

## TRANSLATION AND PUBLISHING IN TRANSLATION STUDIES: AN OLD PARTNERSHIP REVISITED

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**ABSTRACT:** Since the emergence of an international book market in the mid-nineteenth century, publishers have acted as gatekeepers in regulating access to literary works, including translations, and in constructing entire literary fields. However, from both academic and non-academic perspectives, published translations have often been examined as if in a textual vacuum, in which the translator's strategies and choices are scrutinised via a logic of losses and gains in relation to the source text. In the wake of the incorporation of sociological theories and concepts into Translation Studies, scholars have now begun to address the institutional role played by publishing houses and to acknowledge the diversity of agents involved. This article reviews the literature on the topic since the early 2000s, focusing on studies which, while premised on various theoretical, conceptual, and methodological perspectives, show convergence in acknowledging the collaborative dynamic of publishing and its effects on both the translation process and product.

**KEYWORDS:** Translation, Publishing, Sociological Approach, Publishing Houses, Editorial Agents

### 1. Introduction

Over the course of centuries of philosophical reflections on translation, written texts have taken centre stage. Even with the establishment of Translation Studies (TS) as an autonomous (inter)discipline from the 1970s onwards and the emergence of the descriptive paradigm, which led to more systematic (and contextualised) investigations of translation practices and norms, the primacy of the text-based approach remained largely unchallenged. Framing such an approach, which takes for granted an indissociable relationship between a translation and a source text produced in another language and culture, is a “linguistic bias” (Marais, 2019, p. 11) that has informed a sizeable portion of translated-related research, a legacy of TS's early ties with linguistics and literary theory and, more specifically, of Roman Jakobson's ([1959] 2000) influential conceptualisation of translation as the “interpretation of verbal signs”.

With the development of the book trade and the consolidation of an international book market in the nineteenth century, translation became the main mode of circulation of literary works (Sapiro, 2016, p. 7). In material terms, this meant translations went from being written texts to becoming *published* artefacts, characterised by a visual identity and an institutional affiliation to a publisher,<sup>1</sup> with the potential to consecrate authors and texts in specific contexts (Casanova, 2002) and, hence, to form particular readerships. However, even though there has been close collaboration between translators and publishing houses for over a century, this has only recently been acknowledged by TS scholars. Nergaard

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<sup>1</sup> The terms “publisher” and “publishing house” are used interchangeably in this article to refer to companies from the publishing segment.

(2013, p. 2, emphasis added) attributes such a delay in filling this gap in the literature to the continuing adoption of the text-based paradigm:

In the field of Translation Studies we are familiar with the numerous case studies of single translations or corpora of translations, where the aim has been to discover how and why translations have been done and how specific translation problems have been solved. Translations have been compared to previous translations of the same text, in different epochs, in different languages; we have been reading discussions on the translator's poetics and on whether the translator should domesticate or foreignize the original text. Common to almost all of these studies is that they are studies of *published* translations, but often without consideration of other aspects than the text itself. The cases where a broader vision of the translated text has been adopted, one which takes into consideration paratextual elements and publishing policies, are much rarer.

The “broader vision of the translated text” referred to by Nergaard began to be taken up by TS scholars from the 1980s onwards, when major theoretical frameworks signalled the social nature of translation, albeit in non-systematic ways. Concepts such as those of “system”, “norms”, *skopos*, “translational action”, and “rewriting” helped increase awareness of socially-oriented questions (e.g. who is the translator?; what is the nature of his/her commission?; what translation norms operate in a given society at a given time?; how does translation contribute to canonising a literary work?), and, ultimately, paved the way for a systematic sociological approach (Wolf, 2007).

With the growing endorsement of sociologically-oriented research in TS, made possible by the incorporation of theories, concepts, and methods from the social sciences, there was a new awareness of the (human) figure of the translator as an individual with a certain identity, expectations, and worldviews, someone who operates under specific sociocultural and professional constraints. According to Pym (1998, p. 161), this translator is no longer to be regarded as an abstract discursive figure that has produced a translation or as an anonymous professional who abides by norms, but as a “material body, as a mobile biological unit” active in a certain place and time. The direct corollary of acknowledging that there are “translators behind the translations, people behind the texts” (Chesterman, 2009, p. 14) is accounting for the fact that extratextual factors, be they social, historical, cultural or political, play a central (not tangential) role in the way translations are produced. Among such factors is the inevitable involvement of a series of agents, individual or collective. In the particular case of publishing, a multilayered milieu that entails both horizontal (i.e. collaborative) and vertical (i.e. hierarchical) interactions, these agents perform a wide range of activities that affect translations at both micro and macro levels. Although publishing houses may (and often do) vary in terms of size, organisational structure, and editorial segment, the operational chain of producing a book or other textual materials follows a dynamic that invariably involves social interactions.

This article aims to shed light on the relationship between translation and publishing, with a focus on printed media (i.e. books and magazines<sup>2</sup>), as it has been addressed by TS scholars. To achieve this, the literature of the past two decades is reviewed with the purpose of mapping the ways researchers have approached the topic, based on their chosen 1) objects of study; 2) theoretical, conceptual, and methodological frameworks; and 3) spatio-temporal boundaries. A critical analysis of these elements then seeks to highlight the research trends and broader paradigmatic concerns of these studies, with a view to outlining potential future avenues of investigation on this topic.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: Section 2 summarises the criteria for constructing the literature review; Section 3 presents the theoretical/conceptual, methodological, and spatio-temporal frameworks of the reviewed studies; Section 4 offers concluding remarks on the topic at hand.

## 2. Methodology

As previously mentioned, the time frame selected for studies to be included in the review spans almost two decades from the year 2000, the starting point of the decade in which the first major studies effectively connecting translation to the publishing sector were carried out (e.g. Buzelin, 2006; Sapiro, 2008; Serry, 2002), to 2018.

Studies assessed for inclusion in the review were obtained through a search of the *Translation Studies Bibliography* (Gambier and van Doorslaer, 2019),<sup>3</sup> one of the most comprehensive databases of TS research available. The search strings used were “publishing”, “publishing house”, and “publishing agent”. Several entries were not considered, since 1) they occurred repeatedly in more than one search string, 2) many of the hits on “publishing” and “publishing house” actually referred to the publishers responsible for the publications, not the topic at hand, 3) they were written in languages unfamiliar to me or 4) they did not conform to the review’s selected time frame. Additionally, studies related to the topic via a strictly theoretical lens (e.g. Sapiro, 2008) were also excluded, due to the priority given to more empirical investigations. Such priority stems from the need to map the actual publishing scenarios covered by TS researchers, which is in line with this study’s main goals.

Thus, the present review comprises a total of fifteen studies (Anderson, 2005; Bedson and Schulz, 2017; Bisiada, 2018; Buzelin, 2006; Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia, 2015; Castro and Foz, 2013; Haddadian Moghaddam, 2012; Nergaard, 2013; Paloposki, 2009, 2016; Pinho, 2011; Serry, 2002; Solum, 2017, 2018; Whitfield, 2013). Not claiming to be exhaustive of all that has so far been produced in TS on this topic, this selection seeks to provide an overview of research on translation and/in publishing that has been carried out in various editorial (and research) contexts.

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<sup>2</sup> To the extent that studies of periodical publications such as academic journals already make up a considerable body of knowledge on their own right (often intersecting with the field of academic writing), they lie outside the scope of this review.

<sup>3</sup> An exception was the study by Anderson (2005), which is not listed in the database but was already known to me prior to the preparation of this review.

### **3. Translation and publishing in Translation Studies**

#### **3.1 Theoretical and conceptual frameworks**

Given the central role played by sociologically-oriented research in TS in recent decades, it is unsurprising that most of the studies encompassed by this literature review tend to deploy theories and concepts from the social sciences in general and from sociology in particular.

The theory of cultural goods proposed by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1984), now a widely-known name within TS, has had profound effects on general scholarly discourse on translation, to the extent that notions such as “habitus”, “field”, and “symbolic capital” have become familiar references (a case in point being Daniel Simeoni’s seminal and widely debated 1998 paper “The Pivotal Status of the Translator’s Habitus”). As a result, a number of TS scholars have endorsed Bourdieu’s theory in an attempt to understand the social and institutional constraints facing translators in diverse professional scenarios, including that of publishing. Serry (2002), for instance, analyses the role of translated literature in the book catalogue of French publisher Éditions du Seuil from 1946 to 1999, grounded on the assumption that foreign literature may be a means of accumulating symbolic capital for a publishing house that does not have a long tradition or established position in the literary field.

However, the present review has identified what appears to be a growing trend among those carrying out sociologically-grounded research in TS: the wish to combine, or indeed reconcile, Bourdieusian sociology and the actor-network theory (ANT), “two sets of theories [that] are often understood as antagonistic, and were probably envisioned as such” (Solum, 2018, p. 546). In brief terms, ANT is yet another major contribution from sociology that was first proposed in the late 1970s by French anthropologist and philosopher Bruno Latour together with Michel Callon, John Law, and other colleagues. Having been initially proposed within sociology of science, it has since been applied to many fields of knowledge, including TS. Despite the evident conceptual distance between the way “translation” is understood by this theory’s proponents<sup>4</sup> and the more conventional notion of translation as linguistic and cultural transfer,<sup>5</sup> a number of TS researchers have endorsed other major ANT concepts and principles to ground their empirical research, e.g. the “actor-network” as consisting of a series of actors (human and non-human) who strive to reach a particular objective; the ethnographic motto “follow the actors”; and the idea of texts as “inscriptions” that reveal traces of an actor’s decision-making processes.

Therefore, the studies which draw on both Bourdieu and Latour do so with the express aim of counteracting each theory’s limitations with elements from the other. Haddadian Moghaddam (2012), in his ethnographic analysis of the multiple agents of an

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<sup>4</sup> In ANT literature, translation is a transformative process through which an actor attempts to convince others to strive for a particular objective, hence forming an actor-network. For an in-depth formulation of the concept, see Latour (2005).

<sup>5</sup> According to Chesterman (2006, p. 22), “[ANT’s notion of translation] may be misleading for translation scholars as it has a somewhat different sense”, while Buzelin (2007, p. 138) concedes that “Latour is clearly not interested in interlinguistic transfer processes”.

Iranian publishing house involved in the production of translations, attempts to establish the publisher's symbolic capital and to determine whether its agents aim for economic or non-economic capital when translating and revising texts. However, "it is not easy to locate [the Iranian publishing house] on either the literary or commercial side of the publishing field" (Haddadian Moghaddam, 2012, p. 48) – both poles respectively belonging to Bourdieu's (1984) small-scale and large-scale production of cultural goods – since the publisher's main commitment is in promoting Islamic doctrine. Thus, Haddadian Moghaddam turns to ANT to account for the coexistence of three networks of interaction, how these are activated, and how agents' written inscriptions reveal traces of their agency throughout the editorial production of translations.

Solum (2018), in her study of the degree of intervention of copy-editors in Norwegian literary translations, also seeks to combine Bourdieusian sociology and ANT. While the latter views negotiations between actors as a (highly unpredictable) means of constructing a given actor-network (negotiations which can be ethnographically traced through textual inscriptions, such as the copy-edited translation drafts analysed by Solum), Bourdieu's approach is more suited to relating agents' negotiation strategies (or habitus) to the broader constraints of the publishing field and the social world.

The contributions offered by ANT and its focus on social processes rather than on products have also been endorsed without reference to Bourdieusian sociology. Buzelin (2006), one of the researchers who helped introduce Latour's work to TS in the early 2000s, uses an ethnographic approach (a theoretical as well as a methodological pillar of ANT) to follow the production process of literary translations in independent publishing houses in Canada, from the negotiations of translation rights through to the book's final launch. In addition to interviews with editorial actors and participant observation (in meetings between editors and translators, for instance), Buzelin's method involved analysing a series of written documents such as translation contracts, translators' first drafts, and correspondence between those involved, in order to establish how the actor-networks at the publishing houses were constructed, maintained, and even changed via successive negotiations.

Solum (2017), for her part, deploys another of ANT's cornerstones, the understanding of actors as being human and non-human, to investigate three public debates in the Norwegian press triggered by reviews of translations of novels written originally in English. By opting to distinguish between "agents" (i.e. human individuals that possess agency and intentionality, such as translators, copy-editors, and critics) and "actors" (those that do not make decisions intentionally), Solum (2017, p. 41) identifies "two actors that are not humans with an individual conscience and that did not have a voice of their own in the debates, but that may have played a key role in shaping them": first, a Norwegian project which encouraged translators and critics to discuss translation-related issues, and second, the English language, given that most of the debates in the press touched upon the presence of "Anglicisms" in the Norwegian translations.

Another sociological body of knowledge that has recently been incorporated into translation research is the sociology of publishing (Bourdieu, 2008; Sapiro, 2008), alternatively called book studies<sup>6</sup> (Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia, 2015; Pinho, 2011) or the sociology of books, in a direct reference to Bourdieu's work (Nergaard, 2013). This field of research, which "analyses the making and the circulation of books" (Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia, 2015, p. 25), emerged in the 1990s, much later than the related domains of the history of books and the economics of the book market (Sapiro, 2008, p. 154). In the present review, Pinho (2011), Nergaard (2013), and Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia (2015) offer distinctive approaches to the analysis of translations through the lens of sociology of publishing.

Pinho (2011) conducts a case study of the translation strategies employed by a Portuguese publishing house over a fifteen-year period and considers its publishing policies both in relation to dominant national and international trends as well as to its readership and the translators collaborating with it. His ultimate aim is to outline a scenario in which publishing and translation strategies interact, "from the decisions about what to publish to those concerning how to translate" (Pinho, 2011, p. 193, my translation). Nergaard (2013), in turn, combines the history of books and the sociology of books (in addition to other concepts, such as that of power) to analyse paratexts in translations of Norwegian literary works published by an Italian publishing house. By importing from the history of books the importance assigned to the material aspect of publications, as well as the Bourdieusian contribution to the sociology of books (i.e. that the production and reception of literary works involve individual and collective strategies), Nergaard supports her claim that paratextual elements have a vital role in creating meaning. Lastly, Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia (2015) compare translations of a bestselling marketing textbook into French, Spanish, and Italian with the aim of investigating translation practices in higher education publishing, a sector on which, according to the authors, "virtually nothing – to the best of our knowledge – has been written" (Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia, 2015, p. 25) in TS. Filling such a gap in the literature would, therefore, bring to the fore marked differences between translation in this sector and in literary and scholarly publishing, "from the selection of books, to the background and the status of translators, to the actual translation process" (2015, p. 26).

Parallel to the endorsement of theoretical and conceptual frameworks from sociology, some researchers have adopted notions that have sociological repercussions despite stemming from various disciplinary backgrounds. One such notion is that of "agents of translation", now popularised within TS following its inclusion in the title of Milton and Bandia's (2009) collection of essays. Originally proposed by Juan Sager (1994, p. 321) within communication studies to address the individual "in an intermediary position between a translator and an end user of a translation", the idea of agents of translation was further expanded by Milton and Bandia to include collective agents such as publishing houses and

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<sup>6</sup> According to Pinho (2011, p. 10, my translation), the field of book studies is "criss-crossed by contributions from history, sociology, literary criticism and anthropology, among other disciplines."

institutions, as well as to assign agents with the ability to effect changes within their sociocultural context. Explicit affiliation to the concept in question is made by Castro and Foz (2013), who carry out an extensive bibliographical research to highlight the role of several agents (publishers, translators, intellectuals, and politicians, among others) in helping disseminate positivism in nineteenth-century Mexico and Argentina. Such a bibliographical approach proves useful to TS, according to Castro and Foz (2013, p. 12), in the sense that “this research considers publishing practices as an object of study of the discipline”. Moreover, in attempting to trace the complex process of disseminating positivist ideas in Latin America, the authors regarded as crucial the need to consider the perspectives of the various agents within the wider scenario of the international book market.

Another term with a sociological guise, that of “multiple translatorship”, was coined by Jansen and Wegener (2013) in the context of TS, largely inspired by the notion of “multiple authorship” proposed by Jack Stillinger in the early 1990s within literary criticism. Just as Stillinger attempted to challenge the myth of the solitary author with a view to claiming that literary creation is a collaborative activity, Jansen and Wegener (2013, p. 5) state that “the notion of singular translatorship cannot be sustained empirically” to the extent that “for better or worse, translation is frequently collaborative in nature”.<sup>7</sup> This perspective (adopted by Solum 2017, 2018), in acknowledging the translation process in publishers as a series of negotiations between translators, editors, copy-editors, and other individual and collective agents, ultimately underpins most of the current research on translation and publishing being carried out by TS scholars.

Lastly, such an understanding of the multilayeredness of publishing practices is also shared by Bisiada (2018), who focuses on editorial intervention in translated texts but from a perspective that differs considerably from the other studies under review. Grounded on a holistic view of the translation workflow which encompasses both manuscript and published versions of translated texts, the researcher produces a corpus-based study to verify editors’ and translators’ use of grammatical metaphorisation in articles from a business magazine. The findings of his contrastive analysis, which “support the idea that translation production is a multi-agent activity, and should be studied as such” (Bisiada, 2018, p. 18), ultimately illustrate the outreach of sociologically-inspired notions in sub-areas of TS that focus on microstructural levels of translated texts.

### **3.2 Methodological frameworks**

In line with the widespread process of “borrowing” theoretical and conceptual frameworks from the social sciences, the methodological principles and tools deployed by a considerable number of the studies under review are also sociologically grounded, even though there is considerable diversity as regards their objects of study. Since data

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<sup>7</sup> Jansen and Wegener (2013, p. 32) highlight that their use of the term “collaborative” does not necessarily entail two or more translators working on a single translation project (a notion commonly endorsed within the discipline), but rather any set of agents working closely with a translator.

collection methods are mostly empirical (qualitative and quantitative), including participant observation, interviews, questionnaires, and field notes, there is a clear aim on the part of researchers to account for translation practices in specific, real-life settings and to relate translators' decision-making processes with broader contextual factors, such as professional constraints and the intervention of other agents. This points to an emphasis both on the production of case studies (usually concerning a single publishing house and/or a restricted group of agents and working practices) and on the understanding of translation as a (multilayered and collaborative) *process* rather than as a product, which means that few of the studies surveyed here offer micro-level textual analyses of translations (the most notable case being that of Bisiada, 2018).

Whenever textual material is relevant to these investigations, it usually comprises publishers' book catalogues (Serry, 2002), books' internal organisation and physical features (Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia, 2015), paratextual elements ranging from book covers and blurbs to translators' afterwords (Nergaard, 2013), and documents such as contracts and correspondence between agents (Buzelin, 2006; Haddadian Moghaddam, 2012; Paloposki, 2009, 2016; Solum, 2017). Nevertheless, such a move away from the actual translated text, although in tune with TS scholars' growing awareness of external factors that influence translation processes following the "cultural turn", needs to avoid "bringing about the danger of a sociology of translation existing without *translation*" (Wolf, 2007, p. 27, emphasis added).

As previously mentioned, studies which endorse ANT as a theoretical framework tend to be bound to ethnographic research (Buzelin, 2006; Haddadian Moghaddam, 2012; Solum, 2017), since the "follow the actors" principle, i.e. the investigation of how individuals carry out negotiations towards reaching a given objective, is a direct corollary of the notion of the actor-network. In addition to carrying out interviews and participant observation (Buzelin, 2006; Haddadian Moghaddam, 2012), these researchers also analyse written documents, or the "inscriptions" through which actors reveal their decision-making processes as well as their interactions with others. Such documents range from "translation contract and license, promotional brochures, (...) translators' first drafts" (Buzelin, 2006, p. 139), "copies of the contacts between the translator, the editors and the publisher, (...) sample pages from both the original work and their corresponding translation" (Haddadian Moghaddam, 2012, p. 42), as well as "newspaper debates sparked off by critical reviews of Norwegian translations" (Solum, 2017, p. 39). These written materials, including translators' drafts, are not assessed in terms of the "quality" of the translator's work, but rather viewed as evidence of an actor's ability to acquire power in the actor-network through negotiations with others, given that, according to ANT, "inscriptions allow the interests of one actor to reach several people" (Solum, 2017, p. 44).

Solum (2018), in her study of negotiations between translators and copy-editors, presents a less common approach to data collection via the scope of ANT. Given that negotiation is "central in various sociologically oriented translation studies contributions (...) [and] a crucial term in Latour's actor-network-theory" (Solum, 2018, p. 545), Solum

carries out a quantitative analysis to verify copy-editors' degree of intervention in translation drafts as well as translators' negotiation strategies. This entails, firstly, counting the number of changes proposed by copy-editors and then dividing translators' responses to the changes in terms of their acceptance, modification or rejection. Lastly, she offers a statistical analysis of such data based on the source language of the translated texts, translator experience, and book genre. While such a methodological stance may appear to challenge ANT's strict focus on ethnography, Solum stresses the theory's potential for studies which examine textual "inscriptions" left behind by actors, rather than actors directly; additionally, she draws on both ANT and Bourdieusian sociology, the latter being more easily relatable to statistical surveys as attested by Bourdieu's (2008) own statistical treatment of data on French publishing houses.

A quantitative approach to agents' intervention is also adopted by Bisiada (2018), who analyses a tripartite parallel corpus made up of source texts written in English, their translations into German, and translations' manuscripts in order to verify editors' and translators' handling of grammatical metaphorisation patterns. Bisiada's main finding is that editors tend to transform translators' nominalisations into verb-based structures, in a clear indication that editorial intervention significantly alters the translated text prior to publication. Nevertheless, he is quite critical of the limitations posed by a corpus-based approach, stating that issues surrounding the reasons behind editorial intervention "can only be tackled by a qualitative analysis" (Bisiada, 2018, p. 18).

Empirical methods are also employed in studies grounded on various other theoretical and conceptual perspectives. Anderson (2005), in a study that assesses the nature of conflicts arising between translators and copy-editors in Brazilian publishing houses, draws on data obtained from questionnaires to examine the role of universalist, relativist, and post-structuralist views of translation and textual production on the working practices of these professionals. Whitfield (2013), in her investigation of author–publisher–translator communication in Canadian English-language publishing houses based on Chesterman's (2006) notion of translation practice, uses a mixed-methods approach which includes an electronic survey, a telephone interview, analysis of correspondence exchanged between the three professional groups, and an assessment of translations (concerning which the author does not elaborate on).

Amid the large number of sociologically-oriented studies can be found occasional investigations of a more historiographic nature.<sup>8</sup> Paloposki (2009) investigates the working practices and agency of two nineteenth-century Finnish translators, based on their correspondence and other personal papers. This author employs a similar methodology in a later study (Paloposki, 2016), which consists of analysing two different sets of archives from the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century (on the one hand, a Finnish

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<sup>8</sup> Potential complementarity between research in translation sociology and translation history has already been underscored by Chesterman (2009), in his call for the development of Translator Studies, as well as by Pym (2009), who advocates a humanisation – i.e. a focus on translators rather than on translations – of translation history.

translator's collection of personal papers and, on the other, documents of a Finnish publishing house). According to Paloposki (2016, p. 3), archival material as a methodological tool in TS research, despite being little explored to this day, stands as a crucial resource "in investigating translators' working conditions and experience". Three other studies that employ a historiographic approach are those of: Castro and Foz (2013), who carry out a bibliographical research in library catalogues in Mexico and Argentina with the aim of outlining the reception history of positivist ideas in these countries via translations; Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia (2015), who trace the editorial history of a bestselling marketing textbook via translations into three languages, addressing the macro- and microstructure of the translated texts as well as complementing findings with interviews with the agents involved; and Bedson and Schulz (2017), who examine the implementation of translational principles in two Soviet publishing houses in the 1920s and 1930s by analysing documents such as book catalogues, instruction guides for translators, and theoretical essays on what was considered a "good" translation in that sociocultural context.

Lastly, most of the studies surveyed here share a common feature related to their objects of study: a focus on literary translation (a point already made by Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia 2015, p. 25). This focus may acquire different forms, such as analyses of book catalogues comprising literary translations (Bedson and Schulz, 2017; Nergaard, 2013; Serry, 2002), paratextual elements (Nergaard, 2013) and reviews (Solum, 2017) of literary works, as well as agent-oriented analyses of literary translation projects (Buzelin, 2006; Haddadian Moghaddam, 2012; Paloposki, 2009, 2016; Solum, 2018). Though one can only speculate about these scholars' reasons for choosing to concentrate on literary translation (e.g. greater access to publishing houses and editorial agents working in this segment, greater availability of published material, or even personal preference), a focus on the literary segment reinforces the long-standing tradition of translation analyses involving comparisons between (literary) source and target texts, while leaving unexplored a whole range of issues related to non-literary genres and their specific publishing and translational practices.

### ***3.3 Spatial and temporal scopes***

As far as the spatial scope of the studies included in this literature review is concerned, most address publishing contexts in European countries: Germany (Bisiada, 2018), Italy (Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia, 2015; Nergaard, 2013), Finland (Paloposki, 2009, 2016), France (Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia, 2015; Serry, 2002), Norway (Solum, 2017, 2018), Portugal (Pinho, 2011), Spain (Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia, 2015), and the former Soviet Union (Bedson and Schulz, 2017). Other editorial backgrounds that have been the object of research in TS are those in Canada (for Québec, see Buzelin, 2006; for Anglophone Canada, see Whitfield, 2013), Latin American countries such as Brazil (Anderson, 2005), Argentina and Mexico (Castro and Foz, 2013), and Iran (Haddadian Moghaddam, 2012).

Despite this wide geographical range, a few common denominators underlie these countries' publishing markets. Firstly, they are highly permeable to translations and may, therefore, offer considerable potential for research in this particular field. Secondly, publishing houses seem to be somewhat resistant to giving researchers access to inside information, a difficulty acknowledged by Bourdieu (2008, p. 127) concerning the French context: "Another difficulty was the extremely secretive attitude of a professional milieu that is ill disposed to the prying questions of outsiders and therefore disinclined to disclose either tactical information regarding sales or descriptive information regarding the social characteristics of their executives". Haddadian Moghaddam (2012, p. 37), for his part, concedes that "access to publishing houses in Tehran proved challenging and close to impossible", whereas Pinho (2011, p. 139, my translation) stresses that "Portuguese publishing houses maintain strict confidentiality regarding the professionals they hire to carry out translations for publication". Publishers' widespread resistance to divulging information may, hence, play a role in these researchers' tendency to produce case studies.

As for temporal scope, investigations usually focus on the present-day working practices and routines of publishing houses and their agents, particularly when ethnographic methods of data collection are used (Anderson, 2005; Buzelin, 2006; Haddadian Moghaddam, 2012; Solum, 2017). Another recurrent trend consists in studies' complementary use of sociological and historiographic perspectives and methodological tools (Buzelin, Dufault and Foglia, 2015; Pinho, 2011; Whitfield, 2013), in an attempt to view publishers' current institutional position and the ways agents enrol in negotiations as resulting from sociocultural and historical processes.

#### **4. Final considerations**

Conducting research that combines two activities with such multiple ramifications as translation and publishing is by no means an easy task. In addition to the difficulties of accessing publishers' data and in-house routines and decision-making processes, TS researchers operating in this field need to account for a profusion of factors that affect the production process of translations (such as editorial policies, organisational structure, profit orientation, market and cultural demands) without actually losing sight of translations as *texts*. In a movement away from the strictly textual analyses on which a long tradition of translation scholarship was built, translations are now viewed as socially and culturally embedded constructs, criss-crossed by factors affecting both their production and reception. Nevertheless, striking a balance between "a monopoly on text comprehension" and "a sociologicistic reduction to external factors" (Wolf, 2007, p. 28) is vital to the legitimation of this particular area of research.

Based on the findings of this literature review, research on the topic has generally tended to: 1) focus on one-to-one working relationships between translators and other publishing agents, e.g. editors, copy-editors, proofreaders, and authors; 2) adopt theoretical, conceptual, and methodological frameworks from sociology and other social sciences, a stance that clearly favours interdisciplinarity; 3) employ empirical or

ethnographic methods, which signals a move away from strictly textual analyses of translations; 4) produce case studies of specific publishing houses, translation projects, and editorial agents; 5) focus on the literary segment, be it through literary works or supplementary material (paratexts, reviews, book catalogues); and 6) investigate commercial publishers. The gaps in the literature resulting from the last two trends need to be especially tackled by TS scholars operating in this area of research, otherwise a whole spectrum of editorial practices and constraints inherent to non-literary niches and non-commercial publishing houses will remain largely unexplored. Moreover, scholars must strive to interpret the findings of case studies in the light of broader publishing practices, both nationally and supranationally, so as to establish a more representative and explanatory body of knowledge on the subject.

Future avenues of research in this field will need to take two major factors into account: first, the growing use of technologies in the editorial scenario, which are now affecting publishers' entire production process, from the very nature of interactions between agents (and, consequently, the ways they negotiate their decisions) to the forms of media used (i.e. printed or electronic books); second, reigning but under-researched forms of professional partnerships, such as co-edition publishing, collective translation, indirect translation, and the mediation of literary agents in the acquisition of translation rights (some of which have already been highlighted by Buzelin, 2006). In summary, it is imperative that the literature on this topic keep up to date with the rapidly evolving dynamic of publishing, at a time when demands for the production and (almost instant) circulation of knowledge have given rise to a global network of repercussions and interests.

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