similar networks first tested at the Thienemann-Verlag during the last days of his studies: after filling in for Ulrich Mihr for a translation commission—Mihr was still a translator for the Thienemann-Verlag at that time—Prange had translated 5 to 6 children’s and young readers’ books, with Ulrich Mihr as editor at his side (Prange, p.c.).

Quite interestingly, both Schmitt and Prange pointed out in their interviews that one of the guiding principles of the Weitbrecht Verlag under Roman Hocke’s leadership was *deleitare et docere*. Accordingly, perhaps, Prange’s main aim when revising the German version of *El maestro de esgrima* was to deliver a “gut lesbares Produkt auf Deutsch” [a product that would read well in German] (Prange, p.c., my translation). Prange’s and Schmitt’s understanding of readability most probably encompassed helping the readers over those spots in the text referring to historical and political *realia* which, in spite of their good educational level, they could not be assumed to be acquainted with. Prange sees the translator as a “representative of the readers’ interests”, and further affirms that “if you (as a translator), have difficulties in understanding specific passages of the original text, you can assume your readers will have such difficulties too” (Prange, p.c., my translation). Schmitt also points out that they wanted to create a product that could be read “without specific knowledge of the details of late 19<sup>th</sup> century historical Spanish politics” (Schmitt, p.c., my translation).

Claudia Schmitt had a personal connection with Pérez-Reverte. She faxed with him and even paid him visits whenever she was in Madrid at that time, and they met once in Italy too.

Margaret Jull Costa also established a professional relationship to Pérez-Reverte: "I was very briefly in touch with P[érez]-R[everte] regarding *The Fencing Master*, and he was very helpful, but I have not been in touch since" (Costa, p.c.). This contact appears to very much concur with the expectations of the publishers at The Harvill Press: "[I]t seems to me certainly desirable that a translator open a line to the author, and keep it always open. [...] I don't remember a single case in which the time taken to establish communication with an author was time wasted" (MacLehose 2005: 105). Nevertheless, M. J. Costa is one of so far six translators of Pérez-Reverte's novels. She translated Pérez-Reverte in 1994 (*The Flanders Panel*), 1999 (*The Fencing Master*), and, more recently, between 2008 and 2010 (*The King's Gold*, *The Man in the Yellow Doublet*, *Pirates of the Levant*).<sup>12</sup> "P-R is very prolific and translators are not always available at the right time", Costa explains (p.c.). Drawing on the former data and on Pérez-Reverte's statement of identification with Schmitt as *his* German translator (see above), we might assume Schmitt's relationship to Pérez-Reverte to have been closer than Costa's back in the period of Pérez-Reverte's first novels.

Faced with the question of the relationship to editors and proofreaders when translating *The Fencing Master*, Margaret Jull Costa could not go too much into details: "I translated the book such a long time ago that I can't really remember". In any case, she sketches the editing phase in her translation work as something usually rather fluent: "[I]n general, my translations are not heavily edited, and editors tend not to suggest changes to the original text" (p.c.s). However, in Gordon (2011) she acknowledges that "[t]he text that needs no further editing remains an as yet unattainable goal, and I'm always grateful to editors and proofreaders who find lurking imperfections". She thoroughly rereads and edits her texts at different phases of the self-editing process, reading them out loud. Her husband is usually the first person to suggest changes (Gordon 2011). Most importantly, there seems to be an alignment between Jull Costa's

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<sup>12</sup> Sonia Soto translated *The Seville Communion* in 1995 and *The Club Dumas* in 1996. Margaret Sayer Peden translated *The Nautical Chart* in 2001 and Andrew Hurley *The Queen of the South* in 2002. Sayer Peden also translated *The Painter of Battles* in 2007. As for the Captain Alariste series, Sayers Peden has translated the first three and M. J. Costa the last three out of the six novels that have been published in the UK so far. Recently, *El tango de la guardia vieja* was translated by Nick Caistor and Lorenza García (*What We Become*, Simon & Schuster UK).

statements about what she aims at when translating—“to produce a text that reads as if it had been written in English, but without misrepresenting or distorting the original”, “[...] to produce something that is a fine text in its own right. It’s the writing process [she] love[s]” (Sanches and Berkobien 2013))—and the publisher’s view at The Harvill Press (particularly MacLehose’s):

Guido Waldman, my colleague at Harvill, and himself a very good translator [...] favoured the school of the exact translation, but my preference remains to seek the best reflection of the text in English rather than to sacrifice a more felicitous rendering in English for the sake of being its mirror (MacLehose 2005: 104).

As for the details of Spanish political intrigues at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which have been mentioned in some reader reviews as the “hardest” part to read in *El Maestro de esgrima*, Schmitt’s and Costa’s approaches obviously differ. On the one hand, the statements in Costa’s interview allow us to infer that she did not work as closely in a team with her editors as Schmitt did. On the other hand, referring to the editors and herself, she states:

I don’t think we considered adapting anything or adding explanations, and certainly not omitting anything! *The Fencing Master* is an historical novel, but I do feel that the plot and the characters are far more important than the historical background (Costa, p.c.).

In the particular case of *El maestro de esgrima*, both Schmitt and Costa relied upon the help of a fencing expert, with whom they corresponded by letter (Costa), faxed, or met personally (Schmitt).

## 7 Concluding Remarks: Hypothesising Causal Mechanisms

The circumstances explained in Section 6 have helped us to map the network of relationships Costa and Schmitt were part of when producing their respective translations of *El Maestro de esgrima*. This knowledge of the circumstances in which the translators found themselves, alongside our observations of the agency of each translator (Section 5), permits us to advance some hypotheses about the causal mechanisms behind the differences identified using the descriptive data provided in Section 4.

Some facts favour the hypothesis that Margaret Jull Costa uses a more literal translation method: here, her own ideas on translation and, more specifically, the idea of “trusting the author” (see Section 5) stand out. We

have to bear in mind that, in 1998, she was already a well-established, award-winning translator, thus perhaps already able to decide whether to accept or reject those authors she “trusted” (or didn’t). Secondly, the fact that Jull Costa worked quite independently during the editing phase suggests that it would have been easier for her to create an output fitting with her own views of translating and translation. Thirdly, it is not easy to determine what effect the fact that one of the editors at The Harvill Press favoured “the school of the exact translation” could have had on Jull Costa’s production, but we can still assume that such open assertions point at least to lively discussions between translators and their editors and that translators’ work was openly reflected upon at the publishing house.

Other facts might have influenced Claudia Schmitt to explore the possibilities of an interpretative-communicative method. On the one hand, her socialisation pattern as a translator—see Monzó (2002) for this concept—included a role distribution that favoured discussions and exchanges between both translating agents (translator and editor). On the other hand, Weitbrechts’s guiding principle of *deleitare and docere* was shared by both agents and the publisher. The historical novel, a genre thriving in the 1980s and 1990s after the impulse provided by Eco’s *Il nome della rosa*, provided an ideal foundation for implementing such an approach. In addition to this, Schmitt’s previous experiences with Irina Liebmann at her side and her outspoken admiration for her essentialist style might have led her to make decisions that resulted in the non-translated segments under the sentence level accounted for in 4.1 and Table 1.

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