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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

When I was writing the introductions to the last two general issues of *Translation Matters* in the Spring of 2020 and 2021, Covid was raging. Travel was forbidden, conviviality put on hold, and we had become used to conducting all our social, professional and academic interactions online instead of face-to-face. In the first of these introductions (Volume 2/1), I reflected wistfully on the de-territorialization brought about by the pandemic and its philosophical and practical implications for translation, stimulated to some extent by Manuel Alegre's elegiac poem to Lisbon in lockdown that formed the Epigraph to the issue. In the second (Volume 3/1), I found myself adopting a somewhat more disgruntled tone as the weeks and months of isolation stretched on before us with no clear respite in sight. Now, in 2022, though the numbers of infections are still very high, it feels as if the worst is over. The economy is up and running again; we no longer have to isolate or wear masks; and in countries (like Portugal) that have benefitted from widespread vaccination programmes, the majority of cases that now occur tend to be relatively minor, requiring nothing more than a few days off work. Consequently, other crises, such as the war in Ukraine, the heatwave devastating much of Europe, and (curiously) the plight of the UK government in the wake of the "partygate" scandal, have displaced the pandemic as the main headline stories in the international news.

In this scenario, **Maria Cantarero Muñoz's** article about how the Covid-19 pandemic reconfigured the semiotic landscape has a historical feel about it – an account of corporate responses to an event that blasted into our lives and changed so many things, but which is now receding into the middle distance. Taking as a case study two Coca-Cola advertisements based on the same creative idea, which circulated in 2002 and 2020 respectively, she shows how the original version was semiotically translated in order to adapt it to the needs of a new target context (the pandemic situation). These ads, like the others described in her initial survey – quirky recreations in which logos and images from earlier campaigns were visually and verbally tweaked to evoke social distance and mask-wearing, or display solidarity with the suffering in their confinement – now seem like historical curiosities. From the theoretical perspective, however, her article is cutting-edge, building on the tendency noted in previous editions of *Translation Matters* (e.g. Bennett, 2020) for translation to expand beyond its conventional horizons to assume a transformative role in the construction of systems, models and ideologies. In particular, her focus on multimodal translation through time, rather than across linguistic boundaries, is a potent illustration of Douglas Robinson's notion of "translationality" (2017), and signals one of the new directions in which Translation Studies is likely to develop in coming years.

The next article, by **Margarita Savchenkova**, continues this disciplinary expansion with a study of the human body as translation in *u Vojny ne ženskoe lico* ("The unwomanly face of war") by Nobel-prize-winning author Svetlana Alexievich. The work, which gathers testimonies of women who fought in the ranks of the Red Army during World War II, is difficult to categorise, since it has elements of both the fictional and the documentary.

Called a “novel of voices” by its author and “literary journalism” by critics, it was first published in 1985, but was reworked in 2013 in order to enhance the sensory aspect of these women’s experiences, with a view to undermining the more abstract or glamorous representations common in male accounts. Savchenkova first reviews how women’s bodies have been represented by Soviet ideologues in war contexts, before going on to compare the two versions of Alexievich’s text in order to identify the 2013 additions. The new focus on the senses of touch, smell, sight, hearing and taste, illustrates not only how the war has been searingly translated into the female body, but also how the same narrative has been temporally translated across editions in order to serve a new ideological agenda.

Bárbara Sexauer’s paper, which follows, deals with another work that blurs the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction, Brice Mathiessent’s *Vengeance du Traducteur* (2009). The narrative of this novel is constructed entirely through the translator’s notes, which become gradually more creative and subjective until they burst free of their paratextual confines, inverting the traditional roles and enacting the (fictional) translator’s desire to replace his author, whom he secretly despises. The various *mises-en-abîme* that this device entails offer Sexauer the opportunity to reflect upon the complex relationship between authorship and translation, identifying translation as a creative act that is ultimately not so different from authorship in its incorporation of preceding voices and textualities. Framing her analysis within ongoing debates about the “fictional turn” in translation studies (Arrojo, 2018; Kadiu, 2019; Kaindl, 2018; Vieira, 1995), as well as classic studies of liminality (Genette, 1997), voice (Hermans, 1996) and visibility (Venuti, 1995), Sexauer shows how features conventionally considered to be defects in translation, such as inaccuracy or infidelity, may actually become the very engines of literary creativity.

The next three articles move into the realm of audiovisual translation, beginning with one by **Carlos Guimarães** about the subtitling of the television series *Fargo*. His aim is to compare the commercial and fan-subtitling of the series’ pilot episode in European Portuguese in order to test the assumption – largely derived from the widely documented fansubbing of Japanese *anime* (Díaz-Cintas and Muñoz Sánchez, 2006; O’Hagan, 2009) – that the latter will be more faithful to the source than the former. Focusing on features that present particular challenges for the translator, such as cultural references, offensive language and idiomatic expressions, he concludes, unexpectedly, that the commercial subtitles in this case are often more foreignizing than the fansubs. Whether or not this is indicative of a broader trend concerning American (as opposed to Japanese) source texts, or Portuguese subtitling in general, is obviously something that will require much more research, a project for which this article neatly paves the way.

Matteo Fabbretti’s article moves on to the subtitling of Japanese videogames in English, framed by Andrew Chesterman’s (2007) theory of causality. Fabbretti is interested in the way some recent Japanese videogames have been published outside Japan with both English and Japanese voice tracks, each accompanied by a different set of English language subtitles; and he draws on Chesterman’s taxonomy of causes (material, cultural, social and cognitive) in an attempt to explain how and why this practice may have started. Taking as

a case-study the 2019 videogame *Judgement* (a spin-off of Sega's *Yakuza* series), he analyses the differences between the two sets of English subtitles and concludes that the EN/EN version of the game (English voice tracks + English subtitles) seems designed to allow players to draw intertextually on their knowledge of American hardboiled crime fiction, enabling the target text to fit neatly into a longstanding domestic literary tradition. The JP/EN version, on the other hand, is a more neutral translation unmarked by American cultural references, and may therefore be targeting a different market, speakers of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), more interested in the Japanese imaginary than the American one. Amongst the various causes that he identifies for this decision are the development of technology (a material cause according to Chesterman's taxonomy), the preference of some fans for Japanese rather than American voices (a cultural cause), and, most interestingly, the intervention of a particular individual, the localization producer at Sega of America, thereby illustrating how translators can themselves be efficient causes of translations.

Heidy Gonçalves' article continues the videogame thread, describing the development and localization of an independent game, and exploring the possible relation between the translation approaches used in the field and the promotion of a videogame on social networks, websites and platforms. *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid's Tale* is unusual in that it is the result of a collaborative family project involving two adults (a software engineer and translator/localizer) and a child, who drew the pictures, conceived the story and produced the voices and sound effects. After briefly tracing the history of videogame localization and the processes involved in it, Gonçalves describes some of the challenges faced in the localization of this particular game and aspects of the game's promotion.

The next two articles are concerned with different aspects of professional translation practice. The first, by **Tatiana Limongi Chaves**, moves into the domain of computer-assisted translation, with a particular focus on memo-Q. After a brief overview of the development of CAT tools, she draws on her experience of working with memo-Q during an internship with a translation company to provide a detailed explanation of the stages involved in preparing a text for use with it. The paper then goes on to offer a critique of the tool, identifying certain weaknesses that might be improved in subsequent editions to provide users with a more satisfactory experience.

Phillippa May Bennett's paper focuses on the phenomenon of back-translation, a technique habitually used in the medical industry for the linguistic validation of health questionnaires. She begins by reviewing the literature about these quality assurance processes, providing some examples from her own professional experience of backtranslating clinical scales. This is followed by a simulation of part of the linguistic validation process of the Portuguese version of the RAND 36-Item Short Health Survey Questionnaire, in which she compares the backtranslation with the original scale in English and then analyses the Portuguese for adaptation issues and errors. She too ends by critiquing the established process, making some recommendations to the industry for how it could be improved.

The issue ends, as it began, on the Covid theme, more precisely with an exercise in discourse analysis by **Hanyun Liu** of the Portuguese translation of the 2021 New Year speech of the Chinese premier Xi Jinping, which was of course heavily preoccupied with the pandemic. Considering this as a form of institutional translation, Liu focuses on the construction of illocutionary force through modalization, before reporting on the results of a quantitative analysis using the computational tool VISL. The conclusions reveal that this Portuguese institutional translation, like English translations of similar political texts (Huang 2004), uses strategies of omission, addition and distortion to bring the text closer to the thought patterns of its target audience.

Finally, a word should be said about the Epigraph (a poem by **Margarida Vale de Gato** translated into English by **Martin Earl**) which anticipates some of the themes rehearsed in this issue. Woven around the images that a young girl sees on the mosaic of the bathroom floor, the poem has something profound to say about the construction of meaning and the way signification can proliferate even in the absence of an organizing mind. There is something primordial about that random collection of images on the floor; like the kabbalist’s Torah,¹ it shimmers there, a text as yet unwritten, awaiting translation by the young sybil perched on her throne, whose insight derives precisely from her detachment from socially sanctioned narratives. Let us not forget that the word for “translator” in Greek (*hermêneus/ἑρμηνεύς*) also means “prophet” or “interpreter of the gods”. Though this aspect of the profession has been somewhat neglected by contemporary training programmes, it may well acquire a whole new relevance in the emergent paradigm as our understanding what constitutes a (source) text expands once again.

This new issue of *Translation Matters*, eclectic as it is, has much to say about some of the major debates taking place at the present time, from the theoretical expansions of Translation Studies into new domains, and practical issues resulting from the development of new tools and processes, to the philosophical implications of translating before the poet has even arrived.

Karen Bennett

¹ “According to some, the primordial Torah was inscribed in black flames upon white fire. At the moment of its creation, it appeared as a series of letters not yet joined up in the form of words. For this reason, in the Torah rolls there appear neither vowels, nor punctuation, nor accents; for the original Torah was nothing but a disordered heap of letters. Furthermore, had it not been for Adam’s sin, these letters might have been joined differently to form another story. For the kabbalist, God will abolish the present ordering of these letters, or else will teach us how to read them according to a new disposition, only after the coming of the Messiah” (Eco, 1995, p. 26).

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EPIGRAPH

Revelação Mosaica

El poeta, inmerso en el movimiento del idioma, continuo ir y venir verbal, escoge unas cuantas palabras – o es escogido por ellas. Al combinarlas, construye su poema: un objeto verbal hecho de signos insustituibles e inamovibles. El punto de partida del traductor no es el lenguaje en movimiento, materia prima del poeta, sino el lenguaje fijo del poema. Lenguaje congelado y, no obstante, perfectamente vivo. Su operación es inversa a la del poeta...

Octavio Paz, *Traducción: Literatura y Literalidad*

Um pulmão rosa atrai um pulmão cor de pele;
um torso bege por cima de esquisso de coração
ou molde duma púbis feminil; em baixo um rosto
masculino com seu chapéu oval farejando tudo;
uma rola com patas de traço infantil cantando
para uma pedra em forma de mapa, em volta
estilhaços de sigilosa matéria negra cintilante.

Via estas coisas prolongando o tempo na sanita:
eu miúda, aquilo o padrão de um mosaico
cujo nome saberão os construtores civis
(termos relacionados: *grés, lambaz, tessela*).
Decifrar era modo de saber o que conversava
o chão consigo. Pensava: se o chão for cabeça
da terra o mosaico fala e as formas são

bocas a abrir a cor um acento. Não pensava
creio em palavras que soube depois na catequese
n'As Mais Belas Histórias da Bíblia: sarça, maná
e profeta: contratos de decência entre homens—
rasto efémero do dedo de Jesus na areia frente
ao campo de lapidação da mulher adúltera. Cada lasca
tinha mais línguas do que o céu a minha ginástica

era isso: ainda não palavras nem ainda linguagem
pendurada numa geração de árvores — posto
ser a força o mais rupestre desenho na base
há as patas de uma rola cantando há ainda
expressão incomum sem forçar o consenso
os sentidos afetos ao falante e o resto que impede
o fixo: mais variáveis do que regras trajetos

ainda não metas — essas formas de miúda
na retrete praticando a distração de abjetas
coisas sendo afinal a tradução prévia a poetas

Margarida Vale de Gato

Mosaic Revelation

A pink lung beckons a skin-colored lung;
a beige torso overlays the sketch of a heart
or the mold of a female pubis, beneath a male
face with its oval hat sniffing out everything;
a dove with stick-figure legs is singing
to a stone shaped like a map, around
shining shards of secretive black material.

I saw such things as I lingered on the toilet:
me a girl, what I saw the pattern of a mosaic
whose name only builders would know
(related terms: *stoneware, sandstone, tessera*).
Deciphering was like finding out how the floor
spoke to itself. I thought: if the ground is the head
of the earth the mosaic talks and the shapes are

mouths opening, color an accent. I guess I didn't
believe in words I learned later in Sunday school
in *The Most Beautiful Bible Stories: bramble, manna*
and *prophet*: the contracts of decency among men –
the faint line Jesus drew in the sand around
the adulterous wife in the stoning field. Each
chip had more tongues than heaven and I tried

to speak them all: not quite words not yet
language, hung from a generation of trees – even if
the most rudimentary drawing was the gallows caught
in a dove's feet singing of all the rare ways that still exist
to say things without clamoring for consensus,
meanings that had to do with the speaker,
no final word: variants instead of rules,

roads taken without intent – to the girl on the
toilet shapes all distracted by abjections
translated before the poet had even arrived.

Translation by Martin Earl

RE-CONTEXTUALISING ADVERTISING THROUGH RE-CREATION: THE RECYCLING AND TRANSLATION OF ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

María Cantarero Muñoz*

University of Salamanca

GIR TRADIC

ABSTRACT: The COVID-19 pandemic completely reconfigured the semiotic landscape. When the crisis was at its height, a whole series of words, images and sounds (or their absence) became representative symbols of the context we found ourselves in, not only in the media, but also in public and private spaces. This article analyses how these semiotic systems were renegotiated in order to acquire new meanings in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. It takes as a case study two Coca-Cola brand advertisements based on the same creative idea, which circulated in 2002 and 2020 respectively. Through a comparative analysis of the elements that make up each version of this multimodal text, it shows how the original advertisement was semiotically translated in order to adapt it to the needs of a new target context (the pandemic situation). We conclude that concepts drawn from intersemiotic and audiovisual translation studies can help shed light on these processes of recontextualization and meaning reconstruction in the case of multimodal texts.

KEYWORDS: Advertising Translation, Multimodal Translation, Meaning Remaking, Intersemiotic Translation

1. Introduction: translating a new multisemiotic landscape

The coronavirus pandemic reshaped the multisemiotic landscape in a variety of ways, not only in the streets (by means of information, guidelines, and warnings on posters and billboards), but also in the media (TV news or advertisements, hashtags on social media, internet memes, and so on). As Adami et al. (2020) put it in the *PanMeMic Manifesto*, "The physical world that people inhabit and navigate has shrunk for those who are enclosed, while for all it has been re-regulated, often also marked visually by all kinds of signs and materially through the redesign of public spaces."

It is no coincidence that one place where these changes are most evident is in the domain of audiovisual communication. The use of digital devices significantly increased under lockdown; indeed, for many, such devices were their only means of contact with the outside world, and during the most extreme moments of the crisis, they were also used for school lessons, exercise classes, concerts, even for virtual visits to museums and socializing with friends. Hence, it is not surprising that the changes should have manifested themselves first and foremost in this domain.

Our hypothesis was that the renegotiation of semiotic regimes requires various kinds of translational processes that can be elucidated using the tools and concepts developed within Translation Studies. In the domain of audiovisual advertising specifically, it is postulated that the (re)creation of advertising campaigns for their insertion into a new context, such as that represented by the COVID-19 pandemic, can be analyzed in

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translatological terms, following the advances in multimodality within the discipline (see, for example, Boria, Carreres, Noriega-Sánchez and Tomalin, 2020).

Advertising, by definition, has to be relevant to current times, and for this reason often draws on news events to its advantage (Scott, 2011). It is thus interesting to see how brands have represented the pandemic and how they have used it in their advertising from a communicative point of view. Therefore, the research questions that were used as the starting point for this project were: how has the advertising landscape changed because of the pandemic? And, more specifically, what general themes, and verbal, visual, and oral elements have been used most?

In what follows, we will examine how one particular brand (Coca-Cola) reused its previous advertisements to make them relevant during the pandemic, and discuss the extent to which translation contributes to the construction of meaning.

2. Methodology

In order to explore how the construction of a particular advertisement draws on current symbols and themes to keep the brand and its values relevant at any given time, we decided to undertake a case study that would offer enough complexity to be a worthy topic for qualitative analysis. But first, a number of multimodal advertising texts were studied in order to extract the elements specific to pandemic advertising. This was done via the database on the *Ads of the World* webpage¹, which permits the filtering of results.

The criterion for the selection of the texts explored in the first instance was that they should belong to commercial advertising, thus omitting results pertaining to organisations and governments. Furthermore, they needed to have been published during the first few months of the pandemic and have the pandemic as their central theme. These texts would then allow us to classify the main verbal, visual, and oral elements that referenced the pandemic. The conclusions of this first stage are summarized in Section 3.

At this point in the research, it became clear that many of the elements in the advertisements had been used before under other circumstances and with a different meaning. As a result, the decision was taken to explore how these elements had been reconfigured (translated) for the new context and how new symbols (such as masks or quarantine) had been added to them. We found that one brand in particular (Coca-Cola) had re-licensed several previous adverts and translated them in a way that made them relevant to the context of the pandemic. Therefore, and because it is a sufficiently well-known brand globally, we decided to use this as a case study in which we could analyse the elements mentioned above.

3. Pandemic advertising: themes and elements when translating the context

As stated above, the multisemiotic landscape was reconstructed or, at least, greatly modified with the pandemic. Indeed, when the health crisis was at its height, most

¹ Available at <https://www.adsoftheworld.com/> (Accessed: 30 June 2022).

communicative acts, both physically and virtually, bore some kind of reference to it. Advertising messages, traditionally seen as a reflection of society, were no exception.

One marketing strategy that many brands used during the pandemic was to emphasise their dedication to corporate social responsibility (CSR) (He and Harris, 2020). While some companies demonstrated their CSR by adapting their factories to produce fans or hand sanitisers (Butler, 2020), others tried to show it through their advertising, such as through repeated calls for social distancing or the use of face coverings.² Many companies took advantage of lockdowns to represent their brands in a positive light and develop brand identity in a new way, often emphasising solidarity and "togetherness", the sense that everyone has a shared experience of the pandemic, despite being physically separated.

The survey revealed that the main pandemic themes covered in these types of advertising, either visually or audio-visually, were the following: (dis)connection, social distancing, lockdowns, face coverings, handwashing, social responsibility (directly related to marketing concept we have just explained), and heroes (such as the health service workers). One recurrent theme is summarized by Adami et al. in their "PanMeMic Manifesto" (2020) as *keeping people separate yet connected*.

How might brands transmit this message while continuing to promote their products at the same time? Well-known brands such as Audi, McDonald's and Volkswagen, among others, found an interesting solution. They all chose to produce new versions of their logotypes in which each element is separated from the rest as if in accordance with the rules of social distancing (see Valinsky, 26 March, 2020)– a form of "pandemic translation".³

Another result worth mentioning were some surprising products created *ad hoc*, such as the so-called "Social Distancing Whopper" (an advert created by Wunderman Thompson for Burger King⁴), in which social distancing is translated into a burger with a triple helping of onions. This slight variation in the product allowed the company to use one of the previously mentioned themes (social distancing) and reconfigure it to its advantage.

Other companies took the opportunity to tailor their products and services to the pandemic context. One neologism that arose in the context was "maskne" (i.e. acne caused by the use of face masks),⁵ which enabled skincare providers to adapt their products to the situation, generating new markets.

Another important trend that arose at this time was a particular use of the first-person plural pronouns, "we" and "us". These are often used in advertising to refer to the brand in question, or to the identity or nationality of the group being targeted. However, in many adverts produced during the pandemic, "we" refers to the world population and the shared experiences of the global crisis. As Sobande (2020, p. 1036) explains:

² It has also been argued that this kind of advertising is a form of "newsjacking", in the sense that current affairs are exploited by brands to gain visibility (Scott, 2011).

³ See research by Gupta and Hagtvedt (2021) on the effect of this trick upon brand perception.

⁴ See the campaign "Social Distancing Whopper" (Burger King by Wunderman Thompson). Available at <https://www.wundermanthompson.com/work/social-distancing-whopper> (Accessed: 30 June 2022)

⁵ See the definition of the term by the brand Camaleon Cosmetics. Available at: <https://camaleoncosmetics.com/en/maskne>. (Accessed: 20 June 22).

Brands' marketed notions of "we" which gloss over inequalities and (re)present everyone as being part of a unified mass of people who are equally susceptible to the negative impacts of COVID-19 do not simply function in ways that may propel their profit. Such a commodified construction of "we" dismisses the experiences of those who are most at risk and worst affected by COVID-19. This is a "we" that may also be nefariously weaponised by brands with an interest in painting a picture of places, and even the world, as being free from discrimination and differences between people, in order for them to target a broader market demographic than usual.

As for the aural dimension, in the pandemic context, silence took on a new meaning. Although often used in advertising to signify anything from tranquillity to loss, during the pandemic it appeared as an obvious reference to the absence of traffic or people on the streets. In many cases, it is not actual silence that we hear⁶ but a representation of it, such as the BMW advert that replaced the background music and/or noise of the car engine with ambient sounds of nature.⁷ Indeed, it is not necessary for there to even be a soundtrack for silence to be represented. In many images, it is translated visually, for instance, by the absence of cars or people in advertisements that would normally have them as their main focal point.

The features discussed above do not necessarily occur in isolation; indeed, as a general rule, they are combined in audiovisual texts. It is, therefore, more beneficial, and of more interest to us, to see how these elements have been re-signified in the context of a specific advertising campaign. For this reason, we selected a campaign in which the re-signification process is evident, due to the fact that there already existed an earlier version of the same campaign, brought out in an entirely different context. In this way, it was possible to ascertain how images or sounds that previously meant one thing could be reconstrued to mean something else.

4. Coca-Cola: not so "original"

Coca-Cola has been one of the world's best-known brands for decades; hence, it is no coincidence that much research has been carried out into the company from many different perspectives (Méndez Noguero, 1995; Taylor, 2000; Ran 2010; Sánchez Porras, 2013, among others). Its advertising strategy, which oscillates between global and local, and between internationalisation and personalised campaigns, has been the subject of much sociological, communicative, and translational analysis.

During the pandemic, Coca-Cola did not neglect its communication with its potential buyers, but surprisingly – for a company famed for its pioneering role in advertising (Méndez Noguero, 1995) – it did not tap into its many resources to produce a completely original campaign. Instead, the adverts it created at this time involved the recycling of several of its best-known campaigns from the past.

⁶ Some scholars (Abril, 2007; Vidal Claramonte, 2017) have argued that total silence cannot exist, because it is always full of meaning in whatever context it appears.

⁷ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MljNPMBSvo0> (Accessed: 20 June 2022).

For the specific purpose of this paper, we will focus here on the “For Everyone” campaign (first launched in Spanish in 2002, then reproduced in 2020, see Gianatasio, 2020). The aim – as explained at the beginning of the article - is to uncover the processes by means of which this advert was invested with a new meaning in the context of the pandemic. We will argue that the second advert was re-created by means of a complex intersemiotic translation process. That is to say, it uses the same idea as the first ad launched in 2002, but by adding several new symbols and allusions to the pandemic, it was possible to recontextualise it while maintaining its (global) brand value.

4.1 “For everyone” campaign (2002)

The Coca-Cola “For Everyone” campaign was originally launched in 2002 for the Argentinian public (see Gianatasio, 2020), although it was later exported to Spain and elsewhere with slight variations. These were in response to the need to adapt one of the images which included the name of the country the campaign was launched in (e.g. “Argentina”, changed to “Perú”, “España” etc.) and the phrase “for us”, which had to be localised for the new audience.⁸ Some words corresponding to diatopic varieties of Spanish were also adapted, though in most versions of the advert, the speaker's accent is Argentinian. The success of the campaign, which was first intended to be local, led the company to subtitle it in English, and it still appears today on its global YouTube channel with these subtitles (uploaded in 2009). A later version of the same advert was uploaded in 2013.⁹ It was not able to find an official dubbed version (understanding “official” to be one uploaded by the company itself to its channel), and so an English version voiced by the same person who voiced the Spanish one was used here. This is the translation used for the analysis, and the speaker utters the following words:

For the fat, for the skinny, for the tall, for the short, for those that laugh, for the near-sighted, for those who cry, for the optimistic, for the pessimistic, for those who have it all, for those who have nothing, for the open, for the players, for the closed, for the families, for the anxious, for kings, for magicians, for the committed, for castaways, for the rockers, for those that go, for those who ride the train, for the well-mannered, for those who suffer, for bikers, for the ones who are there, for the ones who work, for the ones who are here, for the romantics, for those who love you, for those who love you not, for those who love you a little, for those who love you a lot, for the tanned, for nudists, for the superstitious, for the original, for jugglers, for the calculating, for the bald, for sportsmen, for those who read, for those who write, for astronauts, for twins, for the different, for clowns, for those who live alone, for those who live together, for the undecided, for kissers, for the first, for the last, for men, for the cautious, for her, for musicians, for the transparent, for the strong, for the ones who excel, for the ones who participate, for the ones who add, for the ones who won't be silenced, for us. For everyone.¹⁰

⁸ In the spot for the Argentinian market, for example, while the camera focuses on the word “Argentina” appearing on the can, the voice says “for us”, so the image was changed in each market, while the speech for that part of the spot remained the same.

⁹ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPmP7lwbASA> (Accessed: 20 June 2022).

¹⁰ English version. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcCSa77mzWk> (Accessed: 20 June 2022).

The discursive strategy used is obvious: it involves a parallelism in which the name of the brand and the product are deliberately left elliptical – though of course it is understood that the title of the campaign, "For everyone", refers to the product ("a Coke for everyone"). Moreover, the idea is not only to create a list of parallel phrases, but also to create a series of contrasts: that whatever you are like, there is a coke for you. In this way, diametrically opposed words are used, such as "fat-skinny", "tall-short", "optimistic-pessimistic". Interestingly, these kinds of physical allusions were omitted in later versions.

On the verbal level, the first-person plural is not used until the end of the monologue ("for us, for the whole world"). This use of "we" as a reference to a global population is not new for Coca-Cola, whose advertising and marketing strategies oscillate between localisation and internationalisation (Méndez Noguero, 1995). Many of its campaigns, despite starting out with the same idea, are filmed with physically different protagonists in order to maintain the closeness with the target audience (see, for example, the different versions of the "Brotherly Love" campaign in 2017 for countries such as Spain, Thailand, and Ecuador, among many others).

The verbal plane is extremely interesting from a semiotic point of view. As the voice narrates people's different characteristics (see the list above), images of Coca-Cola cans, boxes and bottles (i.e. the product) appear. Sometimes the image focuses on specific elements, for example, the top or bottom of the can, the bottle top, or the labelling. These, in turn, are modified to take on a specific meaning (the bottle half full or half empty, the can open or closed) and new meanings are also created by means of techniques such as zooming in on the images (focusing on a specific word on the labelling, on a part of the brand name or on a symbol, such as the trademark or the recycling symbol).

As for the auditory aspect, the voiceover for the English version is performed by the same person who did the Spanish version. This voiceover is male and the tone he uses is lively, even cheerful, due to the speed of the delivery (particularly at the beginning). The background music is also the same in both versions. The combination of all these elements (visual, verbal, auditory) clearly transmits a message of hope.

4.2 "For Everyone" campaign (2020)

Although most major international brands created advertising that was relevant to the pandemic, often making direct reference to it, this Coca-Cola advert stands out for being a translation of the previous one. In that case, there were several local versions, but for this new advert, there are many more.

The idea behind both campaigns is the same: a Coke for everyone, no matter what they are like. However, in the pandemic context, what the brand represents is not the people's *characteristics*, but their *circumstances* during the pandemic.

The parallel structure of the text in the first ad is reproduced in the 2020 version by repeating the same idea with a slightly different meaning, namely that Coca-Cola is the drink for all who are suffering during the pandemic in different ways. In the Spanish version, for instance, the preposition in the campaign title has been changed from "Para todos" to

“Por todos”. This small variation in the preposition introduces a change of meaning: by using "para", the public understands that there is a Coke for everyone, no matter what they are (like); using "por" implies a toast to the people that struggled against COVID-19 in different ways.

In English, the 2020 version goes like this:

For those who are apart, for those who are together, for our friends, for our families, for those we know well, for those we barely know, for classmates, for workmates, for relatives, for neighbours, for those who share, for those with little ones, for those with older ones, for those who can't work, for those who can't stop working, for those who cough into their elbows, for those who don't gather, for those who don't kiss, for those who have facemasks, for those who don't have facemasks, for those who came back, for those in quarantine, for those who wish they could come back, for the elderly, for those who help the elderly, for the firefighters, for the sanitation workers, for the volunteers, for the first responders, for the doctors and nurses, for those in fear, for the fearless, for those who join forces, for those who sing from balconies, for the strong, for the fragile, for those who recover, for those who are no longer with us, for those who are struggling, for those who never give up, for those who believe, for what we love the most, we will get through this, for everyone.¹¹

It is clear that, on the verbal level, the overriding idea is the same as in the 2002 advert. There continues to be parallelism in the structure – short sentences that begin, for the most part, with "for those" – and, as in the previous version, a series of contrasts are made, for example, "for those in fear, for the fearless".

Regarding the auditory dimension, it is worth noting that the same music is used in both versions. However, in the new context, it seems to acquire a new meaning and evoke new feelings. This may be due to the tone of the voice that voices the new message. It is spoken by the same actor, but in a much graver, more dignified tone.

As for the visual aspects, some of the images have remained unchanged (for example, bottles of different sizes are used to illustrate “for families”), but in others, the same images are used but with new meanings (a cap bent in the shape of puckering lips which, in 2002, referred to the line “For kissers”, in 2020 becomes "For those who don't kiss"). There are also new images with new meanings, for instance, the icon representing “throw away in the trash can” is focused exclusively on the upper part of the body by the camera while the voice says “for those who cough into their elbows”.

In the context of the pandemic, not only do the words evoke specific situations, but the images, either explicitly or otherwise. For example, the phrase "for those who sing from

¹¹ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wktR1XjYtTQ> (Accessed: 20 June 2022). It is worth mentioning that another English version for the United States was launched (voiced by a different person) that is much shorter, but shares the same idea: “For those living together, and those living apart, for classmates, graduates, and teachers making the best of it, for the restaurants delivering to our doorsteps, for the frontline workers, putting it on the line every single day, for this great nation, determined to be stronger on the other side. Thanks to all of you. We'll be together again.” Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fd9G9MBdv2U> (Accessed: 20 June 2022).

the windows" could have been used in any context, and yet, framed by the pandemic, it takes on a whole new meaning, with indirect allusions to confinement, isolation, and so on.

5. Final remarks and new avenues

This study, though limited, has attempted to offer a first approach to the recycling of audiovisual texts for new contexts. As we have seen - from the verbal level (including lexis, pronouns and structures) to the visual (images and symbols) and the auditory (music, silence, tone of voice) - there are many possible analytical perspectives, each of which deserve their own special attention.

The complexity of our case study stems from the fact that it is a multimodal text (in which the meaning is constructed through the interactions of all these levels) that has been translated into another multimodal text with similar characteristics, but to which changes have been introduced (in the images, tone of voice, verbal mode) to create new meanings. In the field of cinema, this would be considered a remake. However, in advertising, there has been little theorization about the process of recycling or reusing audiovisual content to produce a new, completely re-signified advertisement (although, it must be said, there are many cases of it). The development of an analytical model for multimodal translation would be very useful for future research that seeks to explore the repurposing of advertising texts to generate different meanings.

Sounds, silence, and images are all social and cultural constructs that we can interpret in accordance with models that we have internalized during our lives. However, the way in which an image can acquire a particular value, or music can take on different meanings, are still hotly debated. In the words of Scott (1990, p. 226): "Understanding a complex message like an ad would involve evoking several symbolic schemata – a huge regression of past exposures to pictures, words, sounds, and ads– and the making and matching of many hypotheses according to learned conventions".

Translation Studies, now that it has moved beyond the interlingual to take in all kinds of symbolic transfer and is no longer fixated on the concept of equivalence, is an essential discipline for analysing these transformations. Indeed, the very fact that there effectively exists a source text (the first manifestation of the advertisement) and a target text (a new version, produced in response to a new environment) means that the concepts, tools and methods developed in Translation Studies can easily be applied in the advertising domain. The advances made in Audiovisual Translation in particular, along with the multimodal turn in different epistemological areas and its application to Translation Studies (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001; Dicerto, 2018; Boria et al., 2020) are likely to prove fundamental when analysing advertising translations.

The signage and symbols that arose during the Covid-19 crisis not only invited us to re-examine the relationship between language, materiality, and public space, but also offered our discipline an opportunity to broaden its scope by turning its attention to public health and communication. The concept of multimodal translation, understood here as the

re-construction of a given multimodal text for new audiences and contexts, could contribute significantly to this debate.

Recently, many adverts have been launched that bring new perspectives on the pandemic, such as the announced “return to physical contact”. This understanding that the pandemic is now something from the past will surely renegotiate the multimodal landscape once again.

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THE BODY AS A TRANSLATION: THE SENSES AND WORLD WAR II IN *U VOJNY NE ŽENSKOE LICO* BY SVETLANA ALEXIEVICH

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ABSTRACT: In this paper, we aim to study the human body as a form of translation by unfolding the (non)presence of the senses in two editions of *U vojny ne ženskoe lico*, one of the most successful “novels of voices” by Nobel Prize-winning author Svetlana Alexievich. First published in 1985, the book gathers testimonies of women who fought in the ranks of the Red Army during World War II. By conducting a comparative analysis of the appearance (and absence) of sensory perceptions in two versions of the text (from 1985 and 2013), we have concluded that the writer makes multiple changes at a microstructural level. The overlapping of the senses in the discursive construction of the most recent version of the book helps Alexievich to translate the horrors of the bloodiest conflict in history, enabling the reader to feel the war through the body of another person.

KEYWORDS: Body, Translation, World War II, Alexievich

1. Introduction

As Foucault ([1966] 2006, p. 233) once stated, “[t]he body is the zero point of the world”. This is how the French philosopher emphasised the role of the body as the main agent of life, the epicentre of every living being. For several decades now, scholars from different epistemological fields have been paying particular attention to the body beyond the physical or metaphysical plane to examine it as a set of semiotic elements. For Federici and Parlati (2018, p. 7), the body “has become a point of intersection between various fields because it has always been a powerful metaphor for the understanding and exploration of social issues, sexual controversies and cultural debates”. And, according to Baynham and Lee (2019, p. 29), “it makes sense to treat the body as a semiotic object in that it speaks, which would thus align the body with other semiotic modalities, having its own communicative affordances”.

Meanwhile, the senses, as phenomena inherent to corporeality, also possess this power. Through sensations, we gather information about the world and experience it; this is the way our body translates reality. At the same time, bodies not only translate our current life; they are also a great source of knowledge from our past that shows us many ways of interpreting history, understanding it and even feeling it with our bodies.

In this paper, we would like to examine what human bodies and the senses can translate about war, particularly about World War II. Our analysis will be carried out on a corpus compiled from two editions of *U vojny ne ženskoe lico*¹ (1985, 2013), a literary work by Svetlana Alexievich, Belarusian journalist and winner of the 2015 Nobel Prize for Literature “for her polyphonic writings, a monument to suffering and courage in our time”².

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¹ English edition: *The Unwomanly Face of War. An Oral History of Women in World War II*, translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (New York: Random House, 2017).

² <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/2015/press-release/> (Accessed: 25 March 2022)

First published in 1985, the book contains multiple testimonies of Soviet women who took part in World War II. In its pages, the writer shares a new translation of the history of war from the double female point of view: from the witnesses she interviewed and from the writer herself. Alexievich (2013, p. 6) stresses that war as seen by women is different from war as seen by men, mainly because women focus on other aspects when they talk about it:

When women talk, this has nothing or almost nothing to do with what we are used to reading and hearing about: how some people heroically killed other people and won. Or lost. Which equipment there was and which generals there were. Female stories are different and about different things. “Women’s” war has its own colours, its own smells, its own light, and its own universe of feelings. Its own words. There are no heroes and incredible exploits, there are just people involved in inhumanly human tasks.³

As the author acknowledges, describing the war from a female perspective was a necessary task, since, in the case of the Soviet Union, war narratives were almost always presented from a male point of view. In the late 1970s, the future Nobel Prize winner decided to investigate how that approach would change if we were talking about women. As a result, she had the idea of interviewing former participants in the war and translating their stories. After talking to hundreds of women, in 1985 she published the Russian edition of *U vojny ne ženskoe lico*. It is worth noting that the text of the book has undergone numerous changes in the editions that have followed its first publication.

Which literary genre does *U vojny ne ženskoe lico* belong to? The debates about Alexievich’s books are ongoing, since researchers still have not had access to the recordings that she used to create her “novels of voices”, as she calls them. It is, therefore, impossible to determine the extent to which the journalist rewrites the initial material or manipulates the data. Nevertheless, some researchers have carried out the arduous task of comparing different editions of Alexievich’s works and have detected many discrepancies in the content (Ackerman and Lemarchand, 2009; Pinkham, 2016; Hniadzko, 2018). Thus, Hniadzko comes to the conclusion that, “Alexievich’s texts are collages of different little stories told by several people which she would later montage into one coherent narrative” (2018, p. 204). Although it is difficult to attribute a literary genre to her texts, specialists (cf. Novykov et al., 2021) relate it to the so-called *literary journalism*, placing her work somewhere between fiction and non-fiction.

In the latest edition of *U vojny ne ženskoe lico* (2013), the senses form the backbone of the narrative and allow Alexievich to embrace what Atwood (2009, p. 88) defined as “out of the body, onto the page”. Decades after the first publication of her debut novel,

³ Original: Когда женщины говорят, у них нет или почти нет того, о чем мы привыкли читать и слышать: как одни люди героически убивали других и победили. Или проиграли. Какая была техника и какие генералы. Женские рассказы другие и о другом. У «женской» войны свои краски, свои запахи, свое освещение и свое пространство чувств. Свои слова. Там нет героев и невероятных подвигов, там есть просто люди, которые заняты нечеловеческим человеческим делом. The translations from Russian into English in this article are ours.

Alexievich decided to rewrite it in order to focus more specifically on the human senses, a key tool for translating certain aspects of war. This is how she explains it:

I would like to write a book about war that would make people feel nauseous, that the very thought of war would be repulsive. Insane. That it would even make the generals feel nauseous...⁴ (Alexievich, 2013, p. 10).

Her idea is in line with one of Campbell and Vidal's (2019, p. xxxiv) approaches:

Perceiving through the eyes, ears, tongue or body of another opens the willing recipient (performer or spectator) to unfamiliar affects and sensory experiences, a "disorienting" event that can, if enacted in a safe environment, lead to personal growth and greater levels of awareness and understanding of the other, and thereby enhance cultural literacy.

Our main objective is to carry out a comparative analysis between two versions of *U vojny ne ženskoe lico*, published in 1985 and 2013, to determine how Alexievich translates the war through the senses and to reflect on the changes she introduces in her rewriting as well as the possible reasons for these modifications. In order to achieve the established objectives, we will draw on the comparative methodology of literary studies, as well as on the latest theoretical approaches in translation studies, which, among other novel approaches, have incorporated the concept of the body as a (form of) translation.

2. The body as a (form of) translation

Thanks to the latest theories in translation studies such as Gentzler's (2017) "post-translation" theory or Bassnett and Johnston's (2019) "outward turn", our discipline is increasingly opening up to new paradigms and seeking to study translation beyond mere interlinguistic transfer. In Gentzler's words (2017, p. 1), "translation phenomena appear in all languages, major or minor discourses, and in many forms of communication, not just written texts". The most progressive scholars amplify the concept of translation in their works and understand it as fundamental to all communicative acts. And, when we start thinking about what a communicative act is and who or what can communicate, we will realise that many objects around us can be studied within the framework of translation studies, even our own bodies.

Thus, we can say, with Vidal Claramonte (2018, p. 20), that the body "is never neutral and is never *only* a body, but a true semiotic system, of representation and of signification", which translates and can be translated. As Baynham and Lee (2019, p. 19) put it, "[o]ur body speaks"; consequently, in line with Cixous (1976, p. 880), "[c]ensor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time". Or, according to Reynolds (2020, p. 183), "the body has become a text imprinted by culture".

⁴ Original: "Написать бы такую книгу о войне, чтобы от войны тошнило, и сама мысль о ней была бы противна. Безумна. Самих генералов бы тошнило..."

The idea of studying the human body as a text or as a translation is not new; there is an increasing number of papers that focus their attention on what our body communicates and how it does it. Federici and Parlati (2018, p. 7) describe how the body functions as a “sign expressing a variety of metaphorical meanings” (and draws clear parallels with the concept of translation. In this regard, we can recall two articles published by Bennett (2007a, 2007b), in which she studies how the body communicates through movement, turning ballet into intersemiotic translation; or Vidal Claramonte’s analysis (2022) of the works of photographer Cindy Sherman, who “post-translates, translates outward by using her own body as a text that rewrites other bodies in order to deconstruct the male gaze” (Vidal Claramonte, 2022, p. 65). Other studies worth mentioning include articles by Baynham and Lee (2019), who seek to explain how gestures in capoeira and basketball can be interpreted as translations, and McCartney (2019), who, with the help of several dancers, studies how Michael Jackson posters are translated into movement. We might also recall two works by Carrasco López (2017, 2019), analysing the post-translations of women’s bodies in the novels of Moroccan-Spanish writer Najat El Hachmi; Rodríguez Arcos’ (2018, 2019) research on the rewritings of the female body in the media; Martínez Pleguezuelos’ (2021) study of the translation of the queer body or Cantarero Muñoz’s (2020) analysis of the new social network identities as post-translated bodies.

3. The female body in World War II: A Soviet perspective

Before going into detail about Alexievich’s work, it is important to consider the representation of the female body in war constructed by Soviet ideologues. In this sense, we witness the manipulation and projection of male visions onto the female body, with the aim of encouraging men to fight against Nazi Germany.

Among the best-known images, perhaps we should name the poster “Motherland is calling” (1941). It depicts a woman covered with a red cloth, who personifies a common mother for all Soviets—their Motherland—that they have to defend. This woman stares into the eyes of her viewer, engaging in an imaginary dialogue to convey the message of enlisting in the army. It should be pointed out that the image of the Motherland was first used by the White movement during the years of the Russian Civil War, but was subsequently appropriated by the Bolsheviks. According to Haarmann (2000, p. 6):

The connection between femaleness and Russia is initially invoked merely by its grammatical rendering: Rossiia carries a female gender, also the names of many nations whose people speak Slavic or Romance languages [...]. In Russia, however, this feminine identity is more deeply rooted; it extends to the multinational state being called a motherland rather than a fatherland. Not only does "Mother Russia" imply the protective spirit inherent in motherly attitudes and behavior, but it is also an allegory of the earth itself as a caring mother intrinsically related to village life, drawing sustenance from the soil.

Another famous depiction of the female body in war is a photo of the corpse of Zoya Kosmodemanskaya, an 18-year-old Soviet partisan, tortured and executed by Hitler’s

soldiers. This horrifying image of the body desecrated by Germans was published in *Pravda*, one of the most important Soviet newspapers, in January 1942. The article builds a myth about the life of Zoya, called Tanya, creating a story which somewhat resembles the life of Joan of Arc, a French heroine of the Middle Ages. The story goes that she kept threatening the Nazis until the very last moment. This image also motivates the Soviets to join the army to defend Russian women from these kinds of atrocities. While the image of the Motherland is associated with the representation of a mother or a wife (if we talk about the adult population), in the case of Kosmodemyanskaya, we are dealing with the case of a young girl who can be identified as a sweetheart or daughter of a soldier.

Finally, in many photographs from the war years we can see military women represented as sexual objects: beautiful, smiling, with model-like faces, sexy, well-dressed and well-groomed, as if they had just come out of a salon or a hairdresser's. These images published in the press were far from reality in several ways. For example, many women had to cut their hair and looked more like boys. In most cases, they had to wear men's clothes and shoes, because, in the early war years, there were no specific items produced for women. Difficulty in grooming was also a fact. We may also note that war photographs rarely show older or disabled women. In summary, we believe that all these (non)representations of women had only one function: to support the men who were on the front line encouraging them to stand against the enemy.

4. Bodies that translate the war in *U vojny ne ženskoe lico*

The importance of the concept of the body for Alexievich can even be perceived from the title of the book: *U vojny ne ženskoe lico* (*The Unwomanly Face of War*). The word *war* (*vojna*) is feminine in Russian, and so if war doesn't have a woman's face, what face does it have? We could ask whether the Belarusian writer felt that war has a man's face, or whether, perhaps, it is a faceless being.

How does Alexievich translate war? We want to emphasise that she not only uses the female body to express different sensations experienced by women on the front line, but also uses the concept of the body and related elements such as clothes or shoes to broaden her image of war, to show how people lived in that period, what fears women had and how they saw themselves. In this section, we will expound on several examples that illustrate different aspects related to the depiction of corporeality in war. The collected examples are from the 2013 edition.

One of the ideas Alexievich formulates in the book is the body's refusal to kill. The journalist exposes this through a story of a sniper who described her physical and emotional sensations about shooting a Nazi soldier for the first time: "Suddenly a thought came to me—he's a human being, he's an enemy, but he's a human being—and my hands began to tremble, I felt the trembling in my whole body, I got chills"⁵ (p. 27). Something similar was experienced by other women both during and after the war: "Many of us got sick. I had a

⁵ Original: "[И] вдруг такая мысль мелькнула: это же человек, хоть он враг, но человек, и у меня как-то начали дрожать руки, по всему телу пошла дрожь, озноб".

fever. Chills. I was lying there and crying”⁶ (p. 41); “How can they walk on our land! [...] My body temperature went up from those scenes”⁷ (p. 43); “My nose bled from fear, I wasn’t sure if I was still alive”⁸ (pp. 81-82). Women also remember the continuous fatigue: “[Y]our eyes get tired, get watery, you don’t even notice your hands, your whole body goes numb with tension”⁹ (p. 28); “Our eyes were so tired that it was hard to close them...”¹⁰ (p. 79).

Many of the soldiers interviewed focus on their physical appearance and reflect on their hair and clothing in the war years. They talk about the hair greying due to stress: “At nineteen my hair turned grey”¹¹ (p. 39); “At the age of twenty-two, I was standing guard for the first time...In those two hours my hair turned grey...”¹² (p. 52). They also regret the fact that they had to cut their hair, which made them look like men: “The girls arrived at military school with long braids... [...] Our commander [...] told us all to cut off our braids”¹³ (p. 48). It was not only the haircuts that made them feel uncomfortable. Alexievich’s interlocutors often describe the men’s clothes and shoes they had to wear: “I was ready to do great deeds, but I wasn’t ready to wear boots size 42 instead of 35. So heavy and so ugly!”¹⁴ (p. 48); “You’re at war, you’re preparing to die for the Motherland, and you’re wearing men’s underpants. You look ridiculous”¹⁵ (p. 53).

Another important point highlighted in the book is the desire to die rather than be disfigured or disabled: “I asked only one thing of God, that if they mutilate you, better let them kill you”¹⁶ (p. 27); “[I]t is better to have your head blown off by a shell than to be captured and brutalised”¹⁷ (p. 42). Finally, Alexievich also talks about the taboo subject, the use of women on the front line as sex objects: “There were three girls with us. At night, they got intimate with everyone who was able...”¹⁸ (p. 16).

5. World War II through sensory perceptions

In this section, we seek to explore the presence and absence of sensory perceptions in two editions of *U vojny ne ženskoe lico*. The five main senses (touch, smell, sight, hearing and taste) form a fundamental part of the narrative space of the most recent version of the book (2013) and allow Alexievich to transport us into the world of war. She probably did

⁶ Original: “Много нас тогда заболело. Температура высокая. Озноб. Лежу – плачу”.

⁷ Original: “Как они могут ходить по нашей земле! [...] У меня поднималась температура от этих сцен”.

⁸ Original: “У меня течет кровь из носа от страха, не знаю: жива я или не жива?”

⁹ Original: “[Г]лаза устают, слезятся, рук не чувствуешь, всё тело от напряжения немеет”.

¹⁰ Original: “До того глаза устанут, что трудно их закрыть...”

¹¹ Original: “В девятнадцать лет поседела”.

¹² Original: “[М]не было двадцать два года, я первый раз стояла на посту... И я за эти два часа поседела...”

¹³ Original: “Девушки приехали в училище с длинными косами... [...] Наш командир [...] велела всем косы состричь”.

¹⁴ Original: “Я готова была совершить подвиг, но не готова была вместо тридцать пятого носить сорок второй размер. Это так тяжело и так некрасиво!”

¹⁵ Original: “Ты на войне, собираешься умереть за Родину, а на тебе мужские трусы. В общем, ты выглядишь смешно”.

¹⁶ Original: “Об одном я Бога просила, если тебя изуродуют, то пусть лучше убьют”.

¹⁷ Original: “[П]уть лучше головы снарядом сорвет, чем они возьмут нас в плен, будут издеваться”.

¹⁸ Original: “У нас было три девушки. Они приходили ночью к каждому, кто мог...”

not pay attention to those aspects in the first draft, or else the Soviet censorship, which the author mentions, changed her plans. However, thanks to the extensive material Alexievich had collected while interviewing the female soldiers, she was able to modify the text later. We have chosen two references for each of the five senses mentioned in order to illustrate how the Belarusian writer constructs and reconstructs the everyday life of war.

5.1 Touch

The references to the perception of touch inject some uniqueness into the work, as they provide us with a possibility to “feel” the war. The main function of the skin is to protect our bodies from the outside world, to create a barrier between human beings and the environment. However, Alexievich’s interlocutors show that this barrier is not so insurmountable in the case of war.

As can be seen in Table 1, in the first edition of the work, one of the witnesses merely notes the fact that she had been taught to shoot with a rifle. However, in the second version of the same fragment, Alexievich adds a reference to the unpleasant sensation of holding a rifle in her hands. It is important to note that the interviewee is Maria Morozova, one of the best Soviet female snipers. Certainly, hearing it from a woman of this profession sounds strange; we believe that the Belarusian journalist chooses to add this detail to show that, even though Morozova managed to shoot down 75 Germans, her skin remembers the unpleasantness of holding the rifle.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 1985 (p. 64) | They taught us how to shoot a combat rifle. ¹⁹ |
| 2013 (p. 25) | There they taught us how to shoot a combat rifle, to throw grenades. At first...I’ll confess, I was afraid to pick up the rifle, it was unpleasant. ²⁰ |

Table 1. Morozova’s testimony.

Another example of unpleasant and uncomfortable feelings is that of contact between the body and the mud (Table 2). In the 2013 edition, through Maximchuk’s testimony, Alexievich shows the harsh weather soldiers had to deal with in the years of World War II. In this case, the witness explains that, due to weather conditions, on certain occasions the ground turned into mud that resembled dough. The soldiers had to carry heavy loads of military equipment through that mud. Knowing this, the reader can easily imagine the feeling of dampness and leg fatigue that the interviewee would have experienced. We can visualise Maximchuk in the midst of all this mud and, at the same time, we perceive her physical pain at the thought of how hard it would be for her to take each step. In the 1985 edition, this passage was omitted.

¹⁹ Original: “Нас там обучали стрелять из боевой винтовки”.

²⁰ Original: “Нас там учили стрелять из боевой винтовки, бросать гранаты. Первое время... Я, признаюсь, боялась винтовку в руки брать, было неприятно”.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 1985 | [Absent fragment] |
| 2013 (p. 42) | I remember how we carried the shells, carried the equipment through the mud, especially in Ukraine, the ground after rain or in spring was so heavy, it was like dough. ²¹ |

Table 2. Maximchuk's testimony.

5.2 Smell

As in the previous examples, in the case of the sense of smell, the writer also plays with the reader's sensory perceptions. Here are two fragments that Alexievich modifies in the rewritten versions of *U vojny ne ženskoe lico* to convey the smells of war.

What does war smell like? War has a fusion of smells that Alexievich introduces in the last edition of the fragment compiled in Table 3. This witness confesses that she still remembers the smell of corpses and *mahorca*, a kind of cheap tobacco. The stench of corpses has a clear association with death, while smoking is a historically male attribute. Tobacco use is also linked to stress, as at the time it was the only escape from reality available to Soviet soldiers, along with alcohol. So, the wartime smells mentioned by the sniper evoke the sensation of death, of the presence of men and of continuous nervousness.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 1985 (p. 70) | I had been on the front line, what hadn't I seen? Corpses and all the rest. And I was afraid to cross a ravine. It turns out that the war changed nothing in us. ²² |
| 2013 (p. 29) | I had been on the front line, what hadn't I seen? Corpses and all the rest. And I was afraid to cross a ravine. I still remember the smell of corpses mixed with the smell of <i>mahorca</i> [cheap tobacco]... But then I was still a girl. ²³ |

Table 3. Morozova's testimony.

Another smell of the war that some interviewees recall is the smell of burning. In Table 4, we see an example describing this smell, or rather a mixture of smells, as it combines the smell of burnt animals, burnt forests and burnt food (in the 1985 edition this fragment is not present). The interviewee emphasises several times that the smell was strange, unfamiliar, and one had to get used to it. This focus on smells allows Alexievich to expand the destructive image of war, which we usually see in films or books, and to accompany it with smells.

²¹ Original: "Помню, как таскали снаряды на себе, таскали орудия по грязи, особенно на Украине, такая тяжелая земля после дождя или весной, она как тесто".

²² Original: "[Ф]ронт прошла, чего только не повидала: и смертей, и разного, а тут овраг перейти страшно. Оказывается, война ничего в нас не изменила".

²³ Original: "[Ф]ронт позади, чего только не повидала: и трупов, и разного, а тут овраг перейти страшно. Я до сих пор помню запах трупов, смешанный с запахом махорки... Но так девчонкой и осталась".

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 1985 | [Absent fragment] |
| 2013 (p. 83) | The field and forest were burning...The meadow was smoky. I saw burnt cows and dogs...An unusual smell. Unfamiliar. I saw...Burnt barrels of tomatoes, of cabbage. Birds were burning. Horses...Many...Many black objects lay on the roads. You had to get used to that smell... ²⁴ |

Table 4. Anonymous testimony.

5.3 Sight

The narrative world that Alexievich builds in her several books offers innumerable images that arouse feelings and whose function goes beyond a simple representation of war. In this context, we would like to mention a reference that appears in an article by Daniuska González González (2018, p. 104 and p. 109), dedicated to another work by the Nobel Laureate, *Černobyľ'skaja molitva (Chernobyl Prayer)*. González González resorts to an unexpected comparison between the texts of the Belarusian writer, the photos taken in Auschwitz and the objects in the Chernobyl Museum: a curious description, in all three sources, of dolls left behind, scattered on the ground. In the case of *U vojny ne ženskoe lico*, we also witness how the author relies on striking images and plays with colours (red and black) to translate the horror of war through the eyes of its witnesses.

Morozova asks a rhetorical question about whether war films can be coloured (Table 5). But, at the same time, she states that in war everything is black, only the blood is red. This mixture of colours, black and red, represents a dark and gloomy image, an image of war.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 1985 (p. 72) | I don't remember either the birds or the flowers. Of course, they were there, but I don't remember them. So...It's strange, isn't it? ²⁵ |
| 2013 (p. 30) | I don't remember either the birds or the flowers. Of course, they were there, but I don't remember them. Yes, yes...It's strange, isn't it? Can war films be coloured? Everything there is black. Only the blood is a different colour, only the blood is red... ²⁶ |

Table 5. Morozova's testimony.

The contrast between the red colour of blood and the other colours recurs in the book's pages, but this time only in the last edition (Table 6). Semyonova, another of Alexievich's

²⁴ Original: "Горело поле и лес... Дымил луг. Я видела сгоревших коров и собак... Запах непривычный. Незнакомый. Я видела.... Сгоревшие бочки с помидорами, с капустой. Птицы горели. Кони... Много... Много всего черного валялось на дорогах. К этому запаху тоже надо было привыкнуть..."

²⁵ Original: "Ни птиц, ни цветов не помню. Они, конечно, были, но я их не помню. Вот такое... Странно, правда?.."

²⁶ Original: "Сколько была война? Четыре года. Очень долго... Ни птиц, ни цветов не помню. Они, конечно, были, но я их не помню. Да-да... Странно, правда? Разве могут быть цветными фильмы о войне? Там все черное. Только у крови другой цвет, одна кровь красная..."

interviewees, recalls the battle of Stalingrad, one of the bloodiest battles of World War II. While, in the 1985 edition, the witness simply states that she arrived in Stalingrad, in the 2013 edition, she gives more details. She stresses that it was the deadliest place and, to illustrate this observation, she points out that the water and the land there were red, red because of the blood. The reader can only imagine what it would be like to see it in person.

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 1985 (p. 112) | We arrived in Stalingrad. There was deadly battle going on there. ²⁷ |
| 2013 (p. 54) | We arrived in Stalingrad. There was deadly battle going on there. It was the deadliest place...The water and the land were red... ²⁸ |

Table 6. Semyonova's testimony.

5.4 Hearing

In *U vojny ne ženskoe lico*, Alexievich frequently includes references to sounds. Noises and silences are placed in many of the descriptions and create a cinematic effect, as the reader gets to "hear" the war. For this paper, we have chosen two representative examples to show how war "sounds".

In Table 7, Klavdia Krokchina recalls the moment she killed a German soldier for the first time. In both versions of this story, she stresses that she was trembling and crying after she had done it: she confesses that it was nothing like shooting at targets. Her testimony focuses on the difficulty of killing, but not only on the psychological aspect. In this context, we would like to point out an extraordinary detail in the last edition of the fragment, "...I heard my bones knocking". Through this chilling sound, both the author and the interviewee emphasise the body's refusal to kill on a physical level.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 1985 (p. 67) | And, you know, my whole body started to tremble, my whole body was shaking. ²⁹ |
| 2013 (p. 27) | And, you know, my whole body started to tremble, I heard my bones knocking. ³⁰ |

Table 7. Krokchina's testimony.

The following passage shows a different image of war, no longer of the physical sensations of a soldier, but of the sounds of battle (Table 8). In both versions of the fragment the sounds are the protagonists. While in the 1985 edition, the focus is on screams and groans, in the later version we are provided with more details: the description of the sounds of breaking bones. The already frightening narrative is intensified and accompanied by the sounds that rarely come to mind when we imagine a battle. We tend to think of screams

²⁷ Original: "Прибыли мы к Сталинграду... Там смертные бои шли."

²⁸ Original: "Прибыли мы к Сталинграду... Там смертные бои шли. Самое смертельное место... Вода и земля были красные..."

²⁹ Original: "И вот, знаете, меня всю затрясло, меня колотило всю".

³⁰ Original: "И вот, знаете, меня всю затрясло, я слышала, как стучали мои кости".

or gunshots, at least that is what is usually depicted in war films. However, some details can only be revealed to us by witnesses.

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 1985 (p. 163) | Heavy combat. I was in hand-to-hand combat...It is horrific. A human turns into something...inhuman... [...] They break each other's bones. Howls, screams, groans. ³¹ |
| 2013 (p. 87) | Heavy combat. I was in hand-to-hand combat...It is horrific...Inhuman... [...] They break each other's bones. Howls, screams. Groans. And that crunching... That crunching! Impossible to forget it. The crunching of bones...You hear a skull crack. How it splits open... ³² |

Table 8. Omelchenko's testimony.

5.5 Taste

The sense of taste is practically absent in the text. This may be due to the wartime famine, the lack of food supply. In the collected testimonies, food is often related to the imaginary life after the war. Many interviewees dream of eating bread when they come back from the front line.

In Table 9, we see a peculiar situation: Alexievich presents two different views of the same testimony about the person's eagerness to fight against Nazi Germany. In the first edition of the book, Lyubchik merely observes that she wanted to join the army. Later, however, Alexievich changes this view by adding a clarification that the witness was starving and wished to go to the front line because some food would be available there. Possibly, the first version was censored, since in the Soviet Union it was important to show the willingness to defend the homeland—a patriotic idea—and not to look for food, a biological necessity.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 1985 (p. 97) | The only thing on our mind was to get to the front line. ³³ |
| 2013 (p. 44) | We were starving. The only thing on our mind was to get to the front line. There would be food there. There would be rusks and tea with sugar. They would give us butter. ³⁴ |

Table 9. Lyubchik's testimony.

³¹ Original: "Бои тяжелые. В рукопашной была... Это ужас. Человек таким делается... это не для человека... [...] Ломают кости. Вой стоит, крик, стон..."

³² Original: "Бои тяжелые. В рукопашной была... Это ужас... Это не для человека... [...] Ломают кости. Вой стоит, крик. Стон. И этот хруст... Этот хруст! Его не забыть. Хруст костей... Ты слышишь, как череп трещит. Раскалывается..."

³³ Original: "В мыслях одно – попасть на фронт".

³⁴ Original: "Голодали. В мыслях одно – попасть на фронт. Там питание какое-никакое. Будут сухари и сладкий чай. Дадут масло".

Finally, we present one of the few descriptions of “food” that Alexievich shares with the reader (Table 10). Through a testimony of Podvyshenslaya, the writer portrays the horrors of the siege of Leningrad (1941–1944) that left the city practically without nourishment. Many contemporaries remember that citizens starved to death and looked like skeletons; there were cases of cannibalism. Podvyshenskaya describes the physical appearance of malnourished children who looked like old people. While in the 1985 edition she simply specifies their appearance, in the latest edition of the book she explains possible reasons for how they came to be in this state. According to the interviewee, there was no food in the city. People ate glue, shoes, belts, as well as animals and birds that lived there. The reader can imagine that the taste of the food was the less significant: the aim in the war was to survive by filling the stomach.

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 1985 (p. 131) | They were not children, they were sort of little old people. ³⁵ |
| 2013 (p. 66) | They were not children, they were sort of little old people. Mummies. They explained to us their menu, so to speak, during the siege: soup made with leather belts or new leather shoes, aspic made with carpenter’s glue, mustard pancakes...They had eaten all the cats and dogs in the city. The sparrows and magpies had disappeared. They even caught rats and mice to eat them... ³⁶ |

Table 10. Podvyshenskaya’s testimony.

6. Discussion

So, why does the writer make all these changes in the description of the senses in the latest editions of her book? First of all, we would like to point out that Alexievich rewrote *U vojny ne ženskoe lico* while she was a citizen of another country. The original text was published in the Soviet Union and was part of the so-called *war literature*, a very popular literary genre in the USSR. Censorship was an amount feature of the period, not only the state censorship that the author herself talks about, but also self-censorship. However, the latest version of her work was published in Belarus, a young country which, while maintaining a certain connection with the Soviet political tradition, is no longer linked to the communist regime. It is also important to mention that, before settling in Belarus in 2013, Alexievich spent more than ten years living in several different European countries, which may also have influenced her understanding of the world and prompted her to rewrite her debut book.³⁷

Secondly, a few years after publishing *U vojny ne ženskoe lico*, Alexievich had an opportunity to witness an armed conflict with her own eyes: she came face to face with the

³⁵ Original: “Это были не дети, это были какие-то маленькие старички”.

³⁶ Original: “Это были не дети, это были какие-то маленькие старички. Мумии. Они нам рассказывали о блокадном меню, если можно так выразиться: суп из кожаных ремней или кожаных новых ботинок, заливное из столярного клея, блинчики из горчицы... В городе съели всех котов и собак. Исчезли воробьи, сороки. Даже крыс и мышей ловили, чтобы съесть...”

³⁷ Alexievich has been residing in Germany since 2020 due to the political situation in Belarus.

war in Afghanistan while working on her new book. This experience could have changed her view of war and shown her the need to rewrite it.

Thirdly, the author's own particular style was gradually shaped as each new book came out. When working on new material, she sought her own way of expressing herself and constructing her narrative. Perhaps she wanted to give the texts that were already known to the public a second life.

And, finally, in one of her interviews in 1995 (Bek, 1995), the future Nobel Prize winner states that if she had been working on the book at that time, she would have asked her interviewees different questions. She would have tried to dig deeper into human nature and get closer to human beings as a biological species. We believe that, through her interweaving of the senses in the latest rewriting of the testimonies, the journalist tries to do just this: she focuses her attention on impressions of physical reality such as sounds, smells, colours or tactile sensations. These are her instruments for translating the war.

7. Conclusion

Alexievich's work is just one example of how the history of a war can be translated from a female perspective through the human body and senses. Alexievich embraces what Baynham and Lee (2019, p. 162) defined as "[t]ext and body cross[ing] each other", showing that, in order to describe the horrors of an armed conflict, it is not so relevant to cite the number of deaths or to specify the conduct of the enemy: it is enough to construct the narrative in such a way that the reader notices the presence of the witnesses and how incredibly intimate their story is. By resorting to the format of an emotional monologue, the writer alerts us to the fact that the war story is not a tale of unattainable feats and bravery, but, rather, a dark episode in the lives of people who are just like us. While in the first edition of *U vojny ne ženskoe lico* Alexievich was only beginning to develop this approach, in the latest edition she goes further, paying special attention to the senses that help her to translate certain aspects of war.

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O TRADUTOR NUM LUGAR PLURAL EM *VENGEANCE DU TRADUCTEUR*, DE BRICE MATHIEUSSSENT: ENTRE LEITURA E (RE)ESCRITURA

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RESUMO: O lugar do tradutor em relação ao texto de partida tem sido, por vezes, percecionado como ambíguo e paradoxal, entre a fidelidade dependente e a ativa intervenção da reescrita. Mediante um exercício de *close reading* do romance de Brice Mathieussent, *Vengeance du Traducteur* (2009), no presente artigo discute-se o modo como as duas vertentes do trabalho do tradutor se podem aproximar e complementar, no sentido de uma atenuação de fronteiras entre leitura, reescrita e escrita. A nota do tradutor, elemento central do romance, espelha esta dupla dimensão, surgindo como mecanismo de afirmação do tradutor, por um lado, e veículo de distanciamento crítico, por outro. A partir da observação deste espaço (para)textual reflete-se acerca da tradução como concretização de uma leitura individual e da recriação como motor da própria escrita. Conclui-se que o olhar exterior de que parte a tradução pode consistir numa experiência sensível e criativa do leitor-tradutor, motora de um gesto autoral radicado na materialização das possibilidades hermenêuticas da obra literária.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Vengeance du Traducteur*, Leitura, Reescrita, Nota do Tradutor

1. Introdução

O pensamento crítico acerca da tradução tem sido marcado, sobretudo a partir dos anos 1990, por uma viragem ficcional, em que o estudo da tradução e do tradutor tem por base a análise das suas representações ficcionais. O termo foi cunhado por Else Vieira, que definiu a viragem ficcional como “the incorporation of fictional-theoretical parameters as a source of theorization on translation and other hermeneutical processes” (Vieira, 1995, p. 51). A reflexão sobre a tradução a partir da literatura pode permitir perceber como é percecionada a figura do tradutor, considerando a sua dimensão mais subjetiva, enquanto ser individual de que também são características a sensibilidade e a criatividade, ocultadas por um trabalho por vezes tido como automático e imparcial. Em *Fictional Translators — Rethinking Translation Through Literature*, Rosemary Arrojo sublinha a potencialidade das representações ficcionais de revelar os conflitos interiores dos tradutores e outros aspetos ocultados pela imagem prevalecte sobre o tradutor e a prática da tradução (Arrojo, 2018, p. 9). O romance em análise, *Vengeance du Traducteur* (2009),¹ de Brice Mathieussent, tem como narrador autodiegético um tradutor, cuja voz assume a forma de nota de rodapé, num gesto de revolta contra a sua posição subalterna face ao autor do texto de partida. Este tradutor-narrador surge numa relação de simetria com o autor empírico do romance, Brice Mathieussent, também ele tradutor de obras norte-americanas para a língua francesa. O efeito de sobreposição entre o plano textual e extratextual concretiza-se também no facto de o tradutor se encontrar a traduzir o romance *Translator’s Revenge*, que em francês se intitula *Vengeance du Traducteur*. Nas suas notas, o tradutor exprime-

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¹ A partir daqui a referência será feita apenas com o ano de publicação.

se enquanto sujeito individual, ao mesmo tempo que narra, em parte, a história da tradução que vai construindo para além do texto de partida, por si recriado em larga medida. Esta sua tradução trata do relacionamento entre um tradutor, David Grey, que, ao invés do tradutor-narrador, traduz do inglês para o francês, e um autor, Abel Prote, aos quais nos referiremos como tradutor e autor-personagem. Contudo, os dois planos diegéticos sobrepõem-se no momento em que o tradutor-narrador passa a fazer parte da história que traduz e recria, inserindo-se nela como personagem, sob o nome de “Trad”. O efeito de espelho entre os dois planos é também manifesto, por exemplo, no título do romance de Prote traduzido por Grey: *N.d.T.*, que sugere o procedimento de escrita do tradutor-narrador, em nota de rodapé.

Tomando como ponto de leitura central a relação que o tradutor mantém com a obra e o autor original, proponho-me refletir acerca da relação entre autoria e o posicionamento do tradutor face ao texto de partida, tendo em vista perceber como se conjugam dois lugares aparentemente contraditórios: o olhar exterior do tradutor como um leitor da obra literária e o gesto de reescrita que o aproxima de uma posição autoral. De facto, a imagem do tradutor como ocupando um lugar de fronteira, em certa medida ambíguo ou incerto, é discutida por vários autores sob perspetivas diversas, como é o caso de Susan Bassnett e Peter Bush em *Translator as Author* (2006). No capítulo “Let poetry win — Translator as writer”, Holmström sublinha o que diz ser um paradoxo: “Creative transformation into a different language seems to call for a kind of paradox: both meticulous reading and then imaginative risk-taking.” (Holmström in Bassnett e Bush, 2006, p. 44). Outro exemplo é o de Klaus Kaindl que, em *Literary Translation Studies* (2018), constata a contradição entre a necessidade da tradução para a continuidade e a sobrevivência da obra literária e a posição do tradutor, exterior ao texto que traduz (Kaindl, 2018, p. 158). Pretende-se, então, problematizar esta noção do tradutor como existindo num lugar plural.

A resposta a este questionamento sugerido pela narrativa em estudo faz-se a partir de um exercício de *close reading* estruturado em torno de três problemáticas. Orientam a reflexão, entre outros, os estudos de Gérard Genette (1997), Jacqueline Henry (2000) e Theo Hermans (1996) acerca da nota, em geral, e da nota do tradutor, em particular, e da presença da sua voz na tradução, bem como a ideia de invisibilidade do tradutor proposta por Lawrence Venuti (1995). Convoca-se ainda o pensamento de Wolfgang Iser (1972) sobre o papel do leitor na construção da obra literária e o estudo de Silvia Kadiu, *Reflexive Translation Studies: Translation as Critical Reflection* (2019), sobre um conjunto de propostas de diversos autores relativamente à visibilidade e à criatividade do tradutor. A partir destes textos, observo, num primeiro momento, a nota do tradutor como forma de aceder à expressão do tradutor na sua própria voz. Procuo perceber de que modo a nota é marcada por uma dimensão espacial reveladora da posição do tradutor, não apenas na página, mas em termos mais abrangentes, no seu papel face ao texto de partida. Na segunda secção, proponho-me refletir sobre a posição do tradutor como leitor e observar de que forma a tradução pode ser resultado do contacto do tradutor com o texto de partida numa dimensão privada, marcada pela subjetividade e pela individualidade da leitura.

Finalmente, a terceira questão discutida prende-se com a problematização das fronteiras entre escrita e reescrita, tendo em atenção o modo como o romance em estudo sugere a sobreposição destas noções. Concluo que se aproximam, em *Vengeance du Traducteur*, duas dimensões do lugar plural do tradutor: o olhar exterior de um leitor do texto de partida e a conexão individual que com este se estabelece e que se concretiza na criatividade do gesto de reescrita.

2. Entre proximidade e distanciamento: a nota do tradutor

A narrativa do romance *Vengeance du Traducteur* constrói-se num espaço particular: a nota do tradutor. A nota de rodapé tende a ser o lugar que, na página, recorda ao leitor a presença do tradutor. Neste romance, a tradução do texto de partida encontra-se ausente, embora haja uma chamada para a nota, através do asterisco, que se cumpre no rodapé. O conjunto de notas vai ocupando de forma progressiva o espaço principal da página, que pertenceria à tradução do texto de partida, de modo que o lugar do tradutor se estende a todo o espaço do texto. A nota é, de forma metafórica, apresentada pelo tradutor como sendo o seu lugar de residência, a partir do qual abre as portas ao leitor. A narrativa principia da seguinte forma: “Je loge ici sous cette fine barre noire” (2009, p. 13). Ao longo da obra, este espaço no final da página parece refletir uma dupla dimensão do trabalho do tradutor.

A nota é a manifestação mais evidente da presença da voz do tradutor num texto traduzido, como analisa Theo Hermans, apontando para este elemento textual como um mecanismo que permite que a voz do tradutor alcance a superfície do texto e fale por si mesma, em nome próprio (Hermans, 1996, p. 27). A nota relembra ao leitor o facto de estar perante uma tradução. Esta consciência quebra a ilusão de transparência, procurada, de modo geral, por leitores, editores e autores. Segundo Lawrence Venuti, a tradução mais procurada, reconhecida, em contexto anglo-americano, é a que se lê como texto de partida, isto é, aquela em que não são perceptíveis marcas de uma presença outra no texto (Venuti, 1995, p. 1). O autor analisa a preferência de leitores e editores pela invisibilidade do tradutor e a transparência da tradução, que procuram criar a ilusão de leitura do texto de partida na língua de chegada. A qualidade do tradutor encontra-se, então, sobretudo na capacidade de integrar a obra na cultura de chegada, ao eliminar o mais possível a presença do “outro” diferente e, em consequência, esconder o próprio gesto da tradução². Efetivamente, a criatividade não é associada ao trabalho do tradutor e, legalmente, a sua “autoria” é apenas parcialmente reconhecida. A posição monolítica do autor e da obra parecem sobrepor-se à ideia de que possa haver uma contribuição do tradutor para o diálogo entre contextos linguístico-culturais e identidades. Venuti refere o modo como o silenciamento do tradutor e, com ele, da comunicação entre as culturas de partida e chegada, contribui para a consolidação de culturas dominantes e centradas sobre si mesmas. Pelo contrário, a preservação de elementos que indiciam a mediação da tradução

² “And over the past fifty years the comments are amazingly consistent in praising fluent discourse (...)” (Venuti, 1995, p. 2).

— termos arcaizantes, manutenção de estruturas sintáticas da língua de partida, por exemplo — são para o autor um meio de promover a heterogeneidade cultural ao colocar o leitor em contacto com culturas de menor representação. O tradutor de *Vengeance du Traducteur* parece ter consciência da problemática receção da nota do tradutor e por isso a usa como “arma” para se insurgir contra o seu estatuto “invisible et muet” (2009, p. 13). “Suis-je trop bavard?” (2009, p. 14), questiona o tradutor, apontando com ironia para o provável desagrado com que leitores e autor receberão a sua palavra.

Num ensaio acerca da nota do tradutor, “De l’échec à l’érudition” (Henry, 2000), discute-se a desconfiança com que a nota de rodapé pode ser recebida, por se tratar da intromissão de uma voz autoral outra, que vem alterar o todo pensado pelo autor, e interromper a fluência de leitura. Segundo Henry, a nota é percebida como uma quebra do pacto de invisibilidade entre autor e tradutor que a autora diz estar implícito em todos os processos de tradução, sob a forma de um “contrato moral” (Henry, 2000, p. 239). No romance, o autor ficcional, Abel Prote, numa carta que envia ao seu tradutor, relembra-lhe justamente que não deve acrescentar qualquer tipo de nota ao seu texto, porque “dans votre travail de traducteur, la plus grande rigueur s’impose” (2009, p. 58). Esta passagem é reveladora do modo como a nota do tradutor é depreciada pela figura autoral, e de como pode ser entendida como uma divagação ou comentário, que não teria o seu lugar num “trabalho sério e rigoroso”. A progressiva extensão das notas, no romance, é a forma que o narrador-tradutor tem de fazer a sua voz ganhar predominância, contrariando a invisibilidade que lhe é imposta e penetrando o espaço “nobre” da página.

A nota funciona também em *Vengeance du Traducteur* como espaço de expressão do tradutor numa dimensão mais pessoal, através da comunicação de pensamentos, aspirações e pontos de vista, de modo geral velados pelo anonimato do trabalho que desempenha. Neste sentido, a escrita autodiegética do tradutor assume contornos de um estilo que poderá dizer-se diarístico. Esta escrita diarística manifesta-se, por exemplo, no modo como dirige o discurso a uma entidade, concretamente a um “leitor”, como se se tratasse de uma confissão. O tom confessional, e muitas vezes queixoso, transparece em passagens como: “Ce n’est pas une vie, c’est à peine exister” (2009, p. 14). O tradutor expõe também nestas notas a perceção que tem de si mesmo, como se percebe nos numerosos adjetivos com que se descreve: “désincarné”, “fantôme obéissant”, “fidèle comme l’ombre”, entre outros (2009, p. 14), metáforas que remetem para a posição tradutiva mais tradicional e conservadora, alinhada com a referida “invisibilidade”, nos termos de Venuti (1995), aqui associada a uma situação sombria de não-vida, de apagamento. O tradutor dá também conta, em nota, das suas aspirações, nomeadamente a de alcançar uma posição de maior visibilidade: “Que verrais-tu, mon lecteur? Qu’y a-t-il derrière la porte ? Quel espace inconnu découvririons-nous ensemble?” (2009, p. 17), “J’aimerais me relever (...) puis gagner la station verticale” (2009, p. 27). Esta escrita de carácter íntimo encontra ainda particular expressão num poema que o tradutor acrescenta ao texto de partida e que reproduz em nota. Nele constrói um retrato daquela que é a sua condição: “L’ombre de l’après-midi sur le cadran solaire/Montrant que le labeur reclame son salaire” (2009, p. 41).

Embora o diálogo que este último estabelece com o leitor seja marcado por um discurso centrado na expressão do “eu”, o tradutor permanece anónimo, atribuindo-se apenas o nome de “Trad”, no momento em que passa a ser também personagem da sua tradução. Este anonimato reforça a sua invisibilidade e sugere uma forma de albergar na situação que apresenta como sua a de todos os tradutores anónimos.

Se a nota do tradutor surge como espaço de expressão, ou poder-se-ia dizer, tradução do “eu”, a obra ficcional em estudo parece traçar, ao mesmo tempo, uma visão menos positiva do espaço reservado ao tradutor. A nota tem, como referido acima, uma dimensão espacial muito marcada e que é contrastada com a “residência vizinha”, a do autor. O espaço que cabe ao autor contrasta com o do tradutor por ser luminoso, amplo, permitindo-lhe receber convidados: os leitores. O “domicílio” em rodapé que o tradutor habita é caracterizado de forma oposta, como sendo um local estreito, claustrofóbico, subterrâneo e sombrio. Várias metáforas vêm caracterizar esta sua posição, sendo reveladoras da forma como se autoperceciona, como a toupeira, ou o mineiro no seu túnel escuro (2009, p. 20). A barra preta, que divide a nota do texto principal, e o asterisco, são duas marcas gráficas que o tradutor acusa de o excluírem do espaço de criação. Ainda que os dois asteriscos iguais, no texto e na nota, relembrem, num efeito de espelho, a proximidade entre autor e tradutor e uma possibilidade de comunicação entre os dois, o asterisco remete o tradutor para o lugar mais discreto e sempre dependente do outro: “J’ai un fil à la patte, je suis une comète non seulement en négatif, mais aussi en laisse, un astre domestique” (2009, p. 15). Dependente do texto de partida, está-o ainda relativamente ao leitor, que tem a escolha de não ler a nota, e do editor, que determina a posição das notas. A linha preta estabelece a fronteira na página e é uma barreira que separa um lugar superior de criação de um lugar inferior de adição e complemento, marcado por restrições de espaço e de criatividade. O próprio leitor pode vir a sentir-se claustrofóbico em casa do tradutor: ao impedir a aproximação, o texto parece tornar-se desconfortável: “Prends garde, simplement, de ne pas te cogner la tête au plafond.” (2009, p. 13). Neste sentido, é também sugerido que as relações entre leitor e tradutor não são comuns. Habitando a nota de rodapé, o tradutor ocupa um lugar que dá a ver preferencialmente a sua posição de leitor mais do que a de autor. Na nota, o tradutor tende a observar o autor e a levar os leitores a fazer o mesmo.

Ao situar o tradutor no exterior do corpo do texto principal, a nota parece quebrar uma fusão total com o texto de partida, dado o seu carácter estrangeiro ao texto, embora partilhe com este o espaço da página (Henry, 2000, p. 229). Gérard Genette aponta justamente para este lugar de fronteira que ocupa a nota, entre texto e paratexto: “if the paratext is an often indefinite fringe between text and off-text, the note (...) perfectly illustrates this indefiniteness” (Genette, 1997, p. 343). A relação entre o tradutor de *Vengeance du Traducteur* e a personagem feminina que reconstrói na sua tradução, Doris, é relevante para pensar o distanciamento imposto pela nota enquanto elemento paratextual. A conotação erótica da personagem torna-se evidente ao longo do romance, como se viesse colmatar a necessidade de haver na tradução um ato íntimo. Se no texto do

autor original Doris será apenas secretária de Abel Prote, o autor-personagem, o tradutor transforma-a numa “musa”, que de amante do autor passa a amante do tradutor-personagem, David Grey. Este último, querendo vingar-se do autor, parece conseguir afirmar-se perante o seu autor a partir do momento em que estabelece uma relação íntima com Doris. Quando o tradutor se coloca a si mesmo como personagem da sua tradução, na figura de “Trad”, e acaba por, num gesto mimético, se tornar ele próprio amante de Doris, significativamente a sua tradução alcança o estatuto de obra de partida, publicada em seu nome (2009, p. 107). Assim, estas ligações íntimas entre Doris e as demais personagens da obra, autor e tradutores, sugerem uma associação entre a “musa” e a ideia de original, de inspiração criativa. De facto, quando o tradutor entra na sua tradução e confronta as personagens com a onisciência de quem conhece o desenrolar dos acontecimentos da história, Doris é a única cujas ações fogem à narrativa delineada: “C’est elle qui dérouté la trajectoire promise, elle qui déroule son jeu imprévu.” (2009, p. 266). Enquanto personificação do texto de partida, a personagem feminina escapa ao domínio total do seu autor, como se representasse a parte do texto que se liberta de quem o cria. A aparente dependência por parte dos tradutores relativamente a Doris aponta para uma vontade de intimidade com o texto de partida que é aqui representada por imagens de carácter erótico e sexual. O acolhimento do tradutor no corpo do texto de partida é sugerido em dois momentos por diálogos interiores de Doris, dirigidos a Grey e a Trad, em que o envolvimento físico se confunde com o gesto da tradução: “Traduis-toi en moi” (2009, p. 290). O tradutor propõe justamente uma definição de tradução como ato de amor, “possession magique, à la fois souveraine et délicate (comme l’acte d’amour)” (2009, p. 70). Numa variação da metáfora de intimidade, refere-se ainda a tradução como um ato canibal, fazendo-se uma descrição detalhada do modo como o tradutor “devora” o texto de partida para o digerir na sua língua (2009, p. 19). Esta visão da tradução como um gesto de envolvimento total com o texto, de fusão com a obra de partida, parece ser, de certo modo, contrariada pela presença do tradutor na nota. Reconhecendo o paratexto como espaço de residência que lhe é reservado, o tradutor aparenta carecer desta intimidade, que procura compensar no modo como recria a personagem Doris e as suas relações eróticas com o autor e tradutores.

Finalmente, a nota do tradutor desempenha uma reflexão sobre o próprio gesto de tradução. Nestes casos, a nota coloca o tradutor numa posição analítica, de crítico do seu próprio trabalho. De facto, as notas do tradutor podem ser definidas como “paratextual spaces where translators act as ‘textual critics’ intervening and discussing ‘alternative textual variants’ or showing ‘the elusive nature of translation’” (Loffredo e Perteghella in Kadiu, 2019, p. 58). A nota, como manifestação de uma dúvida ou insuficiência da tradução para a restituição do texto de partida, dá conta da tradução como exercício marcado pela subjetividade, como ato humano falível. Na obra ficcional em estudo, é recorrente que o tradutor sublinhe e enalteça as alterações, supressões ou acrescentos que faz ao texto de partida. Esta frequente necessidade sentida pelo tradutor de defender o seu trabalho pode refletir a forma como sente que a criatividade não é, de modo geral, considerada como

parte do ato de tradução. Espera-se do tradutor que dê conta dos seus procedimentos de escrita, o que não acontece relativamente ao autor original. Nos momentos em que o próprio tradutor, desempenhando a posição de um leitor com uma proximidade privilegiada à obra – por ter, neste caso, possibilidade de contacto direto com o primeiro criador – questiona o autor acerca de determinadas escolhas criativas, este responde de forma vaga e pouco esclarecedora, num contraste evidente com as explicações múltiplas do tradutor ao longo das suas notas (2009, p. 26). A nota surge, então, como um momento de distanciamento em que o tradutor assume uma postura crítica relativamente à própria tradução, e em que pode transparecer a relação que o tradutor mantém com o texto de partida. Assim, se, por um lado, a nota é um meio de expressão da voz do tradutor e de afirmação da sua presença, por outro, enquanto elemento paratextual, constitui um olhar exterior que parece opor-se a uma imersão na totalidade, uma fusão entre o tradutor e a obra. Este olhar do tradutor sobre o texto, que a nota revela, pode ser um ponto de partida para pensar o lugar do tradutor como leitor.

3. A tradução como leitura individual e criativa

O exercício de tradução parte de um olhar exterior sobre o texto, em que o tradutor ocupa a posição de leitor, num envolvimento primeiro que vai sendo aprofundado no gesto da (re)escrita. Assim, a tradução pode ser percebida como resultando em primeira instância de uma experiência sensível e subjetiva que radica no contacto com a obra de partida. De facto, a criatividade do tradutor depende tanto do texto de partida como do envolvimento que com ele estabelece: “Far from being removed from its source, the translator’s response to a text is inevitably indebted to it” (Kadiu, 2019, p. 62). Em *Vengeance du Traducteur*, embora a ideia de revolta contra a figura autoral pareça ser o principal motor desta tradução invadida pelas notas do tradutor, torna-se também evidente a conexão que se estabelece entre o tradutor e o texto de partida, e que motiva o envolvimento criativo na sua tradução. Note-se a seguinte confissão do tradutor quanto à sua experiência de leitura: “J’étais vraiment emballé par les qualités du roman, son ambition, son originalité, son côté monstrueux, son impact visuel, la précision de l’écriture.” (2009, p. 233). Esta passagem sugere a confiança do tradutor na potencialidade do texto de partida como ponto inicial de uma tradução. Ao longo da obra, outros momentos revelam o envolvimento afetivo com o texto de partida: “Je traduis avec délection ce passage de *Vengeance du Traducteur*” (2009, p. 103). A confiança no texto de partida, por um lado, e a reação sensível no contacto com o mesmo, por outro, parecem ser condições para o exercício da tradução. Relembre-se, a este propósito, o primeiro passo do movimento hermenêutico proposto por George Steiner: a confiança de que haverá algo no texto de partida merecedor de um investimento na tradução (Steiner, 1975, p. 296). A relação com o texto de partida, *Translator’s Revenge*, e a confiança do tradutor no texto de partida parecem estar sobretudo ancoradas num envolvimento com as personagens da obra nas quais se revê e com as quais desenvolve uma proximidade que tem por base a sua própria imaginação, o que o conduz a completar as suas efabulações para as tornar mais reais. Assim, o tradutor acrescenta, por exemplo,

passagens sobre a infância de Abel Prote (2009, p. 47), encontros entre David Grey e Doris Night e outras “tribulations souterraines, érotiques, épistolaires et passionnelles des personnages”, que o próprio cria (2009, p. 133). É a partir destas personagens do texto de partida, e do pensamento criativo que desenvolve sobre elas, que o tradutor se apropria do texto que traduz. A escrita da tradução é, então, uma atividade que depende tanto do texto de partida como da apropriação que dele faz o tradutor; daí que este último se refira, pensando nas personagens do texto que traduz, a uma escrita colaborativa: “notre écriture” (2009, p. 224). As personagens do texto de partida evoluem com o tradutor, e a sua história desenvolve-se na imaginação deste leitor privilegiado que a fixa num novo texto, em que estas surgem já como a sua “progéniture” (2009, p. 225).

A propósito da imaginação do leitor como parte essencial do relacionamento com a obra, Wolfgang Iser (1972) reflete acerca da leitura como um processo criativo que não se resume à percepção do que é lido, mas que é parte ativa na construção da obra literária, ativando as suas possibilidades interpretativas (Iser, 1972, p. 280). A parte ativa do leitor no contacto com o texto é, então, definitiva para a própria existência da obra: “Reading causes the literary work to unfold its inherently dynamic character” (Iser, 1972, p. 280). Iser propõe que o encontro entre o texto e a imaginação do leitor resulta numa dimensão virtual de existência da obra. Segundo o autor, o carácter virtual deste encontro prende-se com o facto de não poder ser claramente definido ou identificado (Iser, 1972, p. 479). Por um lado, esta noção de leitura como exercício criativo sugere-nos que o tradutor, enquanto leitor, parte desde logo de um gesto criativo na sua primeira interação com o texto. Por outro lado, a tradução pode ser justamente o lugar em que se concretiza a “dimensão virtual” da leitura, o encontro entre o texto e a imaginação do leitor, através da sua materialização num espaço textual. Tal pressupõe uma visão da tradução não tanto como transposição, mas antes como encontro de dois gestos criativos, o de leitura e o de escrita, que se completam. A tradução que o tradutor de Mathieussent (2009) dá a ver nas suas notas de rodapé parece revelar, através do exagero da transformação – acrescento de longas passagens, colagens de excertos de outros textos, construção de personagens – o ato imaginativo de um tradutor-leitor que, ao contactar com o texto de partida, o completa e reescreve com a sua própria leitura criativa, considerando-se mesmo melhor conhecedor da trama e das personagens do que o próprio autor.

Esta noção da tradução como fixação de uma leitura individual comporta uma dimensão fragmentária, no sentido em que é reveladora de uma entre várias possibilidades de relacionamento com o texto. Iser refere que cada texto pode ser concretizado pelo leitor de várias formas e, como tal, nenhuma leitura esgota todo o potencial da obra (Iser, 1972, p. 285). No romance em estudo, a ideia de fragmento é central, dada a construção da narrativa a partir da nota, como discutido na secção anterior. Por um lado, o carácter fragmentário da nota resulta da sua curta extensão e do facto de se referir a uma porção limitada do texto (Genette, 1997, p. 319). Por outro lado, sendo com frequência um comentário relacionado com uma opção entre hipóteses possíveis de tradução, ou justificação de uma decisão, como referido acima, relaciona-se sobretudo com uma leitura

individual que implica escolhas, mesmo que inconscientes: “Elle [la traduction] suppose un exercice d’interprétation récurrent, un art des variantes et du choix, auquel la N. D. T. prend tout naturellement part” (Sardin, 2007). As alusões ao fragmento são diversas ao longo do romance, apresentado como noção constitutiva do exercício de tradução. Neste sentido, o tradutor descreve a tradução como um transporte de objetos frágeis de um lado ao outro do oceano, que acabam sempre por se partir em pedaços (2009, p. 35). De modo semelhante, David Grey, o tradutor-personagem, encontra na praia uma série de “débris divers” (2009, p. 51), pedaços que são justamente fragmentos de todo o tipo de objetos, dos quais é feita uma longa descrição. A obra alude à ideia de fragmento também através da sua composição, baseada na articulação de vários discursos fracionados. A narrativa compõe-se de diferentes planos que se alternam e da intromissão de personagens de um tempo passado cuja voz se faz ouvir mediante a presença de cartas.

O fragmento pode ser ainda observado, no romance em estudo, como “détail révélateur” (2009, p. 71). Este detalhe que se torna tão relevante como o todo — “Renonçant à toute saisie globale, j’aime donc le fragment (...), la partie qui remplace le tout (...)” (p. 71) — é sintomático de uma nova forma de olhar a obra, que a partir da totalidade de possibilidades que a constituem, retém, ou revela, determinados aspetos em particular. Esta presença insistente da ideia de fragmento associada ao resultado do trabalho do tradutor aponta para o modo como a tradução pode estabelecer uma relação metonímica com o texto de partida, sendo o fragmento portador de significados tão relevantes na experiência de leitura quanto a obra no seu todo. Neste sentido, Iser argumenta, quanto ao processo de leitura, que da interação do leitor com o texto é possível que uma passagem ou particularidade da obra assuma maior importância do que aquela que o autor teria considerado (Iser, 1972, p. 281). A dimensão criativa da atividade do tradutor no seu papel de leitor, que concretiza no ato da reescrita, aproxima a tradução da interpretação e do comentário crítico, enquanto discursos que atualizam as potencialidades da obra literária e as concretizam em novos textos. Gianni Vattimo, em “Translation and Interpretation” (1997), aponta para a semelhança entre a interpretação e a tradução, dado que se trata de gestos de transposição de um texto para linguagens ou imagens compreensíveis àquele que interpreta. Assim, “the conditions of the interpreter and the translator are substantially the same” (Gadamer in Vattimo, 1997). Como acima referido, a voz individual do tradutor pode ser identificada na tradução, de modo mais evidente, a partir da nota, mas ainda nas escolhas do tradutor reveladoras da sua subjetividade, que um leitor-modelo distinto do do autor original também justifica, como faz notar Theo Hermans (1996, p. 26). No romance em estudo, não só a dependência da tradução face ao texto de partida é visível, como também o modo como o texto de partida se encontra vulnerável à tradução. O tradutor decide quais as passagens do texto de partida que dá a ver inalteradas em nota, e as que só apresenta como produto da sua própria criatividade. Através deste cenário marcado pelo exagero das transformações feitas pelo tradutor, sugere-se a vulnerabilidade do texto de partida face ao poder criativo do tradutor. Em certos passos, surge a ideia do tradutor como sussurrando as palavras ao texto de

partida: “Je lui chuchote ses répliques une à une” (2009, p. 21). Assim, a ideia de sobreposição de dois gestos criativos num mesmo espaço textual, por via da nota do tradutor, pode conduzir a um questionamento das fronteiras entre o escritor e o (re)escritor e à reflexão sobre em que medida o romance em estudo sugere a contaminação entre estes dois lugares.

4. Fronteiras entre escrita e reescrita

Vengeance du Traducteur questiona as fronteiras entre a escrita como gesto original de criação, e a tradução como reescrita fiel a um texto de partida. Na ficção em estudo, o tradutor e o autor são figuras que se aproximam, de modo que a reescrita surge com características de um texto de partida e, simultaneamente, a escrita original constitui-se também de movimentos de reescrita. A este propósito é relevante o modo como o tradutor descreve a escrita ficcional: como sendo movida pela infidelidade e a preguiça (2009, p. 20). Estas duas características que o tradutor denuncia na escrita criativa opõem-se à fidelidade e ao labor tradicionalmente exigidos num trabalho de tradução. Assim, o tradutor chama a atenção para o modo como estes aspetos muitas vezes apontados como defeitos de uma tradução são, na verdade, motores da própria escrita. O romance de Mathieussent mostra, então, como a escrita e a reescrita partilham estas características: por um lado, no sentido de dependerem de textos que as precedem, por outro, de terem como base a incorporação de outras vozes que não a própria.

Em primeiro lugar, a obra constrói uma imagem do autor como leitor de outros textos, e da criação justamente como reação, resposta ou memória de uma tradição literária anterior. Sublinha-se em diferentes momentos a recuperação que o autor faz de outros textos, através de citações e outros mecanismos de intertextualidade: “Il s’agit d’une citation de *Monnaie de singe* de William Faulkner” (2009, p. 13), “une citation de Joyce” (2009, p. 26), “Prote semble connaître la première séquence du *Mépris* de Godard” (2009, p. 59). A convivência de textos dentro da obra de partida é ainda evidenciada num passo em que o tradutor encontra no texto do seu autor uma passagem plagiada de um romance de Nabokov (2009, p. 32). Grey, o tradutor-personagem, ao percorrer a biblioteca do seu autor, encontra uma série de exemplares anotados que sugerem a necessidade do autor de se inspirar em textos anteriores aos seus, e dos quais se encontrarão possivelmente ecos no seu texto de partida. De passagens como estas transparece uma noção de literatura como sistema dinâmico, em que a criação surge de uma transfiguração criativa de matéria já existente, contrariando uma conceção individualista e romântica de autoria, que segundo Venuti continua a ser predominante (Venuti, 1995, p. 6). O estatuto monolítico da obra é ainda contrariado, no romance em estudo, por um jogo de *mises en abyme* (2009, p. 296) em que as obras são refrações de outras anteriores: o romance *Vengeance du Traducteur* do autor Brice Mathieussent contém a obra homónima de um autor anónimo, em cuja história se encontra um livro intitulado *N.d.T.*, na qual se pode supor que haverá também um tradutor e a obra que traduz. Cada texto contém já em si um novo texto, e a tradução do tradutor-narrador surge igualmente como uma obra que deriva

da anterior. Contrariamente a uma conceção romântica de originalidade absoluta, em que a subjetividade do escritor é tida como fonte única do ato criativo, sugere-se que a obra literária se constrói num diálogo com outras. É de notar o facto de o próprio tradutor fazer também uso destes mecanismos de intertextualidade e recuperação de textos, por exemplo ao recuperar fragmentos de um livro do seu autor, *Fragments Épars*, para substituir passagens retiradas de *Vengeance du Traducteur*. Do mesmo modo, numa descrição de um pesadelo que acrescenta ao texto de partida, o tradutor convoca duas novelas de Edgar Allan Poe e um quadro de Goya, no espaço de uma única nota, o que reforça a ideia de criatividade ancorada na memória de outras obras. Em segundo lugar, a ideia de infidelidade parece ser concretizada na associação entre escritor e máscara. Assim, conta-se a história do autor-personagem, Abel Prote, e da sua fixação pelo uso de disfarces e encarnação de personagens. Este gosto por se transformar em “outro” relembra a noção de escrita como um fingimento, ou como divisão do eu em outros, atributo comum do tradutor em ficções de tradução. Neste sentido, o escritor aproxima-se do reescritor, a quem se associa de forma mais corrente a ideia de encarnação da alteridade: Proteu, dotado do poder de metamorfose, é a “divindade tutelar” do tradutor-personagem, David Grey (2009, p. 18). A esta ideia junta-se a imagem do camaleão (2009, p. 22). Embora a capacidade de metamorfose possa dizer a criatividade do tradutor para, tal como um autor, dar vida a vozes que não são a sua e que através da sua voz adquirem possibilidade de expressão, parece antes estar na origem de uma imagem do tradutor como alguém cuja verdadeira identidade não é conhecida, ou que se esconde atrás de outra pessoa, como diz a metáfora do “hidebehind” (2009, p. 19). A imagem do disfarce e da manipulação da matéria criativa – neste caso personificada por Doris, que o autor faz entrar nos seus jogos de disfarces – contrariam uma expectativa de transparente autorrepresentação – e expressão de si, que parece moldar a conceção de escrita e de autoria, como o observa Venuti (1995, p. 6). Quanto à originalidade, Vattimo, recuperando ideias de Hegel e Heidegger, propõe uma visão da obra literária como construção à imagem de uma ideia primeira de original, ou seja, a obra como sendo já uma mediação dessa ideia original: “it is not only co-constituted by its interpretations, but it is indeed an interpretation since its origin” (Vattimo, 1997, p. 55).

A aproximação entre autor e tradutor manifesta-se ainda mediante o referido efeito de *mise en abyme*, que permite questionar a independência de cada personagem e obra literária no romance. Os dois autores escrevem livros sobre tradução – *Vengeance du Traducteur, N.d.T* – que, significativamente, principiam com a mesma frase, tornando evidente a sobreposição (2009, p. 72). São, então, as figuras autorais que tratam em primeiro lugar de questões relacionadas com tradutores e tradução. O tradutor diz encontrar em David Grey o seu semelhante — “mon semblable, mon frère” (2009, p. 66). É curioso notar o modo como este verso de Baudelaire no poema “Au Lecteur” (Baudelaire, 1991, p. 56), dirigido justamente à figura do leitor, surge aqui em referência ao tradutor, o que reforça o papel do tradutor como leitor, mas um leitor hipócrita (“hypocrite lecteur”), adjetivo que sugere a dimensão interpretativa e a capacidade de criação de papéis por

parte do leitor da obra literária e, neste caso, igualmente do tradutor. Também entre os autores se encontram marcas de uma possível sobreposição, como o bilinguismo de Abel Prote e a relação com uma figura paternal autoritária, que sugere a figura autoral do ponto de vista do tradutor. No próprio nome “Prote” ecoa uma semelhança com Proteu, o deus da metamorfose que é dado como divindade protetora do tradutor. O trabalho deste tradutor prende-se com uma vontade de aperfeiçoamento do texto de partida e de chegar a um romance perfeito (2009, p. 233). Esta possível sobreposição entre autor e tradutor sugere que a tradução pode ser um espaço de construção do sujeito, em que este se descobre no contacto com um texto que o afeta de determinada forma e a partir do qual afirma o seu próprio modo de expressão. Segundo Susan Bassnett, a tradução é uma atividade reflexiva através da qual o sujeito se confronta com a sua própria voz autoral (Bassnett in Kadiou, 2019, p. 63). Reconhecendo as potencialidades do texto de partida, o tradutor apercebe-se também do que seria preciso alterar para melhorar a obra do seu autor: “Mais je voyais aussi ses faiblesses” (2009, p. 233). Essa vontade de aperfeiçoamento conduz o tradutor a entregar-se ao texto, de modo que este absorve a sua vida: “À la virgule près, au détail près, la vie se conformait à la fiction” (2009, p. 233). A confusão que se cria entre ficção e realidade, dado que a vida começa a seguir os acontecimentos da ficção, como o constata com incredulidade o tradutor – “la vie se conformait à la fiction” (2009, p. 233) – pode ser sintomática do envolvimento do tradutor, primeiro na leitura, depois na reescrita do texto de partida. A loucura que diz ter-se apoderado de si (2009, p. 233) ao decidir refazer a obra do primeiro autor a de acordo com o seu próprio espírito criativo assemelha-se ao que alguns autores descrevem como um impulso criador irrepresível, semelhante ao que, por exemplo, William Wordsworth diz ser o ímpeto poético do romântico: “a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (Wordsworth, 1991, p. 290). O tradutor descreve ainda o final de uma sessão de tradução como um momento de desorientação, em que se vê incapaz de encontrar uma razão de ser fora da intimidade com o texto (2009, p. 137). A tradução é, portanto, sentida como uma atividade que pressupõe o envolvimento de todo o ser e em que a vida do tradutor se sujeita ao esforço tradutório.

Finalmente, no “Epílogo” do romance, o tradutor revela que a sua tradução, publicada como texto de partida, será traduzida para inglês. Tal como um autor que se sente defensor do seu próprio texto, no final de *Vengeance du Traducteur* é o próprio tradutor, agora autor, a temer a tradução da sua obra, por recear que o novo tradutor acabe por se apropriar tanto dela que a publique mais tarde em seu nome. Daqui se conclui que o tradutor reproduz uma atitude autoral que ele próprio critica: a desconfiança perante a ideia de tradução. Por outro lado, a retradução encontra a língua do texto de partida, numa sobreposição de títulos que, uma vez mais, confunde a ideia de original e reprodução. Estes pensamentos finais do tradutor concluem a obra com a sugestão de um movimento cíclico inevitável: cada reescritor apropria-se do texto e tem sobre ele um sentimento de posse. Na verdade, ao longo de todo o romance a vontade de se tornar autor parece ser uma vontade latente do tradutor. Embora tenhamos verificado a importância do texto de partida, o tradutor acaba por render-se a esta vontade de conquistar o espaço da página

para si – o que se concretiza na eliminação do autor ficcional, Abel Prote. O seu duplo, David Grey, acaba também por ser posto de parte e o tradutor espera não ser ele o responsável pela tradução da obra agora publicada em seu nome, porque o vê como um rival (2009, p. 307). Efetivamente, o tradutor parece reproduzir concepções de autoridade total sobre o texto, mais do que defender a partilha do espaço literário ou a possibilidade de uma escrita colaborativa. A determinado momento, afirma não ter nenhuma intenção de entrar no espaço da página do autor, antes querer que toda a narrativa se desloque para o seu próprio espaço, a nota de rodapé: “Je ne tiens pas à quitter mes douves pour occuper la place forte” (2009, p. 27). O sentimento de posse sobre o texto seduz o tradutor, à medida que vai afirmando a sua criatividade: “Désormais mon pouvoir est grand” (2009, p. 107) A este propósito é ainda relevante observar as críticas que faz à tradução de *Scattered Figments*, descrevendo-a como uma tradução de qualidade deplorável (2009, p. 55) e um massacre do texto de partida (2009, p. 70), da qual apresenta a sua própria versão. O tradutor afirma, deste modo, a defesa das suas capacidades criativas e da sua legitimidade na posição de autor. Assim, autor e tradutor aproximam-se pela forma semelhante como se relacionam com as suas criações, originais ou traduções. Ambos revelam um próximo envolvimento com o produto da sua criação, que tende a resultar num sentimento de propriedade, contrariado pelo próprio carácter dinâmico do sistema literário, de que a tradução é exemplo.

5. Conclusão

A leitura do romance *Vengeance du Traducteur* sob o ângulo do posicionamento do tradutor face ao texto de partida – ideia sugerida na narrativa em estudo, desde logo, pela centralidade da nota de rodapé enquanto espaço ocupado pelo tradutor – permitiu refletir acerca de um lugar de fronteira, não tanto em termos linguísticos ou culturais, antes no sentido do relacionamento que o tradutor estabelece com a obra literária de partida. A nota do tradutor revela como, em termos topográficos e simbólicos, a voz do tradutor existe sobretudo no paratexto, e é no exterior do espaço literário que o leitor se apercebe mais evidentemente da sua presença. A sua existência neste espaço pode, então, construir uma imagem do tradutor que se aproxima mais do comentário do que da criação. De facto, ainda que a nota lembre ao leitor a presença do tradutor, esta parece ser marcada por um distanciamento crítico ou meta-reflexivo em relação ao texto de partida. Contudo, em *Vengeance du Traducteur*, os enfatizados acrescentos ou alterações ao texto de partida parecem dar a ver uma dimensão mais íntima de relação com o texto, em que a imaginação decorrente da leitura se concretiza no gesto da reescrita. A tradução surge, assim, como resultado de uma conexão individual e criativa com o texto de partida em que o olhar do leitor pode não ser, afinal, apenas um olhar exterior, mas uma primeira aproximação ao texto mediante a sua própria dimensão criativa. A leitura enquanto gesto criativo encontra no tradutor como leitor um primeiro ato criador.

Ao relembrar a permeabilidade da obra literária ao exercício criativo da leitura e a simultânea ancoragem do gesto autoral do tradutor na entrega da sua criatividade e

subjetividade ao texto de partida, a narrativa em estudo aproxima as duas dimensões do trabalho do tradutor. A leitura e a reescrita podem ser percebidas como já não opostas num lugar ambíguo ou incerto, mas complementares, apontando para uma flexibilização de fronteiras entre a escrita e a reescrita. Assim, as propostas sugeridas pelas representações ficcionais do tradutor, e por esta representação em particular, podem ser um ponto de partida para uma revisão do modo como se tende ainda a contactar com o texto de partida, na procura de uma objetividade e verdade hermenêutica, e a conceber a tradução como reprodução desta verdade. Ao invés, em *Vengeance du Traducteur* a tradução revela o carácter dinâmico que é próprio da obra literária, atualizada nas leituras e reapropriações que a complementam.

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COMMERCIAL AND FAN SUBTITLING OF THE PILOT EPISODE OF THE TV SERIES *FARGO* (2014): DESCRIPTIVE AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT: This article carries out a comparative study of the commercial and fan subtitling of the same source text, namely “The Crocodile’s Dilemma”, the pilot episode of the TV series *Fargo* (2014). The aim is to ascertain the commonalities and divergences between these two different types of translation with regard to European Portuguese. It seeks to verify if the usual tendency of commercial subtitling being domesticating and fan subtitling foreignizing applies in Portugal or if Portugal deviates from this pattern. Furthermore, the herein article shall also focus on other translational matters outside the domestication and foreignization aspects, although with a bit less coverage. The attention will also shift toward the tackling of taboo language and omission of verbal information between commercial and fan subtitling, with commercial subtitling being typically associated with censorship and omissions, whilst fan subtitling is usually known for its uncensored all-inclusive version. Naturally, the case study of a single pilot episode cannot permit encompassing conclusions to be drawn, but it can provide a peek into the commercial and fan subtitling phenomena in Portugal in order to get a preliminary idea of how it compares to the rest of the world.

KEYWORDS: Commercial Subtitling, Fan Subtitling, Domestication, Foreignization, Censorship, Omissions, Comparative Study, English-To-Portuguese

1. Introduction

Subtitling is one of the most widely used methods of making foreign movies and television shows linguistically accessible to particular national markets (Koolstra et al., 2002, p. 325), but what exactly is understood by the concept of “subtitling”? Díaz-Cintas (2012, p.274) defines it as a translation practice involving a written target language translation, presented at the bottom of the screen, not only of the original dialogue and other verbal information transmitted aurally (such as material from the soundtrack and radio/television broadcasts), but also of any written information which pops up on the screen, like letters and banners.

Amongst the different kinds of subtitling that exist, this article will focus only on (interlingual) commercial and fan subtitling, which entails transcription and captioning processes, as well as translation proper (Liu, 2014, p. 1105). In this type of translation, not only are two languages involved but also two different channels, speech and writing; thus, there is a shift of mode as well as language, with the crossing from speech in the source language into writing in the target language (Liu, 2014, p. 1105).

As regards the difference between commercial and fan subtitling, in broad terms, the former is the subtitling visible on TV, DVD, or in a movie theater, which will have been carried out by a professional remunerated subtitler/translator (Neves, 2007, p. 9; O’Hagan, 2009, p. 101; Pérez-González, 2007, p. 264), while “fan-subbing” is a hobby with no

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monetary reward (Neves, 2007, p. 9; O'Hagan, 2009, p. 101; Pérez-González, 2007, p. 264). There are also differences as regards aims and strategies: the main goal of commercial subtitling is usually to fully integrate the foreign audiovisual product into the target culture to the extent that the viewer is led to believe that the work they are consuming originated in that culture (Pérez-González, 2007, pp. 264-275), while fan subtitling may be motivated by other more personal concerns and prefer a more foreignizing approach (see below).

The article begins by exploring in more depth the differences between commercial and fan subtitling, before moving on to analyse excerpts from the pilot episode of *Fargo* translated into Portuguese by commercial and fan subtitlers.

2. Commercial subtitling

Subtitling, whether commercial or fan-made, is an incredibly challenging task. Lefevere (1985) famously described the five constraints operating on the translation of literature (namely patronage, poetics or ideology, the universe of discourse, natural language, and the constraint of the original work or source text); but in addition to these, audiovisual translation is further constrained by a sixth factor, namely time-space limitations (Pedersen, 2011, p. 130). These are particularly stringent in the case of commercial subtitling, which has to be carried out in compliance with the industry norms and regulations.

Two of the technical restrictions that most affect commercial subtitling practice are *reading speed* and *exposure time*, which are closely related concepts (Pedersen, 2011, p. 130). The former is defined as the speed with which the average reader is expected to read a subtitle and is calculated by dividing the number of characters in a subtitle by the number of seconds that the subtitle is exposed on the screen; thus, the result indicates how many characters the viewer is expected to read per second of exposure time. As for exposure time, this denotes the length of time for which a subtitle will be displayed on screen, which in turn depends on its length. There is no general consensus concerning expected reading speed in Portugal, and guidelines vary according to the platform (e.g. streaming services, television, DVDs, etc.), target audience, particular specifications, amongst other external factors. For example, Netflix (2021) recommend an average reading speed of 17 characters per second with a maximum of 42 characters per line, whilst the subtitling scholar Neves (2007, p. 79) recommends an average reading speed of 12 characters per second with a maximum of 36 characters per line.

Further technicalities and rules which professional subtitlers have to adhere to include: (i) *positioning*: all subtitles must be centered at the very bottom of the screen, in order to free up the image and not take up a lot of space (Neves, 2007, p. 15); (ii) *length*: subtitles can only be one or two lines long (Neves, 2007, pp. 16-41); (iii) *synchronization*: a subtitle should always be synchronized with the utterance it is reproducing, i.e. entering at the exact time a character starts talking and disappearing immediately after (Neves, 2007, pp. 27-28); (iv) *gaps between subtitles*: subtitles cannot immediately follow on one from another without any space between them; that is to say there should be at least two

textless frames between consecutive subtitles (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2021, pp. 113-114); and (v) *translation brief*: the way the subtitler carries out the procedure is bound by the client's instructions (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2021, p. 144).

For Neves (2007, pp. 31-32) any kind of subtitling should ideally aim to reproduce and transcribe the oral speech into written text as faithfully as possible, word-for-word, without any omissions, censorship, or additions. However, such an idealistic scenario is seldom feasible, as there are almost always going to be changes in the form of textual additions and subtractions. Still according to Neves (2007, pp. 34-35), omissions should only be used whenever time and space are scarce, and the information is superfluous (e.g. repetitions, names, and greetings), whilst additions should only be used whenever there is time and space for it, and the context warrants it, such as when it is necessary to make explicit ambiguous pronouns and references, in order to improve readability. Similarly, successful subtitling will not only be technically correct but also linguistically adequate and appropriate to the communicative needs of the viewers (Neves, 2007, pp. 81-84). Indeed, it is worth remembering that subtitling is, for many people, either their only or main interaction with written Portuguese, as well as being a vehicle for successful foreign language learning. Thus, it would not be incorrect to perceive subtitling as an important didactic tool (Neves, 2007, pp. 81-84).

3. Fan subtitling

Web 2.0 ushered in the age of Internet users that were no longer passive consumers, but also producers who could freely and willingly contribute to a vast array of content for public consumption. It is within this context that the concept of *user-generated content* (UGC) emerged (Flew, 2008, p. 35), soon giving rise to the related concept of *user-generated translation* (UGT). This term, coined by O'Hagan (2009), encompasses a wide range of translations carried out on the basis of free web-user collaboration on digital media platforms. The entire translation process is carried out by unspecified anonymous self-selected individuals. Hence, the UGT contributor is someone who, from their own volition, plays the role of remediator of otherwise linguistically inaccessible products, drawing on a knowledge of the media content and genre acquired as a direct result of their passion for the subject matter (O'Hagan, 2009, p. 97). In many cases, community translation, collaborative technology and processes, and crowdsourcing all come together to create a form of translation that is generated by and for the people (De Palma and Kelly, 2008, cited in O'Hagan 2009, p. 97).

Internet availability and collaboration tools have given fandoms a means to shift from passive spectators to active *prosumers* (Tapscott and Williams, 2006, cited in O'Hagan, 2009, p. 99). Fan translation fits well within this category, as potential consumers of translations also take on the role of translation producers. The most well-established early form of UGT appeared in the 1980s with the translation of Japanese animated films or *anime* (O'Hagan, 2009, p. 99) produced chiefly by fans for fans (Díaz-Cintas and Muñoz Sánchez, 2006, p. 51).

Web 2.0 technology also saw the fan subtitling of audiovisual content expand to countless types of audiovisual products and genres, and in the early 2000s Web users started craving more English-language content, more specifically American TV shows and movies. According to the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation (2012, p. 29), the year 2004 marked the advent of fansubbing into other languages with the American television series *Lost*, which at the time was an internationally famous television show. The reason why fan subtitling became prominent around this time was due to the fact that officially subtitled episodes in languages other than English only became available long after the original had been broadcast in the US. International fans would therefore look for the episodes on the Internet as soon as they were aired in the United States, but as many of them did not comprehend English well enough to understand the show, this generated a demand that was met informally by foreign fans that were fluent in English. These would then gather together to translate and subtitle the episodes the day after their original broadcast in the US. Since then, fan subtitling (fansubbing) has become an efficient way of disseminating American television series in non-English speaking countries (2012, pp. 29-30).

Generally speaking, fansubs tend not to conform to audiovisual subtitling norms, and are often experimental or "abusive" in nature, tending towards a foreignizing approach rather than the domestication that is the norm in conventional commercial translation subtitling (Nornes, 2004, pp. 462-467). These norm-bending strategies originate from the fans' desire for "authentic" text (Cubbison, 2005, p. 438). Indeed, fansubs developed largely as a protest against the over-edited dubbed versions of *anime* broadcast on television networks outside Japan, and also against the tendency of commercial subtitling to westernize the genre, erasing all the nuances and idiosyncrasies of Japanese culture (Díaz-Cintas and Muñoz Sánchez, 2006, p. 46; O'Hagan, 2009, p. 100). Thus, for many fandoms, fansubbing provides not only greater source-text fidelity but also rapid availability. It is also seen as preferable to dubbed versions, as fans prefer to hear and feel the original voices and sounds of the source language, which flow much more naturally in the non-dubbed version (Díaz-Cintas and Muñoz Sánchez, 2006, p. 46; Pérez-González, 2007, pp. 264-270).

Many fansubbers tend to not adhere to the strict rules governing commercial translation and, as a result, there is a great deal of fansubbed content online which has an excessive number of lines within the same subtitle, more characters per line than the commercially established limit allows, and long explanatory headnotes centered at the very top of the screen. As these fansubbing practices go against the commercial translation established guidelines, they are deemed to be disruptive practices (Massidda, 2012, pp. 73-92; Orrego-Carmona and Lee, 2017, p. 5).

However, although some early research into this phenomenon labelled all fan subtitling as foreignizing and non-adherent to conventional subtitling norms, more recent studies have actually shown that this is a gross overgeneralization. In fact, there are fan subtitles that are actually target-oriented rather than source-bound, and many that strictly

follow professional standards (Orrego-Carmona and Lee, 2017, pp. 5-9). That is to say, just because most of the fansubbing circulating on the Internet tends to be foreignizing and non-conformist, that does not mean all fansub communities carry out subtitling within these molds (Orrego-Carmona and Lee, 2017, pp. 5-9). A notable exception, for example, is the Chinese fansubbing of the popular TV series *The Big Bang Theory* (Orrego-Carmona and Lee, 2017, pp. 5-9).

According to Orrego-Carmona and Lee (2017), fan subtitling can also be referred to as volunteer subtitling, community subtitling, unprofessional subtitling, or non-professional subtitling, with the term “un/non-professional” suggesting a negative charge (Orrego-Carmona and Lee, 2017, pp. 4-5). However, the “un/non-professional” aspect has nothing to do with the subtitler’s competence or academic qualifications; rather it refers to whether they are remunerated or not at the end of the subtitling process (Orrego-Carmona and Lee, 2017, pp. 4-5). That is to say, remunerated subtitlers are called professional subtitlers, since they are doing it as a profession, whilst the ones who do it voluntarily as a hobby are classified as non-professional subtitlers.

According to Pérez-González (2007, p. 269), from a legal standpoint, fansubbing is unlawful, given that fansubbers do not hold the copyright of the shows they subtitle and are therefore not legally authorized to do it. However, the sheer volume of fansubtitles circulating around the Internet is such, and the target audience for them so vast, that the companies which hold the copyright have no other option but to turn a blind eye, as companies will never be able to prosecute all fan subtitled content online, especially in the future when fan subtitles are projected to increase at an even higher rate (Pérez-González, 2007).

According to O’Hagan (2009, p. 115), unanswered questions regarding ethical issues and translational quality from crowdsourced translations, linger in an environment where the boundary between the professional and amateur translator grows ever more fuzzy. The digital world of Web 2.0 built upon free access, user participation, and mass dissemination, has brought issues which are already seeping into the professional life of translators (O’Hagan, 2009, p. 116). However, leveraging the ongoing changes in the professional translator’s favor may help improve the translation profession. In other words, if the target audience clamors for a foreignized translation product produced in a timely manner, then it is a foreignized timely translation which commercial subtitling must start providing, in order to not alienate their audiences even more (O’Hagan, 2009).

4. Case study: *Fargo* (2014)

According to the TV Tropes (2021) website, *Fargo* is a 2014 FX dark comedy and crime drama series based on the Coen Brothers’ 1996 movie of the same name, thus drawing inspiration from their whole library of works. However, the Coen Brothers are not actually the creators or writers of the series. That role fell to Noah Hawley, with the brothers taking on the role of executive producers (TV Tropes, 2021). Despite being originally conceived as a one-season miniseries, its commercial success and critical acclaim naturally led to its

subsequent renewal and development into an anthology based around crime in the snowy Midwest (TV Tropes, 2021). Since December 6, 2021, four seasons have been produced, each focusing on a new cast and storyline, yet coexisting within the same world (TV Tropes, 2021). This article will then focus on the pilot episode of the very first season.

The first season is set in 2006 in Bemidji, Minnesota, and follows life insurance salesman Lester Nygaard, portrayed by Martin Freeman, and his downward spiral into crime and darkness, triggered by the persuasive prowess of a shady drifter hitman called Lorne Malvo, played by Billy Bob Thornton. Malvo persuades Lester to stop being so meek and submissive in his underwhelming life, and start lashing out at those who look down on him (TV Tropes, 2021). However, Molly Solverson, played by Allison Tolman, a fearless Sheriff's Deputy, conducts a joint investigation with Officer Gus Grimly, portrayed by Colin Hanks, in a bid to track and incarcerate the two felons (TV Tropes, 2021).

4.1 Source and target texts

The source text for this research is the 69-minute-long pilot episode "The Crocodile's Dilemma", which was initially broadcasted on April 15, 2014, on the *FX* television channel in the United States (TV Tropes, 2021). It was selected because it is full of idiomatic expressions, cultural references, slang, and offensive language, which provides a solid foundation from which to examine how a professional and amateur subtitler in completely different work environments tackle these translational matters. In particular, it should be possible to identify any cases of omission and/or censorship.

The first target text of the research is the version commercially subtitled in European Portuguese which aired in 2016 on the Portuguese AMC channel (AMC, 2016), which the NOS TV streaming platform hosts on demand on their NOS Play series and movies library. The translation and subtitling of the episode is credited to Jorge Filho, a professional subtitler from the Lisbon-based subtitling company *JUPI multiMedia* (Yellow Place, 2021).

The second target text is a fan-subtitled version, also in European Portuguese, that was uploaded to the OpenSubtitles.org platform, the web's largest free subtitles database, where any user can produce and upload their own subtitles or download and view them free of charge (Brookes, 2010, 1-23). With regard to *Fargo's* pilot episode, the platform offers 15 different choices for Portuguese subtitles, 10 in Brazilian Portuguese and 5 in European Portuguese. Out of the 5 European Portuguese subtitles available, the one chosen was the file on top of the list, (i.e. the most recent), which had been uploaded by one of the website's administrators *MaSousa* on December 6, 2015 (it was selected because this project is trying to focus on more recent fan subtitling practices). In this case, the translation and subtitling were credited to the *YpeeKiYay* and *kunundrum* usernames, while the synchronization and proofreading were credited to the *PEN* username. Thus, the work will be credited to these three usernames and not the uploader, who is not mentioned in the subtitling file.

5. Descriptive and comparative analysis

This section will focus on describing and comparing the commercial and fan translations of the episode in order to identify their translational commonalities and divergences, as well as to verify if the translational tradition of commercial subtitling being domesticating and fan subtitling foreignizing also holds true for this European Portuguese case study.

This section will also be divided into various subsections in accordance with the translational matter being discussed, namely cultural references, offensive language, idiomatic expressions, and omissions.

5.1 Cultural references

A cultural reference is understood to be a real-life phenomenon which exists within a given culture and is conveyed through the language of that same culture. Hence, the original target audience is usually able to grasp the cultural reference through their shared cultural experience and background (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2021, p. 202), though this may prove problematic for audiences receiving the work through translation. Cultural references can be divided into real-word cultural references and intertextual cultural references, with the former denoting items stemming from a specific culture (e.g. cuisine, military institutions, physical locations, etc), whilst the latter refers to human-made cultural artefacts (e.g. books, movies, television shows, video games, etc). (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2021, pp. 203-206).

When it comes to employing the right translational strategy to successfully tackle a cultural reference, this is not a black-and-white one-dimensional matter, but rather a nuanced multi-faceted one. Various matters must be factored in beforehand, including, but not limited to, transculturality (i.e. the extent to which a cultural reference is recognizable to the target culture audience); the importance of the cultural reference to the overall scene and narrative; the amount of information conveyed by the visuals and soundtrack (this will subsequently determine the amount of information required for the subtitles); the technicalities and restrictions imposed by the subtitling guidelines, etc. (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2021, pp. 204-205).

Generally, the nine most employed translational strategies for dealing with cultural references are: loans, i.e. the source language word is directly incorporated into the target language without any changes; literal translations, i.e. rendering the source language elements literally into the target language in a manner which sounds natural to the target audience; calques, i.e. a literal translation from the source language into the target language that comes across as foreign-sounding to the target reader/watcher; explicitations, i.e. explicitly introducing information into the target language which is only manifested implicitly in the source language; substitutions, i.e. replacing the cultural reference in the source language with a similar target language reference, or with a target language expression that fits the given situation but reveals no link to the source language expression; transpositions, i.e. a cultural concept from the source language is replaced by its target language counterpart; lexical recreations, i.e. whenever the source language

speaker makes up new words, the subtitler can then invent neologisms in the target language as equivalents for the source language fictional words; compensations, i.e. trying to make up for a translational loss that occurred in a previous subtitle by adding extra information/content to a posterior subtitle; and, lastly, omissions, i.e. erasing source language terms and expressions from the target language, whether it be due to fast-paced speech, unbeknownst cultural references to the target audience, and/or absence of target language equivalents (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2021, pp. 207-217). As mentioned above, it is often claimed that commercial subtitling tends to favor domesticating approaches, whilst fan subtitling leans more toward foreignization, at least in most abroad cases. To verify if this holds true for this case study, illustrative examples have been provided in Tables 1 to 3.

The first example concerns the use of imperial versus metric measurements, as shown in Table 1 below.

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|---|---|---|-----------|
| <p>“Supposed to get down to negative 10 later”</p> <p>(Hawley et al., 2014)</p> | <p>“Pode chegar aos 10 graus negativos mais tarde”</p> <p>(Hawley et al., 2014) (Filho, Trans.)</p> | <p>“É suposto chegar aos 23 negativos mais logo”</p> <p>(Hawley et al., 2014) (YipeeKiYay et al., Trans.)</p> | 17:19 |
| Context: Two police officers discussing the weather. | | | |

Table 1. “Supposed to get down to negative 10 later” translation.

Although it is not explicitly stated within the source text, the minus 10 degrees are Fahrenheit, since that is the temperature scale used in the US. The commercial subtitling used this implicitness to its favor either by simply failing to elucidate or by preserving the Fahrenheit scale, perhaps on the assumption that the target audience would never notice it under these circumstances. However, the fan subtitlers went through the extra work of converting the -10°F to the Celsius scale, which gives -23°C.

The second example concerns forms of address, as given in Table 2.

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| “Mr. Mickey” | “Mr. Mickey” | “Sr. Mickey” | 38:33 |
| “Mrs. Hess” | “Mrs. Hess” | “Sra. Hess” | 40:03 |
| Context: Lorne Malvo disguised as a lawyer talking to Sam Hess’ older son. | | | |

Table 2. “Mr. Mickey & Mrs. Hess” translation.

In this case, the commercial subtitling chose to keep the English forms of address, i.e. Mr. and Mrs., while the fan subtitling adapted them to their respective Portuguese equivalents, namely “Sr.” and “Sra.”.

The third example concerns a reference to American football, a game which is barely known in Portugal (Table 3).

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|---|------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| “Kicked in another field goal” | “Foi um pontapé de 3 pontos” | “Mais um golo de campo” | 01:01:25 |
| Context: Discussion about American football. | | | |

Table 3. “Kicked in another field goal” translation.

Both translations kept the American football reference, meaning neither of them tried to adapt it to soccer, which is the sport most familiar to the target audience.

5.2 Offensive language

Offensive language contains taboo and stigmatized cultural elements and is usually employed to convey strong emotions and/or attitudes, or to shock the reader/listener. Thus, its function within a given context is more important than its literal meaning (Hawel, 2019, p. 425). However, the emotional impact that it will have on the reader/listener will obviously depend on their culture and language (Hawel, 2019, p. 426). For this reason, offensive language constitutes a problem for translators, especially for professional subtitlers, who are constrained in their choice of terms by the restrictions placed on them (Hawel, 2019, p. 426). In Portugal, in particular, professional subtitlers have been shown to euphemize and omit offensive language in the light of the country’s conservative stance on swearing and taboo language (Xavier, 2019, pp. 374-390).

However, fan subtitlers, who do not have to answer to any clients, superiors or translation/subtitling companies, can make use of any translation strategy that they deem appropriate, including preserving the offensive language in the target language (Hawel, 2019, p. 426). It is therefore interesting to find out how the offensive language was tackled in this case study, both in the commercial and fan subtitling.

The source text in the first case (Table 4) entails two translational problems, wordplay between the racial slur “nigger” and Lester’s surname “Nygaard,” and of course, the offensiveness of the slur in question.

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|--|-----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| “Lester Niggered” | “Lester Negro” | “Lester Negro” | 07:42 |
| Context: Sam Hess bullying Lester after bumping into him in the street. | | | |

Table 4. “Lester Niggered” translation.

Although the Portuguese language does not allow the source wordplay to exert the same linguistic effect as it does in English, the translations nevertheless managed to convey the speaker's intention. The callousness, however, was toned down significantly, given that the word "negro" is actually the politically correct way to address a black person in the target culture. In order for the wordplay and crassness to both be conveyed in Portuguese, then the translation would have to be, "Lester Preto", which of course loses the wordplay component.

The next two examples concern sexual slang. In the first case (Table 5), the wording in the commercial subtitling is much more offensive than in the fan subtitling, while in the second (Table 6), the expression is euphemized in both translations (a more offensive but faithful rendition of this slang would be, "casa de putas").

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|---|----------------------------|--|-----------|
| "You know, she gave me a tug once" | "Ela bateu-me uma punheta" | "Sabes, uma vez ela fez-me um trabalhinho" | 09:02 |
| Context: Sam Hess talking about Lester's wife. | | | |

Table 5. "You know, she gave me a tug once" translation.

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| "Whorehouse" | "Bordel" | "Casa de alterne" | 38:00 |
| Context: Sam Hess's wife describing the place in which her husband got murdered. | | | |

Table 6. "Whorehouse" translation.

As regards the scatological language given in Table 7 below, both translations are faithful renditions of the slang word "shit," with neither trying to euphemize it as "porcaria".

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| "The shit they make us eat" | "A merda que nos fazem comer" | "As merdas que nos obrigam a engolir" | 44:26 |
| Context: Lorne Malvo telling Lester what society makes people go through. | | | |

Table 7. "The shit they make us eat" translation.

5.3 Idiomatic expressions

Idiomatic expressions can be loosely defined as figures of speech comprising a string of words which, when clustered together, convey a different meaning collectively than they would if every single word were to be interpreted individually (Longman Idioms Dictionary, 1998, cited in Shojaei, 2012, p. 1221). As a result, idiomatic expressions can never be

broken down into singular units, but instead should be dealt with as fixed expressions (Balfaqqeh, 2009, cited in Shojaei, 2012, p. 1221). Such expressions can thus describe aspects of perceptible and imperceptible reality in a more comprehensible and concise manner than is feasible to achieve with literal language (Strakšiene, 2009, p. 14, cited in Shojaei, 2012, p. 1221).

Idiomatic expressions are particularly hard to translate: indeed, the translator may not even realise that they are in the presence of an idiomatic expression at all. And even when they do, translating it may be troublesome, as there may not be a target language counterpart, or an apparent counterpart may convey a completely different meaning (Shojaei, 2012, pp. 1222-1223).

When tackling the subtitling of foreign idiomatic expressions, the most commonly employed translation strategies tend to be loan, literal translation, calque, explicitation, substitution, transposition, lexical recreation, compensation, and omission (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2021, p. 207; Vinay and Darbelnet, 1958, p. 90). Tables 8 to 12 below provide some examples of how idiomatic expressions from this episode of *Fargo* have been treated by the subtitlers in question.

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|--|----------------------------|---|-----------|
| "Bet that set them back a penny" | "Aposto que ficaram lisos" | "Aposto que lhes custou muito dinheiro" | 03:19 |
| Context: This idiomatic expression was uttered by Lester Nygaard, the main character, upon hearing from his wife that his younger brother and his wife had bought an expensive washing machine. | | | |

Table 8. "Bet that set them back a penny" translation.

In this example, the commercial translator found an equivalent idiomatic expression in the target language, whilst the fan translators opted to instead make explicit the meaning of the English idiom, rather than replacing it with a Portuguese equivalent. Both translations are of course perfectly understandable to the target audience.

In the example given in Table 9 below, interestingly, both translations opted to translate this idiom in a rather literal manner, by preserving the idea that the woman was discussing clothes for girls, when in reality the underlying meaning behind this idiom in this context is that the mother really wants her child to be a girl (though this idea is implicit in both translations).

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|--|--------------------------------|---|-----------|
| "I'd just about hug the pants off a little girl" | "Adoro as roupas para meninas" | "Acabei de ajeitar umas calças para menina" | 05:53 |
| Context: A pregnant woman, who does not know the gender of her baby, is talking to Lester, who is trying to sell her life insurance at his workplace. | | | |

Table 9. "I'd just about hug the pants off a little girl" translation.

In the case given in Table 10 below, the commercial subtitling opted to find an equivalent Portuguese idiom, “cabeça de alho choco,” while the fan subtitling went for a literal rendition, “cérebro do tamanho de uma batata”.

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|---|---|---|-----------|
| “Dad said that he also thinks you’ve got a potato brain” | “Também disse que acha que tens cabeça de alho choco” | “O pai também pensa que tens um cérebro do tamanho de uma batata” | 21:41 |
| Context: An older brother joking with his younger brother. | | | |

Table 10. “You’ve got a potato brain” translation.

The next expression (Table 11) also contains a cultural reference, namely to the sport of baseball, which is not particularly well known in the target culture. In both translations, the cultural reference was simply eliminated and the basic meaning of the expression made explicit.

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| “Steak big as a catcher’s mitt” | “Um bife do tamanho do prato” | “Um bife gigantesco” | 24:45 |
| Context: Chazz Nygaard, Lester’s younger brother, talking to Lester about a steak he ate. | | | |

Table 11. “Steak big as a catcher’s mitt” translation.

In the next example, however (Table 12), the technique employed by the fan translation was actually the opposite of this strategy, with the insertion of an equivalent Portuguese idiomatic expression. The commercial subtitler, on the other hand, chose to use an explicative translation.

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|---|---|---|-----------|
| “Yeah, with the two boys, both dumb as a dog’s foot” | “Sim, que tem dois filhos parvos como tudo” | “Sim, aquele que tem dois filhos burros como uma porta” | 32:30 |
| Context: The Sheriff talking about Sam Hess’ sons. | | | |

Table 12. “Both dumb as a dog’s foot” translation.

5.4. Omissions

As stated by Neves (2007), in an ideal situation, a professional subtitler should not have to resort to omissions. However, time and space constraints may sometimes compel the subtitler to omit certain bits of information (Neves, 2007, pp. 31-35). This phenomenon is

not usually observed so much in fan subtitling, given that fan subtitlers are not bound by subtitling/television companies' restrictions (Orrego-Carmona and Lee, 2017, p. 5). However, as recent studies have shown that some fan subtitling communities approach their translation practice as if it were taking place in a professional environment, adhering to all the subtitling norms (Orrego-Carmona and Lee, 2017, pp. 5-9), we might wonder how the Portuguese fan subtitling community will react. Tables 13 to 15 gives examples from this case study. The first concerns the transfer of forms of address.

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|---|--|---|-----------|
| "Excuse me, Miss " | "Desculpe" | "Desculpe, menina " | 10:37 |
| "No, mister , we're not friends" | "Não somos amigos" | "Não, senhor , nós não somos amigos" | 14:17 |
| " Sir , it's real busy" | "Tenho muito que fazer" | " Senhor , temos muito trabalho" | 16:07 |
| "Only two reasons to come to my shop, friend " | "Só há duas razões para vir à minha empresa" | "Só há duas razões para vir às minhas instalações, amigo " | 22:48 |
| " Son , she compared you to a clam" | "Ela comparou-te com um molusco" | "Ela comparou-te a um mexilhão, rapaz " | 34:40 |

Table 13. Omissions of forms of address.

As we can see in Table 13 above, the commercial subtitling opted to omit every single form of address present within the source text, whilst the fan subtitling preserved them all.

A similar pattern can be seen in Table 14, concerning the omission of slang. That is to say, all the source text slang presented here were omitted in the commercial subtitling but maintained and translated in the fan subtitling.

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|--|--|--|-----------|
| "Or say you're up a ladder, cleaning up the gutters and you fall off the darn thing and break your neck?" | "Ou se estiver num escadote, a limpar o algeroz, cair e partir o pescoço?" | "Ou digamos sobe ao escadote para limpar uma calha e vai da maldita coisa e parte o pescoço?" | 06:20 |
| "What the heck " | (complete omission) | "Que raio " | 41:18 |

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|-------|
| "I'm trying to fix the darn thing" | "Estou a tentar arranjar esta coisa" | "Estou a tentar consertar esta maldita coisa" | 47:45 |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|-------|

Table 14. Omission of slang.

Finally, fan subtitling seems to preserve all kinds of information, whilst commercial subtitling seems to only keep the most important elements and anything the professional subtitler deems as superfluous, gets cut from the translation (Table 15).

| Source Text | Commercial Subtitling | Fan Subtitling | Timestamp |
|--|----------------------------------|--|-----------|
| "Took the whole team down to Duluth Tuesday " | "Levei toda a equipa até Duluth" | "Levei a equipa toda a Duluth, na terça-feira " | 24:31 |
| "Real intense" | (complete omission) | "Algo estranho" | 46:30 |

Table 15. Omission of information.

6. Discussion

After analyzing all 15 translational examples, we can conclude that neither the commercial nor fan subtitling were completely foreignizing or domesticating in their approach, as both versions had domesticating and foreignizing aspects to them. Both tried to adapt and find equivalent Portuguese idiomatic expressions for the English ones, and adapted or omitted American cultural realities which the target audience may not be familiar with (such as the baseball reference). But foreignizing aspects were also present in both translations: for example, the American football reference was maintained without any attempt to adapt it to the more familiar soccer lexicon.

However, despite this commonality, the fan subtitling is actually (and unexpectedly) a much more domesticating translation in comparison to the commercial subtitling, which leans more toward the foreignization. The fan subtitlers went through the extra work of converting the Fahrenheit scale into Celsius, and finding the equivalent Portuguese forms of address for the English ones. The commercial translation, on the other hand, preserved both the Fahrenheit scale and the English forms of address.

Regarding offensive content, no significant differences were spotted between commercial and fan subtitling. Despite there being no cases of complete censorship via omission and manipulation of the message in either subtitling, there were two instances of euphemization with the expressions "Niggered" and "whorehouse", softened in both translations. In spite of this, there were also instances where both translations preserved the force of the source slang, such as "shit" being translated as "merda" rather than being toned down to "porcaria", as might have been expected. There was also one instance of the commercial translation actually being much more offensive than the fan translation, when "tug" was translated as "punheta" by the professional subtitler, while the fan subtitlers decided to tone it down to "trabalhinho".

When it comes to omissions, the commercial subtitling decided to omit forms of address (i.e. mister, friend, son, miss, and sir), certain forms of slang (i.e. heck and darn), and superfluous information [i.e. days of the week (Tuesday) and intensifying adjectives (real intense)]. In these cases, it is noteworthy that the fan subtitlers did not resort to omission instead choosing to convey every aspect of spontaneous oral discourse to the target audience. Although the commercial subtitling omissions could be accounted for by time and space constraints, there were also instances in which there was more than enough time and space to preserve all the information, yet the professional subtitler still omitted some of it. External factors outside the subtitler's control (such as client's guidelines, company policy, orders from above, etc.) may have played a role in this, though the real reason remains to be ascertained.

7. Conclusion

As discussed above, commercial subtitling is traditionally associated with a more domesticating approach to translation, while fan subtitling tends to favor a foreignizing approach. However, surprisingly, the findings of this European Portuguese case study actually reveal quite the opposite, with the commercial subtitling being the more foreignizing one and the fan subtitling being the more domesticating one. These results then lead to more questions. In Portugal, is commercial subtitling foreignizing and fan subtitling domesticating? If so, why is it the reverse of what happens in most parts of the world? Have Portuguese professional subtitlers, and subtitling companies as whole, already given in to the clamor for foreignized translations by fandoms? And if that is the case, then why is fan translation heading in the opposite direction to what it is expected to take? Could this case study then be an irregularity within the Portuguese commercial and fan subtitling status quo or is it in conformity with it?

This article's results not only open up avenues for future translational research on the matter of foreignization and domestication, but also within the subject of translation omissions. As we have seen, the commercial translation, in this case study, omits all traits of spontaneous oral discourse, while fan subtitling conserves them and drives that fact home. But why is this the case? What are the underlying reasons that might explain this omission discrepancy between fan and commercial subtitling?

As regards offensive content, there is no evidence that either type of subtitling explicitly censored it via omission or by twisting the intended message. However, two cases of euphemization were encountered, which begs the question of what the criteria were for the rendition of these kinds of terms. The fact that "Niggered" and "whorehouse" were respectively toned down to "Negro" and "bordel/casa de alterne" might have something to do with the fact that, in Portugal, lewd and racist language are amongst the most censored subject matters (Xavier, 2019, p. 379), while scatology is one of the least stigmatized topic, and tends to be faithfully rendered into European Portuguese (Xavier, 2019, p. 379). We see this reflected in the fact that "shit" was translated literally as "merda/merdas" and not euphemized to "porcaria." However, the trend is belied by the

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word “tug”, which, as we have seen, was translated as “punheta” in the commercial subtitling. The explanation might lie in the fact that this utterance was delivered in a humorous manner (unlike “whorehouse”), which may have contributed to the decision, since Portugal is predisposed to safeguard comedic taboo, i.e. preserve offensive language uttered in a comedic context, as a means to try to convey the humor (Xavier, 2019, p. 380). Further research is then required to draw more assertive and certain conclusions.

Naturally, this paper is limited in its scope and therefore could not, in itself, provide answers to the above questions. A follow-up project with a wider sample pool, comprising several entire television shows and movies rather than just a single episode, might offer a greater insight into the phenomena of commercial and fan subtitling in Portugal.

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JAPANESE VIDEO GAMES IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION: A STUDY OF CONTEMPORARY SUBTITLING PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT: This article examines the ongoing development of translation norms in the field of Japanese popular culture texts, focusing on the translation of Japanese video games into English. In the first part, the article describes particular translation norms that have emerged in the field, before presenting a case study of the translation of the Japanese video game series *Yakuza* in order to illustrate how video game companies have begun to successfully integrate fan-translation norms into commercial products.

KEYWORDS: Video game translation, Video game subtitling, Translation into ELF, Fan translation

1. Introduction

Writing in 2007 on the topic of “bridge concepts in translation sociology”, Andrew Chesterman argued in favour of “causality” as one such bridge concept that could be useful in bringing together disparate ways of studying translation (Chesterman, 2007, p. 174). Drawing upon an earlier article by Anthony Pym (2006), Chesterman proposes four main causes of translation: material causes, including the source text and the target language and the technology involved in translation; cultural causes such as translation norms and expectations; social causes such as the translator’s aim and the client’s requirements; and finally cognitive causes such as the translator’s mind and body (Chesterman, 2007, p. 175). Chesterman illustrates how these four causes can be brought together with a simple example:

In terms of a simple causal chain, for instance, we could say: this translation is like this, it contains these particular features, because of the decisions that this translator took; the translator worked like that partly because of the nature of the source text, the client’s instructions and the ridiculously short deadline; the client specified these conditions because of the norms governing translation work of this kind in this society at this time, which are themselves determined e.g. by commercial values (Chesterman, 2007, p. 175).

My aim in this article is to provide a causal explanation for a recent development in the field of Japanese video game translation. To put it simply, I am interested in the way some recent Japanese video games were published outside of Japan with both English and Japanese voice tracks, and the option to select between two different sets of English language subtitles to accompany the different voice track. I will describe the main differences between these two sets of English subtitles and try to provide a causal explanation as to why a Japanese video game publisher may have started this practice. I will first describe the textual features of the texts I am interested in. Then, I will attempt to provide an explanation for the presence of these textual features by drawing on extra-textual sources, such as translators’ testimonies and fan opinions.

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2. Language policy in Japanese video games

Video game development is a fast-moving field at the cutting edge of technology, where innovation seems to take place at a faster pace than other field of cultural production. One such development in recent years is the way Japanese video game firms have started to include multiple voice tracks with their games. The focus here in particular is on those games that include both Japanese and English voice tracks.

The practice of adding (or not removing) Japanese voice tracks in video games translated into English is a relatively recent development. Up until the seventh generation of console games, that is to say, from around 2006 until 2012, the process of video game localisation usually meant that Japanese video games translated into English would simply replace the original Japanese voice tracks with English voice tracks. This may have been due to disc storage issues, as multiple voice track may have been too large to fit within the capacity of a single CD or DVD (Bernal-Merino, 2015, p. 102). In other words, there may have been constraints of a material nature.

With the advent of the eighth generation of video games consoles (PlayStation 4, Xbox One, etc.) in 2012, faster internet speed and increased storage capacity made it easier to overcome these material constraints, so video game firms began to ship their products with different foreign language included in the same product, or alternatively began to allow for users to download additional voice tracks of their choice directly to the consoles data storage devices (hard disk drives). One such example was the game *Persona 5* (Atlus, 2017) published by the Japanese video game company Sega, which allowed users the option of downloading the Japanese voice tracks for free as additional DLC (downloadable content) after the game had already shipped, thereby removing the problem of having to compress large audio files in order to fit them into a digital optical disc storage format.¹

Why would Japanese video game firms offer such an option? The evidence points toward cultural causes; on the one hand, a share of the English-speaking gaming community is critical of the removal of Japanese voice tracks from Japanese games.² Simply put, some fans seemed to enjoy listening to the voices of Japanese voice actors, just as some moviegoers prefer subtitles to dubbing (O'Sullivan, 2011, p. 104). Others simply dislike the way English voices sound when dubbing Japanese videogames (Schreier, 2012). In the past, the discontent on the part of fans gave rise to a unique fan translation³ practice

¹ The free Japanese language DLC can be downloaded from Sony PlayStation store: https://store.playstation.com/en-us/product/UP2611-CUSA05877_00-ADDCONTENT000022/ (Accessed: 19 August 2021).

² See for example the website: The Undubbing FAQ (Accessed: 19 August 2021).

³ The term 'fan translation' is used here to describe non-commercial, amateur translation practices. In other words, professional translation is remunerated and considered a source of livelihood, while fan translation is not. Although translation scholars have noted that "non-professional translators and interpreters have played a very important role in facilitating economic, commercial, cultural and religious exchanges throughout history" (Pym, 2000, in Pérez-González and Susam-Saraeva, 2012, p. 151), I refrain from using the term 'non-professional' here because it may give the impression that only inexperienced translators are involved in amateur translation practices, which may not be always the case; professional translators may also be involved in translation activism and other similarly non-remunerated practices.

called 'undubbing', where English voice tracks were replaced with the original Japanese voices, sometimes also accompanied by English subtitles created by fans for those players who preferred Japanese voice acting but had no Japanese language ability (Eisenbeis, 2013).

Although undubbed video games are made available to download for free, Japanese firms may have understood the existence of such practices as an attempt to respond to the wishes of a part of the gaming community abroad, and, rather than ignoring these expectations or actively fighting them, they sought to meet them by including the option to choose how games could be experienced, either dubbed by English voice actors or retaining the Japanese voices accompanied by English language subtitles. This flexibility and readiness to meet users' expectations is perhaps a distinguishing characteristic of video game production, as game firms tend to see themselves as creating products and services to meet the expectations of their customers (Bernal-Merino, 2015, p. 104) and have historically been characterized by the close collaboration with players (Czarnota, 2016, p. 3).

The inclusion of selectable Japanese voice tracks solved a problem, but in turn introduced new issues. To explain it simply, video game translation often requires the adoption of creative strategies, which O'Hagan and Mangiron describe as akin to 'transcreation' (O'Hagan and Mangiron, 2013, p. 190), that is to say, considerable adaptation is often necessary to meet the cultural and legal requirements of different countries. The problem emerges when players are faced with discrepancies between subtitles and voiceovers; for example, when Japanese voice tracks use one name to refer to a character depicted on screen, while the English subtitles use a different one for the same character.

One example of this kind of discrepancy can be found in the game *Xenoblade Chronicles 2* (Monolith Soft, 2017) published by Nintendo for the Nintendo Switch console. In this game, one of the main characters is an artificial being that has two distinct personalities, represented in the game by fire and light. In the Japanese version of the game, the names of these two personalities reflects their personalities and designs: Homura (literally 'flame', 'blaze') is warm and wears red, while Hikari (literally 'light') is cold and wears white/green colours (Figure 1). In order to preserve these design elements, the English version of *Xenoblade Chronicles 2* adapted their names, translating Homura as Pyra (from 'pyre', thereby recalling the fire element) and Hikari as Mythra (from Mithra, the angelic divinity of light in ancient Indo-Iranian mythology). These solutions are clever and elegant in themselves. The problem, however, emerges when players of the English version are faced with the discrepancies that the game introduces when Japanese voices refer to these characters as Homura/Hikari while the corresponding English subtitles refer to them as Pyra/Mythra (Rogers, 2017).



Figure 1. Homura and Hikari (Doolan, 2020).

This problem is acknowledged by players, critics and Japanese developers. For example, Ollie Barder, writing in 2018 about the imminent western release of the game *Dragon Quest XI* for the Nintendo Switch console (Square Enix, 2019), wondered whether the game would include Japanese voices alongside the English ones, and if so, whether the subtitles would include the original Japanese names: “while I respect that attention to detail a great deal, I am still hoping that if the Japanese voices are included on the Western Switch release of the game that the subtitles will be updated to match that” (Barder, 2018). This expectation was not unknown to Square-Enix, the Japanese publisher of *Dragon Quest XI*, because when the game was finally released for Nintendo Switch in September 2019, the option to choose between Japanese and English voices was present. However, an in-game notice was also inserted to warn players that, depending on the choice of language setting, discrepancies between the voiced lines and subtitles may be present (Figure 2).

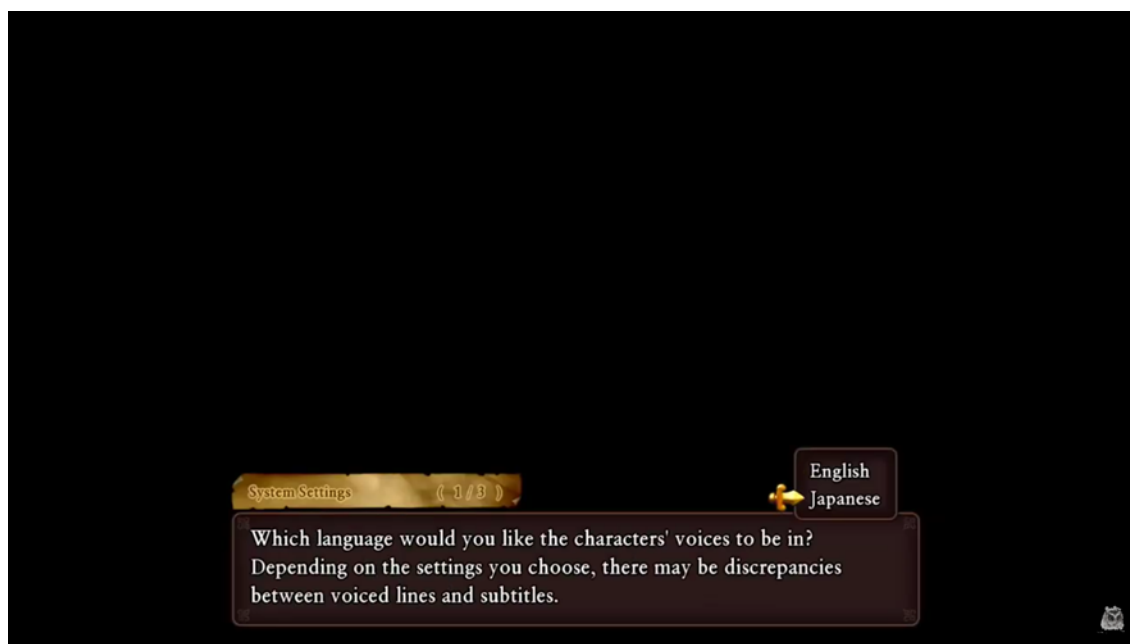


Figure 2. Dragon Quest XI (2019), language settings.

In other words, the inclusion of Japanese voice tracks brings to video games the same element of vulnerability that affects other forms of subtitling; As Carol O'Sullivan noted, subtitling juxtaposes source text and target text, so that "viewers are enabled, and feel entitled, to comment on the translation solutions adopted" (O'Sullivan, 2011, p. 103). In our model of causation, this feedback could be seen simply as an effect of translation; however, for O'Sullivan the problem is that such vulnerability may constrain and devalue the work of translators because viewers often perceive subtitles as unfaithful (O'Sullivan, 2011, p. 103). How can this problem be solved? I will present here the example of how the Japanese firm Sega dealt with this problem, taking as a case study the game series *Yakuza* and its spin-off game *Judgment*.

3. Translating *Yakuza*

Yakuza, known in Japan as *Ryū ga Gotoku* (龍が如く, literally 'Like a Dragon') is an action-adventure video game series developed and published by Sega Corporation (Sega hereafter). The series include eight main games (*Yakuza 0* to *7*) and a number of spin-offs. The *Yakuza* games are primarily set in a fictional recreation of Tokyo, inspired in particular by the actual entertainment district of Tokyo known as Kabukichō. The main storyline spanning from *Yakuza 0* to *6* features as the main playable character Kazuma Kiryu, a reformed member of the Japanese crime syndicate (the Yakuza, also known in Japan as *gokudō* (極道, literally "the extreme path")).

The games in the *Yakuza* series draw heavily from the popular genre of Japanese crime drama known as Yakuza films. While Kiryu is associated with the leaders of the Yakuza, the storyline often centres on his efforts to leave the crime syndicate behind, and the games have been praised for their nuanced portrait of masculinity (Stuart, 2020). The

gameplay of the *Yakuza* games has the players engaged in a number of activities in an open-world setting, including fighting against groups of street thugs, carrying out side missions and mini-games, eating and drinking at various restaurants and bars, and so on.

Despite its eventual success, the creation of the first *Yakuza* game was initially considered a risk. As a result of internal restructuring within Sega in the mid-2000s, the game director, Toshihiro Nagoshi, was promoted to an executive position and tasked with the creation of new games. In interviews, Nagoshi explained that he and his team would often brainstorm new ideas while drinking casually in bars around Kabukichō, and this district at the heart of Yakuza activities became the inspiration for the new game.

Sega, however, initially rejected Nagoshi's game proposal as it lacked broader appeal, as it explicitly targeted the shrinking audience of adult Japanese male players (Hester, 2021). It was only through Nagoshi's persistence and the backing of Sega's chief executive at the time that the first *Yakuza* title was eventually released in Japan in December 2005, unexpectedly gaining a favourable response from Japanese critics and players alike.

In the West, the *Yakuza* games gained broader popularity with the release of *Yakuza 0* in 2017 (Hester, 2021), but, for the purpose of this article, it is the reception of the first *Yakuza* game abroad (Sega, 2006) that is particularly significant. The first *Yakuza* game was released internationally in September 2006 but, despite receiving full English voiceovers by a cast of famous actors, including Mark Hamill of *Star Wars* fame and Michael Madsen (Constantine, 2010), the game failed to gain critical and commercial success. Following the poor reception of the first *Yakuza*, Sega would not create English voice overs for another *Yakuza* game until the release of the spin-off game *Judgment* (known as *Judge Eyes* in Japan) in June 2019 (Sega, 2019).

Starting with the release of *Yakuza 2* in September 2008, Sega began releasing its games in North America and Europe with only Japanese voice tracks, accompanied by English subtitles. The games released in this format include *Yakuza 3* (Sega, 2010), *Yakuza 4* (Sega, 2011), *Yakuza 5* (Sega, 2015), *Yakuza 0* (Sega, 2017), and *Yakuza 6* (Sega, 2018). Here I will illustrate with an example how the translation team at Sega translated the *Yakuza* games into English.

The example I draw here is taken from an early scene in *Yakuza 0*. *Yakuza 0* is an origin story, as the zero in the title indicates. The game is set in Japan in the 1980s and narrates the story of Kiryu before the events of the first *Yakuza* game. Because the game strives to create a sense of cultural and historical authenticity, characters in the game do not communicate through mobile phones, but instead rely on pagers (also known in Japan as 'pocket bells') to send numerical combinations to each other. These codes can be said to represent actual Japanese culture specific items, as Japanese people through the 1980s and 90s had in fact invented some clever number combinations to exchange messages, using the different ways the same numeral forms can be read in Japanese (Kyoto, 2018).

In a scene close to the beginning of the game, Kiryu receives a message on his pager that reads '724106' (figure 3). In this context, the number 7 (in Japanese, 'nana' or 'shichi') stands for the phoneme 'na'; the number 2 (ni) stands for the phoneme 'ni'; the number 4

(yon or shi) stands for the phoneme 'shi'; the number 10 (jū) stands for the English 'ten', here shortened to 'te'; the number 6 (roku) stands for the phoneme 'ru'. Taken together, this can be read 'nani shiteru' (なにしてる), which in English can be translated roughly as 'what are you doing?' (Koichi, 2011).

The image in Figure 3 is drawn from an official video published on the Sega of America YouTube channel (SegaAmerica, 2017, 5:13). In a series of videos Sega's localization producers Scott Strichart and Sam Mullen, the individuals responsible for the translation of the *Yakuza* games into English, played through various games in the series and comment on their translation choices. In the particular example taken in consideration here, Strichart and Mullen discuss the translation of the code explained above. As can be seen in the image, the translators have added two lines of subtitles to the original Japanese text (in the Japanese ST, no explanation whatsoever is added, the screen simply shows the numbers on the screen as they are).



Figure 3. *Yakuza 0* (2017).

The English subtitles read:

Kiryu: (724106, huh? That's code for "whatcha up to?" ... I'm waiting for your slow ass to show up).

Commenting in the video about the subtitles above, Strichart ask Mullen to explain why the number 724106 equals 'what are you up to' (SegaAmerica, 2017, 5:13). Mullen explains that they had worked really hard, and tried all kinds of ways, to explain to the reader the context of what the numbers actually meant; they had actually spelled out an explanation and put it in the game but were not satisfied with the result (SegaAmerica, 2017, 5:37).

Mullen then continues with an explanation of the Japanese word play, similar to the one provided above.

What can we learn about the translation of *Yakuza 0* from the example above? First of all, the addition of subtitles to the scene seems to make Kiryu more talkative than he is in the Japanese source text. This is because the subtitles sought to present the new information diegetically, meaning that they are meant to represent the actual speech or thoughts of the in-game character (rather than being presented as an explicit intervention on the part of the translators from outside the game-world). This is in contrast to the way Kiryu is depicted in the source text, as in Japanese Kiryu does not talk much, and his sentences are rather short (Johnston, 2019). A related second point is about the words used in the subtitles – especially ‘whatcha up to’ (instead of ‘what are you up to’) and ‘slow ass’. Here the use of informal speech, slang, and vulgar terms could be understood as a deliberate attempt to draw intertextually from the speech style of characters featured in the ‘hardboiled’ literary genre, popularised in North America with the novels of authors like Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett, among others, a style that Dennis Porter defined as a “vernacular heightened and burnished to the level of street-wise poetry” (Porter, 2003, p. 105).

Finally, a point about the unexplained cultural reference: despite providing a great amount of additional flavour to the scene on screen, the subtitles on screen do not actually explain the meaning of the numerical code, so it is not clear why the number 724106 translates as ‘what are you up to’; this is to say that the situation seems to require a different translation strategy, and perhaps the exchange between Strichart and Mullen in the video can be interpreted as an implicit admission of this issue. In other respects, the translation of *Yakuza* games clearly displays an orientation toward the source text: names of Japanese food items are usually transliterated into English; Japanese signage (in the streets and inside shops, for example) are simply presented with their Japanese characters (known as kanji), Japanese honorific suffixes such as -san, -kun, -chan, and so forth (see Fabbretti, 2017, p. 464) are commonly retained in the English subtitles, among many other examples.⁴

In short, here the translators seem to have drawn a distinction between source-oriented translation strategies that allow the target text to retain elements of Japanese language and culture that are presented diegetically, as part of the game world, and translation strategies that would add non-diegetic elements that may read as translation notes inserted directly in the body of the target text. Note, however, that the translators were comfortable in adding explanations in the form of paratextual material separate from the main body of the target text (in the shape of a video commentary) that interested fans could experience separately. In other words, the translators’ ability to intervene directly in the game text may have been constrained by an established translation norm.

⁴ Strichart (2019) explained that “The English dub's goal was never to Westernize the game, but to make Japan more accessible. No matter the language, the setting doesn't change”.

4. Translating Judgment

As we have seen in the previous section, Sega created a series of games set in a fictional representation of Japan and, while these games were well received by their domestic audience, they initially struggled to gain popularity abroad beyond a fan base of dedicated players. This situation changed with the positive critical and commercial success of *Yakuza 0*, which was rated an overall metascore of 85 on the popular review aggregation website *Metacritic* (2017). The next game in the franchise, *Yakuza 6*, released in the West in 2018, was equally well received with a metascore of 83 (*Metacritic*, 2018).

With the conclusion of the saga of Kiryu in *Yakuza 6*, the developers at Sega decided it was time for a new protagonist. This resulted in the creation of a spin-off game entitled *Judgment*, set in the same fictional world of *Yakuza*, featuring this time an ex-lawyer turned private investigator named Takayuki Yagami (whose face is based on the real life popular Japanese singer and actor Takuya Kimura, who also provided the voice acting for Yagami). The story of *Judgment* follows Yagami as he investigates a serial murder case involving the Japanese crime syndicate and a mysterious killer. The game was released for the PlayStation 4 in Japan in December 2018 and worldwide in June 2019 (Sega, 2018, 2019).

For the purpose of this article, the most notable feature of *Judgment* is that it signals the start of a new translation strategy by Sega. In short, the Western version of *Judgment* was released with the option to select either English voice acting (a first for the series) or the original Japanese voices. Additionally, the two different language options were accompanied by different subtitle tracks. The image in Figure 4 illustrates the text that accompanied the subtitle menu for the Japanese voice option, warning that “subtitles were written specifically to accommodate the Japanese audio track and do not match the English dialog”.

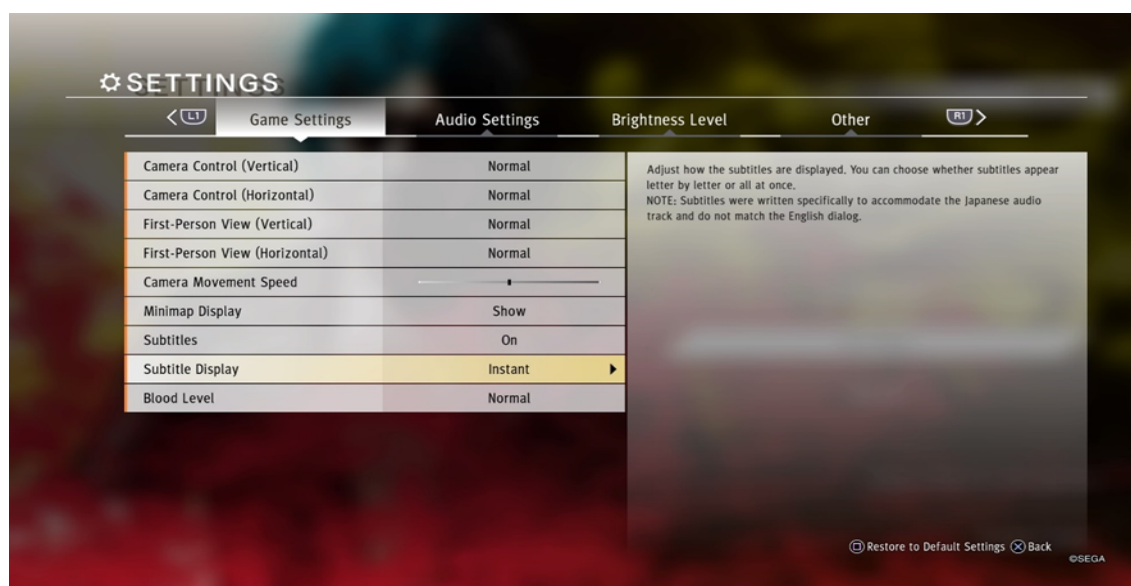


Figure 4. *Judgment* (2019), English subtitles option.

What do these options mean in practice? In what follows, I will present some examples that illustrate key differences between the two sets of subtitles, drawing a comparison between the same in-game scenes played once with English voices and English subtitles (EN/EN) and again with Japanese voices and English subtitles (JP/EN).

To begin with, there are some similarities: both the EN/EN and JP/EN versions make use of Japanese nouns. For example, in the scene depicted in Figure 5 below, Yagami is talking to his investigative partner Masaharu Kaito. In the Japanese source text (*Judge Eyes*, Sega, 2018), Yagami says:



Figure 5. *Judge Eyes* (2019).

Yagami: また源田先生んところに行ってみるわ
なんか仕事ないかって

Yagami: **Mata genda-sensei n toko ni itte miru wa. Nanka shigoto nai katte**
(Gloss translation: I am going to see Genda-sensei again. To ask if there is any work)

Which both versions translate as:

Yagami: **Anyway. I'm gonna swing by Genda-sensei's place, to see if he's got any work.**

As can be seen from the example above, both translations retain Japanese honorifics: the noun 'sensei' (先生, literally, 'born earlier'), used in Japanese to refer to or address teachers, doctors, politicians, lawyers and other authority figures, is used here as an honorific suffix in reference to the owner of the law firm for which Yagami worked as a lawyer. Throughout the game, both versions retain the use of Japanese honorific suffixes such as -san, -chan, -kun, and so on. In this sense, both translations are similar to what we have already seen in *Yakuza* games.

The following examples will illustrate some of the key differences between the two versions. The image in Figure 6 below is taken from *Judge Eyes* (Sega, 2018). In this scene, Yagami and Kato are investigating a murder scene. Yagami is looking for clues that may lead to the 'Mole' ('mogura' in Japanese), the individual responsible for a series of gruesome murders. In the following exchange, Kaito remarks that the police would have already investigated the crime scene:



Figure 6. *Judge Eyes* (2018).

Kaito: なあ 警察だってモグラは探したはずだぜ？

Kaito: Naa **keisatu datte mogura wa sagashita hazudaze?**

(Gloss translation: [hey/say/look], hasn't the police already searched for the Mole?)

Which the EN/EN subtitles translated as:

Kaito: **Hold up a sec. The cops already did their whole song and dance searchin' for the Mole.**

And the JP/EN subtitles translated as:

Kaito: **Look. The cops did their own investigation for the Mole.**

Kaito is a former member of the Yakuza, and in Japanese his words and speech patterns are associated with men's gendered language, which is perceived as rough and vulgar (for example, the informal 'da' in place of the copula 'desu', and the sentence-final particle 'ze'). As the example shows, the English voices and subtitles insert the idiomatic expression 'the whole song and dance' to Kaito's question, probably with the intention of suggesting a degree of scepticism on the part of Kaito about the ability of the police. The abbreviated expression 'searchin' (instead of 'searching'), retains also helps retaining a degree of informality in English. However, the same passage in the JP/EN version is

substantially different. Here Kaito's language is neutral and avoids the use of idiomatic expressions. In another exchange between Yagami and Masamichi Shintani, of the senior lawyers at Genda's office, Shintani calls Yagami on the phone in order to arrange a meeting to discuss the details of a case they are working on. The image in Figure 7 illustrates the exchange in the Japanese version of the game (Sega, 2018):



Figure 7. *Judge Eyes* (2018).

Shintani: 新谷だ 今 中道通りまで来てる

Shintani: **Shintani da. Ima, Nakamichi douri made kiteru.**

(Gloss translation: Its Shintani. I am on Nakamichi street)

Shintani : ミジョーレって喫茶店があるな？ そこで待ってる

Shintai: **Mijore tte kissaten ga aruna? soko de matteru**

(Gloss translation: There is a café called Mijore, I am waiting there)

In the EN/EN version, this is how the English subtitles translate the above passage:

Shintani: **Morning sunshine. I'm on Nakamichi Street.**

Shintani: **You know Mijore, little café, killer coffee? C'mere.**

And in the JP/EN version of the game, the same passage is translated into English as:

Shintani: **It's Shintani. I'm on Nakamichi Street.**

Shintani: **You know Mijore, the little café? I'll wait for you there.**

As in the previous example, the English voices and accompanying subtitles add a degree of informality and colourful expressions ('morning sunshine', 'killer coffee', 'c'mere') that are not present in the Japanese source text, while the English subtitles for the Japanese voice

tracks seem to keep things neutral, as far as possible. The above comparisons are just two examples to illustrate the main translational differences between the two sets of subtitles in *Judgment*. The analysis here is not meant to cover every aspect of the text, as this is a game that can be played for hundreds of hours, and which contains far too many examples to be exhaustively analysed in the space provided here.

However, for the purpose of drawing a provisional hypothesis about the translation strategies adopted by the translators at Sega, these brief comparisons may help illustrate the point I wish to make here. In short, I want to suggest here that the EN/EN version of the game (with English voice tracks accompanied by English subtitles) follows closely the translation strategies that were established in the *Yakuza* games. In practice, the overall purpose of these strategies seems to be the creation of a target text that, like the *Yakuza* games, that allows players to draw intertextually from their knowledge of American hardboiled crime fiction.

This is an understandable goal because *Judgment* as a text in some ways already seems to draw from this tradition of hardboiled private investigators, and for the players familiar with the conventions of this literary genre, there is an undeniable pleasure in experiencing it anew, with an interactive, contemporary medium⁵. In functional terms, the purpose of this version, therefore, could be seen as the creation of target text that could easily find its place alongside a well-established and prestigious domestic literary tradition.

What about the JP/EN version? I want to suggest that this version does not share the same purpose. In other words, this is a translation not created for an audience already familiar with the literary style of American hardboiled fiction. Here I would like to suggest a way of conceptualising this version of the game by drawing a theoretical connection to the idea of translation into English as a Lingua Franca (ELF).

To put it simply, translation into ELF could be understood as translation into English for an audience of speakers that do not necessarily share the same cultural background. Julianne House has argued that, unlike the English spoken by native speakers, ELF does not rely on “culturally-embedded, typically English forms such as idioms or other routinized phrases full of insider cultural-historical references invariably based on national tradition, convention or class” (House, 2013, p. 281). In terms of translation aim, therefore, a translation into English as a Lingua Franca would not assume a priori that readers share the same ‘cultural-historical references’ of native English speakers, based on a shared literary tradition (such as the tradition of hardboiled crime fiction popularised in North America), and therefore would not experience the same intertextual pleasure of native English-speaking players.

In other words, American culture-specific references and idioms would not have the desired effect on ELF-speaking audiences and potentially, even lessen the experience for these readers. It is in this sense that I believe that the JP/EN subtitles in *Judgment* can be

⁵ A popular video game streamer on YouTube, CohhCarnage, commented while playing *Judgment*: “oh my god these lines! I love it. It’s like a film noir” (CohhCarnage, 2019, 0:32).

theorised as 'ELF subtitles' (in contrast to just 'English subtitles'). I also want to suggest here a possible link between the ELF subtitles of *Judgment* and the broader practices of translation into ELF that are currently emerging in the field of fan translation of Japanese cultural products into English.

This is a broad field of amateur translation that already counts on extensive body of texts and established ways of doing translation, particularly in the field of amateur manga translation into English for an international audience. As suggested in Fabbretti (2017), fan translators have long been adapting their translation practices to meet the needs of an international readership; fan-translated texts are shared freely on the internet, which means that they can be accessed from anywhere in the world, regardless of national or regional boundaries. This, in practice, means that fan-translated Japanese texts for an international readership in general tend to avoid informal expressions, slang, culture-specific dialects, swear words and foul language, and so on. In other words, the translators at Sega may have been able to draw from these established fan-translation practices in order to develop an alternative subtitle track for the Japanese voices in *Judgment* in a way that would meet the expectations of those fans who prefer to experience the game with Japanese voices.

As for causal explanations, in the following section I will examine the rationale provided by Strichart for the creation of an alternative set of subtitles to accompany the Japanese voices in *Judgment*. So far, this article has examined various probable causes that may have played a part in the recent developments in the field of video game translation. The probable causes suggested so far were of a material nature (technology, financial considerations, etc.), cultural (translation norms, expectations) and social (the function of translation). In this part of the article, I would like to consider the human element within the question of causation, what Chesterman and Pym called the efficient cause. After all, as Chesterman argued:

[...] all external causes of translations, or particular features in translations, only exert a causal force by virtue of their being channelled or filtered through the translator's mind. Cultural and sociological pressures and values, norms and instructions, only have an effect on the target text via the individual translator's cognition, since the text itself is only produced by the translator's agency (Chesterman, 2007, p. 76).

In the context of this article, I will refer here to the evidence available about the influence of Scott Strichart, the localization producer at Sega of America responsible for the translation of the *Yakuza* and *Judgment* games. Strichart was interviewed by the video game specialised press, and I was also able to ask him some questions directly. I report here a summary of his statements about his role in introducing the idea of having two sets of subtitles to accompany the global release of *Judgment*.

Explaining the idea behind the English subtitles for the Japanese voice tracks, Strichart reportedly said:

“You just get that authentic, Yakuza-level experience without us pushing it too far into English [...] [Fans of *Yakuza* games in the West] have been playing in Japanese for so long. It wasn't right to say, 'well now that we have English audio, that's now the priority language'. Both have their unique experience.” (Scarpinito, 2019, n.p.).

As the above quote indicates, Strichart's role within Sega seems to involve a degree of mediation between players' expectations and the development team in Japan. Strichart released numerous interviews before the international release of *Judgment* and was in this sense part of Sega's promotion effort, but he is based in the US at the offices of Sega of America, therefore somewhat removed from the Japanese side. This distance may have benefitted Strichart's independence from the development team. In his statements, Strichart seems to clearly understand the importance of creating different experiences for different type of players, but did the Japanese side understand this as well? According to Strichart, they did not, at least initially. Strichart recounts:

I want one English subtitle track that mirror what the English actors are saying, but I want a second English subtitle track that would accompany the Japanese audio. Can we do that?” I asked a room full of Japanese developers via teleconference. A moment of silence passed that felt like an eternity. There was clearly some confusion. “We can probably do that, but... why? (Strichart, 2019)

In the same article, Strichart explains how he managed to convince the developers to let him translate the game twice. He did so by showing examples of other media that did the same, for example movies and anime. One of the difficulties that he faced is that compared to movies and animation, videos games contain a lot more lines of text to translate, so the idea of translating the same game twice was harder to justify. However, the process was simplified to an extent: instead of creating two separate versions, Strichart explained:

We took a base translation and then pushed it out into two different directions for Japanese audio and English audio [...]. The English script was written for actors to perform it, with more of a focus on making sure it sounded like things people would actually say in English. Sometimes, the two versions are totally the same! Others, it's totally different. (Strichart, 2019).

I contacted Strichart on LinkedIn, in our correspondence, he seemed very satisfied with the end result. *Judgment* received generally positive critical reviews (Metacritic, 2019) and its sales in the West exceeded Sega's expectations. The critical and commercial success can therefore be seen as justifying Strichart's effort to create two distinct players' experiences. The success of *Judgment* also allowed Strichart to repeat the same process with the latest *Yakuza* game (*Yakuza: Like a Dragon*, Sega, 2020) and the upcoming *Judgment* sequel (*Lost Judgment*, Sega, 2021).

Would the additional subtitle track have been possible without Strichart's effort? I do not believe so. When Strichart pitched the idea to the Japanese developers, Sega rightly questioned what the return on the investment would be, since allocating the resources to

translating the game twice, as well as the extra work required for quality assurance, in practice meant adding an extra language to the process (2020, pers. comm., 15 January).

Strichart made the case for the integration of two English subtitle tracks by explaining that if Sega only released one set of subtitles, they would risk alienating their core fans and could be criticised for removing an existing option. In this sense, the effort to revoice the game could have been perceived negatively as an attempt to reach the mass market at the expense of the fans who had supported the company through the less prosperous times (2020, pers. comm., 15 January).

In other words, I believe that this is a clear example of how translators can be efficient causes of translation, not just with regards to the actual process of translation, but also, as illustrated above, by pitching proposals to patrons and institutions, by crafting convincing reasons for adopting a particular translation strategy, by knowing and understanding the expectations of their audiences, and by promoting their translations through interviews and commentaries.

5. Conclusion

One of the original aims of the discipline of translation studies, as set out by James St. Holmes (Holmes, 2000, p. 176) was to describe phenomena and to establish general principles to explain and predict translation. Andrew Chesterman (2007) and Anthony Pym (2006) have argued that translation theory is rather more adept at observing translation than explaining it. In this article, I have sought to explain the causes of recent developments in the field of video game translation drawing from different sources of causation, including material, cultural and social causes, as well as human causes. In this concluding part of the article, I would like to attempt a prediction. As we have seen, the practice of creating two sets of English subtitles to accompany different voice tracks is relatively new in the field of video games and, so far, only Sega has been releasing games in this way. How likely is this practice to become more common in the future?

In my opinion, given the evidence available, Japanese videogame firms tend to be rather risk-averse and would take a dim view of the extra work, time and resources required to offer such option in games. They would question what the return on investment would be for carrying out the extra work. Simply adding Japanese voice tracks is a relatively cost-efficient option to satisfy the fans who prefer experiencing games that way but adding an extra subtitle track would be a costlier proposition.

What may make a difference going forward is how this extra option may come to be understood in the near future. It may remain an oddity, with Sega remaining the only company offering such an extravagant extra. Or, it may come to be considered a tool of digital accessibility, in the same way that subtitles for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH) are. In this second scenario, I believe that Japanese firms will be compelled to at least match the perceived value of competing products.

The ultimate aim of Japanese video game firms like Sega is the creation of economic value, generating profit for their shareholders (SegaSammy Holdings Integrated Report,

2020). For these firms, then, it would be a matter of balancing the increased costs of creating an additional language option with the potential value that such option may add to their video game products. From this point of view, I believe that Japanese firms are not bound to a particular language ideology and have no intrinsic preferences in term of translation orientation. Rather, their aim is to generate value for their customer and shareholders. In other words, if players will come to expect ELF subtitles as part of a video game product, firms will surely find a way to provide this option, like Sega is already doing.

Furthermore, if additional ELF subtitles become the new norm, it may be the case that not offering this option may become the riskier proposition. I believe that, particularly in the case of games that are explicitly set in a fictional recreation of Japan like *Yakuza* and *Judgment*, fans and critics could make their expectations heard loudly, so there would be pressure on developers to meet these expectations. Other firms that do not create such games may not experience the same pressure. If, however, the current popularity of Japanese culture and media on the international stage continues, game developers may be tempted to offer similar products, trying to appeal to the general prestige that Japanese cultural products seem to enjoy at present.

I believe that as long as ELF subtitles do not replace 'native English' subtitles, offering the choice of selecting different translation orientations will become more popular in the future. The factors constraining this option may perhaps be material, financial, or simply dictated by constraints in planning and logistics; but firms will strive to meet the expectations of players as much as they can, simply as a way to increase customer satisfaction and eventually improve the sale of their products.

To conclude, I will also add here a note about the possibility of video game translation coming to affect other fields of translation. I have suggested above that translation into ELF is already a reality in the field of amateur translation. In a sense, Sega's innovation can be understood as the integration of fan translation practices into a commercial product. How likely are these practices to influence other fields of translation as well? From the evidence I was able to gather in my research, other commercial fields of translation from Japanese such as English manga publishing, despite having largely transitioned to a digital distribution format, do not yet offer a choice between translation orientations. This may be one of the reasons why amateur manga translation continues to flourish outside the commercial field. If Sega's practices become more widely accepted, we may see the introduction of similar options in other related fields of translation in the future. These developments are ongoing, so future research may be able to confirm, or refute my predictions.

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**A LOCALIZATION TALE:
LOCALIZATION OF A VIDEOGAME NAMED *SOFIA AND THE BARBARIAN – A KID’S TALE***

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ABSTRACT: In this paper, the practice of videogame development, translation and localization is explored, taking as a case-study an independent videogame created through a collaborative family project - *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid’s Tale*.¹ The paper explores the possible relation between the translation approaches used in the field and the promotion of a videogame on social networks, websites and platforms (*itch.io*). The findings are likely to be of interest not only to videogame lovers, but also independent videogame creators, translators, and translator trainers.

KEYWORDS: Videogame, Localization, Translation, Promotion and Creation

1. Introduction

The design and development of videogames is one of the largest and fastest-growing areas of the entertainment business, so it is not a surprise that it is also attracting attention in Translation Studies. Videogames have been studied by translation scholars from a variety of different perspectives, for example by Bernal-Merino (2006, 2011), O’Hagan and Mangiron (2006), Sánchez, M. (2008) and O’Hagan (2007, 2009). Indeed, localization is perceived as a subfield of Translation Studies, reflecting the extent to which technology and the digital world have impacted translation and language research.

With the surge of new programming tools enabling the creation of a small prototypes by independent teams, videogames are no longer created exclusively by computer programmers in big videogame companies. This article explores a small-family-based localization project for a videogame called *Sofia and the Barbarian – A Kid’s Tale*, looking at the possible relation between the translation approaches used in the field and the promotion of this videogame on social networks, websites and game platforms. As such, it provides insights that should be relevant not only to videogame lovers, but also to independent videogame creators, translators, and translator trainers.

The article will first describe the localization process in general terms, including a brief overview of the history of game localization, before zooming in on the particular videogame that is our object of study to examine the specific stages of game development, translation and promotion.

2. The localization process

Videogame companies tend to publish their videogames in several languages to maximize their returns on investment (Dietz, 2006, p. 125) and as a result, the demand for localization is growing and is expected to continue to do so in the forthcoming years (Chandler and

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¹Source: *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid’s Tale*:

http://www.fluxogramadigital.pt/project_sofia_barbarian.html (Accessed: 21 January 2022).

Deming, 2012). Many games are sold in over 30 countries and are translated into more than a dozen languages (Melnick and Kirin, 2008). Thus, effective game localization plays a big role in selling games in specified regions or cultures.

The Globalization and Localization Association (GALA) defines localization as “the process of adapting a product or content to a specific locale or market” (Carrillo, D. and Sauberer, G., 2019, pp. 633-646). In addition to translation, this may include: converting currencies and units of measurement; reformatting dates, addresses, phone numbers, etc; amending content to increase its appeal to the target audience (such as by adapting, adding or removing text, or being creative when translating idioms or wordplay); modifying graphics to suit the target market (different cultures interpret colors and images differently, so it is necessary to make sure they're appropriate); adapting the layout, and changing domain names². Besides the technical development of videogames and the addition of new visual and audio features, game production has developed ever more complex plots and narrative techniques to create compelling stories and atmospheres. Consequently, the translation strategy needs to be specifically customized to the product, theme and platform, taking account of the target audience and the distinct purpose of each individual game.

2.1 Brief history of game localization

During the 1970s, videogames would normally be released in their original versions to the few foreign markets that were ready for this type of entertainment, and as a result, trade took place mainly in English between the United States of America, United Kingdom and Japan. The priorities in those days tended to be establishing a brand and customizing the product for more immediate markets; consequently, there was little awareness of how minor adjustments could be made to help boost sales abroad. Most videogames relied on intuitive gameplay and simple instructions, so there was little text to be read and indeed, to be translated. It was during this early period that English terms such as ‘arcade’, ‘joystick’, ‘score’ and ‘game over’ were directly introduced into most languages without any need for translation.

One of the earliest examples of game localization was the popular “Pac-Man”, brought to the US market from Japan in 1980. The original Japanese name was initially transliterated into English as ‘Puck Man’ [from パックマン], a coinage inspired by the Japanese onomatopoeic ‘/pakupakutaberu/’, a phrase normally used to indicate that someone is eating greedily, in imitation of a fish-like opening and closing of the mouth (Bernal-Merino, 2011, p. 13). The initial transliteration into Latin script characters sounded like ‘/pakkuman/’ to the Japanese, but when localizing the product for the USA, marketers decided that ‘Puck’ was too close to a certain coarse four-letter word and decided to go for a similar but less troublesome spelling, ‘Pac’. The final solution, ‘Pac-Man’, was a

² Source: <https://www.sure-languages.com/what-is-localization-2/> (Accessed: 21 February 2022)

successful choice, emphasizing that one of the principles of good practice in localization is respect for the language and culture of the players of each importing country.

In the 1980s, the so-called “digital revolution” brought a rapid growth in the demand for hardware and software from many countries around the world (Cooke, 1992), leading to a new demand for internationalization. At the same time, videogames were becoming more appealing, featuring more creative and better-developed plots that improved the gaming experience and involved the players more in the story. The need for games to appeal to the users’ own reality now made it essential for companies to adapt them to different locales and target markets.

This meant that large teams of writers and translators were increasingly required for each language version, something that videogame companies could not possibly undertake without more cooperation. Consequently, they started outsourcing the work to translation providers. It was thus that the process of adapting the software to different locales became known as localization.

Today, localization represents a “lucrative, dynamic and interprofessional field, often involving marketing, design, software engineering, as well as linguistic processes” (Windle and Pym, 2011, p. 410). The process encompasses not only the socio- cultural aspects of the game, but also the technical, ideological, ethical, and representational aspects (Pym, 2004), helping the software engineer and creators focus on the end users and their total satisfaction and enjoyment of the game.

2.2 The process of game localization

Due to the wide spectrum of players for which games are designed, the localized game must be innovative and exciting, but at the same time, it has to be easy to play and understand. For this reason, translators are often given *an unusual degree of independence* to modify, adapt, and remove any cultural references or wordplay that would not work in the target language. With videogames, fidelity takes on a different meaning, in that the translator does not have to be loyal to the original text, but rather to the overall game experience.

Localization engineers will first extract all the linguistic assets³ from the game and present them to the translators in a format that is convenient for all the parties involved in the team (primarily the localizer, programmer, and quality assurance department).

³ The most common linguistic assets to accompany a videogame are: the game itself, which is made up of a variety of texts in need of translation, encoded in a variety of formats depending on the information; the documentation manual (usually produced with software applications such as Word); user interface and pop-up help captions (often designed with proprietary tools in XML or binary code); audio files (encoded in .wav, .mp3 or a unique proprietary format); and video files (encoded in .avi, .mov, .mp4, or with more restricted proprietary tools). Other features may include: the official website of the game, developed in HTML or Java Script; the promotional texts in general which are distributed on the Internet, mainly on social networks; game patches (small downloadable programs that fix existing bugs missed in the testing process); the game-updates demo (a periodical downloadable modular augmentation demo of game chapters, features, storylines, and characters).

Some developers may employ amateur translators and localizers, as part of an 'inner circle', while others use freelancers or translation agencies.

At the root of many of the problems connected with game localization lies the fact that the various language versions need to be released simultaneously (or almost simultaneously), necessitating parallel development. Thus, there is pressure to produce the translations in good time in order to permit revision and editing before the game is released onto the market.

The videogame production chain encompasses different stages (O'Hagan and Mangiron, 2013, p. 129). This localization process entails three of stages: pre-localization (encompassing the development of the original game, the preparation of the localization kit,⁴ and the launch of internationalization), localization proper (translation), and post-localization (the distribution of the game).

The main aim of game localization is to adapt the contents in order to achieve an appropriate game experience in the target audience, while retaining loyalty to the original source. In fact, in the globalized marketplace, the acceptance of the product by the receiving culture is often perceived as more important than its provenance (Bernal-Merino, 2014), which in any case may be difficult to determine, as production is often spread over various countries. The fact that interactivity is part of the very essence of videogames means that a basic game design can also accommodate technical, cultural and linguistic transformation in order to bring the product closer to the local taste and expectations of the territory of release. According to this principle, almost everything in a videogame is open to change in order to meet the needs of specific territories, especially if it will bring a potential increase in sales. In other words, games may look different and be played differently depending on the country where they are purchased.

The culturalization of games also involves consideration of legal issues. In reality, the marketing departments of publishers are typically involved in decisions affecting changes at macro level, such as the title or visuals of a game. In many titles developed in the US or UK, a strategy of non-translation is the norm: that is, the name is kept in English in the different locales, so that big titles like *League of Legends* or *World of Warcraft* are easily recognizable all over the world. Interestingly, countries with protective policies like France also uphold this general tendency.

The localization department is usually behind cultural adaptation at the micro level. Successful localization goes beyond technical and linguistic adaptation to include the customization of the cultural content of a game when this is required to facilitate the gameplay and performance for target players. For example, it will involve careful attention

⁴A well-organized localization kit should contain all the final resources needed by localizers in order to create a localized version of the software without assistance from the original development team. Therefore, a localization kit should contain the files to be localized and prepared for translation (the binary files and the resource files), as well as the control panel, instructions, guidelines, indications, marketing texts and texts used for audio files and notes from the developers. It should also provide background and contextual information about what is being localized. A fully functional version (at least a beta version) of the running software should be included. Finally, a localization kit should contain all the tools required to work with the file.

to idiomatic speech, which changes not only from language to language but culture to culture (many expressions found in England sound strange to Americans and vice versa), and to local sensitivities (in Germany, representations of Nazism cannot be shown, while in Korea, sexual content is heavily censored). Ultimately, it is attention to such details that will determine the success of the product in a specific locale.

The translation of video games into different cultures shares most of the stages to be found in any localization process (e.g. of a software, an app or a website) but it also incorporates additional challenges like those faced by translators working in the audiovisual domain (time and space constraints, such as the number of characters per line; lip synchronization, etc.) or even literary translation (for example the use of slang, wordplay or tongue twisters). In the following section, the process is described in more detail within the context of a specific case study.

3. Case study: *Sofia and the Barbarian – A Kid's Tale*

Sofia and the Barbarian – A Kid's Tale is a 2D-platform independent⁵ videogame of the action genre.⁶ It is a family-based venture, which counts on the cooperation of a child (who is the artist, author, voice, and sound-effect creator), a software engineer and a translator/localizer. Development began on it in 2018 (on a part-time basis) and is still ongoing, with a launch planned for early 2023. The idea of going ahead with the localization process was born in 2020 with the desire to promote it at a worldwide level with the help of a crowdfunding campaign.

The software engineer wrote the code, developed the content, and tested the internationalization, and is also in charge of the art adaptation, project coordination, and promotion. The translator not only works with the transfer of information from UK English into European Portuguese and German, but also cooperates directly with the software engineer to create the best possible options in terms of translation and localization. The developer is always open to new suggestions made by the localizer or the fan base, whether involving technical or linguistic aspects.

Developing a game based on the creative skills of a child is not an easy task. When the process of creating the game started, most of the drawings had already been done, so there was a need to digitally adapt the illustrations to create frames for the characters, animations, objects and scenarios.

The story of the game was imagined by the child and is based on many drawings that she drew when she was between 3 and 5 years of age. It is a story of our universe and its planets which are ruled by the Sun Sorcerer and his two faithful servants, AI and UI. One

⁵An 'independent game' is one created by an independent developer or team of developers without the financial support of publishers, as the big mainstream videogames have. These games depend on the cooperation of various gaming communities that offer their experience and expertise in gaming to support the project. The growth of the worldwide web and modernization of software and localization tools have made it possible for independent games to flourish within the global market.

⁶The player needs to overcome various obstacles, while accumulating power (power-up).

day, the Ice Witch captures the Sun Sorcerer and, because of this, the whole universe is plunged into complete darkness. The universe is now in danger and its only hope is a little girl named Sofia and her friend, the Barbarian.

The game was originally written in UK English, but there are plans to translate it into European Portuguese, European Spanish, German, French, Russian, Chinese, Hindi, Arabic and Japanese. As the game is still under development, the translation and localization stages are still undergoing changes and adaptations. At this moment, the localizer is checking whether the main characters, their physical appearance and the game's settings are suitable for global audiences and cultures without having to undergo major changes and looking into culturalization issues relating to aspects of the content, such as the animals and the sounds they make, types of food, the use of children's songs and nursery rhymes, and the restrictions on content by age.

In accordance with usual procedures for videogame localization, *Sofia and the Barbarian- a Kid's Tale* is undergoing the following stages: 1. Development of the original game; 2. Determination of project content and specifications (i.e., the core gameplay and innovative selling points are discussed); 3. Creation of the concept art created, including the basic game mechanics and storyboard; 4. Identification of the engine and development tools to be used; 5. Organization of the localization kit; 6. Edition and revision of texts.

3.1. Game development

The development of the prototype is often regarded as the core phase of the project, and it is at this stage that developers take the decision about whether to create a game that is internally different from almost every other game or not. They will also decide issues related to the internationalization of the product (for example the integration of Unicode and the design of a generous or resizable user interface).

In our case, the programming language used was *GDScript*, which is based on the language *Python*, for the game engine *GODOT*. Figure 1, below, shows an example from the tutorials, illustrating how even a simple user interface requires many lines of code to tell the hardware what and when to do things. These are often rather confusing for the translator.

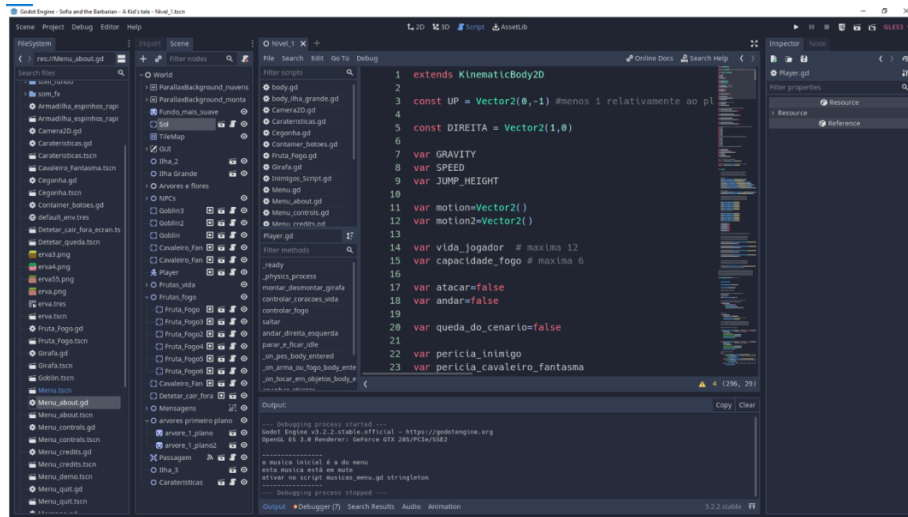


Figure 1. Coding on Godot game engine from the game *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid's Tale*.

Figure 2 illustrates game code and how working with it could be complex for both translators and engineers. Words/commands appearing as part of the user interface have not been highlighted, which can become more difficult for the translator to identify correctly, leading to possible errors.

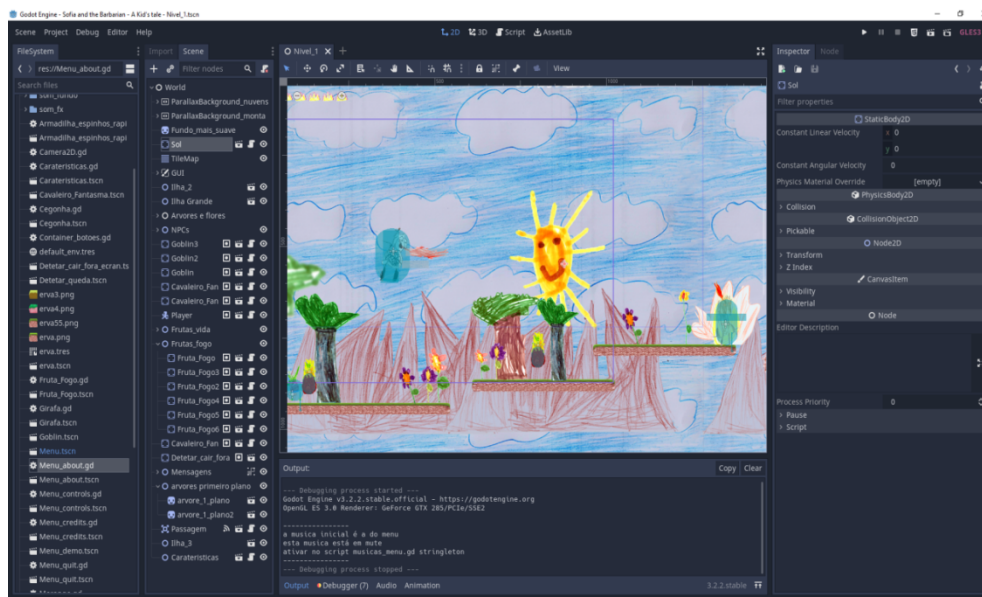


Figure 2. User interface programmed on Godot game engine from the game *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid's Tale*.

The user interface (UI) is also often referred to as the menu. This is made up of short text labels that trigger specific computer behaviors. This is a functional text type that can take the form of a reader-friendly version such as play, as seen in Figure 3.



Figure 3 - User Interface from the game *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid's Tale*

The user interface text needs to be short, clear, and precise in terms of the information displayed, because its main purpose is to facilitate play without creating confusion, while maintaining the mystery and magic of the game. In this case, the user interface was designed with available space, so the labels of other languages could fit in without any problem, even if they are visually longer.

As regards the controls panel (Figure 4), the Z key may cause confusion in many parts of the world because the letter z is a part of the Latin-script alphabet. On the Latin keyboard the z key was chosen (by default) because of its strategic location on the keyboard. Nonetheless in different keyboards the same may represent different letter. However, it is planned that the player may choose the keys that they wish to play with.

At this stage of the game's development, the following is yet to be implemented: after the user chooses which language they want, the keys that appear in this menu will adjust to the user's keyboard. In the future, another option will also be implemented, which will allow the user to reset the keys to be used in the game.



Figure 4. Controls panel from the game *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid's Tale*.

3.2 The translation process

In order to localize this game, the team used the valuable support of the Game Engine Localizer Tutorial Guide, produced by Juan Linietsky, Ariel Manzur and the Godot community.⁷ The preferred format for the presentation of this material is the spreadsheet (Chandler, 2005), as in [Table 1](#), because it is a simple, rational structure that can be reduced to numerical values – the true language of machine code. Informative texts and characters' dialogue are presented in columns, which is a fragmented, but easy and effective way to locate specific details. By attributing a separate line and column to each piece of information, programmers and localization teams can then automatically and safely insert the relevant strings back into the game code, avoiding the potential creation of errors in the source code by translators or localizers. This is based on whichever language the player chooses to use. For instance, in our case, the word “stronger” remains in the coding, but the script will be presented in the language that the player chose in the first place.

| Keys | PT | EN | DE |
|-----------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| <i>STRONGER</i> | <i>Agora estou mais forte</i> | <i>I'm stronger now</i> | <i>Ich bin jetztstärker</i> |
| <i>WEAK</i> | <i>Estou demasiado fraco para montar</i> | <i>I'm too weak to ride...</i> | <i>Ich bin zuschwach um zureiten ...</i> |
| <i>FIRE</i> | <i>Agora consigo cuspir fogo</i> | <i>Now I can breathe fire</i> | <i>Jetzt kann ich Feuer speien</i> |
| <i>DISMOUNT</i> | <i>Para cuspir fogo eu tenho de desmontar</i> | <i>To breath fire I must dismount</i> | <i>Um Feuerzuspeien, muss ich absteigen</i> |

Table 1. Language spreadsheet from the game *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid's Tale*.

⁷Juan Linietsky, Ariel Manzur and the Godot community (CC-BY 3.0). Revision e43d99b8. In https://docs.godotengine.org/en/stable/tutorials/i18n/internationalizing_games.html

This method can be very useful for adjusting words to space constraints, encoding variables, mobilizing obligatory pre-established terminologies and identifying potentially ungrammatical constructions generated by software automatic juxtapositions, as well as the possible lack of context.

The translation of all these assets leads to the perennial dilemma of localization: what is to be localized and for whom? As regards this particular game, the main target audience consists of children, young teenagers and their parents, which makes the localization process relatively easy; this is because the creative aspect of the game is based on a child's imagination (a surprising vision of the world in many ways), which is to be maintained. On the other hand, the game's narrative may stir up a completely different debate since the main plot is based on a friendship between a child and a barbarian (Figure 5). This might engender some puzzlement/debate since cultural references around the notion of 'barbarian' suggest everything that is far from childlike and innocent.⁸ However, the visual imagery throws it into a new light, as the character of the "barbarian" is envisioned and described as a child, and we learn that his main goal is to help his friend save the universe. The game thus inspires a sense of friendship and comradeship towards an otherwise fearsome character.

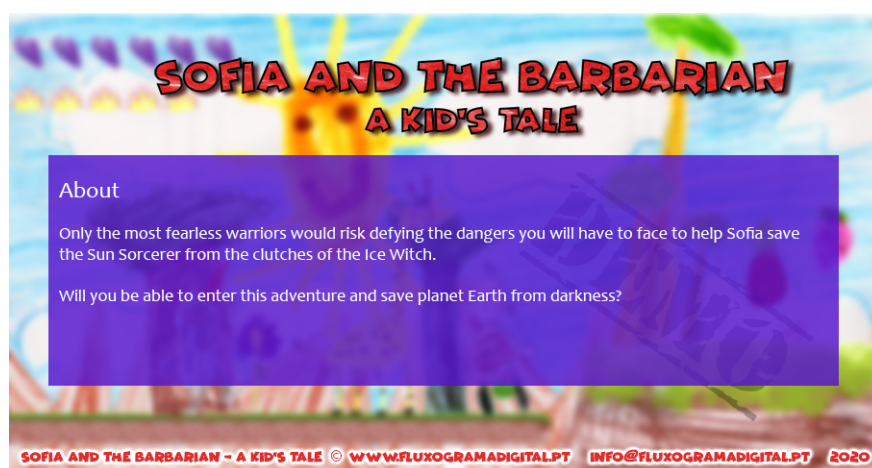


Figure 5. "About" interface from the game *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid's Tale*.

The narrative load is actually lower in this game than in some other genres, which means that the margin for creativity in translation is relatively narrow; indeed, a fairly literal strategy would seem to be indicated to keep the game experience in the destination locale. This does not signify that the translation is an easy process, though, as expertise relevant to the specific genre and subject matter are still required (Dietz, 2007).

One of things that needs to be considered in the localization process is the preferred language variant for localization. There may be reason to differentiate between variants of

⁸In many cultures, the word "barbarian" carries a negative charge of violence, brutality, exploitation, and destruction, precisely in opposition to the more positive notions of culture, humanism, and particularly civilization. In this case, these associations are less well defined, as the term is seen through the eyes of a child, who does not have the knowledge of the historical factors underpinning it.

the same language when player communities are large enough to justify the investment, and in some cases, games are now being localized into Canadian French, Brazilian Portuguese and Latin-American Spanish (Giné, 2009). In our case, the team has decided to localize *Sofia and the Barbarian* into the European variants only, at least for the moment. Depending on the game and the target audience, register may also be an issue. For example, formal German is more refined, but can feel dated or distant, and might even seem confusing for smaller children to use; informal German, on the other hand, may seem impolite to some players, although it is becoming increasingly common as cultural norms shift. In our game, we have generally opted for the informal or neutral variant, such as “Quit” (EN), “Spiel verlassen” (DE) or “Sortir” (FR).

The following table pinpoints some aspects of the localization process into English, Spanish and French in terms of formatting, punctuation, grammar and formality (Table 2). These can quickly become challenges: for example, different modes of address (such as the choice of “tú” above the more formal “usted” in Spanish) may bring other grammatical implications. The text and narrative have to acknowledge the player, as well as their age and dialogue responses.

| Language | Formatting | Punctuation | Grammar | Formality |
|----------|---------------------------------|--|--|-----------|
| English | Shorter words/sentences/strings | Use of "" | No distinction between gender in nouns | you |
| French | Longer words/sentences/strings | Use of « » | Gender in nouns | tu /vous |
| Spanish | Longer words/sentences/strings | Use of inverted question (¿) and exclamation (¡) marks at the beginning of the sentences as well as the regular ones in the end. The letter "ñ" | Gender in nouns | tu/usted |

Table 2. Translation and Localization process from the game *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid's Tale*.

As we have attempted to demonstrate above, game localization seems to grant a high degree of freedom to the translators, which is closely linked to the nature of this medium. The choice by the translator of a particular linguistic solution in the target game cannot be explained simply on the basis of the relationship between the translation and the source

text alone. For example, the phrase “breathing fire” in English refers simultaneously to the literal act of producing a stream of fire from the mouth, but also to the little Barbarian’s temperament, in that he is intimidatingly or violently aggressive towards his enemies in speech and manner.⁹ In Portuguese and French, the terms “cuspir fogo” “cracher du feu” tend to be associated with creatures like dragons, though there are also interesting examples of idiomatic expressions with the word ‘fire’ to represent the idea of anger and violence in other languages, such as “deitar fogo pelas narinas” (PT) or “echar fuego pelos ojos” (SP).

Certain names, terms, places or expressions may be subject to a wider foreignization strategy. In this case the title of the game remains the same in any language in order to retain the overall “feeling” of the game.

3.3. Game promotion: getting the idea

Marketing was not included in the main stages of the production chain described above, since it can begin at any moment during a project. In this particular case, the game developer began promoting the game even before he actually started programming the software, since the game design and child’s drawings had already been completed. This section discusses the various aspects of the game’s promotion, namely the promotional videos, website, crowdfunding campaign, and fan-based suggestions. The game manual and promotional book of illustrations, which will also be subject to localization, are still being developed.

3.3.1 Promotional videos and drawings

Multimedia support was used to launch the initial idea and create an aura of mystery and suspense around the game, a strategy that appeals to the adult users of the game. Marketing has to take into account how the different game assets are being localized: for instance music is perceived differently among different cultures, as using different music genres to promote a child’s game should be considered a strategy. Thus, a videogame is both a product designed for mass consumption and an artistic creation at the same time. By doing this for different audiences in other countries it is more effective in a sales perspective.

⁹Retrieved from: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fire-breathing> (Accessed: 12 February 2022).

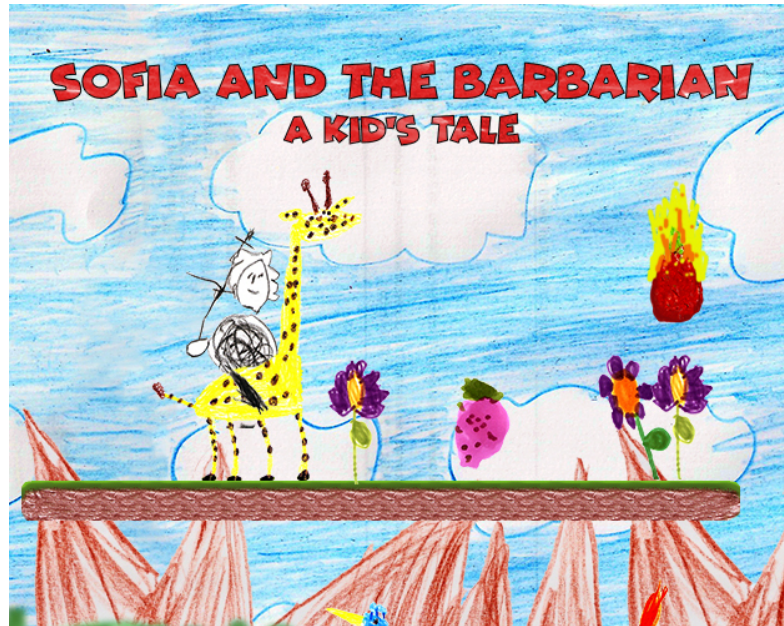


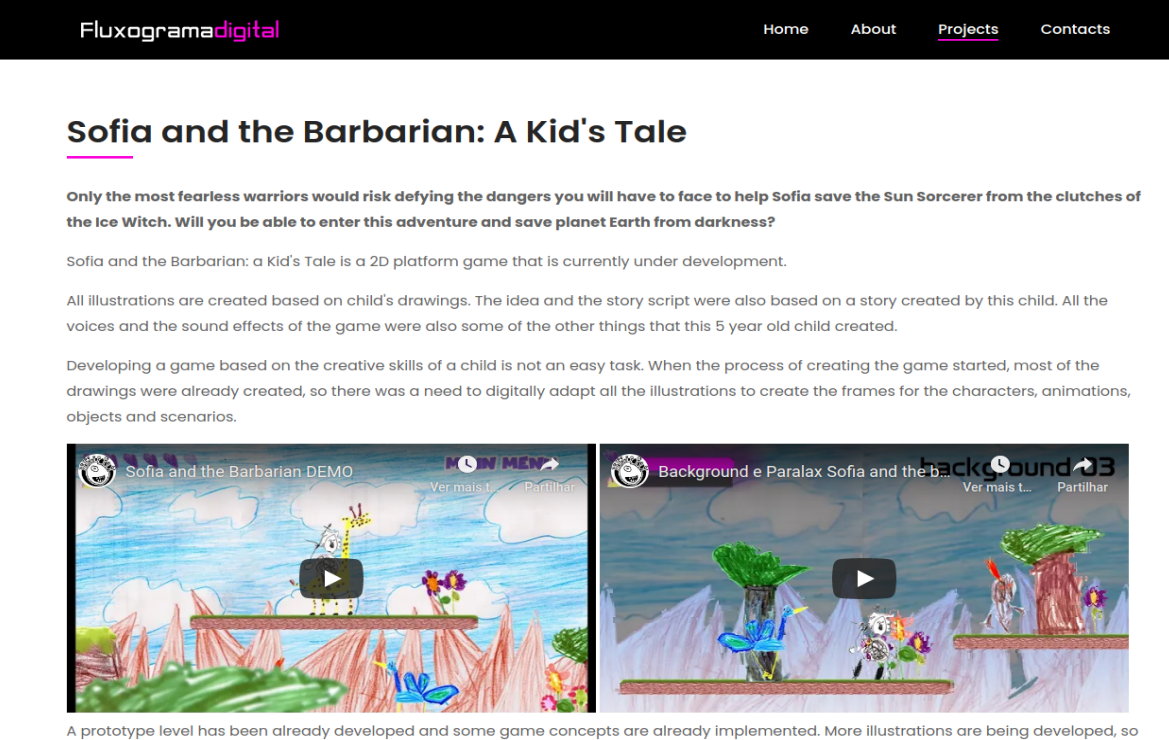
Figure 6. Game Design of *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid's Tale*.

The promotional video, for example, aims to show the gameplay of the video game. Therefore, the scenes presented are as diverse as possible, in a way of introducing different environments and levels in a fast and dynamic way. It is intended to make a general presentation of what the players can expect out of the game, but without revealing situations that will be important for the player to witness when playing the video game. Each video is a part of a sequence of promotional videos that is released as the development of the game progresses and can be seen on the Youtube channel, game website and social networks of the project¹⁰.

3.3.2 Website

The website was created in order to launch additional information such as previews and reviews of the product, notice boards, forums, customer support details, and expansion packs with new chapters and language versions, as well as screenshots, game play clips of the actual videogame, and information on the crowdfunding campaign (Figure 7).

¹⁰ Link to social networks - <https://linktr.ee/sofiaandthebarbarian> (Accessed: 22 June 2022)



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Sofia and the Barbarian: A Kid's Tale

Only the most fearless warriors would risk defying the dangers you will have to face to help Sofia save the Sun Sorcerer from the clutches of the Ice Witch. Will you be able to enter this adventure and save planet Earth from darkness?

Sofia and the Barbarian: a Kid's Tale is a 2D platform game that is currently under development.

All illustrations are created based on child's drawings. The idea and the story script were also based on a story created by this child. All the voices and the sound effects of the game were also some of the other things that this 5 year old child created.

Developing a game based on the creative skills of a child is not an easy task. When the process of creating the game started, most of the drawings were already created, so there was a need to digitally adapt all the illustrations to create the frames for the characters, animations, objects and scenarios.

A prototype level has been already developed and some game concepts are already implemented. More illustrations are being developed, so

Figure 7. Website.

The main aim of the website is to actively involve different language-specific fan communities, in order to improve the game. By learning about players' likes and dislikes, the content can be better adapted to the general public in different countries, making the selling process easier.

3.3.3 Game platform

The *Itch.io* platform is a marketplace platform for independent videogames where developers can sell the contents that they have created. Access to the site is limited, but there is a small part of the gaming community that has access to some downloadable files and a demo in order to test and fix specific problems. These testers are from various parts of the world and are available to collaborate and identify all kinds of errors or inaccuracies in order to help the game developer.



Figure 8. Itch.io platform.

3.3.4 Demo version

After the testers have tested the updated version of the game and all possible modifications have been made, the worldwide community can download the demo version of the game. The localizer will also depend on the testers' helpful feedback regarding linguistic and/or cultural appropriacy and can make the necessary adaptations to make it more interesting and fulfilling in terms of gameplay.

3.3.5 Demonstration video

Another way of launching a videogame product is by means of a demonstration video,¹¹ which promotes and facilitates the cooperation of the fan base in terms of suggestions for gameplay, design, localization, and language used. This project, as the work of independent videogame developers and creators, depends on voluntary help from others (Figure 9).

¹¹Demonstration video - <https://fluxogramadigital.itch.io/sofiabarbarian> (Accessed: 12 January 2022).



Figure 9. Demo video from the game *Sofia and the Barbarian – a Kid's Tale*.

3.3.6 Fan-based promotion and validation

Soliciting help from the wider Internet community has become a new and innovative way of solving problems and making game development and creation a cooperative and satisfying experience. Here, internet users voluntarily contribute their domain knowledge on the subject, enabling the developer to constantly improve the content and design of the product. This empowers the users, as well as being very beneficial for the creators and their budgets.

In our case, one useful suggestion that emanated from the internet community was that a specific font should be created that evoked a child's handwriting, bringing more authenticity to the game and making it more reader friendly. This means that the child will have to write all of the letters of the different alphabets that will be used in the game, and, in the case of Russian, Chinese and Japanese, use different scripts.

Another suggestion was the use of icons instead of words in the user interface (for example in choosing the language, since the former are, generally speaking, more universally understood). This was suggested especially because icons generally offer a more universal perspective and can relate assertively at a cultural and sociological level. They are also useful for game players with Autism Spectrum Disorder or Dyslexia, for example. In these cases, the player could have the choice between handwritten information or icons.

In terms of the testing phase, it is fundamental for fans to undertake the gameplay or localization testing, because they can pinpoint errors, mistakes or bugs that the software developer, translators or localizers may have overlooked or do not have knowledge of. This supplies the videogame with accessibility and value, bringing more sales success worldwide.

Language testers also check for grammar mistakes, typos, repetitions, and problems with text layout, while the localization team checks the ethical, cultural and sociological-related information. Creating content that is clear and accessible for users around the world is beneficial in terms advertising and revenue of the game.

3.3.7 Crowdfunding

In this game, crowdfunding was used to generate financial support for continuous software development, game promotion and localization. The process began in February of 2021, in order to give the developer enough time to develop the multimedia content that will be the foundation of the publicity for this crowdfunding campaign.

4. Conclusion

This tale of localization in the world of videogames has sought to provide an insight into the process from a practical perspective. Although the project is still ongoing, the constant commitment shown by its creative team and the fact that it already has got its very own fan base has made it possible to believe in the continuity of the project. Through a good localization service, the creative team can bring not only the language, but also the characters and the whole game experience closer to the player.

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O USO DO MEMOQ NAS TAREFAS DE PRÉ-TRADUÇÃO: REVISÃO CRÍTICA DE FUNÇÕES E SUGESTÕES DE MELHORIA

Tatiana Limongi Chaves*

RESUMO: O presente artigo apresenta sugestões de melhorias e novas funcionalidades para o memoQ com o objetivo de conseguir um ambiente tecnológico integrado e abrangente de tradução, que inclua funções de pré-tradução. As melhorias sugeridas são baseadas em observações de campo feitas durante um estágio numa empresa de tradução. A análise das funções concentra-se nas tarefas de pré-tradução por ter sido a fase em que mais constrangimentos foram encontrados, enquanto as sugestões abrangem várias etapas do ciclo de tradução.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Memoq, Formatação, Online, Ambiente Integrado

1. Introdução

As CAT tools (“computer-aided translation tools”) são consideradas um campo de estudo emergente quando comparado a outros estudos envolvendo tecnologia e tradução. Cada ferramenta, por esse motivo, carece de melhorias e aperfeiçoamentos para que possa estar cada vez mais alinhada com os reais problemas do profissional de tradução (Peng, 2020, p. 1).

O objetivo deste artigo é contribuir para o avanço das ferramentas CAT, em especial o memoQ, tomando por base as observações e a experiência obtidas durante um estágio numa empresa de tradução. O artigo concentra-se nas tarefas de pré-tradução, por terem sido aquelas em que o software analisado tem maiores carências.

Este artigo está subdividido em três seções, detalhadas em seguida. Na seção 2, apresenta-se a evolução do uso de ferramentas tecnológicas no campo da tradução, a partir de um referencial teórico selecionado (Peng, H., Pietrzak, P., and Kornacki, M., Sinwai, C.). Inicialmente, faz-se um breve apanhado da evolução do uso de ferramentas tecnológicas no campo da tradução, procurando-se mostrar como os tradutores atualmente utilizam as ferramentas CAT de forma habitual. Prossegue-se com a apresentação de uma breve cronologia das ferramentas CAT, na qual se mostra a sua evolução em paralelo com a evolução tecnológica. A seção termina com uma análise da evolução da ferramenta memoQ em particular, uma vez que foi a ferramenta em que incidiu o meu projeto de investigação.

Na seção 3 descreve-se, de forma detalhada, alguns tipos de atividades práticas analisadas e os problemas encontrados nas ferramentas CAT, especificamente na ferramenta memoQ, durante o meu estágio e prática profissional. Procurei categorizar os tipos de atividades realizadas. Há uma maior incidência na atividade de formatação (pré-tradução) e grande parte das melhorias sugeridas teve como motivação o fato de pouco valer o uso de uma ferramenta CAT na tradução se o texto estiver mal formatado e com erros tipográficos (por exemplo).

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Na seção 4, a partir principalmente dos problemas descritos nas análises efetuadas (seção 3), elenca-se um conjunto de propostas de melhoria aplicáveis ao memoQ. Novamente, procurei categorizar as melhorias sugeridas, para facilitar sua explicação e compreensão. Conforme mencionado anteriormente, grande parte das melhorias concentra-se na atividade de formatação, exercida por muitos tradutores e outros profissionais de tradução.

2. Evolução do uso de ferramentas tecnológicas no campo da tradução

2.1 As ferramentas de auxílio à tradução

Nesta seção são abordadas algumas referências teóricas relevantes sobre o uso das ferramentas CAT (*computer-aided translation*) em ambiente profissional de tradução. Importa ressaltar aqui a definição deste tipo de ferramentas, os seus benefícios para o campo da tradução, e a evolução histórica de seu uso.

Hao Peng (2020) define uma ferramenta CAT como “Computer-aided Translation (CAT), a *software* using computer to help with translation, is working with the aid with the computer”, e prossegue afirmando que “CAT can help translators to translate better and help people to finish foreign language translation easily and effectively” (Peng, 2020, p. 1). Hoje, muitos tradutores estão dependentes da tecnologia para fazer o seu trabalho, pois as ferramentas CAT vêm expandindo as suas funcionalidades e abrangendo diversas tarefas do macroprocesso de tradução (Sin-wai, 2017).

Segundo Sin-wai (2017, p. 273), as tecnologias aplicadas à tradução são cada vez mais tema de reflexão no meio acadêmico:

For a very long time in the past, scholars in the field discussed translation from a literary and personal perspective. Nowadays, more and more attention has been given to translation technology.

Em relação ao fluxo de trabalho do macroprocesso de tradução, que compreende todas as etapas preparatórias para a tradução, as ferramentas CAT fizeram um avanço significativo nas suas funcionalidades. Segundo Pietrzak e Kornacki (2021, pp. 46-47), “Translation technology contributes to a significant change in the way in which translators approach and manage their tasks and broadly defined workflow.”

É inegável, segundo diversos autores, o ganho de produtividade e de qualidade que as ferramentas CAT trouxeram ao trabalho do tradutor. Esse ganho continua crescendo, à medida que os fabricantes lançam novas versões de suas ferramentas CAT. Conforme escrevem Pietrzak e Kornacki (2021, p. 47), “CAT technology has optimised the translation process to a large extent. First and foremost, it greatly enhanced the speed and efficiency of translation, which caused a lot of changes to the very process of translation”. Prosseguem ainda os autores, em referência ao impacto econômico decorrente desse aumento de produtividade e qualidade: “With various services that support cross-language communication, CAT technology has been developing continuously, and its innovations have had a huge economic impact.”

As atividades acessórias ao processo específico de tradução acabaram entrando no radar das ferramentas CAT. Diferentemente do processo de tradução propriamente dito, tem-se nesse caso uma miríade de tarefas que dão suporte à tradução. Conforme afirma Sin-wai (2017, p. 40):

Rather than simply translating the document, a computer-aided translator has to engage in other types of work, such as authoring, pre-editing, interactive editing, postediting, termbase management, translation memory database management, text alignment, and manual alignment verification.

Além das atividades mencionadas por esse autor, pode-se ainda acrescentar a essa lista duas outras: revisão de texto (*proofreading*) e reconhecimento ótico de caracteres (OCR).

Sin-wai (2017, p. 38) discorre sobre como, devido a esses avanços, as ferramentas CAT se tornaram indispensáveis para a atividade profissional do tradutor:

All computer-aided translation systems aim to increase translation productivity. In terms of the means of production, all translation nowadays can be considered computer-aided translation, as virtually no one would be able to translate without making use of a computer.

Pode-se ainda acrescentar que houve um grande avanço no processo de tradução auxiliado por ferramentas CAT em si mesmo, visto que está disponível atualmente ao tradutor um sofisticado ambiente integrado e interativo de suporte à tradução, disponibilizado por praticamente todos os fabricantes.

De acordo com Peng (2020, p. 4), os benefícios do uso de uma ferramenta CAT alargam-se a vários níveis:

(...) applying the CAT on the translation practice, can improve the operability, improve the translation practice quality, speed up translation, and meet the demands of translation practice, accelerating the communications between different countries and different languages.

As ferramentas CAT compartilham esses benefícios com todas as ferramentas do tipo CA (*computer-aided*), como, por exemplo, as ferramentas CAD (*computer-aided design*), CAE (*computer-aided engineering*), CASE (*computer-aided system engineering*), entre outras.

2.1 Breve cronologia das ferramentas CAT

Para acompanhar a breve história da tecnologia na tradução, optou-se por seguir a cronologia de Sin-Wai (2017, p. 1). O autor divide o desenvolvimento da CAT em 4 períodos:

1) 1967-1983: período da germinação;

- 2) 1984-1992: período de constante crescimento;
- 3) 1993 a 2002: período de rápido crescimento;
- 4) 2003-2014: período de desenvolvimento global.

A respeito do período pós-computador pessoal (PC) e início da disseminação da internet, Sin-wai (2017, p. 7) discorre sobre os grandes avanços da década a partir de então:

The decade that extends from 1993 to 2003 was a period of rapid growth, due largely to (1) the emergence of more commercial systems, (2) the development of more built-in functions, (3) the dominance of Windows operating systems, (4) the support of more document formats, (5) the support of more languages for translation, and (6) the dominance of Trados as a market leader.

Os principais avanços tecnológicos da época foram:

1) A consolidação do computador pessoal de 16 bits, que foi desenvolvido numa arquitetura padronizada por todos os fabricantes (o que não aconteceu com o antigo microcomputador de 8 bits) e que constituiu um importante marco. Dessa maneira, um programa desenvolvido para PC funcionava na máquina de qualquer fabricante sem precisar de adaptações.

2) O advento da internet, que também contribuiu desde o início para a expansão da oferta de ferramentas de computador. A grande contribuição da internet foi permitir a venda de programas pelo computador, bastando efetuar um *download*. Antes da internet, o cliente teria de encontrar uma loja que vendesse a caixa do programa com as mídias (disquete, CD, DVD) de instalação dentro. Evidentemente, nem todas as lojas tinham todos os programas à venda.

Já nas duas primeiras décadas do século XXI, registrou-se o surgimento de múltiplas ferramentas CAT, devido principalmente aos avanços tecnológicos da época. De acordo com Sin-wai (2017, p. 13):

Advances in technology have given added capabilities to computer-aided translation systems. During the last ten years [2004-2014], most old systems have been upgraded on a regular basis, and close to 30 new systems have been released to the market.

2.2 memoQ

Foi exatamente nesse período inicial do século XXI que surgiu o memoQ, conforme explica Sin-wai (2017, p. 14):

In 2004, Kilgray Translation Technologies was established by three Hungarian language technologists. The name of the company was made up of the founders' surnames: Kis Balázs (KI), Lengyel István (L), and Ugray Gábor (GRAY). Shortly after, in 2005, the company launched the first version of MemoQ, an Integrated Localization Environment (ILE).

Em 2004, esses três tradutores começaram a trabalhar em projetos referentes à tradução assistida e verificação ortográfica que deram origem ao memoQ. Esse movimento iniciou-se a partir de um encontro de profissionais da língua, que colaboraram na criação de um novo ambiente de tecnologia de tradução (memoQ ©, 2020).

Os três empreendedores começaram a desenvolver a tecnologia que imaginaram, correspondente ao núcleo do memoQ. Foi uma tarefa desafiadora, pois uns poucos intervenientes importantes da indústria dominavam o mercado naquela época. No entanto, os três fundadores da Kilgray tinham uma visão clara de como executar a transformação digital da indústria da tradução (memoQ ©, 2020).

O lado visionário dos profissionais que criaram o memoQ – que conheciam em profundidade os processos e problemas da tradução – foi tão amplo e popular que alastrou a outras empresas, passando a usar *interfaces* semelhantes para suas ferramentas CAT.

O memoQ conseguiu uma boa posição no mercado pois, ao tornar a tradução mais eficiente e agradável, fez sucesso entre os tradutores. Foi esse sucesso o fator determinante para que o memoQ pudesse enfrentar as grandes empresas já estabelecidas e conquistar uma fatia significativa do mercado.

3. A preparação de textos (etapa pré-tradução)

3.1 Definição de formatação e problemas habituais

Esta seção concentra-se nos processos pré-tradução e pós-tradução. Não será abordado, nesta seção, o processo de formatação pós-tradução, que não foi objeto do meu estágio. As indicações aqui incluídas são boas práticas com que me deparei durante o estágio e que podem ser integradas nas ferramentas, nalguns casos, como descrito na seção 4.

A formatação do documento é necessária para que a ferramenta CAT (memoQ neste caso) possa identificar corretamente o texto contido no arquivo. Não raro o cliente fornece o conteúdo a ser traduzido numa forma que o memoQ não consegue ler, como por exemplo uma foto de um documento. Nestes casos, torna-se necessária a formatação do documento, que também ajuda a solucionar o problema de “tags” excessivas. Ao limpar o texto de certas formatações, muitas dessas “tags” desaparecem.

As “tags” (*Text and Graphics*) são elementos de uma metalinguagem. Dentro do texto das páginas da internet há “tags” da metalinguagem HTML (*Hyper Text Markup Language*). Dentro do texto de um documento em Word há “tags” da metalinguagem RTF (*Rich Text Format*). Quando o memoQ processa um texto em Word, interpreta as “tags” do Word e gera “tags” suas.

Tipicamente, uma “tag” é composta por uma sequência não usual de caracteres, como por exemplo “~<”. Após a abertura da “tag”, surgem informações de formatação tais como início de texto em negrito ou em itálico, ou início de uma nova fonte, ou ainda fim de texto em negrito, etc. No final, vêm os caracteres de encerramento da “tag”. O Word, por exemplo, não mostra a imensa maioria de suas “tags”. Mostra apenas, quando configurado para tal, quebras de parágrafo, quebras de página, etc. Já o memoQ mostra algumas de suas “tags” através de um símbolo, tipicamente aquelas diferentes de

identificação de texto negrito, sublinhado ou itálico. A figura 1 abaixo ilustra um exemplo de “tag” no memoQ:

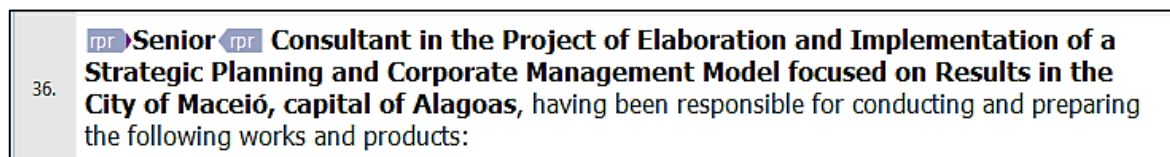


Figura 1. “tags”no memoQ.

As “tags” existem para permitir à ferramenta recriar a formatação inicial do documento na versão traduzida. Um documento graficamente complexo terá muitas “tags”, o que pode dificultar a tarefa do tradutor. A tarefa de formatação implica criar um documento com o menor número de “tags” possível, equilibrando tal objetivo com a recriação de um documento final graficamente bem-feito e pronto a entregar ao cliente.

3.2 Etapas da preparação de texto

3.2.1 A conversão

Para formatar um documento, primeiro deve-se convertê-lo para o Microsoft Word (Word). Dependendo do formato em que se recebe o documento, essa etapa será diferente. O ideal é pedir ao cliente uma versão do documento em Word, mas nem sempre será possível obtê-la. Aqui serão tratados apenas os arquivos do tipo PDF (*Portable Document Format*).

Se o documento for um PDF de texto – que possibilita selecionar e copiar o texto –, o primeiro passo é passar o texto para o Word. Existem duas formas de o fazer: a primeira é simplesmente selecionar tudo, copiar e colar no Word, mas é preciso ter em atenção que, se o documento tiver imagens, estas não serão copiadas. A segunda é, caso se disponha do Adobe Acrobat Pro (Adobe, 2021), ou de algum outro programa similar, selecionar a opção “Exportar para” e “Microsoft Word”.

Se o documento for um PDF de texto baseado em imagem – que não permite selecionar o texto –, o primeiro passo será utilizar uma ferramenta de OCR (*Optical Character Recognition*), que fará a conversão de imagens de textos digitados ou escritos para texto codificado por máquina. Este processo é muito utilizado quando o documento é um papel escaneado ou é uma foto de um texto. Quanto melhor a qualidade (resolução, iluminação, sem sombras) do texto escaneado, melhor o resultado do OCR. O Adobe Acrobat Pro possui um OCR embutido no programa capaz de converter a imagem em texto para o Word. Quando se seleciona o comando “Exportar para o Word”, o Adobe Acrobat Pro nota que o documento é texto baseado em imagem e automaticamente faz o OCR antes, sem precisar que tal seja especificado. Também é possível fazer o OCR sem exportar o documento, através dos comandos “Ferramentas” e “Digitalizar e OCR”. É recomendável não usar o “Converter para Texto”, e sim o “Aprimorar”, que fica do lado. É necessário, nesse momento, selecionar primeiro o idioma desejado antes de pressionar o “Aprimorar” (ver figura 2). A razão para tal é que ele ajusta a digitalização, ajusta páginas empenadas,

tira riscos, reconhece as palavras do idioma, deixa o PDF mais alinhado e reconhece então o texto com mais qualidade.

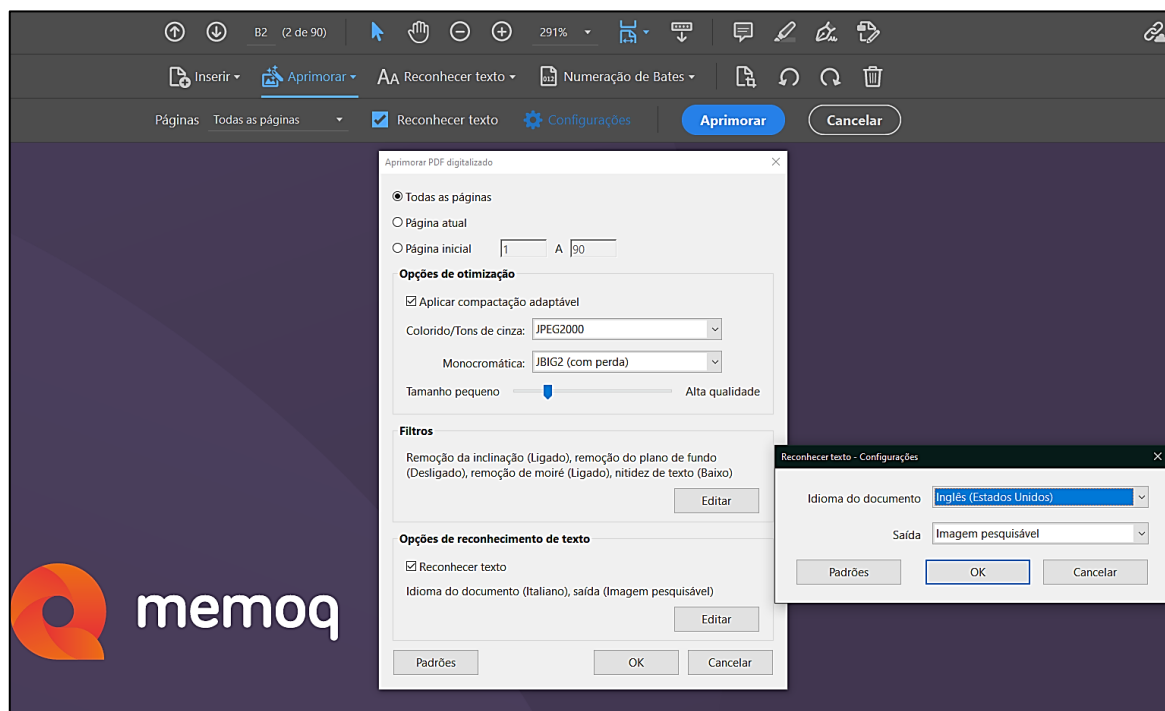


Figura 2. OCR no Adobe Acrobat Pro.

Em ambos os casos – textos que se podem copiar e colar para o Word e aqueles em que se deve utilizar o OCR –, deve-se verificar se existem imagens não editáveis, gráficos que possam ser convertidos usando o Word, para convertê-los antes da tradução, idealmente antes da orçamentação.

3.2.2 A formatação

A conversão do texto para o Microsoft Word é apenas a preparação para um longo e complexo processo de formatação de texto. Cada tradutor tem a sua preferência quanto aos métodos a utilizar. Alguns preferem copiar todo o texto, colar no Bloco de Notas (aplicativo do Windows) e então copiar o texto do Bloco de Notas para o Word (jblosser, 2011). Deste modo, grande parte da edição será apagada. Outros preferem utilizar apenas as ferramentas disponibilizadas pelo Microsoft Word. Existem, pois, vários métodos, mas aqui será abordado apenas aquele utilizado pela autora deste artigo, que se divide em três etapas.

Primeira etapa

Nesta primeira etapa, a ação inicial a ser realizada se refere a limpeza da formatação do texto, pois a exportação do texto PDF para Word frequentemente gera um excedente de formatações. Torna-se bastante comum o fato de, ao invés de um trecho de texto ser formatado como fonte azul, ser gerada uma formatação em cada palavra, todas iguais. Tal

provoca um excesso de “tags” no memoQ. Diante desta ocorrência, é melhor desformatar tudo e formatar de novo a fonte azul. Nessa situação, as “tags” reduzem-se ao mínimo, tal como deveria estar no documento original.

Antes de começar a formatação, é recomendado ativar o modo “Mostrar Tudo” (ilustrado pelo símbolo “¶”) na guia “Página Inicial” do Word. Este comando mostra caracteres ocultos, como espaços, marcadores de parágrafo ou marcas de tabulação. A importância de esta marcação ser ativada é que deixa visível os excessos de espaçamento, quebras de linha e inadequação de quebra de parágrafo. A figura 3 abaixo exemplifica melhor o que foi relatado:

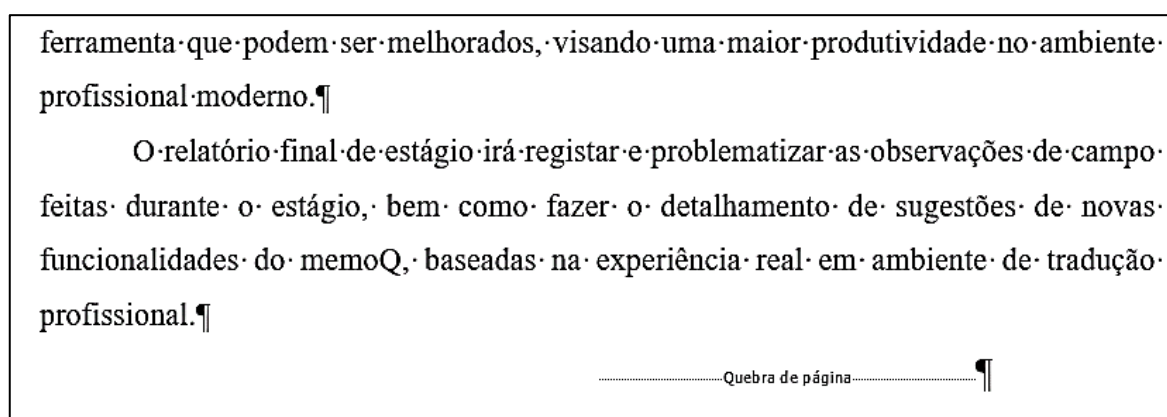


Figura 3. Caracteres ocultos.

Para fazer a limpeza das formatações deve-se primeiro selecionar todo o texto e, em seguida, na guia “Página Inicial” do Word, clicar no ícone “Limpar Toda a Formatação” (simbolizado por “A”). Depois – ainda com todo o texto selecionado – clica-se no símbolo “¶”, que está no canto inferior direito do grupo “Fonte” da barra de ferramentas, para mostrar a caixa de diálogo com todas as opções de formatação de fonte. Aí, na categoria “Efeitos”, desmarca-se todas as opções – tais como “Tachado”, “Tachado duplo”, “Sobrescrito”. Em seguida, muda-se a “Fonte” para “Times New Roman” – devido à facilidade em distinguir as letras, como o “l” (L) minúsculo do “I” maiúsculo (I) – o “Estilo da fonte” para “Regular” e o “Tamanho” para 12 (doze) (ver figura 4).

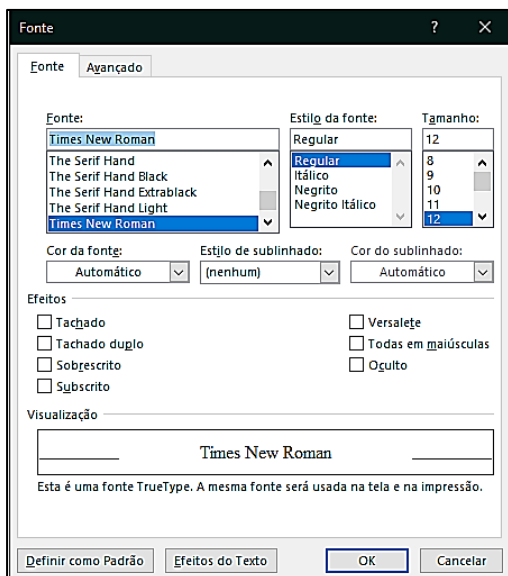



Figura 4. Caixa de diálogo Fonte.

Por fim, na guia “Layout”, seleciona-se a opção “Margens”, escolhe-se “Normal”, e depois clica-se no símbolo “”, que está no canto inferior direito do grupo “Configurar Página” da barra de ferramentas, para mostrar a caixa de diálogo com todas as opções de formatação de parágrafo. Aí, na aba “Papel”, na categoria “Tamanho do papel:”, escolhe-se a opção “A4”, conforme descrito na figura 5.

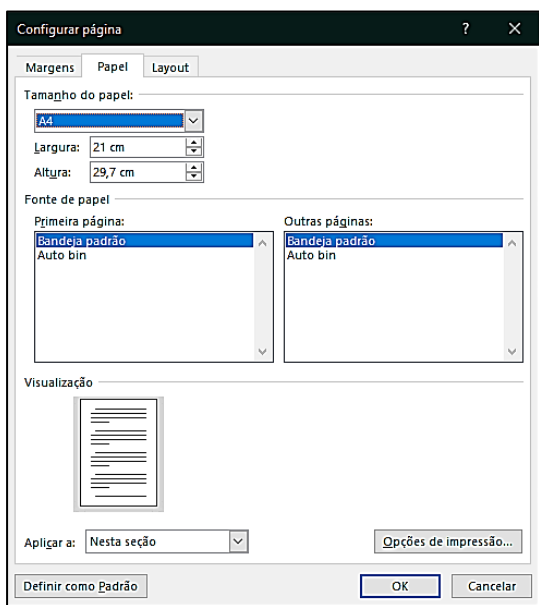


Figura 5. Caixa de diálogo “Configurar Página”.

Segunda etapa

Como na primeira etapa teve de ser retirada toda a formatação da conversão, pois estava repetitiva e excessiva, nesta etapa tem-se de colocar toda a formatação do documento de origem de volta. Esta ação tem o objetivo de otimizar a formatação.

A formatação padrão é a “Regular Normal”. Só são formatadas as palavras em negrito, itálico, sublinhado etc. Em algumas situações há que alterar também o tamanho da fonte de certas palavras em destaque.

Em relação às imagens, deve-se substituí-las por uma representação delas para que haja uma fidelidade segura da transposição de significados. Esta representação deve ficar no mesmo local da imagem substituída.

Serão apresentados, a seguir, alguns exemplos de várias situações a título de ilustração:

A) Independentemente de a figura vir com texto ou sem texto, ela deve ser excluída do documento;

B) No lugar da imagem deve ser incluído o nome dela entre colchetes – como, por exemplo [selo], [assinatura], [carimbo], [imagem], [foto], [marca de água], [logótipo], etc. Porém, deve-se colocar este texto exatamente no mesmo local onde estava a imagem. A tabela abaixo ilustra algumas possibilidades vistas nos exemplos citados neste parágrafo (tabela 2).





| Imagem | Nomenclatura |
|---|--------------|
|  | [selo] |
|  | [carimbo] |
|  | [imagem] |
|  | [assinatura] |

Tabela 2. Compilado de exemplos de imagens frequentes na segunda etapa da formatação

O mesmo deve ser feito quando as imagens contêm texto. No caso, o texto deve ser digitado junto com a nomenclatura da imagem – como [logótipo: Palitos Ltda.]. Esse procedimento também deve ser seguido quando apenas um pequeno texto aparece solto em diferentes posições na página – como avisos de direitos autorais, data da impressão, etc. Para isso, deve-se excluir as Caixas de Texto no documento, pois elas criam muitas “tags” no memoQ. Deve-se também arrumar a disposição dos elementos de outra forma, a fim de facilitar o trabalho do tradutor. A solução para esse problema é utilizar as tabelas e régua do Word. Compondo diversas linhas e colunas de tabela, forma-se uma grade na qual o texto da imagem pode ser disposto numa configuração que se assemelhe à da imagem. Utilizar a régua facilita o processo de visualização do texto e, conseqüentemente,

o processo de tradução, já que o uso da tecla “Enter” é proibido nesses casos, pois o memoQ iria separar a frase em segmentos, podendo causar confusão ao termos uma expressão dividida em dois segmentos, levando a uma má tradução. A tabela 3 abaixo apresenta as possibilidades de utilização de régua e de imagem com texto no processo de visualização:



| Imagem | Nomenclatura |
|---|--|
|  | [selo: 100% GARANTIA DE SATISFAÇÃO] |
|  | [carimbo: A-0087 27.04.2018·16 DÜSSELDORF· IMMIGRATION] |

Tabela 3. Exemplos de imagens com texto.

Um tipo de imagem que costuma causar muitos problemas é o gráfico. A melhor forma de o reproduzir, de modo a evitar a criação de “tags” no memoQ, é utilizando uma tabela do Word. As figuras 6 e 7, a seguir, ilustram um exemplo de gráfico criado utilizando tabelas no Word:

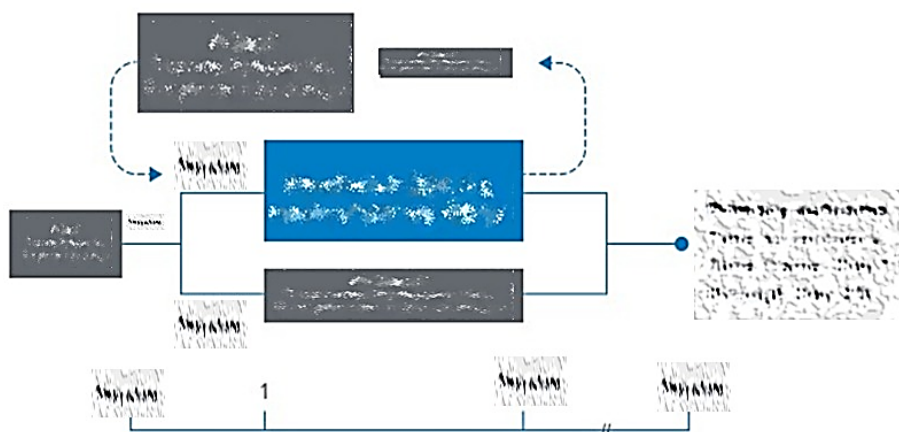


Figura 6. Gráfico (com texto protegido) do documento de origem.

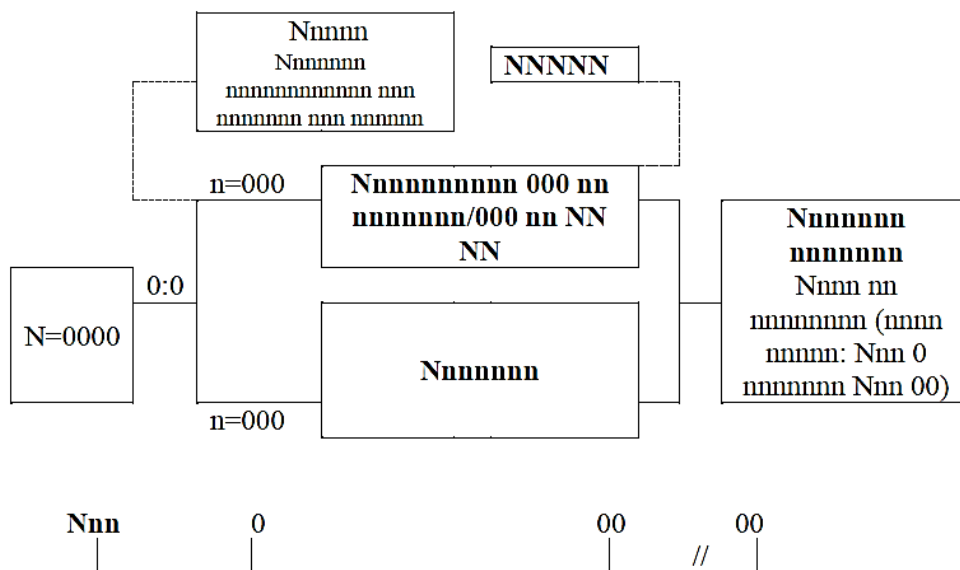


Figura 7. Gráfico reproduzido (com texto protegido) utilizando a tabela do Word.

A Figura 6 foi substituída pela tabela ilustrada na Figura 7. A tabela contém todos os textos da figura original. Buscou-se uma disposição espacial dos textos na tabela semelhante à dos textos na figura de origem.

Terceira etapa

Nesta última etapa, deve-se fazer a revisão da ortografia, uma vez que é muito comum que o OCR cometa erros de troca de caracteres, como a letra “i” maiúscula (I) pela letra “l” (L) minúscula, ou pelo número um (1), ou até mesmo pelo ponto de exclamação (!), que são muito comuns. Ver exemplo na tabela 4:

| Texto no PDF | Formato no Word |
|--|--|
| 9-514 Lazarim 46102 - E-mail: secretaria@ | -514 Lazarim ;102 - E-mail: <u>so</u> cretaria@ |

Tabela 4. Exemplos de erros do OCR com a letra “i” trocada pela letra “l”, e a letra “e” trocada pela letra “o”.

Outras trocas comuns que resultam de erros do OCR são referentes à letra “o”, que, por vezes, se transforma no número zero (0), a letra “g”, que pode ser trocada pelo número oito (8), e a letra “m”, que pode aparecer como a combinação das letras “rn”, e vice versa. A tabela 5, abaixo mostra um exemplo:

| Formato no PDF | Formato no Word |
|---|--|
| G ^a represents -CONR ^{7a} -, -NR ^{7a} CO-, -SO ₂ NR ^{7a} -, -NR ^{7a} SC | G ^a <u>represents</u> -CONR ^{7a} -, -NR ^{7a} CO-, -SO ₂ NR ^{7a} -, -NR ^{7a} SI |

Tabela 5. Exemplos de erros do OCR com algumas letras “O” trocadas pelo número “0” (zero).

Por fim, algumas partes do texto podem parecer ilegíveis – seja devido a alguma mancha no documento, à má qualidade do escaneamento, ou até mesmo, nos textos manuscritos, à caligrafia da pessoa que escreveu ser difícil de decifrar. Nesses casos, se não houver meio de obter o documento numa qualidade melhor, deve-se pôr a marcação [ilegível] no local da palavra ou frase.

Todos estes procedimentos de ajuste acima descritos são necessários para que a tradução transcorra de maneira mais eficiente e com menor risco de erros. Fica claro que é fundamental conhecer em profundidade estas ferramentas de TI, tais como o Word e o Adobe Acrobat. Como diz Zélia Neves (comunicação pessoal, 18 de setembro de 2020):

Convém perdermos cada vez menos tempo com esta tarefa – para isso, é preciso perder muito tempo nos primeiros projetos em que estamos a preparar documentos. O melhor truque é conhecer muito bem o Word e, assim, saber utilizar todas as suas funções, para pouparmos tempo e criarmos documentos o mais limpos possível. Propostas de melhoria para o memoQ para a etapa pré-tradução.

4. Propostas de melhoria para o memoQ para a etapa pré-tradução

Esta seção apresenta ideias de melhorias do memoQ, com base na experiência adquirida no meu estágio – e problematizada na seção 3 –, e consolida o objetivo central deste trabalho acadêmico. Apesar de me concentrar nas tarefas de pré-tradução, as propostas aqui descritas incidem no aperfeiçoamento do serviço como um todo – tradução, formatação e revisão – e são referentes ao uso prático da ferramenta memoQ em ambiente de trabalho profissional. Optei por fazer sugestões abrangentes e não apenas para a fase de pré-tradução por serem sugestões que melhoram a utilização do software em todas as fases, incluindo a pré-tradução. Espero que o presente artigo possa contribuir para preencher uma lacuna existente na literatura sobre formatação e suas ferramentas especializadas.

4.1 Múltiplos aparelhos

Como o memoQ é um *software* executável, precisa ser instalado em um computador, ficando limitado ao uso apenas nesta mesma máquina. As funções de tradução ficam reduzidas a um único local. O ideal seria que o tradutor pudesse acessar o memoQ em qualquer aparelho e não apenas num único computador. Nesse sentido, uma melhoria fundamental seria poder acessar via internet (*browser* ou aplicativo) o memoQ, com todas as configurações do perfil do usuário. A empresa já está caminhando nesse sentido, tendo em conta a existência de versões online para os clientes que adquiram um servidor (memoQ WebTrans) e ainda a oferta de uma versão online reduzida. No entanto, claramente, este programa está ainda baseado na versão *desktop*.

Sabe-se que uma das alegações apresentadas que justificam o modelo de acesso restrito a apenas um computador repousa na ideia central de ser uma estratégia de segurança dos dados. No entanto, há várias modalidades de uso de *browser* sem quebra

de segurança, completamente online e bastante utilizada no mundo todo. Diversos autores, entre eles Sin-wai (2017, p. 14), analisam os serviços baseados em nuvem:

Due to the rapid development of new information technologies, most computer-aided translation systems during this period are server-based, web-based, and even cloud-based computer-aided translation systems, which have a huge storage of data. By the end of 2012, there were fifteen cloud-based computer-aided translation systems available on the market aimed at individuals or enterprises, such as Lingotek Collaborative Translation Platform, SDL World Server, and XTM Cloud.

Como contraponto ao alegado problema de segurança, observe-se que praticamente não existe organização com maior exigência de sigilo e segurança do que as forças armadas americanas. No entanto, o Ministério da Defesa dos Estados Unidos (Pentágono) decidiu colocar todos os seus dados em nuvens privadas. A Amazon, o Google, a Microsoft e a Oracle foram solicitadas a apresentar propostas para o projeto JWCC (Joint Warfighting Cloud Capability), para este projeto (Swartz, 2021).

Nesta linha de sugestões de melhoria, acrescenta-se a proposta de acesso nativo via aplicativo em *tablets*, *smartphones* e *notebooks touchscreen* com todas as funcionalidades existentes na versão *desktop*.

4.2 O memoQ e os sistemas operacionais da Apple

O memoQ não funciona nativamente na plataforma Apple. Isto é um problema para vários usuários do memoQ que possuem apenas equipamentos Apple.

A solução adotada até hoje por esses usuários é criar uma máquina virtual Windows dentro do equipamento Apple. Porém, essa solução, além de trabalhosa, não é tecnicamente fácil para a grande maioria das pessoas leigas em TI.

Uma solução muito mais simples para esse problema seria o memoQ disponibilizar uma versão completa e totalmente funcional na nuvem, visto que “all cloud-based systems can be run on Mac OS and OS X” (Sin-wai, 2017, p. 46). De fato, se o memoQ fosse baseado em nuvem, poderia funcionar com tranquilidade nos computadores da Apple – incluindo iPad e iPhone – via *browser*, sem precisar de máquina virtual. Porém, se utilizado via aplicativo, então teria de ser reprogramado para a plataforma Apple.

4.3 Assistente de voz

Dando seguimento aos aspectos de incremento do memoQ, apresento outra proposta de melhoria: a implementação de assistente de voz tanto para o comando das funcionalidades do memoQ como para a redação da tradução de documentos.

Conforme diz Sin-wai (2017, p. 75):

The use of speech as an inputting method is important in several ways. First, speech input is natural because it requires neither special equipment, but a microphone, nor special training or abilities. Second, speech input is convenient, as it allows fast and comfortable communication at a rate of 120 to 210 English words per minute without encumbering the

hands or eyes. Third, speech input is universal because nearly everybody can speak, except those who are vocally handicapped.

Essa implementação resolveria o problema de teclados estrangeiros ou de tamanho reduzido. Um outro importante problema que essa funcionalidade resolveria seria o da acessibilidade: o público que apresenta deficiência visual ou mobilidade reduzida poderia acessar o memoQ com muito mais facilidade. Portanto, tal melhoramento promoveria a inclusão social de tradutores e poderia também ajudar a evitar lesões, como por exemplo a síndrome da lesão do esforço repetitivo (LER).

Diversas plataformas digitais já possuem seu próprio assistente de voz (ver figura 8):

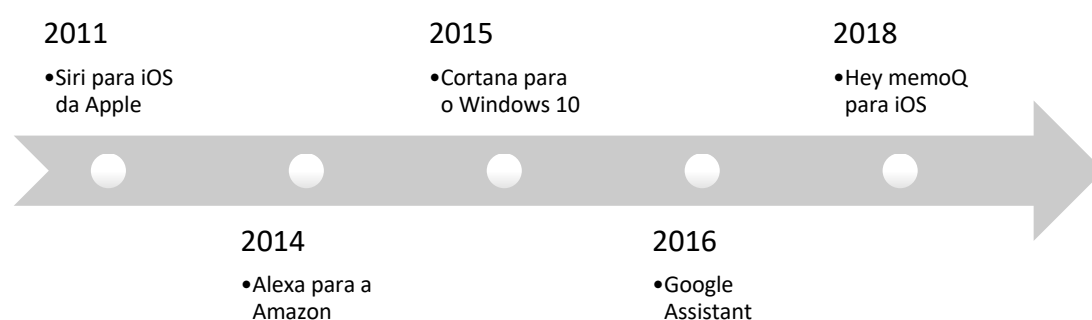


Figura 8. Linha do tempo dos assistentes de voz.¹

Em 2018, foi lançado o memoQ 8.7, cuja maior novidade foi a funcionalidade chamada de Hey memoQ (memoQ ©, 2021) para suporte a comando e ditado por voz. Este recurso, porém, é baseado no uso do assistente Siri da Apple (Apple Inc. ©, 2021), portanto só está disponível na plataforma iOS. A empresa declarou que não desenvolveu esta funcionalidade nas demais plataformas pois, segundo ela, os demais assistentes de voz não têm a mesma qualidade e funcionalidades do Siri.

Essas plataformas e seus assistentes de voz vêm, contudo, evoluindo significativamente nos anos recentes e, portanto, espera-se que o memoQ não só reveja essa sua decisão como também expanda a utilização do assistente de voz.

4.4 Precisão da funcionalidade OCR

A funcionalidade OCR do memoQ apresenta diversos problemas, como foi visto na seção 2. Um dos principais entraves desta funcionalidade é a sua falta de precisão.

O OCR tem as seguintes finalidades:

- a) reconhecer o texto da imagem;
- b) conseguir repassar de forma fiel os elementos da imagem para o Word.

O que acontece, porém, com muita frequência no OCR do memoQ são defeitos de precisão nessas duas finalidades. Percebe-se que o memoQ visivelmente não vem investindo no seu OCR como deveria, mantendo-se numa versão ultrapassada e atrasada, com sérios problemas de precisão que chegam a inviabilizar o seu uso.

¹ Apple Inc. ©, 2021, Amazon.com, Inc. ©, 2021, Microsoft ©, 2021, Google, s.d. e memoQ ©, 2021.

Nesta perspectiva, muitos tradutores utilizam outros programas como forma de melhorar a precisão do OCR, tais como o Adobe Acrobat Pro (Adobe, 2021) e o ABBYY FineReader PDF (ABBYY, 2021).

Portanto, percebe-se que o memoQ deve investir na melhoria contínua de seu OCR e/ou permitir a utilização de um *plugin* de OCR desenvolvido por terceiros.

4.5 Melhoria do tratamento e exibição de “tags”

Como foi discutido na seção anterior, alguns tradutores têm utilizado o Adobe Acrobat Pro para suprir a insuficiência da funcionalidade OCR do memoQ. Porém, existem também lacunas na formatação oriunda do OCR do Adobe.

Normalmente, gera-se um arquivo Word a partir desse documento PDF para se trabalhar com ele no memoQ. Quando o memoQ interpreta e exibe o texto do Word, deveria ter um procedimento de agrupar formatações de fonte de palavras sucessivas em uma única formatação do grupo de palavras. Por exemplo, se um trecho de diversas palavras sucessivas estiver com a fonte azul, o memoQ deveria considerar que os espaços entre essas palavras também têm fonte azul. Dessa maneira bastaria uma “tag” no início e outra no final do trecho. O mesmo procedimento se aplica à cor de fundo, cor de realce etc. Isso reduziria significativamente o número de “tags” no memoQ, bem como facilitaria e agilizaria o trabalho de quem estivesse formatando os documentos para serem traduzidos.

4.6 Expansão das funcionalidades de edição do memoQ

As funcionalidades do memoQ concentram-se apenas nas funções de tradução propriamente dita. Porém, o memoQ poderia e deveria permitir que o tradutor trabalhasse nativamente com formatações (pré- e pós-tradução) de textos, de maneira inteligente e integrada com a ação de tradução, transformando-se num ITE (*integrated translation environment*), do mesmo modo, por exemplo, que já existe o IDE (*integrated development environment*) para a comunidade da área de TI, de desenvolvimento de programas.

O ideal seria que o próprio memoQ fosse mais livre do Microsoft Word e que a edição fosse feita dentro da própria ferramenta CAT, inclusive o tratamento de documentos PDF, de modo a, por exemplo, poder interativamente:

- orientar o memoQ a transformar imagens no PDF em tabelas temporárias para evitar “tags”;
- fazer um melhor OCR em arquivos PDF baseados em imagem;
- reconstruir o documento PDF de origem com a tradução, permitindo fazer os ajustes necessários em imagens.

Várias das funcionalidades propostas acima poderiam também ser implementadas via *plugin*. Com a integração das funções de formatação pré- e pós-tradução no memoQ, ganha-se não apenas um ambiente integrado de tradução, mas, principalmente, um ambiente interativo especializado nos problemas específicos do tradutor.

4.7 Plugins do memoQ em outros programas

Várias funcionalidades de edição já propostas anteriormente podem ser implementadas via a utilização de *plugins*; porém, nesta seção, serão discutidos possíveis *plugins* do memoQ para outros programas, especificamente o Microsoft Word e o Adobe Acrobat.

O memoQ poderia criar um *plugin* para o Adobe Acrobat (figura 9), tal que o OCR já fosse adaptado a documentos que vão ser traduzidos em ferramentas CAT. Esse *plugin* poderia incluir um OCR personalizado em que, por exemplo, não fossem criadas caixas de texto, mas tabelas para poder distribuir o texto espacialmente de forma precisa.

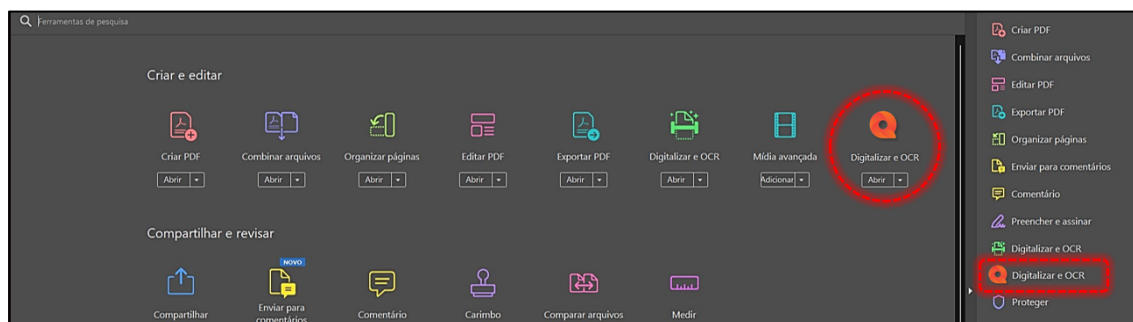


Figura 9. Ilustração de plugin do memoQ no Adobe Acrobat.

O memoQ também poderia criar um *plugin* para o Microsoft Word (figura 10) para auxiliar na formatação dos documentos. O *plugin* poderia conter funções como:

- Otimizar formatações;
- Substituir figuras por *placeholders*, como [FOTO], [SELO], [RÚBRICA], etc.;
- Transformar caixas de texto em tabelas;
- Eliminar quebras incorretas de linha;
- Identificar erros de OCR, como troca de caracteres (“rn” ter virado “m”, ou “O” ter virado “0”, etc.).

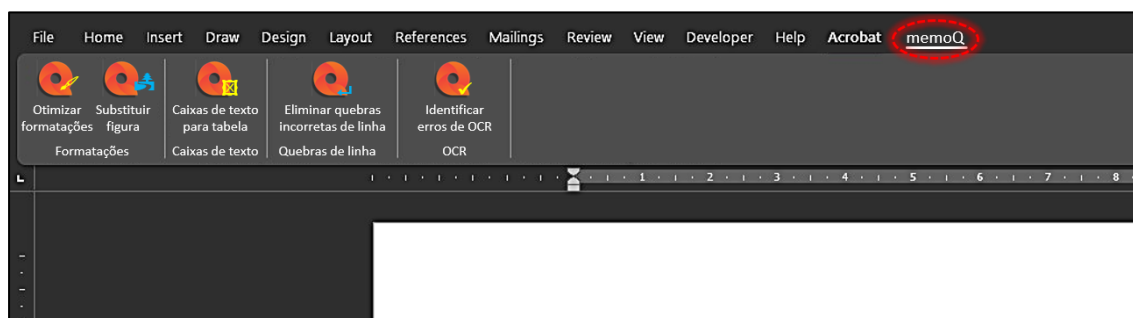


Figura 10. Ilustração de *plugin* do memoQ no Microsoft Word.

4.8 Implementação de diferentes revisores ortográficos no memoQ

Observa-se esta lacuna no memoQ: não há uma grande variedade de revisores ortográficos. Atualmente só existem duas opções, o Microsoft Word (Microsoft ©, 2021) e o Hunspell (Hunspell, s.d.), o que leva muitos tradutores a abrirem mão do revisor nativo

do Word, preferindo o auxílio de outros revisores via *plugins*, ou de outros programas como o FLiP (Priberam Informática, S.A., 2021) e o Grammarly (Grammarly Inc. ©, 2021).

Uma sugestão de melhoria seria a existência de um *plugin* no memoQ que daria acesso aos revisores ortográficos da escolha do tradutor.

5. Conclusão

As ferramentas CAT são relativamente recentes e, portanto, apresentam inúmeras oportunidades de melhorias. A seção 3 concentrou-se precisamente em oito sugestões de melhorias motivadas pelo meu estágio.

As ferramentas CA (*computer-assisted*), noutras áreas, oferecem um nível inicial de qualidade já alto. A partir de toda a comodidade que essas ferramentas oferecem, o usuário pode se concentrar melhor no seu trabalho e, daí, aumentar ainda mais o nível de qualidade do resultado. Logo, quanto mais funcionalidades o memoQ disponibilizar para automatizar, de forma integrada (ITE), tarefas que hoje são efetuadas fora dele, mais o usuário da ferramenta poderá concentrar-se na qualidade da tradução em si.

Assim como as ferramentas CA em geral percorreram uma trilha de constantes progressos, no sentido de integrar num único ambiente de trabalho (*integrated environment*) tanto as funcionalidades principais como as acessórias, sugere-se neste artigo que o memoQ caminhe também nessa direção. Foi neste sentido que o grupo de oito melhorias propostas neste artigo considerou a incorporação no memoQ de funcionalidades que hoje ele não possui. Algumas das melhorias baseiam-se em funcionalidades já existentes no memoQ mas implementadas de forma incipiente, provavelmente devido ao fato de automatizarem atividades acessórias à tradução.

A experiência durante o meu estágio e os trabalhos *freelance*, que se concentraram em atividades acessórias (formatação e revisão de textos), mostrou-me que, de forma geral, o memoQ ainda se destina, acima de tudo, a dar suporte à atividade de tradução em si, não se preocupando em integrar as atividades pré-tradução de forma nativa e eficiente dentro da ferramenta.

Fica então a sugestão de que futuros trabalhos possam não só aprofundar as oportunidades aqui elencadas, como também apontar outras oportunidades de melhorias que possam tornar o memoQ numa ferramenta CAT mais abrangente e integrada (ITE), dando, portanto, um maior e melhor suporte ao processo de tradução em todas suas etapas.

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REVIEWING TRANSLATED SCALES: BACKTRANSLATION UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

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ABSTRACT: Linguistic validation of patient-reported outcomes is a costly and time-consuming process involving not only professional translators in the forward and backtranslation processes, but also reviewers, clinicians and project managers. Backtranslation, an essential step in this process, is used as a quality-assurance measure to detect any differences in the adaptation of cross-cultural concepts and to draw attention to poorly drafted wording and blatant errors. It is the gold standard for the translation of patient-reported outcomes. The objectives of this paper are to examine and review examples of patient-reported outcomes that underwent the linguistic validation process into Portuguese and analyse them from the perspective of register, cultural adaptation, semantics, associative meaning and localisation/adaptation and to understand how effective backtranslation is at detecting any possible discrepancies.

KEYWORDS: Backtranslation; Linguistic Validation; Quality Assurance; Cultural Adaptation; Patient-Reported Outcomes.

1. Introduction

Backtranslation has been the gold standard in the translation and cultural adaptation of scales ever since Brislin (1970), a cross-cultural psychologist, outlined his model for cross-cultural research translation in 1970. His model was the first step towards what we now call linguistic validation. The discussion on backtranslation and its use as a quality assurance measure discussion began outside of the translation and importantly outside of Translation Studies proper. Over 50 years later, scholarly research on the role of backtranslation in the linguistic validation process is still focused overwhelmingly within cross-cultural nursing and clinical research (Ferreira, 2000; Hall et al., 2018; Fawcett, 2011; Behr, 2017; Beaton et al., 2000; Sousa and Rojjanasrirat, 2010). The principal guidelines for orienting the adaptation of scales are all published in journals outside of the translation and language fields or represent a partnership between industry and academics (Wild et al., 2005).

To date there has been limited research into backtranslation and linguistic validation of patient-reported outcomes by translators or translation scholars. Within Translation Studies, there are some noteworthy exceptions, including Tyupa's research into a theoretical framework for backtranslation based on a cognitive linguistics approach (Tyupa, 2011). Other scholars have focused on the role of the backtranslator (Bundgaard and Brøgger, 2019; Ozolins, 2009) and translators' understanding of the concept of backtranslation in the medical field (Bundgaard and Brøgger, 2018). Of most relevance to this study is Colina et al. (2016)'s work into translation quality assessment and the role of backtranslation and, more recently, the inadequacies of backtranslation in the health field (Ozolins et al., 2020).

The purpose of this paper is to provide some insights into backtranslation as a quality assurance method in the translation of clinical scales (patient-reported outcomes) and

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foment discussion within the translation community (academic and professional) on the subject. I would specifically like to investigate why backtranslation plays such an important role in the translation of patient-reported outcomes as it is “time consuming and costly” (Beaton et al., 2000, p. 3190) and “resource intensive” (Hall et al., 2018, p. 164). Simpler and cheaper processes of reviewing and localising translations involving a group of specialised professional translators and reviewers are already standard practice in other medical areas.

The article discusses three main aspects: firstly, a contextualisation of backtranslation within the linguistic validation process used by contract research organisations/ clinical trial sponsors and academia; secondly, an analysis of examples of backtranslation from my own professional experience; thirdly a simulation of the part of the linguistic validation process by taking the Portuguese version of the RAND 36-Item Health Survey Questionnaire (RAND Corporation, 2021) backtranslating it into English, conducting a backtranslation review and analysis of this version and the Portuguese version in terms of semantics (associative meaning, connotation), cultural adaptation/localisation, grammar issues and consistency. The paper will end with recommendations for future research into the use of backtranslation.

2. Linguistic validation

Backtranslation is only one of 10 industry-approved steps in the linguistic validation process: these are: 1. Preparation; 2. Forward Translation; 3. Reconciliation; 4. Backtranslation; 5. Backtranslation Review; 6. Harmonisation; 7. Cognitive Debriefing; 8. Review of Cognitive Debriefing Results and Finalisation; 9. Proofreading; and 10. Final Report (Wild et al., 2005). However, it is the one that has caused significant debate and discussions within the field of cross-cultural research.

Interest in linguistic validation is growing and as “patient-reported outcomes and clinician reports have become increasingly important in life sciences research and development” (Weiss, 2018), the need for a consistent linguistic validation process has become essential. Linguist validation is advertised in recruitment advertisements as a service to check the “reliability, conceptual equivalence and content validity” of patient-reported outcome measures (IQVIA, 2021).¹ The existence of these advertisements also shows that this process is in such demand that linguists specialising in this particular field are required and actively recruited by translation agencies. Translators are now frequently hired to perform linguistic validation and it is a service now offered by many professional translators working in the healthcare and medical translation fields, especially within the European Portuguese context (Correia, 2021).

In 2005, Wild et al. analysed and sought to synthesize cross cultural research and academic guidelines on the use of linguistic validation as part of the International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research Translation and Linguistic Validation Task

¹ Available at: https://iqvia.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/IQVIA/job/Reading-Berkshire-United-Kingdom/Freelance-Translators-Linguists--Linguistic-Validation_R1183388 (Accessed: 21 February 2021).

Force. Their research led to the creation of “step identifications, critical components, rationale, who should do this and what are the risks of not doing this” (Wild et al., 2005, p. 97), culminating in principles of good practice for the translation and cross-cultural adaptation of patient-reported outcomes. This document has formed the basis for most linguistic validation studies conducted in clinical research settings to ensure “high quality new language versions of patient-reported outcomes” are produced consistently (Wild et al., 2009, p. 437).

Given the prominence of linguistic validation within the medical community and the limited discussion on this topic within the translation field, there seems to be no better time than now to start to assess the role backtranslation plays as quality assurance measure in the translation and cultural adaptation of scales.

3. Theoretical and conceptual framework and rationale

Before going into specific details about the backtranslation process, it is important to focus on the two main translation processes: forward translation (stage 2) and backtranslation (stage 3). The forward translation process is very similar to a standardised translation process for any type of medical text, in which the translator needs to be specialised in the subject they are translating. There is generally agreement in the literature consulted that linguistic validation should involve two forward translations by different translators (Ferreira, 2000; Hall et al., 2018; Behr, 2017; Beaton et al., 2000), despite it being such a costly process. What is not known, however, is how frequently the ten-step linguistic validation process considered as good practice by Wild et al. (2005) is used. There is definitely a lack of data on this subject. The major justification provided by authors is that “many concepts do not have the same meaning in all cultures and some concepts may not even be translated in some cultures” (Fawcett, 2011, p. 2079). It is also important to note that in many cases those involved in the “expert committee” (Beaton et al., 2000, p. 3188) review or backtranslation review are not familiar with the languages being translated. Backtranslation here serves to ensure “consistent translation” (Beaton et al., 2000, p. 3188) and give those involved in the process a seal of quality.

There is, however, little consensus on the backtranslation process, as reported by Behr (2017). Not only can it vary between company or researcher conducting the study, but scholarly articles also describe different processes. In some cases, two backtranslations, rather than one, are performed by different translators (Beaton et al., 2000), possibly with different backgrounds (one specialising in medical translation and one a more generalised translation) (Sousa and Rojjanasrirat, 2010). This is however “not so common in the commercial sector” (Hall et al., 2018, p. 169).

For the purpose of this paper, I will adopt the simplified process of linguistic validation outlined in Figure 3, which is based on the linguistic validation process listed in Figure 1 (Wild et al., 2005).

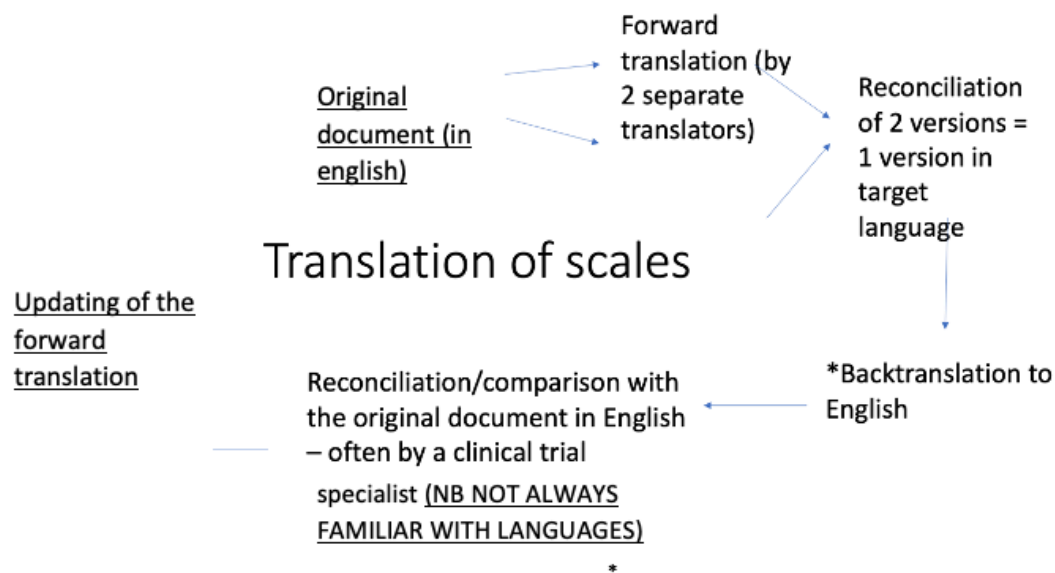


Figure 1. Adapted version of linguistic validation process.

Backtranslators are defined as “the people who develop the translations from the target language back to the source language” (Wild et al., 2005) and are responsible for providing a translation that is as literal or faithful as possible, but most importantly gives prominence to equivalence of concepts. Wild et al. (2005, p. 100) highlight the importance of the project manager deciding whether a “literal or conceptual backtranslation” is required at the risk of the translation not “respect(ing) the normal speech patterns and colloquialisms of the target culture”. Backtranslators are expected to be “bilingual speakers with lived experience of the target culture, even if the translator is not currently an in-country resident” (Hall et al., 2018, p. 173). Although being a professional translator is, according to many guidelines, not essential, it is recommended that these translators have “appropriate linguistic expertise” (Hall et al., 2018, p. 169). Backtranslators must be blinded to the original document (normally in English) and should declare whether they have previously been involved in the translation of a particular instrument. Guidance from industry often includes very specific instructions:

The text has been translated by **native speakers**. This back translation is a quality-control step to ensure that the translation contains the **same concepts** as the original English. The backtranslation does **not need to be a polished translation**; the aim is to show what the translated version **means** in English.

If you notice any errors in the translation, please add a note explaining the error.

If you have already worked on this translation in the past, please let us know, as back translators should be blinded to the source text. (“ICON PLC”, 2021, emphasis added).

The instructions emanating from ICON PLC, a leading contract research organisation, place emphasis on the need for equivalence of concepts, the need for the translation not to necessarily read smoothly or be fluent and the importance of semantics. Interestingly, there is no reference to professional translators, but one can assume that given this particular company has a department dedicated to translation and linguistic validation, by “native speaker” they mean professional translators who are native speakers of the language of the backtranslation (almost always English). According to Beaton et al. (2000, p.3188) backtranslation “magnifies unclear wording in the translation” and backtranslators are expected to take notes on any discrepancies, concepts and wording that do not match the formality, tenor, associative meaning and connotation of the original text.

One particularly important notion in the backtranslation process is that of literalisation and the replication of any mistakes found in the forward translation in the backtranslation. This may be the source of some confusion among more inexperienced backtranslators as the literalisation hypothesis, as argued by Chesterman (2011), points to translators moving from a more literal to less literal and “fluent” target text. However, recent research by Valdez (2021) would seem to suggest that it cannot automatically be assumed that more experienced translators produce less literal (more “fluent”) target texts. She sampled self-revision processes in 15 novice and 15 experienced English to Portuguese biomedical translators and found that the sampled translators did, in fact, the exact opposite of the hypothesis, producing final versions that were more “literal” in nature. This itself would therefore seem to favour the backtranslation process, as the main objective is to produce a “more literal backtranslation that would prove more useful when compared with the original language version” (Wild et al., 2005, p. 99). It is, therefore, of utmost importance to ensure that translators are clear about the difference between translation and backtranslation processes.

Backtranslation has over the years been adopted as the principal quality-assurance measure in the translation of scales into multiple languages, however, the reason for this is not yet clearly understood. It can be assumed that it was initially designed for circumstances in which the researchers did not speak the language of the target culture (Behr, 2017) to ensure that the questions being asked of the respondents were actually what was written in the original source document. The premise is that the backtranslation will exemplify and highlight problems in the forward translation, described by Beaton et al. (2000, p. 3188) as “gross inconsistencies/conceptual errors”. Backtranslation is frequently fraught with problems, including: 1) translators not receiving training on what is involved in backtranslation; 2) the fact that translators must not have previous knowledge of the original source document, as this could enhance translator bias (a requirement that runs counter to the usual practice of trying to “know as much as possible about the context in order to translate accurately” (Ozolins et al., 2020, p. 16); 3) translators not understanding the concept of replicating errors in the backtranslation (Behr, 2017); 4) translators not understanding the concept of performing a literal translation (Tyupa, 2011; Colina et al., 2016), which, of course, goes against the training given to translators in universities; 5)

ambiguities in the “original” (source) text, which then lead to ambiguities in the backtranslation (Ozolins et al., 2020); 6) forward translators being aware that a translation will be backtranslated, therefore potentially trying to “find a more literal version of the source term, rather than the term that is most suitable in the target language” (Ozolins et al., 2020, p. 21). Thus, this translation process requires the translator to “unlearn” previous concepts of how one should translate. This point is highlighted by Behr (2017, p.574) who suggests that backtranslators attempting to understand or reword the source text actually undermine the whole point of the backtranslation process, making “detecting target text problems futile”).

In this next section I draw on three examples collected over a 14-year period, adapted from my own professional experience of backtranslating from Brazilian and European Portuguese into English (UK) and then anonymised. They illustrate some of the problems that can be encountered in the backtranslation process.

| Forward translation |
|---|
| O doente nunca realizou esta atividade antes do <u>surgimento</u> da doença. (<i>The patient never performed this activity before the appearance of the disease</i>) |

Example 1a.

Example 1 is an example from a training document for medical professionals. In the forward translation, the translator opted for the word “*surgimento*”. This is not the correct term within the medical domain. Although semantically it conveys the meaning of a disease beginning or starting, it is not the medically appropriate term. In Portuguese it should be “*início*”. The forward translation in the following examples is into European Portuguese and the English variety used is British English.

| Backtranslation |
|---|
| The patient never performed this activity before the <u>onset</u> of xxxxx disease. |

Example 1b.

This is something that should have been detected in the backtranslation process by translating this as “*appearance*” and leaving a note for the backtranslation review team that there was a medical domain terminological error. However, as example 1b illustrates, it is likely here that the backtranslator overcompensated as they understood what the

source was attempting to say. This could explain why the translator opted for “onset”, which is the correct term in English for the start of the disease.

| Original | Forward translation | Backtranslation |
|---|--|---|
| The patient never performed this activity before the <u>onset</u> of the disease. | O doente nunca realizou esta atividade antes do <u>surgimento</u> da doença. <i>(The patient never performed this activity before the appearance of the disease).</i> | The patient never performed this activity before the <u>onset</u> of the disease. |

Example 1c.

A comparison here of the original and the backtranslation (1c) in the backtranslation review would not immediately raise any issues as the correct term “onset” is found both in the original and the backtranslation. Here is one of the fundamental problems posed by backtranslation. What happens when the original and the backtranslation are the same, but there is in fact a mistake in the forward translation? As Beaton et al. (2000, p. 3188) stated, “backtranslation is only one type of validity check”. However, if there is a risk of backtranslator overcompensation for errors, does this not question the overall validity of backtranslation as a quality assurance measure? This particular document also underwent external review by someone who was unfamiliar with the Portuguese language but was specialised in clinical medicine. Example 1d illustrates the solution provided by the reviewer in Stage 5 (Wild et al., 2005) of the linguistic validation process.

| Backtranslation review |
|---|
| O doente nunca realizou esta atividade antes do <u>aparecimento</u> da doença. <i>(The patient never performed this activity before the appearance of the disease).</i> |

Example 1d.

Here the independent review proposed the term “*aparecimento*”, which is semantically very similar to the term chosen by the forward translator “*surgimento*”. It is important here to note that in terms of usability of the scale, the terms “*surgimento*” or “*aparecimento*” would not cause a huge impact, as the term would have been easily understood by the staff administering this scale. However, in terms of specialised terminology, it was inappropriate for the target audience (physicians).

Another example of semantic difference that was not noted in the backtranslation process is illustrated in example 2. Backtranslations can closely mirror the source texts, but

this is not automatically a sign that the forward translation is accurate or even natural sounding (Beaton et al., 2000).

| Original | Forward translation | Backtranslation |
|---|---|---|
| These are activities which are considered to be important for <u>self-care</u> and hygiene. | Estas são atividades consideradas importantes a nível dos <u>cuidados próprios</u> e higiene. <i>(These are activities considered important at the level of own care and hygiene.)</i> | These are activities considered important in terms of <u>self-care</u> and hygiene. |

Example 2.

A prime example of this is example 2 in which the term self-care was translated into Portuguese as “*cuidados próprios*” (*own care*). Here it would seem that the forward translator adopted a more literal approach to the translation process, as if they were backtranslating (Ozolins, 2020) as “*cuidados próprios*” (*own care*) is incorrect and is not a commonly used term. This particular case demonstrates not only the importance of a professional translator being used in the first stage (forward translation) but also the need for this work also to be subject to review before undergoing the backtranslation process. Had this initial forward translation been reviewed or had this particular project involved two forward translations, this kind of discrepancy would probably have been detected before the project reached the backtranslation stage. At this point, it is also important to note the importance of the backtranslator being versed in the cultural concepts associated with the source language (forward translation, in this case Portuguese). As any backtranslator with “lived experience” (Hall et al., 2018, p. 167) would realise that although “*cuidados próprios*” can be backtranslated as “*self-care*”, the concept here is not correct and the term “*cuidados pessoais*” would be more appropriate. This is a good example of when a backtranslator should leave a note to the client regarding the discrepancy.

Semantic issues are not the only potential problems that can arise in the backtranslation process. Issues related to grammar, particularly the choice of tenses, can also remain undetected. Example 3 illustrates the differing use of the present perfect in Portuguese and in English.

| Original | Forward translation | Backtranslation |
|--|--|--|
| In the past ONE month, how much of a problem <u>has this been</u> for you? | Durante este último mês, quantas vezes isto <u>tem sido</u> um problema para ti? | During this last month, how many times <u>has this been</u> a problem for you? |

Example 3.

This example shows how important it is for the backtranslator to be aware of how some grammatical structures may not be used as much in the source language as in the target language. In this case, the forward translator translated the present perfect in English (“*has this been*”) to Portuguese by using the “*tem sido*” (*has been*) construction in Portuguese. Although this is perhaps insignificant in semantic terms, as overall the intended meaning is conveyed, in grammatical terms there is a difference. The present perfect in English is more than often conveyed by the past simple in Portuguese. In this particular example, the content would be rendered more appropriately as “*quantas vezes foi...*” (*how many times was*). Had this construction then been backtranslated, there is also another potential problem as “*foi*” (3rd person simple past of “*ser*” - *to be*) could depending on the context be actually translated as “*was*” in English. This might then be flagged up in the backtranslation review process as a tense problem. Given the current reliance on backtranslation, the only solution here would be for the translator to leave a note for the client. In the end here, the meaning is not likely to be compromised, but from a translation perspective, which is not something that is currently being investigated in the literature, it still remains problematic.

These examples led me to want to investigate the use of backtranslation a little further. Some years ago, I was invited to be part of an observational clinical trial on asthma. I did not actually participate in the trial but I received the scales for analysing my health status (12-Item Health Survey), and was struck by the awkwardness of the Portuguese translation. I decided that it would be optimal material for a more in-depth analysis of the backtranslation process.

Thus, I decided to take the longer version of the scale in Portuguese I was already familiar with, and simulate part of the linguistic validation process. My findings are described below.

4. Material and method: *RAND 36-Item Short Form Survey Instrument (SF-36)*

The RAND 36-Item Health Survey 1.0 Questionnaire Items (RAND Corporation, 2021) is a patient-reported outcome survey of health and is used to assess quality of life compared to the cost-effectiveness of a particular treatment. It is also used by Medicare, a type of “health insurance for people aged 65 or over”² in the United States of America, for “monitoring and assessment of care outcomes in adult patients” (RAND Corporation, 2021). It is divided into eight sections: “physical functioning, role limitations due to physical health, role limitations due to emotional problems, energy/fatigue, emotional well-being, social functioning, pain and general health” (RAND Corporation, 2021).

The translation and validation process into European Portuguese was conducted by Pedro Lopes Ferreira (2000). The translation process sought to achieve conceptual, semantic and technical equivalence in addition to equivalence of content and criterion. It involved two forward translations performed by different translators that were then

² Available at: <https://www.medicare.gov/basics/get-started-with-medicare> (Accessed: 2 June 2022).

harmonised into one forward translation. Two backtranslations were provided and then reconciled to create one final backtranslation. These were then compared and any discrepancies were noted and updates were made where necessary to the forward translation. A pilot testing period was run to check whether the questions were “resposta difícil, questão confusa e utilidade da questão” (Ferreira, 2000, p. 61) (“hard to answer, confusing question and utility of the question”) and a final version was then created. The term “pilot testing” is what is currently referred to as “cognitive debriefing” in the ISPOR 10-stage linguistic validation process (Wild et al., 2005, p. 95). There is, however, evidence that at one time the terms “pilot study” and “cognitive briefing” were both used to “describe the testing of a new translation on a small group of five or six patients” (Wild et al., 2005, p. 95), while “pilot testing” referred to a larger group of 20-30 patients. Ferreira did not, however, provide any information on the size of the sample group, “target setting”, educational background of the test group, “average medical education” and “degree of democratisation of medical knowledge” (Montalt and Davies, 2014, p. 427), which are all important in the cultural adaptation of medical genres. Figure 2 illustrates the adaptation process used by Pedro Lopes Ferreira and his team. It is worthy of note that according to Ferreira (2000), professional translators who were native speakers of the target language were used at all stages of the translation process.

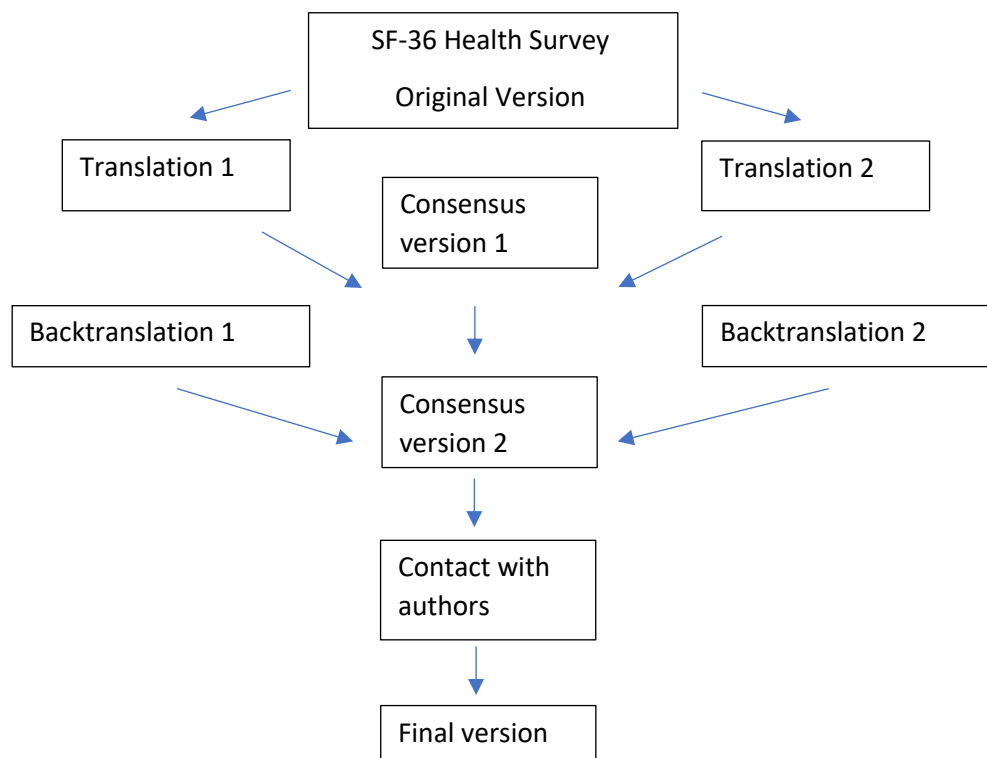


Figure 2. Adapted from Ferreira (2000), this diagram shows the linguistic validation process for the translation and cross-cultural adaptation of the SF-36 Health Survey.

In my simulation of the backtranslation process I consulted the standard procedures for backtranslation and noted that one of the first procedures is to check whether the scale had already been adapted into the target culture language (Hall et al., 2018, p. 164). If this is the case, it can be used as one of the forward translations. The diagram below (Figure 3) illustrates the process I used in the analysis of the SF-36 Health Survey.

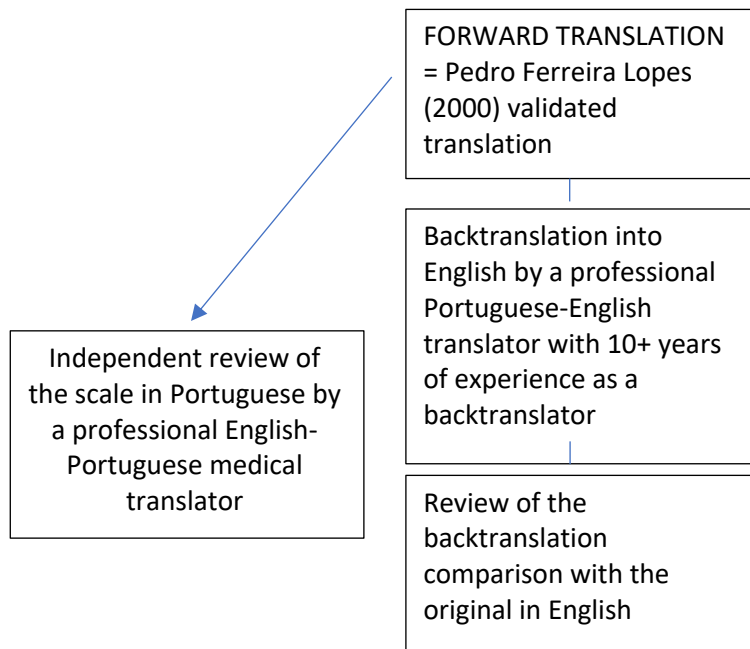


Figure 3. The methodology used in the analysis of the SF-36 Health Survey.

5. Results and discussion

The final monolingual review of the Portuguese validated version of the SF-36 Health Survey showed that there were over 30 errors ranging from incorrect punctuation, wrong use of function words, English-influenced constructions, incorrect agreements, outdated terminology or incorrect tenses. These inconsistencies were not detected in either the backtranslation process or during the pilot group. This scale is the currently approved and validated European Portuguese version of the SF-36 Health Survey.

As a way of assessing the potential usefulness of the backtranslation as a quality assurance, the validated Portuguese scale was then backtranslated into English and this version compared with the original translation (Figure 5). These are a sample of the results, categorised according to consistency, semantics, grammar and localisation.

5.1 Consistency

| Forward translation | Backtranslation |
|---|--|
| <p><u>As perguntas que se seguem pedem-lhe sua opinião sobre a sua saúde. Esta informação nos ajudará a saber como se sente, e como é capaz de desempenhar as atividades habituais.</u> <i>(The following questions ask your opinion about your health. This information will help us to know how you feel, and how you are able to perform your normal activities)</i></p> | <p>The questions that follow ask your opinion about your health. This information will help us to know how you feel, and how you are capable of performing your usual activities.</p> |

Example 4.

Example 4 illustrates a case where the forward translated text does not actually exist in the original. Here “original” is used to refer to the source text in English. This can be categorised as an example of localisation to ensure the scale works for its target public (patients). A section explaining the objective of the scale was added to the questionnaire to assist not only in the administration of the scale but also for patients who might be completing it on their own at home. It is, however, worthy of commentary here as two items are highlighted in the forward translation that have an impact upon the rest of the questionnaire.

Consistency of phrases and concepts is an important element in backtranslation. Here the phrase “*perguntas que se seguem*” (*questions that follow*) is used in Portuguese. Here there is no immediate issue, other than this phrase is not used consistently throughout the questionnaire. If one looks at the second introductory paragraph, illustrated in example 5, it begins with “*para cada uma das seguintes perguntas*” (*for each one of the following questions*). This section was adapted for the European Portuguese environment and is much longer than the original in English.

| Original | Forward translation |
|---|--|
| <p>Choose one option for each questionnaire item.</p> | <p>Para cada uma das seguintes perguntas, por favor marque uma <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> na caixa que melhor descreve sua resposta. <i>(For each one of the following questions, please place a X in the box that best describes your response)</i></p> |

Example 5.

Arguably, this is not hugely relevant to a patient answering this question, but if this type of consistency issue is repeated several times, it does make one wonder if it could not induce some type of error in the respondent in terms of readability or comprehensibility. This was, however, not found in the validation process described in Figure 2 and conducted

by Ferreira (2000). The backtranslation here would immediately alert the team to differences between the Portuguese and the original, but given that this process also relates to adaptation and not just translation, it would not have been considered as an issue.

5.2 Semantics

| Original | Forward translation | Backtranslation |
|-----------|------------------------------------|---|
| Excellent | Em geral, diria que a sua saúde é: | In general, would you say your health is: |
| Very good | Excelente | Excellent |
| Good | Muito boa | Very good |
| Fair | Razoável | Reasonable |
| Poor | Fraca | Weak |

Example 6.

This example illustrates a semantic error with regard to the way one refers to poor health in Portuguese. Here, the forward translator chose the word “*fraca*”, which is not used when describing one’s health status. As the term *weak* is a synonym of “*poor*” in English, its use in the backtranslation would not immediately raise an alarm. However, in-depth knowledge of the Portuguese language and experience of the Portuguese health context would show that “*fraco*” is not the appropriate adjective for describing health and that “*má*”, which would backtranslate as “*bad*”, is the correct term.

| Original | Forward translation | Backtranslation |
|---|--|--|
| The following items are about activities you might <u>do during</u> a typical day. Does your health now limit you in these activities? If so, how much? | As perguntas que se seguem são sobre atividades que <u>pode executar</u> no seu dia-a-dia. Será que a sua saúde atual o/a limita nestas atividades? Se sim, quanto? <i>(The following questions are about the activities you can perform in your day-to-day. Does your current health limit you in these activities? If yes, how much?)</i> | The questions that follow about activities that you are able to <u>perform</u> in your day-to-day. Does your current health limit you in these activities? If yes, how much? |

Example 7.

Further semantic issues are found in example 7 from the questionnaire. The verb “*executar*” conjures up images of something related to machinery or possibly related to some form of governance (associative meaning). Here the backtranslator opted for “*to*

perform”, which when compared to the original document, the meaning is quite similar. However, this is possibly an example of the backtranslator compensating for possible failings in the Portuguese semantics and conveying what they believe to be the meaning here. If “*executar*” were backtranslated more literally as “*execute*”, perhaps this would alert the reviewers to an adaptation possibly being required in the Portuguese.

| Original | Forward translation | Backtranslation |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Lifting or carrying groceries | Levantar ou carregar as compras de <u>mercearia</u> (<i>Lifting or carrying grocery shopping</i>) | Lifting or carrying grocery shopping |

Example 8.

In example 8, the term “*mercearia*” is used to convey the concept of “*groceries*” in the English original. It backtranslates quite simply to “*groceries*” or “*grocery shopping*”. However, this term in Portuguese is perhaps slightly outdated as most shopping is now done in large supermarkets rather than grocery shops. There is also a slight conceptual issue here as *groceries* in English can mean items from a small food store (“*mercearia*”) but also it refers to general food shopping bought in a supermarket. In this case, the forward translation may not effectively convey the relevant reference. If one compares the original with the backtranslation the discrepancy is not immediately visible. A reference to “*sacos de compras*” (*shopping bags*) would help convey the meaning here, given that this particular question on this scale relates to exertion and weight.

| Original | Forward translation | Backtranslation |
|------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Did you feel worn out? | Se sentiu estafado/a (Felt worn out) | Worn out |

Example 9.

Example 9 illustrates how it is extremely important to check that the term being used would be commonly understood by the target population. Here, “*estafado*” means “*worn out*”, and a comparison between the original and backtranslation would not likely result in any alteration to the Portuguese, as at face value the concepts seem to be identical. However, “*estafado*” (*very tired*) is not a universally used term for exhaustion or fatigue, and among patients with a lower level of schooling this might not be immediately understood.

5.3 Localisation

| Original | Forward translation | Backtranslation |
|--|--|--|
| Moderate activities, such as moving a table, pushing | Atividades moderadas, tais como deslocar uma mesa, aspirar a casa, | Moderate activities, such as moving a table, |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| a vacuum cleaner, bowling, or playing golf | andar de bicicleta, ou nadar <i>(Moderate activities, such as moving a table, hoovering the house, cycling or swimming)</i> | vacuuming the house, riding a bicycle, or swimming |
|--|---|--|

Example 10.

The examples so far have illustrated that most of the issues encountered in the validated SF-36 Health questionnaire relate to semantics and concepts that were not translated appropriately into Portuguese. In most cases, they were not necessarily apparent in the backtranslation. It is important however to highlight an example of successful localisation in which the concept in English was not considered to be relevant to a similar European Portuguese speaking audience. Bowling and golf (see example 10) are not common activities for the average Portuguese citizen, so here the choice of “*andar de bicicleta*” (*cycling*) would seem sensible as it is a popular sport in Portugal. These would then need to be checked with a health professional to take into account the amount of exertion involved.

5.4 Grammatical

| Original | Forward translation | Backtranslation |
|--|--|---|
| Compared to <u>one year ago</u> , how would you rate your health in general now? | Comparando com <u>há um ano atrás</u> , como classificaria o seu estado geral de saúde atual? <i>(Compare to one year ago, how would you rate your current overall health?)</i> | Compared to <u>one year ago</u> , how would you classify your current general health? |

Example 11.

There are several grammatical errors in the questionnaire; however, this one stood out particularly. In this case, the backtranslation mirrors the original document with regard to the translation of “*há um ano atrás*” (see Example 11). This is an example of redundancy as the *ago* is already implied in the “*há um ano*” (*one year ago*). Unless someone independently consulted the Portuguese and reviewed it, the error would possibly not be found. Backtranslators are generally encouraged to highlight any discrepancies or errors and in this case a note on the redundancy of the phrase “*há um ano atrás*” would be required. In a pilot group this would probably not have caused any alarm among participants as this phrase is being heard increasingly in spoken Portuguese (Cardoso, 2016).

| Original | Forward translation | Backtranslation |
|---|---|--|
| <p>9) These questions are about how you feel and how things <u>have been with you</u> during the past 4 weeks. For each question, please give the one answer that comes closest to the way <u>you have been feeling</u>. How much of the time during the past 4 weeks...</p> | <p>As perguntas que se seguem pretendem avaliar a forma como <u>se sentiu e como lhe correram</u> as coisas durante as últimas 4 semanas. Para cada pergunta, <u>por favor</u> dê a resposta que melhor descreva a forma como se sentiu. <u>Quanto tempo</u>, durante as últimas 4 semanas... <i>(The questions that follow intend to assess the way you felt and how things went for you in the last 4 weeks. For each question, give the answer that best describes how you felt. How long during the last 4 weeks...)</i></p> | <p>The questions that follow intend to assess the way you <u>felt</u> about <u>how things went</u> during the past 4 weeks. For each question, <u>please</u> give the answer that best describes the way you felt. <u>How long</u>, during the past 4 weeks...</p> |

Example 12.

Example 12 illustrates several issues that are only likely to appear in the backtranslation, if the backtranslator were particularly meticulous and aware of some of the more cultural aspects of European Portuguese. The use of the politeness marker *por favor* is a particularly good example of this. In English “*please*” is used far more overtly (Murphy and Felice, 2018), whereas in Portuguese it is implicit. The backtranslation here is a faithful representation of the forward translation so includes the “*please*”; however, it would be advisable here for the translator to leave a note explaining that the “*por favor*” in this particular context is redundant in Portuguese. Without a translator’s note, the backtranslation process would not pick up on this cultural phenomenon.

The change of tenses here in the forward translation, from the present tense “*how do you feel*” to the simple past in Portuguese “*como se sentiu*” (“*how you felt*”) represents a change in meaning. Whereas the original reflects how the person feels at this present point in time about something in the past, the Portuguese and the backtranslation reflect how the person “*felt*” (simple past) at that time in the past. Analysing the backtranslation again here, this is something that I think would normally be corrected in the subsequent review process, but for some reason it was not altered here. In addition, there is arguably a loss of meaning in the translation into Portuguese of “*how have you been*” which relates to the person’s mood rather than the way the things they have been doing have evolved (“*como lhe correram as coisas*”). Oddly, this slight change of concept was not picked up in the original questionnaire validation process, but in the above backtranslation this mistranslation is apparent.

Throughout the questionnaire, the forward translator struggled with the concept of “*how much of the time*” which was rendered in the examples as “*quanto tempo*” (“*how*

long”). The backtranslation should immediately have caused this particular issue to be flagged up as it would have been better rendered in Portuguese as “*com que frequência*” (“how often”) as the concept “*how much of the time*” relates to the frequency of a particular feeling or sensation.

6. Limitations

My analysis does have limitations, as I drew here on my professional experience in backtranslation and then chose only to review one particular scale with which I had some experience (as a patient). Although the size of the corpus is very small, it does help to highlight some of the errors that can occur in the linguistic validation process and, in particular, errors that do not necessarily become apparent or are overlooked in the backtranslation process.

7. Conclusion

It is hard to draw conclusions on the use of backtranslation due to its inherent complexities. The linguistic validation process clearly is a source of income for many translators and other stakeholders (such as project managers, translation agencies, clinical research organisations, clinical researchers). However, my analysis of the translated SF-36 Health Survey shows there were fundamental problems in the linguistic validation process used by Ferreira (2000) and his team. Although there is open access to the journal article outlining the different steps, there is no further detailed information on the problems encountered during the backtranslation phase, nor clear details on the translation process. It is clear that the scale needs to be updated for modern usage and to be more patient-oriented, taking into account some of the priorities cited by Montalt and Davies (2014, p. 427) for “transferring cultural references”: “social norms”, “varying degrees of formality, tenor”, “elements of popular knowledge”, “degree of democratisation of knowledge”, “differences in the relationship patient-physician”, “average medical education of the population”.

The errors, mainly in the semantic field, but also related to grammar, localisation and consistency, are of extreme relevance to translators and to the analysis of how effective and accurate a translation is. From a cross-cultural research perspective, these discrepancies may not matter, as the end objective is for the patient to complete the questionnaire accurately. If this happens the objective is achieved. However, from a translation perspective (where discussions focus more on the semantics, adaptations, localisation, correctly conveying the target to the source and respecting target culture conventions), the translation process and its outcome are important. Improvements to the backtranslation/translation process would also result in a better outcome for patients/users who are the intended audience of translated questionnaires.

Joint discussion among translation stakeholders from academia and industry is urgently needed about the use of backtranslation and its utility as a quality assurance tool. It would be useful to conduct a study that compares forward and backtranslation with a

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standard translation methodology involving “translation plus revision” (Ozolins et al., 2020, p. 30) and then pilot testing on groups of patients with different backgrounds and educational levels. As a starting point, this could be conducted with the Portuguese language alone and then extended to other language combinations. Behr (2017, p. 582) writes in the conclusion to her paper on backtranslation that “the research community still has a lot to learn about the actual impact of differences in a translation”. This is true, but I would take it further; the translation community needs to efficiently and systematically voice its concerns about the use of backtranslation, stimulating a debate that could perhaps one day lead to backtranslation (stages 4 and 5 in the linguistic validation process, Figure 1) being replaced with a simple translation and review process. It is time for the cross-cultural adaptation industry to place their full trust in translators and reviewers.

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ANÁLISE DA TRADUÇÃO PORTUGUESA DO DISCURSO DE ANO NOVO DE 2021 DO PRESIDENTE DA CHINA XI JINPING

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RESUMO: Este trabalho debruça-se sobre a tradução portuguesa do Discurso de Ano Novo de 2021 do presidente chinês Xi Jinping. O ano de 2020 foi um ano anormal devido ao aparecimento da pandemia da covid-19, pelo que o resumo desse ano ocupa uma grande parte do discurso de Ano Novo de 2021. O objetivo deste trabalho é perspetivar a construção da força discursiva na tradução portuguesa do Discurso de Ano Novo de 2021 do presidente chinês Xi Jinping, incluindo a análise das opções na tradução que comprometem a equivalência semântico-pragmática, nomeadamente omissão, acrescento, e distorção, assim como as influências resultantes na força ilocutória (Searle, 1969); as modalidades e modalizações (Campos e Xavier, 1991) ocorrentes no texto original, nomeadamente modalização de atenuação e modalização de reforço e, por fim, uma análise quantitativa do *corpus* com a ferramenta computacional de análise de discurso VISL. Este trabalho contribuirá para a análise de discursos políticos chineses e para o estudo da sua tradução entre os pares de línguas Chinês/Português europeu.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Tradução, Discurso Presidencial Chinês, Análise de Discurso de Ano Novo, Força Discursiva, Modalização, VISL

1. Introdução

O Discurso de Ano Novo é um tipo de discurso político que o chefe do país profere no último dia do ano que finda ou no primeiro dia do novo ano, tendo-se transformado já numa tradição. Este discurso não só transmite as bênçãos do presidente para o povo, como é também um canal de apresentação das posições do país em relação a algumas questões importantes, domésticas e internacionais, incluindo geralmente o resumo do ano anterior e as perspetivas para o novo ano.

Na China, com o passar do tempo, os conteúdos do Discurso Presidencial de Ano Novo têm vindo a mudar, assim como os meios usados na sua transmissão, que passaram da imprensa escrita, nomeadamente jornais, para a rádio, televisão e, mais recentemente, a internet. Atualmente, o presidente da República Popular da China profere o discurso através do Grupo de Mídias da China e da Internet para todos os chineses do mundo.

O Discurso de Ano Novo de 2021 foi proferido em 31 de dezembro de 2020 pelo presidente chinês Xi Jinping. Desde a tomada de posse em 2013, o presidente chinês já proferiu discursos de Ano Novo em 8 anos consecutivos. De entre estes, escolhemos o discurso mais recente, o Discurso de Ano Novo de 2021. O momento da apresentação deste discurso ao público foi no dia 31 de dezembro, no programa “Xinwen Lianbo”, um programa diário de notícias produzido pela emissora estatal Televisão Central da China (CCTV).

O objetivo deste trabalho é analisar a força discursiva do Discurso de Ano Novo de 2021 do presidente Xi, a fim de perceber a sua estrutura, assim como a maneira de construir a força discursiva deste tipo de discurso. Como o texto analisado é uma tradução do texto

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original, faremos também uma análise das mudanças semântico-pragmáticas existentes entre os dois discursos devido à tradução, para verificar como a tradução interfere na construção da força discursiva.

2. Enquadramento teórico

Neste capítulo iremos proceder a um breve enquadramento teórico do nosso estudo, mencionando aspetos do contexto sociopolítico do ano de 2020 na China que justificam certas propriedades semânticas do discurso em questão, para garantir uma visão abrangente da análise. Para efeito deste estudo, vamos também tomar em consideração os atos ilocutórios (Searle, 1979).

Começaremos então por apresentar brevemente o contexto político da China e a tradução institucional bem como a tradução efetuada pelo instituto oficial da China, como enquadramento prévio para entender melhor o discurso do presidente chinês.

2.1 Contexto político

O Sistema de Cooperação Multipartidária e Consulta Política, consagrado na Constituição em 1993, é o sistema político base da China sob o qual o Partido Comunista da China (PCC), como partido no poder, consulta todos os partidos não comunistas e representantes de personalidades não partidárias para chegar a um entendimento comum antes de tomar decisões importantes. A *Constituição do Partido Comunista da China* regista “Três Representações” do PCC, sendo a seguinte a mais importante: o Partido Comunista da China representa os interesses fundamentais da maior parte possível do povo chinês. Por isso, o presidente do país é também o líder superior do PCC e representa a maioria do povo chinês, pelo que o “nós” no discurso é o “nós” inclusivo que não se refere só ao PCC, mas também ao povo chinês.

2.2 Tradução institucional

A “tradução institucional” é definida por Gouadec (2007, p.36) da seguinte forma: “any translation carried out in the name, on behalf of, and for the benefit of institutions”, e tem sido aplicada ao estudo da tradução desde que foi proposta por Mossop em 1988. Os estudos efetuados sobre a tradução dos discursos políticos chineses, como por exemplo “New trends of Chinese political translation in the age of globalisation.” de Li e Li, em 2015, “Re-appraising self and other in the English translation of contemporary Chinese political discourse” de Li e Xu, em 2018, e “Institutional Versus Individual Translations of Chinese Political Texts: A Corpus-based Critical Discourse Analysis” de Pan, Kim e Li, em 2020, concentram-se nas estratégias assumidas na tradução institucional, assim como na ideologia veiculada na tradução.

O organismo intitulado como *China International Publishing Group* (CIPG), também conhecido como *Foreign Languages Publishing Administration* (FLPA), é uma instituição criada pelo Comité Central do PCC para desempenhar a tarefa da comunicação internacional do PCC e do governo chinês, liderado pelo PCC. Este organismo utiliza casos

típicos de tradução institucional dos discursos políticos chineses, tendo já sido objeto de vários estudos. Aquele que mais nos chamou a atenção foi, no estudo de Huang em 2004, o "Três Princípios" proposto pela *Foreign Languages Publishing Administration* (FLPA) na sua prática de tradução orientada para a publicidade, que deve manter-se próxima dos cidadãos: "being closer to the reality of China's development, being closer to the target audience's needs of information from China, and being closer to the target audience's thinking patterns" (Huang, 2004, p. 27).

A tradução portuguesa do discurso de Ano Novo de 2021 que analisamos neste estudo, é também uma tradução institucional efetuada pelo Grupo de Mídias da China. O Grupo de Mídias da China é a agência estatal de rádio e televisão da República Popular da China, dirigida pelo Departamento de Propaganda do PCC, assim como pela *China International Publishing Group* (CIPG). Como setor de propaganda do PCC, o Grupo de Mídias da China deve partilhar um princípio idêntico ou semelhante em relação à tradução.

Através de um estudo efetuado com base em *corpora* das traduções dos textos políticos chineses, Pan, Kim e Li (2020, p. 69) afirmaram:

(...) translation is not a 'bridge', as suggested in the traditional metaphor, across two cultures or societies to facilitate communication, where an adiabatic role is assumed for translation, but rather, as an activity underpinned by ideology, serves largely its producer's interests.

Neste trabalho, para além de descrevermos as características do Discurso de Ano Novo do presidente Xi, iremos também analisar as influências consequentes das opções da tradução portuguesa na construção da força discursiva, a fim de contribuir para o estudo da tradução e da análise dos discursos políticos chineses.

2.3 Modalização e modalidade

Quanto à modalização, há várias definições tendo em conta diferentes perspetivas. Para Corbari (2008), a modalização é a estratégia à qual o enunciador recorre para demarcar a sua posição em relação à mensagem que exprime ou para estabelecer uma interlocução mais ativa com o leitor, no sentido de o tentar convencer da validade da opinião expressa. Para Charaudeau e Maingueneau (2002, pp. 382-383), a modalização indica "l'attitude du sujet parlant à l'égard de son interlocuteur, de lui-même et de son propre énoncé".¹ Por outras palavras, a modalização é um mecanismo ao qual o enunciador recorre, de modo a reforçar ou atenuar a modalidade do seu enunciado, para atingir com sucesso a finalidade da sua comunicação.

Falando de modalidade, existem também propostas muito diversificadas. Para Oliveira (2003, p.245) a modalidade é a gramaticalização de atitudes e opiniões dos falantes, correspondendo a um fenómeno de grande amplitude. Esta autora define quatro tipos de modalidade: modalidade interna ao participante, modalidade externa ao

¹ "A atitude do orador para com o interlocutor, para consigo próprio e para com o seu próprio discurso" (minha tradução).

participante, modalidade epistémica e modalidade deôntica, acrescentando, na proposta de 2013, a modalidade desiderativa a estes quatro tipos. Por outro lado, Campos (1998; 2004) e Campos e Xavier (1991) defenderam uma tipologia tripartida de modalidade: modalidade apreciativa, modalidade epistémica e modalidade intersubjetiva ou deôntica. Estas modalidades estão relacionadas com três dimensões: avaliação, obrigação e certeza. Assim, é possível estabelecer uma relação entre modalidades e atos ilocutórios.

A modalidade apreciativa permite a expressão de um juízo de valor ou de uma apreciação sobre um dado conteúdo proposicional e a modalidade apreciativa reflete atos expressivos. A modalidade epistémica está relacionada com o grau de conhecimento e de crença que o enunciador tem relativamente ao que enuncia, sendo que a modalidade epistémica reflete atos assertivos. A modalidade intersubjetiva ou deôntica permite ao enunciador exprimir valores como permissões, proibições, obrigações, necessidades. O objetivo desses valores pode ser o interlocutor, como também pode ser o próprio enunciador. Por último, a modalidade deôntica reflete atos comissivos e diretivos.

3. Estratégia na tradução portuguesa

Assim como existem diferenças sintáticas entre línguas diferentes, também existem, como referimos no enquadramento teórico, diferentes ideologias de tradução institucional com o objetivo de facilitar a comunicação entre países de culturas diferentes, sendo necessária uma estratégia de opções quando se efetua a tradução. O mesmo acontece na tradução das peças de teatro para os espetadores compreenderem melhor e mais facilmente o que estão a ver. Mathijssen (2007) propôs três categorias de "alterações matriciais" na tradução teatral, sendo estas a redução (*reduction*), a correção (*emendation*) e a adição (*addition*). Para além disso, os estudos de Li e Xu (2018) e de Pan, Kim e Li (2020) sobre a tradução dos discursos políticos chineses também referem os tipos de estratégias da tradução. A partir destes estudos, combinando uma leitura paralela do texto original e da tradução portuguesa, verificamos três tipos de estratégia na tradução: omissões, acrescentos e distorções. *Omissão* refere-se às estratégias que omitem certas palavras ou expressões do texto original; *acrescento* refere-se à estratégia de acrescentar certas palavras ou expressões que não existem no texto original; por fim, *distorção* refere-se à estratégia de mudar palavras ou significados no texto traduzido. Neste ponto, não só distinguimos as estratégias, mas também a influência dessas estratégias na força discursiva do discurso.

3.1 Omissão

A estratégia de omissão não é muito frequente na tradução de Discurso de Ano Novo de 2021 do presidente chinês, mas existe como uma maneira de regular a força ilocutória. Elencamos todos os casos desta estratégia de tradução abaixo. Por causa das mudanças na tradução, não conseguimos encontrar na versão portuguesa certas expressões. Assim, para esclarecer melhor o texto original, adicionamos uma eventual tradução literal marcada pelo símbolo de TL (Tradução Literal), e o texto português marcado por TC (Texto de Chegada).

(1) 新发展格局加快构建，高质量发展**深入**实施。

TL: O novo padrão de desenvolvimento tem sido acelerado a estabelecer-se e o desenvolvimento de alta qualidade tem sido implementado **em profundidade**.

TC: A nova estrutura de desenvolvimento tem sido estabelecida de forma acelerada e o desenvolvimento de alta qualidade continua sendo implementado.

(2) 粮食生产喜获“十七连丰”。

TL: A produção alimentar conseguiu “17 anos consecutivos de abundância” **felizmente**.

TC: A produção agrícola conseguiu safra em 17 anos consecutivos...

(3) 2020年，全面建成小康社会取得伟大历史性成就，决战脱贫攻坚取得决定性胜利。

TL: Em 2020, realizou-se um grande feito histórico na construção de uma sociedade moderadamente próspera **em todos os aspetos** e obteve-se uma vitória decisiva na batalha do alívio da pobreza.

TD: Em 2020, o país obteve conquistas notáveis históricas na construção de uma sociedade moderadamente próspera e um sucesso decisivo na luta de alívio da pobreza.

(4) 我同国际上新老朋友进行了多次通话，出席了多场“云会议”。。。

TL: Tive muitas conversas com velhos e **novos** amigos internacionais e assisti a muitas reuniões pela internet...

TD: Conversei muito com velhos amigos no âmbito internacional e participei de várias reuniões pela internet...

(5) 世界各国人民要携起手来，风雨同舟，早日驱散疫情的阴霾，**努力**建设更加美好的地球家园。

TL: Os povos do mundo devem dar as mãos e manter-se unidos ao superar as dificuldades e tempestades para dissipar a escuridão da epidemia o quanto antes e **trabalhar arduamente** para construir um lar na Terra ainda melhor.

TD: Os povos de todos os países devem ficar de mãos dadas ao superar as dificuldades e tempestades em prol da dissipação de neblinas epidémicas o quanto antes e construir um lar na Terra ainda mais feliz.

Podemos ver que todos os casos de omissão são palavras ou expressões com a função de modificação: o que foi omitido no exemplo (4) foi um adjetivo para delimitar o substantivo, o resto dos exemplos são palavras ou expressões de natureza adverbial para modificar ou descrever a ação.

Em (1), “深入” é entendido, neste contexto específico, como um adverbial que significa “profundamente” ou “de forma profunda”. No texto original é usado para descrever o nível de implementação do desenvolvimento, implicando que já se realiza há

algum tempo. Na tradução falta este modificador adverbial, ficando mais ambígua a forma como a ação é executada. Esta situação é semelhante ao exemplo (3), em que falta também um modificador preposicional muito importante “全面”, que significa “em todos os aspetos”. “Uma sociedade moderadamente próspera” foi pela primeira vez proposta em 1979 por De Xiaoping, o responsável supremo da abertura económica da China a partir de 1978. A “sociedade moderadamente próspera” tem duas fases: A primeira é “sociedade moderadamente próspera em geral (总体小康)”, com um bem-estar de baixo padrão e de desenvolvimento desigual, puxando tendencialmente para o consumo material. Considera-se que a China completou esta primeira fase em 2000 e, desde então, a meta do Partido Comunista da China tem sido construir “uma sociedade moderadamente próspera em todos os aspetos (全面小康)”. Quanto ao (4), o que falta é um adjetivo no texto original, “新”, que significa “novo”. A frase quer dizer “os velhos amigos assim como os novos amigos”, existindo uma extensão metafórica no uso das expressões num discurso político em relação à expressão “amigos”, que se refere aos países estrangeiros. O uso de “novo” mostra a variedade de alianças que a China constrói: não só aqueles que já conhece, mas também os países com quem estabelece novas relações. A estratégia de tradução zero nesses casos não é muito conveniente porque os adjetivos e advérbios omitidos têm função semântica e delimitam a dimensão da referência. As mudanças na tradução desses casos alteraram a ideia original do discurso de forma danosa, mesmo que pareçam pormenores, alterando a força ilocutória dos atos assertivos.

Em (2) o que falta é um advérbio “喜”, que significa “felizmente”. O uso deste advérbio mostra a alegria e até o orgulho do presidente Xi pelas boas colheitas de anos consecutivos. A falta deste advérbio na tradução não prejudica a informação principal do texto, mas apaga a marca de ato expressivo do texto original, tornando a frase num puro ato assertivo ao invés de um complexo ilocutório de ato expressivo e de ato assertivo. Em (5), “努力” no texto original é um advérbio que significa “(trabalhar) arduamente”, normalmente usado com “trabalhar” ou “estudar” para dizer “trabalhar” de forma dedicada e esforçada. Estes dois casos mostram o impacto das traduções na regulação da força ilocutória dos enunciados. Embora não prejudicando muito a ideia principal do texto original, a força ilocutória é atenuada. Entretanto (5) é um caso de uma frase de modalidade deontica, marcado por “要”(dever), como defende Oliveira (2004, pp. 249-250):

(...) Modalidade externa ao participante (marcada por poder, dever e ter de) estamos a lidar com circunstâncias que são externas ao participante envolvido numa situação, mas que a tornam possível ou necessária. A modalidade deontica diz respeito às circunstâncias externas (pessoais, regras sociais ou normas...) que permitem ou obrigam o participante a envolver-se na situação.

Um apelo aos povos do mundo convém que não imponha mais esforço e exigência do que os estritamente necessários. A tradução atenua a força ilocutória talvez para tornar mais aceitável o conselho.

3.2 *Acrescento*

O segundo tipo de estratégia da tradução é o acrescento: o tradutor acrescenta alguma expressão ou unidade linguística para explicar ou regular o texto original. Encontramos alguns casos nesta tradução que dividimos em dois grupos.

O primeiro grupo ilustra uma função de explicação. Inclui os seguintes exemplos:

(1) “天问一号”、“嫦娥五号”、“奋斗者”号等科学探测实现重大突破。

TL: Grandes avanços foram alcançados na exploração científica, tais como a "Tianwen-1", o "Chang'e-5" e o "Fendouzhe".

TD: enquanto as explorações científicas conquistaram um grande avanço com o lançamento bem-sucedido da **sonda de Marte** “Tianwen-1”, **sonda lunar** “Chang'e-5” e **submersível tripulado** “Fendouzhe”.

(2) 我到13个省区市考察时欣喜看到。。。

TL: Durante as minhas visitas a 13 províncias e municípios, fiquei feliz por ver...

TD: Em visita a 13 **províncias, regiões autônomas e municípios**, fiquei contente em ver...

O tradutor acrescentou informações relativas a certos termos estranhos aos estrangeiros, nesse caso os falantes de língua portuguesa, explicando melhor a ideia expressa no texto original, a fim de fazer os estrangeiros perceberem o texto original. Essas mudanças não interferem na construção de força discursiva.

No entanto, o segundo grupo ilustra uma espécie de acrescento implícito. Mesmo que não se acrescente necessariamente uma expressão ou unidade linguística, podemos deduzir a adição de sujeito ou a concretização de pessoa gramatical por causa da morfologia rica da língua portuguesa. Essas mudanças estão relacionadas com a marcação gramatical de “nós” ou “eu”, e exemplificam-se através dos casos seguintes:

(3) 置身春潮涌动的南海之滨、绚丽多姿的黄浦江畔，令人百感交集。。。

TL: Estar nas margens do mar do Sul da China e na beira do rio Huangpu com maré da Primavera leva a pessoa a ter sentimentos misturados.

TD: Ficando no litoral sul do país, com marés da primavera, e na beira do rio Huangpu, com aparência diversificada, **fiquei** com sentimentos e emoções misturados...

(4) 今后还要以更大气魄深化改革、扩大开放，续写更多“春天的故事”。

TL: No futuro, é preciso aprofundar a reforma e expandir a abertura com mais vigor, e continuar a escrever mais "histórias de Primavera".

TD: ...**vamos** continuar a escrever mais “histórias da primavera” por meio do aprofundamento da reforma e a ampliação da abertura com maior coragem.

(5) 疫情防控任重道远。

TL: Há um longo caminho a percorrer para prevenir e controlar a epidemia.

TD: Ainda **temos** tarefas pesadas e um caminho longo no combate à pandemia.

(6) 胸怀千秋伟业，恰是百年风华。

TL: Tem em mente que a grande carreira de mil anos está no seu auge de centenário.

TD: **Devemos** levar em consideração a causa eterna do Partido que está ainda no seu auge apesar de completar um centenário.

Em (3) o texto original caracteriza-se pela não-marcação de sujeito agente humano; a única presença de constituinte humano surge no objeto direto da frase principal, remetendo para uma pessoa indefinida: “人”(pessoa ou pessoas). Na tradução, o verbo “fiquei” implica que o sujeito é o “eu”, o enunciador, o presidente Xi. A expressão “Fiquei com sentimentos e emoções misturados” é subjetiva; a concretização do sujeito que experimenta os sentimentos e emoções enfatiza a presença do enunciador e evita a generalização, formulando um ato expressivo. A presença de “eu” reforça o ato ilocutório expressivo, mostrando a emoção do presidente Xi e, mais do que isso, uma proximidade com as pessoas comuns. Em relação a (4) e (6), os enunciados não têm sujeitos expressos no texto original, mas, na tradução, através dos verbos “vamos” e “temos”, verificamos que o sujeito é o “nós” inclusivo: o partido comunista da China ou até todo o país. O partido ou o país precisam de continuar a reforma e abertura e ter em mente a grande carreira do partido. No caso de (5), em conjunto com o contexto, podemos deduzir que também é o “nós” inclusivo e mais abrangente: a China e os outros países ainda têm tarefas pesadas para combater a pandemia. Em (4), (5) e (6), a presença de “nós” inclusivo marca um reforço do ato ilocutório diretivo que pede a execução da ação futura por todos. A estratégia de acrescento nestes casos torna o discurso mais envolvente e expressivo, dando mais força ilocutória aos atos ilocutórios praticados.

A língua chinesa é uma língua de sujeito nulo radical. Por vezes esta omissão de sujeito deve-se a este estar subentendido e não haver ambiguidade na interpretação e, noutras vezes, esta omissão leva a uma interpretação ambígua. Para além desta razão, outros autores defendem que a outra possibilidade de ocorrência de sujeito nulo é também uma forma de construir uma retórica de autoridade e de doutrinação ideológica: “political rhetoric to establish authority and ensure ideological indoctrination” (Pan, Kin e Li, 2020, pp. 60-61). Tal também é confirmado por outros estudos sobre os textos políticos chineses. O sujeito nulo, em particular, a falta de sujeito agente humano nestas frases, gera uma impressão de maior objetividade nos enunciados, como podemos verificar a partir das palavras de Li e Li (2015, p. 432):

(...) not only generated by the subject-ellipsis characteristic of the Chinese language, but it is also a result of the text producer’s attempt to leave an objective impression on the audience.

Ao contrário do chinês, a língua portuguesa é uma língua de sujeito nulo consistente, o sujeito está subentendido “quando há razões para afirmar que sintaticamente existe uma

posição de sujeito, embora não exista nenhuma palavra a ocupar essa posição.” (Eliseu, 2007, p. 48). Quer devido à diferença sintática entre português e chinês quer devido à modificação dos tradutores, a adição de “eu” e “nós” reforça a força ilocutória do discurso.

3.3 Distorção

A estratégia de distorção refere-se àquelas alterações que mudam a estrutura da frase original, não alterando a ideia principal do discurso, mas sim a força discursiva.

(1) 我为伟大的祖国和人民而骄傲，为自强不息的民族精神而自豪！

TL: Estou orgulhoso com a grande pátria e povo, e orgulhoso com o espírito nacional de lutar constantemente para se fortalecer.

TD: Estou orgulhoso com a nossa grande pátria, o grande povo e o espírito da nação que busca constantemente o auto-fortalecimento.

(2) 我到13个省区市考察时欣喜看到，大家认真细致落实防疫措施，争分夺秒复工复产，全力以赴创新创造，。。。

TL: Quando visitei 13 províncias, regiões autónomas e municípios, fiquei encantado por ver que **todos** têm trabalhado arduamente para implementar medidas de prevenção de epidemias, correndo contra o tempo para retomar o trabalho e a produção, e não poupando esforços para fazer inovações.

TD: Em visita a 13 províncias, regiões autónomas e municípios, fiquei contente em ver os trabalhos meticulosos de colocar em prática as medidas de prevenção e controle da epidemia, os esforços de recuperar a produção aproveitando cada segundo, e a determinação de fazer tudo possível em busca da inovação e da criatividade.

(3) 。。。, 832个贫困县全部摘帽。

TL: Todos os 32 condados empobrecidos tiraram os seus “chapéus de pobreza”.

TD: ...832 distritos empobrecidos deixaram de ter rótulo de “distrito pobre”.

(4) 这些年，我去了全国14个集中连片特困地区，乡亲们愚公移山的干劲，广大扶贫干部倾情投入的奉献，时常浮现在脑海。

TL: Ao longo dos anos, visitei 14 áreas intensivas de pobreza absoluta em todo o país, a determinação dos aldeões que têm a coragem de superar todas as dificuldades, e a dedicação de uma multidão de quadros para a redução da pobreza vêm-me muitas vezes à mente.

TD: Visitei nestes anos, 14 áreas contíguas intensivas de pobreza absoluta. Surgiram sempre na minha cabeça, as imagens dos aldeões locais com vontade de persistir e dos quadros que deram todas as contribuições ao ajudar os pobres.

Em (1), o texto original repete duas vezes “orgulhoso com”. A primeira vez refere-se ao povo e ao país, que são objetos mais concretos² enquanto a segunda vez refere-se ao

² Assim se define “concreto” e “abstrato” na *Nova Gramática do Português Contemporâneo* de Celso Cunha e Lindley Cintra (2016, p. 177): “Chamam-se substantivos concretos os substantivos que designam os seres propriamente ditos, isto é, os nomes de pessoas, de lugares, de instituições, de um género de uma espécie

espírito nacional que é um objeto mais abstrato. A repetição não só enfatiza, mas também sublinha o sentimento subjetivo do enunciador, possuindo uma grande força ilocutória de ato expressivo. Em (2), “大家”(todos) é o agente do predicado no texto original; no entanto, na tradução, o agente pessoal é substituído pelos temas do predicado “os trabalhos” e “os esforços”, diminuindo e diluindo a presença do destinatário do ato expressivo de elogio. Esta mudança reforça os feitos realizados, atenuando o agente da ação “todas as pessoas” e simultaneamente o alvo do ato ilocutório concretizado pela frase. Podemos ter em consideração o valor ilocutório dominante nesta sequência que é o presidente Xi expressar o seu contentamento com um dado estado de coisas. Mas o objeto deste contentamento é o povo ou são os feitos? Poderá haver interpretações diferentes e a tradução é mais próxima do contentamento com os feitos do que com o povo. Ora, isto é contrário ao texto original, que identifica o responsável pelos feitos que geram contentamento no Presidente Xi e que transforma este ato expressivo num ato de elogio. O caso (4) é um pouco semelhante ao caso (2), pois também está relacionado com a força da expressão do sentimento subjetivo. “干劲” (determinação ou entusiasmo) e “奉献”(dedicação), palavras de natureza abstrata que designam qualidades ou sentimentos, são substituídas por “imagens”, mais concretas e de natureza material. Assim, a ausência dos nomes de sentimento e de qualidade atenua a força ilocutória do ato expressivo. No caso (3), “摘帽” (tirar o chapéu da pobreza), o texto original usa uma metáfora que resulta numa retórica de antropomorfismo que atribui características humanas aos condados através da expressão “tirar o chapéu da pobreza”, enunciando a situação de uma forma animada e mais expressiva. A tradução “deixaram de ter rótulo de ‘distrito pobre’” é mais objetiva e formal, perdendo a carga expressiva que a metáfora conferia ao enunciado.

4. Modalização

No capítulo anterior, vimos as estratégias da tradução institucional e as suas influências nos atos ilocutórios originais; tal faz-nos lembrar a modalização, uma operação comum à qual os autores recorrem frequentemente para ajustar a sua posição para uma transmissão mais acessível aos leitores do discurso proferido. Com a análise dos últimos apartados, verificámos a mutação da força dos atos ilocutórios; de certa forma é a estratégia da modalização do tradutor a funcionar. Neste capítulo vamos analisar como a modalização é efetuada e modifica a força discursiva na tradução portuguesa do Discurso Presidencial de Ano Novo de 2021. Para o efeito, desconsideramos as diferenças entre a tradução literal e o texto de destino, usando só o texto de destino.

4.1 Modalização de atenuação

ou de um dos seus representantes [...] Dá-se o nome de abstratos aos substantivos que designam noções, ações, estados e qualidades, considerados como seres...”. No entanto, o carácter concreto de entidades tem de ser relativizado já que, em termos semânticos, podemos conceber uma escala: povo é mais concreto do que país que são, ambos, mais concretos do que espírito nacional, mas nenhum é tão concreto como homem, mulher, cão ou pedra.

As estratégias de tradução que analisámos no terceiro ponto apresentam uma tendência da atenuação da força ilocutória na tradução; no entanto, estas não ocultam a força ilocutória forte do texto original em chinês, ou seja, a modalização dominante da tradução é a de reforço, sobre a qual falaremos em breve. Além do efeito da tradução e da intervenção do tradutor, ainda encontramos alguns mecanismos de atenuação, mesmo que sejam menores no que diz respeito aos tipos e quantidade quando em comparação com mecanismos de reforço. Apresentamos alguns exemplos:

1. O uso do tempo verbal condicional para expressar o desejo do enunciador com cortesia; só existem dois casos no texto inteiro:

(1) **Gostaria** de enviar a todos meus melhores votos do ano novo daqui de Beijing.

(2) **Gostaria** de expressar condolências a todos os infetados e mostrar meu respeito às pessoas comuns, mas heroicas.

2. Expressões com conotação na cultura chinesa que expressam a opinião do locutor com recurso a provérbios (1), (2) e metáforas (3), (4), (5), (6). A utilização dessas expressões na língua de chegada perde a expressividade da língua de origem, pelo que atenua a modalidade epistémica em (1), (6) e a modalidade deôntica em (2), (3), (4), (5):

(1) A coragem tenaz nasce da dificuldade e o **jade perfeito vem do polimento**.

(2) A Reforma e Abertura criou um milagre de desenvolvimento e vamos continuar a escrever mais “**histórias da primavera**” por meio do aprofundamento da reforma e a ampliação da abertura com maior coragem.

(3) Os povos de todos os países devem ficar de mãos dadas ao superar as dificuldades e **tempestades**.

(4) De Shikumen, em Shanghai, para Nanhu, em Jiaying, uma barca vermelha pequenina, carregando a grande missão conferida pelo povo e esperança da nação, **rompeu torrentes e corredeiras traiçoeiras e atravessou ondas agitadas, se transformando em um navio gigantesco que lidera a China a navegar estavelmente para longe**.

(5) Manter a inspiração original e ter a missão em mente, **navegando em mares violentos**, conseguiremos com certeza a grande revitalização da nação chinesa.

A luta nos fez superar todos os obstáculos e **passar milhares de rios e montanhas** e vai nos levar a continuar progredindo corajosamente em busca de um futuro ainda mais brilhante.

4.2 Modalização de reforço

Mesmo que a tradução tente atenuar a força ilocutória de certos enunciados, a característica forte e emocional (*pathémica*) do discurso original, marcada por atos ilocutórios assertivos e expressivos abundantes, continua a existir na tradução.

Apresentamos exemplos da modalização de reforço:

1. Nomes, verbos, adjetivos ou advérbios de polaridade semântica positiva muito alta, que mostram uma atitude subjetiva do enunciador nos atos assertivos e expressivos.

(1) Nesses dias em que enfrentamos em conjunto as dificuldades, testemunhamos **a coragem** de **marchar** ao epicentro da epidemia, **a persistência** de ser **valente** e **perseverante**, **a responsabilidade** de compartilhar as penalidades e as dificuldades, **o sacrifício** sem vacilo e **comoção** de ajudas mútuas.

(2) A **grande causa** nasce do ordinário e **heróis** vêm do povo.

(3) Vai nos levar a continuar progredindo **corajosamente** em busca de um futuro ainda **mais brilhante**.

(4) Em 2020, o país obteve **conquistas notáveis históricas** na construção de uma sociedade moderadamente próspera e um **sucesso decisivo** na luta de alívio da pobreza.

(5) A produção agrícola **conseguiu** safra em 17 anos consecutivos, enquanto as explorações científicas **conquistaram** um **grande avanço**.

2. As marcas gramaticais da 1.^a pessoa do singular reforçam a modalidade apreciativa, assinalando construções delimitadoras da experiência na 1.^a pessoa do singular:

(1) **Gostaria** de expressar condolências a todos os infetados e mostrar **meu** respeito às pessoas comuns, mas heroicas. **Gostaria** de expressar condolências a todos os infetados e mostrar **meu** respeito às pessoas comuns, mas heroicas.

(2) **Fiquei** contente em ver os trabalhos meticolosos de colocar em prática as medidas de prevenção e controle da epidemia...

(3) Surgiram sempre na **minha** cabeça, as imagens dos aldeões locais com vontade de persistir e dos quadros que deram todas as contribuições ao ajudar os pobres.

(4) **Fiquei** com sentimentos e emoções misturados ao ver que as zonas pilotos se tornaram pioneiros e exemplares e a exploração da inovação se transformou em liderança pela inovação.

(5) **Espero** que a harmonia traga boa sorte e a vida seja feliz.

3. Várias expressões de reforço tanto da modalidade epistémica (1) quanto da modalidade apreciativa (1), (2).

(1) O ano de 2020 foi **realmente** extraordinário.

(2) Desejo **sinceramente**, às vésperas do ano novo, a permanência da paisagem pitoresca das montanhas e rios, prosperidade à nação e segurança ao povo.

4. Modificadores morfológicos externos, nomeadamente modificadores maximizadores do significado, que servem, na maioria dos casos, para reforçar a modalidade epistémica:

(1) Com boa qualidade moral, **ninguém** vai ficar sozinho e todo o mundo sob o

céu é uma família.

(2) Fiquei contente em ver os trabalhos meticulosos de colocar em prática as medidas de prevenção e controle da epidemia, os esforços de recuperar a produção aproveitando **cada** segundo, e a determinação de fazer **tudo** possível em busca da inovação e da criatividade.

(3) Os povos de **todos** os países devem ficar de mãos dadas ao superar as dificuldades e tempestades em prol da dissipação de neblinas epidêmicas o quanto antes e construir um lar na Terra ainda **mais** feliz.

(4) Neste caminho longo, a luta é a **única** escolha.

5. Expressão no grau comparativo e superlativo: a modificação de grau reforça a modalidade epistémica (1), (4), deôntica (2) ou apreciativa (3), (4), (5), (6),

(1) Promovemos a batalha **final** às fortalezas da pobreza profunda, conseguindo roer os ossos **mais** duros.

(2) Vamos continuar a escrever **mais** “histórias da primavera” por meio do aprofundamento da reforma e a ampliação da abertura com maior coragem.

(3) O caminho nestes 100 anos é notável e a inspiração inicial neste centenário resiste ao teste do tempo e fica ainda **mais** forte.

(4) Somos **o primeiro** país entre as principais economias do mundo a conseguir o crescimento do PIB com a previsão de atingir um novo patamar de 100 trilhões de yuans no ano de 2020.

(5) Neste ano, superamos a grave inundação e diminuímos **ao máximo** os danos, graças à solidariedade entre setores civil e militar.

(6) Ao experimentar todas as dificuldades decorrentes deste ano, compreendemos o significado da comunidade de futuro compartilhado para Humanidade de forma **mais** profunda, **comparando com qualquer outro momento histórico**.

6. O uso do “nós inclusivo” e do tempo verbal do presente de verbos que tipicamente marcam atos compromissivos e diretivos, apelando ao “eu” e à audiência em conjunto para que efetuem certa tarefa, o que constitui um reforço da modalidade deôntica.

(1) **Devemos** levar em consideração a causa eterna do Partido que está ainda no seu auge apesar de completar um centenário.

(2) **Devemos** ater-nos firme e resolutamente às nossas metas e trabalhar duro com os pés no chão, nos esforçando para pintar uma imagem bela e gigantesca da vitalização das zonas rurais, rumo à prosperidade comum a passos firmes.

7. Partícula discursiva com valor modal epistémico de certeza, reforçando a modalidade epistémica.

(1) Ao sustentar o conceito de desenvolvimento centrado no povo, manter a inspiração original e ter a missão em mente, navegando em mares violentos,

conseguiremos **com certeza** a grande revitalização da nação chinesa.

5. Análise quantitativa do *corpus*

Neste capítulo recorreremos a ferramentas computacionais para melhor analisar a tradução portuguesa do Discurso do Ano Novo de 2021 do presidente Xi no que toca aos tempos e modos verbais, quantificadores, adjetivos e advérbios. Através das marcas gramaticais e semânticas, verificaremos a força discursiva, bem como a modalidade e modalização dominantes.

A aplicação *Visual Interactive Syntax Learning*”, designação abreviada para VISL, é um projeto de investigação que permite a análise de *corpora* a vários níveis gramaticais, a saber, morfológico, sintático e semântico. A ferramenta de análise gramatical para o português é sustentada por um léxico de cerca de 50 000 palavras cruzado com cerca de 5000 regras da *Constraint Grammar* de natureza morfológica, sintática e também semântica. O VISL, de entre as ferramentas computacionais de PLN (Processamento de Linguagem Natural), é uma aplicação que divide o discurso em partes (palavras e outros sinais) e etiqueta essas partes de acordo com aspetos morfológicos (classe de palavras, processos de formação), sintáticos (funções sintáticas) e semânticos (traços semânticos) dessas unidades.³

Inserimos todo o texto na ferramenta “Machine Analysis” da aplicação em causa e importámos o texto etiquetado para o Microsoft Excel. Nesta aplicação, ativámos a função “ordenar e filtrar” e de seguida “filtro” para podermos trabalhar com elementos ou categorias. Analisámos o texto inteiro a partir de três aspetos: modo e tempo verbal para ver a modalização dominante; quantificadores mais ou menos usados no sentido da modalidade epistémica; advérbios no sentido da modalidade apreciativa.

5.1 Tempo e modo verbal

Com a análise da aplicação informática e a estatística manual por definição das categorias, encontrámos 69 verbos conjugados no total, entre os quais 27 verbos na 1.ª pessoa do singular ou do plural e 42 verbos na 3.ª pessoa do singular ou do plural. A presença dos verbos na 1.ª pessoa marca a subjetividade do discurso e, em consequência, reforça a modalidade apreciativa. No entanto, a maioria dos verbos estão na 3.ª pessoa, o que tenta mostrar a atitude objetiva do enunciador, atenuando a modalidade apreciativa e reforçando a modalidade epistémica. Como Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1980, p. 162) defendeu, “toute séquence discursive porte la marque de son énonciateur, mais selon des modes et des degrés divers”.⁴

Em relação ao tempo e modo verbal, verificámos que há 63 verbos no presente e o pretérito perfeito simples do indicativo é o dominante, marcas reforçadas da modalidade epistémica de certeza e da modalidade deôntica de permissão ou obrigação. Além disso, há 2 verbos na 1ª pessoa do singular no condicional (1), (2); 2 verbos no futuro do indicativo,

³ Mais informações disponíveis em *site* oficial de VISL: <https://visl.sdu.dk/>

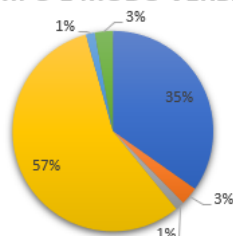
⁴ “Qualquer sequência discursiva ostenta a marca do seu enunciador, mas em graus e modos variados”, minha tradução.

um na 1ª pessoa do plural (3), outro na 3ª pessoa do singular (4); 2 verbos no presente do conjuntivo na 3ª pessoa do singular (5). De acordo com Briz e Albelda (2013), os usos modais do condicional, do futuro e do conjuntivo implicam uma desfocalização do eixo temporal e, por isso, expressam a ação de forma mais suave, tratando-se duma modalização de atenuação. Podemos ver que o uso de condicionais em (1) e (2) é de facto uma cortesia do enunciador, no entanto, em (3), (4) e (5), o tempo verbal do futuro e conjuntivo está relacionado com certeza na ocorrência de um dado evento no futuro:

- (1) **Gostaria** de enviar a todos meus melhores votos do ano novo daqui de Beijing.
- (2) **Gostaria** de expressar condolências a todos os infetados e mostrar meu respeito às pessoas comuns, mas heroicas.
- (3) Ao sustentar o conceito de desenvolvimento centrado no povo, manter a inspiração original e ter a missão em mente, navegando em mares violentos, **conseguiremos** com certeza a grande revitalização da nação chinesa.
- (4) O ano 2021 **marcará** os 100 anos de aniversário do Partido Comunista da China.
- (5) Espero que a harmonia **traga** boa sorte e a vida **seja** feliz.

| | |
|--|----|
| 1 pessoa singular ou plural do presente e perfeito do indicativo do | 24 |
| 1 pessoa singular ou plural do condicional, | 2 |
| 1 pessoa singular ou plural do futuro do indicativo | 1 |
| 3 pessoa singular ou plural do presente e perfeito simples do indicativo | 39 |
| 3 pessoa singular ou plural do futuro do indicativo | 1 |
| 3 pessoa singular ou plural do presente do conjuntivo | 2 |
| suma | 69 |

TEMPO E MODO VERBAL



- 1 pessoa singular ou plural do presente e perfeito do indicativo do
- 1 pessoa singular ou plural do condicional,
- 1 pessoa singular ou plural do futuro do indicativo
- 3 pessoa singular ou plural do presente e perfeito simples do indicativo
- 3 pessoa singular ou plural do futuro do indicativo
- 3 pessoa singular ou plural do presente do conjuntivo

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X |
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Gráfico 1. Diagrama da classificação do tempo e modo verbal.

5.2 Quantificadores

De acordo com Briz e Albelda (2013), modificadores morfológicos externos, sobretudo quantificadores minimizadores, aproximativos ou difusores do significado proposicionais ou extraproposicionais, também são uma maneira de atenuação ou de reforço, dependendo dos casos. Para o efeito, também considerámos os quantificadores um fator de análise e encontrámos no total 23 quantificadores no texto, que podem ser divididos em três grupos: 14 universal, 8 gradativo e 1 não universal.

Os quantificadores universais (*todo, tudo, cada, qualquer*) ocupam a maioria dos casos e denotam a totalidade dos valores que a expressão quantificada pode ter. O uso do quantificador universal reforça a força da modalidade deôntica (1) e das modalidades apreciativa e epistémica (1), (2), (3).

- (1) Os povos de **todos** os países devem ficar de mãos dadas ao superar as dificuldades e tempestades em prol da dissipação de neblinas epidêmicas o quanto antes e construir um lar na Terra ainda mais feliz.
- (2) Fiquei contente em ver os trabalhos meticulosos de colocar em prática as medidas de prevenção e controle da epidemia, os esforços de recuperar a produção aproveitando **cada** segundo, e a determinação de fazer **tudo** possível em busca da inovação e da criatividade.
- (3) Compreendemos o significado da comunidade da comunidade de futuro compartilhado para Humanidade de forma mais profunda, comparando com **qualquer** outro momento histórico.

Os quantificadores gradativos (*muito, mais*) são os segundos mais frequentes. São usados no texto para reforçar a modalidade deôntica (1), a modalidade apreciativa (2), (3), e a modalidade epistémica (3). O quantificador não universal (*várias*) só tem um caso que se situa no exemplo (3); a função deste está presente na semântica de presença e

existência, em conjunto com outros dois quantificadores gradativos na mesma frase.

- (1) A Reforma e Abertura criou um milagre de desenvolvimento e vamos continuar a escrever **mais** “histórias da primavera” ...
- (2) O caminho nestes 100 anos é notável e a inspiração inicial neste centenário resiste ao teste do tempo e fica ainda **mais** forte.
- (3) Conversei **muito** com velhos amigos no âmbito internacional e participei de **várias** reuniões pela internet, ocasiões em que o tema **mais** discutido foi ajuda mútua e a união na luta contra a pandemia.

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O |
|----|----------------------|---------|---------|--------|-----|-------|--------|---|-----------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | todosSOU [todo] | <quant> | DET | M | P | @P< | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | todosSOU [todo] | <quant> | DET | M | P | @>N | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | todosSOU [todo] | <quant> | DET | M | P | @P< | | | Quantificador universal | 14 | | | | | |
| 4 | todos=oS [todo=o] | <quant> | DET | M | P | @>N | | | Quantificador não universal | 1 | | | | | |
| 5 | cadaSOUR [cada] | <quant> | DET | M | S | @>N | | | Quantificador gradativa | 8 | | | | | |
| 6 | tudoSOUR [tudo] | <quant> | SPEC | M | S | @<ACC | | | Suma | 23 | | | | | |
| 7 | maisSOUR [muito] | <quant> | <KOMP> | ADV | @>A | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | toda=aSO [todo=o] | <quant> | DET | F | S | @>N | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | todas=asS [todo=o] | <quant> | DET | F | P | @>N | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | maisSOUR [muito] | <quant> | <KOMP> | DET | F | P | @>N | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | todas=asS [todo=o] | <quant> | DET | F | P | @>N | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | maisSOUR [muito] | <quant> | <KOMP> | ADV | @>A | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | qualquerS [qualquer] | <quant> | DET | M | S | @>N | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | muitoSOU [muito] | <quant> | ADV | @<ADVL | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | vÁriasSOU [vÁrias] | <quant> | DET | F | P | @>N | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | maisSOUR [muito] | <quant> | <KOMP> | ADV | @>A | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | todos=oS [todo=o] | <quant> | DET | M | P | @>N | | | | | | | | | |
| 18 | maisSOUR [muito] | <quant> | <KOMP> | ADV | @>A | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19 | maisSOUR [muito] | <quant> | <KOMP> | ADV | @>A | | | | | | | | | | |
| 20 | todos=oS [todo=o] | <quant> | DET | M | P | @>N | | | | | | | | | |
| 21 | maisSOUR [muito] | <quant> | <KOMP> | ADV | @>A | | | | | | | | | | |
| 22 | todosSOU [todo] | <quant> | DET | M | P | @P< | | | | | | | | | |
| 23 | todosSOU [todo] | <+> | <quant> | DET | M | P | @SUBJ> | | | | | | | | |
| 24 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

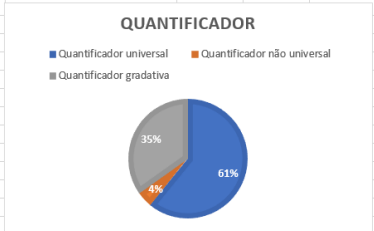


Gráfico 2. Diagrama da classificação do quantificador.

5.3 Advérbio e grupo preposicional

O advérbio e o grupo preposicional também são elementos importantes na modalização do discurso. Neste texto, encontramos no total 35 casos, entre os quais 20 são de tempo-espeto (sempre, ainda, de novo, em breve), de lugar (aqui, longe), de quantidade (muito) e relativo (enquanto). Os restantes 15 casos são de modo e possuem uma semântica positiva, mostrando a subjetividade e reforçando a modalidade apreciativa, por exemplo:

- (1) Estou orgulhoso com a nossa grande pátria, o grande povo e o espírito da nação que busca **constantemente** pelo autofortalecimento.
- (2) Surgiram sempre na minha cabeça, as imagens dos aldeões locais **com vontade** de persistir e dos quadros que deram todas as contribuições ao ajudar os pobres.
- (3) A luta nos fez superar todos os obstáculos e passar milhares de rios e montanhas e vai nos levar a continuar progredindo **corajosamente** em busca de um futuro ainda mais brilhante.
- (4) Desejo **sinceramente**, às vésperas do ano novo, a permanência da paisagem pitoresca das montanhas e rios, prosperidade à nação e segurança ao povo.
- (5) Com esforços de oito anos, toda a população rural com cerca de 100 milhões se livrou da pobreza de acordo com o padrão vigente **enquanto** 832 distritos

empobrecidos deixaram de ter rótulo de “distrito pobre”.

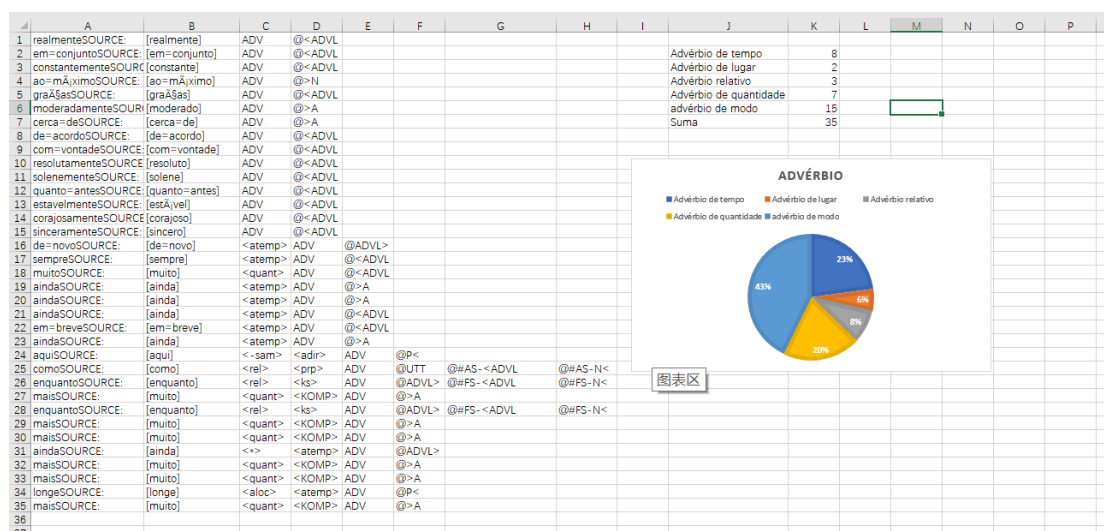


Gráfico 3. Diagrama da classificação do advérbio.

6. Conclusão

A tradução portuguesa do Discurso Presidencial de Ano Novo de 2021 de Xi Jinping atenua a força ilocutória e a força discursiva de alguns dos enunciados do texto original, com as três estratégias de tradução *omissão*, *acrescento* e *distorção*, a fim de divulgar e tornar o discurso mais acessível para o público de língua portuguesa. A análise confirmou os estudos anteriores sobre a tradução institucional dos textos políticos chineses, permitindo verificar que não só a tradução inglesa, mas também a tradução portuguesa, seguem o princípio de “being closer to the target audience's thinking patterns” (Huang, 2004, p. 27).

Não obstante a atenuação da força de certos atos ilocutórios com vista a uma melhor adequação cultural com a análise computacional e manual, verificamos que a modalização dominante, na tradução portuguesa do Discurso do Ano Novo do Presidente Xi, é o reforço. A semântica fortemente positiva, o tempo e os modos verbais ligados a assertividade, certeza e à modalidade deôntica e os advérbios altamente subjetivos e de polaridade positiva reforçam a modalidade apreciativa, deôntica e epistêmica. Como discurso político, transmite bem a força e a atitude firme do presidente, do partido e até do país, mas também contém um aspeto emocional, para se aproximar do público-alvo, o povo chinês, assim como leitores estrangeiros interessados, de forma a construir um apelo motivador e galvanizador para a nação.

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BOOK REVIEW

LANGUAGES AS WEAPONS

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Interpreting conflict. A comparative framework, edited by Marija Todorova and Lucía Ruiz Rosendo, Cham (Switzerland), Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, 320 pp, €139,09 (hardcover), ISBN 978-3-030-66909-6.

The case studies contained in this edited volume constitute an excellent compilation for practitioners – not just interpreters and their trainers, but military and humanitarian personnel too, as well as for researchers. Different types of sources, sometimes built by the authors themselves, make up the raw material of most of the research in this volume, always complemented by an arsenal of specialized bibliography. The chapters use a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives to approach topics or events in several locations, political and social entities, and historical moments.

Both editors share three characteristics that are relevant to building the frame of the volume: they are practicing interpreters; they have a long research background in this field, and they train interpreters and researchers.

In her introduction, Ruiz Rosendo articulates the idea that the moving of boundaries in the book refers not only to the geographical lines of separation that are often the cause or consequence of conflict, but also to disciplinary borders. This compendium handles this matter quite aptly by devoting eight chapters to military interpreting and six to interpreting in humanitarian settings. All the chapters deal with contemporary issues, some very recent, whose volatile objects of analysis require approaches in which empirical evidence cannot always count on the benefit of hindsight but rely rather on direct observation or oral interviews.

American Senator Hiram Johnson's words in reference to World War I, "The first casualty when war comes is truth", may support the idea that language and discourse become ammunition in the hands of those who wage war. This quote applies indeed to multilingual conflicts, where interpreters are required, always under the instructions of their commanders. While the war is raging, guns deafen the ears of combatants and it is difficult to talk, so it may seem that interpreting is needed only when truces or pauses in the battle bring about the necessary silence. In any case, at first sight, words do not kill. However, war is fought on many fronts and the potential participation of interpreters evolves throughout the whole conflict, from the preparatory phase to the post-conflict

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arrangements, as Hyongrae Kim points out in his chapter. Even the beginning of a war can be based on the manipulation of words. The concept of the Cold War was conceived when World War II was ending in order to define a new type of confrontation between former allies by apparently removing the *heat* associated with the fire and destruction from the previous war. But the Korean War, as shown by Kim, was as hot as any war can get, to the extent that its embers are still burning in the form of the 38th parallel north demarcation line between the two Koreas. When the “War on Terror” was launched in all directions as a reaction to the 9/11 attack, it hid the real enemy under a nebulous word, *terror*, which is something that one feels or that one tries to inflict on someone else. The truth is that the “war on terror” syntagm went beyond its blurred sense, as several chapters in this book show: Gómez Amich on a mission in Afghanistan; Ruiz Rosendo in her individual chapter on a mission in Iraq, where she analyzes two novels based on real facts; and Hess, who reveals the dishonor of the US military and justice system in their treatment of two Arabic-speaking linguists who were victims of ruthless scapegoating just for doing their job, as a result of an age-long *traduttore traditore* mentality.

A second element that emerges from the book is that interpreters’ roles and identities should be always defined in the plural. We may all agree that linguistic and cultural proficiency are the basic ingredients that make up an interpreter, since those are the key factors that allow for communication among people who use reciprocally unintelligible codes. The examples in this book show that understanding between the parties, more often than not, consists not of linguistic perfection, but rather of the crossing of a communication threshold, and that loyalty is more important than professional interpreting regulations. Moreover, even though interpreting is related to oral and gestural messages, the interpreters’ functions encompass a series of actions and tasks that go beyond oral communication. “Advisors, mediators, lie detectors, intelligence sources, coordinators, guides and subject matter experts” are the roles enumerated by Gómez Amich in her chapter on interpreters in Afghanistan (p. 89). “The administrative, training, and logistical tasks, and those involving direct and inverse translations, such as collecting information, analyzing documents, proofreading, direct and inverse interpretation of daily conversations, conferences, and meetings” are typical assignments Méndez Sánchez was called to perform in her mission in Senegal (pp. 146-147). “Interpreter, cultural mediator, intercultural mediator and language mediator” are apparent synonyms in users’ perceptions of the roles played by interpreters in humanitarian settings in present-day Italy, where cultural issues emerge as important factors in Radicioni’s case study on an NGO at Castel Volturno (p. 237). Thus, the “zone of uncertainty” described by Kim is a persistent feature in the attempt to define the roles of interpreters as social agents in a network of power structures.

As a result of some of the previous comments, an element that permeates all chapters is that of trust, which is related to how loyalty is perceived by users of interpreting services and by interpreters themselves, as it has been throughout recorded history. It is quite interesting to note the typology of loyalties described by Tian Luo & Ruiqi Zhu in their

case study on the Second Sino-Japanese War (1931–1945): *Fervent*, including respect for samurai loyalty codes; *feigned*, including by Chinese Communist Party members; *shifted*, such as when a prisoner of the opposing side is turned; and *divided*, or the loyalty attributed to double agents. Takeda refers to “the muddled and risky aspects of dual citizenship and the visibility of interpreters in war” (p. 29), since an unstable national identity would eventually backfire on these interpreters during the wartime trials following the Asia-Pacific War (1931-1945), where witnesses could easily identify them as language assistants of the Japanese political police or in the prisoner of war camps.

There are other significant factors when it comes to interpreting in specific situations, including in conflict: interpreters have feelings, and their performance reveals that language and discourse are far from innocuous. Moreno Bello shows that ideological differences are a significant component in the context of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon and that each interpreter understands their role and the way they perform it in a different manner, thus proving that a truly neutral translation does not exist. Manuel Barea Muñoz, referring to interpreters in the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict, discusses the influence that emotional and psychological factors may have on the interpreters’ performance. Cherine Haidar Ahmad focuses on how the positionality of United Nations interpreters working in the context of the Arab Spring fluctuates depending on their country of origin, since interpreters working in their own country may experience an additional emotional stress beyond the apparent outsider position associated with impersonal international staff.

Estela Martín Ruel and Marija Todorova devote their chapters to interpreters in the context of refugees arriving in Andalusia, Spain, and in Hong Kong, respectively. Martín Ruel covers a full array of aspects in her qualitative study on refugee reception agencies, where the issues of interpreters’ roles, their training or lack thereof, their gender, etc., have an impact on interviews with refugees in a variety of settings. Todorova touches upon the traits of interpreting in humanitarian refugee crises in Hong Kong derived from conflicts and war, where the use of non-professional interpreters, often refugees themselves, poses the added challenge of finding the right balance between trust for both parties and empathy towards those with whom interpreters often share cultural background and values. Lorena Guadalupe Baudo and Gabriela Fernanda Lorenzo provide a very honest account of the difficulties they faced and the coping strategies they sought in a conference setting where experts and refugees from different countries participated in an international dialogue session at Córdoba (Argentina), i.e. in a safe country.

Todorova’s conclusion sums up the salient issues in the volume, according to their respective backdrops (military or humanitarian) and emphasizes, *inter alia*, two ideas. First, the need to develop specific training programs adapted to the requirements identified by all parties from their different positions, which, ideally, would lead to an increased professionalization of those called to interpret in conflict or in post-conflict situations. Secondly, the importance of environmental issues (from climate change to the overexploitation of the Earth, to mention just two) as triggers of conflict and forced

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migrations. These prompt a higher demand for linguistic and cultural services; space must be made in interpreting research and practice for an awareness of indigenous populations' knowledge and expertise – food for thought and an invitation to stimulate further research.

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BOOK REVIEW

AVT STUDIES THROUGH THE (CAMERA) LENS OF GENDER

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‘Gender in audiovisual translation studies. Advocating for gender awareness’, *The Routledge Handbook of Audiovisual Translation*, Luis Pérez-González, London, Routledge, 2018, 570pp, £190.00 (hardback) ISBN 978-1-13885-952-4 £29.99 (e-book) ISBN 978-1-31571-716-6

The *Routledge Handbook of Audiovisual Translation* edited by Luis Pérez-González represents perhaps the most in-depth exploration of the rapidly evolving area of audiovisual translation (AVT) studies. Published in 2018, the handbook presents a comprehensive overview of the existing and emerging modalities of audiovisual translation alongside a critical examination of the various theoretical approaches to understand them. The contents of the handbook’s 570 pages are divided into 32 chapters, organized across four parts preceded by an introduction by the book’s editor. The first part is the longest in terms of page count and provides a solid introduction to the history and primary modalities of audiovisual translation. The second part contextualizes the practical applications of audiovisual translation within the broader theoretical framework of the discipline, encompassing areas as diverse as the concept of mediality, socio- and psycholinguistics, spoken discourse and – as is the focus of this critical review – gender studies. Although the shortest of the handbook’s four parts, the third section affords an exhaustive survey of the various research methods employed in the discipline of AVT studies, broaching topics such as corpus-based approaches, eye tracking and ethnographic research. The handbook’s fourth and final part focuses on the roles and impacts of audiovisual translation in society and includes a diverse range of topics such as minority language, popular music, fandoms and filmmaking, among several others.

The breadth and scope of the topics discussed in the handbook serve as a reflection of the fundamentally diverse and multifaceted nature of audiovisual translation as both a practice and an area of research. Despite its impressive overall length, the book’s division of its contents across its four sections provides a natural guide for readers to first acquaint themselves with the fundamentals of audiovisual translation before delving further into its manifold theoretical foundations, research methods and manifestations in society.

As the nineteenth chapter of the handbook, ‘Gender in audiovisual translation studies. Advocating for gender awareness’ by Luise von Flotow and Daniel E. Josephy-Hernández is geared towards students and scholars interested in the intersection of gender

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studies and audiovisual translation. Offering an overview of the major academic contributions to an otherwise under-researched area of translation studies, the chapter highlights the importance of applying feminist, gender-focused and queer theory to different modes of audiovisual translation, placing particular emphasis on the work of academics adopting an advocacy-centered approach. In a time marred by increasingly divisive political rhetoric but also marked by historic advancements in the rights and freedoms of women, members of the LGBTQ+ community and gender non-conforming individuals, the chapter is particularly relevant for students and educators of translation studies, both of whom occupy important roles as agents of social progress. Despite affording a thought-provoking exploration of the current status of feminist and gender-focused thought in audiovisual translation, the chapter raises nearly as many questions as it attempts to answer, prompting further reading and ultimately encouraging more research the field.

The chapter is divided into three sections, which are then subdivided into more in-depth examinations of the contributions of two types of authors, the first of which specifically addresses feminist and gender theory in their work and the second which, accidentally or otherwise, provides gender-focused critiques in work that doesn't have an emphasis on advocacy. Before diving into the chapter's first section, the authors note the problematic nature of the definition of gender, which has more recently been used to describe the plurality of identities unique to the human experience but has historically been used to reinforce a heteronormative binary, leading to the assertion that "...gender in any translation situation will always be complicated by cultural politics" (p. 298). As such, and in order to contextualize the arguments made later on in the chapter, gender is defined as the notion that biological differences exist and are culturally managed and represented in many audiovisual products. Operating under this definition, the subsequent sections explore how scholarly work interprets gender and sexual orientation and how they are portrayed linguistically, rather than visually, in audiovisual products.

In the first of the chapter's main sections, von Flotow and Josephy-Hernández provide an overview of the work of three major voices in the realm of feminist film studies, all of which serve as examples of early gender-conscious critiques of audiovisual products and which laid the groundwork for later developments. Specifically, the work of Laura Mulvey (1975,1999), Kaja Silverman (1998) and Teresa de Lauretis (1987) is discussed, with the first of these proposing the now ubiquitous theory of scopophilia, which can be understood as the dual aspect of the active, voyeuristic male gaze and the passive, eroticized "being-looked-at-ness" expected of women. In her work *The Acoustic Mirror*, Silverman asserts that normative representations of the female body result in the women depicted in audiovisual products often becoming audiovisual products themselves, depriving them of authoritative voice within the narrative. Finally, the pioneering work of de Lauretis on lesbian desire and its representation in film is discussed, emphasizing the importance of her recognition of gender indeterminacy in contrast to the rigidity of binarism, and leading to her coining the term 'queer theory'. In addition to setting the foundation for the critical

examination of gender in AVT studies later in the chapter, this section highlights that very little attention has been paid to issues of gender specifically in the *language* of audiovisual products, which is of course at the core of translation as both a practice and a theory.

The chapter's second section is dedicated to the different approaches to studying gender in audiovisual translation, and starts by presenting some of the major examples of feminist materials in Anglo-American audiovisual products and their translation into Romance languages. Providing examples of the work of Anne-Lise Feral (2011b), Diana Bianchi (2008) and Marcella and Alessandra De Marco (2012; 2013) on translation of audiovisual products from English into French, Italian and Spanish, respectively, von Flotow and Josephy-Hernández synthesize these arguments and note the different effects that subtitling and dubbing have on gender representation. Further, translations are provided of script excerpts from popular US 'chick-flicks' and films with gender non-conforming main characters, helping to elucidate the various ways in which audiovisual translation, either via dubbing or subtitling, subverts or reinforces prevailing heteronormative social attitudes. The chapter's final two sections review contributions of authors who adopt a less advocacy-driven approach to gender-aware criticism of audiovisual translation, focusing specifically on the into-English translations of originally Greek and Japanese films and anime series. The authors note the importance of these series for bringing to light the often ignored linguistic and culture-bound intricacies inherent to these languages' conceptions of gender. These sections are important for reaffirming that gender is a sensitive and very culturally-informed topic in all of its manifestations, and that future research is desperately needed in order to enrich our current understanding of gender-focused critiques of audiovisual translation.

The chapter affords a valuable lens through which to view the current landscape of gender and queer theory as applied to audiovisual translation studies, and excels at both featuring the existing contributions in the field and highlighting the dearth of similar studies from which to form more profound analyses. However, in its effort to succinctly summarize a wide array of theories and critiques, the chapter also raises many questions that either go entirely unanswered or are presumably too complex to address within the constraints of the handbook itself. As perhaps the most notable example of this, the authors only occasionally allude to the influence of political forces as primary drivers of the expression or suppression of gender and feminist issues in audiovisual translation products. This contrasts sharply with Álvarez and Vidal's (1999) assertion that:

The study and practice of translation is inevitably an exploration of power relationships within textual practice that reflect power structures within the wider cultural context (p.1).

As such, more exploration is needed into how the wider political relationships between the countries or linguistic communities where these audiovisual products are being produced and how these relationships necessarily impact representations of gender and sexuality in audiovisual translation. The chapter does, however, address the ways in which issues of class and access to education lead to the reinforcement of gender stereotypes and

heteronormative character depictions, particularly in countries where dubbing is the preferred mode of AVT for mass distribution and where subtitling is the preference of the educated elite. In these scenarios, the authors assert that the audiovisual products that are dubbed for mainstream audiences are traditionally more conservative in their treatment of gender and sexuality, but do not touch on whether the same trend is observed for countries where subtitling is the preferred or historically more prevalent mode. In this sense, the question of whether the same tendency can be identified in countries like Portugal and Brazil, which share a language and a legacy of subtitling but which have different levels of education, class stratification and cultural representations of gender and sexuality remains to be explored.

In the same vein of examining how political and national interests often coalesce to affect issues of gender in audiovisual translation, the chapter briefly overviews some of the ways in which media networks and distributors also exert considerable influence over these issues. In one case described by Changnon (2016), the efforts to maximize viewership of the French dubbing of *Queer as Folk* for francophone audiences in Quebec resulted in the deliberate emphasizing of the gay features of the script, effectively creating exaggerated gay stereotypes for the sole purpose of attracting more viewers. Although this represents a departure from the trend of erasure of gay aspects of the script as identified by Ranzato (2012), Changnon points to the importance of increasing sales as a force driving this trend, an interesting assertion that, unfortunately, isn't addressed further in the chapter. Consequently, the reader is left to question how any potential increases in viewership due to exaggerated gay stereotypes could lead to perpetuation of this practice and, as a result, the commodification of the gay identity in media. Similarly, questions about mainstream society's perceptions of the LGBTQ+ community following consumption of programs featuring commodified gay characters and the effects of these perceptions on the community are left to the research endeavors of other scholars. Another area related to the issues surrounding gay dialogue in dubbed audiovisual products that the chapter teases but does not expand upon is what is referred to by Ranzato (2012) as the translation of 'gayspeak'. Defined as a "fictional scripted language of fictional homosexuals portrayed...in usually stereotypical ways, often through the use of 'camp'" (*ibid.*, p. 371), Ranzato posits that 'gayspeak' in English scripts poses a particular challenge to audiovisual translation, citing what she believes to be a lack of richness in the Italian gay lexicon as the source of the difficulty. However, this perception of a lack of native linguistic resources for the translation of gay dialogue in Italian is surprising, considering that languages like Brazilian Portuguese and European Spanish as noted by Rei (2014) and Ortega (2007) have very broad and developed sociolects used by their respective gay communities that reveal rich intersectional and cultural foundations. Accordingly, this topic merits an equally rich and rigorous investigation to better understand the linguistic and cultural challenges underlying translation of 'gayspeak' into Italian and what other factors might influence its appearance in audiovisual products.

As a topic only very briefly discussed in the chapter, censorship in AVT, particularly as it pertains to issues of gender equality and queer representation, is another area whose observations prompted questions that remained unanswered. One such example of this is the tendency of French dubbers to eliminate or strongly edit textual elements that “pose[d] the greatest threat to patriarchal notions of female sexuality” in translations of *Sex and the City*. This, as Feral (2011a) notes, reveals a clear effort by linguists and likely also by broadcast networks to censor expressions of empowered and sexually liberated female characters. However, another example overviewed by Nicole Baumgarten (2005) wherein German linguists are more likely to ‘tone down’ or greatly modify scripts with gratuitous instances of sexist and misogynist language is *not* regarded as its own form of censorship, but rather as a technique to remove items that are unwelcome in the target culture. In this sense, the chapter does not draw a clear distinction between the erasure of the strong female lead in dialogue and the omission of overtly sexist language as separate but comparable acts of censorship in two similar translation scenarios, leaving the reader to question if censorship in this context is defined objectively or more along the lines of historically heteronormative systems of oppression.

In summary, the observations and analyses presented by Luise von Flotow and Daniel E. Josephy-Hernández in ‘Gender in audiovisual translation studies: Advocating for gender awareness’ represent an important contribution to what is still a relatively young area of research. Through their detailed introduction to the major academic thought underlying the intersection of feminist and gender-focused theory and AVT, the authors highlight the essential connection between language and its capacity for advocacy and provide a firm foundation upon which further study can take root.

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BOOK REVIEW

THE INFLUENCE OF FANSUBBING ON THE AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION INDUSTRY IN ITALY

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Audiovisual Translation in the Digital Age: The Italian Fansubbing Phenomenon, Serenella Massidda, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 136 pp, €54.99 (hardcover) ISBN: 978-1-137-47036-2, €46.00 (e-book) ISBN: 978-1-137-47037-9

A fascination with fansubbing was the impetus for Serenella Massidda to dip her toes in the world of amateur Italian subtitlers throughout her postgraduate career, “infiltrating” their communities with the objective of understanding their practices, ideologies and structures. *Audiovisual Translation in the Digital Age: The Italian Fansubbing Phenomenon* is the culmination of the insight gleaned through these experiences. Massidda’s stated aim for the volume is to explore the influence of fansubbing on audiovisual translation in Italy, as well as the effect of the norms of fansubbing communities on professional practice, all contextualised within the transformations brought about by the advent of Web 2.0. The democratisation of media access and production, coupled with an unprecedented bidirectionality in feedback between consumers and producers, paved the way for the emergence of fansubbing communities and their growing ability to exert pressure on the media industry. The author finds that this influence has led to transformations in both the prevalence and nature of dubbing in Italy, the speed with which official subtitles are released and the practice norms adopted by professional subtitlers, but it has also been accompanied by falling professional rates and by ethical and legal quandaries. Although these conclusions are soundly argued and substantiated, Massidda frames her study as an attempt to identify general features of fansubbing as well as the evolution of the practice over time. However, it is disputable to what degree her objects of study, namely the Italian fansubbing communities ItaSA and Subsfactory, are representative of the generality of the fansubbing universe.

The book opens with an examination of the concept of Web 2.0 and the concomitant democratisation of media access and production, increasing influence of consumers and fansubbers on multiple aspects of media production, transformation of consumers into producers, and increasing fusion of work and play. In addition, the author discusses the legality of fansubbing in relation to copyright laws, and the difficulty in distinguishing between piracy and the indirect promotion of media products. The author attempts to

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make a conceptual distinction between fansubbing and crowdsourced translations along legal and ethical lines; however, her descriptions fall prey to a lack of accuracy and objectivity. Massidda's characterisation of crowdsourcing as "copyright holders exploit[ing] the digital labour of specialised users to make a profit" (p. 18) is misleading on two counts. First, she ignores the widespread use of crowdsourcing in open-source projects that are free to use, modify and distribute, the most prominent of which are the various distributions of Linux. Second, her lexicon is unnecessarily value-laden: the use of the word "exploit" disregards any potential consent and freedom of voluntary participation on the part of translators. The characterisation of fansubbing as an ethical activity on the basis of its being "an unselfish activity, a form of social disobedience, and a reaction to professional translations that do not meet fans' needs" (pp. 18-19) is also debatable and is certainly not as definitive a matter as is presented.

The subject of the brief second chapter is the controversial choice between subtitling and dubbing, the history of dubbing in Italy and the challenge to the dominance thereof in the Italian market posed by the globalisation of the film industry, as well as the ever-tightening noose around the professional subtitler's neck as a result of the "rise of the amateur" (p. 33), decreasing rates and unreasonable deadlines.

Chapters 3 to 7 constitute a survey of the origin and development of fansubbing in Italy up to the publication of the book.

The first of these chapters analyses the evolution of the "philosophy" of Italian fansubbing communities, whose principal focus has shifted from Japanese anime to American TV programmes, and thereby examines the emergence in Italy of the first such communities as well as their hierarchies, roles and workflow. The author finds that the opposition by fansubbers to the "deculturalisation" inherent in dubbing foreign media replicates Mangiron and O'Hagan's conclusion that "[fan translation] approaches seem to swing between reverence for the source text and the desire to remain faithful to it" (2013, p. 302).

Chapter 4 compares the practice norms of fansubbing communities with those of professional subtitlers. Furthermore, through the lens of the theories of Lewis (1985), Nornes (1999) and Venuti (2008), the author considers the ideological aspects of fansubbing and concludes that fansubbers prioritise "foreignisation" and "target-orientedness" over "domestication", which is the approach generally favoured by professional subtitlers.

A justified concern, given the narrow national focus of the book, is the degree to which the findings therein can be universally applied. However, Massidda's findings do align with those of Mangiron and O'Hagan (2013), as cited above. In addition, in a similar vein as the Italian fansubbers who decry dubbing for its "domestication" for wider appeal, Wang (2017, p. 166) cites Ding (2013) as stating that while official subtitles in China may have universal appeal, they "make one feel like one is chewing wax", particularly because of their sanitisation. Furthermore, government censorship or outright banning is a far more relevant concern in China and, with the ease of access to foreign media via the Web, is a

powerful impetus for fansubbing. It appears evident that socio-political context is a determining factor in the emergence of fansubbing and in the norms adopted by such communities, but loyalty to the source, albeit with varying objectives, seems to hold promise as a universal characteristic.

A hybrid approach based on meeting viewers' expectations, which would bring the two norms closer together and potentially appeal to a wider audience, is also set forth in chapter 4. In light of the partially pedagogical objectives of fansubbing in China (Wang, 2017), an approach that entails tailoring subtitling norms to viewers' expectations offers the necessary flexibility and contextual adaptation.

Chapters 5 and 6 attempt to identify the principal characteristics and track the evolution of the methodologies of fansubbing by performing a comparative analysis of two episodes of *Lost*. The fansubs and corresponding official subtitles are contrasted to gauge their quality, and the merits and drawbacks of the methodologies of both parties are discussed. Massidda also considers the repercussions of fansubbers' aversion to dubbing and professional subtitling and proposes that professional subtitlers may often be guilty of "legal plagiarism", as the influence of fansubs on the final official subtitles is evident.

There are a couple of typographical errata in the official subtitles (pp. 68, 71) presented in chapter 5. It is unclear whether they are attributable to the author or to the original subtitlers. The former is more likely, as other categories of errata in the professional subtitles are discussed at length. Considering that the integrity of the subtitles is paramount to the focus of the study, this sort of carelessness is an unfortunate oversight.

The closing chapter contrasts fansubs and professional subtitles of the American TV programme *Californication* and concludes that professional subtitlers, as opposed to fansubbers, are plagued by an inability, for several reasons, to reproduce the essence of the original dialogue, particularly in reference to foul language and political correctness. The failings of professional subtitling identified in the aforementioned case studies segue into a more sociological analysis of the profession which considers the status of and opportunities for professional translators.

The book reads well, although it occasionally falls victim to an awkwardly structured sentence or incorrect vocabulary, which could have been remedied by a (more) capable editor. Massidda identifies some of the study's limitations and signals various avenues for further research. In consideration of the relatively clearly drawn boundaries of the volume, it would serve any researchers who wished to develop its findings, contrast their own findings transnationally or study the phenomenon of fansubbing in Italy in particular. It is, however, to be kept in mind that the cross-contextual applicability of Massidda's observations remains tenuous and should therefore be approached with the due caution.

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BOOK REVIEW

CARDINAL ASPECTS OF TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING HEALTH MATTERS

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The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Health, Şebnem Susam-Saraeva and Eva Spišiaková (eds.), Routledge, 2021, 428 pp, £152,00 (Hardback) ISBN 9781138335349 £31.99 (e-book) ISBN 9781003167983

The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Health, edited by Şebnem Susam-Saraeva and Eva Spišiaková, has been available to the public for a year but remains as relevant and current as the first day it was published. The pertinence of the twenty-three essays in this long-needed *vade mecum* is justified by the thirty-one scholars from translation, interpretation, terminology, cultural studies, linguistics, computational linguistics, anthropology, psychology, communication, and health sciences, from more than ten institutions in Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, South Korea, Spain, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, who have authored the content. The volume provides the reader with detailed accounts of historical, terminological, technical, ethical, as well as various social and cultural aspects of translating and interpreting in the health sciences. Likewise, the extensive list of references – more than one thousand scientific journal articles, books, webpages, guidelines, and institutional reports – after section notes, further reading suggestions, arrays of related topics, and a handful of informative tables, figures, and lists convey to the reader the breadth and depth of this interdisciplinary area. Students, professors, researchers, and professionals from communication, language sciences, and the health-related fields interested in the intersection of language and health will certainly profit from this broad and captivating examination of concepts, methods, and practices in the health humanities.

The first part of the book is a brief yet broad account of medical translations. In section 1, Elaine van Dalen shows us that the language of medicine and medical research is not an exception to the evolution of scientific languages, demonstrating how medical texts in Eastern regions were influenced by events related to imperial power, sponsorship, and beliefs; and how translators played an active role in spreading medical knowledge. In section 2, Ji-Hae Kang discusses *Translations of Western medical texts in East Asia* from approximately 1850 to 1939, comparing the way Western medical knowledge was disseminated in Japan, China, and Korea. The chapter depicts the nonlinearity of the

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translation process and the conflict experienced in these countries due to the introduction of medical knowledge with a biomedical tradition (i.e., Western) in the name of progress and the reaffirmation of traditional eastern ways of practising medicine and understanding health, as well as social and cultural values. Lastly, in section 3, Carmen Quijada Diez explores translation as a well-established course of medical research dissemination. The author sketches the development of medical translation starting in ancient Greece and continues with the Middle Ages and the School of Translators of Toledo, completing the map with an analysis of the impact of the printing press invention on knowledge and information distribution. The final and most stimulating part of the section is dedicated to contemporary science communication and scientific dissemination, the dominance of English in academic writing and its impact on medical publishing, authorship matters, and the effect of medical hyperspecialisation on professional practice and training programmes.

The second and perhaps most specialised part of the handbook takes the reader to the specificities of translation and the medical sciences. Joost Buyschaert begins by analysing the linguistic variation of medical terminology, how to approach it, and the role of Computer Aided Translation (CAT) tools and Machine Translation (MT) in managing medical terminology. Next, Wioleta Karwacka examines *Quality, accessibility and readability in medical translation* in close relation to patients as the focus of medical knowledge, international standards, and competencies demanded from translators and interpreters. The following section, authored by Matilde Nisbeth Brøgger and Karen Korning Zethsen, is dedicated to health communication. It explains the shift from the biomedical monologic paradigm to the current patient-centered model of healthcare with its focus on clear and comprehensible medical texts. It thus presents intralingual translation as a process by which a specialised text is translated into plain language and offers several examples of translations from a specialised to a general genre. Section 7 addresses *Machine translation in healthcare* as investigated by Barry Haddow, Alexandra Birch, and Kenneth Heafield. First, a historical overview provides the reader with the main elements of MT systems development. Then, MT evaluation is discussed, and the main categories of MT applications in healthcare are presented. The section continues with brief descriptions of MT projects implemented within healthcare from 2003 to the present. The section ends with the description of two projects in which the authors participated, offering valuable insights into the needs of successfully using MT in healthcare. Section 8, by Vicent Montalt, focuses on the crossroads of medical translation and medical humanities, foregrounding the role of persons by discussing patient-centered care, personalised medicine, and narrative medicine. The second part closes with an essay on *Knowledge translation* authored by John Ødemark, Gina Fraas Henriksen and Eivind Engebretsen, which explores the unexpected, though not surprising, resemblance between translational medicine and interlingual translation practices regarding the unavoidable transformation of the primary information contained in a source text when translated, and how conflicting it is to expect

that knowledge remains untouched during translation and at the same time is affected by its conveyance.

Parts III and IV are devoted to translation and interpreting in healthcare environments, followed by an overview of the health areas where translation and interpreting services are more frequently used. The essays in these two parts address mostly spoken translation and would have easily made a separate handbook given the myriad of fundamental issues that are analysed. Here, the content can be summed up into four major themes (1) the maturity of the field, (2) the need to create, develop or advance codes of ethics and standards of interpretation as well as regulate the profession for general healthcare scenarios and specific extreme or marginalised settings, (3) the parties involved and their role in healthcare interpretation, and (4) socially and politically prominent topics of the field.

In section 10, Bruce T. Downing discusses the state of community interpreting, especially in health-related scenarios, in terms of the roles played by the interpreters, standards, training, ethics, and research. The ethical component presented here has a follow-up in section 12, with a critical review by Robyn K. Dean, which compares generalist translation and interpretation codes of ethics and codes addressing healthcare interpreters while discussing other deontological references.

The role of informal and non-professional interpreting is outlined in section 11 by Rachele Antonini and Ira Torresi, who address translation and interpreting services carried out *by* children, the legality of this practice, the perception of the parties involved, the negative consequences of this activity as established in research, and, notably, the authors' original contribution to the investigation of child-mediated interpretation. This topic is complemented in section 17 by Anne Birgitta Nilsen, who reviews communication *for* children, demonstrating the interdisciplinarity of the subject and the need to advance research that can inform better professional practices.

Remote interpreting in healthcare is dealt with by Raquel Lázaro Gutiérrez in section 13, with a presentation of the categories and the pros and cons of this modality, as well as ethical and training-related concerns, using Australia as a reference. Then, sections 14 and 18 (by Christopher J. Moreland & Laurie Swabey, and Eva Spišiaková, respectively) discuss interpretation and disability in close association with activism. Whereas section 14 focuses on interpretation for the deaf and hard-of-hearing and, therefore, sign language, section 18 is committed to discussing disabilities in terms of sensory, physical, mental, and intellectual impairments and other limitations stemming from living with a health condition. Here, the reader can get a taste of some of the translation options used in international disability legislation and how these can hinder the social participation of people with disabilities.

Interpretation in disaster situations is examined in sections 15 and 16. First, Patrick Cadwell discusses disaster settings as scenarios of translation and interpretation and best practices, technology-mediated translation and interpretation services, ethics, and training of the professionals and volunteers who work as interpreters. Tony Joakim Sandset then

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continues to explore this topic by examining the Ebola outbreaks in two countries as scenarios of medical knowledge translation.

Translation as an instrument to claim the right to freedom of choice and women's sexual and reproductive health is discussed in sections 19 (*Queer feminisms and the translation of sexual health* by Michela Baldo), 20 (*Translation and women's health* by Nesrine Bessaïh) and 21 (*Translation in maternal and neonatal health* by Şebnem Susam-Saraeva and Luciana Carvalho Fonseca). Finally, the last two sections, *Dialogue interpreting in mental healthcare: supportive interference* by Hanneke Bot and *Nutrition and translation* by Renée Desjardins, feature particularly relevant issues, given the current awareness about mental health – especially after the COVID-19 pandemic – and healthy food in the context of general well-being.

All sections are brought to the reader with thought-provoking future research directions, explicitly declared under a homonymous subtitle or contained in the conclusion sections or final remarks. The investigation routes convey the topicality of health humanities and propose innovative and unexplored matters within translation and interpreting studies. Anybody who is interested in medical translation, health humanities and their current developments will expand their knowledge of these areas and draw inspiration for possible interdisciplinary research projects.

About the author: Milaydis Sosa Napolskij works at the Knowledge Management Unit of FMUP and the R&D Unit CINTESIS of the Associate Laboratory RISE. She is a Specialist in Terminology and Translation and a Doctor in Language Sciences. Her research interests focus on linguistic variation and interdisciplinary matters of health and language sciences.