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**THE ARTICLES ARE THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THEIR AUTHORS.**
**THE ARTICLES WERE PEER REVIEWED**

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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

After an unprecedented run of issues devoted to a single theme, *Translation Matters* has finally returned to what is perhaps its central mission – to offer a window onto the range and diversity of academic production in the field of Translation Studies. And this is a particularly varied issue. Alongside articles on themes that have been central to the discipline practically since its inception (such as literary translation, subtitling, interpreting and translation pedagogy), it also contains papers on more recent or emergent concerns, such as Artificial Intelligence, experiential translation[1] and (inter-)epistemic translation.[2]

The Epigraph sets the tone for this variety, offering an interlingual AND intersemiotic translation from a linguaculture that has barely featured in the journal till now - Turkish. The poem '*Bu Aşk Burada Biter*' ('O Amor Acaba Aqui' in Imren Gökce's Portuguese translation) was written in 1965 by the poet Ataol Behramoglu and set to music a quarter-century later by Tuna Kiremitçi, when the composer was only seventeen or eighteen years old. Evoking the poignancy of a lovers' separation ('Love ends here as I depart/ A child in my heart and a revolver in my pocket'), the song was recorded twice in Turkey, first by Kiremitçi himself with his band Kumdan Kaleler in 1996,[3] and then again in 2002 by rock musician Haluk Levent for his album *Bir Erkeğin Günlüğü* ('The Diary of a Man').

This epigraph raises some interesting questions about the interlingual and intersemiotic processes involved in song-translation.[4] Setting a poem to music is clearly a translational act, since it involves shadowing the words with melody and activating other features of the musical code (harmony, rhythm, volume, timbre, etc.) to express the various non-denotational aspects of the poetic meaning. Cover versions are translational events too, of course, even without traversing linguistic boundaries; we can hear in the two Turkish recordings that this song has a markedly different quality when sung in lyrical or rock mode. But when the cover version also involves translation into a whole new linguaculture (as in the informal recording in Portuguese presented here by Diana Combo),[5] something quite remarkable happens: the rhythmic constraints imposed by the target language, combined with the luminous quality of the singer's solo voice and vocal habits she will have acquired through experience of another musical tradition, imbue it with a flavour that is unmistakably reminiscent of 'fado'. And what is more, that quality (the

[1] Also known as experimental or avant-garde translation, this is concerned with translation as a springboard for artistic creation (see the Experiential Translation Network - https://experientialtranslation.net). This was the subject of the Autumn 2023 special issue of *Translation Matters* (Vol. 5(2)).

[2] This term was coined by Douglas Robinson in his 2017 *Translationality*: *Essays in the Translational-Medical Humanities* (2017, pp. 200-202) and has since become the subject of an international research project (*Epistemic Translation: Towards an Ecology of Knowledges* - https://www.epistran.org) based at NOVA/CETAPS. It was the subject of the Spring 2024 special issue of *Translation Matters* (Vol. 6(1)).

[3] The version given in the epigraph is from the album *Tuna Kiremitçi ve arkadaşları* ('Tuna Kiremitçi and his friends') of 2017.

[4] These will be explored in more depth in the special issue of *Translation Matters* due out in Spring 2025 (Vol. 7(1)) devoted to *Music in/and Translation.*

[5] https://dianacombo.com/

plaintiveness, 'saudade') seems to suit the spirit of the original poem almost better (dare I say it?) than the treatments given it by the Turkish musicians. Were Ataol Behramoglu ever to hear it, I'm sure he would approve.

Quite appropriately, the first article in this issue is also about music, more specifically about the multilingual visual melodies of American composer John Cage. **Sofia Lacasta Millera** explores three of Cage's works – *Aria* (1958), *Solo for Voice 35* (1970) and *Sonnekus2* (1985) – from the dual perspective of intersemiotic and interlingual translation, first analysing the way that the musical meaning is construed between sign systems and before translating the verbal parts into Spanish in order to highlight their formal and textual complexities. In doing so, she touches on themes of importance to all branches of Translation Studies, such as originality, authorship, interpretation and representation.

Poetry is the subject of the second article, by **Marouane Zakhir**, inflected towards the specific issue of fidelity in indirect translation. Taking as a case-study an Arabic rendering by Abdessalam Benabdelali of Goethe's poem '*Ein Gleichnis*' ('A Parable'), made via a French version by Antoine Berman, it questions whether it is in fact possible to maintain the style, aesthetic features, culture-bound words and figurative expressions of the original when the translator is not working directly from it. After reviewing the literature on indirect translation, and briefly discussing the modern Arabic free-verse tradition, Zakhir proceeds to analyse Benabdelali's version using a quality assessment questionnaire. The resulting reflection sheds light upon the various processes that were involved in this poetic transposition, bringing implications for (indirect) poetry translation as a whole.

The next article stays in the literary domain but the focus shifts to something rather more earthy: the handling of taboo language in the English translations of Chinese novel *Jin Ping Mei.* After reviewing the different functions played by swearing, author **Shuangjin Xiao** undertakes a descriptive study of two different English translations in order to assess how the translators dealt with this notoriously problematic feature. His results show the use of different strategies, though in some cases, there is a loss of pragmatic effect, bringing repercussions for how characters are portrayed and interact.

With the fourth article we pass to the world of audiovisual translation, more specifically the Portuguese subtitling of Stanley Kubrick's 1971 film *A Clockwork Orange*, based on Anthony Burgess's novel of the same name. **Madalena Feliciano Santos** is particularly concerned with how the Portuguese translators dealt with Nadsat, the distinctive argot that Burgess created for his teenagers, which borrows words from Russian, Cockney, German and other sources. Aware of the limitations of the audiovisual channel for the transmission of a fictional language and the difficulties of reproducing it meaningfully in translation, she concludes that the tendency has largely been to standardize Nadsat, with the effect that it loses much of its power in the Portuguese subtitles.

**Alexandra Ferreira**'s article, which comes next, is concerned with the translation into Portuguese of Japanese manga comics, focusing on the question of onomatopoeia. She explains how onomatopoeia is a very rich and diverse code in Japanese, and an important

feature of manga, used to convey all manner of effects. Given the limited range of onomatopoeia in Portuguese, she is curious about how translators have dealt with this issue, the strategies they have chosen, and whether there is any difference between the Portuguese and Brazilians as regards their approach.

The next article moves to the Arab world, more specifically to Libya, where **Rawad Alhashmi** and **Mustafa Abdullah Abdulrahman Bashir** have been developing a course for the teaching of journalistic translation to undergraduate students. With a view to making the training more meaningful than that traditionally used in their country, they have developed a task-based approach that attempts to reproduce real-life situations in an interactive environment. Using authentic materials from international media outlets, the tasks are carefully set up and staged in such a way as to provide maximum support for decision-making, enabling the focus to be placed firmly on the translation process, over and above the final product. The article describes not only the theoretical assumptions underpinning this method, but also offers detailed information about the way in which the tasks are set up, monitored and assessed, information that will surely be helpful to translator trainers all over the world.

We stay with news translation for the next article, but this time as part of an experiment designed to test the effectiveness of automatic interpreting technology. After a thorough review of the state-of-the-art in machine interpreting (MI), **Pablo Ramírez Rodríguez** describes how a corpus of verbal idioms was extracted from the Spanish news channel *Sur Noticias 24 horas* and then translated into Russian using Yandex voice-recognition and MI systems. The results were then analysed for accuracy and naturalness in order to determine the factors affecting the system's performance. It was found that Yandex performed reasonably well with common idiomatic phrases but encountered some difficulties with less frequent or contextually more complex expressions. In explaining just why this is the case, Ramírez Rodríguez gives us an insight into how such systems work and the complexity of the technology required to achieve results comparable to what a human interpreter could achieve.

The final two articles move into the realm of (Inter-)Epistemic Translation, which of course was the subject of *TM*'s last thematic issue, and of an ongoing research project at FCSH/CETAPS.[6] The first one, by legal scholar **Fabrizio Esposito**, looks at the epistemic gaps that exist between the disciplines of law and economics, and the misunderstandings that frequently arise because of them in the interdisciplinary field known as Economic Analysis of Law (or Law and Economics). After giving some examples of such misunderstandings from several branches of law, he argues that these should best be seen not as conceptual differences, but rather as linguistic problems which could be overcome using techniques borrowed from Translation Studies. In his last section, he attempts to put this into practice by presenting a tentative typology of translation strategies (drawn from Pym, 2018 and

[6] The EPISTRAN project (*Epistemic Translation: Towards an Ecology of Knowledges*). Available at: www.epistran.org.

Chesterman, 2016, amongst others) that could be used to overcome this problem and succeed in making economic insights legally relevant.

The final article, by internationally renowned translation scholar **Douglas Robinson**, looks at the contributions of Charles Sanders Peirce and, especially, Thomas Kuhn to the ongoing discussion about inter-epistemic translation. Robinson argues here that interepistemic translation takes place primarily *not* between epistemic systems (as he had previously suggested in his 2017 book *Translationality*) but rather between what Kuhn calls 'epistemological communities', such as Peirce's 'communities of enquiry' (1877), Stanley Fish's 'interpretive communities' (1980) or Lave & Wenger's 'communities of practice' (1990s). He relates how Kuhn, in a Postscript to the 1970 second edition of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, suggested that the problem of incompatible scientific theories might be approached as a communication breakdown between different language communities, and as such, could be susceptible to translational manoeuvres. Robinson then proceeds to analyse Kuhn's proposal into its component parts, coming up with a nine-point methodology that may one day prove to have applications far beyond the contexts contemplated by either author.

For the average translation scholar (one who is perhaps more interested in interlingual transits than in abstruse debates about epistemology), the most compelling aspect of Robinson's discussion will probably be his use of Kuhn to shed light upon certain theoretical rifts in our own field of study. The long-running dispute about 'equivalence', for example, may be traced back (he suggests) to different uses of the term by luminaries such as Eugene Nida, Juliane House, Gideon Toury and Anthony Pym, who each approach it from the perspective of different paradigms. Similarly, the historical confusion provoked by Schleiermacher's use of the phrase '*das übersetzte Werk*' ('the translated work' – which could be understood as referring to either the source text, as the work that has been translated, or to the translation itself) may, Robinson says, reflect a "pre-paradigmatic state—the state before 'nature' has been forced into 'the conceptual boxes supplied by professional education'".

Nevertheless, there is something rather disturbing about the suggestion that translation scholars from different paradigms (and Robinson specifically mentions "the empiricists studying corpora and eye-tracking" versus those who spend their time "reading Judith Butler and Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida and Deleuze and Guattari") are as locked in their own worldviews as speakers of geographically dispersed languages. Though this divide has been signalled many times before since the 1990s,[7] this is perhaps the first time that the suggestion has been made that they might actually need to learn how to *translate* in order to be able to communicate together. This seems profoundly ironic.

[7] At different times, this has been expressed as a conflict between the 'linguistics' and 'cultural studies' paradigms (Baker, 1996); between 'essentialist' and 'non-essentialist' approaches (Arrojo 1998); between 'instrumental' and 'hermeneutic' theories of language (Venuti, 2000, after Kelly, 1979), between 'empiricism' and 'postmodernism' (Delabastita, 2003) or between the 'empirical science paradigm' and the 'liberal arts paradigm' (Gile, 2005).

Hopefully, *Translation Matters*, which aims to be a broad church open to translation scholars of all persuasions (as well as outsiders like Esposito that venture in from other fields), will prove to be a platform where these different paradigms can enter into dialogue in a productive way.

Karen Bennett

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## EPIGRAPH

BU AŞK BURADA BİTER

Bu aşk burada biter ve ben çekip giderim
Yüreğimde bir çocuk cebimde bir revolver
Bu aşk burada biter iyi günler sevgilim
Ve ben çekip giderim bir nehir akıp gider

Bir hatıradır şimdi dalgın uyuyan şehir
Solarken albümlerde çocuklar ve askerler
Yüzün bir kır çeçeği gibi usulca söner
Uyku ve unutkanlık gittikçe derinleşir

Yan yana uzanırdık ve ıslaktı çimenler
Ne kadar güzeldin sen! nasıl eşsiz bir yazdı!
Bunu anlattılar hep, yani yiten bir aşkı
Geçerek bu dünyadan bütün ölü şairler

Bu aşk burada biter ve ben çekip giderim
Yüreğimde bir çocuk cebimde bir revolver
Bu aşk burada biter iyi günler sevgilim
Ve ben çekip giderim bir nehir akıp gider

Ataol Behramoğlu
(1965)

Song adaptations:
♫ 1st version: Tuna Kiremitçi & Jehan Barbur (2017)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfoh4GRLow8&list=RDmfoh4GRLow8&start_radio=1

♫ 2nd version: Haluk Levent (2002)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEjfykB_85k

O AMOR ACABA AQUI

O amor acaba aqui e eu vou me embora
Uma criança no meu coração e no bolso um revólver
O amor acaba aqui, meu amor que tenhas um bom dia
Eu vou me embora, e um rio corre até um mar

A cidade num sono profundo, agora é uma memória
As fotos de crianças e soldados desbotam, que pena
E a tua cara perde o seu brilho numa maneira discreta
O sono e esquecimento aprofundam-se em cada dia

Deitava-me ao teu lado e estava molhada a relva
Que bonita eras! E foi um verão tão singular!
Falaram sempre disto, de um amor perdido
Todos os poetas passando deste mundo

O amor acaba aqui e eu vou me embora
Uma criança no meu coração e no bolso um revólver
O amor acaba aqui, meu amor que tenhas um bom dia
Eu vou me embora, e um rio corre até um mar

Translator: Imren Gökce

♫ Portuguese version: Diana Combo (2024)
https://www.youtube.com/shorts/zwxPPDYZtYU

# TRANSLATION FOR SOLO VOICE: JOHN CAGE'S MULTILINGUAL VISUAL MELODIES

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ABSTRACT: John Cage's interdisciplinary compositions have been studied more from a musical than a literary perspective. The latter, as this paper seeks to demonstrate, is of particular interest to address certain concepts related to the latest trends in Translation Studies (Campbell and Vidal, 2025, 2024, 2019; Bennett, 2024; Vidal Claramonte, 2024, 2017; Blumczynski, 2023; Minors, 2023; Meylaerts and Marais, 2023; Lee, 2022; Gambier and Van Doorslaer, 2021). In this sense, this paper aims to offer a panoramic overview of this relationship between vocal scores and translational practices through the analysis and translation into Spanish of three of Cage's works: *Aria* (1958), *Solo for Voice 35* (1970) and *Sonnekus2* (1985). Despite the formal specificities of each of these works for solo voice, all of them constitute, from different perspectives, a clear line of study to delve deeper into the current paradigm shift of Translation Studies as a discipline. In addition to sounds and visuals, the literary nature of these three works means that translation goes beyond linguistic barriers and experiments with other semiotic systems, tackling concepts such as originality, authorship, interpretation and representation.
KEYWORDS: Solo Voice; Intersemiotic Translation; Multimodal Adaptation; Interdisciplinarity; Intertextuality; Interdisciplinarity

## 1. Introduction

This paper approaches the translation of John Cage's experimental artistic works from a dual perspective: on the one hand, the original work is analysed descriptively as an intersemiotic translation from literature to music and vice versa; on the other hand, I shall make a first attempt, considering that the research continues theoretically and practically with other vocal works by the same composer, to interlingually translate some of these works into Spanish, highlighting their formal and textual complexities. The study focuses on compositions that combine mainly the sonorous, but also the visual aspects, with the literary; that is, works composed for solo voice in which text is subordinated to the melody, while simultaneously complementing each other. Among Cage's compositions, three works have been selected for this study: *Aria* (1958), *Solo for Voice 35* (1970) and *Sonnekus2* (1985). It should be noted, as will be made clear later on, that the reason for this selection from among all of Cage's works for voice lies mainly in two factors: on the one hand, the possibility of establishing a comparative line between three works from three different compositional periods; on the other hand, to delve in a practical way from the same theoretical prism into the idiosyncrasies of three works which, although all of them are composed for voice, possess very particular and diverse formal characteristics.

Almost like an abstract painting, Cage's *Aria* operates like a visual score in which shapes, colours and languages guide a performer through indeterminacy (Brown, 2007). This composition, in which the perception of music as language is more than a simple premise, revolutionises notation as a method of representation: verticality indicates

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height; horizontality, time; and colours, style. In his musical lecture, *Solo for Voice 35*, Cage journeys through philosopher Henry David Thoreau's social and political concepts. Influenced by Thoreau's writings, above all, *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience* (1849), Cage uses Thoreau's words to begin his musical lecture: 'that government is best which governs least', composing a series of musical variations that combines the more textual and vocal aspects of the song's lyrics with its musical accompaniment. Finally, the textual score *Sonnekus2* consists of nine short songs based on passages from *Genesis*, which are arranged in mesostics: the vertical structural line refers to the *Sonneries de la Rose + Croix* (1892) by Erik Satie, whose cabaret pieces *Je te veux* (1902), *La Diva de l'Empire* (1904) and *Tendrement* (1902) also act as a backdrop for Cage.

The composer's experimentation with musical and literary works through innovative compositional procedures has led to some texts being considered untranslatable (Battistón, 2023; Apter, 2007). In these cases, Cage vanishes, following the postmodern hypothesis of the death of the author (Barthes, 1968) to end up saying almost the same, but in a different way: through listening to sounds, noises, silences and voices in several languages, echoes of an infinity of cultural and artistic references resonate through transliteration and intertextuality. However, the tunes of the intersemiotic and the multimodal in the performance (Bermann, 2014) invite reflection on their conceptual, visual and sonorous idiosyncrasy from a new perspective of Translation Studies (Campbell and Vidal, 2025, 2024, 2019; Meylaerts and Marais, 2023; Vidal Claramonte, 2022, 2017; Lee, 2022; Bassnett, 2022; Gambier and Van Doorslaer, 2021). Hence, the translation will, therefore, have to draw on all those semiotic elements that constitute the work and endow it with meaning, both in the process of studying the original interdisciplinary work and in its interlingual transfer into Spanish. Cage's vocal compositions represent, in this sense, an interesting corpus for studying translation from an interdisciplinary prism that allows us to apprehend the narration and interpretation of a new performative representation beyond the linguistic.

## 2. From voice to song, from song to translation: the interlingual translation of an intersemiotic composition

The idea of tackling the interlingual translation into Spanish of Cage's intersemiotic works, conceived in an interdisciplinary setting, must go beyond the hackneyed question of what translation is, to ask "what does translation do?" (Blumczynski, 2023, p. 7) and how it does so, reflecting on "the manner as well as the matter" (Blumczynski, 2016, p. 27). Following this line of inquiry, this study takes these works as melodies sung by different voices or played by different instruments in an intersection between 'musical texts' (Desblache, 2019) and 'sound poetry' (Perloff, 2019) from a musicological and translational perspective. In this sense, musical texts include "musical elements, such as notes, chords annotations, music transcription, and performed music and non-musical elements (verbal and visual content as well as performative content linked to the way a piece is played, sung and/or produced)" (Desblache, 2019, p. 65), while sound poetry possesses a series of semantic,

syntactic and linguistic attributes that redefine the function of language. For this reason, the analysis of the poem as an act of sound

> [m]ust consider its realization in live performance and hence the very nature of its sounds — their intelligibility, their relation to other sounds in the poem, their use of the pronunciation of a particular spoken language, their role in articulating a structure. Since sound poetry, while not constituting music, is a poetic form that works between media, the perspective of musicology and of avant-garde and experimental music can help us interpret its aural dimension. (Perloff, 2009, p. 97)

Recent studies, which focus on translational practices within other non-linguistic artistic disciplines such as music, painting or dance (see, for example, Vidal Claramonte, 2022), ask questions about how musical performance is affected by the process of translation, whether the notation of the former is itself a form of translation or how the source text has to be apprehended in order to carry out the semiotic transfer during the creative and interpretative process in order to

> [c]ommunicate to the target-language audience that the original work is worth its attention by revealing at least something of the special excellence of the original. This does not necessarily mean preserving the sounds of the words at all times, though it could mean creating word–music sounds that re-create the overall beauty and pleasure of the original, while also, if possible, re-creating some of the original's word–music interactions. (Apter and Herman, 2016, p. 15)

The incessant debate in Translation Studies about the idiosyncrasies of the original text takes on another dimension here, since the musical works of Cage that we take as 'originals' are indeed palimpsests of other texts. These "unstable texts" (Bennett, 2019, p. 45) are polyhedral pieces that require a plural approach from the lines of the stave to the sentences of the stanza, from the notes to the words, from the rhythm of the melody to the cadence of the speech. In this sense, the idea of this research lies in demonstrating that the interlingual translation of these works is possible thanks to the intersemiotic nature of the original work, which has already been translated interdisciplinarily. Each translation procedure is specific to the work itself, but the procedure is nourished by the musical nature of the text. Accordingly, the search for idiomaticity in the translation of this discourse, which is superimposed on the melody in the target language, will also depend on the target linguistic system because

> [r]hythmic phrases provide frames for sound acts. These sound acts themselves are realized by a configuration of choices from all the sound resources available in the given context. Melody often plays a key role, but not always and never only. Thus, the sound 'caress' may be realized by a certain choice of melodic means (voice at high pitch level; narrow pitch range; slightly descending and undulating melody); but also and at the same time by certain rhythmic choices (for example a medium tempo); by a choice of 'social distance' (soft, hence close); and by certain choices of voice quality or instrumental timbre (slightly nasal, labialized) and so on. Change any of these, and the sound act will also change - change the

> voice quality of the aural 'caress' to nasal, tense and loud, and the melody might be better described as sounding like a whining complaint. (Van Leeuwen, 1999, pp. 97-98)

Therefore, it would be expected that "[t]he language dissolves into purely material sound, musically interchangeable with the instrumentation to which it is set, and any rhetorical value that the words possess collapses into the rhetoric of the performance" (Bailey, 2016, p. 162). However, the difference in this case is that Cage is not an ordinary musical composer. As Mumma explains,

> [h]e was a virtuoso storyteller, a happy raconteur. But Cage was also quick with complex ideas and structures, and a fast learner. As a performer he was disciplined, reliable, and imaginative with creative decisions. Cage loved performing. He was nourished by the performing experience, even under difficult circumstances. He usually found an appropriate match of his technical proficiency with a given situation. Indeed, quite often his unique performance virtuosity—with music, with words and verbal repartee, and with graphic materials—was astonishing, even to practitioners of those arts not easily astonished. (Mumma, 2001, p. 119)

Yet, as Pritchett (1993, p. 1) notes,

> [h]is credentials are clearly those of a composer, Cage has, as often as not, been treated as something else. It has been stated on various occasions by various authorities that Cage was more a philosopher than a composer, that his ideas were more interesting than his music.

Although his musical compositions have been more widely recognised and performed, it is true that his literary and visual works were key to his conception of art and his creative practice, interchanging techniques and compositional procedures between the two disciplines indistinctly, but through a highly structured conceptual and formal process:

> Initially through translating structural ideas from the musical to the textual, during the 1940s, then moving musical notation closer to the visual through the 1960s, Cage drew the different art forms gradually closer together, exploring their similarities as well as differences, so that by the 1970s he had moved to a point as a mature artist where his creative ideas were equally able to find expression in music, text or drawing or painting. […] This consistency of approach allowed Cage to identify and then use the similarities between the art forms to build deliberate relationships that enabled a fluidity of ideas across previously closed boundaries; despite bringing the art forms closer together, he also ensured to recognize the unique aspects of each of them. (Stones, 2013, p. 133)

In parallel to the interdisciplinary nature of the work, two aspects are of great importance for the translation: on the one hand, Cage's combination of different textual sources and, on the other hand, the visual nature of the work. Cage draws on pre-existing materials in all his works; however, his works for solo voice represent a very significant case. The fragmentation, combination and rewriting of texts by other authors and musicians, as will be shown in the presented case studies, led to the creation of solos to be performed. In some of them, moreover, beyond experimentation with musical notation, "Cage

reconceived the nature of his invented 'mesostic', changing it from a structure around which a poem could be written to a method for 'writing through' preexisting texts […]" (Brooks, 2002, p. 138). A mesostic is a poetic form created by Cage, in which, following the idea of the acrostic, there is a vertical line made up of the central letters of each horizontal line. Beyond the conceptual evolution of the mesostic throughout Cage's artistic career and the complexity of its formal application through aleatoric rules, Jorge considers that *"[l]as obras de poetas y pensadores funcionaban como pre-textos sobre los que intervenir con el mesóstico como regla arbitraria pero impersonal*" and, as a result, "*lo que se lee o percibe es una suerte de temperatura lexical de los textos reescritos, una reminiscencia, un perfume verbal que recuerda a un universo, pero que en otro sentido está totalmente perturbado y mutado, y de cuya sintaxis nada queda*" (2015, pp. 368-369).[8] In addition to this fading of syntax, there is also a preference for a notation that breaks with tradition, as Nyman argues,

> [m]any of these notations move further along the road to a completely non-representational situation – no longer is a particular sound heard and translated into a graphic symbol which represents the 'image' of the sound to be reproduced. Many in fact represent a certain kind of work to be done so as to arrive at a point of being able to make an action (or actions) to produce a sound (or sounds)! (1999, p. 96).

Taking this into account and attending to the interdisciplinary nature of the original work, between the textual and the musical, interlingual translation (in this case into Spanish) should not opt for the predominance of one language or the other, but rather negotiate the tensions between original and translation, offering

> a conceptual route out of irreconcilable dualities by opening up to the possibilities of creative and critical intertextualities across languages and cultures. It transcends a zero-sum (all-or-nothing) conception under which the translator is either submissive to or subversive of the original text and its author (Lee, 2022, p. 6).

Experimental notational procedures are particularly striking in Cage's first and second compositions studied below. In all of them, but especially in the third, the need to adapt the text to musical discourse in performance stands out. As with other lyrical forms, these texts are open to multiple readings and interpretations, always subject to the idea of duration and time, which is also characteristic of each language. This aspect is particularly relevant in the translation of these melodic lines since the internal reading differs greatly from the performance reading, especially in relation to pitch and breathing. Considering the formal complexity intrinsic to this translational procedure, and far from questioning its

[8] "the works of poets and thinkers served as pre-texts on which to intervene with the mesostic as an arbitrary but impersonal norm. […]. what one reads or perceives is a sort of lexical texture of the rewritten texts, a reminiscence, a verbal scent that recalls a uniline, but which in another sense is totally disturbed and mutated, and of whose syntax nothing is left." [All translations of quotations henceforth presented in footnotes are my own.]

possible interlingual untranslatability, it is worthwhile exploring Cage's works to study "the extent to which the process of intersemiotic translation from music is similar to or different from the process of translating between verbal languages" (Bennett, 2024, p. 162). The creative combination of music, image and text in the original compositions serves as the basis for an interlingual translation in which it is revealed that "[t]he centrality of language in all these works is a symptom of a transition from the sign as a representation of the world to an image of the world as a textual sign" (Vidal, 2022, p. 86). Hence, "translation is crucial to all forms of artistic creativity, collaboration and performance", especially in those multimodal works which propose an analysis of the "transference, exchange and dialogue between the arts and the artists, not only in performance, but during the collaborative process, during the archival process, and during the interpretation process" (Minors, 2023, p.3).

## 3. Multilingual melody of music, literature, politics and religion: *Aria* (1958), *Solo for Voice 35* (1970) and *Sonnekus2* (1985)

In his quest for interdisciplinary creativity, there are several works in which Cage walks between different artistic manifestations, with an important preponderance of the written text during the representation and interpretation. In cases where the composition stemmed from a previous work, "Cage used elaborate rules for 'writing through' these predecessor texts to give rise to poems that start from other poems but that are very different" (Vidal Claramonte, 2024, p. 26). On this occasion, however, the three works studied below are similar, but also present an added, manifested formal difference: the textual discourse itself has to be sung by a solo voice, so that the translated text has to comply with certain performative components.

### *3.1. The translation of a multilingual vocal line: Aria*

*Aria* was composed in 1958 and premiered in Rome early the following year. This work, dedicated to the composer and mezzo-soprano Cathy Berberian, can be performed on its own or in combination with *Fontana Mix* (1958)[9] or with any part of *Concert for Piano and Orchestra* (1958).[10] As the composer explains in the score, and as can be seen in its reading, the musical notation is not according to the traditional system, but is created and adapted to the specific work. As a result, it indicates the tempo horizontally and the timbre vertically (see Figure 1 below). Despite the imprecision that this representation may suggest at first glance, the original work was composed for a duration of approximately ten minutes, about thirty seconds per page, although this is not a *sine qua non* for the performer.

The vocal lines are drawn in black. The continuous or discontinuous lines, as well as the colours, represent the singing styles. However, the correlation established between a

[9] Available at: https://johncage.org/pp/John-Cage-Work-Detail.cfm?work_ID=79 (Accessed: 30 October 2024).

[10] Available at: https://www.johncage.org/pp/John-Cage-Work-Detail.cfm?work_ID=48 (Accessed: 30 October 2024).

style and its graphic representation is up to the performer. Singing is characterised by the alternation of performance styles or vocal emissions between syllabic execution and *glissandos*, the latter graphically noted by wavy lines suggesting melodic directionality and visually reminiscent of certain neumas in pre-Gregorian adiasmatic notation. Accompanying these vocal lines, the score is punctuated by a series of black squares representing any noise, considered by the composer to be "'unmusical' use of the voice, auxiliary percussion, mechanical or electronic devices" (Cage, 1960, n.p.). It should be noted that any other aspects of performance that are not indicated by the composer in the notation, such as rhythm, articulation or nuances, must be stipulated by the performer himself. This composition of a contrasting expressive character is framed within atonality, alternating aleatoric vocal interpretations with recorded 'non-musical' noises or sonorities close to concrete music, although following certain recommended guidelines.

As we can see, the performer is given a lot of freedom through the notation: in Cage's composition for Berberian,[11] by way of example, colour is correlated to style: dark blue to jazz, green to folk, orange to oriental and brown to nasal, among other indications. As for noises, finger snapping, clapping, shouting, barking dogs, laughter and moans of pleasure are added.

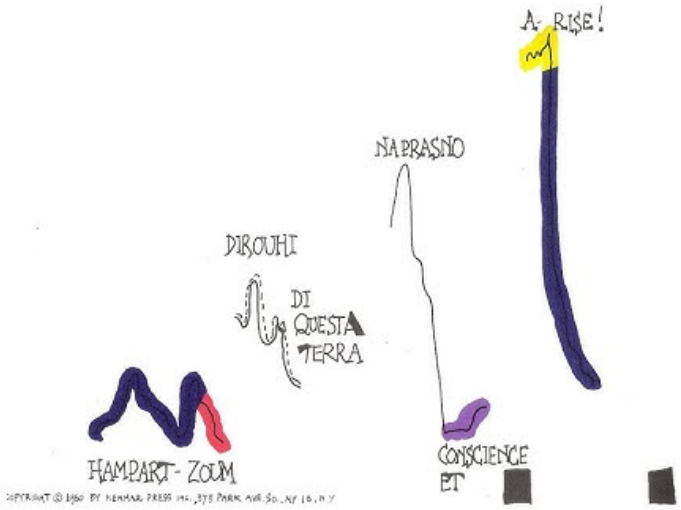



Figure 1. Score for the first part of *Aria* (John Cage, 1960)

Perhaps the most salient feature of this work, from a translational prism per se, is that the text includes vowels, consonants and words in Armenian, Russian, Italian, French and English. If there is one thing that Cage's work reveals, it is that its conceptual and formal complexity goes beyond what is apparent at first reading. In this instance, the intertextuality underlying the multilingual line is not as evident as on other occasions, but it endows the work with a richness that verges on the metalinguistic.

[11] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a15xkowPEPg (Cathy Berberian, voice). (Accessed: 30 October 2024).

The debate about the translatability of *Aria* lies not only in the simplification of translating an original work written in several languages into a target language, but also in the complexity of understanding what it narrates in each of these languages and why it chooses each of these linguistic systems as a system of representation. In this sense, I believe that it can and should be translated, but the translation strategy in this case is different from the usual procedure, as explained below. In a metaphorical contraposition between aria and counterpoint, the voices flee here from the title of the work to dialogue with each other, to establish a kind of choreography in which they contradict and complement each other. In this sense, it is worthwhile to briefly outline some aspects of the narrative not previously studied.

As a metalinguistic proposal, Cage quotes some canonical artistic, literary and historical works and authors not only through their original language, but also through translation. In the French passages, for example, the voice of Stéphane Mallarmé stands out from works like *Igitur ou La Folie d'Elbehnon* (1925) or *Diptyque* (II. *La Littérature. Doctrine,* 1929). In the English lines, however, we find Frank Pfeiffer's translation of Meister Eckhart's German work. Most of the selected fragments are, in fact, references to religion, an aspect that is also very present in all three works under analysis in this paper. Similarly, in the Italian fragments, the voice of e.e. Cummings, translated by the poet Salvatore Quasimodo, winner of the 1959 Nobel Prize for Literature, stands out.

Additionally, Cage uses his own transliterations of fragments written in Russian and Armenian, languages that do not share an alphabet with English. This practice of adaptation establishes certain processes of representation of power through the use of language adaptations in order not only to be heard, but also to be read. For example, Cage's journeys through 19th century Russia through the works of poets, playwrights and musicians such as Afanasi Fet, Aleksandr Griboyédov, Nikolái Nekrásov, Aleksandr Pushkin, Mijaíl Lérmontov, Iván Krylov, and Mijaíl Lérmontov, among others.

Considering the multilingual intertextuality evident in Cage's work, in addition to his references to canonical works, the question arises as to whether it is appropriate or not to offer new translations. Each of the languages chosen by Cage represents a particular locative and temporal culture. The vocal work becomes a kind of choreography in which different stories, each told in its own system, intermingle. The conceptual background of the work, therefore, lies in this linguistic hybridisation. To homogenise the text and translate all the lines indistinctly into the same language would go against Cage's compositional process. However, one could justify playing with certain combinations, as he does in the case of English or Italian. As in any translational process, something is always lost along the way and, perhaps on this occasion, this loss is related to wondering what the target languages would be, what the relationship between them would be, or whether it makes sense to speak of 19th century Russian authors and their respective works in a language other than one's own.

In this sense, the conceptual and linguistic complexity of Cage's original work requires, as previously mentioned, a translation strategy that differs from the procedure

followed in the other case studies. With regard to the vocal and musical line, and unlike the other examples presented, not only is it not written entirely in an original language to be translated entirely into a target language, but also the choice of each of these languages has a connotation, as has been explained. After an exhaustive analysis, and although the translated work will be published in the doctoral thesis to be presented soon, the score has been kept intact. Visually, the work is identical to Cage's work. However, having ensured that it can and should be translated, each of the pages has a table on the back as an explanatory footnote. In it, not only is the interlingual translation of the text into Spanish included to know the meaning of what is being listened to, but each of the lines is studied in depth. As an example, and in accordance with the information already mentioned, the distinction between lines in different languages is established, the original writing in other alphabets is included, references to works mentioned are added, as well as their interrelation with other works, and certain aspects whose previous reading allows a much fuller listening of the work are complemented.

Finally, to mention just a couple of derivative works of *Aria*, Cage composed two other arias with similar features and identical initial performance instructions. Beyond the visual and formal resemblance, at the interlingual level the language combination also includes words from Satie and Thoreau in French and English respectively, among other examples. These works, entitled *Aria Nº2* and *Aria Nº2B* are included in *Songbook I* (Song 52 and Song 53), published in 1970. Cage's composition *Solo for Voice 35* was also included in *Songbook I*, and is discussed in the next section.

### *3.2. The translation of a vocal line in the form of variations: Solo for Voice 35*

Thoreau's political, social and philosophical essay *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience* (1849) was a vitally important piece of writing for modern thought on the relationship between the individual and society. In his opening lines, Thoreau condenses the premises on which he would later develop his thought, quoted by Cage as the starting points for his musical variations (see Figure 2, Figure 3 and Figure 4).

Cage composed *Solo for Voice 35* to be performed "in an optimistic spirit as though you believe what you are singing, and in such a way as to 'blur' both the pitch and the text as though your voice had not been trained" (Cage, 1970, p. 113). Through an AABA structure, he offers a series of thirty-two variations on each of the themes, derived from Thoreau's quotations, opening up the possibility of indeterminacy, but through precise instructions: "having sung any of them, the singer may substitute its A or B for any other A or B providing the latter A or B belongs to an AABA already sung" (Idem). The themes that constitute such variations at the linguistic level derives from Thoreau, whose thoughts influenced Cage's work on both a personal and artistic level (*Empty Words. Writings '73-'78*, 1981). References to Thoreau are a constant in Cage's work, not only in his musical and

literary compositions (the most important of which is the work *Mureau,*[12] in *M: Writings '67-'72*, 1973), but also his pictorial ones, as exemplified below.

Accordingly, intertextuality is a leitmotif in Cage's work, not only in terms of Thoreau's work, but also his own composition appears in his publications. For example, the literary work *John Cage, Writer*, alludes to the composition for solo voice in his text *Political/Social Ends?* (1969), where he is asked if anyone, including himself, has ever used his music for political or social purposes. His answer is as follows:

> I am interested in social ends, but not in political ends, because politics deals with power, and society deals with numbers of individuals; and I'm interested both in single individuals and large numbers or medium numbers or any kinds of numbers of individuals. In other words, I'm interested in society, not for purposes of power, but for purposes of cooperation and enjoyment (p. 115).

Following this textual composition, Cage adds the first part of variation 22 of *Solo for Voice 35*, as shown in the following figure:

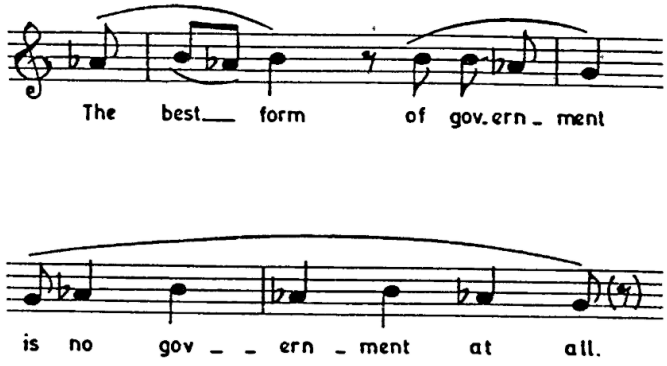



Figure 2. Score for *Political/Social Ends?* (John Cage, 1969) [first part of variation 22 of *Solo for Voice 35*] (John Cage, 1970)]

On a performance level, in *Solo for Voice 35*, Cage stipulates the following:

> before singing this solo, raise either the black flag of Anarchy or the flag of the Whole Earth. Having raised the flag, do not lower it at any time during the performance. Any number of flags may be raised during a single performance, one before each performance of this solo.

Beyond the disruptive and theatricalised character of the proposal, and its clear political and social component, Cage's commentary that completes the instruction at the linguistic level deserves special mention, especially from a translational point of view: "if possible,

[12] In this literary work, Cage plays a linguistic game to hide the title and, drawing on Thoreau's words, he makes the frontiers between paragraphs, sentences and syllables disappear, converting the work into a text that is no longer illegible, but almost untranslatable. In *M* (2023), Battistón translates the voices of both authors (Cage and Thoreau) into Spanish, and offers his own proposals for the solo voice piece. Battistón shows that translation has become an indispensable element to represent the form and content of these political and artistic discourses born in interlingual and dynamic ecosystems in which natural phenomena are reproduced through musical and literary representations.

the text should be sung by at least one singer *in the language of the audience* (making melodic changes where necessary)" (Cage, 1970, p. 113, emphasis added). Cage, therefore, removes any doubt about the function of the text in the work. The importance lies in the message: Cage's intention is for the audience to understand the background, beyond the musical variations. Consequently, the text must be translated and, as he notes, must be melodically adapted to the prosodic idiosyncrasies of each language.

Considering Cage's instructions, the process of translation here is complex and poses several challenges. On the one hand, there is the rhythmic question: the conciseness of English, added to the contractions that are possible in that language, makes it difficult to adapt it to the number of syllables and notes in the process of translating it into a polysyllabic language, such as Spanish, especially in those cases where it plays with the repetition of monosyllabic words through notes of short duration such as eighth notes. On the other hand, there is the question of terminology: in a sentence with such a semantic and conceptual background, there are certain words which cannot easily be replaced with synonyms. This is the case with the term 'government', which has a ready cognate in Spanish, for example ('gobierno'). Furthermore, the number of syllables and the diphthong in this word mean that a rhythmic adaptation of the term is difficult to achieve. Finally, on the question of originality, several translations of Thoreau's political treatise into Spanish that have been reprinted over the years across Spain and Latin America. Therefore, in terms of rhythm and terminology, a comparison between the translations published in Spain and Latin America may reveal parts of the translations that respect not only Cage's lexical choices, but also his random compositional procedure.

Taking Thoreau's themes chosen by Cage for these musical variations, a literal translation, closer to the original, but seeking idiomaticity in the target language could be something like: '*La mejor forma de gobierno es no tener gobierno alguno*'. This option respects the lexical selection and grammatical categories of the original but increases the line quantitatively. Another version, which also fits rhythmically with the linearity of the information and the progressivity between silences, would involve playing with the melisma of 'best' and the diphthong of 'government', as well as verbalising the nouns. Although expressive nuances of the original are still lost, especially with the adverb 'at all', one of the options, but certainly not the only one, to combine the rhythmic and conceptual issues could be: '*La mejor forma de gobernar es no tener gobierno*'. The discrepancy in the number of syllables between English and Spanish shows that, in order to maintain the conceptual charge of the discourse, as well as the rhythm and linearity through the distribution of the most semantically important terms, it is necessary to play with the diphthongs in Spanish and offer a couple of games with the melody. The first of these would be to convert the monosyllabic word 'best' into its direct bisyllabic translation 'me-jor' by taking advantage of the two quavers. The second, just below, would involve converting the crotchet of 'form' into two quavers at the same pitch, modifying the duration, but not the note. Both licences respect the structure and nature of Cage's text, while allowing idiomatic discourse to be offered in the target language.

It is sufficient to note that although the translation conforms to the musical variation selected by Cage in the 1969 work, the musical possibilities are varied, and the textual combinations have to be subordinated to the various melodic lines included in the 1970 publication. The first variations of which are presented in Figures 3 and 4 by way of example:

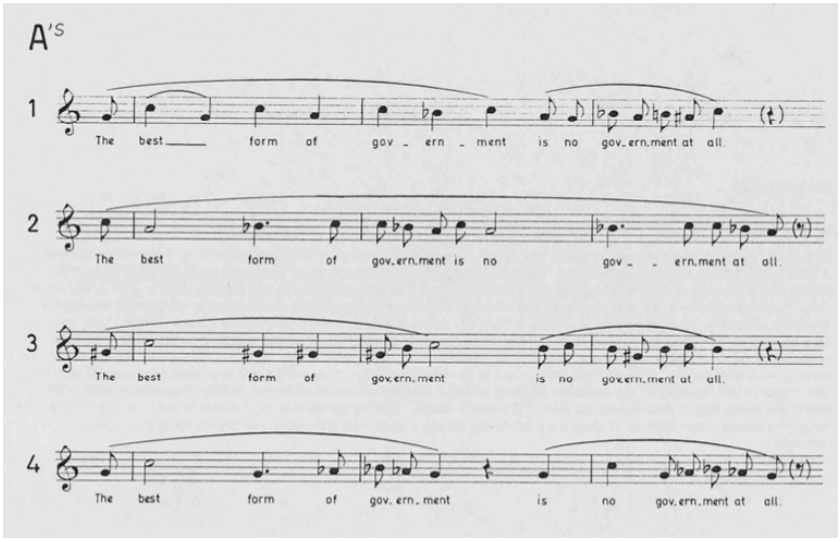



Figure 3. Score for *Solo for Voice 35* (John Cage, 1970): first four textual and musical variations of the A part

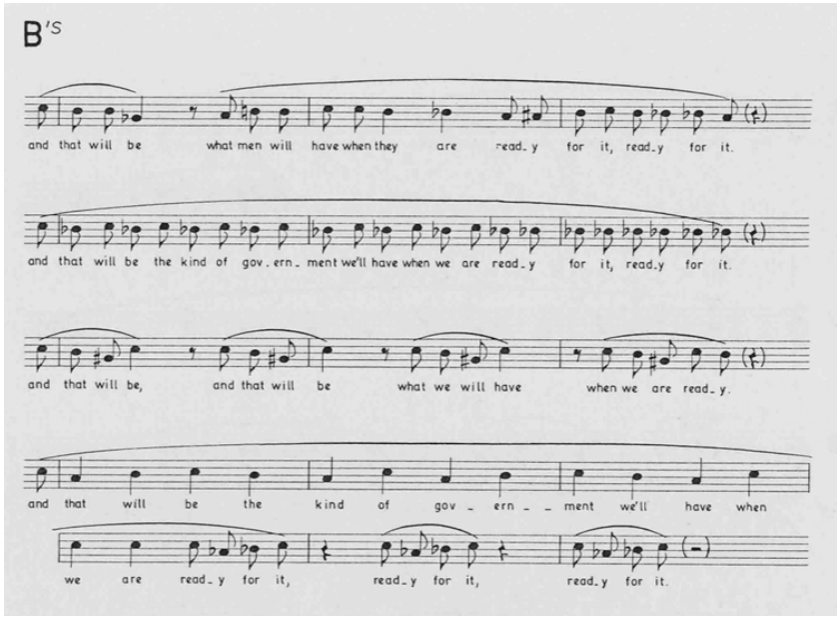



Figure 4. Score for *Solo for Voice 35* (John Cage, 1970): first four textual and musical variations of the B part

As for the notation (a fundamental aspect of Cage's experimentation with musical composition), in this work, it is more conventional than that of the other compositions analysed in this study. However, although the variations are presented on a stave structured with bar lines and a treble clef, there is no reference to the time signature that would mark the tempo of the performance. In terms of tonality, the absence of a key

signature suggests that the work is apparently in the key of C major or A minor in all the variations, though some of them are subject to some musical accidentals which embellish it[13] and which offer certain parameters for their representation and reading.[14]

Taking into account that it is impossible to include in this publication the complete translation of all the variations that make up the work, we have chosen, by way of example, the one that constitutes the work *Political/Social Ends,* published in the compilation of John Cage's textual works edited by Kostelanetz (2000)*?* As shown below at the visual level, in the translation I finally opted for a combination of the two versions recently exposed, in which the linguistic translation is combined with its adaptation to a score that has been personally created with a music editing programme:

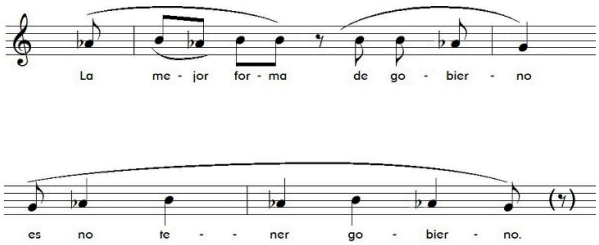



Figure 5. Score for *Political/Social Ends?* (John Cage, 1969) translated into Spanish by Sofía Lacasta Millera

Thoreau's philosophical and artistic influence on Cage can also be gleaned from his visually experimental works. In 1974, Cage published *30 Drawings by Thoreau*, a thirty-two-colour silkscreen on Japanese paper. Four years later, in 1978, he published *Score without Parts (40 Drawings by Thoreau)* and *17 Drawings by Thoreau*. In the first of these later two works, Cage superimposes Thoreau's illustrations on twelve lines divided into a Haiku structure (5+7+5), a procedure analogous to that used in *Renga* (1976). The twenty or so pages that make up this visual score are unnumbered and can be performed in whole or in part by an indeterminate number of pianists not exceeding the number of pages. Similar to his other works, such as *Indeterminacy*, it does impose certain questions relating to tempo, but always with freedom for the performer, who must compose a programme of a given duration and extrapolate it to the parts to be played. Other aspects relating to dynamics

[13] It should be noted that in other variations of the same work, which are not analysed on this occasion due to the formal limitations of the present publication, Cage also includes signs of articulation: the use of *tenutos*, which sustain the sound between one note and the next, and *staccatos*, which shorten them to produce the opposite effect, stand out. Considering the musical ornaments, Cage adds a series of tremolos which, although they are more typical of string instruments, on this occasion, allow for the rapid and continuous repetition of a note, and, therefore, of a textual phoneme. The use of *acciaccatura* is also notable.

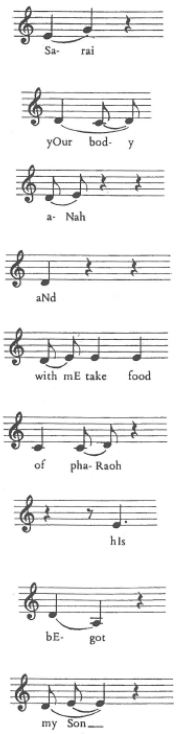
[14] In some of his works, such as *Lecture on Nothing* (1961), published in *Silence* (1973), Cage employs a notation that allows the text to be read "with the rubato one uses in everyday speech" (p. 109). On this occasion, however, the lines of expression and slurs do define a natural cadence on a prosodic level, but the elements mentioned above force the text to be subordinated to the score. To facilitate this last aspect, certain crotchet and quaver rests and end-of-line textual sentences appear in parentheses, giving the performer (and the translator) the possibility of playing with them in order to match the discourse to the tempo and rhythm.

are not specified. In this kind of eternal spiral, this work can be interpreted with *Atlas Eclipticalis* or *Song Books*. For *17 Drawings by Thoreau*, Cage's inspiration derives from the ink drawings of natural elements in Thoreau's diaries, such as a rabbit's footprint, a hawk's feather and a hazelnut, among others, to transform an empirical description into an aesthetic composition. Through random operations based on the *I Ching*, Cage decides on formal elements such as the arrangement, orientation, size and colour of the illustrations, as well as the selection of the elements themselves, revealing not only the conceptual, but also the compositional interrelationship between literary, musical and pictorial works.

### *3.3. The translation of a mesostic vocal line: Sonnekus2*

*Sonnekus2* was composed in 1985 and lasts approximately six minutes. It is a series of nine short songs with texts derived from the *First Book of Moses* or *Genesis*. As can be appreciated on a visual level, in this case the message is structured in the form of mesostics, a poetic form typical of Cage's literary composition as explained above. On this occasion, and given its relevance for the translation, it is important to mention the formal constraints stipulated by the composer and first commented on in the prologue of *M. Writings '67—'72*, namely that "[a] given letter capitalized does not occur between it and the preceding capitalized letter" (1973, p. ix). In other words, the second letter cannot appear between two of the letters that make up the vertical word.

In order to present a more detailed visual and, above all, textual analysis, the first poem is presented below (Figure 6), both in its version set to music on the stave divided into lines, and in the textual transcription, which allows the form of the mesostic to be seen more clearly.




Sarai
yOur body
aNah
aNd
with mE take food
of phaRaoh
hIs
bEgot
my Son

Figure 6. Score and mesostic for the first song of *Sonnekus2* (John Cage, 1985)

In addition to the formal complexities of this textual score, lexical selection has direct consequences for what is narrated in discourse and how that discourse is narrated. Hence, the explanation of my translational process of this first poem requires an exhaustive analysis on several levels. On the one hand, the title and the vertical word that forms the backbone of the mesostics is a reference to one of Erik Satie's piano compositions. *Trois sonneries de la Rose+Croix*, which was published in 1892, when Satie worked as chapel master of the Order of the Temple of the Rosicrucian Cross, and lasts approximately eleven minutes[15].

As this is the title of a work, I made the decision to keep the word in French, so the vertical line '*Sonneries'* is not translated (see Figure 7). Moreover, none of the phonemes require graphic adaptation, since they are all commonly used in Spanish, so the only thing left to do is to respect the spelling in capital letters. As for the formal restrictions, stipulated above regarding the appearance of certain letters, they are complied with in all the lines. On the other hand, as far as the musicalisation of the poem is concerned, the message has generally been conceptually translated and then adapted to the rhythm of the work. Numerous changes have been necessary for this purpose, which are explained in detail below.

The greatest challenge was respecting the number of syllables to match the rhythmic arrangement of the original work. The first three lines allow for a *quasi*-literal translation, adapting the spelling of the proper names. Lines four and five are the most creative. On the one hand, the monosyllable 'and' followed by a black silence made it necessary to look for an option that would leave the cadence of the speech open as well as the conjunction. On the other hand, the fourth and longest line is a sample of a line in which Cage draws on chance compositional procedures, via the *I Ching*, for example, to combine lines from Genesis, resulting in a conceptually abstract sentence. In order to solve both issues, I opted for an enjambment of both lines through the word 'con-migo' and the reformulation with the verb 'comer', which makes it possible to maintain the letter of the vertical line and to unite the two meanings of the original idea. In the sixth line, the hiatus of 'pharaoh' is pronounced as a hiatus in the corresponding note. In the last three lines, the preposition in the fifth line allows the possessive 'his' to be changed to 'mi' without changing the meaning of the original and facilitating the structure of the vertical letter. In the case of 'begot', a term very specific to religious discourse, is modified by a more colloquial term with the same meaning (a begotten son is a new son) and with the central letter included. In the last line, the two monosyllabic words become a bisyllable. Given the impossibility of finding such a specific term, the Latin translation 'filius' is used, a procedure also used by Cage in other compositions, as the language of religious discourse is easily understood in the target language. The result is as follows:

[15] It is performed in three movements: *Air de l'Ordre*, *Air du Grand Maître* and *Air du Grand Prieur*. While this composition has a free metrical structure with no meter lines, Gillmor (1988) argues that in all three movements the proportions bordered on the golden ratio, something Satie and Debussy had fantasised about.

Sarai
tu cuerpO
aNah
coN-
migo comE
del faRaon
mI
nuEvo
váStago

Figure 7. Mesostic for the first song of *Sonnekus2* (John Cage, 1985) translated into Spanish by Sofía Lacasta Millera

It is worth remembering that such a textual translation must follow Cage's performance instructions:

> To be sung without vibrato as in folk singing […] The singer will make a program including silences of any lengths (and changes of dress) that presents all nine of these songs in the auditorium space. Elsewhere with accompaniment any cabaret songs by Satie may be performed (at a distance from the audience) (1985, n.p.).

With regard to this last aspect, Cage intersperses the vocal line of *Sonnekus2* with the sound works of the French composer, listening, between the lines, to the works *Je te veux* (1902)*, La Diva de l'Empire* (1904) and *Tendrement* (1902).[16] *Je te veux* is a *valse chantée* with lyrics by Henry Pacory. *La Diva de l'Empire* is a popular song of *café-concert* with lyrics by Dominique Bonnaud and Numa Blès. The lyrics of *Tendrement* are by Vincent Hyspa. Beyond the sort of semantic oxymoron between the biblical narrative and the cabaret lyric, the syntactic parallelism between the compositions allows their conceptual amalgamation. For example, in Pacory's lyrics, we find lines like "tes vœux, ta maîtresse, la sagesse, la tristesse, des regrets, la vie, mon cœur, la divine promesse, des flammes, des rêves, nos deux âmes"[17] and in the lyrics by Bonnaud and Blès, other examples, such as "un amour tendre et pur, mon âme, la chapelle, votre grâce immortelle, prie à deux genoux mon fidèle amour, le mystère, un douce prière, païenne si légère".[18] All of them could be interpreted from one lexical field or another and raise, once again, the relevance of offering a translation also of these works that act as a backdrop to the mesostics.

[16] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsvdTc2NTSs (Joan La Barbara, voice). (Accessed: 30 October 2024).
[17] "your wishes, your mistress, wisdom, sadness, regrets, life, my heart, the divine promise, flames, dreams, our two souls".
[18] "a tender and pure love, my soul, the chapel, your immortal grace, pray on two knees my faithful love, the mystery, a gentle prayer".

**4. Conclusions**

The analysis of these textual scores and sound poems shows that the source texts, both those used by Cage for his intersemiotic creation and his own works for my interlingual translation, do not disappear in the process of translation, but are manifested again through other linguistic and semiotic systems, through other cultures, other voices and at other moments in time.[19] The intersemiotic nature of Cage's work, especially in his compositions for solo voice, reinforces the idea that, "[l]ike a translation and its original, we can understand Cage's individual works more fully when approaching them pluralistically" (Saletnik, 2012, p. 76). Thus, Cage's interdisciplinary composition not only allows for an analysis of his analogous compositional procedures, but also complements and enriches them in the creation of a plural work:

> For John Cage the significance of art lay, not in the production of artifacts, but in the making of meaning in an active collaboration with medium, performers, and audience. So the work that John Cage has left behind can be seen as just that—"work," which has always yet to be done—to be engaged in by a participatory audience, viewer, reader at a specific intersection of material, place, and time occasioned by a performance, an exhibition, a screening, or the presence of a text. What I mean to say is that what we call the work of John Cage exists entirely in the form of a collection of "scores" —visual and auditory notations—music (on the page and in performance), texts, drawings, prints, and paintings, which are invitations to realization (to use the musical term for performance) of ous aesthetic potential in a "poethics" (a practice or form of life in which ethics and aesthetics come together) of everyday life. (Retallack, 1994, pp. 242-243)

Therefore, it becomes clear that:

> translation subjects an original work to experimental play replete with contingencies and idiosyncrasies, furnishes it with performative resources for aesthetic expression in excess of the linguistic signs, and extrapolates it toward multiple trajectories and plural media" (Lee, 2022, p. 2).

In this new, more open-minded perception of the transfer process, the question arises: "Is originality a prerequisite of creativity?" (Malmkjaer, 2020, p. 23). If the premise of any translational process resided in the search for the longed-for equivalence, perhaps the translation of these interdisciplinary and experimental texts requires changing the prism from which the work is viewed.

In one of the latest Spanish translations of an unpublished selection of Cage's work, Battistón stated, in a note to the translation that is more necessary than any other, that *"[u]n libro que hace toda una celebración de la forma y de los extremos posiblemente pida,*

[19] This process echoes other compositions, such as *Exercises de style* (1947), in which Raymond Queneau narrates the same story ninety-nine times in ninety-nine different ways; *Spleen* (1973), in which Nicholas Moore presents thirty variations on a poem by Baudelaire; or *Via (48 Dante Variations)* (2004), in which Caroline Bergvall offers forty-seven translations as variations on the opening sentences of *Inferno*, the first of the three canticles of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. In all of these compositions, the process of rewriting and translation does not run away from the original, but becomes part of it through new voices.

*a su manera, formas extremas de ser traducido"* (2023, p. 229).[20] As in its 2016 translation (*Ritmo, etc*., Interzona), Battistón's 'ludic s' (Lee, 2022) is committed to following the compositional procedure proposed by Cage to the letter in order to determine formal aspects such as the number of words in each sentence or the number of characters in each line, among other aspects:

> *La sintaxis muchas veces extraña, revirada, de las frases en el original le debe mucho a ese rigor, que no excluye forzamientos, carambolas ni contorsiones más bien quiroprácticas, porque Cage obedece siempre los límites que se impone, pero sin hacer ningún intento por ocultar los efectos caóticos que tienden a producir* (2023, p. 229).[21]

In this way, the translation of musical texts, music and words by other authors, comes to life in Spanish, following in the wake of the English text.

Similar phenomena have occurred in the dramatized version of *Un Alfabeto*, performed in 2005, at the Teatro San Martín in Buenos Aires, in which the translator Gerardo Jorge took part; in the dramatized reading organised at the Librería Falena in Buenos Aires, in 2022, in which Patricio Grinberg represented the reading of *Indeterminación*, timing the reading time of each of the anecdotes; in Gandini's concert at the Biblioteca Nacional in Buenos Aires in 2007, with Fogwill's reading of the *Conferencia sobre Nada*, also translated by Gianera. Finally, in terms of Cage's most experimental texts, Battistón notes:

> …aunque celebro que no sea necesario traducirlos, es cierto también que soy un gran defensor de las cosas innecesarias. Hay un extraño atractivo en todo eso que podemos evitar, en todo eso que perfectamente podríamos no haber hecho (2023, p. 233).[22]

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[20] "a book that is a celebration of form and extremes may well require, in its own way, extreme ways of being translated."
[21] "The often puzzling, jumbled syntax of the sentences in the original owes much to this precision, which does not exclude forced, convoluted and rather chiropractic contortions, because Cage always obeys the limits he imposes on himself, but without making any attempt to hide the chaotic effects they tend to produce."
[22] "although I welcome the fact that it is not necessary to translate them, it is also true that I am a great advocate of unnecessary things. There is a strange appeal in all that we can avoid, in all that we could very well not have done."

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# INDIRECT POETRY TRANSLATION: ISSUES OF FIDELITY AND ADAPTATION

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ABSTRACT: Fidelity has always been a source of controversy for translators. This increases when dealing with indirect poetry translation, particularly between languages belonging to distant cultural communities. Style, aesthetic features, culture-bound words and figurative expressions may be lost when translated from a translated poem, which affects the goal of the original poet. The present paper uses a Translation Quality Assessment model to study a particular instance of indirect poetry translation and the issue of fidelity to the original. It assumes that indirect translation of poetry is feasible and that the question of fidelity depends on both the translator's competence and the quality of the mediating poem. Based on a comparative study of a translation of Goethe's poem '*Ein Gleichnis*' ('A Parable') from French into Arabic, the paper shows that indirect poetry translation is possible even between distant languages.
KEYWORDS: Poetry; Indirect Translation; Fidelity; Adaptation; Literature; Translation Quality Assessment

## 1. Introduction

Translation theorists have often discussed the difference between the original text and its translation in their assessment of indirect translation. Purists defend the position that original texts lose their meanings when they are translated through a mediating text. They believe that the original presupposed meaning and goal of the author are doomed to betrayal when the languages of the source and target texts are distant from each other (Arberry, 1957; Wills, 1982; Sapir, 2000). Metaphysicists from Plato to Leibniz and Hegel, on the other hand, argue that translations from the second and third degrees are possible since they rely on meaning which precedes language itself. They even think that texts flourish through these indirect translations and receive new interpretations that keep them alive in different cultures (Benabdelali, 2014, p. 29). Based on these two positions, the present research examines the challenges of indirect poetry translation, focusing on issues of fidelity and adaptation. This paper attempts to contribute to an area of research that is marked by a shortage of literature, namely the indirect translation of poetry. It aims to respond to the following research questions: To what extent is indirect poetry translation possible? What are the main problems facing translators in translating through a mediating poem? Can an indirect translation of a poem be close to both the mediating poem and the original one? To answer these questions, the study utilizes translation quality assessment adapted from Ma & Wang's (2020) use of systemic functional linguistics model. This model focuses on linguistic alterations at three main levels: (1) the phonetic level, (2) the morpho-syntactic level, and (3) the semantic-pragmatic level. The importance of this linguistic model is that it allows a descriptive study of both form and meaning of poetry translation.

The present paper starts with an overview of the conceptual framework; then, it discusses indirect translation and the reasons for its use. It also gives an insight into the role of fidelity in sharpening the debate about indirect translation. Last, the paper explores indirect poetry translation based on an assessment study of the rate of shift occurring in

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phonological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic aspects in the translation of Goethe's poem from French into Arabic.

## 2. Conceptual framework

A review of the literature has shown that early practices of indirect translation date back to ancient Romans "when the Hebrew Bible was translated indirectly by means of mediating languages (i.e. Greek, Latin, etc.) into Latin, English, and German" (Xie, 2009 cited in Su, 2017, p. 34). Nevertheless, writings and research on the topic are still very sketchy. Many scholars mention indirect translation only in passing while discussing translation problems. The negative connotations marking its practice led translators to perceive it as "some kind of disease to be shunned" (Toury, 1995, p. 19).

The complexity of the process of indirect translation and the lack of consensus among translators on the metalanguage used to define it make it subject to a fluctuating terminology (Rosa et al., 2017, p. 114). Kittel and Armin (1991), Toury (1995), Bellos (2016) and Ringmar (2007) use the term 'indirect translation'; Dollerup (2002) and St Andre (2009) use 'relay translation'; Gambier (1994) uses 'second-hand translation'; while Berman (1990), Bauer (1999) and Shuttleworth & Cowie (1997) use 'retranslation' to refer to both indirect translation through a mediating text and the act of retranslating a text many times by different translators into the same language. This inconsistency in terminology provides a clear insight into the controversial nature of indirect translation. The following paper assumes that indirect translation refers to any sort of translation practice that relies on a mediating text, whose language is different from both the original and the target texts (i.e. a translation based on a translated text).

## 3. Reasons for indirect translation

The use of indirect translation has been justified by scholars (Gambier, 1994; Bellos, 2016; Ringmar, 2007; Washbourne, 2013; Su, 2017; Pięta et al., 2022) for a number of reasons. Firstly, a lack of competence in the source language text sometimes forces translators to rely on mediating translations to grasp the meaning of the original writer. This situation was common in the nineteenth century in China when translators relied on the language of its neighboring country, Japan, as a medium to translate Western culture, literature, science, law and technology, particularly after a long time of Chinese economic and cultural closure (Pięta et al., 2022, p. 10). Translators in this case favour the mediating language as their source to save time and effort, and to avoid mistakes. Ringmar (2007, p. 7), in this regard, points out that relying on a mediating language is "more convenient and less risky that to try a less experienced translator for the source language."

Scarcity of the source texts can also be a reason for indirect translation (Ringmar, 2007, p. 6). Translators resort to mediating languages when a text no longer exists in its original language. This was the case with the famous collection of stories of *The Arabian Nights*, which was translated from Arabic, French and English into many languages due to the lack of any stable source manuscript.

Another reason for indirect translation is the intention of translators to circumvent difficulties existing in the source text (Pięta et al., 2022, p. 10). Arab translators, for instance, relied on French and English to translate Greek philosophy during the Arab renaissance (Bouaraouri, 2024). Additionally, the complexity of Freud's and Nietzsche's books in German required a significant number of Arab translators to read them in French and then translate them into Arabic. Most Arab readers, therefore, know only the French

Freud. What is odd is that some German readers also resort to French translations to understand some of the more difficult ideas of their own philosophers (see Benabdelali, 2014). The mediating translator here plays a crucial role in adapting and simplifying the language of the original text, enabling other translators to easily communicate the main goal of its author to their target readers.

Indirect translation is also justified by the prestige of the mediating text. Ringmar (2007, pp. 3-4) argues that although German culture in the eighteenth century used English literature to liberate itself from "the French yoke" in the initial phase, such works had to be "diluted via French mediation in order to be acceptable to German audiences." Similarly, Washbourne (2013) notes that 'the high prestige of the pivot language often underlies the decision to use it as a new source,' as when German mediating texts were used for translation into Hebrew during the Hebrew Enlightenment (1750-1850 [Toury 2002]) despite the ability of translators to translate directly from original languages. This, of course, "highlights the power relations between cultures/languages in so far that the mediating language is, as a rule, the dominant language whereas the target language is in the position of the dominated" (Ringmar, 2007, p. 1). North African translators, for instance, favour French as a mediating language due to the historical prestigious status it enjoys in their countries.

Additionally, the relative distance between languages can also be a reason for conducting indirect translation. European translators have traditionally preferred to render Chinese texts via European languages (Washbourne, 2013), as it is generally easier and more practical. Sometimes, even the high cost of the translation of texts from distant languages leads translators to rely on close mediating languages instead.

Last but not least, Washbourne (2013) mentions copyrights and authorial control as reasons for conducting indirect translation. This occurs when translators fail to find tangible copyrights of a particular work or information about its author. An example of this case is the absence of international copyrights of the Albanian source text of Ismail Kadare, which led translators to rely on a mediating text to guarantee the survival of the work and its authorial control (Bellos, 2011b cited in Washbourne, 2013, p. 612).

Yet, the choice of indirect translation still raises many issues of practicality and fidelity to both the original author and the target readers, particularly when the languages at stake belong to different language families or have no common cultural backgrounds.

## 4. Fidelity versus freedom

The term 'fidelity' is often perceived in its positive sense as any sort of similarity between the text and its translation. However, fidelity in indirect translation is still controversial due to the complexity of transferring meaning from one language to another. Some theorists, such as Bayar (2007), believe that fidelity is hard to achieve in rewriting texts from the same language, let alone a translation of another language. But fidelity to what?

This question is frequently raised in translation studies. Some theorists argue that translators should respect the goal of the author and minimize their intervention in the source text, producing a text similar to the one the original author would write if he had a chance to write it in the target language. For example, Benabdelali (2014, p. 9) claims that the translator should appear (in the target text) to disappear: "He should write it without signing it to offer the original author the opportunity to speak another language". Within the same vein, in her advocacy of fidelity in translation, Bayar (2007, p. 226) states:

> Not being faithful to the purpose the text has achieved can be harmful to the author and the text, their ideological tendencies, their cultural belonging. Being unfaithful to the text goal is also harmful to the reader or user in the sense that they get a distorted idea of the text and the world of discourse it represents.

This attitude is also advocated by literalists, who insist on using word-for-word translation to avoid any modification of the structure and ideas of the source text. For literalists even the structure of the source text conveys meaning and a perception of the world. They refuse any sort of interpretation in translation and limit the role of the translator to the mechanical rendition of the text as it is. They also believe that the translator should blur the boundaries between languages to ease the flow of meaning of the source text to the target text. Literalists consider indirect translation a double betrayal to the original. For them, the transition from an original text to another through a mediating language inevitably represents a decline and a distortion of meaning. For example, Zheng (1998) claims that translating a text indirectly risks the fidelity of translation because it "surely inherits the same mistakes of the medium translation" (p. 76). This view aligns with Ringmar (2007, p. 10) who argues that second-hand translations may engender the differences that increase the distance from the source text.

To elaborate more on this notion of distance in translation, Benabdelali (2014) invites readers to imagine a circle of individuals sitting side by side, where the first speaker transmits an expression to the one sitting next to him who, in turn, will translate it to his neighbor until the expression reaches the starting point of the circle. He states that advocates of this image think that the expression will turn to its starting point stigmatized and distorted. This pushes many translators to go back to originals in their attempt to grasp the real meaning of texts. Yet, is there an original text? "Every text involves, implicitly or explicitly, other different texts. Every text involves questions from other texts," points out Benabdelali (2014, p. 29). Sometimes even the expressions we use are based on other ideas and expressions of people who may speak other languages. In this vein, Venuti (2004, p. 130) argues:

The source text is always already mediated, whether read in the source language or translated in the receiving language, and that rendition consists of an interpretation that is itself determined by a network of signification beyond the author's control, whether in the source or in the receiving culture. The source text can never be viewed as strictly original.

So which text shall we consider as original? Every text is a translation. For translation is not a secondary task that comes after writing of the original text. Bassnett-McGuire (1980, p. 38) argues that any texts are "translations of translations of translations." The translator, therefore, is a writer and the writer is a translator (Benabdelali, 2014, p. 37).

## 5. Translation quality assessment model

To analyze Benabdelali's translation of '*Ein Gleichnis*' from French into Arabic, the present work relies on translation quality assessment model, based on systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 1956, 1962; Ma & Wang (2020). This model has been routinely used in studies of equivalence in translation and yielded good results (Halliday, 1956, 2009; Zhu, 1966). It provides "a holistic theory of language, which allows us to measure equivalence and shift along various dimensions" (Mattheissen, 2001; Halliday 2009 cited in Ma & Wang, 2020, p. 91). These dimensions comprise the hierarchy of stratification, the cline of instantiation, the spectrum of metafunction, the hierarchy of rank and the hierarchy of axis.

Based on the hierarchy of stratification, which permits a systemic study of both language and context, this paper focuses on four levels of analysis: Graphological analysis (layout), Phonological analysis (rhyme), lexicogrammatical analysis (mood, modality and theme) and contextual analysis (field, tenor and mode) (Ma & Wang, 2020, p. 94). We will give a linear analysis of each line of the Arabic translation to check its degree of equivalence and shift with the source and mediating poems and, then, provide systematic assessment of the translation based on systemic functional linguistics. The focus will be on the choices used by Benabdelali in his translation to adapt the poem to Arabic poetic styles and his attempts to preserve the qualities of the source poem. The original German poem will be used as a point of reference to locate any changes that occur in the French mediating version so as to see their effects on the Arabic translation.

Before proceeding with analysis, it is worthy of notice here that Benabdelali adopted a free poetic style in his translation, which reflects a new and more relaxed convention of free verse of modern Arabic poetry. Free-verse poetry (*al-shi'r al-hor*) was introduced to Arabic poetry through the effects of Western modern poetry in the twentieth century. It came up with radical changes to Classical Arabic poetry, which was notoriously famous by its complex, if not to say impossible, translation into other languages due to its challenging meters, rhythm, allusions and images. The language of modern free Arabic poetry is characterized by its simplicity, directness and lyrical tone. Below is a comparative study of the Benabdelali's translation with the source poem.

## 6. Analysis of Benabdelali's Arabic translation of '*Ein Gleichnis*'

'*Ein Gleichnis*' is one of Goethe's most complex poems in which he makes reference to philosophy, theology and sciences. The concept of 'Gleichnis', for him, signifies:

> the outcome of a cognitive process that begins with the (aesthetic) intuition of a thing as it appears in its natural environment or cultural context, continues with the selection of an object of inquiry that is surveyed in all its relations and transformations, and ends with the imagination's association of the now heightened virtual phenomenon with structurally or functionally similar phenomena that have been separated due to the scientific process (Weber, 2022, p. 2).

Reducing the term into its religious representation as 'A Parable' or رمز (*ramz* in Arabic) thus rather restricts its function as a medium that conveys relations between things and ideals.

The selection of words and structures is very telling in Goethe's poem '*Ein Gleichnis'*, where he tends to preserve the characteristics of the German poetry, i.e., the coherence of style, rhythm and rhymes. This seems to cause Berman and Benabdelali some difficulties in their attempt to generate the same aesthetic features of the original poem in their translations. Benabdelali, for instance, seems to stick to the style and poetic features of Arabic poetry by taking some freedom in his Arabic rendition.

In the first line, Berman starts with a subject and verb '*je cueillis'* and then an adverb '*récemment'* while Benabdelali starts with a preposition من (from) plus a plural noun المروج (meadows) in his attempt to preserve the musicality of the verse and make it sound natural in Arabic. This however does not follow Goethe's verse structure that begins with an adverb 'recently' plus a subject 'I' to emphasize the closeness of the action. Goethe also uses the singular noun 'Wiesenstrauß' while Beabdelali opts for a plural noun المروج.

Benabdelali combines the third and fourth lines into one as في يدي الدافئتين مالت تيجانها إلى الذبول (in my warm hands tended its heads to wilt) while the French translator keeps Goethe's separation of the two lines *'la chaleur de ma main /avait fait tomber les corolles'.* This change in structure, of course, goes beyond Goethe's style where the line break creates a slow image of the act of flowers' heads drooping with warmness: *'Da hatten, von der warmen Hand /Die Kronen sich alle zur Erde gewandt'* (When, heated by my hand, I found /The heads all drooping toward the ground). It is also worthy of notice here that Benabdelali added the word الذبول (wilt) to depict the condition of flowers subdued by the heat of hands while Goethe and Berman used only the act of drooping toward the ground.

Additionally, reduction is blatantly clear in the fifth line as Benabdelali deletes the term 'Glas' (glass) and uses only 'fresh water' وضعتها في ماء منعش (I placed them in fresh water) following neither Berman's translation *'un verre d'eau fraiche'* nor the original *'frisches Glas'* (a cool glass): (I placed them in a well-cooled glass).

In the translation of the seventh line 'Die Köpfchen hoben sich empor', Berman kept the immediacy of the cause for Goethe's wonder of the scene whereas Benabdelali mitigated it using the adverb of time حين (when), affecting the structure of the line by starting with a verb 'raised' plus a noun 'heads' instead of Berman's rendition 'les petites têtes redressèrent.' Benabdelali's choice is justifiable here because Arabic commonly uses a verb-sentence structure,[1] but playing with words' order would better preserve Goethe's fine poetic style. The same choice was followed by Benbdelali in his translation of the eighth line: 'tiges et feuilles reverdirent' واستعادت البراعم والأوراق خضرتها (The stalks were blooming as before), as he began with a coordinating conjunction plus a verb 'واستعادت'.

In his translation of the ninth line, Benabdelali added a term 'معافى' (healthy) which exists neither in the original nor in the French translation. The choice of this word might be acceptable for an Arab reader, who is familiar with its collocation with the term سليم (hale), but would be unworthy for the Western reader, particularly that the poet is talking about flowers, not humans.

Another example of vocabulary shift in Benabdelali's translation is his use of the word رحم (womb) of earth to render Berman's words 'the mother earth.' The last choice preserved Goethe's symbolic weight of the term 'Muttergrund' to refer to the native place of the flowers.

Moreover, the translation of the eleventh line also reveals another example of reduction, as Benabelali uses تلك كانت حالي (So felt I), shifting the rest of the line to the next line, which is not the case in the Goethe's poem and its French translation: *'Ainsi en fut pour moi lorsque j'entendis, merveilleux'* (So felt I when I wondering heard—My song to foreign tongues transferred).

In the last line, Benabdelali uses the expression 'in another language,' instead of 'a foreign' language as in the German and French versions: وأنا أستغربُ سماع أنشودتي في لغة أخرى (while I wondering heard—my song in another language) *'Ainsi en fut pour moi lorsque j'entendis, merveilleux—Mon chant dans la langue 'étrangère': Mein Lied in fremder Sprache vernahm.* These changes of words might seem like normal procedures in translation, but they affect the symbolic weight and value of Goethe's German words.

As far as the graphological level is concerned, we notice that the Arabic translation follows the layout of the French and German versions. There is one case where Benabdelali

[1] In Arabic structure, verbs are usually placed at the beginning of sentences in writing: Verb-Subject-Object (VSO). Subject-Verb-Object (SVO), however, is common in speaking.

decides to combine two lines in one (third and fourth lines), as mentioned above. There are also some cases of mismatch between the punctuation marks used in the Arabic version compared to the source and mediating texts, particularly the use of commas. The Arabic translation removes the comma existing at the end of the first line while using a full stop instead of a semicolon as in the fourth French line. In general, no big differences are recorded in other punctuation marks, given the similarity between Arabic and French punctuation rules.

Concerning phonological features, it seems that the French translator gives less importance to rhymes used in the original poem, making his translation unrhymed. Similarly, Benabdelali followed the French unrhymed lines, despite playing with words to recreate musicality of the poem.

The lexicogrammatical analysis of the translated poem is conducted at the clause level to examine the use of mood, theme and transitivity. The analysis of mood and modality as two main systems of interpersonal metafunction of language is used to examine the use of grammatical categories to exchange information in the poem. Basically, all the lines in the Arabic and French translations have indicative clauses, and there is no case of imperative mood in both versions. These indicative clauses show a declarative mood in all the poems. However, there is one example of exclamatory mood (line 6) in the Arabic, as in the French and German versions. This line وكم كان عجبي! (And what a wonder came to pass!) conveys a strong feeling of surprise of the poet in Arabic.

The modality system reflects the speaker's attitude towards the content of the proposition used. We may distinguish between four main types of modality here: probability, obligation, usuality and readiness (Ma & Wang, 2020). As in the French and German poems, the Arabic translation has no instance of modality.

Theme refers to the point of departure of the message which shows what the speaker is going to say. Four types of theme can be distinguished: textual, interpersonal and topical. Arabic translation contains five instances of textual themes realised by the use of the conjunction و (and) in lines (6, 8, 9, 12) and كما لو (as if) (10) while the French poem has three in lines (6, 9, 10): '*et'* and '*que s'il*'. There are no examples of an interpersonal theme in the Arabic translation, nor in the French and German poems. Concerning topical theme, one might clearly see many instances of change in the Arabic translation. The first French line, for example, '*Je cueillis récemment'* is an unmarked topical theme while its translation into Arabic is a marked one قطفت من المروج (from meadows I picked). Similarly, lines (7, 8) in French translation represent other examples of an unmarked topical theme that is changed to a marked topical theme in Arabic translation: *'les petites têtes se redressèrent'* حين استقامت الرؤوس الصغيرة (when raised the heads themselves once more) and *'tiges et feuilles reverdirent'* واستعادت البراعم والأوراق خضرتها (and blooming the stalks as were before).

To examine choices that are made in the system of process type, the study uses experiential analysis which divides human experience into six types: material, mental, relational, behavioural, verbal and existential (Ma & Wang, 2020). Six cases of material processes are recorded in French, German and Arabic versions. Also, one instance of mental process is found in Arabic تلك كانت حالي وأنا أستغربُ سماع أنشودتي (So felt I, when I wondering heard*)* while no case exists in French and German. However, there is one case of behavioural process in French '*j'entendis'* and German '*vernahm'* which does not exist in Arabic version. Moreover, two instances of existential process are used in the Arabic translation: واستعادت البراعم والأوراق خضرتها (The stalks were blooming as before) and وبدا الكل سليماً (And all were in as good a case as), whereas only one is found in French *'et le tout*

*sembla aussi sain'*. No verbal or relational processes are recorded in the Arabic translation and its French and German source texts.

For the contextual analysis, we use the three semiotic systems of field, tenor and mode. Field analysis helped us study what is going on in the poem and its translation. We notice that the three versions belong to a reporting field of activity due to their description of a particular event. The poet is telling listeners/readers a story about his picking of a rustic nosegay from meadows and compares what happens to it after putting it in water to the case of his poem after being translated into a foreign language. We may say that the field here is equally recreated in Arabic and French translations. Concerning the tenor, we notice no type of role interaction or social relation between the Arabic translator, the French translator and the German poet. Benabdelali, Berman and Goethe are unknown to each other, and they belong to different eras. Although Benabdelali is a philosopher who works a lot on translation and German philosophy, his introduction to German literature and philosophy is always through French because he does not speak any German.

Mode refers to the function of the text in the event, and it includes both channel and genre (Ma & Wang, 2020, p. 104). The channel used in the German poem, Arabic and French translations is written words. Besides, the German poem is rhyming, and it is written to be read whereas the Arabic translation and the French one are written to be read but are not rhyming.

In short, '*Ein Gleichnis*' is a rhymed poem whose musicality adds to its poetic style, combining images and sounds in a homogeneous way. Its French translation contains various examples of adaptation to the characteristics of French poetry, similar to Arabic translation, in which Benabdelali changed words order, some phonetic and semantic features to keep meaning while, at the same time, adapting the form and structure to the characteristics of Arabic poetry. Yet, these alterations at the phonemic, syntactic and semantic levels have not affected the aesthetic beauty and harmony of the poem's form and meaning.

## 7. Discussion and concluding remarks

The analysis of the Arabic translation of Goethe's poem shows how complex indirect translation of poetry is. Benabdelali (2014) himself refers to this complexity by stating that the more translators move away from the original language, the more they distance themselves from the meaning and goal of the original author. Yet, this does not mean that indirect translation of poetry is always doomed to failure, for all depends on the competence of the translator to adapt textual features, prosodic, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic aspects of the mediating poem to the requirements of his language and poetry. Needless to say that the success of indirect translation is also dependent on the appropriateness of the mediating translation.

It is clear from the comparison of the three poems that Berman faced some difficulties in adapting his translation to the aesthetic features of Goethe's poem. His strategy seems to have been to sacrifice form for the sake of content, which affects the musical quality and the poetic essence of the poem in which Goethe combined rhymes and meaning in a fine symbolic shape. This is also evident in the Arabic translation where Benabdelali followed Berman's choice of words and freedom of rendition, either because of the complexity of the original German poem or his preference of the free style of the French translation. These modifications are not unusual in poetry translation. As Venuti (2011, p. 128) points out:

> the poem that is the subject of translation inevitably vanishes during the translation process, replaced by a network of significations—intertextual, interdiscursive, intersemiotic—that is rooted mainly in the receiving situation.

However, the modifications recorded in the Arabic version have not affected the beauty or symbolism of the poem and its capacity to appeal to readers. Benabdelali succeeded in capturing both meaning and poetic musicality of the original and adapting them to the specificities of the Arabic poem. The modifications he used to adapt some French lines to the characteristics of Arabic poetry were inevitable to convey the symbolic meaning of the original.

This sample of Benabdelali's translation confirms the possibility of indirect translation in carrying poetry through languages regardless of their distance and cultural differences. It also confirms that the notions of ageing, historicity, fidelity and closeness remain relative in indirect translation. Languages as well as translations evolve over time and are far from being confined to such cultural paradigms (Peeters and Van Poucke, 2023). Indirect poetry translators should not strive to cancel space between languages and cultures. They should, instead of subduing the Other to the Self, look for ways to open the Self to the Other (as Benabdelali puts it). It is through this foreignization that many translations become famous. Besides, the debate on indirect translation should not be limited to the tiny blemishes, which may occur out of translators' lack of experience or the complexity of the original poem. The literature of indirect translation is rich with successful translations that played a significant role in saving dead or lost original masterpieces of literature and giving them a chance to reach new generations of readers and to enrich world literatures. Spanish readers, for instance, are indebted to Baudelaire for his translation of Poe into French, easing the task for Spanish translators to render his works into Spanish (Pym, 2011, p. 60 cited in Rosa et al., 2017, p. 119). Translation scholars should rather encourage indirect translation and enrich research on it to equip translators with all the necessary tools to surmount problems they face conducting it. It is only through a collaborative and a more positive perspective that research on indirect translation could develop in translation studies.

Finally yet importantly, translation scholars have to adopt an open approach in redefining the concepts of fidelity, closeness and adaptation to free indirect translation activity from all negative connotations that hamper its progress. Indirect translation of poetry is a complex task that requires some flexibility from the part of translators. The migration of the poem from one language to another sometimes cannot be without adaptation of words and structures to save both the meaning and goal of the original poet and the poetic style of the host language.

## Appendix

**Emblème** (Berman, 1995)

1. Je cueillis récemment un bouquet de fleurs des près,
2. les ramenai pensivement à la maison
3. la chaleur de ma main
4. avait fait retomber les corolles ;
5. je les mis dans un verre d'eau fraiche,
6. et quelle merveille ce fut pour moi !
7. les petites têtes se redressèrent,
8. tiges et feuilles reverdirent,
9. et le tout sembla aussi sain
10. que s'il poussait encore sur le sol maternel.
11. Ainsi en fut pour moi lorsque j'entendis, merveilleux,
12. Mon chant dans la langue étrangère.

**رمز** (Benabdelali, 2014)

1. من المروج قطفت باقة ورود
2. حملتها منشغل الذهن إلى البيت،
3. في يدي الدافئتين / 4. مالت تيجانها إلى الذبول.
5. وضعتها في ماء منعش
6. وكم كان عجبي!
7. حين استقامت الرؤوس الصغيرة،
8. واستعادت البراعم والأوراق خضرتها،
9. وبدا الكل سليماً معافى
10. كما لو أنه ما زال ينبت على رحم الأرض،
11. تلك كانت حالي
12. وأنا أستغربُ سماع أنشودتي في لغة أخرى.

**Ein Gleichnis** (Goethe, 1828)

1. Jüngst pflückt' ich einen Wiesenstrauß,
2. Trug ihn gedankenvoll nach Haus;
3. Da hatten, von der warmen Hand,
4. Die Kronen sich alle zur Erde gewandt.
5. Ich setzte sie in frisches Glas,
6. Und welch ein Wunder war mir Das!
7. Die Köpfchen hoben sich empor,
8. Die Blätterstengel im grünen Flor;
9. Und allzusammen so gesund,
10. Als ständen sie noch auf Muttergrund.
11. So war mir's, als ich wundersam
12. Mein Lied in fremder Sprache vernahm.

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# THE TRANSLATION OF TABOO LANGUAGE IN FICTIONAL DIALOGUE: THE CASE OF *JIN PING MEI*

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines the way in which swearing and other forms of taboo language in fictional dialogue are rendered in translations from Chinese into English. To conduct this study, two English translations of the classic novel *Jin Ping Mei* are described and analyzed. Based on the paradigm of descriptive translation studies, the paper resorts to a mixed-method design which combines quantitative data with qualitative textual analysis. It aims to identify how the translators deal with swearing in the fictive dialogue, to determine any translational patterns in the way taboo language is treated and to analyze the effect of translation strategies used on certain aspects of the novel. Through the above mentioned methodology, this paper finds that swearing at times comes across quite differently in English compared to the original, which inevitably influences the target reader's perception of characters and their verbal interactions in the novel.
KEYWORDS: Swearing; Emotion and Affect; Fictional Dialogue; Translation; Prose Fiction

## 1. Introduction

As a socially significant and realistic novel written anonymously in the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), *Jin Ping Mei* (hereafter *JPM*) is recognized as one of the four masterworks of the Ming novel. Set in an urban context characterized by a booming mercantile economy, cultural prosperity, extravagance, and social depravity, *JPM* focuses its attention on ordinary characters and gives a realistic portrayal of their everyday life and manners. By concentrating on the daily minutiae of urban folks' lives in sixteenth-century society, *JPM* contains a splendid display of various forms of Chinese language art. A stereoscopic reading of the novel reveals an interesting language phenomenon: the liberal use of swearing and other forms of taboo language, which renders character dialogue rustic yet lively and compelling. Some characters swear in realistic, spontaneous ways as if they were living in the real world. This might be what Page calls "the closest imitation of reality" (1973, p. 3). The author of *JPM* seems to convey the novels' linguistic energy and represents reality very truthfully, irrespective of whether this means sacrificing moral norms and conventions.

The novel has an extensive repertoire of taboo language, which is used to delineate characters, advance the plot, and generate humor. Swearing in *JPM* seems to be an authorial ploy to create naturalness and vividness; for, as Norrick (2012, p. 43) points out, despite its impolite and taboo nature, swearing does add a humorous tone and bespeaks a level of emotion and involvement that may be unachievable otherwise. Hence, it would be productive to explore the extensive use of swearing in this work and its translation into another language.

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Translating swearing, and taboo language more generally, brings problems relating to register, pragmatic function, connotations, and culture-specificity. Therefore, this paper looks at how taboo expressions have been translated in two English versions of the novel *JPM*: *The Golden Lotus* (hereafter *Lotus*) by Clement Egerton, and *The Plum in the Golden Vase* (hereafter *Plum*) by David Roy. Both are complete translations, in the sense that they include all the chapters of the Chinese original, but Egerton's version, published in London, is in British English and Roy's, published by Princeton University Press, is American. There is also a significant time gap between them: Egerton's was begun in the 1920s and published in 1939, while Roy's five volumes came out between 1993 and 2013. For all these reasons, we might expect contrasting approaches to the treatment of taboo language.

## 2. Definition of swearing and its pragmatic function

Swearing, which is a characteristic feature of many languages and cultures, has been defined in different ways by different authors. For Allan and Burridge (2009, p. 362), it can be understood as "the strongly emotive use of taboo terms in insults, epithets, and expletives", while, for Beers Fägersten, swearing is "the use of words which have the potential to be offensive, inappropriate, objectionable, or unacceptable in any given social context" (2012, p. 3). Andersson and Trudgill (1990, p. 53) postulate swearing as a type of language use in which the expression suggests something taboo or stigmatized in the culture and should not be interpreted literally. In Swearing*:* A Cross-Cultural Linguistic Study, Ljung (2010, p. 4) theorizes that swearing is the use of utterances containing taboo words with non-literal meaning and its main function is to reflect the speaker's feelings, emotions, and attitudes. Jay and Janschewitz (2008, p. 268), for their part, also highlight swearing's primary function as conveying emotional or connotative meaning. All this tells us that swearing is a complex socio-pragmatic phenomenon and the perception of it depends on features of the context. The same applies to swearing in virtual or non-real-world environments, including literary and cinematic dialogues.

Owing to its taboo/transgressive nature, swearing reflects the values and beliefs of a given society. It can be expressed in many ways, including vocatives, expletives, curses, obscenities, profanity, scatology and the like (in this paper, I refer to swearing and expletives interchangeably to avoid terminological confusion).

Within literary and cinematic dialogue, swearing has historically fulfilled various stylistic or aesthetic functions. For instance, in the study of the multifunctionality of swear words and taboo language in television series, Bednarek (2019) demonstrates that such language in television dialogue can serve various purposes, including characterization, humor, plot development, catchphrases, the creation of realism, and the management of audience evaluation and emotions. Similar functions related to the use of swear words can also be observed in historical literary texts. In *Transgressive Language in Medieval English Drama*, Forest-Hill (2018) expounds that insults, oaths, scatological and bawdy language are widely used in medieval mystery plays and morality plays to create characterizations, define characters' moral status, and reflect social conditions. Geoffrey Chaucer's

*Canterbury Tales* also abounds in vulgar language to offer a masterful exploration of humanity and social reality (Azzaro, 2018, p. 284; Horton, 1998). Partridge's (2005) *Shakespeare's Bawdy* demonstrates that bawdy language is common in Shakespearean works, manifesting the sexual resonances of a significant section of Shakespeare's vocabulary. The same holds true for the sixteenth-century novel *JPM* under study, in which a great deal of 'bad language' is used with subtlety and sophistication to characterize fictional persons and to evince naturalness and realism.

As colloquial, non-standard or low register language, swearing performs rhetorical and stylistic functions as a form of marked speech (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2007, p. 187). Through the lens of literary stylistics, swearing serves as a stylistic marker. Azzaro contends that strong/vulgar language "reflects personal character and social standing, so that swearwords uniquely identify the personality of [fictional characters]" (2018, p. 284). In a nutshell, incorporating taboo language, especially swearing expressions, in literary texts can serve the purpose of character development, enhance stylistic effects, and contribute to the advancement of fictional plots. This, in turn, can enhance the reader's experience and entertainment.

## 3. On the translation of swearing

In literary contexts, the translation of swearing raises challenges as it can create 'culture bumps'. However, simply omitting it can cause "a loss in communicative effect and social implicature" (Leppihalme, 1997; Greenall, 2011a, p. 60).

In recent years, a growing number of studies have focused on the treatment of taboo language, including swear words, in interlingual translation (e.g. Fernández Fernández, 2009; Soler Pardo, 2013; Ávila Cabrera, 2014; Ávila Cabrera, 2015; Ávila Cabrera, 2016; Valdeón, 2015; Valdeón, 2020; Formentelli and Ghia, 2021; Formentelli and Monti, 2014; Pavesi and Zamora, 2021; Pavesi and Formentelli, 2023; Lung, 2000; Gomez, 2016). However, they have mostly been conducted in the context of audiovisual translation (AVT), and a significant gap still exists when it comes to research on the translation of swearing in literary works. Only a handful of studies can be found examining the translation of swearing in literary prose, and they almost all report an attenuation of the offensive language. For example, Conde-Parrilla (1996) and Sanz Gallego (2013), discussing *Ulysses* in Spanish translations, conclude, independently, that much of the swearing is simplified, normalized, and mitigated, resulting in a dramatic change in the aesthetic qualities of the original. In his comparison of two translations into Portuguese of J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, Schmitz (1998) concludes that the suppression of the invectives and obscenities in the protagonist's speech alters the reader's perception of the hero's disillusionment with life. Similarly, Maher's (2012) examination of the Italian novel *Ti prendo e ti porto via* in English concludes that the attenuation of the linguistic taboos affects the stylistic value of the novel in many ways. As for the translation of swearing in Roddy Doyle's novel, *The Commitments*, Greenall (2011b) claims that it flouts pragmatic principles and hence creates for the target reader a rather different context for interpreting the novel.

However, if we consider translation to be more of a purpose-driven transcultural activity, then extratextual considerations demand our critical attention. Given that no academic attempt has thus far been made to the study of the cross-cultural transfer of swearing in the novel *JPM*, the present paper seeks to address the lacuna in the literature. However, the paper does not intend to pass any value judgement on any translations, but simply to contribute to understanding of how swearing is dealt with by translators in the cross-cultural communication process.

## 4. Research methods

Methodologically, the present study is positioned within the paradigm of descriptive translation studies (DTS) (Toury, 2012). It thus aims to compare source and target texts, identify translational shifts and describe translational phenomena, relying on empirical evidence. Specifically, the paper attempts to pursue the following objectives with regard to two English translations of *JPM*:

1. To identify how certain taboo expressions in passages of fictive dialogue have been treated by the two different translators;
2. To determine if there are any patterns or tendencies in the two translators' approaches to swearing;
3. To analyze the potential consequences of translators' solutions on certain aspects of the novel, such as register, tone, and characterization.

To achieve the above aims, the study uses a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative analyses. The quantitative data consists of a corpus of textual samples collected at random from the source and target texts, which are then subjected to statistical analysis to determine the frequencies of translators' use of certain strategies for rendering swearing. As for the qualitative analysis, this involves the close comparison of several key passages containing swearing expressions in the source and target texts.

Textual segments containing swearing were first collected from the Chinese novel *JPM* and their counterparts located in the English translations. To structure this analysis, I formulated a taxonomy of swearing based on Wajnryb (2005) and Pinker (2008), given in Table 1.

Table 1. Taxonomy of Swearing

| Subcategory | Description |
|---|---|
| Cathartic swearing | the use of expletives to express frustration or to release pain, tension or regret, when no hearers are present, e.g. fuck! |
| Abusive swearing | swearing used by the speaker to insult others/hearers; higher degree of offensiveness than cathartic swearing, e.g. you fucker, fuck you! |

| | |
|---|---|
| Social swearing | speakers are in-group members in relaxed settings using swearwords to create an easygoing atmosphere in informal or casual conversations, e.g. fucking fantastic! |
| Idiomatic swearing | using set phrases and fixed expressions to express strong emotions; usually conventionalized and socially recognized forms of swearwords, e.g. *it's fucked up.* |

All the selected instances of swearing in the novel were classified according to the taxonomy given in Table 1. I then classified the translation strategies used, as proposed in previous studies (Díaz Cintas and Remael, 2007; Valdeón, 2020). The categorization of translation strategies is illustrated in Table 2:

Table 2. Categorization of translation strategies

| Strategies | Explanation |
|---|---|
| Literal translation | Translating verbatim, regardless of connotative meaning and pragmatic (un)equivalence |
| Functional equivalent | Using a functional equivalent to translate partial meaning but maintain a similar pragmatic function |
| Mitigation | Softening the offensive tone or force of swearing |
| Omission | Deleting or removing swearing from the target text |
| Intensification | Using stronger swearing to express the source text meaning |

These strategies will be exemplified in the quantitative and qualitative analysis that ensue.

## 5. Quantitative analysis

This section gives a quantitative analysis of the translation strategies employed by Egerton (1939) and Roy (2013) for the treatment of taboo language. A total of 266 samples were selected at random to form a corpus for statistical analysis. The corpus is big enough to allow the detection of patterns or tendencies followed by each translator. The following figures and tables offer a visual representation of the strategies used by each translator for translating swearing.

As can be seen in Figure 1 and Table 3, as many as 236 instances of swearing in the corpus (88.72%) were maintained and rendered into English in Egerton's version, while only 30 instances (12%) were omitted. Literal translation is the most frequently used strategy, accounting for 167 occurrences (62.78% of the corpus). Other strategies such as mitigation and functional equivalent are used less frequently, 41 times (15.41%) in the first case and 28 times (10.52%) in the second.

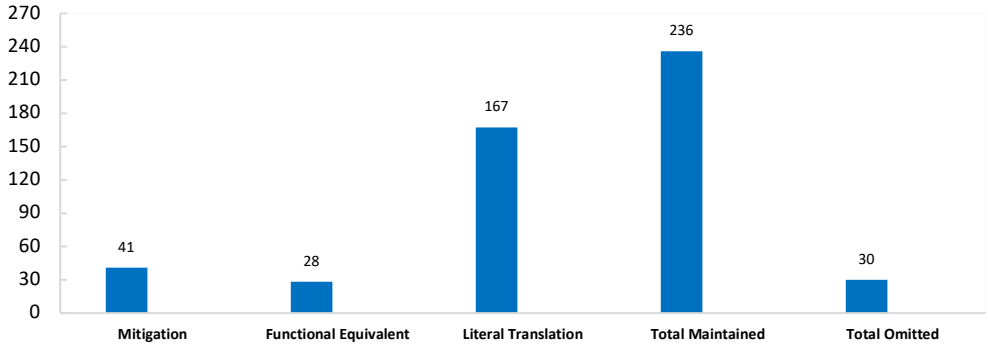


Figure 1. Frequencies of strategies used for dealing with swearing in *Lotus* by Egerton (1939)

Table 3. Percentages of strategies used by Egerton (1939)

| Strategies | Mitigation | Functional Equivalence | Literal Translation | Total Maintained | Total Omitted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Percentages | 15.41% | 10.52% | 62.78% | 88.72% | 11.27% |

As far as Roy's version is concerned, Figure 2 and Table 4 below show that all the 266 instances of swearing in the corpus are maintained. Of all the strategies used, literal translation is the most favored since 231 examples are literally rendered, making up 86.84% of the total. Significantly, about nine percent of the total number of instances are rendered by using intensification strategy whilst fewer than five percent are mitigated or softened in vulgar or offensive tone. None of the instances in this dataset were omitted from the translation.

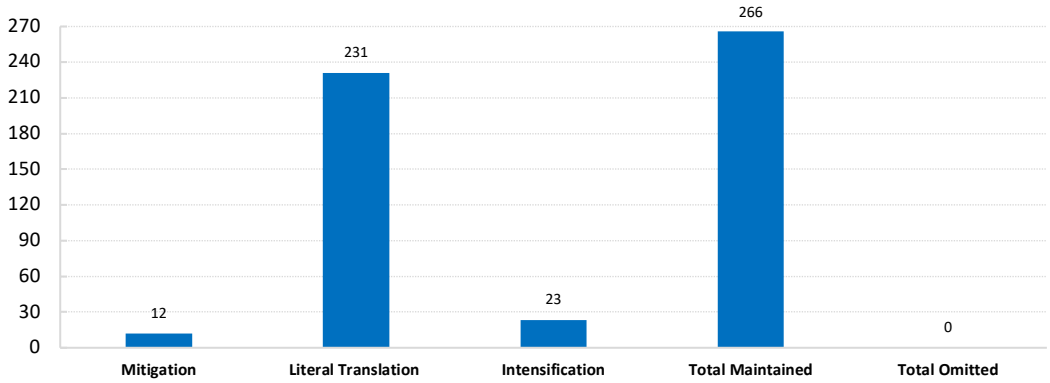


Figure 2. Frequencies of strategies used for dealing with swearing in *Plum* by Roy

Table 4. Percentages of strategies used by Roy

| Strategies | Mitigation | Literal translation | Intensification | Total maintained | Total omitted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Percentages | 4.51% | 86.84% | 8.64% | 100% | 0 |

The statistical analysis reveals that there is a significant retention in the number of swearwords in the two translations. The analysis also shows that both translators follow a similar tendency of finding solutions (e.g. literal translation) for dealing with swearing in

fictive dialogue. The tendency is not to shy away from offensive or bawdy language but to maintain as many swearwords as possible in the target texts, and there are only a few instances omitted in Egerton's version.

## 6. Qualitative analysis

The qualitative analysis aimed to confirm the statistical results generated by the quantitative analysis and to analyze the results or ramifications of the translators' decisions. All the 'coupled pairs' (i.e. the source- and target-text segments) were juxtaposed and categorized according to the taxonomy of swearing given in Table 1. To facilitate analysis, the taboo expressions are highlighted in bold in the excerpts, which are identified as ST (source text) and TT (target text), with the letter 'a' referring to Egerton's translation and 'b' to Roy's version. All the examples are numbered sequentially.

### *6.1. Cathartic swearing*

Cathartic swearing is used by the speaker to communicate strong emotions. It is often used instinctively by the speaker when something unpleasant or unexpected happens (Wajnryb, 2005, p. 25), and is not intended to offend others but is used simply to vent personal emotions. Swearing tends to be cathartic when it is uttered when there are no audiences present. It can be targeted at inanimate objects to vent feelings and frustration. The following examples show how this type of swearing fares in the two translations.

(1) ST: 金蓮道:"不是這等說,***賊三寸強盜***,那鼠腹雞腸的心兒,只好有三寸大一般……

a: "You don't know that ***cheap bandit***," Jinlian cried. "His mind is like a rat's belly, and his guts like a chicken's, not more than three inches long…

b: "That's not it at all," said Chin-lien. "It's just that ***that lousy three-inch good-for-nothing of a ruffian*** has a: Rat-stomach chicken-gut, heart with a capacity of no more than three inches…

In example (1), the character, Jinlian, is uttering the expletive *賊三寸強盜* to vent her frustration behind her husband who often treats her unfairly. In (1a), the expletive is rendered as "cheap bandit", a functional equivalent which can express in English a similar feeling or emotion. In (1b), a literal translation of *賊三寸強盜* as "that lousy three-inch good-for-nothing of a ruffian" keeps the wording of the ST. Yet, this solution reduces idiomaticity of the swearing and lacks a colloquial dimension.

(2) ST: 待西門慶出了門,口裡喃喃吶吶罵道:"***賊作死的強盜***,把人妝出去殺了才是好漢！…… ***賊不逢好死變心的強盜***！"

a: When Jinlian saw her cat destroyed, she sat on her bed and did not move. "***You thief***," she muttered as Ximen Qing went away, "taking people's property and killing it. … ***You treacherous villain***! ***You changeable creature***! ***You will come to a bad end***."

b: … and waited until he had vacated her quarters, muttering to herself, as she cursed him, saying, "***You lousy death-defying ruffian***! If you had only dragged me out and killed me, it would have been more heroic of you. …***you lousy fickle ruffian***!"

In example (2), the utterance *賊作死的強盜* in the ST is rustic and colloquial, signaling outrage and disgust on the part of the speaker, Jinlian. It is simplified as "You thief" in (2a), an epithet which has a clear, concise meaning for the target reader. As for "*賊不逢好死變心的強盜*", it is preserved in (1a) by using three separate sentences, which conveys the pragmatic effect of the original. By contrast, the English renderings in (2b) keeps close to the ST in semantic meaning and syntax. Both "You lousy death-defying ruffian" and "you lousy fickle ruffian" sound prudish and unnatural, although they fulfil the function of expressing anger and frustration. In sum, both translations fail to reflect a cathartic outburst as they sound like abusive swearing. Yet, (1a) appears fluent and more accessible to the target audience in terms of colloquial coloring.

***6.2 Abusive swearing***

Unlike cathartic swearing, abusive swearing is intended to offend others and inflict harm, particularly when a hearer is present. This category of swearing is derogatory in tone and entails metaphorical curses (Wajnryb, 2005, p. 17). In *JPM*, there are many instances of abusive swearing occurring in characters' verbal exchanges. The main function of abusive swearing is to insult others out of anger and jealousy. Abusive swearing in *JPM* is highly flexible and involves complexity, as evidenced by the characters' use of various terms and phrases. Consider the following prime examples:

(3) ST: 姐姐還嗔我罵他,乾淨一家子都養漢,是個***明王八***！把個***王八花子***也裁派將來,早晚好做***勾使鬼***。

a: It looks as though, in this household, almost everybody has a lover in secret. They are ***turtles openly*** and even send their ***young turtles*** here so that those young turtles can ***help them in their evil games***.

b: The fact is that their whole household collaborates in affairs like this. Her mate is ***an open cuckold***, and yet our husband continues to support ***that beggar of a cuckold***. In the future he may well prove to be as fatal as ***a ghost-snatching demon***."

Here in this example, Jinlian is verbally insulting her love rival using very strong expletive terms *明王八*, *王八花子*, and *勾使鬼* to express her hatred and resentment. The swearword *王八* in the ST indicates a man whose wife has an affair with other men whereas the term *勾使鬼* refers to seductive men or women in the context of the exchange. In (3a), *明王八* and *王八花子* are rendered verbatim as "turtles openly" and "young turtles", which are literal translations, expressing the denotative sense of the ST. However, *勾使鬼*

is mitigated by paraphrasing it as "help them in their evil games". The lexical choices used in (3a) fulfil the same function as the original in terms of emotive or offensive force, although they fail to reveal the cultural connotations of the ST. Unlike (3a), the translated swearwords, "an open cuckold" and "that beggar of a cuckold" in (3b) are functional equivalents, manifesting the connotative sense or pragmatic function of the swearword *王八*. Yet, the term *勾使鬼* is translated verbatim as "a ghost-snatching demon", which, while offensive, lacks colloquial tone in English.

(4) ST: 婦人道:"我不好罵出來的,甚麼瓶姨,***鳥姨***,題那***淫婦***做甚,奴好心不得好報……

a: "I can't tell you what I think of you," Jinlian said. "And what do I care for ***that woman***? Why do you bring ***her*** into it? I had to wait for what I wanted …."

b: "I'd only be wasting my breath on you!" said the woman. "My sister P'ing-erh! ***Sister my prick***! What are you dragging ***that whore*** into it for? As far as I'm concerned: Even the best intentions go quite unrequited....

Swearwords like *鳥姨* and *淫婦* in example (4) are omitted in (4a). Certainly, (1a) is mollified in terms of the offensive and aggressive nature reflected in the ST. In (4b), however, the two terms are rendered with strong taboo words in English, such as "prick" and "whore". Hence, unlike (4a), which is a much milder version, (4b) manages to reflect the vulgar, taboo quality of the character's speech in the verbal exchange.

(5) ST: 又說:"你本***蝦鱔***,腰裡無力,平白買將這行貨子來戲弄老娘！把你當塊肉兒,原來是個中看不中吃***臘槍頭***,***死王八***!"

a: "There is no strength in your loins," she cried. "You are ***no better than an eel***. What is the use of buying things like these? You have deceived me. I thought you a piece of good meat, but I find you are only good to look at, not to eat. You are like ***a waxen spearhead***, ***a dead turtle***."

b: "You're just ***like a shrimp or an eel***," she railed at him, "with no real strength in your loins. What's the point of your buying all this junk to titillate your old lady with? I thought I was getting a real hunk of meat, but it turns out you're: Good enough to look at, but not fit to eat. You're about as much use as a '***pewter spearhead***, or a '***dead turtle***'!"

Unlike previous cases, example (5) shows that similar lexical choices, namely swearwords with the animal theme, are used by the translators to render *蝦鱔*, *臘槍頭*, and *死王八*, in the ST. In this sense, both (5a) and (5b) contribute to conveying similar level of offensiveness. The same is true of the next two examples.

(6) ST: 被婦人啐在臉上道:"呸！***濁東西***！你是個男子漢,自不做主,卻聽別人調遣 ……

a: "Pah, ***you vile creature***!" his wife shouted, and spat in his face. "You, a grown-up man, have no will of your own, but have to do whatever anybody tells you."

b: "Phooey!" the woman said, spitting right in his face, "***you stupid clod***! You call yourself a man, yet you can't make up your mind about anything, but let yourself be manipulated by others."

In example (6), the swearing term *濁東西* is directed at unsavory people who are simple and not intelligent. In (6a), the term is rendered as "you vile creature", which is very similar to "you stupid clod" in (6b). Both translations therefore maintain the swearing of the ST using functional equivalents that sound rude and offensive in English.

(7) ST: 姑娘道:"張四,你這***老花根,老奴才,老粉嘴***,你恁騙口張舌的好淡扯,到明日死了時, 不使了繩子扛子。"

a: "Zhang the Fourth, ***you offshoot of generations of beggars***, ***you miserable old slave***, ***you old mealy mouth***, how dare you be such a humbug and talk like this? What utter nonsense! There will be no cords to tie your coffin when you die."

b: "Chang the Fourth!" Aunt Yang retorted. "***You old beggar***! ***You old slave***! ***You old mealy mouth***! If you keep on talking such rot with your: Deceitful mouth and duplicitous tongue, you'll die so poor your family won't be able to afford the rope to hoist your coffin with!"

In example (7), swearing phrases like *老花根*, *老奴才*, and *老粉嘴* in the ST are derogatory and aggressive in their intent. They are not toned down, but instead faithfully rendered in (7a) and (7b). While the target reader may get bewildered by, for instance, the name-calling "You old mealy mouth", both English texts fulfil the same function of name-calling by reflecting the vulgar, offensive tone of the original. Thus, readers of either translation may find it easy to access the force of the utterance. It is also interesting that translators introduce greater lexical variety as they seldom resort to English archetypal swearwords, such as the four-letter word, fuck.

### *6.3 Social swearing*

Social swearing differs significantly from cathartic swearing and abusive swearing. As noted by Wajnryb (2005, p. 34), social swearing is used by people in relaxed settings to create an easygoing atmosphere in casual conversations. It is not intended to offend others or to register strong or negative emotions. Also, social swearing is used by the speaker when listeners or addressees are present, who are comfortable with each other. Therefore, social swearing is highly context-dependent. Below is a detailed analysis of instances of social swearing and their English renderings.

(8) ST: 月娘看不上,說道:"你真個***恁涎臉涎皮***的！我叫丫頭進來。"……月娘忍不住笑道:"***沒羞的貨***,頭跟前也調個謊兒。"

a: "You are ***an utterly shameless fellow***. I shall call the maid," she cried. … Yueniang could not help laughing. "***You worthless rascal***," she said. "Now you're trying to play tricks with my maid."

b: Yueh-niang could abide it no longer and said, "If you're really going to carry on that **shamelessly**, I'll call the maid." …Yueh-niang couldn't help laughing. "***What a shameless character***," she said. "Even the maids have to put up with your barefaced effrontery."

In the ST, both *恁涎臉涎皮* and *沒羞的貨* are swearing expressions that are not intended to offend the hearer. Here the character, Yueniang, uses swearing simply to express her joy in the presence of her husband. In (8a) and (8b), however, both expletives are turned into abusive swearing and the character's tone of voice is altered in the context of this dialogue. This may mislead the reader to believe that the two characters are hostile to each other.

(9) ST: 西門慶尋到那裡,說道:"***好小油嘴兒***！你輸了棋子,卻躲在這裡"。那婦人見西門慶來,昵笑不止,說道:"***怪行貨子***！孟三兒輸了,你不敢禁他,卻來纏我！" (p. 89)

a: "Here, ***little oily mouth***," Ximen Qing cried, and ran after her, "you lose, and then you run away." Jinlian laughed at him. "***You wonderful creature***," she cried, "it was Yulou you beat, go and bother her instead of coming and plaguing me."

b: When His-meng Ch'ing located her, he said, "All right, ***little oily mouth***! It was you who lost the game, and now you're trying to hide over here, are you?" When the woman saw His-men Ch'ing coming, she broke into giggles, saying, "***You crazy good-for-nothing***! It was Meng the Third who lost, but you didn't dare enforce the rules on her, but have come to bother me instead."

In example (9), *好小油嘴兒* refers to someone who has a glib tongue while 怪行貨子 indicates someone who is a bad egg. The two expletives used here in the dialogue are not intended to show negative emotions but are used to exchange banter with each other. However, in (9a) and (9b), both translators render the social swearing into abusive insults, which changes the emphatic or euphonic tone of the original. Similar situation can be observed in the next three examples.

(10) ST: 李瓶兒道:"你這***老貨***,偏有這些胡枝扯葉的。你明日不來,我和你答話！"(p. 338)

a: "Oh, ***you old rogue***," Li Ping'er said, "you always find some excuse. If you do not turn up tomorrow, you shall see what happens."

b: "***You old baggage***!" exclaimed Li P'ing-erh. "You're never content unless you can: Fool with the branches and tug at the leaves."

In example (10), Li Ping'er does not use *老貨* to insult her addressee but she uses it jokingly as she has close relationship with the latter. In (10a), the translator renders this swearing with the very strong insult "you old rogue", thereby turning the social or phatic use of the swearword into an abusive insult. In (10b), *老貨* is directly rendered as "You old baggage", which detracts from the ST meaning and may cause confusion for the target reader.

Likewise, in examples (11) and (12), the swearing *小淫婦兒* in the ST is used in an affectionate manner to create ambience. It shows affection rather than offence. It is in effect a diminutive habitually used by the character Ximen Qing throughout the novel.

(11) ST: 西門慶笑道:"***小淫婦兒***,你過來。你若有本事,把他咂過了,我輸一兩銀子與你。"

a: Ximen Qing laughed. "Come here, ***you little strumpet***, he said, "and see if your mouth can make this smaller; if you can, I'll give you a tael of silver."

b: "***You little whore***," Hsi-men Ch'ing exclaimed with a laugh, "come over here. If you have the talent to suck it to ejaculation, I'll forfeit a tael of silver to you."

(12) ST: 西門慶口中呼叫道:"***小淫婦兒***,你怕我不怕？再敢無禮不敢？"

a: "Now, ***little strumpet***," Ximen Qing cried, "are you afraid of me or not? Will you ever treat me disrespectfully again?"

b: "***You little whore***!" Hsi-men Ch'ing blurted out at her. "Are you afraid of me, or not? Will you ever dare to treat me so disrespectfully again?"

Both translators, however, express *小淫婦兒* in their translations through name-calling. In (11a) and (12a), "little strumpet" is a derogatory and strongly abusive term woman in English. In (11b) and (12b), "you little whore" refers to a lewd or unchaste woman in the target culture. Thus, both translations become abusive swearing by a mere change in the character's tone of voice.

### *6.4 Idiomatic swearing*

Swearing of this kind uses idioms or colloquialisms whose meaning cannot be easily deduced from the meanings of the individual words. According to Pinker (2008, p. 350), idiomatic swearing indicates the use of set phrases and fixed expressions to express strong emotions. Often, the literal meaning of idiomatic swearing gives way to its figurative meaning which works in specific context. As Fernández Dobao (2006, p. 240) puts it, what matters is the emotional charge of swearwords for it evinces the speaker's emotion and attitude. This suggests that idiomatic swearing in certain contexts cannot be rendered literally into the target language. The following five examples reveal how idiomatic swearing is treated by the translators.

(13) ST: 反吃婦人整罵了四五日,罵道:"呸！***蜜麵混沌***,你成日放著正事兒不理……

a: "***You idiot***," she cried, "you have never paid the slightest attention to your own affairs; you have spent all your time chasing after women ...
b: "Phooey! ***You muddleheaded troll!***" she railed at him. "Day after day you neglected your proper concerns…"

In example (13), the archaic expression *魍魎混沌* refers to silly or stupid people. In (13a), the English swearing "You idiot" well reflects the natural informality of the ST. In (13b), the translator selects a dictionary equivalent to render *魍魎混沌* as "You muddleheaded troll", which sounds offensive but less colloquial compared to the ST.

The swearing *黃貓兒黑尾* in example (14) is a colloquial fixed expression, indicating someone who commits evil deeds secretly, while the colloquial term *焦尾靶* is used to curse those who have no offspring. In (14a) and (14b), both idiomatic phrases are literally rendered into English. The result is that the pungent tone of the ST swearing is lost and the earthy, colloquial effect also fades away.

(14) ST: 張四道:"……不似你這老殺才,搬著大引著小,***黃貓兒黑尾***。"…… 張四道: "你這嚼舌頭老淫婦,掙將錢來***焦尾靶***,怪不得你無兒無女。"
a: Zhang the fourth retorted, "… I am not your sort, ripe for the slaughter, one who takes up with the rich and deceives the humble. ***You are like a yellow cat with a black tail.***" … "You garrulous old whore, you want the money yourself to ***put a little warmth under your tail***. No wonder you never had any children!"
b: "I'm not out for anybody's money," said Chang the Fourth. "…You old gallows bird! You're out to: Snatch the big, and Snitch the little. ***You may be a brown cat, but you've got a black tail***." …You waggle-tongued old whore!" replied Chang the Fourth. "You've had to work so hard for your money ***you've burnt out your tail***. No wonder you don't have any children."

(15) ST: 晚夕,西門大姐在房內又罵經濟:"賊囚根子,……***毛司裡磚兒一又臭又硬***……"
a: Ximen Dajie said to him: "You villain! … ***She is like a tile out of the privy, hard and stinking***. She always thinks she is better than anybody else. …
b: Hsi-men Ta-chieh also took Ch'en Ching-chi to task, saying, "You lousy jailbird! ... ***Like the bricks in the privy: She is both hard and smelly*** ...

In example (15), the idiomatic expression *毛司裡磚兒一又臭又硬* carries a strong emotional force but is also used as source of humor. In (15a), a simile is used to reproduce the humorous effect. Similarly, in (15b), a vulgar, aggressive tone is manifested by using a simile. In example (16) below, the colloquial expression *三寸丁谷樹皮* is quite a strong insult to show contempt for others in the source culture.

(16) ST: 西門慶聽,跌腳笑道:"莫不是人叫他***三寸丁谷樹皮***的武大麼?"

a: When Ximen Qing heard this, he nearly jumped out of his chair. “You can’t mean that Wu Da whom people call ***Tom Thumb or Old Scraggy Bark***.”

b: When Hsi-men Ch’ing heard this he stamped his feet and laughed.“You don’t mean to say he’s the Wu the Elder, whom everyone calls the ***Three-inch Mulberry-bark Manikin***, do you?”

In (16a), 三寸丁 is replaced with “Tom Thumb”, an English euphemism, while 谷樹皮 is rendered verbatim as “Old Scraggy Bark”, which diminishes the satiric tone and reduces emotional intensity of the ST swearing. In (16b), “Three-inch Mulberry-bark Manikin”, a word-for-word transfer of the original, does weaken the character’s tone of voice in terms of vulgarity and offensiveness.

(17) ST: 那旁邊多口的,認的他有名叫做***陶扒灰***,一連娶三個媳婦,都吃他扒了……

a: Unfortunately, the garrulous fellow knew all about the old man’s reputation. He had three daughters-in-law, and his relations with all of them had been such that he had been given a rude nickname in consequence.

b: The busybody by his side recognized the oldster to be the notorious ***Crudcrawler Tao***, who was known to have "crawled in the crud" successively with all three of his daughters-in-law.

In example (17), the idiomatic swearing *扒灰* suggests a man who has illicit sexual relations with his daughter(s)-in-law in the source culture. In (17a), the term 扒灰 is simply omitted and hence the satirical tone disappears from the English text. It is nevertheless rendered literally as “Crudcrawler Tao” in (17b), which can be called a neologism. Moreover, an endnote is also provided to explain this freshly minted term.

(18) ST: 月娘便道: “莫不孟三姐也**腊月里萝卜——动个心**，忽剌八要往前进嫁人？

a: “That is Sister Meng,” Yueniang said. “I shall never remarry.”

b: “It must be Sister Meng the Third that he’s referring to,” said Yueh-niang. “It would seem

that: Even during the twelfth month the frozen heart of the turnip is capable of being moved.

All of a sudden, she wants to better her condition by marrying someone, does she?

In the source text (ST), the idiomatic expression *腊月里萝卜—动个心* is used to describe Sister Meng as unfaithful and unchaste. This swearing expression, when translated literally, refers to a radish in the twelfth lunar month, implying a sense of coldness or lack of warmth, and *动个心* suggests a change of heart or fickleness. Thus, the swearing portrays Sister Meng as someone who has a changeable nature and lacks loyalty, deciding

to marry another man after her husband's death. In (18a), the swearing is omitted, resulting in a simplification of the entire Chinese passage. This omission removes the layers of meaning embedded in the idiomatic swearing, particularly the intended satirical or abusive tone. Consequently, the translation loses the nuance of the original text, failing to convey the critical and disapproving attitude towards Sister Meng's actions. In contrast, in (18b), the idiomatic expletive is maintained through a detailed explanation of the Chinese swearword. By doing so, the translation preserves the original tone, connotation, and its pragmatic meaning. It effectively communicates the idea that Sister Meng is viewed as an unchaste woman who seeks to improve her circumstances by marrying another man. It ensures that the reader understands the depth of the critique aimed at Sister Meng, maintaining the integrity and intent of the source text.

The above qualitative analysis shows that different categories of swearing in *JPM* are mostly maintained in the two English translations. More precisely, Egerton opts to render swearing in a fluent, readable manner, making them more accessible to the target reader, whereas Roy tends to translate swearing in a word-for-word fashion, preserving all of them in the translation. It is noticeable that some instances of cathartic swearing and social swearing are changed into abusive, offensive utterances. Furthermore, idiomatic swearing tends to lose the offensive tone or colloquial color because of the strategies used by the two translators. All this inevitably changes the stylistic or pragmatic implications of swearing used by characters. As changes to the way the characters express themselves may "result in changes in the characters themselves" (Maher, 2012, p. 374), these micro-level lexical choices end up influencing the target reader's perception of the fictional events and of characters' idiolects, feelings, emotions, and their mutual relations in the story.

## 7. Conclusion

This paper, based on the DTS paradigm, has sought to explore the way swearing in the dialogue of the novel *JPM* is translated into English. It has achieved three main objectives stated in Section 4.

First, the study shows that there is no significant reduction in swearwords in either of the English translations. This finding seems to contradict the results reported in previous studies which suggest that translators have a general tendency to delete or neutralize offensive and taboo language in their translations (Horton, 1998; Linder, 2000; Greenall, 2011a; Maher, 2012; Sanz Gallego, 2013).

The results of this study demonstrate that the translational patterns in the treatment of swearing are similar for the two translators. Rather than balking at taboo terms, both translators adopt literal translation as their dominant strategy to maintain the majority of swearing instances in the corpus. The main difference is that Egerton omits a few instances while Roy does not delete any. This may be for technical reasons, such as the translator's bilingual competence, and the incommensurable differences between the source and target languages and cultures in terms of using swearing and taboo language in literature. Additionally, this may also be attributable to the specified *skopos* of the two translations

since both translators claim to offer a complete English version of the novel for their intended readers (Egerton, 1939, vol.1, p. vi; Roy, 1993, p. xlviii, my emphasis). Indeed, given that the Chinese work had been banned for many years, the inclusion of various forms of taboo language in the translated versions could serve as a titillating factor and function as a selling point for Western readers. By incorporating the allure of the transgressive or the forbidden, this strategy serves to infuse the narrative with a sense of authenticity and realism, pushing the boundaries of artistic expression, and enhancing its appeal. Since the two English translations of *JPM* were produced at different historical periods, it should be noted that the offensive intensity of translated swear words and expressions may vary for readers across these different timeframes. In Egerton's version, some of the expressions were likely to produce a strong emotional impact on readers of the translator's era, namely the 1920s and 1930s. This is because swearwords or taboo language in general were commonly found in literary works during that time, such as *Ulysses* and many other modernist texts. These modernist works created a sensation due to their experimental and transgressive nature in literary language and aesthetic innovation. Significantly, taboo language often undergoes transformation in terms of offensive nature over the course of time. In the case of Egerton's translation, some of the words and expressions that carried abusive and insulting meanings at the time, as exemplified in (3), (11) and (16), no longer come across as offensive or dysphemistic. As Allan and Burridge (2009) postulate, swearing patterns are subject to ongoing evolution, and what is considered offensive can change with time. For example, outside of Islam, blasphemous and religiously prophane language is no longer perceived as offensive by the majority of speakers; instead, it has been supplanted by expressions of a more explicit and sexually oriented nature (Allan and Burridge, 2009, p. 379). This shift reflects a natural process of linguistic desensitization, the well-recognized fact of lexical life that words (and particularly swearwords) wear out over time. Thus, it is essential to take into account the evolving historical context when interpreting and evaluating the pragmatic function of swear words and taboo language in literary works, including in different translations of the same source text produced at different historical moments.

While this case study confirms that instances of swearing and taboo language are mostly maintained in each of the two target texts, shifts in tone, register, and pragmatic function are still evident. This is because the perception of swearing is context-dependent, and the offensiveness, colloquial color, and emotional evocations vary across languages and cultures (Stapleton, 2020, p. 381). Thus, some of the implicatures (e.g., characters' tone of voice, identity, social relations, etc.) that can be perceived by the source text's readers would not be easily accessible to the target audiences. This aligns with Fernández Fernández's observation that "swearing has traditionally been a problem and many solutions tend to be too bland or too close to the original" (2009, p. 225). In this sense, swearing offers a privileged space for understanding the cultures we translate from and into, because it is a site where linguistic and cultural heterogeneities need to be identified,

mediated, and negotiated so as to avoid evoking the wrong kind of connotations and tones of voice.

This paper represents a modest contribution to the study of taboo language in translation. It should be noted, however, that the findings generated in it are not generalizable to literary translation more broadly, since the analysis relies on a small-scale corpus for both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Further research could involve establishing a larger corpus or utilizing specialized computer software tools to comprehensively study all instances of taboo language present in the Chinese novel and their English counterparts in the two translations, in order to obtain more generalizable results.

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# A LEGENDAGEM PARA PORTUGUÊS EUROPEU DO NADSAT EM *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE* (1971)

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RESUMO: O objetivo deste artigo é a identificação das estratégias utilizadas na tradução para legendagem em português da língua ficcional Nadsat no filme *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), disponível na plataforma de streaming HBO Max, tendo em conta tanto as particularidades do meio audiovisual como o facto de esta ser uma língua característica da história, das personagens e do mundo em que se insere. Apesar de existirem vários estudos sobre a tradução do Nadsat em literatura, não existem estudos sobre a sua tradução para o audiovisual, muito menos para o português. Concluiu-se que a estratégia menos utilizada foi a Manutenção, pelo que se observou uma padronização de grande parte dos termos em Nadsat havendo, consequentemente, uma grande diminuição de instâncias de língua ficcional na legendagem em português.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Tradução Audiovisual; Legendagem; Estratégias de Tradução; Nadsat; Língua Ficcional

## 1. Introdução

*A Clockwork Orange* (1962) é o livro mais conhecido de Anthony Burgess, e a sua adaptação cinematográfica tornou-se num dos filmes mais conhecidos de Stanley Kubrick. No livro, a narrativa passa-se num futuro distópico onde seguimos Alex, o narrador, e o seu gangue de adolescentes, que obtêm um enorme prazer ao infligir violência. Uma das características mais evidentes desta obra é a existência de uma língua ficcional baseada no russo, denominada Nadsat, que é o sufixo russo para 'teen' (Burgess, 2012b). Como o próprio autor refere, esta é de grande importância para a narrativa:

> The language of both movie and book (…) is no mere decoration (…) It was meant to turn *A Clockwork Orange* into, among other things, a brainwashing primer. You read the book or see the film, and at the end you should find yourself in possession of a minimal Russian vocabulary — without effort, with surprise. This is the way brainwashing works (Burgess, 2012, p. 250).

O brainwashing linguístico do leitor pode ser ligado àquele que Alex sofre numa dimensão mais evidente e violenta. Há, portanto, uma intenção por parte do autor de uma imersão gradual nesta língua ficcional, contextualizando as palavras de forma que os leitores consigam inferir o seu significado[1]. O autor mostrou-se sempre, e por esse motivo, contra a inserção de glossários na sua obra (Maher, 2010). Na adaptação cinematográfica, Kubrick enfrenta a limitação temporal característica de uma obra cinematográfica para imersão do

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[1] Para mais informações, consultar também Kingsley Amis (2012), Martin Amis (2012), Biswell (2012), Hyman (2012) e Ricks (2012).

público (no Nadsat e neste mundo). Consequentemente, o público terá de, para além de adquirir esta língua ficcional num curto espaço de tempo, adquiri-la pela audição (quando se fala apenas dos recetores do filme na cultura de partida). Estes dois fatores terão certamente influenciado escolhas feitas quanto à utilização do Nadsat no filme e à forma como esta língua é apresentada ao público. Havendo alterações na forma de expressão do Nadsat que surgem à partida devido a diferenças entre o meio escrito da obra de Burgess e o meio audiovisual para o qual a obra está a ser adaptada, irão também surgir diferenças no que diz respeito à tradução literária e à tradução para legendagem.

No caso em que seja realizada a tradução desta língua ficcional, considera-se que seria importante ter em consideração as intenções iniciais do autor, a função do Nadsat na narrativa, na caracterização das personagens e até mesmo na representação da violência e do que esta simboliza na história. *A Clockwork Orange* sofreu, desde a sua publicação, várias críticas sobre a utilização de violência gratuita, levando Burgess a referir que as suas escolhas e toda a violência utilizada na história eram necessárias para mostrar a importância do poder de escolha:

> What my, and Kubrick's, parable tries to state is that it is preferable to have a world of violence undertaken in full awareness — violence chosen as an act of will — than a world conditioned to be good or harmless (Burgess, 2012, p. 248).

O Nadsat apresenta aqui, também, uma grande importância não só pela sua utilização para classificar certas personagens como pela reflexão da violência inerente à narrativa e as suas flutuações ao longo desta. É de notar um maior uso de Nadsat em episódios violentos e nos capítulos iniciais da obra, e o seu menor uso em interações do protagonista com personagens adultas, na prisão e depois do "tratamento"[2] (Vincent & Clarke, 2017), o que pode também ser observado na adaptação cinematográfica.

Quando falamos em *A Clockwork Orange* podemos encontrar vários estudos feitos sobre a tradução da obra literária, com referência às dificuldades e problemas inerentes à tradução de Nadsat para outra língua, incluindo para português (Rodríguez, 2022). Contudo, não existem estudos sobre a tradução para legendagem da adaptação de Kubrick, sendo o filme apenas referenciado em artigos sobre tradução de línguas ficcionais para cinema e televisão como exemplo e não como objeto de estudo (Overbeeke, 2014). Considera-se que uma das principais razões para isto seja o facto de o Nadsat ser uma língua com características muito específicas, ligadas também à especificidade do meio, das escolhas de tradução que têm de ser feitas, que dependem fortemente de língua para língua, e da forma como as funções descritas podem ser mantidas ou transmitidas em culturas diferentes. Apesar de ser uma língua ficcional comparável às utilizadas em *O*

[2] Alex, depois de ter sido colocado na prisão, é selecionado para fazer parte de um tratamento que promete curar o desejo que sente por infligir violência. Contudo, este tratamento não o cura, mas sim fá-lo ficar doente só com o pensamento de magoar alguém. Isto faz com que não queira infligir violência, mas também que não se consiga defender. Ele abandona a violência não por sentir que é o caminho errado, mas sim por não querer a reação física que essas ações e pensamentos começaram a despoletar a partir do tratamento.

*Senhor dos Anéis* (1954) ou em *Avatar* (2009), Nadsat afasta-se destas por ter raízes em línguas reais, sendo construída e pensada tanto para ser nova e causar estranheza, como para ter algo de reconhecível.

Desta forma, analisar como esta língua ficcional é traduzida para o meio audiovisual em português europeu poderá revelar dados mais concretos sobre as possíveis dificuldades inerentes à sua tradução e às estratégias que poderão ter sido utilizadas para resolver essas dificuldades para esta língua e cultura. Devido às diferenças entre os meios literário e audiovisual, também as estratégias utilizadas, mesmo na tradução para a mesma língua, o português, podem divergir, de modo a moldarem-se às necessidades e expectativas que cada um dos meios impõe.

## 2. A tradução do Nadsat no contexto audiovisual

Apesar de as línguas ficcionais existirem tanto em literatura como em audiovisual, poderá observar-se uma diferença entre a sua presença em cada um dos meios. Primeiramente, em literatura estamos perante um meio onde estas palavras surgem escritas, ao contrário do audiovisual onde são maioritariamente faladas (Overbeeke, 2014, p. 2). Para além disto, não se tem a possibilidade de explicar, comentar ou adicionar informação entre parênteses no audiovisual (Overbeeke, 2014, p. 2), tendo este meio também mais variáveis envolvidas quanto à criação e transmissão da língua ficcional, como os guionistas, os atores e os produtores (Overbeeke, 2014, p. 2). Tudo isto faz com que estas línguas sejam criadas com diferentes objetivos (Overbeeke, 2014), pelo que quando olhamos para a adaptação cinematográfica de uma obra literária, como é o caso de *A Clockwork Orange*, todos estes elementos têm de ser tidos em conta para analisar os moldes nos quais esta língua ficcional surge. Mesmo ao falarmos de uma língua ficcional como o Nadsat, sobre a qual existem diversos estudos (Maher, 2010; Vincent & Clarke, 2017; Rodríguez, 2022), esta diferença de meios implicará também uma diferença entre as traduções realizadas em literatura e as traduções realizadas para a legendagem da adaptação. Ramos Pinto (2009) aborda como, no caso de variantes linguísticas, são muitas vezes encontradas num texto várias estratégias para a sua tradução, que diferem também entre a literatura e o audiovisual.

A presença de variantes linguísticas e dialetos explora elementos extralinguísticos com certos valores e hierarquias, fazendo com que a linguagem se torne num elemento importante para o processo de caracterização de um indivíduo ou grupo de indivíduos (Ramos Pinto, 2009, p. 291). Apesar de o Nadsat ser uma língua ficcional, tem raízes em línguas reais, podendo ser visto como uma socioleto pois é utilizado por um grupo muito específico de adolescentes, sendo esta uma das características de identificação e caracterização destes indivíduos. Deste modo, é uma língua que define um perfil sociocultural destas personagens, bem como a sua posição na hierarquia sociocultural (Ramos Pinto, 2009, p. 291).

Quanto ao audiovisual, muitas vezes também se tem em conta o facto de certas características não terem de ser identificadas apenas através da variante linguística que uma personagem utiliza, mas contar com o apoio dos elementos extralinguísticos

presentes na imagem para caracterizar, por exemplo, o seu estatuto social (Ramos Pinto, 2009). Contudo, no caso do Nadsat, existem fatores importantes associados também à língua em si, como a estranheza inerente a uma língua desconhecida, a intenção de experienciar uma imersão num mundo diferente através desta língua desconhecida e a sua aprendizagem enquanto se acompanha a história e se pensa sobre ela.

Como se pôde observar até agora, o Nadsat é uma língua ficcional com várias camadas para análise. Para além dos fatores já mencionados, as palavras que compõem esta língua podem relacionar-se com palavras tabu. No seu artigo de 2022, Xavier refere como as palavras tabu estão relacionadas com certos temas e tópicos que são de certa forma censurados por uma ou outra cultura. Podem estas ser consideradas proibidas ou ofensivas tendo em conta certos valores característicos do contexto em que são utilizadas (Xavier, 2022, p. 67). Para além disto, são palavras que podem, tal como as variantes linguísticas, dar informação sobre quem as utiliza, caracterizando esse indivíduo ou grupo de indivíduos, bem como dar informação sobre a posição hierárquica das personagens e o seu estatuto sociocultural (Xavier, 2022, p. 68). Como já foi referido, o Nadsat é utilizado por um grupo de indivíduos muito violento, numa sociedade onde a violência está de certa forma quase fora de controlo. As palavras utilizadas por estes indivíduos possuem uma grande carga violenta e ofensiva, sendo mesmo caracterizadas por Malamatidou (2017, p. 3) como uma manifestação linguística da violência da história, pelo que os leitores ou espectadores conseguem senti-lo através do contexto em que são utilizadas, mesmo inicialmente não sabendo o seu significado. Palavras como 'in-out' (sexo), 'yarblockos' (testículos) ou 'soomaka' (velha) são exemplos que ajudam, numa análise inicial, a relacionar esta língua com o tabu. Ao contrário do que acontece normalmente com palavras tabu (Xavier, 2022), as palavras em Nadsat não são, de um ponto de vista linguístico, na sua maioria, semelhantes a outras palavras reconhecíveis em inglês. Mesmo assim, a forte influência de normas sociais na legendagem pode influenciar as estratégias de tradução para audiovisual do Nadsat tal como influencia a tradução e legendagem de tabu (Xavier, 2022).

Quanto à tradução do Nadsat, Malamatidou refere o seguinte: "translations of *A Clockwork Orange* need to create a local version of Nadsat in the target language, instead of employing a universal version of it." (Malamatidou, 2017, p. 3), declarando que traduções que mantenham elementos russos na construção do Nadsat para outra língua são normalmente consideradas mais eficazes (neste caso, o estudo refere-se às traduções literárias da obra). É, desta forma, necessário certo grau de criatividade para a tradução do Nadsat. Contudo, Malamatidou (2017, p. 6) refere que nem sempre uma maior utilização de criatividade em tradução corresponde a uma melhor tradução, pois existem vários fatores internos e externos à língua de chegada que podem influenciar um maior ou menor uso de certos tipos de adaptação linguística. Apesar do papel do tradutor, a sua criatividade na tradução de uma língua como o Nadsat pode também depender da "successful identification and interpretation of creativity in the source text" (Malamatidou, 2017, p. 21). Estes aspetos, mencionados relativamente à tradução literária de *A Clockwork Orange*,

consideram-se de grande relevância também para a tradução para legendagem, onde existem, como dito anteriormente, certos aspetos e restrições que fazem com que o tradutor do audiovisual tenha de considerar métodos criativos diferentes daqueles utilizados pelos tradutores literários para a tradução do Nadsat. Como conclui Malamatidou, "the creativity translators demonstrate is not simply an indication of their talent, but the result of a complex interplay of factors" (2017, p. 22).

De entre os estudos sobre Nadsat realizados no contexto literário, considera-se importante destacar também a análise de Maher (2010) sobre a tradução desta língua ficcional para italiano. Primeiramente, Maher analisa a estrutura do Nadsat em ligação com a parte que esta língua tem na narrativa e caracterização das personagens, principalmente de Alex, referindo o seguinte:

> (…) this unusual argot mirrors the alternative world in which Alex lives – the novel's language, like its setting, is somewhat familiar to the reader, but at the same time frequently strange and shocking. In this way, the very language of the novel reflects central elements of its plot. (Maher, 2010, p. 37),

acompanhando o desenvolvimento de Alex ao longo da narrativa. Aquilo que Maher (2010, p. 38) destacou como mais evidente na comparação entre o texto de partida e o texto de chegada em italiano foi o facto de que a tradução omite maior parte das influências do russo existentes na narração de Alex, passando este a utilizar uma linguagem com base em variações de palavras italianas de origem regional ou dialetal (Maher, 2010, p. 38). O resultado (aliado a outros fatores, como a normalização das estruturas frásicas utilizadas por Alex) é que desaparecem os elementos desconhecidos que existiam até para o leitor do texto de partida e, consequentemente, o mundo de Alex é domesticado, tendo o leitor do texto de chegada uma experiência mais familiar e menos desafiante a nível linguístico e cultural (Maher, 2010, p. 46). Contudo, é também de notar que fatores externos podem ter influenciado a escolha desta estratégia de tradução, como por exemplo a aversão que a cultura de chegada pode ter, historicamente, em relação a literatura experimental (Maher, 2010, p. 48) que Malamatidou (2017) também refere como um dos fatores que podem influenciar a criatividade na construção de uma língua ficcional através da tradução. O mundo criado pela tradução italiana que Maher (2010) analisa é, desta forma, um mundo diferente daquele criado por Burgess, pelo que a experiência dos leitores revela, também, diferir entre as duas culturas. Para esta conclusão, Maher refere o seguinte: "Any translator of *A Clockwork Orange* needs to begin by considering the rhetorical purpose of the text's linguistic experimentation before embarking upon the translation" (Maher, 2010, p. 49). Considera-se que esta conclusão se pode aplicar não só às traduções desta obra para literatura, mas também na tradução para legendagem da adaptação cinematográfica, onde o Nadsat não perde importância ou nenhuma das suas funções já descritas. É, pois, relevante pensar sobre como a conclusão a que chega Maher (2010) se pode relacionar com a tradução desta obra para português, tanto em literatura como no audiovisual.

Vincent e Clarke, no seu artigo 'The language of *A Clockwork Orange*: A corpus stylistic approach to Nadsat' (2017), analisam a obra de Burgess, para a qual propuseram a criação de um sistema de *corpus* em que dividem palavras ou expressões de Nadsat em sete categorias, que também foram estudadas por Rodríguez (2022). Neste artigo, os autores consideram que é importante identificar o que é esta língua ficcional, o que a compõe, como é construída e como funciona para que se possa pensar sobre como a traduzir. É percebendo como funciona o Nadsat que se consegue analisar a forma como esta língua poderá ser aprendida através da obra em questão, quer se esteja a falar do livro e das suas traduções literárias quer das adaptações para cinema e das traduções para legendagem.

A primeira categoria foi denominada de 'Core Nadsat', correspondendo também à categoria mais comum de palavras em Nadsat, constituída por palavras criadas por "relexicalização" de palavras russas, incluindo as que são derivadas de outras línguas ou aquelas que possuem uma etimologia incerta (Vincent & Clarke, 2017, p. 254). Podem observar-se alguns exemplos, desta e das restantes categorias, na tabela 1. Em segundo lugar, apresenta-se a categoria denominada 'Archaisms' que, como os autores referem, é constituída por palavras arcaicas associadas a um tom mais poético (Vincent & Clarke, 2017, p. 255; Rodríguez, 2022, p. 6). Surge também uma categoria denominada 'Babytalk' que, como o nome indica, é constituída por palavras que apresentam uma construção linguística criativa, podendo estas ser descritas como possuindo repetições infantis de certas sílabas (ibid.). Na categoria 'Compound', inserem-se palavras construídas por composição, juntando-se radicais e palavras pré-existentes para a criação de uma nova palavra e de um novo conceito (ibid.). Em 'Rhyming slang', os autores decidiram colocar as palavras que, tal como o nome indica, são criadas através de formas de *slang* que apresentam rima (ibid.). Para além disto, existe também uma categoria denominada 'Creative morphology', que é constituída essencialmente pelas palavras que foram construídas pelo uso criativo de palavras já existentes em inglês, por exemplo, a adaptação do final de uma palavra, a utilização de uma palavra como sendo de uma categoria normalmente não associada a esta (como a modificação de um nome para que se crie uma palavra que entre na categoria morfológica verbal) ou a modificação da forma como uma palavra se escreve para que esta ganhe novas associações (ibid.). Por último, temos a categoria de 'Truncated items', que corresponde às palavras em inglês que são truncadas sem que haja perda de significado (ibid.). Na tabela 1 podem ser observados alguns exemplos da divisão de Nadsat pelas diferentes categorias, exemplos estes retirados do artigo de Vincent e Clarke (2017).

Tabela 1. Categorias de Nadsat

| Category | Number of words | Example items |
|---|---|---|
| Core Nadsat | 218 | bolshy, cal, droog, itty, lighter, tashtook |
| Archaisms | 36 | ashake, canst, throu/thee/thy/thine, redding |
| Babytalk | 10 | eggiweg, purplewurple |
| Rhyming slang | 5 | luscious glory, pretty polly |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Truncations | 21 | guff, hypo, sinny |
| Compound words | 46 | afterlunch, bruiseboy, in-grin, ultra-violent |
| Creative morphology | 20 | appetitish, crunk, syphilised, cancery |

Nota: Categorias de Nadsat e número de palavras que ocorrem para cada categoria na obra *A Clockwork Orange*, de Anthony Burgess. Em 'The language of *A Clockwork Orange*: A corpus stylistic approach to Nadsat' (p. 255), de B. Vincent e J. Clarke (2017).

O objetivo deste artigo é analisar como foi traduzido o Nadsat do filme para português europeu tendo em conta tanto as particularidades do meio audiovisual como o facto de esta ser uma língua característica da história, das personagens e do mundo em que se insere.

## 3. Metodologia

A metodologia utilizada para a realização desta análise foi a seguinte: Primeiro, procurou identificar-se e classificar-se o Nadsat presente no filme tendo como base a classificação que Vincent e Clarke propõem (Vincent & Clarke, 2017). Esta classificação foi utilizada pelo facto de já se encontrar como referência em vários artigos sobre esta obra de Burgess e por ser considerada uma classificação transparente e eficaz, adequada ao objetivo proposto, que é, em primeira instância, perceber que tipos de Nadsat são utilizados no filme, com que prevalência e, consequentemente, qual a sua importância para a narrativa.

Posteriormente, procedeu-se a uma identificação dos termos e expressões utilizados para traduzir os termos do Nadsat original para o português europeu, bem como as estratégias implementadas nesta tradução, tendo apenas em conta a legendagem do filme que está disponível na plataforma de streaming HBO Max. Procurou dividir-se as estratégias em quatro categorias, categorias estas baseadas nas estratégias apresentadas por Xavier (2022, p. 80) no seu estudo da tradução de palavras tabu para o meio audiovisual, pela parecença nos objetivos e pela adequação das mesmas estratégias, adaptadas, ao estudo que se pretende aqui conduzir. Apresentam-se as categorias de seguida:

- **Omissão**, quando há Nadsat que não foi traduzido;
- Utilização de **Linguagem informal ou calão**, semelhante ao Eufemismo, quando o Nadsat é traduzido por expressões de linguagem informal ou calão;
- **Padronização**, quando se procede à tradução do Nadsat por língua-padrão; e
- **Manutenção**, quando houve uma tentativa de, perante o Nadsat original, criar através da tradução uma forma de Nadsat traduzido com características fonéticas ou morfológicas que nos levariam a classificar essas palavras ou expressões como ficcionais.

Analisou-se, também, se existe algum padrão associado à tradução de certa categoria de Nadsat por certa estratégia, ou seja, se a mesma palavra ou expressão é sempre traduzida da mesma forma ou se são apresentadas divergências na tradução ao longo do filme.

Procurou comparar-se a diferença das expressões de Nadsat traduzido em legendagem com as expressões de Nadsat traduzido em literatura.

Por fim, analisou-se em que medida a prevalência das estratégias observadas pode estar relacionada com o tipo de meio ou plataforma de transmissão do filme.

## 4. Apresentação de resultados e discussão

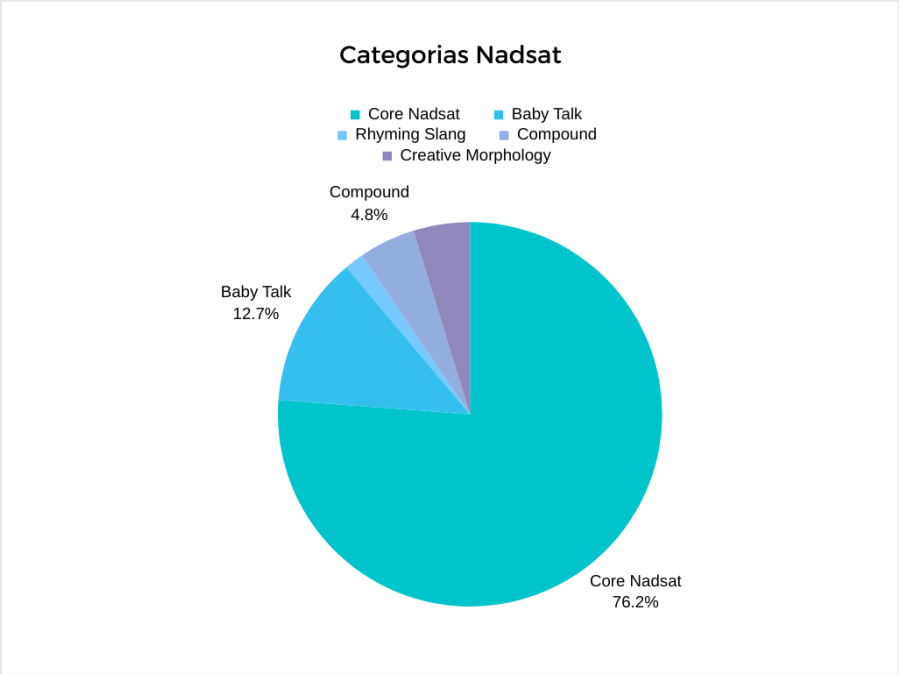


Gráfico 1. Categorias de Nadsat em *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) - O gráfico apresenta o resumo da avaliação feita durante a visualização do filme em inglês com legendas em português e tendo por base a classificação proposta por Vincent & Clarke (2017)

Como pode ser observado no Gráfico 1, o maior grupo de classificação de Nadsat que surge em inglês é, tal como acontece no livro (Vincent & Clarke, 2017), o do 'Core Nadsat', (com 48 instâncias). São utilizadas significativamente menos palavras ou expressões em Nadsat quando comparado com a obra de Burgess (para todas as categorias), havendo repetição de algumas delas, com maior contagem para 'droog' (e variações). A segunda categoria com mais Nadsat é 'Baby talk' com oito instâncias. De seguida temos 'Compound' e 'Creative Morphology', ambas com três instâncias. Por último, com apenas uma instância, temos 'Rhyming slang'. O facto de não haver tantas instâncias de Nadsat no filme pode ser explicado, pois, devido ao limite de tempo e a certas restrições, como a inexistência de glossários, tem de se proceder a uma escolha de palavras a manter tendo em conta aquelas que se iriam repetir algumas vezes para que a audiência conseguisse sentir maior imersão na língua e aprendê-la. Mesmo assim, pode observar-se que o 'Core Nadsat' continua a ser a categoria com maior prevalência e, consequentemente, com maior importância para a narrativa.

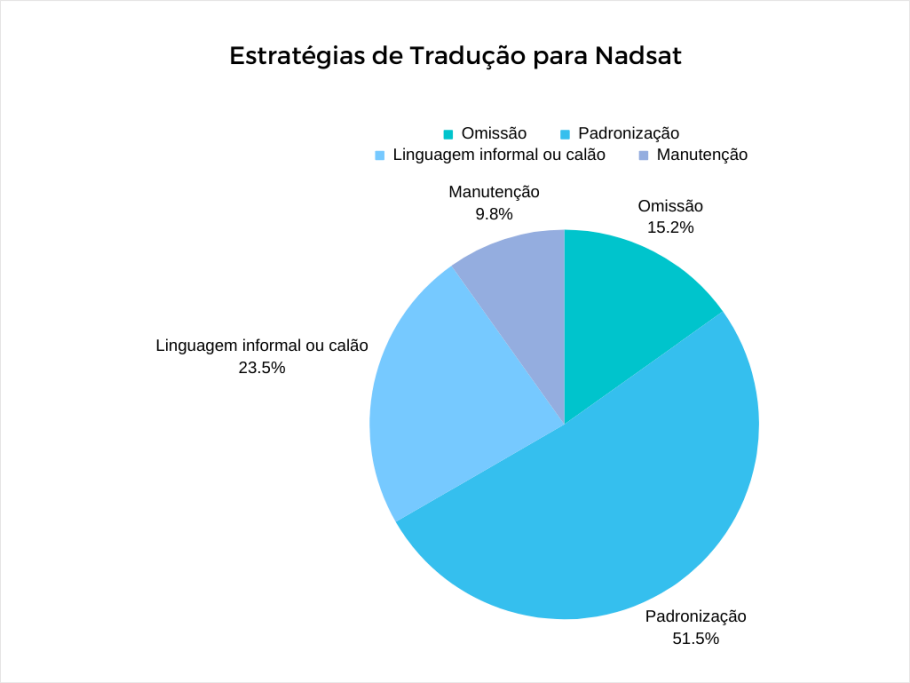


Gráfico 2. Estratégias de tradução de Nadsat para o português utilizadas em *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) para a plataforma de streaming HBO - O gráfico apresenta o resumo da avaliação feita durante a análise da legendagem, após a visualização do filme, em que se dividiu as traduções de Nadsat pelas quatro categorias acima apresentadas

Quanto às estratégias de tradução de Nadsat, conseguiu identificar-se um total de 132 instâncias de tradução que se distribuem pelas quatro categorias, como se observa no Gráfico 2.

As estratégias mais utilizadas foram aquelas onde o tradutor optou por uma tradução com palavras ou expressões reconhecíveis ao público de chegada, com um total de 75% correspondente a 99 instâncias, 68 de Padronização (por exemplo, 'olhos' para 'glazzies', 'cabeça' para 'gulliver', 'sangue' para 'krovvy', 'ver' para 'viddy' ou 'bater' para 'tolchocks') e 31 de Linguagem informal ou calão (por exemplo, observou-se para uma mesma palavra das referidas acima, 'gulliver', a tradução com 'mona', para além de outras como 'chuis' para 'millicents', 'topei' para 'viddied' ou 'montar' para 'in-out in-out')[3]. Observou-se palavras de todas as categorias de Nadsat traduzidas por estas estratégias.

A Manutenção foi a estratégia menos utilizada, com apenas 13 instâncias correspondentes a menos de 10% do total, sendo que dessas 13, sete correspondem à tradução de 'droog' ou expressões variantes, três à tradução de 'ultra-violence', duas à tradução de 'young devotchka' e uma à tradução de 'chelloveck'. Desta forma, não contando com instâncias em repetição, pode observar-se um total de apenas quatro termos traduzidos por Manutenção em todo o filme, três deles pertencentes à categoria de 'Core Nadsat' ('droog' e variantes, 'young devotchka' e 'chelloveck'), categoria esta, como observado anteriormente, mais prevalente e de grande importância para a narrativa.

[3] Todas as traduções de Nadsat utilizadas para construção dos dados apresentados, bem como exemplos adicionais, podem ser consultados nos Anexos I e II.

Dentro destas, podemos também observar que, ao contrário dos dados de Rodríguez (2022) sobre a tradução literária de 'Core Nadsat' para português de *A Clockwork Orange*, tirando 'ultra-violence' que foi traduzido por 'ultra-violência' (tendo esta palavra já uma proximidade fonética ao português) não houve preocupação com a fonética das palavras ou expressões em Nadsat. Na legendagem procurou utilizar-se maioritariamente formas estereotípicas que levam o público português a remeter imediatamente para uma linguagem aproximada ao russo, como a inserção do sufixo '-ska'. Desta forma, para a tradução da palavra 'droog' optou-se por 'compinska', para a tradução de 'young devotchka' optou-se por 'miudoska'. Para a tradução de 'chelloveck' optou-se por 'camaraduncho'. É de notar que estas formulações não causam muita estranheza, não apresentando muitas dificuldades de leitura nem compreensão, sendo, ao mesmo tempo, identificáveis como algo diferente e fora do português.

Por fim, a estratégia de Omissão foi utilizada em 15 % das traduções, com um total de 20 instâncias observadas. As palavras 'malchick' e 'droog' (e variantes) apresentam, respetivamente, quatro e três instâncias de Omissão. Observa-se, também, que as instâncias de palavras ou expressões omitidas correspondem maioritariamente a palavras que se repetem ao longo do filme.

Foi observada a utilização de diferentes estratégias de tradução para as mesmas palavras ou expressões em casos de Padronização e utilização de Linguagem informal ou calão. Observem-se alguns exemplos: a tradução de 'malchick' para 'jovem' e 'tipo'; a tradução de 'in-out' para 'isso', 'montá-la', 'possuí-la' e 'pouca-vergonha'; a tradução de 'gulliver' para 'cabeça' em três instâncias, para 'mona' e para 'cachola'; a tradução de 'tolchock' para 'bater', 'tocar', 'flagelar' e 'porrada'; e a tradução de uma das palavras mais utilizadas, 'horrorshow' e variantes, para 'muito bem', 'melhor', 'autêntica maravilha', 'prazer' e 'que era um gosto'.

Considera-se importante referir que foram encontradas três instâncias de erros de tradução de Nadsat na legendagem analisada, conclusões estas retiradas principalmente através da consulta do glossário de Nadsat presente em *A Clockwork Orange: The restored edition* (Burgess, 2012a). Estes são os casos da palavra 'krovvy', traduzida uma vez por 'sangue' (que está correto) e uma vez por 'calejadas'; da palavra 'pretty-polly' traduzida por 'garota' quando esta se refere a 'dinheiro'; e da palavra 'crast' que significa 'roubar' (e que está traduzido noutra instância por 'assaltar'), mas que foi traduzida por 'levar', sem o mesmo sentido (da frase 'saying he can fence anything any malchick tries to crast' para 'diz que compra tudo o que se lhe levar').

Quanto aos resultados de utilização destas estratégias de tradução, pode concluir-se que o facto de a grande maioria das palavras ou expressões ser traduzida por Padronização e utilização de Linguagem informal ou calão poderá estar ligado ao meio audiovisual. Sendo que o Nadsat não foi uma língua ficcional criada originalmente em meio audiovisual, isso leva, inevitavelmente, à adaptação da sua expressão para este meio levando, consequentemente, a mudanças tanto na frequência com que esta língua é utilizada como na forma como é utilizada. Acresce-se, depois, a tradução realizada para o meio audiovisual

que, para além de ser feita para uma língua diferente, volta a colocar o Nadsat em formato escrito, o que pode suscitar outras dificuldades associadas a este meio, como o tempo que o leitor tem para ler e entender o que se apresenta escrito na legenda.

Perante um filme, ao contrário do que acontece num livro, não temos acesso a um glossário nem é do interesse do público ter de parar o filme para pesquisar palavras ou ter de andar para trás porque não entendeu ou não conseguiu ler o que está na legenda. Considera-se que foi por isso que, na Manutenção, não se optou por manter uma fonética próxima do Nadsat original, a qual teve grande importância na tradução literária (Rodríguez, 2022), mas sim utilizar uma estrutura mais fácil e rápida de ler para o público-alvo.

O facto de a legendagem ter sido realizada para uma plataforma de streaming como a HBO Max poderá influenciar um maior número de instâncias de tradução por Linguagem informal ou calão em comparação com uma tradução realizada para canais abertos como, por exemplo, a RTP. Observou-se, apesar de a percentagem ser aproximada à da categoria que a segue, que a utilização de Linguagem informal ou calão é a segunda estratégia mais utilizada para a tradução de Nadsat. Este pode apresentar-se como um facto positivo uma vez que se observou a tentativa de representar, através de uma tradução com linguagem que seria entendida de uma forma mais fácil e rápida pelo público-alvo da cultura de chegada, os elementos caracterizadores desta língua, apesar de se perder um dos aspetos que a caracteriza como língua ficcional: a estranheza e desconforto perante palavras desconhecidas. Mesmo assim, a Utilização de Linguagem informal ou calão ajuda a classificar este grupo específico de adolescentes que agem com muita violência, apesar de não se estar a utilizar o Nadsat, ou uma tradução desta língua ficcional em si, para realizar esta caracterização. Com esta estratégia, é mantida a diferença e a hierarquia sociocultural (Ramos Pinto, 2009; Xavier, 2022) que distingue este grupo de, por exemplo, personagens de situações económicas e sociais mais elevadas, ou de personagens com maior poder ou com poder sobre eles (como os médicos e investigadores da 'Ludovico Technique'). Em suma, na escolha de não traduzir o Nadsat (ou na impossibilidade de o fazer) por Manutenção, considera-se a utilização de Linguagem informal ou calão como uma alternativa adequada, uma vez que se tenta manter algumas das funções descritas desta língua, nomeadamente para a caracterização das personagens, ao contrário do que acontece com a Padronização e com a Omissão.

Nos casos em que se optou por Padronização observa-se que esta estratégia pode ter sido escolhida, por um lado, em instâncias em que surgem muitas palavras seguidas em Nadsat, o que poderia aumentar o tempo de leitura do espectador, no caso de se utilizar uma estratégia de Manutenção, devido ao maior esforço que seria necessário para compreender tanto as palavras ficcionais como a ligação destas numa frase ou sequência de frases (que poderiam até estar distribuídas por diversas legendas). Por outro lado, existem casos em que se observou que as palavras traduzidas por Padronização já se encontravam traduzidas por outra estratégia que revelasse uma tentativa de manutenção das suas características ou de alguma das suas funções enquanto palavras em língua

ficcional (como Manutenção ou utilização de Linguagem informal ou calão), pelo que são geralmente palavras repetidas ao longo do filme. Desta forma, pode ter-se utilizado esta estratégia por outros motivos, como a necessidade de diminuir o tempo em que a legenda fica no ecrã (utilizando uma palavra reconhecida pelo espectador) ou redução do tamanho da legenda (pois, como foi observado, as palavras traduzidas por Manutenção são construídas geralmente pela inserção do sufixo '-ska', o que pode aumentar o seu tamanho e tornar uma legenda longa demais para o espaço e tempo de uma fala de determinada personagem, por exemplo). Nos casos em que as palavras traduzidas por Padronização não se encontravam já traduzidas por outra estratégia observa-se que, geralmente, estamos perante palavras que não surgem repetidamente no filme e que, por isso, podem ter sido consideradas pelo tradutor como de menor importância e que poderiam causar confusão nos espectadores.

Por fim, quanto à utilização da estratégia de Omissão, observou-se uma percentagem de casos superior à da Manutenção. Pode considerar-se que a principal razão que explica o surgimento destes resultados esteja relacionada com as restrições já referidas que podem surgir no meio audiovisual, entre estas a velocidade de leitura, o tamanho da legenda, a velocidade de fala das personagens e a grande quantidade de informação que estas transmitem em pouco tempo. Xavier (2022, p. 74) refere alguns fatores que podem influenciar a tradução ou não tradução de palavras tabu, fatores esses que podem incluir normas mais conservadoras relacionadas com o formato escrito, a necessidade de redução de texto em legendagem, a omissão de elementos redundantes e repetidos em legendagem, certas instruções que possam estar implementadas em certa empresa que irá transmitir o produto, ou mesmo autocensura ou censura realizada por revisores, bem como as expectativas do público-alvo. Podendo o Nadsat aproximar-se das funções de caracterização de personagens e da história associadas às das palavras tabu, um ou mais destes fatores podem contribuir para que a percentagem de ocorrência de Omissão seja considerável.

As estratégias que não indicam uma tentativa de se manter a língua ficcional ou a sua função caracterizadora na legendagem (Padronização e Omissão) apresentam uma percentagem de escolha de quase 70%, o que pode ter impacto na forma como a caracterização destas personagens é vista pelo público-alvo em questão. Tal como dito anteriormente, no meio audiovisual, a caracterização das personagens pode ser realizada através de vários fatores, principalmente os elementos extralinguísticos presentes na imagem (Ramos Pinto, 2009). Contudo, o que diferencia o Nadsat de variantes linguísticas e da linguagem tabu é o seu lado único e particular que o liga a este universo, a esta história e a estas personagens. A 'imersão' e 'brainwashing' linguístico são características importantes para Burgess, que foram tidas em conta por Kubrick e que devem ser observadas pelos tradutores para que a intenção por detrás da criação desta história consiga ser transmitida o melhor possível. Mesmo a utilização de Linguagem informal ou calão pode já afastar-se deste objetivo de imersão linguística, tal como notado por Maher (2010) na tradução do Nadsat por formas linguísticas associadas a italiano regional ou

dialetal, apesar de ser uma forma que espelha de uma forma mais aproximada e com linguagem reconhecível as características socioculturais deste grupo onde se insere Alex. Com uma percentagem considerável referente a este tipo de estratégias que anulam esta caracterização, poderia ser interessante realizar-se futuramente um estudo que determinasse se a experiência do público-alvo da língua de chegada da legendagem pudesse ou não diferir da experiência sentida pelo público-alvo da língua de partida.

## 5. Conclusão

Tendo em conta o meio e a plataforma de streaming onde o filme é transmitido, considera-se que a estratégia de Manutenção poderia ter sido mais utilizada, principalmente considerando a prevalência do 'Core Nadsat' e a sua já referida importância para a narrativa e caracterização das personagens. Consideram-se adequadas as traduções apresentadas para as palavras em que se utilizou a estratégia de Manutenção pois, apesar de diferir das apresentadas para as traduções literárias, são soluções pertinentes em resposta ao meio audiovisual e às suas restrições, como a impossibilidade de incorporação de glossário e de retroceder ou parar o filme quando não se entende uma palavra na legenda. Considera-se, por outras palavras, que a forma utilizada para tradução por Manutenção respeita a criatividade fundada na análise da criatividade do texto de partida, sobre a qual reflete Malamatidou (2017) no seu artigo, tendo em conta, também, outros fatores externos, característicos do meio audiovisual, como as restrições já referidas. Por isso, uma opção de tradução para que a legendagem reflita de forma mais evidente tanto a presença do Nadsat ao longo de todo o filme como a importância do 'Core Nadsat' poderia ser a utilização da estrutura das soluções mais utilizadas pela estratégia de Manutenção, o sufixo '-ska', para abarcar mais palavras. Por exemplo, 'gulliver' poderia ter como solução 'cabeçuska' em vez de 'cabeça', 'soomaka' ser traduzida por 'velhuska' em vez de 'velha', 'tashtook' por 'lençusko' em vez de 'lenço', etc, principalmente considerando que o público-alvo pode ser conhecedor do contexto e características do filme estando, dessa forma, mais atento à utilização de formulações que indiquem a presença de uma língua ficcional. Isto pode acontecer devido ao facto de o filme ter sido legendado para uma plataforma de streaming, onde os espectadores escolhem o que assistir entre centenas de opções, e também pelo facto de o filme ter sido lançado em 1971 e ser um filme que, como o livro, é não só reconhecido em todo o mundo, como também fonte de diversos estudos. Mesmo assim, teria de ser analisada a possibilidade de estas traduções se adequarem para a legendagem tendo em conta, também, as restrições de tempo e espaço na legenda.

Em suma, considera-se de grande importância a análise das várias camadas associadas a uma língua ficcional como o Nadsat para a tradução. Fatores como o meio para o qual a tradução é feita, a proximidade das características da língua às das variedades linguísticas e de linguagem tabu, a prevalência de certas categorias da língua, a intencionalidade original subjacente à sua existência na narrativa e a sua importância para a caracterização das personagens e da história devem, dentro do possível, ser transmitidas também em tradução para legendagem.

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**ANEXO I — Listagem de instâncias de utilização de Nadsat em *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) e respetivas traduções para legendagem do filme na plataforma de streaming HBO Max.**

1:40 — That is, Alex, and my three droogs. [Estava eu que sou o Alex com os meus três compinskas.]
1:45 — We sat in the Korova Milkbar trying to make up our rassoodocks what to do with the evening. [Fomos para a leitaria Korova a puxar pela caixa e estudar o que fazer à noite.]
1:53 — The Korova Milkbar sold milk plus. Milk plus velllocet or synthemesc or drencrom which is what we were drinking. [O Korova vendia leite magro e gordo e leite vitaminado que era o que estávamos a beber.]
2:03 — This would sharpen you up and make you ready for a bit of the old ultra-violence. [Um estimulante capaz de levar qualquer a um pouco de ultra-violência.]
2:45 — filthy, dirty old drunkie… and going "blerp blerp" in between. [sem tradução]
4:45 — Billy-boy and his four droogs. [Billy-boy e os seus quatro compinskas.]
4:48 — They were about to perform a little of the old in-out, in-out on a weepy young devotchka they had there. [Estavam-se a preparar para montar uma chorosa miudoska que tinham como eles.]
7:28 — The Durango 95 purred away real horrorshow. [O Durango-95 ronronava que era um gosto.]
7:34 — Nice, warm vibratey feeling all through your guttiwuts. [Um ronronar que até consolava cá por dentro.]
14:10 — And I felt all the malenky little hairs on my plott standing endwise. [E senti todos os meus cabelos porem-se em pé pelo corpo todo.]
14:14 — malenky lizards — [pequenas lagartixas]
14:42 — Without a drook of an idea about how to … [sem sombra de ideia…]
15:06 — Great, bouncy yarblockos to you! [Vai para os tomates! (legenda de Yarbles!, nesta frase não surge legenda nenhuma)]
15:11 — I'll meet you with chain or nozh or britva anytime. [Quando quiseres bater-te à corrente ou à navalha é só dizer.]
15:14 — I'm not having you aiming tolchocks at me reasonless. [Mas não gosto de me bater sem razão…]
15:24 — A nozh scrap anytime you say. [À navalha quando e onde quiseres.]
15:41 — Doobidoob. [Combinado.]
19:38 — Bit of a pain in the gulliver, Mum. [Dói-me um bocado a mona.]
22:40 — …who ends up in the stripy hole. […que acaba no cagarrão.]
22:45 — The millicents have nothing on me, brother. […e os chuis não têm nada contra mim.]
24:04 — I been out of the millicents' rookers for a long time. [Há muito que os chuis não me apanham.]
26:40 — What you got back home to play your fuzzy warbles on? [Em que tocas em casa os teus discos idiotas?]
28:42 — There we were, waiting and drinking at the old knifey moloko… [Bebemos o nosso leitinho "temperado," esperámos por ti…]
29:00 — Appy polly loggies [As minhas desculpas.]
29:03 — I had something of a pain in the gulliver, so I had to sleep. [Doía-me um pouco a mona e deixei-me dormir.]
29:12 — Using the gulliver too much-like, maybe. [Será talvez por puxares muito pela cachola?]

30:00 — As I am your droog and leader [Como vosso compinska e chefe]
30:43 — We go around shop crasting and the like coming out with a pitiful rookerfull of money each. [Passamos a vida a assaltar lojecas donde saímos com um punhado de moedas cada.]
30:50 — in the coffee mesto [sem tradução]
30:53 — saying he can fence anything any malchick tries to crast. [diz que compra tudo o que se lhe levar (sem tradução)].
31:12 — If you need pretty polly, you take it. [Se queres uma garota, não faltam por aí. (tradução errada, pretty Polly é dinheiro)]
31:20 — Tonight's a man-size crast! [um "negócio" em grande (não é tradução desta legenda, mas da anterior, para esta não surge nada)].
31:24 — Good! Real horrorshow! [Um negócio de mão cheia!]
31:30 — I've taught you much, my little droogies. [Ensinei-lhes muito, caros compinskas.]
31:40 — The old moloko plus first. [Vamos ao leitinho do costume primeiro.]
31:44 — Something to sharpen us up. [sem tradução, dá-se prioridade a outra fala de outra personagem que está a falar ao mesmo tempo, em inglês colocam as duas com travessões.]
31:54 — Yeah moloko plus! [sem tradução]
32:18 — But suddenly I viddied that thinking was for the gloopy ones and that the oomny ones used, like inspiration and what Bog sends. [Mas, subitamente, topei que o pensar era para os idiotas e que os inteligentes se guiam pela inspiração; e foi como se Deus me mandasse…]
32:34 — and I viddied right at once what to do. [e vi imediatamente o que fazer]
33:43 — And so with the help of a clean tashtook the red, red kroovy soon stopped [com a ajuda dum lenço o sangue não tardou a estancar]
34:40 — Not this nochy. [sem tradução (há tradução na frase anterior 'Not tonight' para 'Esta noite, não')]
34:45 — You're a big, strong chelloveck, like us all. [És um camaraduncho forte e valente como todos nós.]
35:11 — It's owned by this rich ptitsa [É duma sujeita muito rica]
38:53 — Our brief govorett through the letter-hole was not satisfactory. [A nossa conversa pelo buraco do correio, não foi, digamos, satisfatória.]
39:13 — You filthy old soomaka. [Velha pervertida ordinária!]
41:26 — One minoota, droogie. [Um minuto, pá.]
41:58 — I won't say a single solitary slovo unless I have my lawyer here. [Não darei nem um pio, sem a presença do meu advogado.]
44:12 — Where are my treacherous droogs? [Esses traidores?]
44:33 — It was only a slight tolchok. [Mal lhe toquei.]
45:52 — …among smelly perverts and hardened prestoopniks. [entre degenerados mal malcheirosos e bandidos endurecidos.]
45:56 — The shock sending my dada beating his bruised and krovvy rookers against unfair Bog in His Heaven. [O choque levou o meu pai a erguer as mãos calejadas num protesto contra a injustiça de Deus.]
46:01 — And my mum boo-hoo-hooing [e a minha mãe a gritar]
46:07 — like, letting everybody down real horrorshow. [metê-los a todos assim em tão maus lençóis.]
53:02 — Being kicked and tolchoked by brutal warders [a levar pontapés e porrada de brutais carcereiros]

53:10 — a luscious young malchick like your storyteller. [por um jovem apetitoso como o vosso narrador.]
53:18 — It was my rabbit [Fui destacado]
53:23 — He was a bolshy, great burly bastard. [Era um comunista robusto e frustrado]
53:57 — And I could viddy myself helping in and even taking charge of the tolchoking and the nailing in. [E via-me em tudo tomando parte desde as flagelações ao pregar dos cravos.]
54:22 — than fighting and the old in-out. [que de acção e pouca-vergonha.]
54:24 — I like the parts where these old yahoodies tolchok each other [Gosto daquela parte em que os judeus se flagelam]
54:28 — and then drink their Hebrew vino [para beberem depois o seu vinho judeu]
1:04:40 — And I felt a malenky bit sad having to say goodbye to the old Staja [Senti-me um bocado triste ao dizer adeus à velha prisão]
1:08:16 — I like to viddy the old films now and again [Nunca desgostei de ver umas fitinhas.]
1:08:20 — And viddy films I would. [E vi bastantes fitas.]
1:08:26 — was like no cine I ever viddied before. […como nunca tinha visto outro…]
1:08:30 — and my gulliver was strapped to a headrest [com a minha cabeça amarrada à cadeira]
1:08:46 — If I was to be a free malchick again [Para ser de novo livre (não tradução)]
1:09:23 — The sounds were real horrorshow. [O som era uma autêntica maravilha.]
1:09:25 — You could slooshy the screams and moans very realistic. [Os gritos e gemidos eram muito realistas (não tradução)]
1:09:30 — of the tolchocking malchicks [o arfar duns tipos a levar porrada.]
1:09:38 — the red, red vino on tap [o sangue vermelho, vermelhinho]
1:09:52 — when you viddy them on a screen. [quando vistas no cinema]
1:10:13 — which jumped right away on a young devotchka who was being given the old in-out, in-out first by one malchick then another [que mostrava uma miudoska a ser montada primeiro por um tipo depois por outro]
1:10:30 — When it came to the 6th or 7th malchick leering and smecking and then going into it [quando chegou ao sexto ou sétimo que parecia devorá-la com os olhos.]
1:10:39 — But I could not shut me glazzies. [Mas não podia fechar os olhos.]
1:10:41 — And even if I tried to move my glazzballs [E mesmo que os tentasse desviar.]
1:11:32 — Leave me glazzies! [não tradução]
1:11:45 — You mean I have to viddy two sessions in one day? [Tenho de assistir às duas sessões no mesmo dia?!]
1:12:10 — Doing it or watching it, I used to feel real horrorshow. [Até sentia prazer em vê-lo ou fazê-lo.]
1:13:24 — and sit like a horrorshow cooperative malchick [e sentei-me com o melhor espírito de cooperação]
1:13:30 — nasty bits of ultra-violence [enquanto perpassavam na tela pedaços de ultra-violência.]
1:15:21 — all this ultra-violence [o erro da ultra-violência]
1:15:50 — without being tolchocked and knifed! [e não a serem batidos e anavalhados.]
1:19:53 — pushed out his red yabzick a mile and a half to lick the grahzny vonny boots. [esticou a língua o quanto pôde para lamber os sujos e nojentos sapatos.]
1:20:00 — The horrible killing sickness had wooshed up [Aquela horrível agonia desvaneceu-se]

1:21:37 — And the first thing that flashed in me gulliver [e a primeira ideia que me veio à cabeça]
1:21:41 — With the old in-out. Real savage. [e possuí-la como um selvagem.]
1:26:26 — munchy-wunching lomticks of toast. [a trincar torradas.]
1:31:42 — You won't ever viddy me no more. [Nunca mais me verão.]
1:34:22 — with their feeble rookers and horny old claws. [de mãos trêmulas e unhas como garras.]
1:35:06 — Long time no viddy, droog. [Há muito que não te via.]
1:35:12 — Evidence of the old glazzies. [Tens a prova ante os teus olhos.]
1:35:53 — Come, come, come, my little droogies. [Então, meus bons compinskas?]
1:36:19 — It was someone we fillied with back in the old days… [Foi alguém que pilhámos nos velhos tempos…]
1:36:28 — I don't remember them days too horrorshow. [Não me lembro lá muito bem.]
1:38:01 — Be viddying you some more sometime, droogie. [Havemos de nos ver mais vezes.]
1:40:57 — I and my so-called droogs wore our maskies, which were like real horrorshow disguises [tanto eu como os meus compinskas usávamos máscaras que nos tornavam irreconhecíveis.]
1:55:36 — Suddenly, I viddied what I had to do [De repente compreendi o que tinha a fazer.]
2:00:05 — All these doctors were playing around with me gulliver. [Via os médicos às voltas com a minha cabeça…]
2:01:11 — and I'll smash your face for you, yarblockos. [e prego-te uma chapada.]
2:01:21 — No time for the old in-out, love. I've just come to read the meter. [Não tenho tempo para isso. Vim só ver o contador.]
2:01:44 — Eggiwegs. [não tradução]
2:02:26 — munching away at eggiwegs and lomticks of toast and lovely steakie-wakes. [com o auxílio de ovos, grandes torradas e belos bifes.]
2:02:58 — Hi there, my little droogies. [O meu velho compinska.]

**ANEXO II – Lista de termos Nadsat organizados por tipo de estratégia utilizada para a sua tradução no filme *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) para a plataforma de streaming HBO Max.**

**1. Omissão**

A free malchick again [para ser de novo livre]
and I'll smash your face for you, yarblockos. [e prego-te uma chapada.]
Anything any malchick tries to crast [diz que compra tudo o que se lhe levar]
Cooperative malchick [o melhor espírito de cooperação]
Droogie – [0]
Eggiwegs – [0]
Even if I tried to move my glazzballs [mesmo que os tentasse desviar]
In coffee mesto – [0]
Leave me glazzies! – [0]
Long time no viddy, droog. [Há muito que não te via.]
Malenky little hairs [cabelos]
Millicents' rookers [chuis]
Nochy [0]
Nozh or britva [navalha]
Real horrorshow disguises [irreconhecíveis]
Something to sharpen us up [0]
Treacherous droogs [traidores]
When it came to the 6th or 7th malchick leering [quando chegou ao sexto ou sétimo]
Yeah moloko plus [0]
You could slooshy the screams [os gritos e …]

**2. Padronização**

A malenky [um bocado]
Appy Polly loggies [As minhas desculpas]
Bog [Deus (2)]
Bolshy [robusto]
Boo-hoo-hooing [gritar]
Britva [navalha]
Crast [levar]
Doobidoob [combinado]
Drook [sombra]
Eggiwegs [ovos]
Glazzies [olhos (2)]
Gloopy [idiotas]
Govorett [conversa]
Grahzny [sujos]
Gulliver [cabeça (3)]
Guttiwuts [cá por dentro]
Horrorshow [muito bem]
Horrorshow cooperative [o melhor espírito de cooperação]
I viddied [compreendi]
Krovvy [sangue]
Krovvy [calejadas]
Lomticks [grandes]

Malchick [jovem]
Malenky [pequenas]
Maskies [máscaras]
Milk plus vellocet or synthemesc or drencrom [leite magro e gordo e leite vitaminado]
Minoota [minuto]
Munchy-wunching lomticks of toast [trincar torradas]
My rabbit [fui destacado]
Nozh scrap [à navalha]
Old in-out [isso]
Oomny [inteligentes]
Plott [corpo]
Prestoopniks [bandidos]
Real horrorshow [autêntica maravilha]
Real horrorshow [prazer]
Real horrorshow [que era um gosto]
Rookerfull [punhado]
Rookers [mãos (2)]
Soomaka [velha]
Steakie-wakes [bifes]
Tashtook [lenço]
The old Staja [velha prisão]
To viddy [assistir]
Tolchocks [bater (2)]
Tolchock [toquei]
Viddy [ver (9)]
Vino [vinho]
Vonny [nojentos]
Woosked up [desvaneceu-se]
Yabzick [língua]
Yahoodies [judeus]
Yarblockos [tomates]

**3. Linguagem informal ou calão**

A man-size crast [um 'negócio' em grande]
Being given the old in-out, in-out [a ser montada]
Droogie [pá]
Gulliver [Cachola]
Gulliver [mona (2)]
I viddied [topei]
In-out in-out [montar]
Knifey moloko [leitinho 'temperado']
Malchick [tipo]
Malchicks [duns tipos]
Millicents [chuis (2)]
Old in-out [possuí-la]
Old in-out [pouca-vergonha]
Pretty polly [garota (pretty polly é dinheiro)]

Ptitsa [sujeita]
Rassoodocks [caixa]
Real horrorshow [maus lençóis]
Real horrorshow [um negócio de mão cheia]
Red, red vino [sangue vermelho, vermelhinho]
Shop crasting [assaltar lojecas]
Slovo [pio]
Smecking [parecia devorá-la com os olhos]
Stripy hole [cagarrão]
The old films [umas fitinhas]
The old moloko plus [ao leitinho do costume]
Tolchock [flagelam]
Tolchoked [porrada (2)]
Tolchoking [flagelações]
We fillied with [pilhámos (fillied with é play with)]

**4. Manutenção**
Chelloveck [camaraduncho]
Droogs [Compinskas (4)]
My little droogies [caros compinskas]
My little droogies [meu velho compinska]
My little droogies [meus bons compinskas]
Ultra-violence [ultra-violência (3)]
Young devotchka [miudoska (2)]

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# TRANSLATING ONOMATOPOEIAS: A COMPARISON BETWEEN EUROPEAN AND BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE IN THE TRANSLATION OF MANGA

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ABSTRACT: Today, Japanese comics, or manga, are one of the most famous types of comics in the world. However, its translation remains a relatively under-researched topic in the field of translation studies. The translation of onomatopoeia in manga, a distinctive and vital feature of the medium, presents difficulties both linguistically and graphically. Derived from the interaction between language and image, they are used to convey the sounds and circumstances of the story. Thus, considering that the Portuguese language has a very limited use of onomatopoeia, especially when compared to the Japanese language, the main purpose of this article is to identify and compare the main translation strategies adopted by Portuguese and Brazilian translators when dealing with this issue, as well as to determine whether the strategies used between the two differ significantly.
KEYWORDS: Japanese Comics; Manga Translation; Onomatopoeias; Translation Problems

## 1. Introduction

Japanese comics, also known as manga[1] (Kinsella, 2000, p. 3), are currently exported to various countries (Ito, 2005, p. 456) and, together with American comics and the Franco-Belgian *bande dessinée*, constitutes one of the three major comics cultures in the world (Berndt, 2008, p. 299).

Renowned for its ability to captivate readers with its vivid storytelling (Berndt, 2021, p. 54), manga is a medium in which the hopes, disappointments, and adventures of its characters form the core of its stories (Kinsella, 2000). Manga acts as a bridge to Japanese culture, introducing habits, gestures, humour, and other cultural characteristics to Western audiences. Thus, for manga readers to access these cultural aspects as faithfully as possible, well-executed translations are necessary (Fonseca, 2011, p. 138).

Although manga employs a wide variety of symbols to convey meanings to the reader (Inose, 2010, p. 174), onomatopoeias are considered to be "… one of the defining features of manga" (Rohan et al., 2021, p. 61). Manga is a treasure trove for onomatopoeic words (Yomota, 2022, p. 80), with their number being far greater than in any other comic tradition in the world (Petersen, 2009, p. 163). Moreover, since the use of onomatopoeias in the Japanese language is more prominent when compared to other languages, this feature presents extra lexical challenges (Leitão, 2010, p. 283). Focusing on the comparison between the strategies employed to translate the same manga series in European and Brazilian Portuguese, the purpose of this paper is to (1) explore how onomatopoeias found

[1] Though currently the term is widely used to refer to Japanese comics in general, due to the increase interest in Japanese comics and the growing number of works inspired by them, it is also used to refer to the visual style (Kacsuk, 2018, p. 2). In this paper, the word 'manga' will refer only to comics created and published in Japan.

in manga are translated and (2) to understand if the strategies between the two language variants differ significantly.

## 2. Manga

Manga is a "true mass medium" covering every topic imaginable (Schodt, 1996, p. 28). From action to comedy, sci-fi, horror, or romance, all sorts of genres can be found in manga (Pasfield-Neofitou, 2016), to the point one may even consider describing all genres as meaningless since there will always be a manga that does not conform to this type of categorization (Johnson-Woods, 2010, p. 8).

Manga typically starts by being released in anthologies and then reprinted in smaller pocket-size books called *tankōbon* (Zanettin, 2008, p. 9). Numerous stories are printed in magazines, with each publication having between three hundred and five hundred pages per volume, and are published weekly, bimonthly, or monthly (Ingulsrud & Allen, 2009, p. 33). After being compiled into paperback, a successful story is usually turned into an animated television series, known as anime; thus, manga is responsible for the world's largest animation industry, as well as an array of other manga-inspired items like CDs, figures, stationery, video games, TV dramas, movies, and novels (Schodt, 1996, pp. 20-21).

## 3. Onomatopoeias

### *3.1. Onomatopoeias in the Japanese language*

In contrast to most European languages, onomatopoetic words are an essential part of the Japanese language. Due to their expressiveness and ability to convey information, they are abundant in both spoken and written language (Bartashova & Sichinskiy, 2014, pp. 222-223).

Onomatopoeias can be divided in a number of ways; however, they are usually categorised as: phonomimes (*giseigo* or *giongo*) (eg. *zaazaa*, 'the sound of pouring rain'), phenomimes (*gitaigo* or *giyōgo*) (eg. *pikapika*, 'shiny'), and psychomimes (*gijōgo*) (eg. *zukizuki*, 'throbbing pain'). Phonomimes, which mimic sounds, are the closest to onomatopoeia in the traditional sense. Phenomimes mimic phenomena. Finally, psychomimes imitate psychological states (Irwin & Zisk, 2019, p. 136). In his book, *A thesaurus of Japanese mimesis and onomatopoeias: usage by categories,* author Andrew C. Chang (1990, p. v), presents yet another categorisation of Japanese onomatopoeias: *gijōgo*, which describes human emotions and psychological states (eg. *kankan*, 'to boil with rage'); *gitaigo*, which describes nature events and human actions (*mogumogu*, 'to chew with one's mouth closed'); *giseigo*, which imitates the sounds of animated objects (eg. *chiichii*, 'the sound of birds'); and *giongo*, which imitates the sounds of nature (eg. *jirijiri*, 'the sound of sizzling'). The term *onomatope* is used to encompass all types of onomatopoeias (Flyxe, 2002, p. 54).

### *3.2. Onomatopoeias in the Portuguese language*

The Portuguese word *onomatopeia* depicts the similarity, either through imitation or reproduction, between the sound of a word and the reality it represents, such as the voice of animals, the sound of musical instruments, or the sound that accompanies natural phenomena (Trilho, 2009).

Rodrigo de Sá Nogueira, in his book *Subsídios para o Estudo das Onomatopeias em Português* (1936, p. 225-226), distinguishes between the purely phonetic onomatopoeias and the phonetic-ideological onomatopoeias; the purely phonetic onomatopoeias are onomatopoeias that are formed based on the imitation of the phonetic sounds they represent (eg. *trrrrrrim*), while the phonetic-ideological are onomatopoeias that imitate the sounds they represent using words or expressions that are more or less similar in pronunciation instead of phonemes (eg. *pouca terra, pouca terra*). He also distinguishes between vocabulised and non-vocabulised onomatopoeias, stating that non-vocabulised refers to all onomatopoeias that are not a part of the official vocabulary, either because they lack the structure or because they have yet to be recognised (eg. *pffff*).

José Herculano de Carvalho, on the other hand, in *Teoria da Linguagem* (1983, p. 186-194), categorises onomatopoeias into two groups: onomatopoeias in the strict sense and onomatopoeic words. He claims that onomatopoeias in the strict sense are to symbols that do not belong to the linguistic system and whose function, similar to gestures, is to reproduce a situation (eg. *zás*). Onomatopoeic words, on the other hand, are words that are fully integrated in the linguistic system and whose function is to name objects. However, these words can have a symbolic function, albeit more rarely (eg. *zumbir*). He also mentions a third unnamed group, which includes all sounds produced accidentally by man.

More recently, Azevedo (2022, p. 25) categorized onomatopoeias into authentic or pure onomatopoeia, those that roughly mimic a sound (eg. *tic-tac*); interpretive onomatopoeia, those that ideologically mimic a phonetic or morphological sequence (eg. *trinta-réis*); verbal onomatopoeia; interjective onomatopoeia (eg. *xô!*); and accidental onomatopoeia, those that are invented by someone in a particular situation.

### *3.3. Onomatopoeias in manga*

Although the use of onomatopoeias is a key multimodal aspect of comics in general (Rohan et al., 2018, p. 5), when it comes to manga, it is considered to be a feature that sets it apart from other types of comics (Sasamoto, 2019, p. 153). Artists employ them to phonetically evoke a sound, image, or even an emotion in the minds of readers (Holt & Curtin, 2022, p. 77), which makes them crucial expressive units that are able to quickly convey details of a scene (Natsume, 2020, p. 3).

Onomatopoeias found in manga frequently undergo astonishing modifications, enriching the expressiveness of the story (Natsume, 2022, p. 169). These words, which appear outside of speech balloons, are depicted elaborately with varying shapes, sizes, and textures (Hiraishi, 2022, p. 7). The level of graphic representation is much higher than in

western comics since the onomatopoeia is fully incorporated into the structure of the comic, making it impossible for the unfamiliar reader to distinguish between onomatopoeia and artwork (Leitão, 2010, p. 300). Different alphabets or unique styles are employed in order to communicate various types of information. Additionally, they can be positioned in various reading orientations (excluding bottom to top), leading to diverse outcomes, resulting in different effects (Leitão, 2011, p. 8).

At the same time, the translation of onomatopoeias, particularly those that appear in manga, is very challenging (Xiaoxiao & Chen, 2019, p. 135). Although every language has onomatopoeias, they are not commonly used in everyday speech in western languages (Luyten, 2001, p. 180). Furthermore, not all languages represent sounds the same way; although there are instances where some onomatopoeias reflect conventions known to most readers, there are other cases where the meaning of onomatopoeias is only familiar to the readers of the source language (Valero Garcés, 2008, p. 238). Moreover, the flexibility of the use of onomatopoeias in manga is immense (Leitão, 2010, p. 292), and there are many onomatopoeic words that are unique to manga, with even Japanese readers being unable to understand their meaning outside of their manga context (Sell, 2011, p. 99).

### *3.4. Translating onomatopoeias in manga: previous works*

Although studies regarding the translation of Japanese onomatopoeias largely focus on literary translation (Inose, 2008; Bartashova & Sichinskiy, 2014), some research on onomatopoeias found in manga has also been conducted. Leitão (2012), in a study conducted for her master's thesis on the translation of onomatopoeias in Brazilian editions of *shōjo* manga, identified eight strategies, which will be presented below. Inose (2010), in a case study about the translation of onomatopoeias and mimetics from Rumiko Takahashi's work *Maison Ikkoku* into Spanish and English, identified nine methods for each language. For the Spanish version, these involved: translation using an equivalent onomatopoeia; translation using a non-equivalent onomatopoeia; translation using an English onomatopoeia; translation using a Japanese onomatopoeia; translation using an original onomatopoeia; translation from onomatopoeia in the source language to a mimetic word in the target language or vice versa; translation using an adverb; translation through change of content (to dialogue, etc.) and deletion of the original onomatopoeia. For the English Version, they were: translation using an equivalent onomatopoeia; translation using a non-equivalent onomatopoeia; translation using a Japanese onomatopoeia; translation using an original onomatopoeia; translation from onomatopoeia in the source language to a mimetic word in the target language or vice versa; translation using a verb; translation using a verb with the spelling changed; translation through change of content (to dialogue, etc.); and deletion of the original onomatopoeia. In Sell & Pasfield-Neofitou's study (2015, pp. 256-257), which employed strategies from authors Catford, Baker, Tarone, and Harvey and focused on the words used to convey silence, four strategies were identified: equivalence; coinage; descriptive and

omission; and Rohan et al. (2021), while researching readers' behaviour patterns regarding translated onomatopoeia in digital manga, employed an original typology of translation strategies and presented four strategies that are typically used to translate onomatopoeias in manga: annotation; full-textual substitution; non-translation; and glossary.

## 4. Manga Translation

### *4.1. In Brazil*

The first manga published in Brazil was Cedibra's *Lobo Solitário* in 1988. *Akira*, released by Globo in 1990, came after. These series followed in the footsteps of the translations made by North American publishers, but only Akira achieved success with the international release of the animated film (Pinto, 2014).

Manga returned to the Brazilian publishing market in the 2000s after a ten-year hiatus marked by a number of unsuccessful releases that were never published in their entirety due to low sales (Mussarelli & Miotello, 2016, p. 47), including *Crying Freeman* (Sampa, 1992), *Mai - Sensitive Girl* (Abril, 1992), and *A Lenda de Kamui* (Abril, 1993) (Pinto, 2014). Japanese comics grew significantly after the introduction of *anime*, or Japanese cartoons, the majority of which were based on manga, such as *Sailor Moon*, *Yuyu Hakusho*, or *Dragon Ball*. The popularity of these cartoons, which began to be broadcast in the late 1980s and early 1990s, increased the demand for manga translations (Vitorino, 2015). The rising popularity of Japanese pop culture, as well as the internet, were also key factors (Amaral & Carlos, 2013).

### *4.2. In Portugal*

The manga series *Ranma ½* and *Striker*, also known as *Spriggan*, both published by Texto Editora, were the two first manga to be published in Portugal in September of 1996 (Sendai, 2021). Since then, and including the first two publications, there have been several failed projects, including titles such as *Akira* in 1998 by Meribérica, *Vampire Princess Miyu* and *Lupin III* by MangaLine, *Yu-Gi-Ho!* and *Dragon Ball* by ASA (although there was a previous complete edition published by Planeta DeAgostini that, apparently, had very little financial return), and *Dark Angel*, the very first series published by Devir Portugal in 2004 (Leituras de BD, 2013). It was not until 2012 that the Portuguese market started to have regular publications of manga (Biblioteca Brasileira de Mangás, 2018), when Devir started publishing popular manga series such as *Death Note*, *Naruto*, and *Blue Exorcist* (Magazine HD, 2015).

## 5. Methodology

### *5.1. Manga Series*

The data analysed for the creation of this study came from a corpus of the onomatopoeias extracted from the Japanese manga series *Chōjū Gitan* by artist Yuka Nagate. This series was chosen based on the following criteria: it needed to be a recent publication, specifically, from 2022 onward; to be a short series, between two and three volumes; to

have been published both in Portugal and Brazil, but by different publishers; and, finally, to have been directly translated from Japanese.

First released in 2011, *Chōjū Gitan*, whose first part consists of two volumes (aseita, n.d.), is a *seinen*[2] manga about Ochou, a shinobi who, disguised as a courtesan named Kochou, hunts other shinobi who have gone astray (myanimelist, n.d.). The manga was first published in Portugal by publisher A Seita, with the name *Butterfly Beast*. The first volume was published in August 2022 and the second volume in November 2022. It was translated by Raquel Saraiva, manga translator since 2018 (Biblioteca Nacional Portuguesa, n.d.). As for the Brazilian edition, the two volumes were published in a two-in-one version by publisher Pipoca & Nanquim in December 2023, with the name *Borboleta Assassina*. It was translated by Drik Sada, manga translator since 2000 (Japan Foundation: São Paulo, n.d.).

### *5.2. Purpose and corpus*

This paper examines and compares the strategies used to translate onomatopoeic words in manga in both European and Brazilian Portuguese. The comparison between the strategies used in both editions is based on the analysis of a parallel text corpus, which includes three subcorpora: (i) the source text in Japanese, (ii) the translation into European Portuguese, and (iii) the translation into Brazilian Portuguese.

First, the onomatopoeic expressions were extracted from the original Japanese and translated versions, concentrating on the onomatopoeia located outside the speech balloons. Different types of text can be found in manga, namely dialogue, character thoughts, narration, either by a narrator or a character, and onomatopoeia (Mooroka, 2010, p. 15). In contrast to dialogue, which remains inside the speech balloons, onomatopoeias in manga are incorporated into the artwork and, therefore, appear outside of the balloons (Sell & Pasfield-Neofitou, 2015, p. 254). Thus, only the onomatopoeias located outside the speech balloons were extracted and compiled in a textual corpus.

After extracting the expressions from both the original and translated versions, these were then aligned using an Excel spread sheet. They were manually extracted, as no digital versions of the Portuguese and Brazilian translations exist. The Excel sheet was divided into fourteen columns: 1. Series; 2. Volume; 3. Chapter; 4. Page Source Text; 5. Page Target Text PT-PT; 6. Page Target Text PT-BR; 7. Panel; 8. Japanese; 8. Romanization; 9. Type; 10. Meaning; 11. PT-PT Translation; 12. Strategy; 13. PT-BR Translation; and 14. Strategy.

The first columns contain details about the work being analysed, namely its name and volume, and where the onomatopoeia can be found within said work; the page where the onomatopoeia can be found in both the Japanese and Portuguese/Brazilian editions, as there can be differences between the two versions; and the panel where the onomatopoeia is located. These are followed by a column with the onomatopoeia written in Japanese and a column with transcription of the onomatopoeia into the Latin alphabet. The system of romanization adopted for transcribing the onomatopoeias is the Hepburn

[2] Manga aimed towards adult men which contains mature content (Sly, 2022, p. 13).

system, except for the notation of the vowel length and the small *tsu* at the end of onomatopoeias. Long vowels are transcribed by adding vowels, instead of using a macron, and the small *tsu* is represented as (T). This is followed by a column identifying the type and meaning of each onomatopoeia; for both this tasks, the Japanese specialised dictionaries *擬音語・擬態語 4500: 日本語オノマトペ辞典* (*Giongo, gitaigo 4500: Nihongo onomatope jiten*) and the *擬音語・擬態語辞典* (*Giongo, gitaigo jiten*) were consulted. Following their categorizations, the onomatopoeias were divided into *giongo*, *giseigo* and *gitaigo* types, Finally, the last two columns indicate the European and Brazilian Portuguese translations, and the translation strategies employed according to the typology chosen for the study. To be able to identify the translation strategies used, the specialised Portuguese dictionary *Dicionário de Onomatopeias e Vocábulos Expressivos 2º Edição* was consulted. This dictionary gathers words from a corpus that includes lyrics, literature, and comic strips from Brazil and Portugal (Azevedo, 2022, p. 19). Other tools used to identify the strategies were the online dictionaries *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Oxford Learner's Dictionary* and *Infopédia*.

Once extracted, the translations were analysed and classified according to the typology proposed by Leitão (2012) in her master's thesis on how onomatopoeias in *shōjo* manga are translated into Brazilian Portuguese. This typology was chosen because it was created based on the study of the translation of onomatopoeias between the Japanese and Portuguese languages, which are also two languages being analysed on this study. The typology borrows from the typologies from authors Doi (as cited in Leitão, 2012), which identified seven strategies during her analysis of the translation of the novel *Kitchen* by Banana Yoshimoto into Portuguese and English, and Inose (2008), which identified nine strategies in a case study about the translation of onomatopoeias from Haruki Murakami's novel *Sputnik no koibito* into English and Spanish. Leitão's typology include the following strategies: 1) Translation using an equivalent onomatopoeia in the Portuguese Language; 2) Translation using a verb that expresses a similar meaning to the onomatopoeia; 3) Translation using an adjective that expresses a similar meaning to that of the Japanese onomatopoeia; 4) Translation using an adverb that expresses a similar meaning; 5) Translation using a noun that expresses a similar meaning; 6) Translation using a paraphrased form, or an interpretation of the onomatopoeia, that expresses its meaning; 7) Translation using an interjection; and 8) Translation through transliteration, leading to a loan word (Leitão, 2012, pp. 139-173).

## 6. Results

A total of 223 onomatopoeias were extracted from the first volume and 183 from the second volume. Table 1 shows the onomatopoeias divided by type according to each volume:

Table 1. Onomatopoeias according to type

| Type of Onomatopoeia | Volume 1 | Volume 2 |
|---|---|---|
| *Giongo* | 99 | 82 |
| *Giseigo* | 6 | 13 |
| *Gitaigo* | 96 | 70 |
| No meaning was found | 22 | 18 |
| Total | 223 | 183 |

Table 2 shows the translation strategies employed, as well as the number of onomatopoeias that were translated according to each strategy, in both editions:

Table 2. Translation strategies by volume and editions

| Language | Volume 1 | Number of Onomatopoeias | Volume 2 | Number of Onomatopoeias |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| European Portuguese | Translation through transliteration | 8 | Translation through transliteration | 3 |
| | Translation using a non-equivalent onomatopoeia | 12 | Translation using a non-equivalent onomatopoeia | 10 |
| | Translation using a verb | 3 | Translation using a verb | 4 |
| | - | | Translation using a noun | 1 |
| | Translation using an English word | 36 | Translation using an English word | 37 |
| | Translation using an equivalent onomatopoeia | 14 | Translation using an equivalent onomatopoeia | 22 |
| | Translation using an interjection | 3 | Translation using an interjection | 3 |
| | Translation using an original onomatopoeia | 147 | Translation using an original onomatopoeia | 103 |
| Brazilian Portuguese | Translation through transliteration | 30 | Translation through transliteration | 44 |
| | Translation using a non- | 32 | Translation using a non- | 27 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | equivalent onomatopoeia | | equivalent onomatopoeia | |
| | Translation using an English word | 23 | Translation using an English word | 17 |
| | Translation using an equivalent onomatopoeia | 22 | Translation using an equivalent onomatopoeia | 34 |
| | Translation using an interjection | 3 | Translation using an interjection | 3 |
| | Translation using an original onomatopoeia | 113 | Translation using an original onomatopoeia | 58 |

**7. Discussion**

It was found, during the course of the analysis, that Leitão's typology was not comprehensive enough to accommodate all the strategies present in the corpus. Therefore, new strategies needed to be added. Since Leitão based her typology on Inose's work (2008), and upon determining that Inose had developed a typology solely dedicated to the translation of onomatopoeias in manga, it was decided that the new typology by Inose would be used to complement Leitão's typology. From Inose's typology (2010, pp. 165-167), three strategies were borrowed: translation using a non-equivalent onomatopoeia; translation using an English onomatopoeia; and, finally, translation using an original onomatopoeia.

Another interesting aspect, which was referenced in Section 2.3, is the creativity of onomatopoeias in manga. This feature was confirmed by the existence of onomatopoeias, as shown in Table 1, whose meanings could not be found in dictionaries or where none of the meanings fit the image being depicted. In fact, the range of singular onomatopoeic words is such that it is not possible to create a truly complete dictionary of onomatopoeias in manga (Cseh, 2023, p. 71).

By looking at the above table, it becomes quite clear that there are major differences between the two editions. While the Portuguese edition employs seven strategies in volume one and eight in volume two, the Brazilian edition employs the same six strategies in both volumes. The two strategies that only appear in the Portuguese edition are 'translation using a noun' and 'translation using a verb'. However, although employed in the Portuguese edition, these two strategies do not seem to be very frequent, with only one instance of the use of nouns in volume 2 and seven instances of the use of verbs between the two volumes.

Regarding the use of nouns, the only instance is the word 'SILÊNCIO' (*silence*) (*Butterfly Beast*, vol. 2, p. 90), and it is used to translate the *giongo*-type word カタン

(KATAN). However, this word is not associated with the inexistence of sound; on the contrary, it means "the sound of a hard object falling or hitting something" (Ono, 2007, p. 31). This translation, it seems, needs to be understood from the perspective of the story itself and the characters in it, as the image being depicted shows the main character being left completely alone after someone closes a door, and since she does not speak or makes any sound, she remains in complete silence.

Verbs were mostly used to translate *gitaigo*-type words related to the act of smiling, namely ニヤ (NIYA), ニッ (NI(T)), and ニイ (NII), which indicate different ways of smiling (Ono, 2007, p. 312-314). All these were translated as 'SORRI' (*smiles*), which seems like an expected translation as the Portuguese language does not include words to describe the act of smiling, meaning that the translator can only use the verb itself. The other examples are the translation of the *giongo*-type チャプ (CHAPU), which means "the small, bright sound of waves rippling, waves hitting something, or water lightly splashing" (Ono, 2007, p. 251) and the *gitaigo*-type ヨロ (YORO), which means "the state of having an uncertain footing or an unsteady body" (Ono, 2007, p. 500). These were translated as 'LAVA' (*washes*) (*Butterfly Beast*, vol. 2, p. 11) and 'CAMBALEIA' (*staggers*) (*Butterfly Beast*, vol. 2, p. 139), respectively. The first translation relates not the meaning of the onomatopoeia itself but to the image of someone washing their hands and, subsequently, making that sound, while the second translation can be directly associated with the meaning of the onomatopoeia.


Figure 1. *Butterfly Beast 2* (2023) A Seita (Portuguese edition),[3] p. 139 — originally by Nagate Yuka (2012)

The majority of the instances of translations using interjections encompass the word 'AH', and all appeared in the Portuguese edition. This translation is being used for the *gitaigo*-type ハッ (HA(T)), meaning "to be surprised by an unexpected event" (Ono, 2007, p. 340), and ビクッ (BIKU(T)), which means "the state of being startled and fearful" (Ono, 2007, p. 355). In the Brazilian edition, the onomatopoeia ハッ (HA(T)) is also translated using the interjection 'HÃ', which can be used when someone is surprised (Azevedo, 2022, p. 228). Nonetheless, the most interesting example is the interjection 'HU'. Used for jeer" or "shout" according to Azevedo's dictionary of onomatopoeias (2022, p. 229), in the corpus, the word appears as the translation for the already mentioned examples of ニヤ (NIYA), ニッ (NI(T)), and ニイ (NII). This contrast between the meanings of the words in Japanese and Portuguese may be an indication of the origin of a new meaning for the word, not as an interjection but as an onomatopoeia for laughter. This hypothesis seems to be supported by another entry, where the *giseigo*-type ククク (KUKUKU) (*Borboleta*

[3] Portuguese edition A Seita, 2023, used with permission of the publisher

*Assassina*, p. 332), which means “a suppressed laugh” (Ono, 2007, p. 84), was translated as ‘HU HU HU’.


Figure 2. *Choujuu Gitan* (2023) by Pipoca & Nanquim (Brazilian edition)[4] p. 332 — originally by Nagate Yuka (2012)

Despite the linguistic gap between the Portuguese and Japanese languages, there are still instances where equivalent onomatopoeias can be found. The more recurring onomatopoeia translated using an equivalent was the *giseigo*-type word ザワザワ (ZAWAZAWA), which means “a loud voice or sound” and it’s used when people make noise (Ono, 2007, p. 157). The onomatopoeia was translated using the equivalents ‘BLÁ BLÁ’ in the Portuguese edition and ‘BZZ BZZ’ in the Brazilian edition, an onomatopoeia commonly associated with the bussing sound of insects but that is also used to indicate whispering (Azevedo, 2022, p. 107). Other examples of onomatopoeias translated using Portuguese equivalents include the *gitaigo*-type ガツガツ (GATSUGATSU), with the meaning “to devour food with a lustful appetite” (Ono, 2007, p. 36), translated as ‘NHAC NHAC’ (*Borboleta Assassina*, p. 204); and バアンッ (BAAN(T)), a *giongo*-type word that means “the sound of something being violently struck or hit” (Ono, 2007, p. 328), translated as ‘TRÁS’. There was even one instance where the translation of both editions happened to

[4] Nagate Yuka/LEED PUBLISHING Co., Ltd. All rights reserved (c) Pipoca & Nanquim 2023 for the Brazilian edition

coincide, more specifically, the translation of フー (FUU), "the sound of strong breathing or sighing" (Ono, 2007, p. 388), as 'PFFF' (*Butterfly Beast*, vol. 2, p. 148; Borboleta Assassina, p. 332).

Another meaningful difference is the use of transliteration. There is a big discrepancy in the use of this strategy between the Portuguese edition and the Brazilian edition, with the Brazilian edition using it more frequently. Not understanding the meaning of the onomatopoeia does not seem to be a possible explanation for choosing this strategy, as there were only two instances, one in each volume, where the onomatopoeias could not be found in the dictionaries. As such, an inability to find a suitable solution to accurately convey the meaning seems to be the more logical explanation. The majority of the words translated using this strategy, around 54%, were of the *gitaigo*-type, which, according to Leitão (2010, p. 308) is the most challenging type of onomatopoeia since they correspond to a form that does not exist in the Portuguese language. Examples include the transliteration 'ZAH' (*Borboleta Assassina*, p. 28) for ザッ (ZA(T)), which means "a coordinated, vigorous, and rapid movement" (Ono, 2007, p. 149); 'GUH' (*Borboleta Assassina*, p. 235) for グ (GU), which means "to put one's strength into something" (Ono, 2007, p. 96); or 'DAH' (*Borboleta Assassina*, p. 60) for ダッ (DA(T)), meaning "to jump out with great vigour" (Ono, 2007, p. 238). There were also some instances of the use of transliterations for *giongo*-type words, such as 'SHAN SHAN SHAN' (*Borboleta Assassina*, p. 287), for シャンシャンシャン (SHANSHANSHAN), which means "the sound of a bell or other object ringing continuously and lightly" (Ono, 2007, p. 185); or 'CHARIN' for チャリーン(CHARIIN), meaning "the high-pitched sound of metal touching each other or hitting something hard" (Ono, 2007, p. 252).

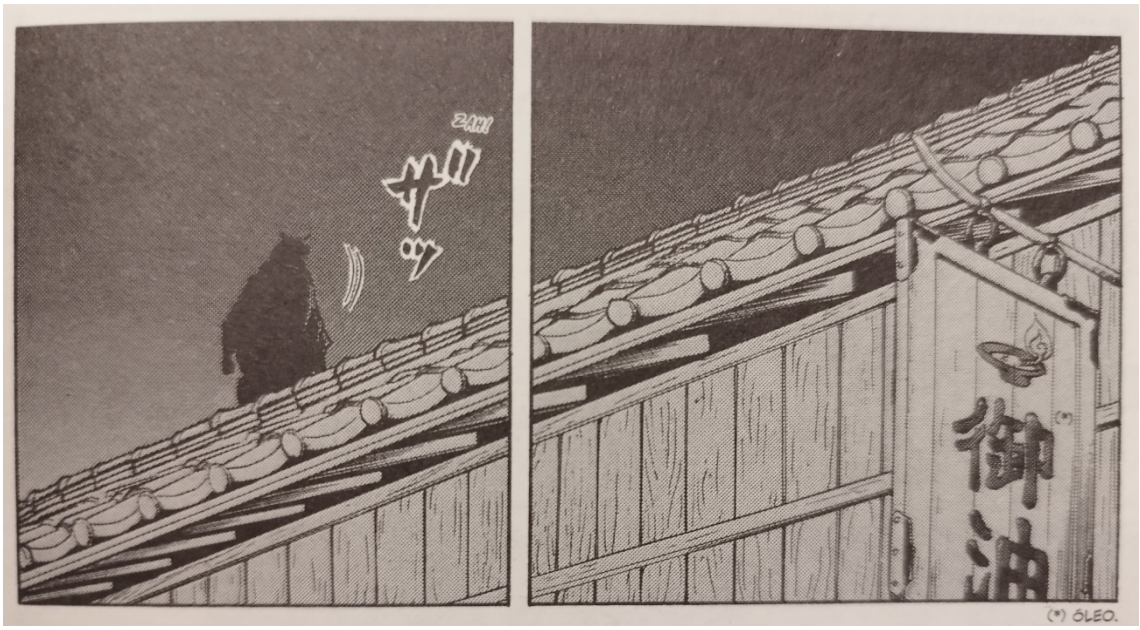


Figure 3. *Choujuu Gitan* (2023) by Pipoca & Nanquim (Brazilian edition),[5] p. 60 — originally by Nagate Yuka (2012)

The strategy of using non-equivalent onomatopoeias refers to the cases when a target language onomatopoeic word is used in a translation, but their meanings do not correspond to those of the source language (Inose, 2010, p. 169). This occurrence seems to be explained by the fact that translators must use the more limited number of onomatopoeic words available in their respective languages (Taran, 2014, p. 99). Examples of words translated using this strategy include ゴオオオ (GOOOO), which means a "a heavy, rumbling, low sound" (Ono, 2007, p. 117) and was used in a panel depicting a battle scene, translated as 'UÓÓÓÓ' (*Butterfly Beast*, vol. 1, p. 51), an onomatopoeia used for indicating "the sound of a siren" (Azevedo, 2022, p. 448); ゴシ (GOSHI), which means "the sound made when something is rubbed repeatedly with great force" (Ono, 2007, p. 121) and was used in a panel where a character was rubbing lipstick from her lips, was translated as 'GLUP' (*Butterfly Beast*, vol. 2, p. 27), an onomatopoeia used to indicate the sound of swallowing or choking (Azevedo, 2022, p. 216); or ガクッ(GAKU(T)), a *gitaigo*-type word meaning of "a body shaking from shock" (Yamaguchi, 2015, p. 36) and was used in a panel that depicts the outcome of character being stabbed, was translated as 'VUP' (*Borboleta Assassina*, p. 355), an onomatopoeia used to indicate the sound of stumbling or slipping, as well as indicating speed (Azevedo, 2022, p. 457).

Another contrast between the two editions is the use of English words. Though both editions employ this strategy, the Portuguese one adopts this strategy much more frequently. With 53 instances, the most frequent example is the use of the word 'TAP'. This translation was used for translating different words, the majority related to movement, more specifically, movement of the feet. Examples of words translated as 'TAP' include ザ

[5] Nagate Yuka/LEED PUBLISHING Co., Ltd. All rights reserved (c) Pipoca & Nanquim 2023 to the Brazilian edition

ッ (ZA(T)) (*Butterfly Beast*, vol. 1, p. 28), which means "the sound of multiple, regular footsteps" (Ono, 2007, p. 151); タタタ (TATATA) (*Butterfly Beast*, vol. 1, p. 11), meaning "the sound of footsteps running regularly" (Ono, 2007, p. 237); ザザッ (ZAZA(T)) (*Butterfly Beast*, vol. 2, p. 97) meaning "the sound and appearance of kicking the ground and moving quickly" (Yamaguchi, 2015, p. 195); or ドカドカ (DOKADOKA) (*Butterfly Beast*, vol. 2, p. 78), which means "the sound of someone stomping their feet, advancing, retreating, or moving around without any restraint at all" (Yamaguchi, 2015, p. 327). Interestingly, this strategy resulted in some similar translations between the two editions, such as 'TAP' for ヒタ (HITA), a *giongo*-type onomatopoeia that means "the sound of walking quickly across a flat surface wearing flat-soled, non-hard shoes such as zori sandals or tabi socks" (Yamaguchi, 2015, p. 419), or 'FLAP' for バサッ (BASA(T)) "the sound and appearance of a bundle of paper, fiber, or other material being shaken or touching a hard surface" (Yamaguchi, 2015, p. 378), and is commonly used for the sound of wings flapping. The most likely explanation for the usage of English words is the fact that, similarly to what happened in Spain (Inose, 2010, p. 169), American comics were introduced into the Portuguese and Brazilian publishing markets long before manga was, more precisely since the late 1920's in Brazil (Porto & Oliveira, 2017, p. 5) and the late 1940's in Portugal (Pinto, 2016, p. 300). This exposure had a lasting effect as many onomatopoeias from these comics were simply left untranslated, leading to their assimilation into certain European languages (Taran, 2014, p. 99)

Nevertheless, despite the various translation strategies employed throughout the series, the majority of the onomatopoeias were still translated using 'original words'. This occurs when the source language does not have a fixed repertoire of onomatopoeia that is equivalent to the Japanese words, which forces the translator to compensate by creating new words (Teshome, 2024, p. 25). This is clearly the case when translating from Japanese to Portuguese, as onomatopoeias are less common in the Portuguese language (Fonseca, 2011, p. 147). Examples of translations using coined words include 'TZIN TZIN' in the Portuguese edition (*Butterfly Beast,* vol. 1, p. 30) and 'KLIM KLIM' in the Brazilian Edition (*Borboleta Assassina*, p. 34) used to translated キンキン (KINKIN), a *giongo*-type word meaning "a metallic, sharp, high-pitched sound that resonates in the ear" (Ono, 2007, p. 80); or 'SHSH' in the Portuguese edition (*Butterfly Beast*, vol. 1, p. 23) and 'TZZ' in the Brazilian edition (*Borboleta Assassina*, p. 27) for ジジ (JIJI) "the faint sound of something burning" (Ono, 2007, p. 164).


Figure 4. *Butterfly Beast 1* (2022) A Seita (Portuguese edition),[6] p. 30 — originally by Nagate Yuka (2012)

Although the most commonly used strategy in both editions, it is much more recurrent in the Portuguese edition than in the Brazilian one. This may be explained by the publishing market itself, as manga has been translated for longer in Brazil than in Portugal, which may imply that Brazilian translators have more experience in dealing with this issue. In fact, when comparing the difference in strategies used in the Brazilian edition with all occurrences of onomatopoeias translated using coined words in the Portuguese edition, it is possible to see that almost half of the translations using new words in the Portuguese edition were translated using different strategies in the Brazilian edition. However, if the reverse comparison is made, less than 35% of the words translated using coined words in the Brazilian edition were translated using other strategies in the Portuguese edition. It is important to note that more than 65% of the words with no meaning in dictionaries present in the corpus were translated using this strategy. In these instances, this strategy can almost be seen as a safeguard, allowing the translator to convey the meaning based solely on the image but without misleading the reader. Furthermore, in both editions, the biggest group of words that were translated using this strategy were *gitaigo*-type. This finding once again emphasizes the previously mentioned difficulty in translating this type of word.

[6] Portuguese edition A Seita, 2023, used with permission of the publisher

## 8. Conclusion

Although initially intended only for Japanese readers, Japanese comics are now a global phenomenon (Johnson-Woods, 2010, p. 10), with the term manga having been assimilated into various languages (Kern, 2016, p. 106). Onomatopoeias, abundant in the Japanese language, are an essential element that contributes to immersive reading (Holt & Curtin, 2022, p. 77). However, its translations constitute one of the most complex issues (Petersen, 2009).

The first purpose of this paper was to identify how onomatopoeias in manga were translated in European and Brazilian Portuguese. To do this, a typology created from the study of the translation of onomatopoeias in manga was used. However, the variety of strategies present in the corpus required the addition of other strategies from a second typology, also based on the translation of onomatopoeia in manga. Accordingly, through analysis of the corpus, a total of eight translation strategies were identified. Thus, through the analysis of the corpus, a total of eight translation strategies were identified. This leads to the first conclusion that can be drawn from this study: that the variety of strategies used in the translation of onomatopoeia in manga is vast, which corroborates the opinion of most authors regarding the difficulty of translating them, not only because of their diversity but also because of their originality (for example, Petersen, 2009; Valero Garcés; Sell, 2011; Natsume, 2022).

The second objective was to assess whether there are significant differences in the strategies used in both editions. The analysis reveals a difference in the number of strategies, with the Portuguese edition presenting more strategies. However, all the strategies present in the Brazilian edition can be found in the Portuguese edition, and the number of occurrences of the two additional strategies present in the Portuguese edition is very low, indicating that their use is very sporadic. In addition, examples of coincidental translations have also been observed. This leads to the second conclusion that can be drawn from this study: although Brazilian translators seem to have more experience in dealing with this unique aspect of manga, particularly with regard to the use of coined words, translators from both countries are still constrained by the same linguistic limitations of the Portuguese language.

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# STRATEGIES FOR JOURNALISTIC TRANSLATION COURSES: TOWARD MEANINGFUL PEDAGOGY

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ABSTRACT: This study focuses on teaching journalistic translation courses to undergraduate students in Libya. It advocates a student-centered approach that is process-oriented and task-based, with a view to creating an active learning environment in which undergraduate students can hone their translation skills, increase their awareness of genre, improve their translation pace, and achieve class objectives and learning outcomes. It contends that such a strategy, complemented with the use of computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools, provides meaningful interactions and enriching learning experiences when utilized successfully. It also suggests that pedagogical strategies, such as a translation portfolio and detailed rubric for comprehensive assessment, along with effective feedback, are important parts of the teaching process.
KEYWORDS: Teaching Journalistic Translation, Translation Pedagogy, Translation Portfolio, Assessment, Task Based Approach, Process Oriented Approach

> *Many translation teachers have only one objective for their translation classes. Students should translate better at the end of the class than when they began* — Donald C. Kiraly (1995, p. xiv).

## 1. Introduction

Translation plays a vital role in every society in this global age. Accordingly, the demand for teaching translation has increased in academia, and it has become an important subject of study in universities and colleges across the globe. Many translation programs now offer various specializations, including Journalistic Translation, Medical Translation, Legal Translation, Audiovisual Translation, Literary translation, and Diplomatic Translation.

This study focuses specifically on the teaching of journalistic translation[1] courses to undergraduate students in Libya. In fact, translation programs are a relatively new establishment in Libya. As Jamal Giaber (2005, p. 186) explains:

> Until the year 2000, and with the exception of Garyounis and Khaliij Al_Tahaddi universities, which have separate departments for translation, all Libyan universities teach translation as a subject within the departments of English and French. It goes without saying that teaching translation as a subject within departments of foreign languages does not qualify students to be translators. Students graduating from the Department of Translation and Arabization of

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[1] The name and scope of this branch of translation practice is a contentious topic. Some scholars label it as 'news translation' (Holland, 2013; Bielsa, 2019), on the grounds that it involves more than just interlingual transfer, and includes rewriting and synthesizing the source material to meet the expectations of the target audience (cf. Bassnett, 2009, p. 6; Bassnett & Bielsa, 2016, p. 37). Federico Zanettin (2021, p 86) prefers the broader 'news media translation' to cover all forms of mass media (printed media, broadcast news, and digital media) that deliver news to the general public. However, Davier & Doorslaer (2018, p. 154) suggest 'journalistic translation' is more comprehensive than news translation (the term also favoured by Valdeón, 2015), and this is the term that is adopted here.

> Khaliij Al-Tahaddi University can only become reliable translators and interpreters after many years of real experience.

Since Giaber's study was published in 2005, more translation majors have become available at undergraduate and graduate levels in several Libyan Universities, such as the University of Tripoli, University of Gharyan, University of Benghazi, Misurata University, Sebha University, etc. This increased demand results not only from individual interest (an increased interest in learning English and working in the translation industry) but also from external reasons, which include: (1) Libya's role in international politics, (2) peace-making, (3) African unity, (4) globalization, and (5) international cooperation (Giaber, 2005, p. 182). Therefore, translation plays a crucial role in Libyan society at various levels.

Journalistic translation is an essential course on the Translation programs at several Universities across Libya. At the University of Tripoli, for example, students are expected to translate various kinds of journalistic texts, including sports, technology, politics, education, economics and reportage on world events etc. However, the practice of teaching translation still relies heavily on traditional methods, which, in turn, impact on students' performance. These involve largely read-and-translate procedures. That is, teachers hand their students passages to translate individually while allowing them to use dictionaries, and then students read what they translated in the classroom, followed by class discussions. They then receive feedback from the teacher, usually consisting of normative judgements as to what the 'correct' translation should be.

As a result, the students' learning experience is constrained and passive. Put differently, while such a traditional method offers good practice opportunities, there is little opportunity for students to interact and discuss their translation choices and strategies, and the teacher's feedback tends to be limited and ineffectual. As a result, most Libyan undergraduate students lack the skills and confidence needed to work successfully as translators in the job market.

With these concerns in mind, the goal of this study is to present a meaningful strategy to advance training in journalistic translation in Libya. It uses a combined approach, involving authentic materials, a detailed and objective assessment rubric, constructive feedback, and a translation portfolio. By incorporating these steps and shifting to a student-centered approach, the course provides an enriching learning experience that enables students to handle a range of topics within a journalistic context.

## 2. Training translators of journalistic texts in the Arab world

Several textbooks have discussed the challenges of translating journalistic texts from English to Arabic and vice versa. Hasan Ghazala's *Translation as Problems and Solutions* (1995), designed for Arabic speakers who are enrolled in Bachelor programs in translation departments across the Arab regions, is a particularly useful resource for training translators to translate from English to Arabic and vice versa. In it, Ghazala discusses translation problems and provides practical solutions for solving them. This book is widely used as a reference in curriculum or as suggested reading in translation courses.

In the same context, James Dickins et al's *Thinking Arabic Translation* (2002) is a practical course in teaching translation from Arabic to English, presenting different translation problems and their solutions with numerous examples. The book is suitable for the final year undergraduate program, offering "a new methodology and plenty of practical work in this area" (2002, p. 2).

More recently, Mahmoud Altarabin's *On Translating Arabic and English Media Texts: A Coursebook for Undergraduates* (2020), designed for undergraduate translation students and journalism students, explores the basic linguistic and stylistic features of news media discourse in English and Arabic. The bidirectional feature of the book, which includes authentic Arabic and English media texts, allows students to understand its distinctive nature and produce accurate translations.

While these textbooks are useful resources for teachers and students, we found that adding authentic materials from ongoing events proved to be very instructive for students. To translate effectively, students need to practice using real-world examples from international media outlets, such as BBC, CNN, Aljazeera, Reuters, etc., as well as material from newspaper magazines, such as the *Guardian, New York Times*, etc.

Although a lot of attention has been given to the problems of translating journalistic texts from Arabic to English and vice versa, the scholarly discussions of translation pedagogy in this field are rather scant. In a key study titled, "Translators as well as thinkers: teaching of journalistic translation in Hong Kong", Defeng Li (2006) identifies a gap between institutional translator training and the real world of professional translation, and aims to bridge it in order to better prepare student translators for the market in Hong Kong. He contends that translator training should focus on "the process and reflective practice of translation so that students will ultimately develop good decision-making and problem-solving abilities utterly needed by professional translators" (2006, p. 618). Li's proposition is illuminating in attempting to make translator training more realistic, focusing on practical skills to enhance students' readiness for the real-life market.

In what follows, we present a teaching model that is suitable for teaching journalistic translation at undergraduate level, insofar as it has the potential to engage students in the process of translation, while enhancing their abilities and skills. It enables students to understand the particularities of journalistic translation, its sensitivity, and the urgency in delivering information effectively. By giving students the opportunity to practice real-world translation tasks, this model exposes them to a real working environment under pressure while delivering timely translation without compromising the validity of news content.

## 3. Pedagogy in Translation Practice

The way in which teachers teach and the kind of methodology they adopt play a vital role in translation training and pedagogy. Defined by Cambridge Dictionary[2] as "the study of the methods and activities of teaching," pedagogy includes the use of specific strategies, design

[2] dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/pedagogy (Accessed date: 3 oct. 2023)

of class activities, selection of materials, goal-setting, assessment and feedback, amongst other things. In Translation Studies, this has gained some attention in the works of Brian James Baer and Geoffrey Koby, whose book *Beyond the Ivory Tower: Rethinking Translation Pedagogy* addresses the central question: "How effectively am I teaching students to think about translation?" (2003, p. x), and Donald Kiraly, who argues that "translation pedagogy has to be based on theories of translation that emerge from translation practice" (1995, p. x). However, choosing an effective teaching method cannot simply be done with the toss of a coin. Rather, it entails thoughtful considerations of various factors including the students' needs, the subject matter, the type of instruction, the teachers' educational philosophy, and the class objectives.

Our approach involves a combination of task-based learning and process-oriented methods, which complement each other in teaching journalistic translation.

Task-based learning was first introduced by Prabhu for the purpose of teaching English as a second language in Southern India, Bangladore (Candlin, 1987), and was further developed by Jane Willis (1996), who divided it into three main stages: pre-task (introduction to topic and task), task cycle (involves task, planning, report), and language focus (entails analysis and practice). While this method is intended for language teaching, it is also applicable in teaching translation practice courses, but with some modifications. Li (2013) customized it to suit business translator training, proposing six stages (pre-task, task, reporting, analysis, revising, and reflection), arguing that this is effective in developing students' translation competence and enhancing their "research skills and reflection capacity as a means of self-discovery and self-improvement" (2013, p. 23). In the pre-task, the instructor delivers instructions and assists students in recalling translation techniques and strategies. Students then conduct effective readings in both the source language and target language to understand the translation task, while familiarizing themselves with related terminology in both languages. In the task stage, the instructor's role is to monitor and facilitate the pair/group work, and students finish their tasks in pairs or groups and may ask the teacher questions for clarification. In the reporting stage, the teacher coordinates the session and may offer quick feedback. Meanwhile, students reflect on their process of translation and share their products verbally in class. In the analysis phase, the instructor underscores the specific learning objectives for the students to achieve based on their assigned tasks. Within this stage, students work together with the instructor on a detailed analysis of selected translations. In the revision phase, the instructor helps students with their revision and editing, and the students incorporate the instructor's feedback on their translations in groups. In the reflection stage, the instructor reflects on the entire activity and offers useful tips for future teaching, meanwhile, the students reflect on the challenges that they faced in their translations (Li, 2013, pp. 7-11).

This method has also been applied by Abduhameed Muhatlis Alenezi, who found it beneficial for teaching translation practice on one of the undergraduate translation programs in Saudi Arabia (2020, p. 194).

However, business translation is different from journalistic translation because it is mostly geared toward clients, whereas the latter is oriented toward the general public. Li's model was further modified by us to suit journalistic translation teaching by integrating some aspects of Daniel Gile's process-oriented approach (see below) and including the use of CAT tools (which allow access to bilingual glossaries and databases[3] in the field of journalism) and a translation portfolio.

Daniel Gile's process-oriented approach focuses on the cognitive processes used by trainee translators as they learn their craft. In the first stage, the students will deduce the meaning of the original passage based on their existing linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge, formulating a meaning hypothesis. If the meaning hypothesis is deemed plausible, they will move to the reformulation stage, which constitutes their first draft (Gile, 1994, p. 108). Instructors will react to successive drafts by commenting on the students' choices and, above all, on the strategies they used to arrive at specific solutions (Gile, 2009, p. 14). That is to say, instead of correcting specific words or phrases in a normative manner, they verify that the students have followed certain strategies to overcome problems. In doing so, they enable the students enhance their translation product as well.

One of the most striking aspects of Gile's method is that it focuses the trainees' attention on the various decision-making processes involved in translation (2009*,* p. 14). This allows teachers to be more flexible, insofar as they will be able to verify that the students follow a certain technique or strategy in making a particular choice, instead of insisting on a specific word or phrase (2009, p. 15).

Gile's model also supports an interactive environment in class, allowing students to have visible agency in their choices and encouraging them to focus on the methods and procedures involved in producing adequate translations, instead of fixating on finished products. As Kruger (2008, p. 59) points out, the model works best in (and contributes to) "teaching-learning environments that are open to discussion not only between lecturer and students, but also among students." In such a context, when they encounter a problem and share their solutions, students realize that there are multiple solutions to a single translation problem. As such, it creates a robust interactive learning environment that sharpens students' understanding of the processes involved in translation.

The combined model thus comprises five main stages with a timed schedule for each session. These stages are pre-task, initial task, work task, draft task, and feedback task. Before delving into details, a task has been defined in numerous ways—but in this context—it means giving students a journalistic passage, extracted from a real-life scenario to translate, but suitable to their level. Here, it is important to note that when selecting journalistic texts for translation (task), teachers must take into account of the level of difficulty in regard to the stylistic, grammatical, syntactic, or cultural aspects of the chosen texts to students. In addition, the teacher must be strategic in introducing different genres

[3] According to Zaretskaya, Pastor, and Seghiri (2015, pp. 79-80): "[CAT tools] consists in suggesting words or phrases to complete the segment that the translator has started typing. The translator, if she wants to discard the suggestions, can simply overtype them, or accept them."

and news formats for students, such as (interviews, headlines, editorials, columns, feature articles, reports, etc.). This is because real-life tasks offer an immediate access to authentic materials that students might encounter in their future jobs as translators. Ideally,

> Translation practice should simulate actual professional translation tasks (i.e., the practice texts should be authentic, translation task specifications should be provided to students at the start, and evaluation of translation products should be based on original task specification" (Christiane Nord, 1988, quoted in Kiraly, 1995, p. 25).

Hence, practice-oriented classroom activities are paramount in preparing students for real-world examples, thereby shaping their understanding of tangible tasks to translate, and strengthening their confidence in performing real tasks in their prospective careers.

In the pre-task stage, the instructor delivers clear instructions about the assigned task, divides the class into groups, and discusses with the students the translation strategies and techniques that they can use collaboratively. In the second phase, students embark on reading the passage, finding the meaning of unknown words or terminology by using CAT tools, after which they start rendering the assigned passage in groups. This stage is crucial in stimulating the group activity, as CAT tools create opportunities for them to interact with each other and hone their translation skills. The teacher's role here is to monitor and facilitate the group work.

In the third stage, students will discuss their translation choices, problems, challenges, mistakes, and how they fix them. A key element of this stage is drawing students' attention to the translation process and making them think about their choices, and the strategies they can use to overcome translation problems. Here, the use of CAT tools is central, as they discuss the suggestions provided by the tools, while the teacher observes and gives support and encouragement. In this vein, students acquire greater control over the translation process, learning to navigate translation problems.

In the fourth stage, while the students are drafting their translations, the teacher refrains from assessing or judging their drafts. Instead, s/he discusses their choices, and how to reasonably justify them. At the end of this stage, one member of each group will be asked to read their translation aloud in class.

The fifth and final stage is where the teacher gives brief oral feedback to each group, and students take notes. This will be followed later by a more in-depth evaluation and detailed constructive comments based on the rubric (discussed below). They are also required to include their revised tasks in their final translation portfolio assignment (see below) where they reflect on their translation processes, problems, solutions, and learning outcomes. As shown, all stages complement each other in the learning process whereby each one entails a new step with a different purpose of engaging with their tasks to enhance their translation skills.

Overall, the advantage of using this method is that it allows students to benefit from the use of CAT tools, while interacting with each other and with the teacher in the classroom. What is unique about this combined approach is that it treats translation as a

multi-faceted activity while creating a productive dynamic environment, using instructive steps and suitable technological tools to hone students' skills, increase their awareness of genre, and its specialized form, thereby achieving learning outcomes.

During the process, students' attention is drawn to features such as headings and subheadings, reported speech, and the various genres that exist within journalistic translation (news reporting, opinion writing, interviews, feature writing, sports writing, entertainment journalism, etc.). Additionally, by performing translation tasks based on the five suggested steps within a limited time frame, students adapt to working under pressure in the workplace and improve their quality of translation. Here, students understand the time sensitivity in delivering timely translation in a specialized language of journalism and its terminology. Our proposed model offers an instructive yet productive classroom training focusing on the process and the product of translation by using CAT tools. Accordingly, students enhance their understanding of the translation process, improve their pace, and ensure consistency and format.

However, one of the challenges in adopting this method in the classroom is its difficulty for students who are not accustomed to this teaching style, since there are a lot of instructions to follow, several steps to take, and tasks that require concentration. Consequently, it will take a couple of classes to implement it efficiently. Another challenge is the class size; it works well when there are fewer than 25 students, but if there are more than that, it will be difficult to implement. The best practical solution is to divide the class into two groups with lessons at different times, allowing the teacher to implement the teaching model more successfully.

## 4. Assessment and Feedback

Assessment is one of the teaching tools that needs to be conducted in a transparent way. This is best achieved by using a detailed rubric based on well-defined criteria to objectively measure students' skills and learning outcomes. Equally important, it must be suitable to the class level and align with the learning objectives. However, the most common method for evaluating translation trainees in Libya relies heavily on the product, concentrating on written exams (a midterm test worth 40% of the total score, and a final one worth 60%). This method is not really a fair way to assess the real outcomes of students' progress, nor is it appropriate in scaling their skills. Rather, it raises students' anxiety to the extreme as they experience a lot of stress about doing well on these exams.[4]

Obviously, this type of assessment depends entirely on the final product, and thus is product-oriented. As such, it does not do justice to the learning process. A better alternative is to use an objective method that reflects criteria that, in turn, meet the class expectations, objectives, and learning outcomes. Accordingly, we have adopted the

[4] This seems to be a common feature of university training across the Arab World. As Omar Atari notes: "The teacher sets a task, usually in examination conditions, which s/he then marks in order to be able to decide whether or not the students have reached the level required to pass the module and proceed to the following level, or receive the diploma" (2012, p. 111).

following table, which shows a breakdown of the process of assessment to the marking criteria of the entire course.

| | |
|---|---|
| Attendance and Participation | 10% |
| Midterm Exam | 30% |
| Translation Portfolio & Reflection | 20% |
| Final Exam | 40% |

After implementing this system in our teaching practice, we found it to be more comprehensive in evaluating students' skills and outcomes throughout the semester, and therefore much more effective than the common assessment form.

When it comes to assessing translation, Williams (2013, p. 420) states, "there is general agreement about the need for a translation to be good, satisfactory or acceptable." To eschew any personal impressionistic judgment or bias, the proposed rubric is based on three straightforward criteria: 1)- *Source-text fidelity* (transfer of content), 2)- *Linguistic accuracy and appropriacy* (correct use of grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, register etc), and 3)- *Readability* (clarity of expression, coherence and cohesion). In honing and pruning this list of evaluation criteria, we made sure that it is suitable for students who are at the early stages of learning translation. Students must be introduced to the rubric in advance in order to give them a clear idea for what they will be evaluated for. As Maria Julia Sainz (1994, p. 137) points out, they have the right to know the evaluation criteria beforehand. In her words:

> As teachers we should establish common ground from the very beginning. Students have the right to know the evaluation system we will be using to evaluate their translation work throughout the year and we should be consistent in its use (Sainz, 1994, p. 138).

The importance of using the translation rubric based on well-defined criteria helps in rendering the assessment effective and consistent. Deborah Allen and Kimberly Tanner explain in "Rubrics: Tools for Making Learning Goals and Evaluation Criteria Explicit for Both Teachers and Learners" (2006, p. 203) that "rubrics not only make the instructor's standards and resulting grading explicit, but they can give students a clear sense of what the expectations are for a high level of performance on a given assignment, and how they can be met." The efficacy of rubrics as a component of translation offers a valid assessment that meets learning needs and teachers' goals and expectations in a transparent manner. Overall, the advantage of using the rubric entails "learning goals, design instruction that addresses those goals, communicate[s] the goals to students, guide[s] our feedback on students' progress toward the goals and judge[s] final products in terms of degree to which the goals were met" (Andrade, 2005, p. 27). We believe that the aforementioned rubric is relevant to our students' level, serving as an effective form of assessment in Journalistic Translation courses at the undergraduate level.

Providing regular feedback is also an integral part of the learning objectives and must be incorporated strategically and instructively. However, the common form of feedback in teaching translation in Libyan universities is predominantly geared toward the translation product with little attention given to process. As Atari (2012, p. 106) puts it:

> Most research findings on English/Arabic/English trainee translators' shifts indicate that a majority of translation teachers' feedback is purely product-oriented. It is mainly linguistically oriented with scant reference to proper translation processes and trainees' strategies such as identifying a problem, finding a solution to the problem, rephrasing, coming up with alternative solutions, checking their translational versions according to use and users, etc.

Another common failing in the translation classroom is for teachers to focus on minor errors and overlook the bigger picture in their feedback. As Anthony Pym (1992) has pointed out, there are two types of translation errors, binary and non-binary errors, in which the former refers to any errors that are clearly incorrect, while the latter describe translations that are not totally wrong but may not be appropriate for some reason and can be improved.

In fact, students should not be held responsible for something they do not yet know, especially in the early stages as novice translators. However, after they recognize their errors, then they should be accountable for them. Cay Dollerup's "Systematic Feedback in Teaching Translation" is highly relevant here. Dollerup explains three components of systematic feedback: "corrections in the translations;" "oral discussion in the class covering adequate as well as inadequate renditions;" and "feedback form assessing strengths and weaknesses with each student" (1994, p. 125). To ensure the feedback is effective and suitable to student's needs, levels, and expectations, it should go beyond dichotomic judgments.

In this way, teachers become more involved in the translation process by giving feedback on the translation drafts based on the clear evaluation criteria and allowing students to work on multiple drafts to engage in the translation process to enhance their translation skills. At the end of the course, students will include their final products in the translation portfolio, which is an integral part of the assessment package as well. Hence, designing effective feedback entails a comprehensive evaluation based on both the process and product of translation, thereby focusing attention on the procedures and the final product of translation. So, our strategy for effective feedback involves useful comments, instructive suggestions, and general advice, while allowing students to invest their time in improving the quality of their translation, thereby focusing on long-term success.

To clarify this further, one of the tasks used in class was the translation of a section of the article: "China-U.S. Cooperation 'No Longer an Option ... but an Imperative' by Wang Yi"[5]

[5] https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2024-01-05/china-u-s-cooperation-no-longer-optional-but-imperative-for-both-and-the-world-wang-yi (Accessed date: 8 Jan 2024)

| Example of Translation Task | |
|---|---|
| Original text | Student translations (versions of 3 groups) |
| BEIJING (Reuters) -Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Friday the most urgent task for Sino-U.S. relations is to establish a correct understanding and cooperation between the two sides, stressing it is “no longer an option … but an imperative” for the world. | 1-بكين 5 يناير (رويتر–) - صرح وزير الخارجية الصيني وانغ يي يوم يجب تحقيقها بشأن العلاقات الجمعة، أن الحاجة الماسة التي الصينية-الأمريكية، هي إقامة التفاهم والتعاون الصحيح بين الجانبين، مؤكدا على انها "لم تعد خيارا... بل ضرورة حتمية" من أجل العالم. |
| | 2-بكين، 5 يناير (رويتر–) - قال وزير الخارجية الصيني وانغ يي يوم الجمعة إن المهمة الأكثر إلحاحًا في العلاقات بين الصين والولايات المتحدة هي تأسيس فهم صحيح وتعاون بين الجانبين، مؤكدًا أنه "لم يعد خيارًا ... بل ضرورة" للعالم. |
| | 3- قال وزير الخارجية الصيني وانغ يي يوم الجمعة ان أكثر المهام العاجلة للعلاقات الصينية الأمريكية هي تأسيس فهم صحيح وتعاون بين الجانبين، مشددا على أنه "لم يعد ذلك خيار ... بل أمر حتميا" للعالم. |
| Cooperation is the "most correct choice for China and the United States to get along", Wang said in a keynote speech at an event to mark the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the U.S. | 1- أوضح وانغ في كلمة رئيسية خلال حدث بمناسبة الذكرى الخامسة والأربعين لإقامة العلاقات الدبلوماسية بين الصين والولايات المتحدة "التعاون هو الخيار الأكثر صحة للصين والولايات المتحدة للتعايش." |
| | 2 -قال وانغ في كلمة رئيسية ألقاها في حفل بمناسبة الذكرى 45 لإقامة العلاقات الدبلوماسية بين الصين والويلات المتحدة أن "التعاون هو الخيار الصحيح بين الصين والويلات المتحدة للتوافق" |
| | 3-وقال وانغ في خطابه الرئيسي الذي يصادف الذكرى الخامسة والأربعين لتأسيس العلاقات الدبلوماسية بين الصين والولايات المتحدة، إن التعاون هو "الخيار الأنسب للصين والولايات المتحدة من أجل التعايش." |
| “It can be said that China-U.S. cooperation is no longer an option for the two countries and even for the world, but an imperative that must be seriously addressed,” Wang said. | 1-وقال وانغ: "يمكن القول إن التعاون بين الصين والولايات المتحدة لم يعد خيارًا للبلدين أو حتى للعالم بأسره، بل هو ضرورة حتمية يجب التعامل معها بجدية". |
| | 2- وقال: "يمكن القول إن التعاون بين الصين والولايات المتحدة لم يعد خيارًا للبلدين وحتى للعالم، بل ضرورة يجب التعامل معها بجدية". |
| | 3-وصرح قائلا "يمكن القول ان التعاون بين الصين والولايات المتحدة لم يعد خيارًا للبلدين وحتى للعالم، بل أمر حتميا يجب التعامل معه بجدية" |
| Relations between the United States and China have been tense over a range of issues, including national security, global conflicts, trade curbs, climate change and Taiwan. | 1-كانت العلاقات بين الولايات المتحدة والصين متوترة بشأن مجموعة من القضايا، ومن ضمنها؛ الأمن القومي والصراعات العالمية والقيود التجارية وتغير المناخ وتايوان. |
| | 2- لقد توترت العلاقات بين الولايات المتحدة والصين بسبب مجموعة من القضايا، بما في ذلك الأمن القومي، والصراعات العالمية، وقيود التجارة، وتغير المناخ، وتايوان. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | 3- توترت العلاقات بين الولايات المتحدة والصين بسبب مجموعة من القضايا، بما في ذلك الأمن القومي، والصراعات العالمية، والقيود التجارية، وتغير المناخ، وتايوان. |
| The diplomatic rift deepened last year as both accused each other of flying high-altitude balloons in their respective air spaces. | 1-تعمق الخلاف الدبلوماسي العام الماضي حيث اتهم كل منهما الآخر بإطلاق بالونات على ارتفاعات عالية في المجال الجوي لكل منهما. |
| | 2-تعمق الخلاف الدبلوماسي العام الماضي حيث اتهمَ كل من البلدين الآخر بإطلاق مناطيد على ارتفاعات عالية في المجال الجوي لكل منهما. |
| | 3-تعمق الخلاف الدبلوماسي العام المنصرم حيث اتهمَ كل طرف الآخر بإطلاق مناطيد على ارتفاعات عالية في مجالها الجوي. |

As shown, each group comes up with their version of the translation, which one member then reads aloud. The teacher gives feedback orally after each translation and then they discuss it together. In doing so, students recognize the nuances between each group's translation and learn from feedback.[6] The use of CAT tools helps students to produce good translations in a timely manner. Although the translations in the table above are rough drafts, they are readable and comprehensible versions. Of course, each group needs to improve their translations based on feedback because there are some problems with each one, but overall, they are acceptable. Students are expected to revise their translations and submit their final translations in the portfolio at the end of the semester.

The feedback aims to strike a balance between the process and the product of translation—in that it covers the steps of the translation process, from analyzing the text to identifying and solving problems, as well as taking decisions to render the message effectively in its final product. It aims to hone the translation skills of the students, build their confidence, and raise awareness of their responsibility to work in the real workplace. Thus, it fits within this method since it involves the bigger picture of assessment and meets the criteria of evaluation in terms of source-text fidelity, linguistic accuracy and readability, that suits students' level and results in a more nuanced evaluation of students' translation.

## 5. Translation Portfolio

Along with assessment and feedback within this proposed teaching model, a translation portfolio is of paramount importance for improving students' performance. In *Portfolio as a Learning Strategy*, Janell Cleland and Carol Porter observe that "the answer to the question, 'what needs to be done next?' can be only determined when individual strengths, weaknesses, needs, and questions are brought to the conscious level of both students and teacher" (1995, p. 45). It also helps in understanding translation as a process. In this regard, Sakolkarn Insai asserts in "Learning Portfolios in Translation Classrooms" that: "It develops

[6] We recommend that the teacher should form new groups every class to allow wider interaction and collaboration between students.

the students' translation competence, as well as other skills necessary for their translation learning, including decision making, problem solving, self-monitoring, and self-assessing" (2013, p. 96). Hence, the incorporation of translation portfolios in the classroom will give a great opportunity for the students to take responsibility for their learning and to be engaged in improving their translation skills through practice, editing, reflection, and feedback.

As a part of the course, students are required to collect their translation tasks based on the weekly exercises that are conducted in class. Students will have the chance to receive feedback, and then revise their drafts accordingly to improve their translations. In this assignment, students are also required to write a reflection paper about their translation process, techniques, choices, mistakes, improvement, revisions, learning outcomes, etc. The translation portfolio and reflection paper assignments are worth 20 percent. Based on our teaching experiences, we learned that the portfolio is not just a dossier of task accomplishments; rather, it gives students the opportunity to invest their time to improve their translation skills, revise their drafts, understand the process of translation, and reflect on their learning experiences.

The benefits of using a Translation Portfolio are various: firstly, it promotes self-revision, which is an essential part of improving translation skills and confidence; secondly, it stimulates positive attitudes towards the process of revision and its significance in improving their competence in translation; and finally, it helps students to track their progress from rough translation to finished draft, thereby enabling them to engage with the process of translation and grasp their overall progress throughout the class.

As observed in our teaching, students engage in their portfolios very seriously from the beginning to the end of the semester, thus, it is a powerful pedagogical tool that has an important place in the teaching of Journalistic Translation courses for undergraduate students.

## 6. Conclusion

Previous scholarship has discussed the problems of translating journalistic texts from Arabic to English and vice versa, highlighting various problems, techniques, and solutions. However, only a few studies are concerned about how to teach journalistic translation in the Arab world, which is quite curious. Nevertheless, the significance of this study lies not only in its attempt to fill a gap in the scholarship as regards translation pedagogy but also to offer an updated and useful teaching method, which is predominately informed by personal experiences. It contends that the *art* of teaching journalistic translation courses requires a strategic approach, supported by a meaningful pedagogy in terms of objective assessments, effective feedback, and reflective learning experiences. Ultimately, the combined teaching approach seeks to transform the teaching practice of journalistic translation for undergraduate students to improve their translation skills and prepare them for their future profession as successful translators. It equips students with the necessary skills and knowledge to translate any kind of journalistic text.

All in all, this paper aims to stimulate more debate about how to teach translation practice in general and journalistic translation in particular. We hope that the model it provides will be useful for translation instructors throughout the Arab world and beyond.

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# PHRASEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF AUTOMATIC INTERPRETING ASSISTED BY YANDEX: STUDY AND ANALYSIS OF VERBAL IDIOMS

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ABSTRACT**:** Verbal idioms pose a significant challenge for automatic translation and interpreting systems due to their idiomatic nature and contextual variability. In this context, and with the aim of analyzing the effectiveness of automatic interpreting of phraseology using the integrated Yandex corpus, this research seeks to evaluate the quality of automatic interpreting through examples of verbal idioms extracted from Canal Sur Noticias 24 horas on YouTube using a voice recognition and interpreting application provided by Yandex. To conduct the study, 50 frequently used verbal idioms were selected from Spanish news and their automatic interpreting into Russian were analyzed. Finally, the results were compared in both languages to determine the accuracy and naturalness of the resulting automatic interpreting.
KEYWORDS**:** Automatic Interpreting; Phraseology; Verbal Idioms; Interpreting Evaluation

## 1. Introduction

The analysis of human interpreting quality is a complex and multidisciplinary field of research, encompassing areas such as linguistics, translation studies, psychology, and sociology (García Becerra, 2013). This analysis aims not only to establish standards and quality criteria but also to enhance interpreting practices through continuous training and the development of new technologies, including AI-assisted tools and voice recognition software (Han & Lu, 2023). It also examines the differences between simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, as well as variations in specialized contexts such as medical, legal, and technical settings. Recent studies have incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methods to evaluate accuracy, fluency, and naturalness in interpreting, providing a comprehensive and detailed view of the essential competencies and skills for effective interpreting (Collados Aís, 2016; Christen & Gracia, 2017; Kolchugina, 2021).

Throughout history, theoretical and methodological studies on interpreting quality have laid a solid foundation for contemporary research. One of the earliest approaches to evaluating interpreting is error analysis, which focuses on identifying and classifying errors during interpreting. This method is used to assess accuracy and fidelity by considering errors such as omissions, additions, and distortions. However, while effective in detecting specific issues, its fragmented approach may not capture essential aspects of overall interpreting, such as pragmatic adequacy. Additionally, this method can be subjective, as the identification of errors often depends on the evaluator's perspective and criteria (Pradas Macías, 2003).

The impact of contextual factors on interpreting is crucial for understanding the quality of the process. These factors include both cultural and situational elements, which can significantly influence the execution and perception of interpreting. Cultural

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differences notably affect the interpreting of phraseological units, which require a deep understanding of the cultures involved. According to Corpas Pastor's classification (1997), phraseological units are divided into collocations, idioms, and phraseological statements, and they present a challenge due to their fixed and sometimes idiomatic nature, as is the case with idiomatic expressions. These expressions have meanings that cannot be easily inferred from the sum of their components, necessitating detailed cultural and contextual understanding (Ruiz Gurillo, 1997). Cultural differences can greatly alter the interpreting of these phraseological units, as their meanings can vary significantly between different languages and cultures (Mogorrón Huerta, 2020).

In this context, we believe that phraseology in general, and verbal idioms in particular, represent a largely unexplored quality parameter due to their linguistic complexity and specificity. Research in this field demonstrates how interpreters manage not only conventional linguistic structures but also deeply rooted idiomatic expressions found in everyday uses of a language (Ramírez Rodríguez, 2024). Verbal idioms possess not only idiomatic meanings but also cultural and pragmatic connotations that can vary depending on the context. Additionally, studying the interpreting of verbal idioms provides an opportunity to better understand how semantic and pragmatic nuances are conveyed in different linguistic and cultural contexts, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and accuracy of interpreting in various communicative situations (Tormo, 2021).

The evolution of technology has led to the incorporation of computational tools in simultaneous interpreting (Corpas Pastor, 2024) and statistical analyses to complement human evaluation, improving the objectivity and reliability of interpreting assessments (Defrancq et al., 2024). Today, automatic tools utilize AI algorithms and models to analyze and compare translations, providing quick and objective assessments (Ramírez Rodríguez, 2022). Additionally, combining automated evaluations with human review has become a common practice, where AI conducts a preliminary analysis that is then reviewed and adjusted by human experts to ensure accuracy and cultural appropriateness (Prandi, 2023).

The motivation driving this study lies in the critical importance of phraseology and verbal expressions for accurate and faithful interpreting of the original discourse, particularly within the context of media and AI. Verbal expressions, which include idioms and specific technical terms, not only convey meanings deeply rooted in cultural contexts but also influence how information is perceived and interpreted by the audience.

On the other hand, advances in AI within the field of interpreting present both significant challenges and opportunities concerning the handling of phraseology and verbal expressions. The ability of AI systems to understand and accurately convey these complex linguistic structures in real time is crucial for their effective integration into media environments, where precision and coherence are essential. Additionally, the study considers how advances in language models are enhancing AI's capacity to interpret idiomatic expressions through contextual learning and deep semantic analysis.

## 2. The role of AI in evaluating phraseological interpreting

In recent years, two events have significantly altered the field of interpreting and the interaction of interpreters with technology: the COVID-19 pandemic and the introduction of generative AI (Wang & Fantinuoli, 2024). Prior to the pandemic, remote communication tools were gradually gaining popularity, with remote interpreting considered more of a future vision than a current trend. However, the global pandemic made the use of remote communication technologies an urgent necessity, leading to a surge in demand for remote interpreting services. Even though the pandemic has now subsided, remote communication tools continue to be widely used because virtual and hybrid meetings and events remain common. By the end of 2022, coinciding with the end of the COVID-19 crisis, generative AI emerged, transforming various professions, including interpreting (Dong & Zhao, 2019). This technology employs advanced natural language processing (NLP) methods to create conversational agents capable of performing various text-related tasks. These developments have had a significant impact on interpreters, software developers, and researchers in the field, exploring different perspectives on interpreting technologies and presenting a promising future for both interpreters and innovators in this sector.

Since the inception of translation studies focusing on how digital technologies and computer tools impact and enhance the translation process and multilingual communication, efforts have been made to optimize the management of corpora and reference resources (Pöchhacker, 2024). Current tools primarily extract multilingual concordances from parallel texts, creating frequency-ordered term lists paired with their equivalents. In the field of interpreting, the adoption of specific tools has been slower and less widespread due to concerns about their reliability and potential distractions (Giustini, 2023). In this context, machine interpreting (MI) can be seen as an extension of machine translation, utilizing speech recognition for input and synthetic speech for output. It involves software that decodes and transcribes spoken language, generating an automatic translation and reproducing it through a speech synthesizer (Gaber, 2023). Currently, most companies and institutions developing MI projects use neural machine translation engines. However, one of the main challenges for MI is its anticipatory capacity, especially when dealing with less common languages (Fantinuoli, 2016, 2017; Ramírez Rodríguez, 2023).

In general, the primary goal of quality assessment has been and continues to be the development of accurate and reliable methods to measure the effectiveness of interpreting in terms of fidelity, coherence, and cultural appropriateness. Over the decades, various models and theoretical approaches have been proposed to address this challenge, each with its own advantages and limitations (Defrancq & Fantinuoli, 2021). These approaches include both quantitative and qualitative assessments, combining detailed linguistic analyses with advanced technological tools such as natural language processing (NLP) algorithms and automated evaluation systems. Additionally, research has considered contextual and psychological factors affecting interpreting, such as stress and mental fatigue, as well as the impact of bilingual proficiency and interpreter experience on performance quality.

Recent scientific advancements have further enriched this field by incorporating insights from cognitive psychology and neurolinguistics. Studies have utilized neuroimaging techniques like fMRI and EEG to explore the neural underpinnings of simultaneous interpreting, revealing the activation of specific brain regions associated with bilingual language processing and cognitive control (Hervais-Adelman et al., 2015). This has provided a more comprehensive understanding of the cognitive load and mental processes involved in interpreting. Moreover, experimental designs in psycholinguistics have been employed to investigate the effects of stress and mental fatigue on interpreter performance. For example, research has demonstrated that high-stress conditions can significantly impair working memory capacity and multitasking abilities, leading to reduced accuracy and increased errors in interpreting (Gile, 2009).

The integration of big data analytics has also allowed for the examination of large corpora of interpreted texts, facilitating the identification of patterns and trends in interpreter behavior and translation choices across different languages and contexts. These methodologies enable a more robust and nuanced analysis of interpreter performance, contributing to the development of more sophisticated evaluation metrics and training programs. By leveraging these interdisciplinary approaches, researchers have been able to provide a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of interpreting. This comprehensive approach has identified specific challenges faced by interpreters in different contexts and communicative situations, thereby informing the development of targeted strategies to enhance interpreting quality and efficacy.

Phraseology, understood as the set of fixed and occasionally idiomatic expressions unique to a language, plays a crucial role as an intraparameter in the accurate transmission of the source discourse and the terminology used. In this context, the ability of AI to accurately process and manage specific phraseology and specialized terminology plays a crucial role in determining the quality of interpreting when compared to human interpreters. Unlike humans, AI systems rely on pre-trained models and large databases to recognize and reproduce fixed expressions, technical terms, and idiomatic phrases within a given domain. While this allows for consistent and precise handling of terminology in specialized fields such as medicine, law, or engineering, it may lack the flexibility and contextual awareness that human interpreters naturally possess.

Human interpreters, on the other hand, excel at adapting to nuanced linguistic and cultural contexts, detecting speaker intent, and managing ambiguous or context-dependent expressions. They can dynamically adjust their output based on non-verbal cues, tone, or situational changes elements that AI systems may struggle to fully interpret.

Several advances in NLP and machine learning have significantly improved the capacity of AI systems to recognize and translate phraseological expressions. However, challenges remain due to the inherent complexity and variability of idiomatic language. Research has shown that phraseology poses a unique challenge to AI due to its contextual dependence and cultural specificity (Sag et al., 2002). One scientific approach to addressing this issue involves the development of large, annotated corpora that include a wide range

of idiomatic expressions. These corpora serve as training data for machine learning models, enabling them to better understand and generate appropriate translations for phraseological units (Ramisch, 2015). Additionally, advanced techniques such as deep learning and transformer models like BERT and GPT have shown promise in capturing the nuances of idiomatic language by leveraging context-aware embeddings and transfer learning (Vaswani et al., 2017).

To evaluate the performance of AI in handling phraseology, researchers employ both intrinsic and extrinsic evaluation methods. Intrinsic methods focus on the linguistic accuracy of translations, assessing aspects such as semantic fidelity, syntactic appropriateness, and contextual relevance. Extrinsic methods, on the other hand, examine the practical impact of translations in real-world tasks, such as user comprehension and task success rates in multilingual communication settings (Manning, 2008). Moreover, psycholinguistic studies have explored how human interpreters process phraseological expressions, shedding light on cognitive strategies employed during interpreting. These insights have informed the design of AI systems by highlighting the importance of context and the need for adaptive translation strategies that can dynamically adjust to different communicative scenarios (Colson, 2005).

By integrating these scientific perspectives, the study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of AI in interpreting phraseology compared to human interpreters. This includes examining factors such as accuracy, fluency, and cultural appropriateness, and identifying specific areas where AI systems may require further enhancement. Through this investigation, the study contributes to the broader understanding of the potential and limitations of AI in the field of interpreting, offering valuable insights for future research and development in NLP and computational linguistics.

## 3. Methodology

The objective of this study is to analyze and evaluate the quality of automatic interpreting using examples of verbal idioms extracted from the Canal Sur Noticias 24 Horas YouTube channel, performed by Yandex's AI. To achieve this goal, 50 verbal idioms were selected and analyzed, using Yandex's intelligence service corpus as the primary method. For this analysis, a bilingual corpus was used consisting of Spanish audio transcriptions and their corresponding automatic interpreting into Russian, generated by Yandex's voice recognition system. This approach allows for the assessment of verbal idioms interpreting within a colloquial spoken language context, which may present challenges different from written language. The audios were transcribed using automated speech recognition (ASR) tool provided by Yandex and then manually reviewed to ensure accuracy. Non-verbal elements, such as facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice were removed, and transcription errors corrected. Subsequently, the transcriptions were segmented into phrases and aligned with their automatic interpreting generated by Yandex.

To ensure a representative sample of verbal idioms, Spanish texts were selected from various sources on the Canal Sur Noticias 24 Horas YouTube channel. Two main types of

content were chosen to guarantee the necessary variety and richness for this study: live news broadcasts and interviews. Live news broadcasts provide a rich source of natural and spontaneous language. In this context, live broadcasts covering a wide range of topics, including politics, economics, culture, and sports, were transcribed. These transcriptions offer a varied context where verbal idioms may naturally appear in different language registers. Interviews with various personalities provide dialogues rich in idiomatic expressions and verbal idioms. These transcriptions allow for observation of how verbal idioms are used in more informal and often contextual conversations. The combination of these two types of content enables a thorough and representative collection of verbal idioms, covering both the formal and structured language of live news and the more colloquial and expressive language of interviews. This diversity of sources ensures that the resulting ad hoc corpus reflects a broad range of uses and contexts, providing a solid basis for linguistic analysis and the study of contemporary Spanish verbal idioms. Additionally, random sampling was applied within the selected content types to avoid over-representation of certain topics or expressions. This random sampling allowed for equitable coverage of various themes within the corpus.

In this study, a technology developed by Yandex was used to translate a live broadcast from Spanish into Russian, specifically focusing on certain verbal idioms. Translating a live broadcast presents a significant challenge due to the need to process and translate information in real-time, which has been addressed through the development of an advanced technique based on neural networks. This technique relies on deep neural networks, which have proven effective in capturing complex contexts and generating accurate translations in machine translation applications. In this context, our study focuses on evaluating this new technique and its ability to preserve the nuances of semantic meaning and cultural connotations inherent in phraseological expressions across different linguistic contexts. Verbal idioms, as key components of phraseology, present challenges for translation due to their idiomatic meanings and context dependence. The evaluation is based on analyzing how the system handles these expressions in terms of semantic fidelity and contextual appropriateness, with the aim of identifying strengths and limitations in preserving linguistic and cultural nuances. Although our study does not delve into the specific technical aspects of this tool, such as the architecture of the neural networks or the training algorithms used, these aspects are considered due to their potential impact on translation quality. Neural network-based machine translation models require extensive training with multilingual data and the integration of attention mechanisms to manage the complexity of phraseological expressions. Understanding these technical elements can provide valuable insights for the optimization and continuous improvement of the translation tool.

In the initial phase, the system captures the audio stream and transcribes it into plain text using ASR technology provided by Yandex. This process faces several challenges due to potential unwanted sounds, such as background noise and music, and the variability in individuals' speaking styles, including different accents, speeds, and diction styles.

Additionally, the presence of multiple speakers further complicates the task. To address these challenges, the technology must ensure that the context and coherence of the speech are maintained during translation. The algorithm processes the input as sequences of audio fragments, extracting relevant acoustic features such as intonation, rhythm, and phonetic characteristics. These acoustic features are fed into a deep neural network, which has been trained to identify patterns and relationships in the language. The neural network then generates a set of word sequences that the language model uses to select the most coherent and plausible interpreting. This stage is crucial to ensure that the transcribed text accurately reflects the original audio content, considering both semantic accuracy and speech fluency.

The next phase involves using a machine translation model to convert the transcribed text into the target language. Several challenges arise during this phase: translating literally, word by word or phrase by phrase, may compromise quality, and waiting for a long pause to ensure the end of a sentence can lead to significant delays. To address these issues, the technology is designed to group words into complete sentences while maintaining the original meaning, avoiding excessively long or fragmented sentences. A critical aspect of this stage is speaker identification, which is essential for accurately assigning dialogue lines and reproducing the voice appropriately. This identification process allows the translation to be adapted to be consistent with the original speaker's identity and style. Once individual sentences and lines have been selected and contextualized, translation proceeds using Yandex's translator, which employs advanced NLP techniques and neural translation models to ensure accurate and fluent conversion of text into the desired language. This technology also incorporates deep learning algorithms to continually improve translation quality based on real-time feedback and data analysis.

After translation, the text is converted into audio using text-to-speech technology, designed to produce natural and coherent sound. This technology adjusts the synthesis according to the speaker's gender identified in the previous stage, ensuring the generated voice is appropriate and consistent with the original speaker. The algorithm then synchronizes the translated speech with the corresponding segments of the live video, ensuring that the audio aligns correctly with the video frames. During this phase, the neural network also faces the challenge of managing discrepancies in speech speed; for instance, the speaker in the video may deliver a sentence at a very high speed, or the translated sentence may be twice as long as the original. To resolve this, the synthesized audio is temporally adjusted, compressed, or expanded as needed to match the video’s pacing. Finally, the translated audio is overlaid onto the live video feed as a new audio track. This audio is integrated into the overall video stream and embedded in the viewer's browser page, allowing real-time listening of the translation while viewing the content. This integration is crucial for ensuring that the translated audio perfectly synchronizes with the video, providing a smooth and coherent viewing experience for the end-user.

The methodology used for evaluating the machine translation of phraseological expressions in live broadcasts includes the following steps: 1. The audio of the original live

broadcast (audio recording #1) and the translated version (audio recording #2) are simultaneously recorded, ensuring that both recordings are captured in parallel and aligned with identical time intervals for precise comparison. In the study, two separate devices were used to capture these recordings. 2. Instances of phraseological expressions in audio recording #1 used in the live broadcast in the original language (Spanish, in this case) are identified and located. 3. These are compared with the translations of these phraseological expressions in audio recording #2 (in Russian). 4. The accuracy of the translations are analysed and assessed.

To ensure the robustness of the methodology, several scientific considerations were incorporated. Firstly, a rigorous sampling method was employed, where recordings were sampled at various times of the day. This approach was designed to account for different types of news content and linguistic variability, ensuring a comprehensive analysis. Secondly, high-fidelity recording devices were utilized to capture the audio accurately. This technical precision was crucial to minimize potential distortions that could affect the identification of phraseological expressions.

For the phraseological evaluation, NLP utilized a range of methods to process and interpret human language, which is fundamental for the analysis of verbal idioms in a corpus assisted by speech recognition. Among the techniques used is part-of-speech tagging, which assigns grammatical labels to each word in a text. This technique facilitated the identification and classification of verbal idioms by distinguishing grammatical components that form these phraseological units, such as verbs and their complements. Additionally, syntactic analysis provided a structural decomposition of sentences, allowing for a detailed understanding of how words are assembled into verbal idioms, contributing to a more accurate identification of these units within the corpus.

- **Semantic network analysis** focused on representing and visualizing the semantic relationships between words within verbal idioms. This technique involves constructing semantic networks where each node represents a word or expression, and connections between nodes illustrate semantic relationships. The visualization of these networks allowed for the identification of recurrent patterns and linguistic structures that characterize verbal idioms, providing a comprehensive perspective on how words combine to form phraseological units.
- **Speech recognition-assisted transcription analysis** was crucial for ensuring the accuracy of automatically generated transcriptions. This technique includes precision review, where automatic transcriptions are compared with the original audio to identify errors. Adaptation and correction of transcriptions are performed to improve accuracy by adjusting mis-transcribed words and ensuring that verbal idioms are represented accurately.
- **Transcript comparison** was employed to validate the accuracy of verbal idioms identified in speech recognition-generated transcriptions. This technique involves comparing manually automatic transcriptions of verbal idioms, allowing for the

identification of discrepancies and errors. Additionally, comparison with supplementary linguistic resources, such as dictionaries and phraseological databases, helps ensure the correct classification of verbal phrases, guaranteeing that the analysis is rigorous and precise.

- **Speech recognition quality assessment** analyzed how imperfections in speech recognition affect the identification of verbal idioms. This assessment considers the impact of transcription errors on the representation of phrases, such as recognition errors, omissions, and additions. Based on these analyses, adjustments can be made to speech recognition algorithms or correction methods to improve the overall quality of transcriptions and ensure a more accurate representation of verbal idioms in the corpus.

For the comparative analysis, the accuracy of translations was assessed based on a predefined set of criteria, encompassing semantic equivalence, contextual appropriateness, and fluency. These criteria aimed to ensure that the translated content preserved the original meaning, aligned with the intended context, and maintained natural readability in the target language. The comparative analysis framework utilized was carefully adapted from well-established translation evaluation models within the field of computational linguistics. This approach not only provided a structured and systematic methodology but also ensured that the evaluation process adhered to rigorous academic standards, making it both reliable and relevant to contemporary research practices. The audio recordings were digitized and stored manually in a structured database, facilitating efficient retrieval and analysis. Metadata such as time stamps, speaker identification, and context notes were meticulously documented to support the accuracy and reproducibility of the analysis.

## 4. Results and discussion

This study has outlined that AI employs various techniques for oral interpreting of information, including NLP, machine learning, speech recognition, and semantic analysis. Within this framework, Yandex's automatic interpreting AI proposed for this study not only analyzes and decomposes the meaning of words and phrases in their specific context but also applies machine learning algorithms to continually enhance its oral translation capabilities. This technology relies on speech recognition to capture and transcribe data in real time and uses neural networks along with sequence processing models to refine translation accuracy. Moreover, these structures enable the AI to understand temporal and contextual relationships between words in a sentence, resulting in more coherent and contextually appropriate translations.

From a corpus linguistics perspective, Yandex benefits significantly from analyzing large linguistic datasets to adjust and refine its translation models. The use of Yandex’s corpus for automatic interpreting of verbal idioms has provided a substantial empirical basis that allows the AI to identify patterns and trends in language use, thus facilitating

more precise and contextually adapted translations. Consequently, Yandex's corpus serves as a valuable tool for continuously evaluating and adjusting translation models, improving their adaptability to linguistic and contextual variations present in real data transcriptions. In the case of the phraseological interpreting of the analyzed verbal idioms, this capability to analyze extensive and varied data has been crucial for capturing nuances and ensuring that translations accurately reflect the meaning and context of phraseological expressions across different languages.

In this context, after analyzing Yandex's integrated corpus, the AI employed NLP techniques to conduct an initial analysis of the message texts studied and subsequently extract key information related to phraseology. The application of machine learning enhanced speech recognition for transcribing and understanding human speech, while semantic analysis focused on deciphering the underlying meaning of verbal idioms. When analyzing these phraseological units, it was crucial to consider various factors for a comprehensive interpretative evaluation. These include ambiguity that may vary between literal and figurative senses; understanding the cultural and linguistic context in which they occur, as many of these phraseologisms are deeply rooted in Hispanic culture; the ability to identify them as integral semantic units; and the capacity to translate them accurately into other languages, in this case, from Spanish into Russian.

However, after interpreting the content and analyzing the verbal idioms, several factors affecting the accuracy of the translation of these expressions were identified. According to the results obtained, out of the 50 units analyzed, only 15 were correctly translated by Yandex's AI, representing less than half of the cases. This finding indicates that the ability of automatic translation systems to handle and translate idiomatic expressions reflected in corpora remains a significant challenge in the advancement of translation technologies. The intricate nature and diversity of idiomatic expressions across languages make their accurate and contextual translation a complex process that requires more thorough analysis and the refinement of specialized translation algorithms.

Among the crucial factors affecting the accuracy of Yandex's translations were the ambiguity in the meaning of idiomatic expressions, the understanding of the cultural context in which these expressions are used, and attention to the type of linguistic register. The inherent ambiguity of idioms presents a notable challenge for AI, as the presence of multiple possible interpretations complicates the selection of the most appropriate translation according to the context. This lack of clarity in the meaning of idioms led to incorrect, sometimes literal translations, or even omissions of parts of the original message. Additionally, the cultural context in which these idiomatic expressions occur is essential for their precise interpreting. Yandex faced difficulties in identifying and capturing the cultural connotations and implicit meanings in these expressions, resulting in translations that did not adequately reflect the original sense of the idioms in question. Furthermore, the nature of the linguistic register impacted the quality of translations. The presence of specific colloquialisms with no direct equivalents in the target language complicated the correct interpreting of these expressions, leading to imprecise or incomplete translations. The

most representative examples of the translations of the analyzed idioms are presented below, illustrating the difficulties encountered and areas for improvement in automatic interpreting.

When it comes to ambiguity, many of the verbal idioms studied, such as *pisar fuerte, abrir puertas, poner en pie, abrir camino, or ajustar cuentas* can have multiple meanings, complicating their accurate translation. In this context, both AI in general and Yandex may struggle to select the appropriate translation based on the usage context of the expression. In our case, Yandex had difficulty determining the correct meaning of certain idioms due to contextual ambiguity, resulting in inaccurate or incorrect translations. This was the case for idioms such as *pegar ojo, salir rana, caérsele la casa encima, dar tela, echar una mano, chuparse los dedos,* or *tener mala leche.* All these idioms were translated literally, resulting in confusing and incomprehensible translations in Russian. Therefore, it is crucial to consider these potential ambiguities when using automatic translation tools. This can be addressed by supplementing machine translations with post-editing, where a human translator reviews and refines the output for accuracy. Additionally, for complex cases involving idiomatic expressions or culturally nuanced content, human translators may need to be employed from the start to ensure a precise and contextually appropriate interpreting.

The interpreting of the mentioned verbal idioms did not work correctly due to several limitations inherent to the corpus integrated in Yandex. First, the linguistic corpus used may not have included enough contextual examples of these idioms in various communicative situations, which is crucial for AI to learn and recognize contextual and cultural variations of idiomatic expressions. Without adequate representation of these idioms in the corpus, AI cannot develop a deep understanding of their use and meaning. Additionally, it is possible that the corpus was not sufficiently updated or enriched with data from diverse and contemporary sources. Idioms often evolve and may acquire new meanings over time, especially in specific cultural contexts. If the corpus does not reflect these changes, AI may fail to interpret the most current or colloquial idiomatic expressions correctly.

Another limitation is the corpus's ability to capture the semantic and pragmatic richness of verbal idioms. Idioms not only depend on individual words but also on their usage in specific situations and the accompanying cultural and social nuances. If the corpus lacks these dimensions, AI will struggle to make accurate and contextually appropriate interpreting.

On the other hand, the integrated corpus may not be designed to handle semantic ambiguity effectively. Verbal idioms, by their nature, are prone to multiple and often figurative meanings, requiring a deep and nuanced understanding that goes beyond simple literal translation. Without a specialized approach to handling ambiguity, AI may resort to literal translations that are inadequate or incomprehensible in the target language.

In addition to linguistic and semantic aspects, the cultural context in which idiomatic expressions are rooted significantly influences their translation into Russian. Many of these expressions are specific to a particular culture and reflect values, beliefs, and traditions

unique to that culture. Consequently, a literal translation may result in a loss of their original meaning and connotation. In our study, Yandex opted to translate some of these idioms in a more general or contextualized manner, considering their underlying meaning in the source culture, in this case, Spanish. Thus, Yandex attempted to preserve the essence and original intent of the expressions by adapting them to the cultural context of the target language. However, this approach has its problems, as the resulting translations are not always equivalent or congruent in meaning. Examples of failed translations by Yandex include: *estar en una nube, meter salsa, ser la guinda del pastel, dar con la tecla,* and *dar cosa.* Although the translation into Russian of these idioms was not literal, Yandex did not consider the specific cultural context in which they are embedded. This highlights the importance of accounting for not only linguistic aspects but also cultural ones to achieve a precise and meaningful translation of idiomatic expressions.

For instance, *estar en una nube* was translated as *быть на облаке* ('being on a cloud'), an expression in Russian that refers to someone who has passed away, contrasting with the Spanish usage where it denotes someone excited or distracted by something positive. In the case of *meter salsa*, this expression was translated as *водить фальшивки* ('to cheat'), whereas in Spanish it is used to describe someone who meddles in other people's lives to criticize them. The Russian translation refers to someone cheating in a game, which does not fit the original context.

An interesting expression is *ser la guinda del pastel*, which has a literal equivalent in Russian, *вишенка на торте* ('the cherry on the cake'). However, Yandex chose to translate it as *глазурь на торте* ('the icing on the cake'), a comprehensible but non-idiomatic version. Regarding *dar con la tecla*, generally used as a synonym for 'hit the mark,' it was translated into Russian as *опредеделить деталь* ('to determine the detail'). On the other hand, the expression *me da cosa*, meaning 'it makes me uneasy,' was translated as *это много мне дает* ('it gives me a lot') due to a lack of context. Such limitations, including ambiguity and polysemy, lack of cultural or situational context, errors in semantic analysis, or constraints in machine learning, highlight the need to enrich the corpora used to train machine translation systems with more examples of idiomatic expressions in various contexts and to consider both linguistic and cultural aspects. Collaboration with human translators and the integration of specific cultural knowledge could also improve translation accuracy.

In terms of linguistic register, it is crucial to note that some idioms include colloquialisms specific to a particular level of formality. These aspects also presented an additional challenge for machine translation, as they may not have direct equivalents in the target language or may be incomprehensible to native speakers. In these situations, Yandex faced the challenge of deciding how to translate such expressions, sometimes choosing to omit the expression if an adequate equivalent could not be found or, alternatively, seeking an approximate equivalent that preserved the general sense of the original expression. Examples of omissions include: *echarle morro, meterse en un fregao, estar al pie del cañón,* and *meter la pata*. In these cases, Yandex did not identify their specific meaning or context

in Spanish because they are very colloquial idiomatic expressions with no direct translation into Russian, leading the tool to omit them to avoid possible interpreting errors.

For finding an approximate equivalent that preserves the general sense of the original expression, the following examples can be cited: *quitarle hierro a un asunto* (*снять напряжение* – 'to relieve tension'), *meterse en un lío* (*втянуть в беспорядок* – 'to get caught in a mess'), *estar en auge* (*процветать* – 'to flourish'*), tener entre algodones a alguien* (*держать в объятиях* – 'to keep in one's arms'), *plantar cara* (*противостоять* – 'to stand up to'), or *estar en un pozo sin fondo* (*быть в яме* – 'to be in a hole'). All these examples retain the metaphorical meaning of the source text, and their translations, though not always idiomatic expressions, integrate well into Russian discourse.

It is also interesting and positive to analyze the idiomatic expressions that Yandex translated correctly. This was the case with expressions like: *tener en el bolsillo* (*есть в кармане* – 'to have in one's pocket'), *dar alas* (*дать крылья* – 'to give wings'), *hacerse la boca agua* (*слюнки текут* – 'to make one's mouth water'), *tocar madera* (*постучать по дереву* – 'to knock on wood'), and *no levantar cabeza* (*не поднимать головы* – 'to not lift one's head'). In these cases, Yandex was able to capture the contextual meaning of the expressions and provide an appropriate translation based on their Russian equivalents. This demonstrates that, on certain occasions, machine translators can correctly translate idiomatic expressions if they have a broad and up-to-date database that allows them to recognize and understand the meaning of these expressions in different languages. It is notable that most correctly translated expressions are idioms with counterparts in Russian. This clearly indicates that both Yandex's corpus and other machine translation systems still exhibit a bias towards a literal approach, offering more accurate translations primarily in cases where there are complete equivalents between the two languages.

## 5. Conclusions

In general, while AI and machine learning have advanced significantly, automated translation systems still face limitations in understanding and accurately translating idiomatic expressions. This highlights the critical need for human intervention and linguistic knowledge in translating texts that are complex and culturally rich. Therefore, it is essential to continue research and refinement of automated translation systems to handle idiomatic expressions and improve the quality and accuracy of the translations produced more effectively.

Yandex's corpus includes an extensive database of texts in multiple languages, enabling it to successfully recognize and translate some idiomatic expressions that have direct equivalents in Russian. This is evident in expressions like *tener en el bolsillo* (*есть в кармане*) and *dar alas* (*дать крылья*), where the system was able to preserve the meaning and essence of the original expressions. The presence of cultural equivalents in the corpus allows Yandex to provide translations that reflect the context and appropriate use of expressions in the target language. Additionally, the use of neural machine translation models based on deep neural networks in Yandex's corpus contributes to greater accuracy

in translating idiomatic expressions. These models help capture the full context of a sentence and consider the syntax and semantics of words, resulting in more natural and contextually appropriate translations. This demonstrates that Yandex's corpus, by incorporating advanced techniques, is well-positioned to offer accurate translations when clear equivalences exist between languages.

However, despite these advances, Yandex's corpus faces challenges with highly colloquial idiomatic expressions or those specific to a particular linguistic register. Idioms such as *echarle morro* or *meterse en un fregao* were omitted or incorrectly translated due to the lack of direct equivalents in Russian. The corpus's inability to handle these colloquial idioms reflects a limitation in understanding contexts and linguistic registers that do not have an exact match in the target language. Idiomatic expressions with specific cultural meanings may be misinterpreted or inaccurately translated if the corpus lacks sufficient information about the cultural context. For example, *estar en una nube* was translated as *быть на облаке* ('to be in the cloud'), an expression used to refer to death in Russian, rather than the positive emotion or distraction implied in Spanish. The lack of specific cultural data in Yandex's corpus can lead to translations that do not capture the appropriate meaning, resulting in incorrect interpreting. Although Yandex has attempted to adapt idiomatic expressions to the cultural context of the target language, some translations do not accurately reflect the original meaning. For instance, *dar con la tecla* was translated as *опредеделить деталь* ('to determine the detail'), which fails to capture the metaphorical meaning of the expression in Spanish. The lack of a deep understanding of cultural and linguistic context in Yandex's corpus limits the AI's ability to provide culturally appropriate translations.

In conclusion, Yandex's corpus demonstrates both strengths and weaknesses in translating idiomatic expressions. While the inclusion of a broad database and advanced techniques improves accuracy in some cases, limitations in understanding colloquial idioms and specific cultural contexts highlight the need to continue developing and refining automated translation systems. Integrating more detailed cultural and colloquial information into Yandex's corpus is crucial to overcoming these challenges and offering translations that are both linguistically precise and culturally appropriate.

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# EPISTEMIC TRANSLATION IN LAW AND ECONOMICS: A TENTATIVE TYPOLOGY*

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ABSTRACT: The field called economic analysis of law or law and economics is an interesting case of epistemic translation, which illustrates well some of the difficulties involved and allows us to identify ways of performing it effectively. The economic analysis of law tends to irritate legal scholars, who complain that it disrespects legal discourses. The idea that this might be a form of translation has been invoked several times, in particular, to articulate the problem of how to transport knowledge from the realm of economics to law: how to make economic insights legally relevant. The following four techniques have been used to solve this interepistemic translation problem: implicit translation; regimentation; terminological approach; inferentialist approach. This article presents these techniques and examples of their application in the economic analysis of law, before going on to discuss their relationship with the conceptual foundations of the epistemic translation.
KEYWORDS: Epistemic Translation; Law and Economics; Interepistemic Translation Problem; Irritation; Relevance; Equivalence

## 1. Introduction: the troubled field of law and economics

This article explores the opportunities to improve the quality of research in the economic approach to law enabled by the concept of epistemic translation, as articulated by the EPISTRAN Project,[1] currently under way at NOVA University of Lisbon (Bennett, 2024; Bennett and Neves, 2024). The long-term objective is to trigger a linguistic and, more precisely, 'translational turn' (Bachmann-Medick, 2009) in the economic approach to law.

In fact, the term 'epistemic translation' suggests an endeavor focused on the process of translating or transferring knowledge across different fields or between different epistemic communities, with an emphasis on retaining the integrity and nuance of the original. The use of expert testimony from different specialist fields in legal proceedings (eg, Haack, 2014; Giocoli, 2020; Canale, 2021) may be considered a case in point.

The economic approach to law (also known as the economic analysis of law, or law and economics; see Calabresi, 2016; Esposito, 2017) looks at legal institutions (provisions, norms, decisions, reforms, etc.) from an economic point of view, fundamentally anchored in economic efficiency and total or social welfare maximization. This perspective, principally developed by scholars such as Ronald Coase (1960, 1990), Richard Posner (2011), Guido Calabresi (1970, 2016), Bob Cooter and Thomas Ulen (2011), views legal norms and institutions as tools to achieve economic goals via, first and foremost, an optimal allocation of resources.

Economists find in this approach a fertile ground for both applying and testing economic theories, thereby enriching economic discourse with complex legal phenomena

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[1] *Epistemic Translation: Towards an Ecology of Knowledges*. Available at: www.epistran.org.

and improving the social impact of their discipline (Klammer and Scorsone, 2022; Esposito, 2022). Legal scholars, when economic analysis is used properly, benefit from the persuasive articulation of the existence of social problems in need of intervention. The development of 'theories of harm' in both competition and consumer law is a pivotal example of this (see on competition: OECD, 2023; on consumer law: Gamper, Siciliani and Riefa, 2019; Esposito, 2021; Esposito and Grochowski, 2022).

However, the economic analysis of law has not been universally welcomed within legal circles. Accused of economic reductionism, it has been criticized for marginalizing the nuanced and multidimensional ethos of law, which traditionally encompasses justice, fairness, and moral principles (see below, Section 2).

Moreover, a series of internal critiques have been recently made of the economic approach to law on its own terms, highlighting its limitations from an analytical point of view (eg, Calabresi, 2016; Kwak, 2017; Garoupa, Gómez Ligüerre and Mélon, 2016; Esposito and Tuzet, 2019, 2020; Klammer and Scorsone, 2022; Tuzet and Esposito, 2023; Bayern, 2023; Esposito and Scorsone, forthcoming).

Against this background, anecdotal evidence and pivotal examples suggest that the economic approach to law irritates significant parts of the legal scholarship. The irritation seems readily accountable from a translation studies perspective, since economic language is injected into the discussion of legal issues without much regard for the communicative expectations and cultural models characteristic of legal communities. This approach thus violates the principle of loyalty in translation activities (Nord, 1991, 2007).

What is more, proponents of the economic analysis of law have presented it as a legal innovation or commodity that the law community should consume because it is good for them (e.g. Garoupa and Ulen 2008). However, as discussed below, legal scholars often lament that the 'innovation' actually amounts to poor quality legal analysis. Thus, in Nord's (1991, 2007) terminology, economists are disloyal to their clients.[2]

Against this background, this article is structured as follows. Section 2 provides illustrative examples of legal irritation with the economic analysis of law, while Section 3 gives a rational justification for it, suggesting that it rests on a semantic misunderstanding. Building on this finding, Section 4 proposes, as a way forward, to move from a conceptual to a linguistic separation, opening the space to introduce, in Section 5, two accounts of the translation problem from economics to law. Section 6 presents and illustrates four approaches that could solve the translation problem, while Section 7 concludes, suggesting venues for future research on epistemic translation.

[2] Similarly, when legal scholars use economic terms, they have to comply with the same constraints. For example, I have dedicated a lot of effort to using economic arguments and references to economic literature to claim that 'allocative efficiency' is ambiguous in economics and then offer a legal perspective on this disagreement (Esposito, 2022).

**2. Legal irritation**

The purpose of this section is to provide illustrative examples of the 'irritation' caused to legal scholars by the exposure to economic analysis and even language. In Europe, this has led to a situation of "polite marginalization" (Alemanno and Sibony, 2015, p. 22). In the United States, on the other hand, the economic approach to law has resulted in the birth of an antagonistic movement in top law schools called (ironically) Law and Political Economy, which aims at doing political economy without economic analysis (Britton-Purdy et al., 2020) – something that is arguably counterproductive and ultimately self-defeating (Woodcock, 2022).

More precisely, the Law and Political Economy movement represents a critical response to the dominant framework of the economic analysis of law, which traditionally emphasizes efficiency, market rationality, and the neutrality of legal mechanisms in economic optimization. This movement emerged from a growing discontent with how traditional approaches to law and economics tend to abstract law from its social and political context, often prioritizing economic efficiency over equity, democratic values, and social justice.

Let us consider some additional examples, namely issues related to the incorporation of economic analysis in comparative law research as well as the normative foundations of contract law, competition law and the EU internal market.

The field of *comparative law* is the one where the supporters of the economic approach have been most self-critical about the difficulties they face in convincing traditional comparative law scholars of the usefulness of economic analysis for comparative law (Garoupa and Ulen, 2021; Vargas Weil, 2022). In particular, critics lament a lack of respect for crucial legal concepts and the use of implausible analytical frameworks (e.g. Kischel, 2019).

In the contemporary debate on 'contract law', the debate on efficiency breach provides clear examples of irritation. Contract lawyers have lamented that the defense of an immoral practice such as breaches of contract (and of promises) is indefensible on moral grounds (eg, Friedmann, 1989). Yet, that is exactly what mainstream economic analysis has been advocating for a long time, more or less explicitly (e.g. Posner, 2010; Klass, 2014).

'Competition law' is, around the globe, the field of law where economic analysis has had the most influence. Indeed, economically oriented scholars in this field are explicitly critical of fairness discourse in the field (e.g. Ducci and Trebilcock, 2019; Colangelo, 2023). The main contention is that fairness is too vague as a term to justify policy. This claim keeps circulating even if the field can rely on a rather distinctive notion of fairness, namely competition on merits (Pera, 2022; Esposito, forthcoming).

Finally, in 'EU private law', the so-called instrumentalization critique is another example of the irritation caused by economics. A number of authors (see Burgers, Bartl and Mak, 2022, p. 11) are very critical of private law being instrumentalized by EU law to achieve the goal of the internal market. According to Christoph Ulrich Schmid (2011, p.22), national private law rests on a specific type of justice, namely commutative justice or justice

between the parties, which should not be instrumentalized by "external considerations" or "external collective goals".

An important, but implicit step in this claim is the answer to the question of what justifies the creation of an internal market. More precisely, what are the 'external collective goals' mentioned by Schmid? We assume that it is the goal of an allocative efficient market, which mainstream economists say means to maximize total welfare (the 'size of the pie'). It follows, quite straightforwardly, that we face a conflict between normative views: justice between the parties versus the maximization of total welfare (the 'external consideration'). Thus, the whole internal market project is met with skepticism by many legal scholars.

However, the opposition disappears when allocative efficiency is expressed in consumer welfare terms.[3] In what follows, I shall attempt to show how this skepticism about the use of economic insights in legal analysis rests on a faulty assumption (the 'Conceptual Separation Assumption'), which in turn rests on a semantic misunderstanding.

**3. Efficiency, the conceptual separation assumption, and the semantic misunderstanding**

Mainstream economic analysis of law considers the efficient allocation of resources to be the primary task of the legal system (Kaplow and Shavell, 1994). In this account, an efficient allocation of resources is one that maximizes social or total welfare or, in other words, the (in)famous size of the pie. This account causes some linguistic tension because it rests on a separation between the legal system and the tax and subsidy system, which is patently superficial from the legal perspective: taxes and subsidies are part of tax law and, therefore, of the legal system. Be this as it may, a large part of the scholarship uses this and similar clear-cut institutional divisions of labour to attribute to parts of the legal system efficiency as their main goal. The consequence is that considerations of distribution, equity, and fairness are relegated to 'somewhere else'. In Kaplow and Shavell's (1994) influential account, the 'legal system' focuses on efficiency, while 'equity', 'fairness' and the like are relegated to a complementary 'tax and subsidy system'.

This 'efficiency vs approach' rests on what can be called the 'Conceptual Separation Assumption': the idea that allocative efficiency as a social value is distinct from equity, fairness, justice – in other words, the economic justification for legal norms is necessarily different from the moral justification thereof. This assumption underscores much of the friction between economic analyses and legal scholarship by suggesting an inherent incompatibility in their respective objectives (and languages).

Mainstream scholarship in favor of and against the economic analysis of law builds on this assumption. Supporters of the approach propose different ways in which economic concepts can relate to legal and moral ones (e.g. Kraus, 2001). Yet, as discussed below, the mainstream harbours an approach which is not really, or at least not necessarily, based on this opposition, the 'regimentation' approach (see Section 6.2). Critics of the approach instead use the opposition as a sufficient reason to reject efficiency and, by implication, the

[3] I have argued this in detail elsewhere (Esposito, 2022, 2023). See also Gómez Liguerre, 2023; Garoupa, 2024; Calderai, 2024; Sibony, forthcoming.

product of economic analysis built on it (e.g. Dworkin, 1980; Coleman, 1980; Mestmacker, 2008).

Despite its foundational role in defining the boundaries of the opposing epistemic communities (each of which exists in its own 'bubble'), the 'Conceptual Separation Assumption' will, in this article, be rejected as false or at least subject to critical scrutiny in the light of the apparent counterevidence. In fact, the 'Conceptual Separation Assumption' falters if we consider the existence of underlying equality norms that support economic efficiency as a social goal.

Elsewhere I have argued that while the current mainstream defines allocative efficiency in terms of total welfare maximization, a long-standing tradition of mainstream economists dating back to Adam Smith, understands allocative efficiency as the property of a market that maximizes the benefits for the consumers on that market (Esposito, 2022, pp. 19-61). As Adam Smith (2007 [1776], p. 426) put it himself in *The Wealth of Nations*:

> Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer. The maxim is so perfectly self-evident, that it would be absurd to attempt to prove it.

Allocative-efficiency-as-total-welfare-maximization rests on the following equality norm: every individual is entitled to respect from others; therefore, distributive effects between market participants shall not matter because benefits to one group are equal to the losses to the other group. Therefore, the two cancel each other out from a moral point of view, making alternatives incomparable. Nevertheless, it is possible to stigmatize an inefficient allocation of resources because fewer resources are available to everyone; accordingly, even ignoring distributive effects, it is possible to identify one inefficient market in a market that does not maximize total welfare, irrespective of its distributive effects.

Instead, allocative-efficiency-as-consumer-welfare-maximization rests on the following equality norm: "all agents are equal because they are sovereign when they act as consumers and they are subject when they act as producers" (Esposito, 2024, p. 231). The idea of consumer sovereignty, if properly understood (Hutt, 1936; Penz, 1986; Esposito, 2022), puts the interest of consumers at the core of the moral justification of markets, as suggested by Adam Smith.

The most important point here is that, no matter the welfare standard, allocative efficiency rests on 'a commitment to equality among market participants', although the commitment and therefore the equality norm is different depending on the considered welfare standard (Esposito, 2024).

Given the centrality of the idea of allocative efficiency in modern economic analysis in general, and of law in particular, the relationship between allocative efficiency and the moral commitment to equal respect should be sufficient to demote the idea of a conceptual separation between efficiency and the normative concept that legal practice has imported

from moral discourse from an assumption to something in need of proper contextual justification.

A shallow exploration of other economic expressions is sufficient to collect additional evidence against the 'Conceptual Separation Assumption'. Mainstream economics uses terms like 'moral hazard', 'parasitic and opportunistic behaviour', 'rent-seeking', 'free rider', 'predatory pricing', among others, which clearly convey some degree of moral disapproval of the agent acting in such a way.

The 'Conceptual Separation Assumption', therefore, simplifies the complex relationship between law and economics, overlooking shared normative commitments. At the same time, it causes a tunnel vision effect, directing attention toward ways to manage the conflict instead of searching for meanings of economic terms fitting with meanings of legal terms (Calabresi, 2016; Esposito, 2019, 2022; Esposito and Tuzet, 2019, 2020).

Thus, the 'Conceptual Separation Assumption' rests on a semantic misunderstanding, namely, the belief that certain concepts are inextricably bound to certain forms or terms, without taking account of the possibility that the same concept may be expressed using other formulations.

## 4. From conceptual to linguistic separation

Since the 'Conceptual Separation Assumption' does not offer plausible grounds for the economic approach to law, it seems interesting to look at how the economic approach to law might instead be received by the legal community as a linguistic problem. In other words, the hypothesis is that we are dealing with a linguistic separation instead of a conceptual separation, in that the two communities may in fact be referring to very similar ideas but using different terms.. This 'Linguistic Separation Assumption' is supported by the following considerations.

First, as noted, different conceptions of allocative efficiency in economics are connected with different conceptions of equality. Second, much of the normative resistance to the economic approach to law rests on the idea that total welfare maximization as the sole or at least primary social goal for market-related institutions fails to give due consideration to the distributed concerns that are apparent in the law. From this point of view, efficiency is ultimately treated as a normative concept and then rejected as a poor one (Dworkin, 1980). Third, the concept of allocative efficiency is actually malleable in many respects, which leads to different normative standards and tests. At the same time, the normative vocabulary used in philosophical, political, and legal discourses is evidently not well regimented (e.g. Dunne, 2020; Hesselink, 2021).

Therefore, different meanings of an economic term will relate differently to different meanings of a legal term applicable to the same class of conducts, suggesting that, "the transfer of information between different 'epistemic systems'" can be meaningfully analyzed as a linguistic problem (Bennett, 2024, p. 6).

Indeed, scholars advancing internal critiques of the economic approach to law have framed their concerns along similar lines. In 1986, Yale Law School Professor Ackerman

(1986, p. 930) observed a general tendency in the economic approach to law to "manufacture jargon", suggesting that this would do little harm if it were the result of "a simple process of coded displacement", since it could be overcome using a simple glossary (a crucial tool for interdisciplinary translation):

> If the lawyer-economist were to deploy the N-term [new term] precisely on those occasions where the traditionalist uses the familiar T-term [traditional term], the relationship between the two terms could be expressed by compiling a simple codebook (Ackerman, 1986, p. 931).

More recently, Guido Calabresi (2016), former Yale Law School Dean and founding father of the economic approach to law, has called for the systematic search of economic theories that 'fit' with the law. I myself (Esposito, 2019) have explained why this fitness check must be understood as the search for concepts used in both economic and legal discourses to count, as Calabresi intends, as something different from the mainstream. In the context of epistemic translation, Calabresian fitness may be understood as a matter of equivalence (see below, Section 6.3). Bayern (2023, p. xi), who is skeptical about the innovativeness of much economic analysis of law, observes: "Speaking about legal problems only in economic terms changes the language of the debate, perhaps unduly and destructively, but it is largely a linguistic translation".

In light of the above, it is possible to identify a translation problem in the economic approach to law. Section 5 presents two accounts of it, and Section 6 describes four ways to address it.

**5. The translation problem**

The translation problem in the economic approach to law may be defined as "the problem of translating interdisciplinary propositions from economics into law" (Esposito, 2020a, p. 291). In this section, I will reproduce an account of the translation problem which I initially addressed to the legal community, and in particular, legal theorists (Esposito, 2018a, 2020), before attempting to generalize from it, building on Brandom's inferentialism and its applications in legal theory by Canale and Tuzet.

The problem of translating from economics to law is different from the problems normally associated with interlingual translation, which are concerned with the relationship between a source text and a target text. In this case, the relationship is not between two texts but between "different epistemic systems" (Bennett and Neves, 2024, p. 1; see also Robinson, 2024).

Building on Gile's (2009) model of translation can perhaps shed light on some of the specificities of epistemic translation. Gile distinguishes between the comprehension and production phases of the translation process. Comprehension concerns the translator's understanding of the "translation unit", while production involves creating a text in the target language that "complies with fidelity requirements" (Gile, 2009, p. 104). In my view, epistemic translation is primarily concerned with enabling the comprehension of a concept from the source episteme by members of the target epistemic community. If this activity is

performed well, then members of the target epistemic community will be enabled to use the concept from the source episteme in their own community. In other words, the production of the text is not the primary concern of epistemic translation; instead, the translator shall explain to the members of the target episteme how to use the concept from the source episteme.

### *5.1 The original account*

My original account of the translation problem was addressed to the legal community and, in particular, to legal theorists. To this end, I built on the influential use by Dworkin (1978) of the idea of propositions of law (Mason, 1971) as a way to speak about the legal validity of a norm – that is, the idea that a certain norm belongs to a certain legal system.

To illustrate, let us consider Article 3 of the *Code of Hammurabi*, which states: "3. If any one bring an accusation of any crime before the elders, and does not prove what he has charged, he shall, if it be a capital offense charged, be put to death" (King, 2008). If this norm were enforced, it would mean that, during the Kingdom of Hammurabi, a farmer that accused a merchant of theft in front of the elders and failed to prove the charges would be executed. Of course this would not be applied today in a country like Portugal, for example. In fact, Article 24(2) of the current Portuguese Constitution expresses a proposition of Portuguese law that explicitly prohibits the death penalty.

It follows that different legal systems identify different legal norms as valid; in other words, different propositions of law are true in different legal systems.

However, it should be pointed out that propositions *of* law are different from propositions *about* the law (King, 1951; Patterson, 1993). Propositions about the law are usually theoretical propositions purporting to describe the conceptual structure of legal systems (e.g. Hart, 1960) or legal relationships (e.g. Hohfeld, 1913; Duarte d'Almeida, 2016). Thus, they require two discourses: legal discourse, in which propositions *of* law are expressed, and the meta-discourse, which expresses propositions *about* law.

A proposition about law is, therefore, an "interdisciplinary proposition": "a statement that is warranted (considered valid, true, correct) according to the rules of a practice, but that concerns another practice, which is therefore the object of the interdisciplinary proposition"(Esposito 2020a, p. 284). Examples of interdisciplinary propositions of economics about law include: 'Article X of the Civil Code contributes to the efficiency of voluntary transactions' or 'Article Y of the Constitution leads to an inefficient allocation of resources'.

Interdisciplinary propositions are of great interest in the context of epistemic translation. In fact, the truth conditions (correctness, warranty, etc) of a proposition *of* law are different from the truth conditions (correctness, warranty, etc) of a proposition of economics *about* law. A proposition of law is 'true' when it is justified using criteria that are accepted in a certain legal community (indeed, how to properly justify propositions of law is the subject of a sub-field of legal studies called 'legal argumentation'). A proposition of

economics is 'true' when it is justified using criteria that are accepted in a certain economic community.

An important difference between the two disciplines is that legal discourse includes a special sub-discourse in which the correct use of legal arguments is particularly important, namely judicial discourse. Lawyers addressing judges and, in particular, judges writing opinions to justify their decision of a case, have to use proper legal arguments to justify their conclusions. The former must do it as a matter of diligence toward their clients, the latter as part of their duty to respect and apply the law, enshrined in the duty to give reasons (Staiano, Palombino and Rossi, 2022).

In contrast, legal academics, especially when they propose legal reforms, enjoy more rhetorical discretion in choosing the disciplines from which they can draw arguments to support their positions. If specific arguments are accepted in legal academia, they will gradually become more relevant to judicial discourse (after all, judges read legal scholarship and often take classes from legal academics who use arguments that are uncommon in judicial discourse).

The problem of translating from economics to law is thus a matter of determining when a proposition that is true in economics is relevant to legal discourse in the sense that it can contribute to making a proposition of law true.

In fact, the threshold is actually low. Failing to warrant the truth of a proposition of law does not mean that the proposition is irrelevant. In every legal dispute decided by a judge or a jury in which there is a dispute on the content of the applicable norms (a large part thereof), the parties present their arguments, trying to warrant the propositions they need to win the dispute. Legal systems recognize that sometimes a legal claim can make no sense (that it is manifestly inadmissible, etc) and may even go as far as punishing the party for a frivolous lawsuit. Still, these cases are the exception rather than the rule.

The best way to solve the translation problem from economics to law is thus to incorporate a proposition of economics into an argumentative scheme justifying a proposition of law (Esposito, 2018a, 2020a). For example, literal arguments from expert language can be used to give prominence to the interpretation of a certain term that has clearly originated in economics, such as 'predatory pricing' (Papayannis, 2013). However, the problem is that economic terms are typically functional, which means that the function assumed by those developing the concept will greatly influence its meaning and, ultimately, its acceptability.

Mindful of this fact, Craswell (1993), one of the most prominent scholars in the economic analysis of contract law, has suggested that every economic argument that starts from the premise that the goal is the maximization of total welfare should be understood as coming with a 'jurisprudential preface', which would state 'to the extent that the maximization of total welfare is legally relevant, the following proposition of law should be true'. This is particularly plausible if we consider that another economic goal – the maximization of consumer welfare – seems to have a higher degree of fit with legal discourse (Esposito and Tuzet, 2019, 2020).

### *5.2 An attempt to generalize the translation problem in inferential terms*

Brandom (1994, 2000) has developed an account of linguistic practices where the content of an expression is determined by the set of correct inferences that can be performed using it. Utterances have two fundamental deontic statuses in this account: commitments and entitlements. An utterer is committed to the correctness of the inference made using a certain expression. If the other participants accept the commitment, it becomes an entitlement. Brandom calls this approach 'score-keeping'. The idea is that participants in a linguistic exchange keep score of each other's commitments and entitlements.

Canale and Tuzet (2007, 2008, 2009) and Canale (2022) have developed an inferentialist account of legal practice. In particular, in a trial, the controversy is progressively shaped by the parties' respective commitments and entitlements about the meaning of the relevant legal provisions. To mark the indebtedness to Brandom, Canale and Tuzet labeled their approach 'judicial score-keeping'.

Building on these ideas, my colleagues and I (Esposito, 2020b, 2022; Esposito and Tuzet, 2019, 2020) have developed and applied an approach to test the fit of economic concepts with a form of legal reasoning called 'reverse-engineering legal reasoning'. This approach is described in Section 6.4.

In inferentialist terms, we can say that the translation of concepts and propositions from economics to law does not require that the one claimant be given an entitlement concerning the correctness of the inference made. As noted in Section 5.1, legal practice is full of proper legal arguments that fail to make a proposition of law true – that is, fail to earn the status of an entitlement. Thus, the translation problem can be framed in inferentialist terms as a situation where a claim is denied the status of a commitment regarding the meaning of an expression because that utterance lacks the requirements to count as a commitment in the relevant linguistic practice.

In other words, the situation where an economic proposition remains untranslated is similar to a situation in which, say, a person claims that (1) the Earth is flat (2) because 'green shacked with milk gives airplanes funny gloves'. That is to say, claim (2) does not come even close to count as a reason for believing that the Earth is flat, and the counterparty refuses to engage with it, refusing to give claim (2) the deontic status of a commitment according to inferentialism.

## 6. Solutions to the translation problem: A tentative typology

An engagement with epistemic translation via the EPISTRAN Project has prompted me to pursue a more systematic and technical exploration of how to translate key knowledge from the domain of economics to law (Esposito, 2018a, 2020a). Indeed, the theoretical frameworks described in Section 5 are deeply influenced by developments in the philosophy of language.

Members of the EPISTRAN Project suggested that my approach to the 'translation problem' might be terminological. In other words, it would seek to identify economic terms (source language-episteme) that could be said to have some equivalence to legal terms

(target language-episteme) (Cabré, 1999; Montero-Martínez and de Quesada, 2003; Vakulenko, 2014; Rabadán Álvarez, 2022).

As this section tries to show, the set of options is broader and often more informal than a mere terminological approach. However, it is indeed the case that two of the four techniques I describe below seem to fit into the idea of a terminological equivalence.

Briefly, the four techniques are:

1. Implicit translation, or 'cruise mode': the economic concept and/or the term expressing it are smoothly integrated into legal discourse.
2. Regimentation: the economic concept and/or the term expressing it are used to enrich the meaning of a legal term (weak regimentation) or to propose a complete delegation to economic theory of the meaning of the term (strong regimentation).
3. Intensional or terminological approach: a certain economic term has the same definition as a legal term.
4. Inferentialist approach: the inferences made in a certain legal domain fit with those that would be made if a certain economic concept were to be used (this approach works best to compare the fitness of different economic terms).

It should be pointed out that this is a tentative typology. These four approaches are an attempt to address the problem of translating from economics to law, but of course, others may exist, or different names could be used (as is often in the discussion of translation solutions, techniques, strategies, etc). Let us look at each one in more detail.[4]

### *6.1 Implicit translation or 'cruise mode'*

In some situations, the economic proposition can be implicitly translated into a legal one (Craswell, 1993; Esposito, 2020a; Hubkova, 2020). This solution matches what Anthony Pym calls "cruise mode" (2018, p. 45) and Chesterman (2016, p. 87) calls "smooth, 'automatic', patches of activity". For example, Hubkova (2020) proposes the legal principle of procedural economy as an example of a situation where judges use, perhaps unknowingly, economic thinking to make decisions about how many witnesses to hear, where to join cases raising similar issues, etc.

As seen above, Craswell (1993) proposed considering standard economic analysis as having a 'judicial preface' (or 'implicit premise'), stating that the argument should be understood as a prudential argument or argument from consequences, which is a typical legal argument. However, we have questioned the effectiveness of this view: since a disagreement exists in economics on the meaning of allocative efficiency, one cannot enter into cruise mode until it is clarified what the relevant concept of allocative efficiency is in a certain context (Esposito and Tuzet, 2019, 2020).

[4] For reasons of space, the second step remains mostly implicit in this article, but adequate bibliographical references support it.

Similarly, I have criticized Papayannis's (2013) claim that it is sufficient to accept the mainstream economic understanding of a legal term simply because it is the mainstream interpretation; one needs to be careful, as the economic understanding may rest on a premise that is rejected in legal discourse (Esposito, 2020a). Often, the economic understanding is functional and the implicit function may be incompatible with the relevant legal values. I simply am advocating for a case-by-case analysis. For example, I noted that one of the most prominent legal philosophers of the last century, Hart (1960) proposes a functional classification of legal norms based on the distinction between primary and secondary norms. Primary norms tell people what they are obliged to and prohibited from doing. Secondary norms correct a series of defects of primary norms, namely that they are static, uncertain and ineffective.[5] A legal system with these characteristics is obviously defective and it is therefore apparent that adaptability, certainty and effectiveness count as plausible candidates to be considered legal values.Thus, an implicit translation takes place when it is apparent that a certain economic idea should count as a reason to make a proposition of law true. The epistemic communities are particularly close to each other, and their boundaries can be cruised smoothly.

### *6.2 Regimentation (weak or strong)*

Regimentation (Ebbs, 2009) is a definitional strategy that, in extreme cases, leads to stipulative definitions unrelated to prior uses of the *definens* (Gupta and Mackereth, 2023). In other occasions, more modestly, the regimentation is meant to clarify the meaning of the term or sentence. Let us call the former strong regimentation and the latter weak regimentation.

The analysis shows that weak regimentation can be useful and count as a proper translation, whereas strong regimentation is highly problematic in terms of epistemic injustice (Kidd, Medina and Pohlhaus, 2019) and economic imperialism (Ackerman, 1986; Mäki, 2009) as well as, in terms of epistemicide and cognitive injustice (Santos, 2016; Bennett, 2024). Let me illustrate.

A historically significant example of weak regimentation is represented by the so-called 'Hand Formula'. This expression refers to the definition of 'negligence' given by Judge Learned Hand (his real name) in the case *United States v. Carroll Towing Co*.[6] Judge Hand explained:

> Since there are occasions when every vessel will break from her moorings, and since, if she does, she becomes a menace to those about her; the owner's duty, as in other similar situations, to provide against resulting injuries is a function of three variables: (1) The probability that she will break away; (2) the gravity of the resulting injury, if she does; (3) the

[5] Actually, Hart uses the term 'efficient'. However, he is referring to the lack of means to settle disputes which, in current European legal discourse is a problem of effective judicial protection (Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union). Moreover, in the context of this text, 'efficiency' is used as an economic term. Hence, the substitution is both justified and advisable.

[6] *United States v. Carroll Towing Co.*, 159 F.2d 169 (2d Cir. 1947).

> burden of adequate precautions. Possibly it serves to bring this notion into relief to state it in algebraic terms: if the probability be called P; the injury, L; and the burden, B; liability depends upon whether B is less than L multiplied by P: i. e. whether B > PL.

Economic analysts soon 'found' an 'ambiguity' in Judge Hand's ruling. As Richard Posner (2011, pp. 214-215) put it:

> There is, however, an ambiguity both in Hand's formulation and ours … . (E)xpected damages and costs must be compared at the margin, by measuring the costs and benefits of small increments in safety and stopping investing in more safety at the point where another dollar spent would yield a dollar or less in added safety. … The Hand Formula in its correct marginal form …

Indeed, according to mainstream economics, under ideal conditions, one should act in such a way that no additional social benefits could have been obtained by investing a little more in precautions. On these grounds, scholars started to demand that the Hand Formula be given a marginalist interpretation. This attempt to achieve strong regimentation does not clarify the meaning of 'negligence' in legal discourse as Judge Hand originally tried to do; rather, Posner is proposing a different meaning of 'negligence', with no legal grounds. The justification for his choice is that standard economic analysis demands that 'damages and costs must be compared at the margin'.

From a translation study perspective, Judge Hand increased the density (Pym, 2018) of legal texts using the expression 'negligence' and its cognates. Posner's proposal is, instead, a significantly more invasive way to relate economics and law. In fact, since Posner is proposing to change the meaning of 'negligence', rather than specifying it, we can more precisely say that he is performing a "material change" (Pym, 2018, pp. 44-45) or "information change" (Chesterman, 2016, p. 106).

Another example from a different field is the theoretical account of proportionality reasoning given by Alexy (2002). Alexy used a series of economic concepts, including indifference curves, marginal utility, Pareto efficiency, and value maximization to provide a rigorous account of the steps involved in legal reasoning when it pertains to balance conflicting legal values (eg, legal certainty vs equity). Alexy uses economic concepts carefully and analogically, to identify and elucidate the activity performed by judges. However, in the subsequent literature, less careful scholars writing on proportionality reasoning started to treat economic concepts and legal ones as identical even when they are not. They effectively attributed to the latter features that they actually did not have, but that were attributes of the economic concepts used (Esposito, 2017b).

These examples clearly illustrate the existence of weak and strong cases of regimentation. They also support my position about the fundamental difference between the two. On a case-by-case basis, weak regimentation may or may not improve the quality

of legal reasoning by increasing its density. However, strong regimentation is too disrespectful of legal discourse to be typically useful.[7]

### *6.3 Intensional definition or terminological approach strictu sensu*

An intensional definition specifies the characteristics that an entity must have for the term to apply correctly (Gupta and Mackereth, 2023). Similarly, a crucial passage in a terminological translation is paying due attention to the definition of a term in both languages. It follows that terms with the same definition have the same meaning and, thus, allow for an epistemic translation. As seen above, Ackerman (1986) and Bayern (2023) see this as a desirable, or at worst, innocuous result, if it were possible. Similarly, I have spoken of porous concepts that can be used to "incorporat(e), introduc(e) and translat(e) [economic insights] into claims and arguments that are legally relevant" (Esposito, 2018b, p. 67).

As seen, two conceptions of allocative efficiency are connected to two different conceptions of equality. These connections establish a relationship of equivalence between the source episteme and the target one.

(E1) 'allocative efficiency' means 'the maximization of total welfare'
(M1) 'the principle of equality is respected by a market that maximizes total welfare because the gains and losses of everyone matter the same'
(C1) 'allocative efficiency respects the principle of equality'

Crucially, (C1) connects (E1) and (M1), showing that the Conceptual Separation Assumption is false for (E1) and (M1). At the same time, the other conception of allocative efficiency is connected to the other conception of equality.

(E2) 'allocative efficiency' means 'the maximization of consumer welfare'
(M2) 'the principle of equality is respected by a market that maximizes consumer welfare because everyone maximizes their welfare when they act as consumers and do not do so when they act as producers'
(C2) 'allocative efficiency respects the principle of equality'

Moreover, (C2) is semiotically but not semantically equivalent to (C1). (C2) connects (E2) and (M2), showing that the Conceptual Separation Assumption is false for (E2) and (M2). The same point is also illustrated by the concept of 'consumer weakness' in the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union on EU consumer law. In this case law,

[7] Of course, academics can and shall argue for the change of the meaning of legal terms, but they need to do it by appealing to legally relevant reasons. When they do so, the meaning of legal provisions can radically change, though the change will normally take the form of a specification of the previously accepted meaning of the provision.

(L1) 'consumers are the weaker contractual party due to asymmetries of information and of bargaining power'
(L2) 'the law intervenes to protect consumers from contractual weakness'
(E3) 'asymmetries of information and of bargaining power are market failures'
(E4) 'market failures cause allocative inefficiency'
(C3) 'the law intervenes to protect consumers from allocative inefficiency'

This inferential chain is longer to aid readers, but (C3) achieves the same result as (C1) and (C2). In this case, asymmetries of information and of bargaining power act as inferential bridges connecting contractual weakness to market failures, which are then connected to the ideas of consumer protection and allocative inefficiency, leading to the conclusion that the law intervenes to protect consumers from allocative inefficiency. In this way, equivalence is established.

### *6.4 Inferentialist approach*

The last approach is the most sophisticated and subtle. In fact, it focuses on identifying situations where an inference formulated in one language fits with an inference made in another language. As discussed below, contrary to the method discussed in Section 6.3, the inferentialist approach is not upfront in determining a connection between an economic term and a legal one.

In my research monograph (Esposito, 2022), I have used this approach to test the degree of fitness between the above-mentioned conceptions of allocative efficiency (total vs consumer welfare maximization). The idea is to test the extent to which one can make sense of legal practice, assuming that this practice has allocative efficiency as its central goal.

The focus is on four important passages in legal reasoning:

1. Why does the law protect a certain type of economic agent from harm?
2. How are defences and exceptions to the application of norms justified?
3. What is the purpose of the applicable sanctions?
4. Which role is played by certain specific economic concepts in legal reasoning?

The two conceptions of allocative efficiency justify incompatible answers to these questions. The activity is then to compare the content of actual legal reasoning (when an answer is being provided to these questions) with the content of the answer that each conception of allocative efficiency provides.

Legal reasoning is often too shallow to decide which conception is better connected with legal reasoning. Still, in relation to each question, with a large enough number of cases, it is possible to find decisions that can be explained very well by one conception of allocative efficiency, but fail to be explained by the other. More precisely, the consumer welfare standard performs better than the total welfare one.

On these grounds, we can conclude that economic arguments with consumer welfare as maximand can, in the analyzed branches of EU law, be used to formulate interpretive arguments along the lines proposed by Craswell (1993), while economic arguments with total welfare as maximand cannot.

Recalling Gile's (2009) distinction between the comprehension and production phases of translation, I would say that the present inferentialist analysis is meant to increase our comprehension of the inferential properties of two different conceptions of allocative efficiency. In particular, the analysis increases our understanding of their fit with a specific legal practice. By showing that one conception fits smoothly with said legal practice and the other does not fit at all, the analysis identifies a series of expressions in the target episteme that can be used to express the smoothened conception of allocative efficiency.

## 7. Discussion

As noted above, members of the EPISTRAN Project suggested that the solutions to the translation problem from economics to law are terminological. Indeed, the second and third approaches seem to be terminological. Traditional terminological approaches have been criticized for having an *a priori* notion of equivalence, among others, by Toury (1995). However, the first and fourth approaches seem to go beyond a terminological approach. Indeed, the implicit translation moves from the *ex-post* observation that certain economic concepts are *de facto* accepted as relevant to legal discourse – they are, in other words, intuitively accepted as capable of contributing to the argumentation making a proposition of law true.

The situation is more subtle in the case of the inferentialist approach, which effectively reverse-engineers legal reasoning. In this case, the analysis shows that the inferences made in legal discourse – that is, the propositions of law that are considered true – have a good fit with propositions of economics with such-and-such characteristics. Thus, the inferentialist approach increases our comprehension of how to translate a proposition of economics into a proposition of law.

Section 6 has discussed the connection between the first, second, and third solutions to the translation problem to translation strategies as classified by Pym (2018) and Chesterman (2016): the first, implicit translation, was connected to the 'cruise mode' or smooth activity; the weak version of regimentation is a form of density or abstraction change, while strong regimentation implies a material or information change in legal discourse. The third, the terminological approach, focuses on the equivalence between expressions in the source language-episteme and in the target one, mediated by the use of the same definition for both terms.

The fourth approach, the inferentialist one, does not connect readily with any of the translation solutions proposed by Pym or Chesterman. The reason has probably to do with the object and the purpose of epistemic translation. While conventional interlingual translation focuses on a text, epistemic translation focuses on the transfer of knowledge

from one episteme to another (Bennett and Neves, 2024; Robinson, 2024). The epistemic transfer takes place between epistemic communities, not between texts. The focus is not on producing a target text that translates the source text. Instead, the focus is transferring concepts from a source community to a target community. For example, an economic expert testifying in legal proceedings is transferring knowledge (concepts, ideas), but they are not translating a text.

The inferentialist approach is thus best understood by way of reference to the distinction between the comprehension and productive phases of a translation (Gile, 2009). The comprehension strategies focus on the understanding of the source text and enable one to find an appropriate reformulation in the target language-episteme. The specificity of the inferentialist approach is that it establishes the connection between multiple existing texts in the source and target languages-epistemes. In so doing, it establishes the conditions for future successful uses of knowledge from the source episteme in the target epistemic community. In particular, the inferentialist approach increases the acceptability of regimentation and terminological approaches in situations where implicit translations are unavailable because the target community is not 'ready' to accept a concept from the source epistemic community. Ideally, the inferentialist approach should make the cruise mode eventually available to members of both the source epistemic community and the target one.

Where should research on epistemic translation, especially with a focus on economics and law go from here? I see at least two directions.

The findings of this article confirm the overarching hypothesis behind my interest in the emerging field of epistemic translation studies: translation scholarship offers a wealth of theoretical insights to better understand the problems in the field of law and economics. First, translation scholars can offer the field of law and economics research methods to search for appropriate epistemic translations between law and economics (e.g. corpus studies). Second, I see it as highly relevant to focus on the cognitive dimension of translation. In fact, perhaps except for the first approach, none of the approaches surveyed in this article pays attention to the cognitive dimension of language (Muñoz Martín, Sanjun Sun and Defeng Li, 2021). However, this dimension is probably crucial to ensure a widespread acceptance of epistemic translations. Given the irritation of legal scholars (Section 3), investigating the cognitive dimension of epistemic translation is essential to the success of the translational turn in the economic approach to law. In particular, the systematic identification of situations where implicit translations are successful could shed great light on the contextual conditions enabling smooth interepistemic communication.

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# THE COMMUNALITY OF INTEREPISTEMIC TRANSLATION: CHARLES SANDERS PEIRCE AND THOMAS KUHN ON THE INTEREPISTEMICITY OF SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITIES

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ABSTRACT: This paper explores interepistemic translation as only secondarily taking place between epistemic systems—primarily between what the historian, philosopher, and sociologist of science Thomas S. Kuhn calls 'epistemological communities.' In the 1969 Postscript to his 1970 second edition of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* Kuhn explores the specifically translational quality of attempts among those splinter epistemological communities in what he calls a 'paradigm shift' to overcome the 'communication breakdown' caused by the erosion and collapse of the previous paradigm; the long middle section of the paper is devoted to an unpacking of Kuhn's account of 'interepistemological' or 'intercommunal' translation. Bookending that long middle section, however, are accounts of other sociological theories of such 'epistemological' communities, from Charles Sanders Peirce's 1877 article 'The fixation of belief' on the communal movement from doubt to belief, through John Dewey's 1897 position paper 'My pedagogic creed', back to Peirce again on the expanded triadic semiosis of instinct-experience-belief and abduction-induction-deduction.
KEYWORDS: Epistemological Communities; Communication Breakdown; Persuasion; Conversion; Interepistemic; Translation

## 1. Introduction

We have not been talking about 'interepistemic translation' long. The term was mentioned very much in passing in Robinson (2017, p. 200), and by 2022 Karen Bennett had launched a research project in its name; in December 2023 the project organized a massively transformative conference in Lisbon[1], and in 2024 a special issue on interepistemic translation was published in *Translation Matters*.

And through all these strong initial phases it has been particularly remarkable how very ubiquitous interepistemic translation is. Once one has the concept of translation between epistemic systems in sight, one sees it everywhere.

What I want to explore here is a slight but significant shift in the theorization of interepistemic translation from the mediation between epistemic *systems* to the mediation between epistemic (or epistemological) *communities*. That shift is outlined most suggestively by Thomas Kuhn in his 1969 Postscript to *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*; but I propose to expand a focus on Kuhn to beginnings in Charles Sanders Peirce (1868/1984 and 1877) and his pragmatist follower John Dewey (1897) on 'communities of inquiry,' concluding, after a close examination of Kuhn's 1969 Postscript, with a return to Peirce, specifically the light his abduction-induction-deduction triad can shed on how and why we launch interepistemic translation projects.

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[1] See https://www.epistran.org/international-conference (Accessed: 28 December 2024)

## 2. Before Kuhn

### *2.1 Peirce on communities of inquiry*

Peirce defined what later came to be called the 'community of inquiry'[2] in an 1868(/1984) paper titled "Some consequences of four incapacities."

There he begins by dividing 'cognitions' into "two kinds, the true and the untrue, or cognitions whose objects are *real* and those whose objects are *unreal*" (p. 239), and defining the former as a product of our awareness of the latter.

The real, he says, "is a conception which we must first have had when we discovered that there was an unreal, an illusion; that is, when we first corrected ourselves" (p. 239).

That process of *discovering one's own error* is for him at the core of all inquiry, all science; and while it begins in the individual in the present, as scientific inquiry it is ideally directed at a distant future in which 'thought' will have established a conception of the real that will 'stand in the long run.'

"The real, then," he says, "is that which, sooner or later, information and reasoning would finally result in, and which is therefore independent of the vagaries of me and you."

And that leads to the formulation that has come to be known as the 'community of inquiry':

> Thus, the very origin of the conception of reality shows that this conception of reality shows that this conception essentially involves the notion of a COMMUNITY, without definite limits, and capable of an indefinite increase of knowledge. And so these two series of cognitions—the real and the unreal—consist of those which, at a time sufficiently future, the community will always continue to reaffirm; and of those which, under the same conditions, will ever after be denied. (p. 239)

In other words, the community he means is not a specific finite group of scientists or other inquirers ('the vagaries of me and you') but an *infinite* community of inquirers—a community 'without definite limits' either in communal extension or in future time—to which every historical scientific community and every member of such a community belongs.

That means that the thought of any given historical scientific community or community of inquiry is necessarily imperfect, incomplete, because it is always in progress, always en route to the future thought of that infinite community:

> Finally, as what anything really is, is what it may finally come to be known to be to the ideal state of complete information, so that reality depends on the ultimate decision of the community; so thought is what it is, only by virtue of its addressing a future thought which is in its value as thought identical with it, though more developed. In this way, the existence of

[2] See Gregory (2022) for a history of the coinage of "community of inquiry," by Matthew Lipman (1998, p. 278; 2008, p. 109) and Ann Margaret Sharp (1991, p. 37n13, 1995, p. 141): "From the early 1970s until their deaths just five months apart in 2010," Gregory writes, "Lipman and Sharp collaborated on developing both a theory and a protocol for the 'community of inquiry' as the standard method of practicing 'philosophy for children,' as they conceived and pioneered that educational endeavor" (p. 2).

> thought now depends on what is to be hereafter; so that it has only a potential existence, dependent on the future thought of the community. (p. 241)

As a consequence, any disagreement between and among historical communities of inquiry, such as the state of revolutionary science that Thomas S. Kuhn will describe a century later—the struggle to establish the new paradigm—is ultimately to be settled by this entelechial movement toward a future state of certainty, in which "reality depends on the ultimate decision of the community."[3]

This model offers one possible motivation for revolutionary scientists to cross communal lines to learn the thought of a competing community, and possibly to be converted to it.

In a sense Peirce's conception is far more idealistic than Kuhn's, who portrays the history of science as repeatedly starting over, always once more replacing one paradigm with another, potentially without end. Peirce seems to be saying that science moves steadily toward a single goal.

But for Peirce that goal is only the *ideal* end of scientific inquiry. That doesn't mean it will ultimately be reached. It only means it that is the end toward which scientific inquiry must always strive.

And in that sense Kuhn's more skeptical model is simply an account of how scientific inquiry moves toward that end, or let's say *sees itself* as moving toward that end—an account, in other words, at a higher level of granularity than Peirce's 1868 formulation.

Peirce comes closer to anticipating the higher granularity of Kuhn's model, in fact, in his 1877 article 'The Fixation of Belief':

> But this method of fixing belief, which may be called the method of tenacity, will be unable to hold its ground in practice. The social impulse is against it. The man who adopts it will find that other men think differently from him, and it will be apt to occur to him, in some saner moment, that their opinions are quite as good as his own, and this will shake his confidence in his belief. This conception, that another man's thought or sentiment may be equivalent to one's own, is a distinctly new step, and a highly important one. It arises from an impulse too strong in man to be suppressed, without danger of destroying the human species. Unless we make ourselves hermits, we shall necessarily influence each other's opinions; so that the

[3] For a useful discussion of Peirce on the community (of inquiry), specifically in terms of Peirce's "maxim of pragmatism," see Kiryushchenko (2023, pp. 15-20), who also read this essay and responded in private correspondence (9 August 2024):

> This infinite community exists not only in the future, but, in some important sense, also in every 'now' of the present, as it is fully embodied in the method (the maxim of pragmatism) that we as inquirers routinely apply. According to the maxim, our every idea or conception of something is such as it is because in constructing it, we take into account the ways the world will react in case we accept it/act on it as if it was true. From this, it follows that, in Peirce, the future directly ('virtually,' in Peirce's own terms) affects the present. One might claim that, within this theoretical framework, time flows in the opposite direction, from the future to the present.

I would add that Kiryushchenko is describing a version of what Kuhn calls historian's time, and in my reading is characterized by recursive iterability.

> problem becomes how to fix belief, not in the individual merely, but in the community. (1931-1958, vol.5, section 378)

*The social impulse is against it*—against the 'method of tenacity.' The social impulse is that we 'influence each other's opinions,' and it does repeatedly prevail against the method of tenacity.

But note: it does *repeatedly* prevail. Not finally, once and for all. Over and over again.

See how Peirce phrases it: the method of tenacity "will be unable to hold its ground in practice." In other words, scientists will repeatedly split up into tenacious factions that will repeatedly prove unable to hold their ground as the social impulse repeatedly prevails.

This is very close to Kuhn's model almost a full century later.

### *2.2 John Dewey on communal inquiry-based pedagogy*

Peirce's pragmatist follower John Dewey developed his notion of the community of inquiry[4] for education, specifically for a communal-inquiry-based pedagogy, in an 1897 piece titled 'My pedagogic creed':

> I believe that knowledge of social conditions, of the present state of civilization, is necessary in order properly to interpret the child's powers. The child has his own instincts and tendencies, but we do not know what these mean until we can translate them into their social equivalents. We must be able to carry them back into a social past and see them as the inheritance of previous race activities. We must also be able to project them into the future to see what their outcome and end will be.

And:

> I believe that the school is primarily a social institution. Education being a social process, the school is simply that form of community life in which all those agencies are concentrated that will be most effective in bringing the child to share in the inherited resources of the race, and to use his own powers for social ends. I believe that education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living.

Neither Peirce nor Dewey uses the phrase 'community of inquiry.' That is a term imposed on both American pragmatist philosophers in later decades, for an approach to science and education based on the sociality of knowledge-creation.

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[4] "Community of inquiry," as I've noted, was a phrase that neither Peirce nor Dewey ever used; it was coined in the early 1970s by Matthew Lipman and Ann Margaret Sharp (see footnote n°2). As Gregory (2022, p. 1) writes:

> Many contemporary scholars who use the phrase "community of inquiry" do not mention Peirce. Some (particularly those writing on education) attribute the idea to John Dewey; few acknowledge Lipman and Sharp. Of those who do attribute the notion of a community of inquiry to Peirce, most—including Lipman and Sharp—do not offer any detailed account of which aspects of his thinking are relevant to their projects.

Dewey did not acknowledge Peirce's influence until his 1938 book *Logic: Theory of inquiry*.

Their notion is that inquiry relies for legitimacy on intersubjective agreement in the community of inquiry that pursues it, and that that legitimacy is both social and psychological, both public and private.

Peirce specifically insists that belief is only 'fixed' in the individual by collective forces outside the individual, and that those forces most effectively fix/legitimize belief when wielded not by the state or religious or other ideological institutions but by the community of one's like-minded peers.

What Thomas S. Kuhn will help us do next is to situate the nagging effects of doubt in two different communal contexts: in one specific community of inquiry—our own—*and* in the discursive differences between two scientific subcommunities of inquiry. 'Our' community has its specific doubt that 'stimulates us to inquiry until it is destroyed,' and that is all fine and good in normal science; but in revolutionary science there are competing subcommunities of inquiry studying the same phenomena, each with a different paradigm, which means not only different beliefs but different doubts and different pathways from doubt to belief. Our own pathway from doubt to belief helps us solve the problems we find within our paradigm, but as long as that paradigm is not accepted as *the* paradigm, the single normative one, and thus as *the* way to do normal science, clinging blindly to that pathway is like the ostrich burying its head in the sand. In the throes of a paradigm shift, the doubts that arise in the differences and conflicts between competing epistemological communities are the essential forces that drive all of the competing subcommunities toward belief in the emerging new paradigm. And once that new paradigm has been selected, belief in that paradigm is what organizes the normal-scientific pathway from doubt to belief.

**3. Thomas S. Kuhn on interepistemic translation in revolutionary science**

The thinker who has most trenchantly explored the notion of communities of inquiry in the sciences, then, is historian and philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn. That sociological orientation is often missed, however, in Kuhn's influential 1962 constructivist history of science *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*: his account of 'paradigms' and 'paradigm shifts,' of 'normal science' and 'revolutionary science,' has been so wildly attractive to scholars in an impressive variety of fields that it has been easy to overlook his focus on scientific communities.

The basic argument of Kuhn's most famous book is that 'normal science' tries exclusively to prove a paradigm right, but in the process also generates new anomalies that can't be explained with the current paradigm, leading to a breakdown of confidence in that paradigm and sense of crisis within the scientific community. In response, different groups tend to come up with strategies for explaining each anomaly, and those strategies tend to congeal into overall models and theories, each championed by a different scientific subcommunity that advances their model as a candidate for the new normative paradigm. This period of 'revolutionary science' is stressful and distressing to scientists, and that stress pushes the rival subcommunities to struggle toward an initially radical and then

increasingly and eventually normative retheorization of the whole field—a paradigm shift.

Kuhn's is in fact specifically a *sociological* history and philosophy of science. For him a paradigm is not just a normative belief structure but the belief structure that organizes what he calls an *epistemological community*. The 'failure' or perceived breakdown of a given paradigm is experienced as a breakdown of communication in a specific epistemological community—or rather, as the communicational splitting of a single normatively constituted epistemological community into several competing ones, and the resulting breakdown of communication among the splinter groups. For Kuhn an epistemological community is organized not only by what its members know and how they know it, but by what kinds of problems they consider interesting and worth solving, and by the scope of solutions to those problems that they accept; and, further, by *how they talk* about those problems and solutions.

Another term Kuhn uses for scientific communities is 'textual community,' in the sense that they are organized by what texts they read, as part of their education and ongoing professional development, what journals they subscribe to and read regularly, how they accredit their members, what conferences they attend, and so on. This points us ahead in time to what Stanley Fish called 'interpretive communities' (1980).

In other words, a paradigm shift for Kuhn is not primarily a cognitive event taking place internally and invisibly in the heads of specific scientists, but a communicational event that can be tracked externally in the behaviors of scientific communities.

As it turns out, too, in his 1969 Postscript to the book, published in the 1970 second edition, Kuhn lays out an explicitly translational model of the paradigm shift, arguing that "the problem of choice between two incompatible theories" might be explored by the expedient of thinking about "men who hold incommensurable viewpoints … as members of different language communities" and analyzing "their communication problems … as problems of translation" (p. 175). He returned to that model later in life, and in the texts collected in Kuhn (2022) worked out additional complexities; space limitations will not allow us to explore those complexities here, but the foundation for that later rethinking was still the model he developed in the 1969 Postscript to *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.

What Kuhn developed in the late 1960s was a kind of sociology of interepistemic translation—or perhaps, more cumbersomely, of interepistemological/intersubcommunity translation. He is interested in tracking the ability of members of an epistemological community loyal to one (emerging rival) paradigm to understand, translate, and even come to adopt the discourses of epistemological subcommunities loyal to other paradigms. This makes Kuhn's model a useful guide to interepistemic translation across all epistemic barriers—especially when those barriers are understood sociologically as barriers not between texts or cognitive schemata but between discourse communities.

The socioprofessional situation in which Kuhn situates his remarks on translation is the interim period of revolutionary science between two paradigmatic periods of normal science. Specifically, he is interested in the intercommunity 'negotiations' by which rival

potential paradigms are tested and compared in the move to the enshrinement of a new normal paradigm.

This of course is not the only situation in which interepistemic translations are pursued. Some situations are purely academic, caught up in the gamesmanship of publishing and winning reputation and prestige: a critical theorist in the humanities may seek to translate interepistemically between two theoretical or philosophical epistemes, such as Marxism and poststructuralism, or queer theory and Deleuzean process philosophy, not to merge them but to supercharge each by means of the other. Some are purely practical, as when a hiking party is lost in the woods and has to find its way out, using epistemic tools that were not designed for use in nature, like buildings as landmarks in big cities. Obviously, the motivations fueling interepistemic translation are very different in those two contexts: in the former 'creating knowledge' (and, let's face it, showing off), in the latter saving the group's lives.

By the same token, the methods used in those two contexts differ markedly as well. The methods used by the critical theorist are textual-hermeneutical, with a bending of each existing theoretical episteme toward the other and a bias toward complexity and surprise; the methods used by the hiking party are visual, tactile, and orientational, with a unidirectional tendency, adapting non-woodsy knowledge to woodsy conditions.

But Kuhn's communal model of socioprofessional interepistemic translation is nevertheless applicable to many situations outside of scientific communities. It is relevant to clashes between any divergent interest groups, such as townhalls, school-board meetings, labor arbitration, international diplomacy, and domestic squabbles over the distribution of chores and rewards. In each of those (and of course thousands more) we find not just a difference of opinion but the conflicting and competing epistemic orientations of the different communities, as between conservatives and liberals, the rich and the poor, management and labor, Orientalists and Occidentalists (see Buruma and Margalit, 2005), women and men, children and their parents.

So let's start by dividing Kuhn's 1969 remarks on translation into nine stages and considering each in turn.

> *Stage 1: What is shared*. The scientists caught up in the "communication breakdown" of a paradigm shift share a great deal: not only neurocultural programming but "a history, except the immediate past" (1962/1970, p. 201). "Both their everyday and most of their scientific world and language are shared." (p. 201)

The 'immediate past' that is not shared is the period of revolutionary science, when the adherents of rival paradigm-candidates have taken up antagonistic positions and intergroup 'communication' has broken down. It is easy to take that antagonism as the sole defining characteristic of the period of the 'communication breakdown,' but Kuhn begins with what is shared—which is almost everything. The 'everyday' world outside science and the language of that world are shared. To the extent that any one 'scientific world' will have been structured for everyone working in that branch of science by at least one 'normal'

paradigm accepted by everyone, and in some cases by a series of such paradigms, that world too and its language will be mostly shared—all, of course, but the current competition to establish the new normative paradigm.

It is significant for the modeling of exploratory/mediatory interepistemological/ intersubcommunity communication as *translation*, of course, that Kuhn highlights the importance of language. Not only the vocabulary but the discursive/rhetorical strategies of each competing community are shaped by the exemplar theory/model (paradigm-candidate) it espouses. It would have been possible, and even, perhaps, expected—especially by humanists, who tend to imagine that scientists are radically different from them—that Kuhn would portray each rival community as primarily shaped by scientific principles, methods, theories, procedures, algorithms. Instead, he focuses on language. That has the salutary effect of expanding his model's applicability to intergroup tensions and conflicts and competitions across a wide spectrum of human social, cultural, and political life. This is not just about scientists.

> *Stage 2: How they differ*. Sharing so much, they can determine how they differ: "what the participants in a communication breakdown can do is recognize each other as members of different language communities and then become translators." (p. 202)

One might want to read "different language communities" (p. 202) there as an interlingual metaphor for proponents of rival paradigm-candidates; but it's not a metaphor. It's a sociological reality. People whose world-views differ speak differently. This for Kuhn is the most salient fact about the sociology of the 'communication breakdown' during the period of revolutionary science—and also, of course, the most salient fact about the sociology of translation that here practically from the outset begins to manage that breakdown. Precisely because those different language communities have so much in common, they have a standpoint from which to identify divergences in language usage—and then to learn to translate across those divergences.

> *Stage 3: Identify "foci of trouble."* "Taking the differences between their own intra- and inter-group discourse as itself a subject for study, they can first attempt to discover the terms and locutions that, used unproblematically within each community, are nevertheless foci of trouble for inter-group discussions." (p. 202)

I read that first direct object, "the differences between their own intra- and inter-group discourse" (p. 202), to mean 'the differences between their own intragroup discourse and intergroup discourse.' (Reading 'intra- and inter-group discourse' as unified by 'their own' confuses things.) The idea is that some "terms and locutions" are "used unproblematically within each community" but become "foci of trouble for inter-group discussions." (p. 202)

What kind of trouble? Semantic trouble, ultimately: people in other groups don't understand us when we talk to them the way we talk to our own people. But the interesting

question is what affective, cognitive, or behavioral effects signal that trouble—or, perhaps, *are* that trouble. Affective trouble; cognitive trouble; behavioral trouble.

Behavioral trouble would be the obvious one: a member of one community suggests a course of action—a method, a testing protocol, an evaluative standard—and a member of another community agrees to try it, but then does something unexpected, something 'wrong.' This scenario already invokes affective and cognitive trouble, of course: the behavioral responses to a given practical instruction within a unified language community are habitualized, which means that members of that community expect the words to lead to the habitualized behavior, and that expectation may not even be conscious. One may only become aware of the habitualized or normalized expectations when they are suddenly and surprisingly not met. Unfulfillment of unconscious expectations may generate first affective trouble—what I've called 'correctness anxiety' (Robinson, 2023a, pp. 56-58)—then cognitive trouble (the attempt to explain what just happened), and 'behavioral trouble' third, as the basis for the explanation.

Take the constant state of 'communication breakdown' (revolutionary science) in translation studies, for example. Arguably our primary keyword is 'equivalence.' But what *is* equivalence?

- The scientifically minded linguists championing Translation Quality Assessment, like Juliane House (1977, 1996), take it to be a stable objective semantic pattern of repetition or reproduction from the source text to the target text ("semantic equivalence"—see Robinson, 2023b, Question 1).
- Back in the 1960s Eugene A. Nida (1964, 1969), Executive Secretary for Translations at the American Bible Society, divided equivalence into 'formal' and 'dynamic equivalence.' Formal equivalence was 'the same meaning' across the source-to-target passage, sticking as closely as possible to the forms of the source text; dynamic equivalence was the similarity not of structure or meaning but of reader response.
- Anthony Pym (2010, pp. 6-8) insists on the Latin roots of the word, saying that an "equivalent" translation is expected to produce not the same meaning but "equal value" with the source text, at all textual levels, from text to sentence and sometimes to word. As the value of consumer products fluctuates with the market, so too does the value of translator decisions.
- And Gideon Toury (1995/2012), arguing for 'target-side priority,' wrote of 'assumed translations' and their 'assumed equivalence.' Anything that is generally taken to be a translation is assumed to be an equivalent reproduction of a source text in another language. No comparative testing for equivalence: the 'proving' of equivalence or nonequivalence and all other comparisons with a source text become irrelevancies.

Juliane House rejected Nida's dynamic equivalence because it depended on target readers' subjective responses and so wasn't scientific. Two linguists, but they disagreed on the correct meaning of 'equivalence'—disagreed on the theoretical and methodological exemplar (paradigm) for the linguistic study of translation. For House the prevailing paradigm was empiricist, scientizing, resting on the systematic exclusion of 'the human factor' (i.e., readers); for Nida it was proselytic, missiological, aimed at the winning of hearts and minds (also readers) for Christianity. Science vs. religion; data vs. salvation.

Pym is a sociologist of translation, and arguably Toury was one as well; but they disagree on the sociological forces or factors determining translational equivalence. Pym situates those forces in the intercultural economic decisions of the professional translation marketplace; Toury situated them in the organizing force of target-side social opinion. For both, the target culture is the sociological group that determines equivalence; but for Pym those economic determinations of semantic and pragmatic value are shaped empirically by a fluctuating cross-cultural market, while for Toury they were a kind of virtual reality, sustained phenomenologically by collective belief. Economics vs. social psychology.

There are translation scholars who still today insist that there is only one acceptable paradigm for translation studies, typically the linguistically aligned equivalence paradigm—semantic equivalence, more or less—and push strongly for the rejection of article manuscripts that do not compare translations with their originals in a test for equivalence. Nothing else is translation studies.

On the other hand, there is a downside to the constant state of what Kuhn calls 'communication breakdown' in revolutionary science. When I was a coeditor at *Target*, I grew extremely frustrated at the overwhelming flood of article submissions adhering to translation-studies paradigms that I hardly knew at all and could not properly judge. A very small fraction of the submissions I processed—say, one single paper among the twenty new submissions that I processed out to reviewers each month—was written in my paradigmatic comfort zone. It would have been nice, I remember thinking then, to serve as editor at a journal organized around the four or five paradigms in which I did feel at home.

In interepistemic terms, I was expected to translate dozens of 'alien' epistemic discourses well enough, at a minimal and very superficial level, to be able to decide whether to desk-reject them or send them out for review. Typically, in most cases I didn't feel competent to desk-reject a submission, which meant that I had to muster enough confidence in my ability to decide who to send them to—what kind of research expertise I should be looking for in tracking down potential reviewers to invite. When the translation-studies paradigm that organized a given submission was one to which I adhered, by contrast, all my editorial decisions came easily and quickly, and I assume competently.

The point is that human beings tend to feel comfortable in their current epistemic regimes, and uncomfortable adapting to some other group's. Thomas Kuhn's 1969 Postscript tracks the slow and arduous process involved in that kind of adaptation.

> *Stage 4: Translate homophonically.* "(Locutions that present no such difficulties may be homophonically translated)." (p. 202)

In an interlingual context homophonic translation generates playful incomprehensibility; presumably for Kuhn, in the context of a paradigm shift 'homophonic translation' is a metaphor for something else—but what? *Ease* of translation, most likely; but what would make 'homophonic' a useful metaphor for that ease?

Almost certainly Kuhn is writing about interepistemic translation that is also *intralingual*: the 'terms and locutions that, used unproblematically within each community, are nevertheless foci of trouble for inter-group discussions' are probably all in English, the global language, or in whatever local vernacular scientific discourse is conducted. In that intralingual translation situation, we might imagine that a homophonic translation of 'Locutions that present no such difficulties may be homophonically translated' into English would be 'Locutions that present no such difficulties may be homophonically translated': the exact same words.

But if that is what Kuhn means here, he's wrong, because my reading of his 'homophonically' as a 'homophonic translation' of 'homophonically' manifestly obscures his meaning. 'Homophonically' is precisely a 'focus of trouble.' The way it is used in translation studies, to mean reproducing the sounds of the source text's syllables in the target language, makes Kuhn's application of the adverb to 'Locutions that present no such difficulties' seem nonsensical.

But perhaps my example of 'equivalence' in translation studies might help. It is precisely because different scholars applying different translation-theoretical paradigms use the exact same word—or, perhaps, a word that only homophonically *sounds* the same—to mean very different things that 'equivalence' needs to be translated interepistemically, as 'accuracy' or 'equivalence of response' or 'equal value' or 'assumed equivalence.' Those unpackings of the differences in cross-paradigmatic usages highlight the differences between the various usages in the different paradigms. It's only, then, when a term is used in exactly the same way across all paradigms that no interepistemic unpacking is necessary.

For example, 'source text' and 'target text' seem to be fairly unproblematic terms in translation studies these days. That is certainly true in English, and in every other European language I know; I'm not sure it is globally unproblematic. Wherever those terms or their local counterparts are well established across translation-theoretical paradigms, they can be 'homophonically translated' in the sense of using the same terms without interepistemic 'translation' (or explicitation).

But compare that situation with this passage in Friedrich Schleiermacher's 1813 Academy address on the different methods of translating:

> Diese beiden Beispiele von den äußersten Enden der Wissenschaft und der Kunst hergenommen zeigen deutlich, wie wenig der eigentlich Zweck alles Uebersetzens, möglichst unverfälschter Genuß fremder Werke, durch eine Methode erreicht werden kann, welche

> *dem übersetzten Werke* ganz und gar den Geist einer ihm fremden Sprache einhauchen will. (1813/2002, p. 90, 38-43; emphasis added)
>
> These two examples from opposite poles in scholarship and the arts clearly demonstrate just how poorly translation's true goal of unadulterated pleasure in foreign works is attained through a method that would breathe into *the translated work* the spirit of a language alien to it. (Robinson, 2014, p. 236; emphasis added)

What exactly is 'das übersetzte Werk' / 'the translated work'? Is it the source text (the work that has been translated)? Or is it the target text (the translated text)? As I wrote in *Schleiermacher's Icoses* (2013, p. 111):

> I take it „der Geist einer ihm fremden Sprache" / "the spirit of a language alien to it" means the spirit of the *target* language? It is a confusing statement, because surely the language whose spirit is alien to the target text is the spirit of the source language, making it seem as if "a method that would breathe into the translated work the spirit of a language alien to it" refers to foreignization: breathing into the target text the spirit of the source language. But since Schleiermacher is specifically attacking domestication here, he must mean by „dem übersetzten Werke" / "the translated work" not the target text but the source text, or something like "the work that has been translated."

Translation studies was very far from an established academic discipline in 1813. The German Romantics were among the most influential voices in the development of that academic discipline a century and a half later, but Schleiermacher's wording is confusing here in much the same way Kuhn says the discourse of communities loyal to rival paradigm-candidate A is confusing to those who are loyal to rival paradigm-candidates B, C, and D.

Or perhaps there is a difference: if, Kuhn seems to suggest, in modern scientific communities rival lexicons are developed that coach their users in the *confident* use of shared words in novel and divergent ways, Schleiermacher's terminological confusion may reflect a pre-paradigmatic state—the state before "nature" has been forced into "the conceptual boxes supplied by professional education" (1962/1970, p. 5). "Normal science," Kuhn adds, "the activity in which most scientists inevitably spend almost all their time, is predicated on the assumption that the scientific community knows what the world is like" (p. 5)—and in 1813 there was no scientific (or scholarly) community that knew what the world of translation was like. There was no professional education to supply the conceptual boxes into which the 'nature' of translation could be forced. Schleiermacher, like his fellow Romantics Novalis, the Schlegel brothers, and Humboldt, was making it up as he went along.

On the other hand, it may also be that in times of revolutionary science the very fact that the next paradigm shift is *underway*, not yet complete, not yet normalized, means that vocabularies are not yet set in stone either. "The early developmental stages of most sciences," Kuhn writes, "have been characterized by continual competition between a number of distinct views of nature, each partially derived from, and all roughly compatible with, the dictates of scientific observation and method" (p. 5). That was certainly the

'translation studies' situation in Romantic Germany—with a loose and forgiving reading of 'the dictates of scientific observation and method.' Remarkably, in many ways it is still the translation studies situation in the world today, where dozens of theoretical paradigms coexist—*and yet* translation studies has been academically institutionalized, to the point where you can get a Ph.D. in Translation Studies in just about any country in the world, and terms like 'source text' and 'target text' have been semantically stabilized. It is unthinkable today, despite the mad proliferation of competing translation-theoretical paradigms, that anyone with a Ph.D. in Translation Studies could write today the confusing paragraph that Schleiermacher wrote in 1813 about 'das übersetzte Werk' / 'the translated work.'

> *Stage 5: Enculturation.* "Having isolated such areas of difficulty in scientific communication, they can next resort to their shared everyday vocabularies in an effort further to elucidate their troubles. Each may, that is, try to discover what the other would see and say when presented with a stimulus to which his own verbal response would be different. If they can sufficiently refrain from explaining anomalous behavior as the consequence of mere error or madness, they may in time become very good predictors of each other's behavior. Each will have learned to translate the other's theory and its consequences into his own language and simultaneously to describe in his language the world to which that theory applies." (p. 202)

Here the scientist who remains loyal to rival paradigm-candidate A begins to feel increasingly at ease, perhaps even at home, in the discourse of the scientific subcommunity that swears loyalty to rival paradigm-candidate B—and vice versa. This is obviously a process of enculturation, and this time Kuhn specifically outlines *behavioral* cues—even perhaps behavioristic cues, such as 'responding' to a 'stimulus'—as indicators of each 'foreigner's' progress.

It is striking that Kuhn imagines this enculturation process as mutual, or reciprocal: 'Each may, that is, try to discover what the other would see and say'; 'Each will have learned to translate the other's theory and its consequences into his own language.' Not being a scientist myself, I'm not sure whether members of rival scientific communities vying to make their approach paradigmatic for the entire branch of science would really be this eager to become thoroughly familiar with the discourse(s) of their competitors. Certainly, it doesn't seem likely to be the standard situation in the humanities, where this welter of competing theoretical paradigms is a continuing reality. Critical theorists in the humanities (including translation theorists) tend to familiarize themselves with a great many theoretical projects; but it doesn't seem likely that a theorist strongly oriented to the critical theories coming out of the Kantian and post-Kantian tradition—hermeneutical, phenomenological, poststructuralist—would consider it worth the effort to become comfortably conversant in positivist theoretical orientations. In translation studies, the empiricists studying corpora and eye-tracking and so on don't seem inclined to waste their time reading Judith Butler and Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida and Deleuze and Guattari—and that feeling is entirely mutual. Are scientists really that different? Or is Kuhn simply romanticizing the communal spirit among scientists?

It may be that Kuhn is simply assuming that the stress and distress caused by the critical "communication breakdown" (p. 202) brings a relentless pressure on everyone to move toward consensus on the emergent shaping of the next normative paradigm. As Peirce would put it, doubt is rampant, and therefore so is the push toward belief. Perhaps that pressure works on all members of all rival subcommunities to remain open to learning what the competition is saying and doing and why.

> *Stage 6: Translation as a tool for persuasion and conversion*. "Since translation, if pursued, allows the participants in a communication breakdown to experience vicariously something of the merits and defects of each other's points of view, it is a potent tool both for persuasion and for conversion." (p. 202) "Translation is not necessary for persuasion, but "in its absence many of the explanations and problem-statements endorsed by the members of one scientific group will be opaque to the other." (p. 203)

It is interesting there to see translation mobilized by "the participants in a communication breakdown", as if a 'communication breakdown' were a principled negotiation, with rules that must be obeyed and established strategies that participants will customarily deploy. On a superficial reading, either revolutionary science is not so much a communication *breakdown* as it is an organized communication *restructuring* or *reorganization*, or else it is not a negotiation or other meeting or organized activity with *participants*.

Working out those apparent tensions on a deeper level might require an edit of Kuhn's sentence.

Let's start at the end, with 'persuasion and conversion': each rival paradigm-candidate has its loyalists who want to see their approach win out over all the others and become the basis for the new period of normal science, and to that end they will be motivated to persuade and convert loyalists of other scientific subcommunities.

Second, 'potent tool': each subcommunity seeking to persuade and convert members of other subcommunities will need to *develop* strategies for doing so, and to that end will be looking for effective rhetorical tools.

Third, 'communication breakdown': thinking of revolutionary science not as a disorganized free-for-all competition with no rules but as a *breakdown of* ***communication*** may help direct the strategic thinking of those who are looking for potent tools to aid in persuading and converting opponents. If what one discovers is a breakdown not of communication but, say, of methodological credibility, then one's strategic eyes are likely to be turned to possible methodological adjustments: we need to rethink our research questions, our hypotheses, our variables, our testing protocols, and so on. But if what has broken down is not our research methodology but our communication, then our thoughts turn to rhetorical strategies, one of which might be translation.

Fourth, *if* translation is 'pursued'—that 'if' implying that, while translation is the only rhetorical strategy that Kuhn mentions, it is really only one of many strategies, rhetorical and otherwise—that pursuit has implications for how we go about imagining and

structuring possible remedies for the communication breakdown. As Kuhn presents it, after all, translation is a *conciliatory* rhetorical strategy. One doesn't go on the offensive, ridiculing and insulting one's opponents; one learns their language, learns to talk and ultimately think like them, so as to enable persuasion *on and in and by their terms*. Conversion, in other words, is not just in your scientific best interests: it is the obvious commonsensical outcome of your own discourse. Your own vocabulary opens the door to you joining us.

And fifth, this conciliatory rhetorical strategy would seem to require that we (all) frame what we're doing not as squabbling over the spoils, trying to win an adversarial zero-sum victory that will devastate the losers, but as participating in a principled negotiation with the goal of benefitting everyone equally. Thinking of the enterprise of revolutionary science along those lines makes a 'communication breakdown' sound like a minor speed bump that we can all get past with relative ease if we just work together and find a common language to facilitate better communication. That would be the sense in which we all are—or perhaps all come to adopt the rhetorical strategy of envisioning ourselves as—'participants in a communication breakdown.'

Thus: "Given the importance in a communication breakdown of pushing for persuasion and conversion, and thus of developing potent rhetorical tools to effect those desiderata, it becomes pressing for participants to pursue conciliatory rhetorical projects aimed at mutual understanding, especially translation." (p. 203)

Ultimately of course the new paradigm must be chosen by consensus. There is no one in a position to decide the new paradigm by fiat—and even if there were, the majority of the relevant 'participants' in the process would have to go along with that decision. There are likely to be some holdouts, of course; but given the basic assumption that normal science is for the most part *what science is*, and that normal science means trying to prove a single dominant paradigm right, holdouts will either have to give up their resistance and rejoin the work on the new paradigmatic terms or retreat into beleaguered and isolated idiosyncrasy, which means working without grants, without a lab stocked with Ph.D. students and lab assistants, without conversations with colleagues, without publishing one's results, and so on. To be a maverick in science is to be branded a crank at best and dangerously insane at worst.

One thinks of the 'evil genius' or 'mad scientist' stereotype on which so many spy-thriller villains have been based: the stereotype reflects society's attitude toward scientists who refuse to do normal science by the rules.

As Kuhn puts it, though, eventually the holdouts all die, and resistance to the new paradigm evaporates.

To be sure, world-changing breakthrough discoveries have been made by such 'cranks.' The theories of such 'cranks' have sometimes survived and become the next paradigm. But for that to happen the 'holdout' must be either able to work alone, or else independently wealthy and so able to staff a lab with researchers who need a job and lack professional ambition, and possibly also to fund a new journal and a new wing of the

science building. The only other option is to be publicly compliant (willing to maintain a lab and grants and so on under the new paradigm) and privately resistant. And, of course, one must be long-lived enough to survive until the new paradigm begins to develop the crippling anomalies that instigate a new paradigm shift.

In the humanities, by contrast, the reigning assumption is that we all work alone and are entitled to espouse whatever theories we like. But we too have our orthodoxies. Racist theories, misogynistic theories, and other unabashedly exploitative theories are so fervently frowned upon by pre-publication reviewers that reputable academic presses and journals will be unlikely to publish them, and publication by disreputable presses and journals will probably not count in promotion and tenure decisions.

There are also radically progressive counterparadigms, especially for qualitative research, experimental paradigms designed to overcome the silencing of 'respondent' communities and heroization of the white male researcher—and they may be uneasily tolerated but quietly shunned as 'woke' by more conservative (especially white male) scientific communities.

Also, while it is true that in the humanities there is no single dominant paradigm that everyone must support or else face career-derailing isolation, it remains the case that work done recognizably and intelligently in one of the eight or ten most respected paradigms of a humanistic field will serve your career far better than brilliant maverick work that no one knows how to categorize. Scientific and scholarly communities tend to be quite conservative. Pigeonholability is a plus.

And of course humdrum work in a peripheral and disparaged paradigm will serve your career hardly at all. In a modern-language department, for example, a literary study of a minor writer had better adhere to some major paradigm, like Deleuze and Guattari retheorizing 'minor writers' as minoritarian disruptors of the major language, or Jacques Lacan theorizing the Other-capital-O (see e.g. Robinson, 1992). Otherwise, the study of minor writers will tar the scholar with the brush of 'minor scholar,' which will tend to keep the colleague on the sidelines in promotion and tenure decisions—except of course at fourth-rate teaching institutions where hardly anyone is publishing anything at all.

Ultimately in the humanities the judge and jury are readers—academic readers, of course, who buy your books and cite your publications and invite you to give guest lectures and conference keynotes, but notably either readers who already adhere strictly to the paradigm your work supports or cross-over readers who are attracted by your name or the quality of your argumentation to wander outside their paradigmatic comfort zone. The former are the humanistic counterpart of what Kuhn calls normal scientists; the latter are examples of the scientists in a 'communication breakdown' who cross the lines, who learn the other side's language, learn to translate one partisan idiom into another.

In the humanities working innovatively, creatively outside a well-established paradigm is a recipe for success only in a 'revolutionary science' context where there are enough cross-over readers who read and cite you (and invite you to give keynotes and guest lectures, offer you jobs, etc.). That is the theoretical overlap between Kuhn on

revolutionary *science* as a 'communication breakdown' and critical theory in the humanities.

Interestingly, 'interepistemic translation' is an emergent paradigm-candidate *in and beyond* translation studies—on into what has been called 'post-translation studies' (see Arduini and Nergaard, 2011; and Gentzler, 2016)—and what this article is designed to do is to win support for that candidacy, for that emergence. To the extent that interepistemic translation is an umbrella term that remains within the well-trodden confines of intralingual, interlingual, and intersemiotic translation (Jakobson, 1959), it is a 'new' paradigm-candidate (or terminological shift) only within translation studies. What this exploration of the parallels between Kuhn on 'translation' in a revolutionary paradigm-shift context and other intercommunity accommodations seeks to establish is the broader application of 'interepistemic translation' as an emerging paradigm-candidate for institutional and intercultural communication studies beyond the translation of verbal texts.

> *Stage 7: Research results as engines of persuasion and conversion*. "But each language community can usually produce from the start a few concrete research results that, though describable in sentences understood in the same way by both groups, cannot yet be accounted for by the other community in its own terms" (p. 203), and this may lead to persuasion and even conversion—especially among scientists "just entering the profession, for they have not yet acquired the special vocabularies and commitments of either group." (p. 203)

Significant here is the psychosociology of those epistemological communities organized around a stance or a policy—excluding, in other words, those communities of practice that are organized more or less unconsciously and so tend not to be thought of by their members as a community of any kind. Still, it's possible for the membership of say a poker game to overlap significantly with a group of buddies drinking beer at the local watering hole, and for tensions to surface between the drinkers and nondrinkers at the poker game ('We're here to play poker, not to get drunk!') or between the drinkers at the bar who want to introduce a poker game and those who don't.

Still, an epistemological community organized by overt affective-becoming-cognitive loyalty to a specific rival paradigm-candidate will feel these tensions with a higher level of awareness. Similar dynamics surface in political parties, as when loyal members of the U.S. Republican party in the era of Donald Trump either were converted to violent Trumpist fascism or clung tenaciously to traditional law-and-order Republicanism, and were branded by the opposite faction as either 'extremists' or 'RINOs' (Republicans In Name Only), respectively.

As Kuhn notes, scientists who enter the profession in times of paradigm uncertainty—'communication breakdown'—are especially susceptible to persuasion. But of course the ultimate establishment of a new paradigm requires 'persuasion and even conversion'

among all or most members of the epistemological subcommunities that were resisting the new paradigm the most strenuously.

> *Stage 8: Translation as threatening.* "For most people translation is a threatening process, and it is entirely foreign to normal science." (p. 203)

This is possibly the most intriguing proposition in Kuhn's 1969 Postscript. Interepistemic translation, of course, is (so far) 'entirely foreign to normal science' because normal science is predicated on universal loyalty to a single paradigm—the now normative one. Translating the epistemic assumptions governing the scientific activities keyed to support for that normative paradigm into the language of some other epistemological subcommunity would be either puzzlingly irrelevant (if to the discourse of an epistemological community whose assumptions had no bearing at all on normal science) or a threat to normativity (if to the discourse of an epistemological community whose assumptions challenged the normative ones).

But isn't an argument for interepistemic translation designed to normalize it, normativize it, establish it as the new norm, the new paradigm, and thus the basis for a new normal science? To the extent that Kuhnian thought is not science but the philosophy and history of science, no, it is not designed to be installed as a 'normal science.' It is at most a metascience. If we assume that Kuhn won the 1965 debate with Karl Popper at the University of London's International Colloquium in the Philosophy of Science, and utterly defeated not only Popper but all philosophy-of-science justificationism, we might declare it the new 'normal metascience.' But if (as indeed is the case) other influential groups still today declare Popper the winner of that debate, then what we find is obviously not normal but revolutionary metascience: the continuing clash of competing paradigm-candidates. As I've been suggesting, that clash is the 'norm' in the humanities.

Kuhn's observation that "For most people translation is a threatening process" also rang true for the anti-Trump messaging that translated the discourse of Trump and Trumpism politically as fascism, legally as criminality, and medically as cognitive decline. But I assume that Kuhn's "threatening process" refers mostly to the competitive situation in the midst of a paradigm shift. In that context, translation is only vaguely threatening; the threat may be experienced as a general nonspecific unease.

That unease is familiar to historians of interlingual translating and interpreting. Translators and interpreters have always been suspect to people in entrenched cultural positions—to what Sakai Naoki (1997) would call 'homolingual' subjects, people who believe that speakers of other languages and members of other cultures than their own are intrinsically suspect, and therefore question the loyalty of translators and interpreters who have lived abroad long enough to pick up proficiency in a foreign language and culture.

A good example of that homolingual unease is Friedrich Schleiermacher's insistence in his 1813 Academy address that translators into German should leave a *Gefühl des Fremden* / 'Feeling of the Foreign' in their translations, so as to signal the foreignness of

the translated text to patriotic Germans. The goal was not to make native speakers of German *hate* the foreign works, but simply to build a kind of subconscious signal of foreignness into all literary and scholarly translations, to induce target readers to maintain a certain protective affective distance from those works.

> *Stage 9: Going native*. "To translate a theory or worldview into one's own language is not to make it one's own. For that one must go native, discover that one is thinking and working in, not simply translating out of, a language that was previously foreign. That transition is not, however, one that an individual may make or refrain from making by deliberation and choice, however good his reasons for wishing to do so. Instead, at some point in the process of learning to translate, he finds that the transition has occurred, that he has slipped into the new language without a decision having been made." (p. 204)

Kuhn's point in this last stage is temptingly close to Schleiermacher as well: the idea that learning to translate an alien discourse into one's own inevitably involves a certain distance is reminiscent of Schleiermacher's insistence that literary and scholarly translators deliberately *maintain* that distance by simulating in the target reader's response to the translation the Feeling of the Foreign experienced by the intermediate learner of the foreign language. The obvious difference is that Kuhn's interepistemic translator *is* that intermediate learner, not an expert mediator who can control and so choose among simulatory strategies. More precisely, Kuhn's interepistemic translator is that intermediate learner *until s/he is no longer*—until s/he has 'gone native, discover[ed] that [s/he] is thinking and working in, not simply translating out of, a language that was previously foreign.' Kuhn's interepistemic translator, in other words, doesn't control that all-important foreignizing affective-becoming-cognitive distance from the 'source language'—the other community's discourse. In an important sense Kuhn's whole discussion of interepistemic translation tracks what Schleiermacher would call 'bringing the author to the reader' (domestication): at first, one gropes one's way forward cautiously, exploring what feel like differences, learning the 'language'; the more one learns, the easier it becomes to translate between the two communities' discourses; eventually one "goes native," or in Schleiermacher's terms becomes a polyglot.

## 4. Conclusion: Back to Peirce

However, one thing is missing in all this so far—or two, depending on how we count: namely, *how and why* we get started in interepistemic translation.

In 1877 Peirce says that we are launched onto the path of scientific reasoning by doubt, and more specifically by the habit of mind that makes us prefer belief to doubt, and so makes us move determinedly toward belief by resolving doubt; but he doesn't consider the 'metadoubt,' as it were, the secondary level of doubt that is aroused when competing subcommunities have developed different pathways from doubt to belief, and thus different normative constructions of doubt, of belief, and of the proper pathway from the one to the other.

One way of mobilizing Peircean thought to address the question before us of how and why we get started translating interepistemically might be to read one paragraph in 'The fixation of belief' in the light of Peirce's later (1901-1902) abduction-induction-deduction triad:

> We are, doubtless, in the main logical animals, but we are not perfectly so. Most of us, for example, are naturally more sanguine and hopeful than logic would justify. We seem to be so constituted that in the absence of any facts to go upon we are happy and self-satisfied; so that the effect of experience is continually to contract our hopes and aspirations. Yet a lifetime of the application of this corrective does not usually eradicate our sanguine disposition. Where hope is unchecked by any experience, it is likely that our optimism is extravagant. *Logicality in regard to practical matters* (if this be understood, not in the old sense, but as consisting in a wise union of security with fruitfulness of reasoning) is the most useful quality an animal can possess, and *might, therefore, result from the action of natural selection*; but outside of these it is probably of more advantage to the animal to have his mind filled with pleasing and encouraging visions, independently of their truth; and thus, upon unpractical subjects, natural selection might occasion a fallacious tendency of thought. (1931-1958, vol. 5, section 366; emphasis added)

Now let us ask: in what does 'logicality in regard to practical matters' consist? Logicality in some general sense? Any kind of logic? It is 'the most useful quality an animal can possess,' but—any animal? Should we imagine rats reasoning syllogistically? Of course not: they have no language, and therefore no propositional logic. In 1877 Peirce imagines 'logicality' as what propels us from doubt toward belief; and we might imagine that for a rat that logical propulsion must take the form of trial and error. If we thematize trial and error as induction, the testing ('trialing') of hypotheses, then we might find ourselves imagining with Peirce that induction 'result[s] from the action of natural selection'—but note that for Peirce the *action* of natural selection is not some static biological 'instinct.' Natural or not, the action of *selecting* would always be triadic—which for Peirce means it would have a semiotic history. Specifically, if an animal is *inclined* to forage inductively for food and water, that inclination—what Peirce identifies as a First, which is to say an abstract potentiality—has to come from somewhere and lead somewhere else. Where it leads, of course, would be the trial-and-error experience of foraging, a Second—a brute engagement with the real world—but where would it come from? Peirce would say that, if successful, the experience of searching by trial and error leads to the development of *habits*, and habit is a Third: pattern, a precept, etc. This would be Peirce's instinct-experience-habit triad.[5] As we continue to cycle through the sign-action, habit comes to seem like instinct: that is where the Firstness of 'instinct' (or inclination) comes from. Experiential Secondness devolves into the habitualized patterns of Thirdness, which feels like instinctual Firstness. We—whatever animals we are—'forget' the triadic history leading from successful

[5] Actually Peirce wrote of an instinct-experience-*form* triad (1931-1958, vol. 8, section 374); I borrowed 'instinct-experience-habit' from Gorlée (1994) for all four editions of *Becoming a Translator* (the fourth in 2020). I engage the terminological shift in Robinson (2016, p. 13).

experience to habit, and what we perform habitually comes to seem as if it had always been with us, always been our stable and reliable resource.

Experience is obviously the realm in and through which doubt propels us toward belief. But is that all induction? As induction leads to deduction, it becomes a Third that is conducive to the formation of habit. But if induction is the testing of hypotheses, where do those hypotheses come from?

In his 1901 article 'On the logic of drawing history from ancient documents especially from testimonies (logic of history)' Peirce first introduces the abduction-induction-deduction triad, arguing that abduction is the indispensable process of *guessing* that generates hypotheses:

> Abduction and induction have, to be sure, this common feature, that both lead to the acceptance of a hypothesis because observed facts are such as would necessarily or probably result as consequences of that hypothesis. But for all that, they are the opposite poles of reason, the one the most ineffective, the other the most effective of arguments. The method of either is the very reverse of the other's. Abduction makes its start from the facts, without, at the outset, having any particular theory in view, though it is motived by the feeling that a theory is needed to explain the surprising facts. Induction makes its start from a hypothesis which seems to recommend itself, without at the outset having any particular facts in view, though it feels the need of facts to support the theory. Abduction seeks a theory. Induction seeks for facts. In abduction the consideration of the facts suggests the hypothesis. In induction the study of the hypothesis suggests the experiments which bring to light the very facts to which the hypothesis had pointed. (1931-1958, vol. 7, section 218)

This expansion of Peirce's 1877 suggestion that 'logicality might 'result from the action of natural selection' would thus imply that, thought triadically, 'the action of natural selection' would be the semiotic action of experience forming habits and habit *feeling like* instinct. But now more specifically, when the Thirdness of habit gives rise to the Firstness of the instinctive impulse to launch and manage the Secondness of experience through trial and error, that experiential Second itself moves triadically through the process of guessing (abduction, a First), testing guesses (induction, a Second), and drawing conclusions (deduction, a Third).

This is of course the schematic framework behind my Wheel of Experience in *Becoming a Translator* (2020, p. 60), which we might adjust for the study of interepistemic translation. The interesting contribution Peirce's abduction-induction-deduction triad can make to Kuhn's theory of inter-epistemological-community translation, as I began to suggest earlier, begins in the fact that the 'metadoubt' or secondary doubt experienced in the encounter with the discourse of a competing epistemological community launches a search for belief, and that belief takes a progressive series of forms that culminate in the selection and formation of a new normative paradigm. But each of those doubt-seeking-belief trajectories might be thought of as an abduction-induction-deduction triad in its own right, with reference to Kuhn's nine stages:

- *First trajectory: isolating areas of difficulty in inter-community communication*. The observed fact of divergent epistemological communities (stage 2) gives rise to doubt, which generates the abductive guess that there are discursive differences as well, leading to the '[inductive] attempt to discover the terms and locutions that [can] nevertheless [be deductively identified as] foci of trouble for inter-group discussions.' (stage 3)
- *Second trajectory: becoming good predictors of other communities' behavior*. The fact established in the first trajectory that there are areas of communicational difficulty between communities gives rise to uncertainty (doubt) regarding the very possibility of communication, which generates the abductive guess at the possibility of understanding and even translating the alien discourse, leading them to 'try [inductively] to discover what the other would see and say when presented with a stimulus to which his own verbal response would be different,' with the deductive result that 'they may in time become very good predictors of each other's behavior.' (stage 5)
- *Third trajectory: the possibility of persuasion and conversion*. The observed fact that without translation 'many of the explanations and problem-statements endorsed by the members of one scientific group will be opaque to the other' creates doubt, which generates the abductive postulation of translation as a possible solution, and the inductive testing of hypotheses generated by that abduction 'allows the participants in a communication breakdown to experience vicariously something of the merits and defects of each other's points of view,' leading deductively to the possibility of 'persuasion and for conversion.' (stage 6)
- *Fourth trajectory: going native*. In this final trajectory, which effectively means persuasion and conversion, the abduction-induction-deduction triad is largely unconscious: 'at some point in the process of learning to translate, he finds that the transition has occurred, that he has slipped into the new language without a decision having been made' (stage 9). Somehow one has continued to move from doubt to belief by responding to uncomfortable facts first abductively, then inductively, then deductively, without the 'individual … mak[ing] or refrain[ing] from making [the transition] by deliberation and choice, however good his reasons for wishing to do so' (stage 9). The fuller title of this trajectory would be 'go[ing] native, discover[ing] that one is thinking and working in, not simply translating out of, a language that was previously foreign.' (stage 9)

The fourth trajectory there is effectively the one that brings the competing epistemological communities into alignment, generating the new normative paradigm. That is of course not the telos of every interepistemic translation project/process. Some will want to stop at the second or third. Others—especially those labeled 'experimental'—may want to stop at the first, exaggerating and playing with the 'the terms and locutions that [can be deductively identified as] foci of trouble for inter-group discussions.'

Still, it is arguably useful to have the full model for reference. Negotiations and arbitrations aimed at consensus—or at making sure both or all contending parties are at least equally unhappy—would fit Kuhn's model from the history of science. The idea that experimental translation, might be thought of as harrying those 'foci of trouble' is intriguing. And if most interepistemic translation projects tend to fall into the middle, into trajectories 2 and 3—which may or may not be the case, but imagine that as an abductive guess—that would only suggest that interepistemic translation tends to be more exploratory than conciliatory (trajectory 4) or disruptive (trajectory 1).

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**About the author:** Douglas Robinson is one of the world's leading translation theorists and the coiner of the term 'interepistemic translation' in his 2017 monograph *Translationality*. He is also a renowned literary translator from Finnish to English.

**BOOK REVIEW**

# THE IDENTITY OF DISPLACEMENT: TRANSLATING MIGRANT EXPERIENCE THROUGH OBJECTS

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**Translation and Objects: Rewriting Migrancy and Displacement through the Materiality of Art**, Mª Carmen África Vidal Claramonte, London and New York: Routledge, 2025, 162 pp., £35.99 (paperback) ISBN 9781032795195, £32.39 (ebook) ISBN 9781003488170.

Objects tell stories: in the same way as meaning, they can be transported. And in the same way as language, they can be part of a person's identity, especially for individuals who have been displaced and travel with both intangible and tangible baggage. Objects thus undergo a process of translation. But how can the interactions between humans and their possessions be understood as acts of translation? Can non-linguistic and non-verbal aspects of life be sources of meaning? These are some of the questions that *Translation and Objects: Rewriting Migrancy and Displacement through the Materiality of Art* explores**.** On the cover, a single shoe lies abandoned on a shore, embodying its story and its journey — one the reader will be part of through this groundbreaking approach.

In her research, Vidal Claramonte follows the path laid out by other scholars who departed from traditional language-based Translation Studies, in order to engage with a more expansive vision that incorporates materiality. Drawing on Bassnett's and Johnston's (2019) outward turn, the approach to multimodality proposed by Boria *et al*. (2020), Littau's (2016) material turn, as well as the concepts of "tangible translation" (Ciribuco and O'Connor, 2022) and "ubiquitous translation" (Blumczynski, 2016), this monograph examines how material and non-linguistic elements —such as objects, sounds and smells— can be sources of emotions, thereby becoming sources of translatable meaning in the context of displacement.

Throughout its five chapters, this book illustrates the significance of materiality in Translation Studies. The introductory chapter begins with the premise that translation permeates all sites and aspects of life. For migrants in particular, translation takes on a political dimension, functioning as a way of life, as they travel with objects that "translate silenced histories and thus bring to light emotions" (p. 2). Translation incorporates different semiotic systems beyond the linguistic, and therefore materiality is an essential medium for creating meaning that can be translated through the five senses.

In the experience of displacement, everyday objects hold memories and emotions, bringing the past into the new home. Although the meanings of these objects may shift

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during the journey and merge into a hybrid space, they remain connected to their original culture and embody the journey undertaken, serving as emotional and mnemonic bridges for their owners. The chapter also highlights the importance of *translatio*, which involves physical movement, and *translationality*: "a dynamic process that brings to light the entanglements of matter and meaning, space and time" (p. 6). Under this enlightening perspective, translation always carries a transformation.

In the second chapter, the reader is invited to delve into the notion of *translatio* as a journey, as "both translation and traveling deal with the creation and deconstruction of representations that occupy a very important place in the construction and maintenance or destabilization of the political and cultural hierarchies" (p. 21). Displacement is not limited to geographical movement, but it also occurs between semiotic systems, in an intertwined process. As migrants flee wars or disasters, they carry their past and their voices —subaltern voices that are brought to life through the rewriting of past narratives— , encountering new experiences and challenges along their path. This view positions the migrant experience as inherently linked to the translation and displacement of stories. Migrants must translate themselves as they leave their homelands, confronting new realities that extend beyond language to new scenarios and contexts. The movement between territories involves changes that result in a rewriting of places: as people are displaced, spaces are reinterpreted, emphasizing that meaning, like migrants, is perpetually in transit.

The third chapter introduces an innovative phenomenological approach as it analyzes the concept of translationality within migrant objects. The researcher emphasizes the storytelling and communicative qualities inherent in the objects migrants carry —often taken hastily and amidst deep uncertainty about their future—, as well as those left behind or lost. Shoes, religious items, pets (among countless other objects) undergo relocation and readapt the meanings they convey. Photographs, due to their portability, serve as unique examples: they act as visual translators of moments, spaces, pains, and various other conditions.

Although migrant objects may stress the *otherness* of their owners, they also offer future generations a tangible link to their ancestors and embody their journeys. Vidal Claramonte points out that "migrants are bodies in constant translation, nomadic bodies that are themselves translations, since time, space, and materiality are in their case habitats of translation" (p. 72). The chapter draws on a variety of literary works for children and adults, as well as installations and artworks where all senses may participate, to explore how migrant objects raise questions about their owners' stories and the ever-shifting meanings that migrate with them.

Chapter four is a thorough, simulating examination of the literature and particularly the visual arts that represent displaced objects, connecting them to *translationality* as a moving and transformative process. Vidal Claramonte studies various exhibitions that feature objects as central storytellers, evoking emotions and preserving the memory of historical events, such as those found in Holocaust museums or refugee-focused displays.

Boats carry great significance in human displacement, and Vidal Claramonte analyzes the example of Christoph Büchel's *Barca Nostra*, a ship exhibited at the 2019 Venice Biennale. This vessel has a dynamic history —it began as a fishing boat, then became an illegal means of transport for migrants, evidence of crime and tragedy, and finally an art piece. Nevertheless, the translation of this particular object failed to communicate the voices of the migrants who perished on board (Simon and Polezzi, 2022). Through this and other examples, we come to understand the importance of approaching the exhibitions of migrant objects from a critical perspective. In order to become *translatio*, objects must authentically convey the voices of displaced individuals, the subalterns, whose stories where once silenced but can be retold through these items. It is equally crucial to question the whole context of translation involving both the translator and the audience who receives it: "Retelling tales through *translatio* encourages us to question received stories in a world where translation permeates all spheres and where we are all translated beings, agents of translation, with a view to bringing all stories to light" (p. 118). Such translations are experiential, following the concept of Campbell and Vidal (2024), because they move emotions more profoundly than intellect or language.

The final chapter is titled '*Terra infirma*', which refers to an infirm, unstable earth, symbolizing the migrants' ever-in-transit identity. It raises awareness of current migratory issues, exploring how a life built on constant *translatio* shapes identity. In an era marked by conflicts and a globalized world increasingly defined by physical and metaphorical walls that restrict diversity, translation assumes a pivotal role: it gives voice to the silenced and displaced, expanding its influence through materiality and emotions, and engaging with art to create new spaces where diverse narratives can be shared. Understanding objects through their translationality becomes a powerful tool to denounce the loss, injustice, and death that displaced people endure on their journeys, where sometimes only objects remain to share their stories and preserve their memories.

By examining a wide array of artists' and activists' works throughout the book, Vidal Claramonte compellingly illustrates that translation is everywhere, requiring society — translators and audience alike — to pay attention to the stories and memories migrant objects can communicate, while always questioning the experiential, tangible, and sensorial perspective from which these stories are told.

In conclusion, this fascinating book delves into the ethical translation issues involved in understanding contemporary artworks through translationality and *translatio*. Vidal Claramonte convincingly argues that it is crucial for Translation Studies to embrace philosophical, political, anthropological, and sociological approaches, moving beyond its traditional linguistic boundaries. *Translation and Objects* is thought-provoking, challenging, deeply evocative and emotionally resonant… much like embarking on a journey.

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**BOOK REVIEW**

# TRANSLATION ETHICS

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**Translation Ethics,** Joseph Lambert, New York: Routledge, 2023, 205 pp., £33.99, ISBN: 978-0-367-70852-8 (Paperback).[51]

The book *Translation Ethics* by Joseph Lambert is an essential read for students, researchers, and professional translators, offering a comprehensive perspective on ethics in translation and interpretation, an area that has seen significant growth over the past decade. Chapters 1-3 discuss foundational theories, while Chapters 4-6 shift to the interpersonal domain, examining the roles of various agents within the translation industry. Chapters 7 and 8 focus on professional contexts, with Chapter 9 providing reflections on ideas not addressed elsewhere, thus enhancing the book's cohesiveness. Lambert delves into fundamental questions concerning ethical practices, from the translator's role to the ethical implications of technology within the language industry. The book explores the evolution of translation ethics both conceptually and historically, from its simpler early perspectives to more nuanced ideas shaped by figures like Mona Baker, and Christiane Nord, both prominent figures in the field.

Chapter 1 of this book lays a robust foundation in the philosophy of ethics as a compass for translation practice. Lambert explores the often ambiguous definition of ethics, delving into the philosophical groundwork that supports theories within *Translation and Interpreting Studies* (TIS). This chapter introduces readers to three major streams of moral theory deontology, consequentialism, and virtue ethics to unpack the principles shaping translators' ethical practices. Lambert defines ethics as "the moral principles governing behavior or practice", a concept he categorizes into three primary branches: metaethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics (2023, p. 12). This framework emphasizes the shift from abstract principles to practical applications, underscoring the value of a metaethical approach in examining the philosophical aspects of translation. For instance, Lambert addresses the unique challenges of translating sacred texts, where translators face a profound dilemma: how to convey divine messages accurately, particularly when texts like the Qur'an are considered incomparable and cannot be equivalently translated (2023,

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[51] Available at: https://www.routledge.com/Translation-Ethics/Lambert/p/book/9780367708528?srsltid (Accessed: 28 October 2024).

p. 18). While Lambert does not offer definitive solutions, he positions ethics as a moral map guiding translators through contemporary issues, thereby strengthening the link between theory and practice in TIS.

The core discussion on Translation Ethics is presented in the second chapter of this book. Lambert develops a framework for translation ethics by drawing on Andrew Chesterman's 'Proposal for a Hieronymic Oath' (2001), which emphasizes fidelity as the foundation of ethical standards in the translation profession. Chesterman views fidelity in translation not as a mere word-for-word rendering but as an endeavor to achieve equivalence in meaning and impact across cultures, time, and context. Lambert delves into TIS ethics by examining how the concept of "fidelity" (2023, p. 33) has evolved from Schleiermacher's tradition (1834) to contemporary models, such as 'dynamic' versus 'formal' or 'documentary' versus 'instrumental' approaches. Lambert asserts that translation ethics should not rest solely on deontological principles, but should also account for four primary domains: truth, fidelity, understanding, and trust, influenced by the notions of sacred duty and moral responsibility attributed to Saint Jerome, the 'Father of Translators' (395 CE/1997). He critically evaluates the ongoing debates surrounding the 'correct' translation methods, questioning whether definitive ethical standards can truly be achieved amid the frequently conflicting complexities of cultures and texts.

Chapter 3 explores questions of truth, leading readers into a deep examination of deontology in translation practice. Lambert builds his argument on the basis of Antoine Berman's (1991) ideas, presenting translation as an ethical and non-ethnocentric act, an approach that preserves the integrity of the text and respects the wholeness of the source culture. This approach is further supported by Kaisa Koskinen's perspective, which views the translator as a guardian of integrity rather than merely a language conduit. However, Lambert critically questions the feasibility of a universal, rigid code of ethics, cautioning that such an approach could overlook essential cross-cultural sensitivities and diversity. He advocates for a more flexible, contextually aware, and interactive approach to foster richer and more meaningful cross-cultural dialogue (2023, p. 53). Thus, this chapter calls for deeper exploration into whether *'moral absolutes'* can be universally applied or should be adapted to cultural sensitivities.

Chapter 4 explores the 'responsibility' of translators as cultural agents, moving from micro-ethics to a macro perspective. Lambert emphasizes that a translator's responsibility extends beyond textual fidelity to a complex accountability that considers social and ideological impacts. He reviews Reiss's (1976) text-type theory, which categorizes texts into informative, expressive, and operative types, each requiring different forms of fidelity. However, Nord's (2001) critique through the concept of 'Function plus Loyalt' challenges Reiss's view by integrating functionality with interpersonal loyalty, which is essential for broader cultural goals. Pym (2012) further suggests that translators are accountable not only to clients and audiences but also to society. A case illustrating this is Marina Gross, a U.S. State Department translator, who was asked to testify about the Trump-Putin

meeting,[52] highlighting Pym's perspective on the dilemma between confidentiality codes and public responsibility (2023, p. 67). Lambert critiques traditional translation ethics for focusing solely on linguistic equivalence and proposes a more flexible, context-sensitive approach. Translators are encouraged to balance textual fidelity with a broader social and moral responsibility.

Chapter 5 introduces the concept of justice in translation, highlighting the translator's role as an active agent of sociocultural transformation. Drawing on Venuti's (1998) ideas of visibility and the ethics of difference, as well as Inghilleri's critique of the neutrality myth, the chapter challenges conventional views on objectivity. In terms of 'justice', translators are encouraged to go beyond a mechanical role in linguistic transfer and view translation as an ideological practice that influences power dynamics and cultural status. Venuti advocates for "foreignization" as a strategy to preserve cultural uniqueness in translated texts, countering dominant domestic norms and actively promoting cultural diversity (2023, p. 80). Inghilleri emphasizes the translator's role in advancing social justice, implying that translation should account for broader social contexts beyond mere textual structure (2023, p. 84). Lambert provides insights into translation ethics, focusing on social responsibility and efforts to create 'intercultural justice' that integrates humanistic values amid diversity.

Chapter 6 addresses 'commitment' as an extension of translation ethics, exploring the limits of translator agency within personal and professional ethical contexts. Lambert views translators not merely as language intermediaries but as agents capable of becoming advocates or activists for specific values (2023, p. 101). Drawing on Bauman's (1993) concept of the 'moral burden of the individual', Lambert illustrates the complexity of ethical decisions that translators face, which often extend beyond an apolitical role (2023, p. 96). He also supports Pym's (2012) perspective that, in certain situations, refusing to translate can be an ethical choice in the face of structural injustices. This chapter outlines a shift from the traditional mediatory role of the translator to a more progressive form of advocacy, showing that translation decisions are frequently influenced by ideological motivations on both macro and micro levels. Lambert then characterizes the translator's commitment as an ethical stance that reflects a deep moral responsibility within complex social and cultural contexts.

In Chapter 7, Lambert reviews ethical standards in the translation and interpretation professions, providing an in-depth analysis of the content, structure, and limitations of existing codes of ethics. He outlines key principles in professional guidelines but also encourages readers to critically assess the shortcomings and contradictions within them (2023, p. 132). These standards often vary, ranging from broad rules to technical guidelines, yet they do not always address the complexities of real professional situations, making it challenging for translators to fully adhere to ethical codes in practice not due to a lack of

[52] Nicole Gaouette and Elise Labott (2018) *Trump's Helsinki Performance Puts Translator in the Spotlight*, CNN Politics. Available at: https://edition.cnn.com/2018/07/18/politics/trump-russian-translator-spotlight/index.html (Accessed: 31 October 2024).

ethical commitment, but rather due to the limitations of the codes themselves (Koskinen, 2000). Lambert ultimately advocates for an educational approach that emphasizes the importance of a critical understanding of ethical codes, which would better equip translators to navigate ethical challenges in real-world practice.

Building on the critical discussion in Chapter 7, Chapter 8 presents a code of ethics in translation by exploring the complexities of professional ethics faced by translators and interpreters. Lambert emphasizes the importance of both external and internal reflection, highlighting the need to balance social responsibility with the need to maintain mental, physical, and financial well-being. This chapter addresses ethical issues that have arisen due to rapid technological advancements, which have transformed the practice of translation and introduced challenges related to quality and privacy (2023, p. 150). Lambert also notes the shift between utilitarian business ethics and deontological ethics, as well as the moral dilemmas that translators frequently encounter in preserving integrity while meeting commercial demands (2023, p. 136). Such dilemmas can have detrimental effects, particularly on less experienced translators, who risk compromising the quality and ethical standards of their practice.

Chapter 9 concludes the book by offering a fresh perspective on ethics and human interaction. Lambert emphasizes the importance of identity and representation as foundational elements for exploring responsibility in translation ethics. This ethical discourse reflects the complexities and evolving dynamics within the field, inviting readers to consider perspectives that may transform their understanding. By referencing two cases *(Egoism and Self-Interest)* that illustrate different approaches to ethical issues, Lambert broadens the understanding of ethical themes within diverse social, cultural, and linguistic contexts (2023, p. 164). The emphasis on identity as a primary criterion in translation serves as a starting point for developing new theories, enriching ethical discussions at both micro and macro levels, and opening avenues for explorations that yield innovative ideas in increasingly relevant ethical debates within multicultural societies.

This book provides profound insights into translation ethics, showcasing its complexity in each and every chapter. Reading this book is akin to assembling a puzzle: each section interconnects to build a comprehensive understanding of ethical issues in translation practice. By progressing through the chapters sequentially, readers can experience the development of various themes and arguments, creating a holistic picture of ethical responsibilities in engaging with texts and other cultures. Lambert consistently reiterates statements from previous sections in each chapter, facilitating readers' connections to related concepts. However, there remains room for further exploration of certain aspects that have not been fully addressed, such as the relationship between translation ethics and the broader socio-political context.

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**BOOK REVIEW**

# INTERPRETING IN TIMES OF CRISIS

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**The Routledge Handbook of Translation, Interpreting and Crisis**, Edited By Christophe Declercq, Koen Kerremans London: Routledge, ISBN 9781032075426, 452 pp. + xvii., $344.80.

According to the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), in the past three years, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance has skyrocketed to 349.2 million, blanketing over 40 global locations, with Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Venezuela, and Yemen among the top ten countries in need of humanitarian aid.

Humanitarian aid refers to the short-term material and logistic assistance to people who need help until the long-term help by the government and other institutions replaces it. These people in need include the homeless, refugees, and victims of natural disasters, wars, and famines. Humanitarian aid is a collaborative and transborder practice, usually between developed countries and the developing countries in crisis, involving linguistically and culturally diverse communities for a mutual purpose and common goal. In this process, translators and interpreters play a vital role in ensuring the adequacy, immediacy, and accuracy of communication in crisis situations. These are often one-off or serial events that endanger the health, safety, or well-being of a community or large groups of people, triggered by calamities, conflicts, disasters, emergencies, or hazards, with cascading effects.

Situated in this context, this timely and comprehensive handbook offers four unique insights into the implementation and delivery of humanitarian assistance over geographically diverse locations. These insights cover (1) policy and practices, (2) professionalisation, (3) community, and (4) language strategies and solutions.

Part I includes eight chapters, highlighting the necessity of language access and accessibility during multilingual and intercultural communication at times of crisis. All their authors advocate an all-hands-on-deck, multi-stakeholder approach to the development of effective policies and practices through top-down directive or grassroot initiatives to support affected communities, regardless of location and size of the crisis. To be more specific, Cadwell discusses Japan's preparedness to engage crisis support translators and interpreters with carved out budgets in White Paper policy documents (Chapter 1). The same spirit is evidenced in Belgium's COVID-19 response policy (Chapter 3), Australia's

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crisis communication management system (Chapter 2), Peru's state-sponsored language support mechanism for indigenous people (Chapter 4), Brazil's language accessibility for sign language users (Chapter 5), Sierra Leone's multilingual terminology resources for disaster and risk reduction (Chapter 6), and distribution missions of other humanitarian organisations. In these operations, it becomes apparent that language access and accessibility could only be adequately achieved with clear policy support, cultural appropriateness, and political awareness (Chapter 8), either through multilingual communication or English as an intermediary language (Chapter 7).

Built on these foundational discussions, Part II dives deeper into related matters concerning professionalisation. Themes and topics discussed include codes of conduct, training, professional ethics, cooperation with NGOs and civil societies, as well as role perceptions and expectations. The central question raised in these chapters concerns the ethics of engaging civilian interpreters in military operations (Chapter 13). In response to this question, the authors express their diverse perspectives and approaches, from international humanitarian law, human rights law, and refugee law (Chapter 9), situational, cultural, and geographic guidance in peacekeeping missions (Chapter 10), self-regulation, empathy and coping strategies for post-traumatic stress and vicarious trauma during the UNHCR Afghan local relief operations (Chapter 11), evacuation and tele-mental health supports in post-war scenarios (Chapter 12), and survival strategies for translation services in Syria (Chapter 14).

While Part II reveals a need for educating and training crisis translators and interpreters, Part III explores the community perspective. In this part, the authors emphasise a community-centred perspective with regard to role expectations and perceptions, contributing to the difficult conversation about translator and interpreter agency in crisis communication. For instance, Moser-Mercer and colleagues advocate an inclusive, durable approach to the education of language mediators in humanitarian settings (Chapter 15), which is reiterated in subsequent chapters in the need for social-cultural guidance (Chapter 16), training in emotional management, professional ethics, and alignment with NGOs' missions (Chapter 17), consideration of the psychological needs of refugees, migrants, minorities, and torture victim survivors in the aftermath of devastating events (Chapters 18 and 20) and the nature of humanitarian organisations (Chapter 19).

The concluding part of this volume pools the practical wisdom from experts and scholars to develop effective strategies and solutions for future events. These include translanguaging strategies in high-stake situations for use with Muslim minorities (Chapter 24), Ukrainian women and trans refugees (Chapter 25), asylum seekers (Chapter 26), and pilot-controller communications (Chapter 26), among others.

This extensive volume offers new directions for interdisciplinary collaboration between translation and interpreting scholars, social workers, migration and refugee attorneys, minority advocates, and human rights lawyers at international, national, and local levels. Its distinctive value lies in the ingenuity of human endeavors in the age of algorithm-dominated technological advancements. The volume is bold and direct, without

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shying away from the blunt reality that our world today is very different from what it was in the past few decades. Migration, by choice or by force, has become a global phenomenon.

In summary, this handbook is an essential guide to translation and interpreting in conflict and crisis settings for advanced students and researchers in translation and interpreting studies and is also of relevance to peace studies, political science, and many other fields.

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