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Special issue on
Semiotics of Translation,
Translation in Semiotics

edited by
Evangelos Kourdis & Pirjo Kukkonen

Evangelos Kourdis and
Pirjo Kukkonen

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INTRODUCTION

Semiotics of translation, translation in semiotics

Evangelos Kourdis and Pirjo Kukkonen

The object of this special issue of *Punctum*, devoted on *Semiotics of Translation, Translation in Semiotics*, is the potential of interaction between the semiotics of translation and semiotically-informed translation studies. It sets out to explore the dimension of translation studies as an interdisciplinary endeavor and bring together scholars of translation and semiotics.

The contact between the two disciplines dates back to the late 1950s, when the linguist and semiologist Roman Jakobson presented his position on the three modes of translation: *intralingual*, *interlingual* and *intersemiotic* (Jakobson 1959). As to the first two types of translation, the history of translation studies has much to offer. The introduction of a new research field in translation studies – that of intersemiotic translation – at a time when the research field of semiotics was not yet entrenched, but was in a state of constant quest, caused both surprise and skepticism to those involved in translation studies. As Hermans observes:

Looking at the essay from today's vantage point, we can also appreciate it both as being part of the self-description and self-reflexiveness of translation, in questioning precisely the boundaries of the field and thus engaging in the discussion about what is and what is not translation, what falls inside or outside, and as being part of an emerging academic discipline of translation studies. (Hermans 1998: 25)

The publication of Jakobson's seminal paper occurred in an era in which translation studies was not a fully recognized field in the humanities – there are some translation scholars who believe that translation studies still do not have this recognition. This is the case because 'during the sixties semiotics was dominated by a dangerous verbo-centric dogmatism whereby the dignity of *language* was only conferred on systems ruled by a double articulation' (Eco 1976: 228) and translation studies focused on the nature of the signifier, prioritizing the linguistic dimension of the translation process. Translation studies was not seen as an autonomous discipline and was under the umbrella of the philological, or at best, the linguistic approach to communication.

More specifically, structural linguistics dominated Europe and was trying to change the deeply rooted belief that Ferdinand de Saussure's *parole* or Algirdas-Julien Greimas's *process* or Roman Jakobson's *message* were not subjects worthy of scientific study. The main assumptions of structuralism and semiology (or semiotics) would be that for every process (an utterance, for instance) there is a system of underlying rules that govern it, and that the system arises contingently.

And if *parole* is not worth studying, is the *image* worth studying? Can the image have rules? Roland Barthes' celebrated study *La rhétorique de l'image* (1964), among the first semiological studies of advertising, influenced decisively the way the scientific community approached the image. Although Barthes did not connect the image with translation, he contributed in establishing it as an object of study, next

to that of linguistics, by uncovering the structural composition of the visual message, something that was later confirmed by the work of Groupe μ (1992). That led the way to the study of the transformation of semiotic systems. Researchers could thus approach the case of untranslatability and information loss in the translation process from a new perspective. Terms like *equivalence*, *negotiation*, *mediation* formed the basis for a new dynamic branch of the human sciences, that of translation studies.

The boundaries of the translation process, therefore, had been expanded quite early by the semioticians, something which that was not acknowledged by translation scholars, who perceived their approach as being primarily metaphorical. Nonetheless, everyday life teaches us not to approach the field of semiotics metaphorically. Umberto Eco observes that:

[c]ulture continuously translates signs into signs, and definitions into definitions, words into icons, icons into ostensive signs, ostensive signs into new definitions, new definitions into propositional functions, propositional functions into exemplifying sentences, and so on; in this way it proposes to its members an uninterrupted chain of cultural units, and thus translating and explaining them. (Eco 1976: 71)

Susan Petrilli and Augusto Ponzio also argue that:

[t]he translator must navigate in the iconic dimension of language and move beyond the conventions and obligations of the dictionary to enter the live dialogue among national languages, among languages internal to a given national language, and among verbal signs and nonverbal signs. (Petrilli and Ponzio 2012: 20)

Eco, Petrilli, Ponzio, and many others distinguished semioticians point to the continuous transition of the translator from one cultural text to the other, to cultural translation. This is a field in which the Tartu-Moscow School and the emblematic figure of Juri Lotman have contributed greatly. In an era of multisemiotic and multimodal communication, in which meaning is continuously transformed among different semiotic systems and intermedially, who could disagree with Lotman's position (1990: 271) that 'the instrument of semiotic research is translation'. Indeed, the most important contribution of the Tartu-Moscow School is the correlation of the concept of culture with the concept of translation, the recognition that culture works in many respects as a translation mechanism. As Torop (2008: 256) notes '[t]ranslation semiotics itself can be regarded as a discipline that deals with mediation processes between various sign systems, and, on the macro level, with culture as a translation mechanism'.

Gradually, however, the scepticism of translation scholars abated and there were calls for drawing on semiotics to enrich translation theory (Stecconi 2009: 261). As early as the 1980s, translation scholars started to timidly turn to semiotics. Thus, for Bassnett (1980: 13), '[t]he first step towards an examination of the processes of translation must be to accept that although translation has a central core of linguistic activity, it belongs most properly to semiotics [...]'. Basil Hatim and Ian Mason (1990: 133-137) discuss *genre*, *discourse*, and *intertextuality* within the framework of semiotics and ideology and maintain that semiotics can hope to offer something to translators, interpreters and indeed all those who work with language. Mona Baker also considers that translation by illustration (intersemiotic translation):

is a useful option if the word which lacks an equivalent in the target language refers to a physical entity which can be illustrated, particularly if there are restrictions on space and if the text has to remain short, concise, and to the point. (Baker 1992: 42)

What is the reason for this gradual shift? Translation scholars, such as Jeremy Munday (2004: 216), argue that 'translation studies must move beyond the written word and that the visual, and multimodal in general, must be incorporated into a fuller study of the translation of advertising'. The expansion of the translation process to include non-verbal texts caused debate about the na-

ture of translation, although there seems to be an agreement that contemporary communication is based almost exclusively on multimodal texts, as there is an '[...] incessant process of "translation", or "transcoding" – transduction – between a range of semiotic modes [that] represents, we suggest, a better, a more adequate understanding of representation and communication' (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006 [1996]: 39).

The articles included in this volume reflect the way semiotics influences translation studies, broadening not only the notion of translation but also the field of translation studies. The volume concentrates on both theoretical and applied contributions: intersemiotic translation, multimodal translation, translation semiotics, audiovisual translation, retro-translation, anthropological translation, interpretative semiotics.

Daniella Aguiar, Pedro Atã and João Queiroz in their article 'Intersemiotic translation and transformational creativity' approach a case of intersemiotic translation as a paradigmatic example of Boden's 'transformational creativity' category. To develop their argument, they consider Boden's fundamental notion of 'conceptual space' as a regular pattern of semiotic action, or 'habit' (*sensu* Peirce). They exemplify with Gertrude Stein's intersemiotic translation of Cézanne and Picasso's proto-cubist and cubist paintings. The results of Stein's IT transform the conceptual space of modern literature, leading it towards new patterns of semiosis. Their application of Boden's framework to describe a cognitive creative phenomenon with a philosophically robust theory of meaning results in a cognitive semiotic account of intersemiotic translation.

The authors' purpose is to present a model of IT based on Peirce's pragmatic philosophy of signs. They argue that IT phenomena should not be dissociated from a general theory of the sign, which provides a general model of semiotic processes and a classification of semiotic morphological variety. Moreover, if a creative translation is the most attentive way of reading a sign system or a text, then an IT can be considered an even more radical practice, since it is obliged to 'transcreate' the same effects produced by the source using drastically different systems and materials.

George Damaskinidis in his article 'Mediating between verbal and visual semiotic elements in the translation of English multimodal texts into Greek' examines the relation of verbal to visual semiotic elements, and proposes a mediation-based codification for intersemiotic translation. Using the concept of translation mediation, he proposes a verbo-visual mediated approach to translation, whereby both the verbal and the visual are potentially considered as translation factors. His approach employs social semiotics and multimodality for the empirical investigation of the translation of multimodal texts. By way of illustration, he provides the Greek translation of an English print advertisement, which is discussed and codified using degrees of verbo-visual mediation.

Multimodality and multisemiosis is a growing field of research. In recent decades we find more and more articles relating multimodality with translation studies, taking into consideration that nowadays there is no monosemiotic text. It is worth mentioning that although translation studies welcomes approaches to translation through the lens of multimodality, some semioticians hesitate to adopt this approach. It is true that the theoretical semiotic background of multimodality, at least as it is described in the works of Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (2001, 2006 [1996]), is not essentially contested. What seems to be contested is the actual application of the multimodality theory, as well as their claim of offering a *visual grammar*. The fact that we welcome contributions concerning multimodality to this volume on translation semiotics reflects our belief that this approach can act as a bridge between semiotics and translation studies.

Ritva Hartama-Heinonen in her article 'Herding together: On semiotic-translational branches, fields, and disciplines' focuses on the essence of disciplinary fields and boundaries, and puts forward the question whether semiotic translation research constitutes a field within which researchers understand each other and share the world of research both theoretically and methodologically. For Hartama-Heinonen, semiotic approaches to translation can be divided into two groups: they contribute either to the *Semiotics of translation* or to *semiotic Translation Studies*.

The former, semiotic-bound field takes as its domain what Roman Jakobson (1959) called the three ways of interpreting verbal signs, namely, *intra-lingual*, *inter-lingual*, and *inter-semiotic translation*. The crucial and pioneering aspect of Jakobson's approach was whether the sign systems involved in a translation are verbal or non-verbal. The latter, which has its home within Translation Studies, seems (more or less afterwards) to have found Jakobson applicable in the new intra-lingual forms of translation (e.g. print interpreting) or in those inter-semiotic ones which, as Mary Snell-Hornby (2006) describes them, reach 'beyond language', exemplified by researchers' growing interest in phenomena of a multimodal or multimedial nature. Hartama-Heinonen concludes her article with a simple but crucial question: who owns translation, and who owns semiotics? Who owns Jakobson? She thus underlines the fact that Jakobson's work was the result of the interaction of three humanistic disciplines: linguistics, semiotics, and translation.

Loukia Kostopoulou in her article 'Translating culture-specific items in films: the case of inter-lingual and inter-semiotic translation' examines the specificity of film as a medium in which the translator mediates between languages and cultures. The research is based on the examination of culture-specific items in French and Greek films and their subtitles. In subtitling, non-verbal messages play an important role in the process of communication. In the frequent cases where the verbal message cannot be easily rendered, the visual message can be used to cover this gap. She also explores whether the spatiotemporal constraints of subtitling allow the viewer to understand the meaning of culture-specific items or not. Her research focuses on both visual and verbal messages, since culture-specific items often need to be localized in order to be better perceived by the target language community.

Most studies of subtitling focus on the semiotic system of language, and the inter-semiotic dimension, although it is part of semiosis, is not explored. Kostopoulou aptly explains that the doubling of the visual and the verbal in subtitling implies inter-semiosis, considering that we are dealing with an occasionally partial verbalization of non-verbal signs in order to achieve cohesion. As Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007: 171) argue, 'inter-semiotic cohesion in subtitling refers to the way it connects language directly to the soundtrack and to images on screen, making use of the information they supply to create a coherent linguistic-visual whole'.

René Lemieux in his article 'Retour de Babel: l'indécidabilité derridienne et la rétrotraduction en supplément' attempts a critique of Lawrence Venuti's commentary on his translation of a lecture by Derrida on translation. The text poses the question of the division in language which translation seems to bring about. This division between the original and the translated text is treated in the first part through a reflection on 'name' and 'naming' in the myth of the tower of Babel. The second part is an analysis of the difficulties of translating into English the works of Jacques Derrida, as attempted by Lawrence Venuti, and of a comment on this process in English by Venuti himself, which was then translated into French. The whole process of translating and back-translating (*retro-translation*) reveals one of the common traits shared both by the act of translating and deconstructive thinking. Both necessitate a kind of 'surplus of language', which has crucial implications both for the theory of translation and for its semiotic description.

Massimo Leone's article 'Anthropological translation: A semiotic definition' concerns the quest of adequate verbalization of unexpressed semantic lines in one's culture before being able to convey them into another language and culture. After proposing a theory of language inspired by the Danish linguist Louis T. Hjelmslev, the essay articulates a typology of translation tasks, divided according to the conceptual difficulty that they entail. The hardest but also the most revealing kind of translation, Leone argues, is anthropological translation. This he exemplifies by examining a series of intercultural accidents resulting from Dante's depiction of the prophet Mohammad in the *Divine Comedy*. Anthropological translation, it is argued, allows one to reframe such conflicts and to subsume them at a superior level of understanding.

This connection between translation and anthropology should not surprise us, since both disciplines involve a search for interpretation. Indeed, for social anthropologists such as Larsen (1987: 1),

the problem of translation seems to be ‘anthropology’s most important theoretical problem’. As Pálsson (1994: 1) states ‘[...] if there is a root metaphor, which unites different ethnographic paradigms and different schools of anthropological thought, it is the metaphor of cultural translation’. Pálsson adds that ‘[a]nthropologists are presented as semiotic tour guides, escorting alien “readers” in rough semiotic space’. The representation of Mohammad in the *Commedia* is such a rough semiotic space, which demands the intricate interpretative labor of anthropological translation.

Susan Petrilli in her article ‘Translation of semiotics into translation theory, and vice versa’ claims that reflection on sign processes and reflection on translation processes can help each other to better identify the problems that concern them respectively, and orient their specific methodologies, since they study the same processes: the relation between a sign and another sign, which in the role of interpretant confers a given meaning and sense on the preceding sign. To study this relationship means to become aware of its dialogical character. Therefore, as much as the disciplinary spheres may be different, the theory – or science – of signs, semiotics, and translation theory study the same process, semiosis. For Petrilli, semiotics and translation may act as interpretants of each other and thus illuminate different aspects of the signs forming the process itself, underlining at once their specificity and interrelatedness. Petrilli claims that to translate is to recreate, to create the conditions for the text to live its life fully, to free it from the limits of language and contemporaneity.

Semiosis, otherness, dialogism, responsive understanding, similarity are some of the key notions explored by Petrilli in her article. Derived from Peirce and Bakhtin, these are notions that continue to engage semiotic theory, but translation studies have only recently started to approach. Peirce’s suggestion that the meaning of a sign is ‘the translation of the sign into another system of signs’ (CP 4.127) or ‘the meaning of a sign is the sign it has to be translated into’ (CP 4.132) might be considered exaggerated by some researchers but has a critical import for translation studies.¹ Eco (2001, 70) aptly remarks that ‘even though Peirce never worked on translation from language to language *ex professo* he nonetheless did not fail to notice the specificity of this phenomenon with respect to the many other modes of interpretation’. The semiotic approach to translation has much to gain from Bakhtin’s dialogism, as well. Torop (2002: 598) argues that although Bakhtin never directly addressed the problems of translation – as Peirce did – scholars still find reasons to connect him to issues of translation.

Closing our introductory note, we would like to thank the editors of *Punctum* for their invitation to edit the present volume and all external reviewers for their contribution and thoughtful comments. We strongly believe that translation studies and semiotics share a common field of research. They both search for a signification that is the result of the interaction and synergy of semiotic systems, and that, in its turn, can not be simply a matter of transferring signifiers, but of negotiating signifieds. We must always remember that the two fields, translation studies and semiotics, explore cultural expression and its transmutations, in other words, cultural communication.

NOTES

¹ We have to remember that for Jakobson (1977: 1029), ‘one of the most felicitous, brilliant ideas which general linguistics and semiotics gained from the American thinker is his definition of meaning as “the translation of a sign into another system of signs”’.

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Intersemiotic translation and transformational creativity

Daniella Aguiar, Pedro Atã and João Queiroz

In this article we approach a case of intersemiotic translation as a paradigmatic example of Boden's 'transformational creativity' category. To develop our argument, we consider Boden's fundamental notion of 'conceptual space' as a regular pattern of semiotic action, or 'habit' (sensu Peirce). We exemplify with Gertrude Stein's intersemiotic translation of Cézanne and Picasso's proto-cubist and cubist paintings. The results of Stein's IT transform the conceptual space of modern literature, constraining it towards new patterns of semiosis. Our association of Boden's framework to describe a cognitive creative phenomenon with a philosophically robust theory of meaning results in a cognitive semiotic account of IT.

KEYWORDS Intersemiotic translation; Creativity; Gertrude Stein; Charles S. Peirce; Margaret A. Boden

Introduction

Intersemiotic translation (IT) is a phenomenon of interest in many fields of research such as Comparative Literature, Translation Studies, General Semiotics, and Intermedial Studies. It has been called adaptation (Clüver 2011), intersemiotic transposition (Clüver 2006), medial transposition (Rajewsky 2005) and so on. Each term emphasizes a slightly different aspect of the phenomenon. IT was first defined by Roman Jakobson (2000 [1959]: 114) as 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems'. Currently, the term designates relations between systems of different natures, and it is not restricted to the interpretation of verbal signs. Consequently, this process is observed between several semiotic phenomena, including literature, cinema, comics, poetry, dance, music, theater, sculpture, painting, video, and so on.

It is well known that several experimental artists who have creatively transformed their fields dedicated themselves to the intersemiotic translation of methods and aesthetic procedures from one sign system into another – Gertrude Stein translated Cézanne and Picasso's proto-cubist and cubist approaches into literature; Kandinsky translated Arnold Schoenberg's methods into painting (Weiss 1997); Morton Feldman translated abstract expressionism's formal procedures into music (Kissane 2010); Paul Klee translated polyphony's music structures into painting (Verdi 1968); Augusto de Campos translated Anton Webern and *Klangfarbenmelodie* models into concrete poetry (Clüver 1981). Nevertheless, to consider an IT creative is often a matter of personal taste. In fact, creativity has often been associated with mysterious, inexplicable, or vaguely formulated concepts such as appeals to 'talent or gift', 'subjective expression', 'intuition', 'inspiration' or 'genius'. A common view is that creativity possesses an unaccountable element of subjectivity and cannot be scientifically explained (see Sternberg and Lubart 1999, Magnani 2005).

Here we approach a case of IT as a paradigmatic example of Boden's 'transformational creativity' category: 'some transformation of one or more of the (relatively fundamental) dimensions defining the conceptual space concerned' (Boden, 2010: 29). To develop our argument, we consider Boden's fundamental notion of 'conceptual space' as a regular pattern of semiotic action, or 'habit' (*sensu* Peirce). For Boden:

A conceptual space is defined by a set of enabling constraints, which make possible the generation of structures lying within that space [...]. If one or more of these constraints is altered (or dropped), the space is transformed. Ideas that previously were *impossible* (relative to the original conceptual space) become conceivable. (Boden 1999: 352)

These sets of enabling constraints define 'structured styles of thought' such as 'ways of writing prose or poetry; styles of sculpture, painting, or music; theories in chemistry or biology; fashions of couture or choreography, nouvelle cuisine and good old meat-and-two-veg' (Boden 2012: 32). To give a more precise philosophical framework to the definition of conceptual space we suggest the notion of 'habit'. Peirce's notion of habit can be defined as a *constraining factor* of semiotic behavior (see below). In our description, Boden's 'set of enabling constraints' constitutes habits, so that conceptual spaces are defined by habits. We characterize IT as a semiotic process (Aguiar and Queiroz, 2010, 2013) of communication of habits from one conceptual space to another. In transformational IT (ITs involved in transformational creativity) the effect of the communication is the alteration of the habits of the target conceptual space.

In the next section we introduce intersemiotic translation and the Peircean notion of habit. Subsequently, we relate intersemiotic translation and the transformation of conceptual spaces, following Boden's typology of creativity. In the final section, we examine the case of Gertrude Stein's intersemiotic translation of Cézanne and Picasso's proto-cubist and cubist painting as a case of transformational creativity.

Intersemiotic translation as a communication of habits

As we have argued in other works (Queiroz and Aguiar 2015; Aguiar and Queiroz 2013, 2010), intersemiotic translation is a semiotic process (semiosis, or *sign action*). According to Peirce's model, any description of semiosis involves a relational complex constituted by three terms irreducibly connected – Sign, Object and Interpretant (S-O-I) (see Bergman and Queiroz 2014). The irreducibility indicates a logical property of this complex: the sign process must be regarded as associated to the interpretant, as an ongoing process of interpretation (see Hausman 1993: 9), and is not decomposable into any simpler relation. A sign is pragmatically defined as a medium for the communication to the interpretant of a form embodied in the object, so as to constrain, in general, the interpreter's behavior. For Peirce,

[...] a Sign may be defined as a Medium for the communication of a Form [...]. As a medium, the Sign is essentially in a triadic relation, to its Object which determines it, and to its Interpretant which it determines [...]. That which is communicated from the Object through the Sign to the Interpretant is a Form; that is to say, it is nothing like an existent, but is a power, is the fact that something would happen under certain conditions. (MS 793:1-3. See EP 2.544, n.22, for a slightly different version)¹

The object of sign communication is a form, or habit (or a 'pattern of constraints') embodied as a constraining factor of interpretative behavior – a logical 'would be' fact of response (see Queiroz and El-Hani 2004).² The habit is something that is embodied in the object as a regularity, a 'disposition' (CP 2.170) (De Tienne 2003; Hulswit 2001). The notion of semiosis as habit, communicated from the object to the interpreter through the mediation of the sign, allows us to conceive meaning in a pro-

cessual, non-substantive way, as a constraining factor of possible patterns of interpretative behavior (Queiroz and El-Hani 2006) (see Figure 1).

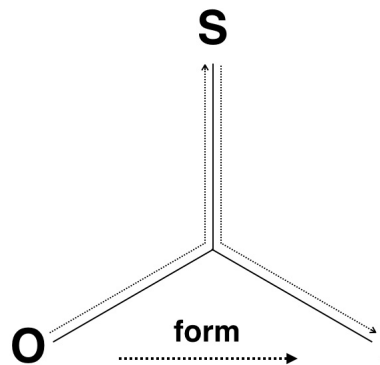


Figure 1. Semiosis as a relation between three irreducibly connected terms (sign-object-interpretant, S-O-I). This triadic relationship communicates/conveys a form from the object to the interpretant through the sign (symbolized by the horizontal arrow). The other two arrows indicate that the form is conveyed from the object to the interpretant through a determination of the sign by the object, and a determination of the interpretant by the sign.

Peirce's habit entails a disposition to act in certain ways under certain circumstances, especially when the carrier of the habit is stimulated, animated, or guided by certain motives (CP 5.480).

... all things have a tendency to take habits. For atoms and their parts, molecules and groups of molecules, and in short every conceivable real object, there is a greater probability of acting as on a former like occasion than otherwise. This tendency itself constitutes a regularity, and is continually on the increase. In looking back into the past we are looking toward periods when it was a less and less decided tendency. But its own essential nature is to grow. It is a generalizing tendency; it causes actions in the future to follow some generalization of past actions; and this tendency is itself something capable of similar generalizations; and thus, it is self-generative. (CP1.409, circa 1890, from 'A guess at the riddle', reprinted in EP1: 277)

A Habit involves a general 'would be' relation, which is not reducible to any number of its instances:

...by a *Habit* I shall mean a character of anything, say of B, this character consisting in the fact that under circumstances of a certain kind, say A, B *would* tend to be such as is signified by a determinate predicate, say C. (MS [R] 681:22)

...no agglomeration of actual happenings can ever completely fill up the meaning of a 'would-be'. (EP 2:402; CP 5.467)

...no collection whatever of single acts, though it were ever so many grades greater than a simple endless series, can constitute a would-be, nor can the knowledge of single acts, whatever their multitude, tell us for sure of a would-be. (1910 | Note (Notes on Art. III) [R] | CP 2.667)

Intersemiotic translation can be described as a fundamentally triadic phenomenon of communication of habits. As the intersemiotic translation is a semiotic process by definition, and semiosis is understood as a relation in which Sign, its Object and its Interpretant are its main constitutive elements that cannot be reduced any further, we can determine specific situations in which this relation can take place in different configurations. Aguiar and Queiroz (2010) propose two different models of intersemiotic translation based on the triadic relation between S-O-I.³ In the first model: 'the sign

is the semiotic source (translated work). The object of the translated sign is the object of the semiotic-source, and the interpretant (produced effect) is the translator sign (semiotic target)' (see Figure 2):

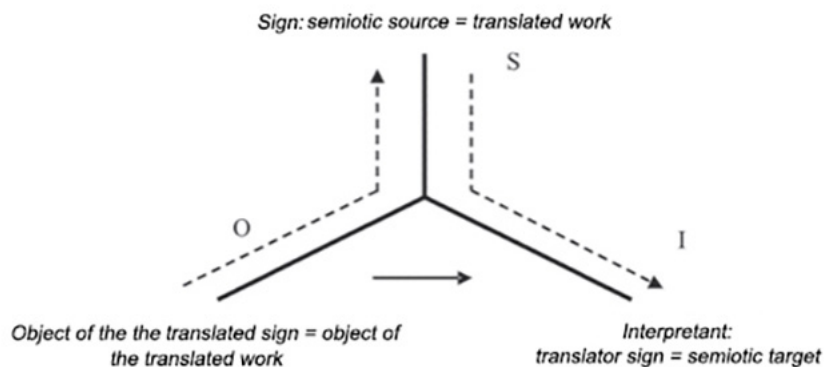


Figure 2. Triadic relation in which the sign is the translated work, the object of the sign is the object of the work, and the interpretant is the translator sign.

In the second model, 'the sign is the semiotic target. The object of the sign is the translated work, and the interpretant is the effect produced on the interpreter (interpretant)'. (Aguar and Queiroz 2010) (Figure 3):

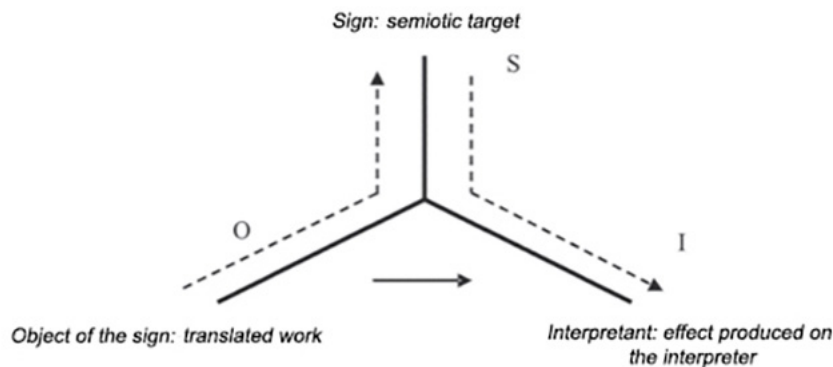


Figure 3. Triadic relation in which the sign is the target, the object of the sign is the translated work, and the interpretant is the effect produced on the interpreter.

A triadic model of IT brings about some interesting consequences. First, as 'sign', 'object' and 'interpretant' are functional roles of a triadic relation, anything that can be in such a relation can participate in the translation. Thus, in an IT, sign and object can be artworks, series of artworks, procedures, properties, or even semiotic phenomena from other fields such as scientific models; similarly, the interpreter can be an individual mind, but also a group of people (e.g. art historians), and many others. Second, as the three entities of the sign action cannot be dissociated, an IT will be considered as such depending on the interpreter and his/her context (such as in interpretative conventions). Third, as meaning is a relational property and not something 'fixed' or 'inherent' in a sign, that which is intersemiotically translated is not 'meaning' in the sense of a conveyed 'message', but a habit which can lead to the emergence of other potentially infinite meaning relations (though not *any* meaning relation, because of the regular nature of the habit itself).

Here we will explore the second model to describe a transformational IT (Figure 3, above), where the interpreter is the conceptual space of modern literature.

Intersemiotic Translation and Creativity

Although IT can be considered a widely spread artistic practice nowadays, as far as we know, it has not been theoretically framed as a creative phenomenon. 'Creative' and 'creativity' are terms of ordinary discourse that are used in unsystematic and inconsistent ways – 'It is plain, nevertheless, from the wealth of academic writing on creativity that there is a widespread belief, or perhaps hypothesis, amongst philosophers, psychologists, and others that such a concept can be defined' (Ritchie 2005). We will base the development of our argument on Margaret Boden's ideas on creativity. She defines creativity as:

the ability to come up with ideas or artefacts that are *new, surprising, and valuable*. 'Ideas', here, include concepts, poems, musical compositions, scientific theories, cooking recipes, choreography, jokes...and so on, and on. 'Artefacts' include paintings, sculpture, steam engines, vacuum cleaners, pottery, origami, penny whistles...and you can name many more. (Boden 2010: 29)

According to her approach, there are three categories of creativity: combinatorial, exploratory, and transformational (Boden 2010).⁴ The first type is related to new things that arise within a combinatorial process of familiar ideas or artefacts. The second consists in the exploration of particular conceptual spaces, such as concrete poetry, constructivist painting, postmodern dance, and so on. And the third type of creativity 'involves some transformation of one or more of the (relatively fundamental) dimensions defining the conceptual space concerned' (Boden 2010: 29). The transformation of conceptual spaces occurs through an otherwise impossible idea that 'can come about only if the creator changes the pre-existing style in some way, [...] so that thoughts are now possible which previously (within the untransformed space) were literally inconceivable' (Boden 2010: 34).

Applying Boden's terminology, IT is a semiotic relation, as modeled in the section above, between different conceptual spaces: from cubist literature to contemporary dance, from surrealist painting to automatic writing, from dodecaphonic music to abstractionist painting, and so on. Some IT cases can be considered transformational creativity phenomena. By translating from different conceptual spaces they create something *new, surprising and valuable* in their own conceptual space, transforming it and creating new possibilities to be explored.⁵

Transformational Creative Intersemiotic Translation: Gertrude Stein

Here we are interested in IT as a way to transform the target conceptual space by translating aspects, properties, or methods from another (source) conceptual space. One good example, mentioned before, is Gertrude Stein's IT from cubism in painting to literature. Stein (1874–1946) is among the most radical of the early twentieth-century literary Modernists. Her work was influenced by William James, her teacher at Harvard Annex, who directed her literary experiments toward questions about personality, consciousness, and perception of time (Levinson 1941; Dubnik 1984; Hoffman 1965). Intersemiotically, her writing translated the compositional techniques developed by Paul Cézanne and Pablo Picasso, creating a proto-cubist conceptual space in literature (see Hilder 2005; Fitz 1973; Perloff 1979).

The results of Stein's transformational IT are new, surprising, and valuable. Respectively, they inaugurate new habits in the conceptual space of Modernist literature; force the reader to drop conventional ideas about the previously established conceptual space; and converted Stein to be widely considered one of the most influential writers of the twentieth century.

Novelty in Stein's transformational IT is related to the translation of the perspective flatness of Cézanne's paintings to experimental texts such as *Three Lives*, *The Making of Americans*, and in the subsequent portraits, such as *Picasso* (1909), *Orta* or *One Dancing* (1912) or *A Valentine to Sherwood Anderson* (1922) (see Abreu, 2008: 40; Hilder, 2005: 73). In Cézanne's work, perspective flatness ruptures the visual hierarchy that had structured pictorial composition since the Renaissance. In Stein's IT, perspective flatness is translated as no difference in relative importance of different parts of the text, as observed in the absence of climax (Weinstein 1970). This translation also affects syntax (and, at the same time, results from Stein's syntactical experiments), since all words are considered equally relevant irrespective of their structural functions. Weinstein (1970: 37) notes that '[...] not only will people and objects have the same importance, but all time passages will be of equal importance'.

Surprise in Stein's transformational IT is related to the translation of Cézanne's meta-painting: critique and questioning of the conceptual space of painting through the painting itself, forcing the viewer to drop conventional ideas about what a painting is. Similarly, Stein's *The Making of Americans* [...] is a meta-novel that makes us question not only the shape of the novel form itself but the nature of the medium, the linguistic 'paint' that the writer applies to create a world' (Weinstein 1970: 45).

Many authors attest the value of Stein's works; they consider her one of the most important writers of Modernist literature (Retallack 2008; Gass 1995). Stein's transformational IT has clearly influenced the work of different writers such as Ernest Hemingway (Nath and Matthes 2005) and Richard Wright (Weiss 1998). However, her work was not well received in its time (see Franken 2000). She had bad answers from editors and negative reception from readers and critics, which is arguably due to the transformational character of her work causing difficulty in its reception inside the conceptual space yet to be transformed.

But why is Gertrude Stein's work an example of transformational IT? Stein's works (sign) have created new possibilities in writing (interpretant) because of the communication of habits from cubist and proto-cubist painting (object) (see Figure 4).

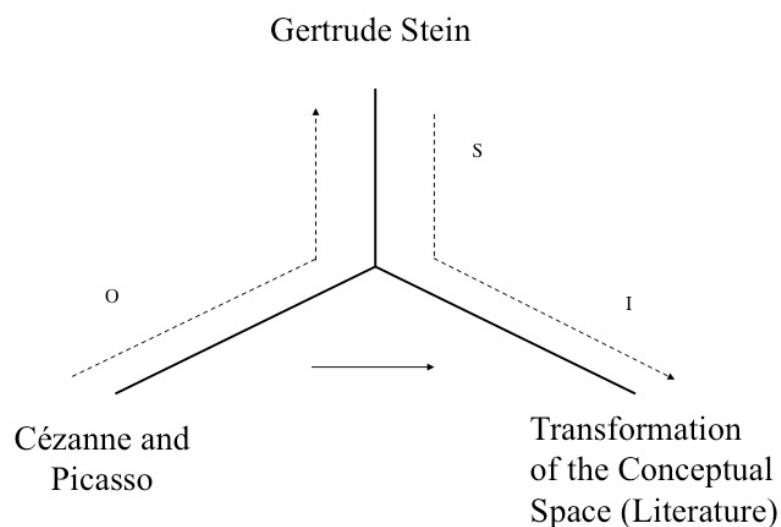


Figure 4. Gertrude Stein transformational IT from Cézanne and Picasso. A habit is communicated from proto-cubist and cubist painting, mediated by Stein's work, to the interpretant, which is a transformation of the conceptual space of literature.

We exemplify below with a written portrait by Stein named *Picasso* (1912) and a painting by Picasso called *Ma Jolie* (1911-1912) (see Figure 5).

Fragment from Picasso

One whom some were certainly following was one who was completely charming. One whom some were certainly following was one who was charming. One whom some were following was one who was completely charming. One whom some were following was one who was certainly completely charming.

Some were certainly following and were certain that the one they were then following was one working and was one bringing out of himself then something. Some were certainly following and were certain that the one they were then following was one bringing out of himself then something that was coming to be a heavy thing, a solid thing and a complete thing.

One whom some were certainly following was one working and certainly was one bringing something out of himself then and was one who had been all his living had been one having something coming out of him.

Something had been coming out of him, certainly it had been coming out of him, certainly it was something, certainly it had been coming out of him and it had meaning, a charming meaning, a solid meaning, a struggling meaning, a clear meaning (Stein 1974 [1912]: 213).



Figure 5. *Ma Jolie* by Pablo Picasso (1911-12).

In *Picasso* and in *Ma Jolie* the vocabulary is extremely restricted. The painting presents the brown and gray hues characteristic in Picasso and Braque's analytic phase, with slight variations. Stein uses a reduced number of vocables, repeated in different positions, unusually arranged, suggesting the multiple perspectives of Picasso. In *Ma Jolie* the composition is based on the superposition and interpenetration of diverse cubic rectilinear semi-transparent planes, producing a multiperspective geometry of the object.

It is also notable that the metonymic procedure is dominant (see Heldrich 1997; Scobie 1997, 1988). The portraits are constructed through extractions or fragments juxtaposed by contiguity. In *Picasso*, there are affirmative sentences of an observed situation, juxtaposed, in a translation of Picasso's procedure.⁶

Abreu (2008: 76) indicates another common element between Stein's writing and Picasso's painting: 'Both wanted to preserve each individual moment of perception in the present before those moments were systematized, by the intellectual knowledge of reality, in a concept of the object as it is "known"' (Abreu 2008: 76). In this way, according to Abreu, the influence by Cézanne over both of them is visible through the common interest in the perception process of the time.

Conclusion

We have described IT as an irreducible triadic relation between conceptual spaces through habits and change of habits. In our example, Gertrude Stein's cubist prose may be defined as a medium for the communication of a regular pattern of sign-action (habit) found in Cézanne and Picasso's paintings. As a medium, Stein's prose is essentially in a triadic relation, to Cézanne and Picasso's paintings, which determine it, and to some effects on the conceptual space, which it transforms. That which is communicated from Cézanne and Picasso's paintings through Stein's prose to the conceptual space is a regular pattern of semiotic action.

Among the advantages of our approach, we mention: criteria to define a type of creative IT (transformational creativity) in the domain of Translation Studies, associating Boden's framework to describe a cognitive creative phenomenon with a philosophically robust theory of meaning, resulting in a cognitive semiotic account of IT. While Boden's approach is more concerned with the description of the effects of transformational creativity, our association suggests a possible semiotic operation to achieve such effects.

Our IT model offers a protocol to identify the relational dynamic between the creation of new artworks and artistic paradigms and their probable sources. Regarding the source of the IT (object), our model provides a criterion to identify which properties and concepts are relevant in an account of a conceptual space (e.g., the habits translated by Stein reveal relevant properties in proto-cubist and cubist painting). Regarding the target source of the IT (sign), our model helps to explain how the conceptual space is transformed.

Additionally, this perspective suggests a general model of the history of new artworks and artistic movements as IT processes. According to this model, art evolution should be understood as a translationally organized semiotic process. S, O and I become historical functional roles of the communication and transformation of habits. The inner relations and constraints between the three irreducible terms substitute the notions of 'influence' and 'inspiration' between artists, artworks and artistic movements. Further investigations are needed to explore this suggestion.

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NOTES

¹ We shall follow the practice of citing from the *Collected Papers* of Charles Sanders Peirce (1931–1935, 1958) by volume number and paragraph number, preceded by 'CP'; the *Essential Peirce* by volume number and page number, preceded by 'EP'. References to the microfilm edition of Peirce's papers (Harvard University) will be indicated by 'MS', followed by the manuscript number.

² For further discussion on how sign, object and interpretant are causally related in semiosis, see Atkin (2015).

³ The reader should be aware that this model is a simplification of a complex multi-hierarchical process involving several layers of description. Thus, its aim here is to highlight some relevant properties to explain a complex phenomenon.

⁴ Boden also acknowledges the possibility of psychological creativity and historical creativity. The first is related to the processes involving an individual kind of creativity; the second involves the creation of something new in human history. We are interested here in the historical one.

⁵ It is not trivial to explain what is *new* and what is *valuable*. Their evaluation depends on negotiation by social groups (Boden 1999: 351).

⁶In 'Portraits and Repetition' (Stein 1974: 115), Stein describes how her portraits result from a 'direct observation', not mediated by the memory or the object.

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Mediating between verbal and visual semiotic elements in the translation of English multimodal texts into Greek

George Damaskinidis

The article examines the relation of verbal to visual semiotic elements, and proposes a mediation-based codification for intersemiotic translation. The examination takes place in the context of the growing interest in problematizing the verbal-visual divide in the translation of multimodal texts and the need for a greater awareness of the ways in which differing verbal and visual semiotic elements shape translation. Based on the concept of translation mediation, a verbo-visual mediated approach to translation is proposed, where both the verbal and the visual are potentially considered as translation factors. Translators slide along and across the verbal and the visual axes – and between two ends (or extreme points) – to mediate, thus performing a kind of translation intervention. The sliding will be illustrated by a codification scheme that builds on other similar efforts to create typologies for text-image interactions in multimodal texts, but with a focus on interlingual translation. This approach employs social semiotics and multimodality for the empirical investigation of the translation of multimodal texts. By way of illustration, I provide the Greek translation of an English print advertisement, which is discussed and codified by using degrees of verbo-visual mediation. Overall, this article addresses the interrelatedness of multimodality, semiotics and translation.

KEYWORDS Image-text interaction; Intersemiotic translation; Multimodal text; Social semiotics; Verbo-visual mediation

Introduction

There has always been an interest in problematizing the verbal-visual divide in translation. For example, Neather (2008: 238) argues that ‘a far greater awareness of the ways in which differing verbal and visual imperatives shape translation is needed’. In this article, ‘verbal’ applies to any written and spoken word, while ‘visual’ indicates the layout, photographs, images, graphics, gestures, color, etc. This type of translation between verbal and visual modes, otherwise known as *intersemiotic translation* (Jakobson 1959), has gained new impetus in the context of the late modern turn to the visual.

A key feature of this turn is the proliferation of multimodal texts which, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 177), ‘are defined as those whose meanings are realized through more than one semiotic code’. Since the meaning-making of multimodal texts is achieved through the juxtaposition of a variety of semiotic elements on the same interface (i.e. a piece of paper or a screen), it is impossible to ignore the relationship between them. Such relationships are most evident in intersemiotic

translation, and even more so when it is combined with interlingual translation. One way to approach these interactions is to use the concept of '[d]egrees of translator mediation' (Hatim and Mason 1997: 122) in order to examine the way translators intervene in the process of translating.

By means of a social semiotic approach to multimodality and a new codification scheme that I call *verbo-visual mediation*, I will illustrate image-text interactions in the translation of print multimodal texts, in the context of English-Greek translation, and propose potential applications to other translation areas.

A social semiotic approach to the translation of multimodal texts

Unsworth (2008) proposes the synergy of semiotics and translation in order to deal with how people describe social semiotic resources, what they say and do with visual means of communication and how these can be interpreted. Following this line of thought, social semiotics, intersemiotic translation and multimodality provide here the framework for a semiotic approach to multimodal translation.

Social semiotics is the systematic study of the systems of signs and of the uses people make of them in specific social contexts (Van Leeuwen 2005). The central concept is the *sign* consisting of two parts, the *signified* (a concept or an object) and the *signifier* (a word, sound or image that is attached to the signified). Translators' attempts to interpret or translate verbal signs were initially classified by Jakobson as follows:

(1) Intralingual translation or *rewording* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.

(2) Interlingual translation or *translation proper* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.

(3) Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non-verbal sign systems (Jakobson 1959: 233).

A problem with his typology, at least with regard to this research, is the unidirectional reference to the 'rewording', 'translation' and 'transmutation' of 'verbal signs', a directionality that implies a superiority, or priority, over non-verbal signs. This criticism is also voiced by Cosculluela (2003), who further adds that any verbal sign also has a non-verbal dimension. In fact, most common signs, notes Cosculluela (2004: 114), reflect a 'balance between verbality and non-verbality'. The interpretation of these verbal signs by means of visual signs may take complicated forms when translating interlinguistically multimodal texts.

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001: 20) define multimodality as the 'use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event together with the particular way in which these modes are combined'. Such a semiotic product is the multimodal text, where the term *mode* refers to the semiotic channel (e.g. words, sounds, images, color and animation) that composes a text. The multimodal text should not be confused with the multimedia text, since the relevant term *media* refers to the tools and material resources (e.g. books, radio, TV) used to produce and disseminate texts consisting of several semiotic modes. A multimodal text is given meaning through the juxtaposition of a variety of semiotic elements (verbal and visual) on the same interface (piece of paper), as opposed to a monomodal text such as a print verbal paragraph (although the font itself as a mode has a visual aspect). Jewitt (2009) discusses social semiotics and multimodality as an approach that stresses how modal resources are used to perform sign-making in social contexts, with a primary focus on the sign-maker. Her examination of the 'relationships across and between modes in multimodal texts' (Jewitt 2009: 17) is in fact a proposition for multimodal research as a line of inquiry in order to examine intersemiotic resources.

The translation of a multimodal text would involve examining the way the semiotic modes that compose this text are used to transfer the source text's (ST) meaning into another culture in the form of a translated target text (TT), and how the intersemiotic relations of these modes affect this process. This sign process and production of meaning is a type of semiosis which is defined by Peirce (1907: 2) as 'action, or influence, which is, or involves, a cooperation of three subjects, such as a sign, its object, and its interpretant.' Stecconi (2004: 471) expanded on this relation and introduced the concept of '[t]ranslation semiosis as the form of semiosis that is specific of translation' to argue that semiosis is a central process of translation. If we approach the multimodal text as multimodal communication and its translation as an enactment of social practice, then the analysis of this enactment would involve determining 'how communicators choose form, design and combine signs (based on the social semiotic ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions)' (Meir and Pentzold 2012: 9).

According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), the representational metafunction presents narrative and conceptual images which examine what the picture is about. The narrative image represents the unfolding of actions, events, or processes of change, in terms of the people, places or things depicted. Conceptual images represent the participant as being something, meaning something, belonging to some category, or having certain characteristics or components. The interpersonal metafunction deals with image act and gaze, social distance and intimacy, and perspective to examine how the picture engages the viewer. This is achieved by means of the eyeline formed between the participants in the image or between the participant and the viewer, how close the participant appears to the viewer, and the horizontal and vertical angle to indicate power relations. The compositional metafunction deals with the layout of the picture, the placement of the participants and the picture's relative salience. This metafunction examines how the representational and interpersonal metafunctions integrate into a meaningful whole. The placement of participants (left/right, top/bottom, center/periphery) allows them to take on different information roles (e.g. before/after, ideal/real, important/unimportant). Salience refers to a participant's ability to capture the viewer's attention, in terms of size, focus, tonal contrast, frame and background/foreground.

The usefulness of the metafunction concept in the translation of print multimodal texts has been shown by Van Meerbergen (2009), who compared a number of Dutch (ST) and Swedish (TT) picture books in terms of their interpersonal metafunction. In one case, while this metafunction was expressed visually in the ST, creating an intimacy with the viewer by presenting a large image of the participant's face in a relatively empty white space, it was reinforced in the TT by adding the Swedish personal pronoun *du* (you). Such markers, which are inserted in the TT, could increase interpersonal involvement with the reader and add, according to Baumgarten (2008: 18), 'meanings, which are not encoded in the source texts'. This points to the intersemiotic possibilities in interlingual translation.

Séguinot (1994) issues an intersemiotic warning to translators to take into account various visual semiotic aspects with reference to verbal elements. She describes how the excessive use of white space employed by graphic specialists creates a layout which breaks up units of text, leaving an incoherent message, and how a particular typographic feature (e.g., Cyrillic letters) may evoke certain cultural (Slav) connotations. This warning is in line with Risku and Pircher (2008), who argue that layout helps the translator to get a better picture of the ST and also delivers important constraints for the creation of the TT. This is of utmost importance since the location and layout of a visual, for instance an image, may dictate a strategy that creates contradiction between semiotic modes.

Such verbal and visual interactions and the three metafunctions have been employed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) to come up with the concept of 'visual grammar', which is based on the idea that pictures have the same kind of regularities as words and sentence syntax. They claim that by using visual grammar, we could analyze images and their relationships to words. Of particular interest is their argument that the arrangement of elements in an image, but also in a multimodal text, is governed by the same rules that apply to the ordering of linguistic elements in a written sentence. On the other hand,

several researchers (e.g. Forceville 1999; Sidiropoulou 2006) argue against the readiness with which a language-oriented theory is applied to the description of non-verbal semiotic resources. Nevertheless, this theory is not dismissed altogether, and despite its problematic nature it is acknowledged that it needs to be addressed by researchers working in this field (Sidiropoulou 2006). Therefore, visual grammar will be combined here with the concept of mediation in translation to examine how translators could intervene in the process of translating print multimodal texts into another language.

Mediation in translation semiotics

The relationship of mediation to translation has been discussed by several scholars. In this research, of particular relevance are the work of Dendrinou (2007) and Torop (2008), who approach these concepts from a semiotic point of view, and the work of Hatim and Mason (1997), who place special emphasis on intervention in translation.

Dendrinou (2007) proposes two types of mediation with a strong semiotic aspect: visual mediation and multimodal mediation. In visual mediation, the message could be relayed in a visual text through a graph, a photograph, etc., to readers who may not understand this visual fully or partially, in three ways: by explaining or simply reporting the visual information, by directing the readers to particular aspects of the visual or by instructing the readers how to interpret the visual. In multimodal mediation, the message is relayed in a similar way in a text of single modality or multiple modalities, and vice-versa. For instance, a verbal-only message may be relayed by another verbal message with the addition of another semiotic modality, such as a picture or graphic.

Torop (2008: 256) closely relates the concept of mediation with translation semiotics because the latter 'deals with mediation processes between various sign systems.' In this case, it is possible to consider the semiotic aspect of the visual in interlingual translation. In addition, if 'no translation is fundamentally a unique text but one of many possibilities to render the original text' (Torop 2008: 255), then it follows that there are several viewpoints from which to approach interlingual translation in multimodal texts, and one of these is the mediation process.

In Hatim and Mason's (1997) concept of mediation in translation, the translator is not a mere communicator of language, but a professional who takes into consideration all meanings that may contribute to communication. This approach to mediation refers to three ways in which the characteristics of the ST appear in the TT. In minimal mediation, these characteristics are 'made entirely visible' to the readers, who do not have to assume anything (Hatim and Mason 1997: 123). In maximal mediation, the translation constitutes a radical departure from the ST in terms of register membership, intentionality, and socio-cultural and socio-textual practices. Third, partial translation is both less extreme and more neutral than minimal and maximal mediation.

Figure 1 shows an illustration of this concept of mediation, where it is possible to slide across a minimal-maximal continuum in which the translator has, in practice, a vast number of potential translation choices, as indicated by the dotted lines to the left and right of the partial point. While Figure 1 may be regarded as redundant to its verbal description, its visual representation is necessary for the presentation of the codification scheme (see Figure 3).

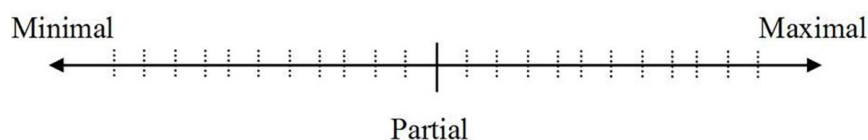


Figure 1. A visual representation of the concept of mediation in translation

There are several strategies which may serve as vehicles for performing mediation in translation, such as the discursual features of ‘cohesion, transitivity, over-lexicalization and style-shifting’ (Hatim and Mason 1997: 124) and the modification of a particular genre, such as ‘intentionality, socio-cultural and socio-textual practices’ (Hatim and Mason 1997: 127). An expansion of this concept of mediation in translation will be described later (see section 4).

By sliding between the two ends (see Figure 1), the translator-mediator performs a kind of intervention, whether this is a conscious process or an unwitting one. Translators can potentially act as mediators who overcome these polarities and facilitate the dialogue between the ST and the TT. As such, they are not neutral third parties, but rather people who intervene in the communicative process and establish a connection between the verbal and the visual elements of the ST and TT. Moreover, they do not hesitate to infuse the TT with their own knowledge and beliefs. On the other hand, Gorlée (1994) claims that translators are passive communicators in translation semiosis and should not intervene in the process. In the translation of multimodal texts, the interpretation of visual elements might require subtle interpretations which may not necessarily be regarded as (conscious) interventions. Within the context of this research, I argue that translation mediation could be approached as nothing more than one of several tactical movements integrated in the translation strategy the translators have chosen to follow.

These movements indicate that being a mediator in translation does not necessarily prevent one from changing directions along the mediation axis (see Figure 1) during the translation semiosis of a given text. This freedom of movement facilitates the addition of a second visual axis to accommodate visual mediation. In the next section, I propose a new concept that I call *verbo-visual mediation*, which will allow movement between the two axes.

Verbal and visual mediation as intersemiotic translation

A theoretical framework for verbo-visual mediation in translation

In an attempt to expand on Hatim and Mason’s (1997) translation mediation, I propose verbo-visual mediation as a new concept that refers to a number of ways in which the verbal, the visual and their interaction in the multimodal ST will appear in the multimodal TT. By employing this concept, the translator chooses from a variety of verbal and visual options to intervene in the translation process in distinctive ways so as to make the ST either visible or invisible to the TT reader.

In order to illustrate the proposed theoretical framework for verbo-visual mediation in translation, I will briefly describe Chuang’s (2006) framework for subtitling films. The relevance lies in the fact that the film is a type of multimodal text. In this framework, the semiotic modes between the ST and TT are not considered to have one-to-one relationships but many-to-many, albeit asymmetric ones. The arrows indicate which elements in the ST are rendered by the elements in the TT.

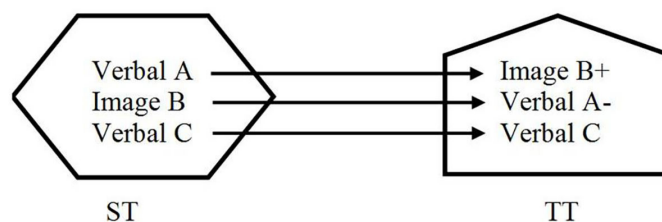


Figure 2. Many-to-many relationships in translation mediation

As shown in Figure 2 (based on Chuang, 2006), the overall translation (illustrated by the different TT polygon) of meaning, sense, function and representation is different between the ST and the TT.

Here, the semiotic modes “Verbal A” and “Image B” are rendered in the TT by “Image B+” (an aspect of visual mode B) and by “Verbal A-” (an aspect of verbal mode A), respectively. Therefore, taking into account Chuang’s (2006) framework and Oittinen’s (2008: 86) claim that ‘reading a book is not far removed from experiencing a film’, I argue that the translators of multimodal texts could manipulate the verbal and visual elements by way of analogy to subtitling (see also discussion on Figure 3).

A relevant verbal-visual discussion is provided by Barthes (1977) in his tripartite concept of ‘anchorage, relay and illustration’. The text-as-anchorage selects appropriate connotations in the image, and in relay the text and the image complement each other. The interpretation of images, in addition to the anchored linguistic message, could be enhanced or modified by looking both at their literal or *denotative* meaning and their symbolic or *connotative* meaning. In reference to illustration, Barthes (1977: 25) makes it clear that ‘the image no longer illustrates the words; it is now the words which, structurally, are parasitic on the image.’ In other words, the interpretation of the image could modify the meaning of the words, and consequently, their translation into another language.

Burgin (1999) proposes a similar rhetorical analysis along three planes: the image plane, the plane of the text (headline, caption, body), and the plane of the text-image bond (see also discussion on Figure 4). He used this type of analysis when exhibiting posters in the form of images appropriated from print advertisements together with his own printed text which ran counter to the intended meaning of the original ads. In this way, he demonstrates the importance of analyzing multimodal texts by referring to images on their own (which highlights their autonomy), by studying the verbal-only element, and through their combination. The restructuring of the print advertisement by substituting the text with his own with the intention to address a different audience is an instance of maximal intervention. Forceville (1999) provides a similar perspective on the interplay between the verbal and the visual mode to remind image readers of the need to look also at the image as an isolated representation. Drawing on an example from Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), he argues that if viewing follows the reading of the verbal element, the interpretation of the image will be biased. Bearing in mind that ‘visual representations have their own effects’ (Rose 2007: 12), there is a need to look very carefully at images (also) as individual items regardless of their context.

This structural autonomy of the image is important for the translators of multimodal texts. Barthes argues that in the case of the press article with photographs, translators should study its two-fold structure, text and image, exhaustively, both on their own and as a whole (Barthes 1977). However, this autonomy of the image should not compromise the overall effect of the verbal/visual entity. In essence, by analogy to selecting one particular TT word out of a number of choices, what determines the autonomous or supplementary role of the image are the translators themselves, who are responsible for their own work. Even when translators do not relate a specific word to a visual element, specific semiotic codes of the image, such as certain colors, an object or a human figure, will create, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), various layers of meanings. While they present semiotic phenomena in terms of binary oppositions (e.g. left/right, top/bottom, center/margin, whole/part), Forceville (1999) argues that categories should describe a continuum between extremes; i.e., from the translation’s point of view, in terms of mediation.

Therefore, it is not so straightforward to identify the individual elements of a visual object and their relationship with the accompanying text. Even if there was a way to identify them, it would still be problematic to separate them. By way of example, I will refer to a museum wall panel as a type of print multimodal text whose translation requires a verbo-visual mediation approach. In the translation of a wall panel in a museum in Hong Kong, where the panel consists of two verbal elements and a visual one, Neather (2008) has found some constraints that affect the overall function of this multimodal text. He refers to a panel where the ST (Chinese) and its TT (English) are juxtaposed to the right of a graphic, with the ST placed above the TT. In this panel, he describes the way significant portions of ST information are modified in the TT version. For instance, a whole phrase is omitted while

two others statements are paraphrased as a single observation. On the other hand, expansions in the TT regarding historical information (not present in the ST) are used to foreground period markers.

Neather (2008: 226) explains that these strategies ‘represent an attempt to negotiate a number of differing forces acting upon text production.’ Such a force is the spatial restriction imposed on the translation. Chinese is a considerably more compact language, both grammatically and orthographically, and it can convey the same message in less physical space than it takes to say it in English. Since in the museum environment spatial relations take on great importance, because the available textual space may be at a minimum, translators may have to reduce the TT to satisfy this need. In addition, there is the need to maintain in the TT the salience of the picture in the ST, which occupies an area at least twice that of the ST and TT combined. If the translator had chosen to produce a longer text column for the TT that would render the full ST, then the visual would no longer dominate the verbal. If we follow this argument, the translator is entitled to break the rules of interlingual translation.

However, it cannot be easily accepted that readers would tend to read this multimodal text from left to right. For example, someone may be more interested in reading first (or spending more time on) the verbal element and then moving on to the visual. Moreover, since the ST and the TT are juxtaposed, some visitors (e.g. a translator) may prefer to focus on the verbal versions for professional reasons and may assign a secondary role to the graphic. Simultaneously, the placement of the ST above the TT, according to Neather (2008), gives the Chinese text a prominent position. Yet, the visitor who does not speak Chinese would ignore the ST and concentrate on the English version.

The discussion of the museum context could guide the translators of illustrated books, who in their very first contact with the ST are readers of both images and text. Pereira (2008: 105), in her exploration of book illustrations, regards ‘the text as the primary source because it is usually the first work to be created, [the illustrations] being derived from it.’ She bases her argument on the fact that only visual work that can be placed independently in an art gallery is not in need of a text to exist. Since photographs could be exhibited in an art gallery, there is the question of whether the decoding of the text (e.g. in the form of a caption) is derived from the photograph or the other way around. Pereira (2008) argues, in addition, that (in illustrated books) ‘pictures represent the text in visual form’ and these ‘two [verbal and visual elements are] different versions of the same story.’

A codification scheme for verbo-visual mediation

The codification scheme for translating multimodal texts into another language is based on the concept of verbo-visual mediation in translation and is summarized in Table 1.

Translation	Code	Mediation
With the visual element	WiVis	Visual minimal (VisMin)
Across the visual element	AcVis	Visual partial (VisPar)
Against the visual element	AgVis	Visual maximal (VisMax)
With the verbal element	WiVer	Verbal minimal (VerMin)
Across the verbal element	AcVer	Verbal partial (VerPar)
Against the verbal element	AgVer	Verbal maximal (VerMax)

Table 1. Coding for verbo-visual mediated translation

The codification scheme in Table 1 is based on Connelly’s (2008: 166-167) realization that reading representation, intertextuality and discourses in visual texts are dependent on one’s consciousness of the three ways in which one can read the author’s intention. Firstly, in ‘with the text’, the

author has already constructed a particular meaning of the text and the reader shares it. Secondly, in 'across the text', some elements of the author's pre-constructed meaning of the text are shared by the reader, but other elements are not, and thus the reader makes alternative interpretations. Thirdly, in 'against the text', the reader questions and contests the author's pre-constructed meaning, making completely new interpretations. In the context of this research, the role of the reader is assumed by the translator-mediator, who in turn becomes the author of the same text in a different language.

The problem with Connelly's (2008) categorization is her claim that we could find the meaning that is constructed by the author. Since it is very difficult (if not impossible) to establish the true meaning implied by the author of a verbal text, let alone a multimodal one, I argue that the proposed coding here refers to only one of a number of possible meanings implied by the author. Additionally, the basic assumption here is that the interventions involve rendering the ST verbal elements into TT verbal elements while the ST visual element is transferred unaltered to the TT text. This means that the verbo-visual associations made in the ST may not be symmetrical to the verbo-visual association made in the TT, as a result of the different (though variously related) verbal elements. As an expansion to Hatim and Mason's (1997) mediation, in verbo-visual mediation, the basis for the verbal TT may not always be provided by the verbal ST, but rather also (or even exclusively) by the visual ST.

When the translation is WiVis-WiVer or AgVis-AgVer, it is making a deliberate intervention and corresponds to Hatim and Mason's (1997) minimal or maximal mediation (see Figure 1), respectively. This intervention depends on how and with what ideological motivations the visual and the verbal element have been taken into account. On one hand, in WiVis-WiVer, the translation reveals a reading that aligns with an interpretation of the ST visual element and with a reading of the verbal element, respectively. On the other hand, in AgVis-AgVer the translation reveals a reading that aims to question and to contest an interpretation of the ST visual element and a reading of the verbal element, respectively. When the translation is AcVis-AcVer, it is making a less extreme and more neutral intervention and corresponds to 'partial' mediation (see Figure 1). This intervention again depends on how and with what ideological motivations the visual and the verbal elements have been taken into account. That is, in AcVis-AcVer, the translation reveals an interpretation that is alternative to the ST visual elements and a reading that is alternative to the ST verbal, respectively. This coding is an expansion on other similar approaches to verbal-visual relationships (e.g. Nikolajeva and Scott 2008; Pereira 2008) as examples of Jakobson's (1959) typology on intersemiotic translation. Moreover, it focuses on the impact of the visual on both interlingual and intersemiotic translation, in a way similar to Neather's (2008) discussion on museum panels.

In Pereira's (2008: 109-111) three-point schema on book illustration, the verbal is translated literally into visual elements, it directs the visual narration in the drawings, or it may be related to a picture that is adapted to a specific ideology or artistic trend. While in her coding it is implied that the three code-points are mutually exclusive, the proposed coding in this article offers a different perspective. For example, in Figure 4, the most obvious way to relate the verbal 'up there patrolling the skies' to the photograph is through the visual 'aircraft' that is depicted neither on 'patrol' nor in the 'skies'. As such, the verbal is not reproduced literally in the photograph, it does not focus on a specific narrative in the photograph but rather on the concept of the aircraft as a flying machine (though capable of patrolling the skies), and it does not seem to be adapted to a specific ideology or artistic trend. Thus, the phrase could be double coded as AgVis, from a narrative point of view, or as WiVis from a conceptual point of view.

In the realm of picture books, Nikolajeva and Scott's (2000: 226) four-point schema relates pictures and text as 'symmetrical', 'enhancing/complementary', 'counterpointing' or 'contradictory'. Words and pictures could tell the same story (i.e. repeat the same information, but in different modes of communication), could amplify or expand on each other to the extent of producing complementary information, could collaborate to produce a meaning that will be a counterpoint to both

of them, and could interact in such a way that they oppose each other, to the extent of inviting the reader to mediate between them. The coding proposed here resembles the two extreme ends, symmetrical and contradictory, and the in-between enhancing/complementary point. However, in the case of interlingual translation, the mediator's movement is not only limited to these two ends of a single text, but also to two different cultures, the ST's and the TT's.

In other words, the two types of coding described above are based on the idea that the pictures have been produced for a specific reason, to accompany a verbal element in a single language. It is exactly this monolingual aspect of the verbal-visual interaction that makes existing schemata inadequate to fully describe a translator's mediation. For that purpose, I propose the concept of verbo-visual mediation that would allow translators to slide along two axes in the same or in diametrically opposite directions in two different (though related) texts.

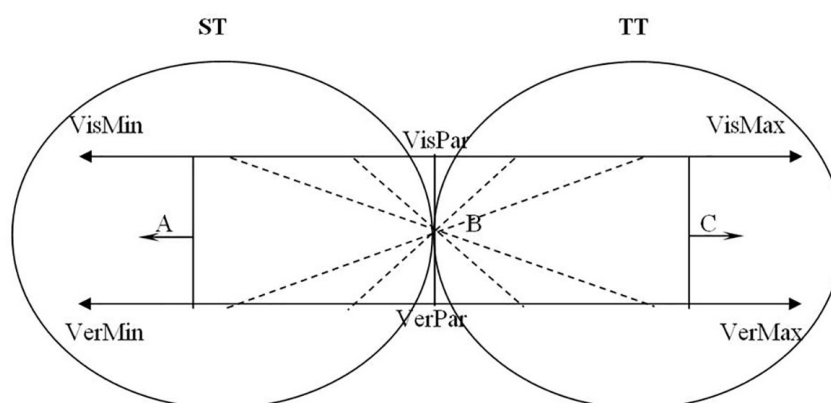


Figure 3. The axes of verbo-visual mediation in interlingual translation

As seen in Figure 3, translators may move exclusively towards minimal verbo-visual mediations (line A), exclusively towards maximal verbo-visual mediations (line C), or adopt partial verbo-visual mediation (line B). The dotted lines indicate the diametrically opposite movements towards both maximal and minimal verbo-visual mediations. It is noted that although the dotted lines cross the partial line B, they indicate verbo-visual mediations that constitute highly deliberate interventions. However, the more the movement on one axis approaches the partial point, the less deliberate becomes the total verbo-visual intervention, at least in comparison to more extreme cases.

The assumption here is that while translators have to do with two different (though related) verbal elements, one in the TT and another in the ST, the visual appears the same in both texts. That is, translators can mediate and modify the verbal component but not the visual. Therefore, the verbo-visual mediated codification cannot be limited to the TT (see previous discussion on visual-verbal schemata) but should be expanded to include the ST. The problem here is that TT readers cannot access the full ST but only part of it (the visual). As such, they would not be able to apply the codification of a verbal-visual scheme to a multimodal text similarly to the way that they could have done with the schemata discussed above. This codification could only be done by the translator, who is privileged by having access to both the TT and ST. The benefit for the translator entails a reflexive approach to translation and heightened translation awareness.

While this verbo-visual mediated codification cannot be applied to monolingual TTs, bilingual versions provide fertile ground to do so. For instance, Baumgarten (2008) shows an example of verbo-visual mediated sliding along the two axes in film subtitling, as an instance of a dynamic multimodal text. She describes a still movie frame showing a man aiming a gun at another man and saying 'The first one won't kill you'. The German subtitle reads '*Die erste Kugel [bullet] wird Sie nicht töten*'. The rendering of the ST pronominal 'one' with the TT noun 'bullet' is an instance of VerMax and VisMax mediation. On the verbal axis, the translator is sliding towards the maximal end and intervenes in the translation by replacing the implicit 'one' with the

explicit 'bullet' that will actually come out of the gun. The translator is sliding towards the maximal end on the visual axis, too, and intervenes in the translation process by interpreting that the 'one' refers to the (invisible) 'bullet' and not the (visible) gun. However, in terms of the type of coding, it could be argued that the translation is an instance of VisPar because the word 'bullet' forms part of the whole visual gun-bullet.

Verbo-visual mediated translation in practice

In this section, I will demonstrate how the proposed codification scheme could be applied to the translation of a multimodal text into another language. In particular, I will first present the English data-text that will be used as a ST, and then I will move on to the practical application of the proposed codification scheme to its Greek translation.

The data-text

Advertising, according to Torresi (2008: 66), 'is one of the multimodal genres which are most suitable for analysing the interplay of verbal and visual elements.' Also, print advertisements with two main modes of communication, verbal and visual, articulated in complex interactions, are 'a good starting point for studying aspects of visual communication' (Van Leeuwen 2005: 8). If we accept these arguments, then the advertisement shown in Figure 4 provides a perfect data-text for this article.

The advertisement, which appeared in the newspaper *DefenseNews*, is about *BAE Systems*, a British multinational defense, security and aerospace company headquartered in London, UK. The structure of



Source: *DefenseNews*, Nov 11-17, 2002, pp.20-21. © Army Times Publishing Company.

IN THE SUPERSONIC WORLD OF FLIGHT^(b), ONE UNGUARDED MOMENT CAN PROVE FATAL. WHEN PILOTS ARE UP THERE PATROLLING THE SKIES^(c), THEY NEED AND DESERVE A LEVEL OF PROTECTION THAT ENABLES THEM TO KEEP THEIR EYE ON THE BALL^(d). AS THE INNOVATORS BEHIND SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED DEFENSE SYSTEMS^(e), WITH ALL EMBRACING AIR, SEA, LAND AND SPACE CAPABILITY, BAE SYSTEMS CAN HELP PROVIDE DEMOCRACY WITH A SAFE PAIR OF HANDS^(f) AND GUARANTEE THE FREEDOM OF FUTURE GENERATIONS^(g). IT'S ALL PART OF OUR LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE WHERE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STABILITY CAN SAFEGUARD LIVELIHOODS^(h), NURTURE TRAINING AND EDUCATION⁽ⁱ⁾, PROMOTE TECHNOLOGICAL GROWTH AND RESTORE THE ENVIRONMENT. AND WHEN THE MEN AND WOMEN ON OUR TEAM^(j) NEED BACK-UP, WE'RE ALWAYS RIGHT BEHIND THEM^(k), PROTECTING THEIR INTERESTS AND EVERYONE ELSE'S.

www.baesystems.com

BAE SYSTEMS

INNOVATING FOR A SAFER WORLD

Figure 4. The structure of the image-nuclear advertising story.

the two-page spread (see scanned image below) will be demonstrated based on Caple's (2008) categorization so as to illustrate the way the various semiotic elements are arranged spatially in the newspaper. This is followed by a reproduction of the verbal elements (capitals in original), while underlining and labelling (with letters a-k) are used to facilitate the application of the codification scheme.

Figure 4 graphically shows that the photograph takes up the most (in comparison to the verbal elements) space on the two-page spread. This suggests that any analysis (visual or verbal) of the data-text should take into account this imbalance no matter which semiotic element is supposedly the dominant meaning-making mode. *DefenseNews* is a subscribers' only newspaper published by the US Army and distributed worldwide. The topics include military issues, the defense industry, civil-military cooperation, and defense policy. Therefore, the intended readership is the professional military and anyone who has an interest in defense and socio-political issues where the military is involved. The verbal element is a text of a general type without specialized terminology or military jargon.

The data-text shares common characteristics with a new genre that Caple (2008) labels 'Image-Nuclear News Stories'. Figure 4 shows the functional structure of the data-text as an image-nuclear news story. According to Caple:

the heading and the image work together to form a nucleus, from which the evaluative stance of the newspaper towards that particular story can be read. The caption then goes on to locate the image participants and their actions within a particular context. (Caple 2008: 126)

The word-image interplay may initially engage the reader in literal play between lexical items in the heading and the image. This interplay (including the caption) may also take other forms, like alliteration and allusions that test our cultural knowledge. The data-text here follows a slightly different structure but it could be considered an expansion of the image-nuclear news story, potentially labelled as *image-nuclear advertising story*.

Application of the codification scheme in translation

In this verbo-visual mediated approach to translating the data-text, I will not be discussing the full translation of the text, but rather selected examples of its verbal parts that may pose translation problems and need clarification before one can start translating.

The translation has not been published, but it is provided by the author simply for illustrative purposes. The aim is to demonstrate the codification scheme and the strategies a translator would have to follow in a verbo-visual mediated translation. Although translators who use their own translations as examples cannot be detached, the purpose here is not to evaluate the translated product and to measure the effectiveness of the proposed strategies but to illustrate an approach to translation. Table 2 shows my own translation followed by a back-translation into English. It should also be noted that the proposed codification scheme does not imply that the closer a translation is to the VisMax or VerMax end, the more it would qualify as a verbo-visual mediated translation. A successful application of the codification scheme is based on the translators' ability to identify which direction (VisMin-VisMax or VerMin-VerMax) meets their needs each time such a verbo-visual mediated strategy is required.

The fact that the application of this scheme is based on my own analysis of the data-text raises the issue of the reliability of my research, which may compromise its external validity. In order to make this method relevant to 'audience creativity' (Rose 2007: 67), the coding assumes that different viewers would see the image in different ways. While recognizing this weakness, my intention is to 'produce a coherent and illuminating description of and perspective on a [verbo-visual mediated] situation that is based on and consistent with the detailed [subjective] study of that situation' (Schofield

2007: 13). If other researchers were to use the process called ‘naturalistic generalization’ (Stake 1978) and recognize the similarities and differences with the findings from my study, they could apply them to understanding other similar situations, albeit with a modified coding. In this kind of generalization, researchers ‘should be both intuitive and empirical’ (Stake 1978: 6).

Greek Translation	Back-translation into English
<p>ΕΑΝ ΤΟΥΣ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΤΕΨΟΥΜΕ^(a), ΒΟΗΘΑΜΕ ΣΤΗΝ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗ ΤΟΥ ΜΕΛΛΟΝΤΟΣ</p> <p><u>ΣΤΟΝ ΥΠΕΡΗΧΗΤΙΚΟ ΚΟΣΜΟ ΤΩΝ ΠΤΗ-ΣΕΩΝ^(b)</u>, ΜΙΑ ΑΠΡΟΣΕΧΤΗ ΣΤΙΓΜΗ ΜΠΟΡΕΙ ΝΑ ΑΠΟΒΕΙ ΜΟΙΡΑΙΑ. ΟΤΑΝ <u>ΟΙ ΠΙΛΟΤΟΙ ΒΡΙΣΚΟΝΤΑΙ ΕΚΕΙ ΨΗΛΑ ΝΑ ΠΕΡΙΠΟΛΟΥΝ ΣΤΟΥΣ ΑΙΘΕΡΕΣ^(c)</u>, ΧΡΕΙΑΖΟΝΤΑΙ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥΝΤΑΙ ΕΝΑ ΕΠΙΠΕΔΟ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΠΟΥ ΘΑ ΤΟΥΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΕΠΕΙ <u>ΝΑ ΠΑΡΑΜΕΝΟΥΝ ΠΡΟΣΗΛΩΜΕΝΟΙ ΣΤΟΝ ΣΤΟΧΟ ΤΟΥΣ^(d)</u>. ΜΕ ΠΑΓΚΟΣΜΙΕΣ ΚΑΙΝΟΤΟΜΙΕΣ ΣΕ ΠΡΟΗΓΜΕΝΑ ΑΜΥΝΤΙΚΑ ΣΥΣΤΗΜΑΤΑ^(e) ΚΑΙ ΔΥΝΑΤΟΤΗΤΕΣ ΣΕ ΑΕΡΑ, ΘΑΛΑΣΣΑ, ΞΗΡΑ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΑΣΤΗΜΑ, Η ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ <u>ΒΡΙΣΚΕΤΑΙ ΣΤΑ ΣΙΓΟΥΡΑ ΧΕΡΙΑ^(f)</u> ΤΗΣ ΒΑΕ SYSTEMS ΕΞΑΣΦΑΛΙΖΟΝΤΑΣ ΕΤΣΙ ΤΗΝ ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΙΑ <u>ΤΩΝ ΠΑΙΔΙΩΝ ΜΑΣ^(g)</u>. ΟΛΑ ΑΥΤΑ ΑΠΟΤΕΛΟΥΝ ΜΕΡΟΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΚΑΤΑΠΑΥΣΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΣΠΑΘΕΙΩΝ ΜΑΣ ΝΑ ΚΑΝΟΥΜΕ ΤΟΝ ΚΟΣΜΟ ΕΝΑ ΚΑΛΥΤΕΡΟ ΜΕΡΟΣ ΟΠΟΥ Η ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΗ ΚΑΙ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΚΗ ΣΤΑΘΕΡΟΤΗΤΑ ΘΑ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΕΙ ΤΗΝ <u>ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΗ ΣΥΝΟΧΗ^(h)</u>, ΘΑ ΕΝΙΣΧΥΣΕΙ ΤΗΝ <u>ΚΑΤΑΡΤΙΣΗ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ⁽ⁱ⁾</u>, ΘΑ ΣΥΜΒΑΛΕΙ ΣΤΗΝ ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΚΗ ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΗ ΚΑΙ ΘΑ ΑΠΟΚΑΤΑΣΤΗΣΕΙ ΤΟ ΠΕΡΙΒΑΛΛΟΝ. ΚΑΙ ΟΤΑΝ <u>ΟΙ ΑΝΤΡΕΣ ΚΑΙ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΕΣ ΜΑΣ^(j)</u> ΧΡΕΙΑΣΤΟΥΝ ΥΠΟΣΤΗΡΙΞΗ, ΘΑ ΕΙΜΑΣΤΕ ΠΑΝΤΑ <u>ΔΙΠΛΑ ΤΟΥΣ^(k)</u>, ΝΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΤΕΨΟΥΜΕ ΤΑ ΔΙΚΑ ΤΟΥΣ ΣΥΜΦΕΡΟΝΤΑ ΚΑΙ ΟΠΟΙΟΥΔΗΠΟΤΕ ΑΛΛΟΥ.</p>	<p>IF THEM SAFEGUARD [WE]^(a), [WE] HELP IN THE SAFEGUARD OF FUTURE.</p> <p>IN THE SUPERSONIC WORLD OF <u>FLIGHT^(b)</u>, AN INCAUTIOUS MOMENT MIGHT BECOME FATAL. WHEN <u>THE PILOTS ARE THERE UP PATROLLING THE SKIES^(c)</u>, THEY NEED AND DESERVE A LEVEL OF PROTECTION THAT WILL THEM ENABLE TO <u>REMAIN FOCUSED ON THEIR TARGET^(d)</u>. WITH WORLDWIDE INNOVATIONS IN ADVANCED DEFENSE SYSTEMS^(e) AND CAPABILITIES IN AIR, SEA, LAND AND SPACE, THE DEMOCRACY IS <u>IN THE SAFE HANDS^(f)</u> OF BAE SYSTEMS GUARANTEEING THUS THE FREEDOM TO <u>OUR CHILDREN^(g)</u>. ALL THESE FORM PART OF OUR CEASELESS EFFORTS TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE WHERE THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STABILITY WILL SAFEGUARD THE <u>SOCIAL COHESION^(h)</u>, WILL ENHANCE <u>TRAINING AND EDUCATION⁽ⁱ⁾</u>, WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE TECHNOLOGICAL GROWTH AND WILL RESTORE THE ENVIRONMENT. AND WHEN THE <u>[OUR] MEN AND WOMEN^(j)</u> NEED BACK-UP, [WE] WILL BE ALWAYS <u>NEXT TO THEM^(k)</u>, TO PROTECT THEIR INTERESTS AND EVERYONE ELSE'S.</p>
<p>ΚΑΙΝΟΤΟΜΙΕΣ ΓΙΑ ΕΝΑΝ ΠΙΟ ΑΣΦΑΛΗ ΚΟΣΜΟ</p>	<p>INNOVATIONS FOR A MORE SAFE WORLD</p>

Table 2. Greek translation of the data-text, back-translated into English

The items of the data-text (visual and verbal) to which the codification scheme is applied below are underlined and followed by the codification in the exponent position. The ST words appear in single quotation marks and their Greek translation in italics followed by a transliteration in parenthesis. Any back-translation into English (that is not included in the data-text in Table 2) is in square brackets. The words in double quotation marks are given special emphasis.

Phrase (a) relates to four participants: the baseball player^[WiVis-AgVer], the aircraft^[WiVis-AcVer], the pilot^[AcVis-WiVer] (if there is one inside the cockpit) and the eagle's shadow^[AcVis-AgVer]. While the Greek translation of 'them' *τους* (*tous*) is quite straightforward and unproblematic (and in fact the translator's single choice), its significance from the beginning is expected to inform the translator's subsequent choices. Aircraft and pilots form a unique bond, frequently thought of as being natural extensions of one another. This relationship is reminiscent of the dyadic horse-rider and car-driver, where people are entitled riders and drivers, respectively, not based upon their ability to ride and drive but upon their temporal and circumstantial position on the horse's back and in the car driver's seat.

In phrase (b), the aircraft (the subsonic A-10) is neither supersonic^[AgVis-WiVer] nor seen in flight^[AgVis-WiVer] mode. The layman will probably not be aware of this "supersonic conflict"; that is, the fact that the aircraft's maximum speed is 0.51 Mach, and thus not supersonic. Despite this contradiction, it could be said that the photo's modality is increased. If the photo was taken spontaneously – the A-10 may just have happened to be there – it could be argued that the photographer did not stage the photo; in other words, the photograph is more plausible. Should the Greek translators aim to translate WiVis (and thus satisfy a visual-sensitive specialist/pilot readership), they could use a word that evokes a lot of noise, something like *στον ξέφρενο κόσμο* (*ston ksefreno kosmo*) [in the frenzied world]. Although this is definitely not a translation proper, even for the non-professional translator, it provides a good example for contemplation by translators. Additionally, it illustrates the need for translators to know the audience of the ST and the intended audience in the TT.

To avoid the contradiction between the word 'flight' and the immobility of the depicted aircraft, the translators could use the neutral hyponym *αεροσκαφών* (*aeroskafon*) [aircraft] and achieve an additional cohesion with the A-10. The downgrading of 'supersonic' is an indication that the focus of the advertisement is not the aircraft, and by extension technology, but the player. In other words, it is a human-centered advertisement. Although the suggested translations above have moved beyond the most maximal and extreme translation mediations, to the point of being considered an idle fancy, they could form a good basis for thinking in terms of verbo-visual mediated translation.

In phrase ©, the aircraft^[AgVis-WiVer] (and as a consequence the pilot) is neither patrolling, nor is it in the skies^[AgVis-AcVer]. Again, the translation in Greek is quite straightforward. Therefore, it seems unavoidable for the TT to have the same conflict as in phrase (b), reinforcing the argument about a human-centered advertisement. By placing the pilot (and the aircraft) on the ground, the focus is on the pilot and not on the aircraft (A-10).

In phrase (d), it is the player^[WiVis-AgVer] that keeps [his/her] eye^[WiVis-WiVer] on the ball^[AcVis-WiVer], ready to catch it when it is thrown from the viewer's point of view. In military terms, the pilot^[WiVis-AcVer] is assisted (by BAE Systems) so that she/he will be able to see^[AcVis-WiVer] a military target^[AgVis-AgVer]. This sports phrase is interpreted metaphorically for the pilot in verbal terms, and literally for the player in visual terms. For the English speaking audience, the phrase is easily attributed to both participants, on the assumption that the audience is culturally informed that this is a baseball player waiting to catch a ball. The translation, at least for a Greek audience in the context set by the verbal element, would normally not include the words 'ball' and 'eye'. Therefore, this loss for the Greek reader will have to be compensated somewhere else in the TT. In military terms, the pilots, by means of BAE Systems, are able to maintain their focus and be in readiness to confront the enemy.

In phrase (e), the eagle's shadow^[AcVis-AgVer], possibly formed by the sun as it falls on the helmet's wire face mask, could be BAE Systems^[AcVis-WiVer]. This interpretation is based on reading the visual cohesion between the red wire mask and the logo, projected as it is next to, and behind^[WiVis-WiVer], the player. A defensive system (the face mask) was transformed by BAE Systems (the innovators) into a predator^[AcVis-AcVer]. Since the word 'behind' cannot be translated literally in Greek, or even with

a (near) synonym, for reasons of registry, the cohesion between the visual vector “BAE Systems logo > red face mask > shadow” and the verbal element ‘the innovators behind’ is broken. From another perspective, we could consider the player, whose face is behind the wire face mask, as the innovator of these systems. In this case, the word ‘behind’ can be translated literally in Greek with the proposition *πίσω* (*pisō*) and thus (possibly) lead the reader to associate the man behind the red face mask with the logo. Thus, the player is a member of the team (BAE Systems) that produces the systems. However, this would require several syntactical and grammatical changes whose consequences are not the purpose of this research; e.g., the sentence should be re-ordered (as it has been done here) or even split into two, though closely related, sentences. Since this discussion is quite interpretative and subjective, it should be considered in the context of the English-Greek pair of languages.

In phrase (f), the sense of safety^[WiVis-WiVer] is provided by the player’s hands^[WiVis-WiVer] in the form of the mitt^[WiVis-AgVer], the helmet^[WiVis-AgVer] and the protective body gear^[WiVis-AgVer]. The use of a Greek translation that seems to cohere both with the ST’s verbal elements ‘safe’ and ‘hands’, and the visual mitt is *βρίσκεται στα ασφαλή χέρια* (*vriskete sta asfali heria*), but it requires a translation shift of the entire sentence.

Phrase (g) could be said to refer to the player who seems to be young or even a child^[WiVis-AcVer]. While the literal translation *μελλοντικών γενεών* (*mellontikon geneon*) seems to fit here, the near synonym *των παιδιών μας*^[AcVis-AcVer] (*ton paidion mas*) might have a stronger emotional impact on a middle-aged audience, like parents, or older people (with children and grandchildren). The catcher-child engages the viewer-pitcher to ‘play’ with him by throwing the ball. It is common American socio-cultural practice for a child and a father to play baseball together by simply tossing the ball to each other while wearing a mitt, but without holding a bat (as in the real game). Since the catcher and the pitcher are in fact in the same team, this ball exchange could be interpreted as an effort to build stronger family bonds. This is additional evidence that the data-text is more human-centered. A semiotic implication here is the background reading required by translators before they start translating texts with cultural connotations.

Word (h) could refer to the two sides of the photograph: (left) everyday life in the military^[WiVis-AcVer] and (right) the everyday life of civilians-sportspeople^[WiVis-AcVer]. The choices *πόρος ζωής* (*poros zois*) or *τα προς το ζην* (*ta pros to zin*) [means of living] are not stylistically appropriate – especially the second choice, which comes from the *katharevousa* dialect, set at a midpoint between Ancient Greek and Modern Greek, and stressing both a more ancient vocabulary and a simplified form of the classical grammar. The translation *κοινωνική συνοχή* (*kinoniki sinohi*) is based on the photo’s division into these two aspects of life; that is, military life (aircraft on the left side) and everyday sports activities (baseball player on the right side). This is achieved through the information roles taken on by the participants, in two ways: firstly, in a left/right distinction through the visual vector of the eyeline formed by the aircraft-pilot and the player; and secondly, through common socio-cultural patterns where both situations form part of everyday life.

In phrase (i), both the pilot and the player receive training and education^[AcVis-WiVer] for different purposes. While the translation seems unproblematic and straightforward, the realization that ‘training and education’ applies to both the pilot and the player might help the translator identify the two realities in word (h).

In phrase (j), there are two teams, in the sense of a group of people with a common purpose: the [baseball] team^[WiVis-AcVer] and the [military] team^[WiVis-AcVer]. As previously, while the translation seems unproblematic and straightforward, the realization that ‘our team’ applies both to the armed forces (implied by the aircraft-pilot) and a social (sports) group (implied by the baseball player) might help translators identify the two realities in word (h).

In phrase (k), the translations *δίπλα τους* (*diplo tous*) or *στο πλευρό τους* (*sto plevro tous*) [by their

side] are semantically (connoting a sense of support) and grammatically (as a prepositional phrase) successful. Moreover, in visual terms (see phrase (e)), the shadow-BAE Systems is not directly behind the player. At the same time, while the shadow-BAE Systems appears behind one person, BAE Systems (from a verbal point of view) is behind more than one participant, the player-pilot and the aircraft.

Conclusion

This paper has shown how the concept of verbo-visual mediation could help translators of multimodal texts to overcome, from a social semiotic perspective, the plain role of communicator of language. Verbo-visual mediation also presents a framework within which translation shares common features with subtitling, providing a new perspective on translation and new challenges for translators of multimodal texts. This enables translators to approach the translation through two different channels, the verbal and the visual. Each channel has an individual role to play; at the same time, their combined effect may be different to the mere sum total effect. It has been shown that traditional, linguistic-related translation strategies such as compensation, addition, omission and redundancy could be adopted by the verbo-visual mediation concept. A problem with these strategies is their Western cultural origin. That is, their application in the translation of culturally diverse multimodal texts, such as those belonging to the European and Asian (e.g. Chinese) cultures, may not be readily accepted. In these cases, the verbo-visual cohesion created in one culture may be broken when the text is rendered in the language of the other culture.

The absence of external evaluators/coders to apply the codification scheme to the translation provided poses another limitation. Using external evaluators is a common procedure in translation research when it involves the analysis of translation products. My own codification of the translation may have been biased by the verbal-visual association I had made for the specific words commented on. Although this decision was part of my reflexive approach to this paper, the element of bias may still be present. This limitation could be remedied by recruiting external coders, but it should be borne in mind that this codification scheme is still at an experimental stage and requires further examination, modification and application in different types of texts. Finally, although Modern Greek is not a widely spoken language worldwide, it is nevertheless a European one, and as such it shares some of the features of Western languages. The cultural realities in relation to photography that have been discussed here should be contrasted with Eastern ones. For example, it could be tested whether the given-new, ideal-real, and primary-secondary information organizations are limited to those cultures where the writing system moves from left to right, top to bottom and center to periphery, respectively.

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Herding together: On semiotic-translational branches, fields, and disciplines

Ritva Hartama-Heinonen

Those 'who pursue a given branch herd together. They understand one another; they live in the same world, while those who pursue another branch are for them foreigners.' This quote summarizes how Charles S. Peirce not only characterized researchers in 1903, but also described how to classify different scientific branches. In the same Peircean vein, the article focuses on the essence of disciplinary fields and boundaries, and poses the question of whether semiotic translation research constitutes a field in which researchers understand each other and share the world of research both theoretically and methodologically. Semiotic approaches to translation can be divided into two: they contribute either to the semiotics of translation or to semiotic Translation Studies – a distinction that reflects the primary disciplinary adherence. Consequently, the question of herding-together-and-understanding is approached from two vantage points in search of a common ground: is it translation or semiotics as a discipline or a methodology that should be the combining factor? Evidence of reciprocal influence and understanding in general or the need for it is discussed with emphasis on five claims concerning the nature of the semiotics of translation.

KEYWORDS Semiotics of translation; Semiotic translation studies; Translation Studies; Multidisciplinarity

Introduction

'Living doubt is the life of investigation,' maintains Charles Sanders Peirce (CP 7.315 = W3: 18; 1872). He believes that what prompts the kind of research and inquiry that settles an opinion or a belief are the following: a real, irritating doubt, a breach of an existing regularity, a discontinuation in expectations, a puzzling sign, and a surprise. Yet another potential catalyst for investigation and thinking is a feeling of growing perplexity and uncertainty. Investigation in turn leads to learning. And if learning is the main objective, then Peirce (CP 1.135; c. 1899) advises us 'not be satisfied with what you already incline to think.' It is thus advisable to rethink and re-evaluate your beliefs, at least occasionally. In the present article, the object of rethinking and critical review is the state-of-the-art confluence between semiotic views and translation, and the purpose of my contribution is to enhance disciplinary self-awareness and self-scrutiny.

Peirce also held that those 'who pursue a given branch herd together. They understand one another; they live in the same world, while those who pursue another branch are for them foreigners.' This quote (CP 1.99; c. 1896) reveals how Peirce perceived not only scientists, but also the diverse scientific branches. Following up on Peirce's observation, my article focuses on the nature of existing semiotic-translational domains and disciplines with their somewhat varying boundaries, and poses

the question of whether those who combine translation and semiotic approaches belong to a field in which researchers understand each other and share a common world of inquiry, both theoretically and methodologically.

However, we have to be aware of certain paradoxes. First, the existence of an academic discipline requires the erection of estranging boundaries, entailing certain inherent obstacles to reciprocal understanding. Second, some level of consensus concerning the justification of a discipline must exist; in other words, a discipline must be able to provide answers to questions that no other discipline addresses. Finally, in addition to unique research objects, a discipline is expected to develop a methodology of its own, even though methods can also be borrowed and modified. Translation Studies is an example of an interdisciplinary field, often described as an interdiscipline (see e.g. Snell-Hornby 2006: 70-72).

Disciplinary boundary-clearing is an instrument for separating those who herd together and represent the same branch from those who do not. The result of boundary-clearing is not always problem-free, and this applies also to semiotic-translational research. If Translation Studies exists as a discipline in its own right, do translation scholars have sole control over translation-related research and, correspondingly, do semioticians have the sole right to sign-theoretical studies? Boundaries, in all cases, seem to grant the right to stake out exclusive disciplinary territories. A familiar means of boundary-preserving gatekeeping is the academic quality-control mechanism of peer reviews, where the major objective is to get a manuscript accepted and ensure a researcher is acknowledged for his or her research.

The question of boundaries can also be posed in a different manner: What do translation scholars think of the fact that semioticians and literature researchers conduct research on translation and translating? The reverse is a pertinent question, as well: what do linguists or literature researchers think of translation researchers who examine translated language and literature, conducting translation-related research using theoretical models derived from linguistics and literature? There is one final question, perhaps the most intricate and delicate of all: Contrary to what one might expect of the independent discipline of Translation Studies, does the state of translation-theoretical research attest to the fact that the field has not fully succeeded in developing its own unique methods and thus establishing its disciplinary integrity, so that, translation studies continue, in effect, to be contributions to other disciplines, for instance, to applied linguistics, comparative literature or cultural studies?

Given that these boundaries exist, we must cope with them, and, if need be, cross them regardless of the consequences. If you cross these boundaries in your inquiry, it follows that you are no longer in the place you set off from. In other words, if a scholar adopts methods from literary studies, will he or she then become a literature researcher, or does a particular choice of method only constitute a necessary yet *temporary* crossing? The pioneers of Translation Studies came from other disciplines, but the question is whether their boundary-crossing involves a *permanent* relocation. Furthermore, is a linguist who writes about translating unavoidably a translation researcher, or is every translation researcher, despite his or her education, also a linguist?

Boundary-crossing is prompted by the need to find suitable intellectual surroundings and the most appropriate frame of reference for one's inquiry. In many cases, this process is not so much a question of choice as of drifting or even of chance encounters. Boundary-crossing can also stem from other circumstances. For instance, a researcher can assess his or her own resources and limits as a test of courage, something comparable to a leap in the dark, into something unknown – a new way of thinking and acting. Alternatively, a researcher can aim at probing the resources and limits of other researchers and scholars, provoking and forcing them to spell out what they consider acceptable within a particular discipline.

To summarize our introductory remarks, several factors can be considered to be decisive in terms of what constitutes a unified branch. These factors include the research object, the method, the overall approach, the surrounding research community and its stance, and the researcher's view of his or her own academic identity.

Disciplinary divisions and fields

We can describe how semiotic views have been used in research on translation in a variety of ways. In the following, I will provide one interpretation of the state of the art (for a different and more comprehensive account see Hartama-Heinonen 2008).

The key approaches I wish to map here are *semiotic translation research*, or *semiotic approaches to translation*. With this clarification I signal my main emphasis and my disciplinary framework. These approaches can be further divided into two: they contribute either to the *semiotics of translation* (*semiotics and translation; semiotranslation; semio-translation; translation semiotics; or trans-semiotics*) or to *semiotic translation studies* (*semiotic approaches to Translation Studies*). This fundamental twofold distinction reflects the choice of the primary disciplinary adherence and starting point and this is often a cause of the current twilight state.

Within *Translation Studies* (TS), translation has been approached through its products, processes, agents, and contexts. Further subdivisions are quite possible. For example, important questions arise such as whether or not translating concerns natural languages, whether translations are human-made or machine-aided or whether the translators are professional. The field has undergone a dynamic development since its introduction in the 1950s, and can demonstrate a variety of paradigms as well as interdisciplinary approaches that are currently in use and I have included the semiotic ones among them (see Figure 1):

Research objects	Paradigm candidates	Approaches and theories (chronology)						
		1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
		Linguistic theories						
		Communicative theories						
		Semiotic perspectives						
		Functionalist theories						
	Linguistic							<i>Translatorisches Handeln</i>
Products	Cultural							<i>Skopos</i> theory
Processes	Cognitive							Cognitive theories
Agents	Sociological							Manipulation School
								Descriptive Translation Studies
Contexts	Technological							Postmodern tendencies
								Multimodal perspectives
								Pragmatics of translation
	Semiotic							Sociology of translation
								Non-Western approaches
								Critical Translation Studies
								Translator Studies

Figure 1. Paradigms, approaches, and theories (an updated version of Hartama-Heinonen 2010: 71).

It is evident from this table that scholars engaged in translation-theoretical issues have been quite successful. First, they have succeeded in the very creation of this field of knowledge, and through its diversity, they have put it firmly on the map, demonstrating that it is relevant, necessary and well-founded. Second, they have succeeded in keeping the field relatively updated, and in doing so, proved that TS possesses the capacity for continuous renewal. However, the capacity for updating and renewal are both relative features. We need to bear in mind the interdisciplinary nature of translation studies, in that this field draws the power and energy for creating something new from other disciplines, just as the moon borrows its light from the sun. This observation also applies to the semiotics of translation, which needs semiotic perspectives and methods in order to succeed and develop. In both cases, the borrowings may result in theoretical and methodological refinements and innovations, even breakthroughs.

Semiotics has general, comparative, and applied forms. It focuses on the conditions, functions, and structures of signs and sign processes, on signs in general and all life systems as well as on the

diverse types of communication, information exchange, and sign usage (Posner 1987: ix). Semiotics – a discipline since the 1960s – is an approach, a methodology, a metalanguage, and furthermore, the ‘international language of scholars’ (NU). Concerned with all types of signs, sign systems, and semiotic practices, semiotics is, in fact, interested in everything. That is why semiotics may be referred to as an umbrella discipline, covering all other disciplines, but not a homogenous field of knowledge.

The role of translation in semiotics emerges as the *semiotics of translation* (SofT) or *translation semiotics*, both designations adopted by translation semioticians. Contrary to semiotic branches such as visual, legal, literary, educational, and bio- or zoosemiotics, translation semiotics has failed to receive significant acknowledgement within semiotics (see Hartama-Heinonen 2008: 70) – something that SofT can hopefully change in the future. Drawing on semiotic mainstream theories, SofT has been able to advance without any commitment to the achievements of Translation Studies. A translation-semiotic approach is anchored in semiotic fields that are philosophical (Peirce, Morris), linguistic/sociosemiotic (Saussure), cultural (Lotman), post-structuralist (Barthes, Derrida), and existential (or neosemiotic; Tarasti). These and many other approaches to semiotics constitute the shared ground and thus, the common language of translation semioticians (TS has likewise sought to establish a shared ground, but has not had much success, see the debate in the journal *Target* 1/2000–1/2002).

While there is semiotic research on translation within both TS and SofT, the overall visibility of this approach is not noteworthy. As a whole, semiotic translation research has not proved to be sufficiently progressive (or aggressive) and therefore it needs to demonstrate increasing field-internal critique and build up its self-awareness and future more actively. As for now, critical voices and explanations can be found elsewhere.

Critical views on multidisciplinary approaches

Some decades ago, André Lefevere (1993: 229-230) warned of the three interdependent childhood diseases of translation studies: researchers reinventing the wheel, not having made themselves properly acquainted with earlier studies within their field, and ignoring the history of their discipline (naturally these diseases are not unique because they are also found in other fields of knowledge). Briefly stated, due to researchers’ possible lack of dedication and adequate knowledge, there are certain inherent problems in inquiry.

The combination of translation and translation-theoretical and/or semiotic thought constitutes multidisciplinary. Kirsten Malmkjær, another translation scholar, refers to the problems concerning multidisciplinary, the first one of them, unsurprisingly, that of:

‘a little knowledge’: for a translation scholar to achieve a sufficient command of another discipline to be able to draw profitably on it, is obviously just as difficult as it is for a scholar from another discipline to reach a sufficient level of understanding of Translation Studies to be able to contribute to it (or draw on it in their own discipline). (Malmkjær 2000: 165)

While a researcher can borrow an entire theory or only a single tool for a descriptive, explanatory, or investigative purpose, Malmkjær (ibid. 166-167) recommends the latter alternative. Borrowings may profit not only Translation Studies, but also, as Malmkjær adds, the feeder discipline. This is a circumstance that must be taken into account if the aim is to promote a particular field. The aforementioned quote demonstrates how demanding it is to conduct multidisciplinary research. It might, however, be difficult to pinpoint what this ‘sufficient command of another discipline’ consists of. Besides, this requirement must also concern the examiners, evaluators, reviewers, editors, and so on of any academic multidisciplinary contribution, because they must also have ‘a sufficient level of understanding’ to be able to assess contributions made to the field.

Malmkjær addresses some of the questions that I have discussed above, and appears to be rather confident about emerging multidisciplinary views:

Researchers are generally aware of the need to keep translation as such clearly in focus, and these days most are professional translation scholars, rather than, for example professional linguists [...]. Nevertheless, it has, not unnaturally, become increasingly common for translation scholars to concentrate on the interaction between Translation Studies and one particular feeder discipline, so that there are now a number of quite distinct approaches to translation. This situation represents a natural and healthy division of labour, and there is really no need, in general, for proponents of the different approaches to consider themselves competitors: each approach contributes valuable insights to the entire body of knowledge which makes up the discipline of Translation Studies. (Malmkjær 2000: 165)

Malmkjær's views are particularly intriguing in our context because she explicitly refers to translation as a specific case and also mentions semiotics:

But what is interesting is that, as far as I am aware, none of the scholars mentioned here have expressed much interest in what is special to translation, that is, in what translation does *not* share with the non-translational case, but has over and above it; this may not seem an obviously interesting question from a philosophical, literary or even linguistic point of view, but it is deeply interesting from the point of view of Translation Studies. The question is why it should not seem interesting from the philosophical, literary or linguistic point of view. Compare the relationship between semiotics and linguistics, for example: here it is quite clear that linguistics goes one step further than semiotics in concentrating on what is special to the *linguistic* sign – on what language has that other semiotic systems do not have – and I don't think that any discipline that acknowledged its relationship to linguistics would neglect to pay attention to language. (Malmkjær 2000: 168; emphases in original)

A Peircean-semiotic orientation to translation is, in fact, more interested in the features that interlingual translation as a product and process shares with other conceivable translational activities. In other words, what is specific becomes highlighted and understood against the background of what is common and general. In this respect, nothing is non-translational: translation, in all its possible forms, is a manifestation of a universal mechanism referred to as *semiosis* (dynamic sign action and sign interpretation). *Semiosis* can be defined as 'the general phenomena of sign processes'. Furthermore, it can be argued that '*everything that is is sign*, that whatever anything is other than its being a sign, it is also a sign' (Merrell 1996: 304, x; emphasis in original). A *sign*, in turn, 'is something by knowing which we know something more' (CP 8.332; 1904), 'a vehicle conveying into the mind something from without' (CP 1.339; n.d.). The fact that the translative *semiotic* mechanism is ubiquitous justifies the semiotics of translation as a semiotic pursuit and a joint intellectual adventure – any other interpretation and emphasis would not be meaningful. But Malmkjær somehow feels uncomfortable when translation is studied by another discipline using other methods:

But when translation is the notion that is being borrowed, attention is absurdly directed away from Translation Studies and into the neighbouring disciplines: the pretence is that important questions about language, meaning, reading, writing, or whatever are now going to be illuminated by discussing them in translation-theoretic terms – only as there is no attempt at finding out just what those terms might be, a rather different effect is in fact achieved: it is taken for granted that the aforementioned important questions are questions of translation; in other words, the other discipline defines Translation Studies to suit its own purposes by imposing upon it its own questions. (Malmkjær 2000: 168-169)

We can turn this issue of whom the questions of translation properly belong to upside down: (translation) semioticians may feel uncomfortable observing how semiotics, semiotic questions and achievements are addressed within Translation Studies. Research on multimodal phenomena could be an example of this. For many scholars, multimodality is the same as semiotics, and often reduced to cover the visual mode. For example, the linguist and semiotician Roman Jakobson (1966 [1959]: 233) introduced the analytical and particular typology to translation research, translational multimodality *avant la lettre*: the ‘three ways of interpreting a verbal sign’. As a translation theoretician and a translation semiotician, he was a forerunner, although a neglected one. In 2008, I remarked that multimodality ‘hardly establishes a foothold in translation studies through semiotics, via the inter-semioticity inherent in Jakobson’s typology or otherwise. Rather, the breakthrough into translation studies comes with the help of linguistics, which is not static, but a continuously developing field.’ (Hartama-Heinonen 2008: 75-76). But the cornering had actually started far earlier, via Halliday, systemic functional linguistics SFL, and sociolinguistics, also known as social semiotics:

Translation has been on the systemic functional research agenda for a long time [...]. Halliday (1956) drew attention to the significance of choice in translation, highlighting the value of the thesaurus as a lexical resource supporting choices in machine translation, and Catford’s (1965) ‘linguistic theory of translation’, based on the systemic functional theory of that period, has become a classic. In that sense, translation studies is not a ‘new direction’ in SFL. (Matthiessen 2009: 41; see also, 21, 41-42)

As we know, SFL has provided linguistics with the impulse and opportunity to expand toward issues and phenomena of communication that have a linguistic core but simultaneously reach beyond the verbal realm, approaching combinations of diverse verbal, visual, and acoustic modes – in other words, semiotic modes and resources (on multimodality, see e.g. Kress 2010).

Critical voices similar to those above can be heard even within semiotics. Eero Tarasti (1991: 85) discussed the attitudes that some semioticians had during the 1980s toward researchers who *immigrate* from their own disciplines to semiotics without being (or becoming) semioticians proper. The danger was said to be that semiotic concepts then become too easily borrowed and employed, which has an impact on the quality of semiotic studies in general. Even here we encounter a lack of necessary background knowledge, and this lack can be observed within translation-semiotic studies as well – a cause for misunderstandings and disputes and an apparent sign of ‘not-herding-together.’ But as I have already maintained, this is also the danger in interdisciplinary Translation Studies; translation scholars might not be sufficiently well-informed about the disciplines whose ideas and concepts they apply or review. Therefore, whichever approach is selected, it is advisable to master the relevant terms, concepts, and methods.

Tarasti (*ibid.*), however, poses two questions that are highly relevant and logical in the context of the present article: Who is in a position to determine the borderline between good or bad semiotics? Who defines what is true or false semiotics? Tarasti’s own position is that such boundary-clearing might only result in doctrinal disputes.

Translation-semiotic challenges

Henri Broms (2004: 103) presents a compelling analysis of Finnish semiotics that may also shed light on semiotics in translation studies. According to Broms, semioticians are Schopenhauerian *Selbstdenker* and academically misunderstood. Semiotic works hardly benefit these independent thinkers, so their policy has instead been to export semiotic ideas to other disciplines. Although Broms focuses on the Finnish situation, I believe that the policy he identifies applies also to translation semioticians, and explains why and how they *also* contribute to Translation Studies. Moreover, it should be remem-

bered that the contributions of translation semioticians can be pioneering within both translation studies and/or within general or applied semiotics.

Another compelling statement was written by Tarasti as early as 1996 (1996: 14-15; see also the first chapter of Tarasti's *Existential semiotics* 2000). Tarasti (2000: 3) very clearly describes the position and dilemma that any semiotician faces today: first-generation semioticians such as Peirce, Greimas, or Sebeok, have become the classics of the field, whereas the second generation that includes Foucault, Barthes, Kristeva, and Eco, has relegated the classical semiotic foundation to the background without being able to propose new semiotic theories. Tarasti attempts to demonstrate that there is an apparent and immediate need for new answers and strategies. For Tarasti, the answer lies in third-generation neo-semiotics, represented by his own doctrine of existential semiotics. It must be noted, however, that Tarasti [2000: vii] does not reject the achievements of the classics of semiotics, but maintains, instead, that their findings must 'be preserved as an essential part of the semiotic heritage' in the present millennium.

In the following quote, Tarasti begins to draft the framework of the much-needed new semiotic theory, a theory that, according to him, not only enhances semiotics, but engages with and answers to the needs of the modern world characterized by constant change and flow:

Is it possible that by enriching first-generation semiotics, by adding there, perhaps, the Heideggerian 'timefilter,' we might construct a new approach? Or shall we completely reject the old sign theories and rebuild them on a radically new basis? If the answer to the last question is 'yes,' then why should we continue speak of 'semiotics' at all? There are, naturally, schools that persist in believing that things are this or that because Peirce or Greimas said so, and not because things *are* so. Every now and then, the semiotician wandering around the world meets such sectarians who, like the Amish people in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, strive to maintain their doctrine untouched. I am afraid they have become the 'arteriosclerosis' of semiotic circulation. Semiotics has to be renewed if it wants to preserve its position on the vanguard of thought. (Tarasti 2000: 4; emphasis in original)

Probably the most influential semiotic approach to translation and simultaneously the most comprehensive semiotic translation theory thus far – the *semiotranslation* introduced by Dinda L. Gorfée (1994) – is essentially based on the work of Charles S. Peirce. My own research has also contributed to Peirce scholarship, semiotics, and Translation Studies. This is why Tarasti's standpoint provides food for thought for those who base their research on Peirce: 'There are, naturally, schools that persist in believing that things are this or that because Peirce or Greimas said so, and not because things *are* so.' This is why Peircean translation scholars must be particularly careful not to justify their theoretical findings, or for that matter, empirical findings simply in terms of Peirce's views, even if their research draws on Peirce. My own approach relies on the type of evidence (if theoretical constructions and arguments can be considered as evidence) that attempts to demonstrate that, ultimately, things are so, that they can be seen or described in a certain, Peircean way. In this context, Peirce is neither an authority nor a justifier, nor are his interpreters doctrine-preservers. On the contrary, applied Peirce studies aim at finding support for Peirce's ideas, which are by no means considered final or unequivocal, but rather continuously updated and therefore put to the test to prove their validity in new areas and new contexts, such as the field of translation.

This is in fact what Peirce himself emphasized. His overall goal was:

to outline a theory so comprehensive that, for a long time to come, the entire work of human reason, in philosophy of every school and kind, in mathematics, in psychology, in physical science, in history, in sociology, and in whatever other department there may be, shall appear as the filling up of its details. (CP 1.1; 1898)

It is this filling-up that Peircean semiotranslation scholars achieve for their part. However, we must work hard to avoid misunderstandings within disciplines and debates about how to justify research and what types of arguments are acceptable within semiotics on the one hand, and within translation semiotics on the other.

Toward more unified discourses on the semiotics of translation

We have thus far touched upon issues which are relevant to the theme of *translation in semiotics* and provide a framework for my article. The relation, and perhaps a hidden tension, between Translation Studies and translation semiotics may have its impact on those who approach translation through their use of semiotic tools; this tense relation may result in a situation that prevents mutual understanding and thus interaction and dissemination of research results between disciplines and even across and beyond them. This section focuses more clearly on translation semiotics, although with relevant references to Translation Studies. The topic remains the same: do the researchers understand each other, is the field theoretically and methodologically homogeneous enough, and what might be the obstacles that reduce uniformity and slow down or even hinder development?

The following discussion stems from some of the aspects that have been discussed earlier. By way of an introduction, I will present two approaches to Translation Studies that are emphasized by translation scholars. For translation semiotics, however, they will serve as a potential mirror image. The first is a position advocated by Lefevere who (1993: 230) considered that 'Translation studies would greatly benefit from a more unified discourse, one which all researchers in the field might view as relevant, if not immediately central, to their own endeavor.' As a means of achieving this, Lefevere (*ibid.*) suggests the following three factors: that this unified discourse should be culture-based, conform to scientific expectations, and result in knowledge-advancement – general factors and requirements that can certainly be extended to refer to any translation-semiotic discourse. The second approach relates to diverse fields of knowledge and, with respect to translation semiotics, leads to the following questions: For whom are the findings of a discipline ultimately intended and who ought to acknowledge them? This issue is beyond the scope of this article, but must be mentioned nevertheless because it is relevant. Kaisa Koskinen (2010: 18-24) has proposed four sociology-inspired subfields for Translation Studies. The first subfield (*professional/scientific TS*) concentrates on scientific research results, the second (*critical TS*) continuously investigates and questions the foundations of the discipline, and the third (*policy/pragmatic TS*) takes into account extra-academic actors and agents and whenever the outcome proves to be successful, develops translational practice. The fourth area (*public TS*) is concerned with furthering public dialogue and widening the scope beyond scholarship:

No matter how interesting findings scientific Translation Studies can unearth, no matter how sharply critical Translation Studies reflects on the foundations of TS research programmes and on the state of the art in the professional world, none of this is of much value unless we are able to communicate these beyond our own small cadre of TS scholars. (Koskinen 2010: 23)

While the dialogue aims at reaching out to the extra-academic and designated public, it can also have other objectives, 'a sustained dialogue with neighbouring disciplines might have spared us some misunderstandings,' the conclusion being that 'as a discipline we cannot matter to others unless we communicate with them' (*ibid.*). As we see, Koskinen's attitude is conciliatory, and she prefers dialogue across scientific boundaries, as this type of dialogue lies in the disciplines' own interests. In my view, the semiotics of translation has not yet succeeded in establishing a dialogue with its neighbors, and this has resulted in a permanent need for self-evaluation within the discipline. The

present article strives to promote this process of self-assessment (for an earlier assessment, see Hartama-Heinonen 2008: 25-80).

In the following, I will present five partly interdependent claims and interpretations of the state of the art. These interpretations, reconsidered and complemented by relevant clarifications and actions, should eventually contribute to a more unified discourse and an advanced reciprocal understanding within the semiotics of translation. In the long run, this development might also extend to how translation semiotics and its achievements will be received and approached within Translation Studies and vice versa.

Semiotics is both too all-inclusive and too fuzzy as a concept.

Semioticians analyze the life of signs. In Peirce's words, 'the life we lead is a life of signs' (unpublished manuscript 1334: 46, 1905, as cited in Gorrée 2007: 218). Consequently, semioticians work with the signs of life, they share their lives with signs, and furthermore, like all interpreters, they give life to signs. From this perspective, semiotics appears to be an all-encompassing discipline; in the broadest understanding of semiotics and translation-semiotics, anything can be a sign and become translated. However, in order to complete its semiotic signhood, a sign must meet certain criteria, namely, representability and interpretability/translatability. In other words, a sign must be able to represent its object, to address the mind of an interpreter, and to determine an interpretant or a chain of interpretants, thus producing an interpretation and a translation which is 'perhaps a more developed sign' (CP 2.228; c. 1897). All in all, it would seem that a researcher in the field of semiotics must possess a deep commitment to the cause of semiotics – admittedly, a very ideal picture that more or less equates semiotics with a lifestyle.

On the other hand, it is no easy task to define semiotics from a more restricted and even individual viewpoint. Tarasti (1990: 10) has claimed that there are almost as many approaches to semiotics as there are semioticians. From this orientation, nearly every semiotician creates his or her own sign theory. To conclude, an outsider can experience semiotics as a fuzzy, vague, and elusive concept and rather monolithic in its comprehensiveness.

Semiotics cannot, however, be whatever one wants it to be. This became evident when *The semiotics of subtitling* by Zoé de Linde and Neil Kay (1999) was reviewed in two translation studies journals by a translation semiotician (Gorrée and Heikkinen 2003) and by a translation scholar (Mason 2003). These reviewers found next to nothing in the book that could be called proper semiotics, if semiotics at all. In brief, all that is presented or referred to as *semiotic(s)* does not have to be semiotic(s) or accepted as such (see Gideon Toury's definition of translation: 'any target-language utterance which is *presented or regarded* as such within the target culture, on whatever grounds' [Toury 1985: 20; my emphases]).

Used by non-semioticians as well, the terms *semiotics* or *semiotic* are merely words, and do not necessarily reveal anything about the user's further commitments to sign-theoretical views. In the same manner, semioticians can refer to *multimodality* or *multisemiotics* without committing themselves to systemic-functional or other approaches. To avoid a flavor of fuzziness and pseudo-semiotics, *semiotics* must be given a relevant meaning-content both within semiotics and by semioticians, and this definition has to bring added value and advantage to a study which in turn advances semiotic knowledge-creation (see Lefevere's view above). Moreover, semiotics as an approach, a methodology, and a language must constitute the unifying factor for translation semiotics.

The translation-semiotic conception of translation is both too comprehensive and too narrow.

In order to be faithful to its semiotic mission, the semiotics of translation needs to address questions that refer to all types of translating and translations. To accomplish this, translation must be assigned the widest possible definition, as maintained above. It is important that this definition in-

cludes all conceivable types of translative actions, and not only the most obvious, the *interlingual* type, or *translation proper*, as Jakobson (1966 [1959]) described it. This semiotic view of translation as the translation of any sign, or *sign* translation, presents certain problems that are readily observed. Namely, it is not always easy to convince researchers, particularly those who are not semiotically oriented, of such an all-embracing concept of translation, the idea that 'translation is translation and beyond.' Many researchers consider this type of definition to be too wide and general and, as an all-encompassing approach, exceedingly vague: translating must be studied as a manifestation or representation of something particular and special. But generality and recursiveness constitute a Peircean-semiotic category and thereby, a distinctly semiotic starting point.

Surprisingly, a parallel tendency of widening conceptions, from a purely linguistic direction to one that is more semiotic, can be observed in Translation Studies. For example, almost thirty years ago, André Lefevere and Susan Bassnett (1995 [1990]: 12) considered that Translation Studies had refined its research object: a translation is approached in its own context of signs from the source and target cultures, so that the discipline 'has been able to both utilize the linguistic approach and to *move beyond* it' (my emphasis). The same idea of 'moving beyond' is expressed by Mary Snell-Hornby (2006: 85) when she refers to multimedial, multimodal, multisemiotic, and audiomedial texts as texts that 'go "beyond language".' Liisa Tiittula and Maija Hirvonen (2015: 252) share this view, arguing that translation is traditionally defined as translating a verbal message into another language. But today, as texts increasingly consist of oral, written, visual, kinesic, and other alternative modalities, translators must take into consideration other sign systems beyond the mere verbal one; a narrow conception of translation does not fulfill current needs (*ibid.*).

These statements remind us of how translation semiotics has, from the very beginning, considered its domain to be what Jakobson (1966 [1959]) described as the three ways of interpreting verbal signs: intralingual, interlingual, and intersemiotic translation. The crucial and pioneering message in Jakobson's proposal was the idea that the sign systems involved in a translation can be either verbal or non-verbal. Contrary to Jakobson's position, which originally focused on verbal signs, translation semiotics is often presented as a field that only concentrates on one type, intersemiotic translation, so that this field is simultaneously both comprehensive and narrow in its definition of translation, its research object. But the relationship with intersemiotic translation has also been given another, semiotranslation-theoretical interpretation. Semiotranslation was, from early on, intended to focus on intersemiotic translation and sign processes, and consequently all possible intersemioses. In other words, the objective was to focus on translations between verbal and non-verbal sign systems and, furthermore, on those translations that do not involve a language at all (Gorlée 1994: 226). What is decisive here is what we want to include in our conception of *intersemiotic*.

The scope of the semiotics of translation is too wide and therefore translation semiotics is, as a concept, too vague.

The discussion above demonstrates that the scope of translation semiotics is wide. It is so wide, in fact, that it might be impossible for translation semioticians to investigate all that could now be included in its realm. While such a project may appear exceedingly ambitious, the problems arising from narrowness become evident in the light of another definition.

In his *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation* (1975), Anton Popovič introduces conceptions that can be regarded as visionary. Popovič (1975: 12, 16 and 17) refers, for instance, to the *linguistics of translation*, which is concerned with the linguistic levels of translations (this designation has not gained currency in TS), and to the *sociology of translation*, which 'explores translation as a fact of social and cultural consciousness' (a designation frequently used today). The following entry is likely the first definition of *semiotics of translation* ever introduced:

Semiotics of Translation. The semiotic nature of the translation process. Translation is, in relation to the author's literary activity, a derived secondary activity. It is a metacommunication in relation to the receiver. The semiotic aspect in translation is concerned with the differences met within the process of translation which are a consequence of a different temporal and spatial realization of the translated text. (Popovič 1975: 16)

In this definition, the semiotic orientation to translation is reduced to the changing of spatio-temporal conditions, and 'the semiotic nature of the translation process' receives a definition that focuses on language. This is a semiotically restricted yet an expected viewpoint, since the topic was literary translation. We may conclude that from a semiotic-translational point of view, a scope that is too wide or too narrow easily becomes a double-edged sword.

The semiotics of translation is too dependent on Roman Jakobson.

Peeter Torop (2001) claims that the research on translation experienced a semiotic shift as early as in 1959, when Jakobson made his seminal proposal of the three ways of interpreting verbal signs – a rather old shift compared to the others (see Figure 1 above). For those representing translation semiotics, it may be impossible to think of their field today without thinking of Jakobson, so influential has his role been. It is, therefore, no surprise that there is still an active interest in Jakobson and his contribution not only to semiotics, but to Translation Studies as well (see, for instance, the articles on the semiotics of translation in *Sign Systems Studies* vol. 36.2 [2008]). Nonetheless, the fundamental question is whether adherence to Jakobson has become an obstacle for the development of translation semiotics.

Jakobson (1896-1982) was, without a doubt, a visionary in translation-theory. In 1959, when he formulated his idea of translation as the intralingual, interlingual, and intersemiotic interpretation of verbal signs, he simultaneously yet preliminarily staked out the field of translation, charting what could be included in future conceptions of translation, translation research, and translation theory (for a different categorization of translation studies, see Holmes 1988: 71-78 and the discussion in Toury 1995: 9-19). In addition, Jakobson was both semiotically and translation-semiotically innovative because, perhaps inspired by Peirce, he indirectly emphasized the nature of translation as *sign interpretation* and *sign translation* as well as an *action across sign systems*. Jakobson's proposal can be interpreted afterwards as concentrating on sign theory, although he explicitly focused 'on linguistic aspects of translation', as the title of his 1959 essay reads.

Jakobson was therefore a pioneer. With his typology, Jakobson demonstrated that interlingual *translation proper* is only one way of interpreting verbal signs, the others being *rewording* and *transmutation*. Implicitly, he also proposed that it is possible to translate within the same sign system (intralingually, within a *language*, which we so often forget is a semiotic system among many others). Besides, Jakobson's view of intersemiotic transposition (1966 [1959]: 238) included the possibility of translating from a non-verbal to a verbal sign system, and even between non-verbal sign systems. Thus, the only alternative that Jakobson's typology did not actually include is the intrasemiotic one, translation within the same non-verbal sign system. In addition, we should not ignore the fact that in this context, even *intra-* can be understood as a type of *inter-*. An intralingual process includes a *from-to* sign transfer, albeit within one language. Through a deeper analysis, all translating proves to be a fundamentally intersemiotic activity, as the process involves a transfer from one sign to another, and definitely occurs between signs. This is, however, an interpretation that is neglected, although in my view, it sincerely honors the classical semiotic heritage.

Since Jakobson referred to signs and sign systems in his classification, it is not surprising that his contribution has evoked a response within semiotic research. In fact, his position is still regarded as one of the cornerstones of translation semiotics. Jakobson is also known within the field of Translation

Studies (see, for instance, Sütiste's article [2008] on the Jakobsonian legacy). The intra- and intersemiotic translation types, though not directly related to Jakobson, have found support in some new practices, such as intermodal print interpreting or audio description as well as multimodal and intra-/interlingual subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (see further, Tiittula and Hirvonen 2015).

The problem with Jakobson's typology of translation lies in the fact that its focus is obviously on language rather than signs (a notion that also applies to any linguistic reading of Charles S. Morris' semiotic views). Still, while the typology has been heavily criticized (see e.g. Hartama-Heinonen 2008: 57-66), the discussion and analysis have somehow become frozen, and no substantial change has occurred. The translation scholar Gideon Toury is one of these critical voices. He blames (1986: 1113-1114) Jakobson's typology for 'the traditional bias for *linguistic* translating' (emphasis in original) and for being concerned only with (verbal) texts. Toury suggests a clearly semiotics-tailored approach to translation as *cross-systemic transference* with two main types of translating between semiotic systems: *intrasemiotic* translating (consisting of an *intrasystemic* type, such as intralingual translating, and an *intersystemic* type, such as interlingual translating) and *intersemiotic* translating. This suggestion with its simple basic categories and further distinctions could well be suited for translation semiotics, since the semiotic aspect of translation is addressed in a balanced manner.

The semiotics of translation is more than intersemiotic translation.

For some reason, translation semioticians are keen to emphasize that intersemiotic translation is for them 'translation proper'. Of course, such an understanding emphasizes the semiotic facet and not the linguistic one, unlike the other two Jakobsonian types. However, with reference to the above discussion, one may wonder whether this line of development will, after all, turn out to be counter-productive. While translation semiotics cannot neglect the possible role of language in translating, it must, under all circumstances, remember its debt to its 'master science'.

To herd together or not to be heard and understood

Translation semiotics suffers from the same type of internal dilemma and ambivalent identity as Translation Studies. Therefore, it is advisable to maintain a balanced and healthy attitude toward one's own area of research, striving for the self-understanding that arises from self-reflection and self-criticism. On the other hand, one must also beware of becoming overly critical; there is no reason to needlessly challenge one's actions and thus create unnecessary problems.

In the present article, I have endeavored to draw attention to several factors that deserve further discussion if we wish to establish and advance the semiotics of translation (or, perhaps, a semiotics of translation). The central question has been whether we belong together and understand each other. It may not be possible to measure the level of understanding, but it is possible to discuss reasons for potential misunderstandings and non-understandings. Another challenge for translation semiotics is whether we need each other and a mutual dialogue, or whether semiotics can consist merely of detached, fuzzy terms without an unambiguous semiotic theory as anchorage. The question of ownership is also fundamental: Who owns translation, and who owns semiotics? Or even, who owns Jakobson?

Translation semiotics deserves to exist, and the questions of its existence must be solved by those who conduct translation-semiotic research.

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Translating culture-specific items in films: the case of interlingual and intersemiotic translation

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Translation is said to be a double act of communication involving both a hermeneutic and a rhetorical dimension. It also involves one or more cognitive acts (Sonesson 2014). In this sense, the translator is both the interpreter of a text and the creator of a new one (ibid.). He or she may 'adapt to the sender of his first act of communication or to the receiver of his second act of communication – or some combination of this' (ibid.). Both the activity of translating and translation as the result of this activity are closely related to the notion of culture. Torop posits that '[c]ulture operates largely through translational activity' in the sense that by the inclusion of new texts culture can both innovate itself and 'perceive its specificity'. In this paper I examine the specificity of films as a medium in which the translator mediates between languages and cultures. Film subtitles involve not only interlingual but mainly intersemiotic translation, where the visual message complements the verbal one and is sometimes preponderant. The research is based on the examination of culture-specific items (CSIs) in Tassos Boulmetis' film Πολιτική Κουζίνα/ A Touch of Spice (2003) and its English subtitles. The theoretical framework for this study is Aixelá's proposed translation strategies for the transfer of CSIs and the parameter of Polysemiotics proposed by Pedersen.

KEYWORDS Audiovisual translation; Interlingual subtitling; Intersemiotic translation; Culture-specific items; Translation strategies; Polysemiotics

Introduction

The first research attempts in the field of audiovisual translation (AVT) were made as early as 1960 and were concerned mainly with constraints involved in film subtitling. In 1982, Marleau underlines one of the key elements of subtitling, that of illusion. He posits that we have to create for the viewer the illusion that he/she can understand everything without even reading the subtitles. Back in the 1980s, subtitling was viewed as a 'necessary evil' (*un mal nécessaire*) with no artistic value. For this reason, Diaz Cintas (2003: 131) expresses the wish that the industry realize that subtitling is a consistent part of the artistic creation of a film. In 2007 Pedersen introduces the idea of 'a tacit contract of illusion'. Later on, he expands on this idea and proposes 'a tacit agreement, "a contract of illusion" [...], between the subtitler and the viewers to the effect that the subtitles are the dialogue, that what you read is actually what people say' (Pedersen 2011: 22). Thus the work of the subtitlers is usually as 'unobtrusive as possible' (ibid.).

Subtitling, be it intralingual or interlingual, is, according to Diaz Cintas and Remael (2007: 8), the translation practice during which translation appears in written form in the lower part of the screen. This practice renders not only the original dialogues, in a condensed way, but also other elements such as letters, signs, graffiti that are present on the screen. It also takes into consideration

the soundtrack of the film or voices that are not seen on screen. From this definition it is evident that audiovisual works, such as films, have three important components: image, the dialogues of the original soundtrack and the subtitles. Thus, during the screening process the viewer is focusing on both the images and the subtitles. To comprehend the film in its totality, he/she is supposed to decrypt the images and at the same time read the subtitles. This process is quite demanding.

In film subtitling the translator is called upon to find a balance between the soundtrack and the subtitles, as there should not be a clash between the subtitles and what is being projected on screen. Another significant element in the process of subtitling is that of redundancy. Subtitles should act as a supplement to the understanding of the film, and should by no means obstruct the reading of the images and the viewing process. Hence, redundant information is usually left out due to the spatio-temporal and technical constraints involved in film translation. Spatial constraints refer to the limited space of 35-40 characters per subtitle line depending on the medium (cinema, television etc.) on which the subtitles are projected. Time constraints refer to the time during which the subtitles appear on the screen. An average viewer is able to read a double-liner in six seconds (d'Ydewalle et al. 1987).¹ Finally, technical constraints refer to a maximum of two lines per subtitle that appear on the lower part of the screen.² Due to these constraints, subtitling has been characterized as 'constrained translation' (Tidford 1982; Mayoral et al. 1988).

The subtitler should bear in mind that events and references at the beginning of a film may reoccur in other sequences later on in the film, thus making even documentary films more attractive to the audience. For this reason he/ she should be careful what to delete or reduce.³ Gottlieb (1994: 269) defines subtitling as an intersemiotic or intermodal type of translation due to the change observed from the spoken to the written mode. This change of mode is critical to the rendering of the original dialogues and is considered one of the constraints of audiovisual translation. It is evident that subtitling, unlike other translation types, is ephemeral or transitory. Another peculiarity of subtitling is that the viewer has access to both the original text and the subtitles. This fact is emphasized by O'Connell (1998) who notes that subtitling is an overt type of translation, since it allows the viewer who knows the original language of the soundtrack to evaluate the subtitles.

In a later study, Gottlieb (1997: 141) suggests that subtitling is a part of a polysemiotic text. He notes that subtitling, contrary to other translation types, is additive since it adds information. The four semiotic channels that are present in polysemiotic texts (the non-verbal visual channel, the non-verbal audio channel, the verbal audio channel and the verbal visual channel) (ibid.: 143) 'carry semiotic information, and there is often a degree of overlap, or Intersemiotic Redundancy between them' (Pedersen 2005: 13). The notion of 'intersemiotic redundancy' was first introduced by Gottlieb (1997: 101). It actually suggests that although almost one third of the information in the original dialogue is lost when rendered in the subtitles, 'the viewers are compensated through other channels, so that the total loss of information is not as dire as the quantitative figures suggest' (Pedersen 2011: 21). Pedersen includes this parameter in his proposed model concerning the translation strategies used in subtitling. He refers to it as 'the parameter of Polysemiotics' (ibid.: 113). He notes that 'the greater the Intersemiotic Redundancy, the less the pressure for the subtitler to provide the TT audience with guidance' (Pedersen 2005: 13). 'Gottlieb's notion of intersemiotic redundancy is closely connected to the parameter of Polysemiotics. The difference is that Polysemiotics would be a more general notion regarding how semiotic channels interact' (ibid.). Polysemiotics aids the subtitler in deciding how much guidance the TT audience needs (ibid.). When an element is referred to in the dialogue and is simultaneously visible in the picture, then the subtitler may refer to it by using a pronoun. So to what extent does the parameter of Polysemiotics influence the transfer of culture-specific items in interlingual subtitling, and does it have an impact on translation strategies used by the subtitler? Before I endeavor to answer these questions, it is interesting to explore how semiotics and subtitling are related. In the following sections relevant literature from the semiotics of translation and AVT will be examined, in an effort to construct a theoretical basis for the analysis of the corpus.

Semiotics, translation, subtitling

Roman Jakobson (1959) in his famous work formulated a three-part division of translation. He named the first division *intralingual translation* or *rewording*, which is the interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language. The second division is *interlingual translation* or *translation proper*, whereby the verbal signs are interpreted by means of another language, and the third division is *intersemiotic translation* or *transmutation* which he defined as ‘an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems’ (1959: 261).

Translation is seen ‘as variation and difference, or rather as a process of transformation’ (Dusi 2015: 188). Dusi (2015: 183), referring to the work of Reiss and Vermeer (1984) and Koller (1995), mentions that intersemiotic translation is ‘not a simple transcodification, but a transcultural, dynamic and functional event caught between the requirement to remain faithful to the source and the need to transform it into a text that is understood and accepted in the target culture’. We are therefore dealing with dynamic texts in which different semiotic systems come into play. Intersemiotic translation is a dynamic process, since languages are open systems that allow translatability given that they keep their boundaries (Dusi 2015: 183). Eco (2001) refers to the field of intersemiotic translation as *adaptation*. It is rather a form of transformation, since it makes more explicit the unsaid. The non-verbal signs come into play and act as explicitation points to express visually what is also portrayed verbally in the subtitles. Torop (2002: 598) makes a similar remark when he mentions that ‘intersemiotic translation makes implicit aspects of interlinguistic translation explicit’. Commenting on the distinction between interlingual and intersemiotic translation, Zabalbeascoa (1997) observes that:

Instead of interlingual–intersemiotic distinction it seems more accurate to regard texts as having varying proportions of linguistic and verbal elements and nonlinguistic or nonverbal signs. In this light, all translations are the result of semiotic processes, where nonlinguistic (and/or nonverbal/suprasegmental, etc.) signs are more important in some translations than in others. (Zabalbeascoa 1997: 341)

Zabalbeascoa therefore asserts that the three-part division proposed by Jakobson may not have clear-cut borders distinguishing the three categories and that it would be more fruitful to examine the different types of translation ‘as a matter of degree, where many different factors come into play’ (ibid.: 327). The distinction between the various types of translation will be made on the basis that ‘certain factors are more important or more restrictive in one type and not so much in another’ (ibid.) This approach allows the translator to have more flexibility in deciding what to include and what to exclude from his/her translation. Furthermore, the model of priorities and restrictions of various types of translation permits the translator to work in a holistic way and account for the difficulties that he/she might encounter. Zabalbeascoa gives the example of translating television comedy and proposes a set of priorities and restrictions imposed both by the medium and by the specific type of translation. This list of priorities and restrictions guides the translator in his work, and can account for ‘[n]ew forms of text production (e.g. cinema, television, hypertexts and multimedia), new discoveries and models describing and explaining language variation and semiotic factors, and even changes in social attitudes and practices’ (ibid.).

Films are considered aesthetic texts, in which meaning is created through the use of semiotic and verbal signs. According to Lotman (1994 [1981]), it can be said that one of the functions of the aesthetic text is to produce new meanings. Lotman posits that every text creates its own semiotic space, but in order to function it needs to interact with other texts. For him, even the audience is a text. Following this, Dusi (2015: 185) states that ‘a film should always be considered an aesthetic text, in which both the plane of expression and the plane of content are necessary for the overall construction of meaning’.

Bearing in mind the above viewpoints, films can be regarded as semiotic texts in which several semiotic systems co-operate and serve to create a coherent whole. Subtitles are an addition to a finished film. As such, in order 'to function effectively, they must interact with and rely on all the film's different channels' (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 45). Delabastita (1989: 199) distinguishes four categories or communication channels that form the filmic sign:

1. Visual presentation – verbal signs.
2. Visual presentation – non-verbal signs.
3. Acoustic presentation – verbal signs.
4. Acoustic presentation – non-verbal signs.

The first category includes credit titles, letters, newspapers and other documents that may appear on screen; the second category focuses on the film's photography; the third category involves songs and dialogue exchanges; and the final one refers to instrumental music and other background noises. The subtitler, in order to fully render the complexity of the film to a foreign audience, should not only rely on verbal information but also on visual information. Visual signs serve to carry cultural information, and help to effectively render the message that is transferred by the verbal sign. Cultures have different visual as well as oral and linguistic traditions. According to the authors, problems arise 'when a linguistic sign, a phrase, refers metaphorically to an iconographic sign or image that the source and target culture do not share' (ibid.: 46). As Dusi states:

The audiovisual image may be deliberately open to interpretations and free to *not-show* and *not-say*: for example, it may employ contrasts in sound, unfocused, point-of-view images, partial shots of actors, with points of view limited to specific details, all of which can create potential elements of indeterminacy that enable the target text to translate the *ambiguities* and the semantic openendedness of the source text. (Dusi 2015: 195-196)

Subtitling can thus be considered 'a process of visual supplementation' (O'Connell 1998: 66). This statement underlines the supplementary nature of subtitles which together with the visual and auditory message form a whole. According to Kovacic (1998: 75), the function of subtitles is 'to facilitate reception and comprehension of a film or television programme produced in a foreign language'. In the case of films, the film itself is a text. However, this text is not limited to verbal signs or to the audio elements of the film; it is considered as an integral whole in which the various points (verbal, non-verbal, visual and acoustic) are complementary. Kendon (1981) concludes that it is very difficult for the writer to convey the wealth of human communication, especially nonverbal communication (cited in Pettit 2004: 35).

Translating culture-specific items in films

The concepts of language and culture are inseparable. According to Aixelá (1996: 53), '[e]ach linguistic or national-linguistic community has at its disposal a series of habits, value judgments, classification systems etc. which sometimes are clearly different and sometimes overlap. This way, cultures create a variability factor the translator will have to take into account. One of the most challenging areas in translation is the rendering of culture-specific items. The specificity of a culture is rendered in texts in the form of references to subjects carrying this cultural distinction (Grammenidis 2009: 107). Several researchers have dealt with this area and use a variety of terms to describe it. Newmark (1988) uses the term *cultural words*, Vermeer (1983) and Nord (1997) refer to *culturemes*, Gambier (2004) uses the term *culture specific references*, Aixelá (1996) and Davies (2003) employ the term *culture-specific items*. Reiss (in Floros 2005) and Leppihalme (2007) use the term *realia*, Pedersen employs the terms *extralinguistic culture-bound references* (ECRs) (2005) and *extralinguistic cultural*

references (2007, 2011) to mention but a few. It is evident that not only the terminology but also the definitions of these terms differ.

Aixelá (1996: 57) notes that many studies have examined CSIs but avoid offering a definition, thus 'attributing the meaning of the notion to a sort of collective intuition'. This poses a two-fold problem, according to the author. Firstly, these terms are arbitrary and secondly they are considered static, 'parallel with the idea that there are permanent CSIs, no matter which pair of cultures is involved and no matter what the textual function (in one text or the other) of the item under study is' (ibid.). For these reasons Aixelá attempts to offer a definition of CSIs as follows:

Those textually actualized items whose function and connotations in a source text involve a translation problem in their transference to a target text, whenever this problem is a product of the nonexistence of the referred item or of its different intertextual status in the cultural system of the readers of the target text. (Aixelá 1996: 58)

From the above definition it is evident that CSIs pose problems in translation either because these items do not exist in the target culture or because they have a *different intertextual status* in the target text. The author offers a third parameter that should be taken into consideration while examining CSIs. This parameter is the *course of time*. As time passes, it is possible for objects, habits or values that in the past were restricted to one community to be shared by other communities (ibid.). Larson referring to the translation of CSIs mentions that:

When the cultures are similar, there is less difficulty in translating. This is because both languages will probably have terms that are more or less equivalent for the various aspects of the culture. When the cultures are very different, it is often difficult to find equivalent lexical items. (Larson 1984: 95-6)

The author posits that every culture has a different focus; some societies are more technical and others are less so (ibid.: 95). The vocabulary used in these societies is more or less technical accordingly. The problem arises when there is a difference in mentality, in culture or in the structure of a society, and this difference is not shared by the target culture. In cases where there is a CSI that is not shared by the target language community, it is difficult to render this diversity. One of the best-known investigations of problems caused by the translation of allusions are the studies by Leppihalme (1994, 1997, 2000), in which she analyzes allusions that can cause 'culture bumps', namely problems in rendering cultural references from one language to another. Baker (1992) refers to the translation of CSIs as one of the most common areas of translation problems. This leads to a 'translation crisis point' (Pedersen 2005: 1). According to the author '[t]he translation crisis point caused by a cultural reference reveals the workings of many norms, such as domestication vs. foreignization, degree of functionalism, awareness of skopos etc' (ibid.). Pedersen proposes the following definition of extralinguistic culture-bound references (ECRs):

Extralinguistic Culture-Bound Reference (ECR) is defined as reference that is attempted by means of any culture-bound linguistic expression, which refers to an extralinguistic entity or process, and which is assumed to have a discourse referent that is identifiable to a relevant audience as this referent is within the encyclopedic knowledge of this audience. (Pedersen 2005: 2)

ECRs are thus 'expressions pertaining to cultural items, which are not part of a language system' (ibid.). The model employed uses a simple demarcation line, namely the use of standard reference works, and does not include 'intralinguistic culture-bound references, such as idioms, proverbs, slang

and dialects' (ibid.). Since the language used in films abounds in intralinguistic culture-bound references such as slang, idioms and even dialects, the definition of CSIs and the model proposed by Aixelá (1996) is more appropriate for the needs of the present study.

The prevailing trends regarding the rendering of CSIs are domestication and foreignisation (cf. Lawrence Venuti 1995). Holmes observes that contrary to the trends of translating culture items in the previous centuries, among contemporary translations there is 'a tendency towards exoticizing and historicizing in the socio-cultural situation' (cited in Aixelá 1996: 56). However, there are some cultural elements that cannot be easily perceived by a foreign-speaking audience.

A translator, in his/ her effort to maintain the cultural diversity of the original film, is faced with several challenges. One challenge is the transfer of proper names to the target text. The translator has the option of preserving the proper name or omitting it. In subtitling, nonverbal messages play an important role in the process of communication. Very often when the verbal message cannot be easily rendered, the visual message is able to make up for it. Bearing in mind the spatiotemporal constraints of film subtitling that were analyzed in the previous section, the transfer of CSIs becomes even more difficult. To make matters worse, the translator is not able to resort to translator's notes or explanatory footnotes to explain CSIs, as in the case of literary texts. Explanations of CSIs in subtitling usually take the form of an intertextual gloss, whereby an explanation is provided with an addition of a word in the subtitles, as a non-distinct part of the text, thus without disrupting the coherence of the text. There are some rare instances in which information is provided as an extratextual gloss, usually in parenthesis or in brackets.

Methodology

Corpus

The study is a comparative analysis of the translation strategies used to translate CSIs. The corpus is comprised of a parallel Greek-English corpus of 103 minutes of film, consisting of the Greek audio script of Tassos Boulmetis' film *Πολίτικη Κουζίνα/A Touch of Spice* (2003) and its English subtitles.

The film is a story about a young boy who, through his grandfather's lessons, acquires some excellent cooking skills along with important lessons about life. The film tries to remind us all that both life and food need a touch of spice, in order to become more interesting and more fulfilling. The director, who is also the scriptwriter, drawing from his own experiences, carefully constructs a nostalgic film which is permeated by several CSIs. The CSIs fall under the categories of personal and geographic names, material culture (food, clothes, objects, measurements, etc.), customs, institutions and historical references. In the following section, I will present the theoretical framework that was used as a basis for the analysis of the film.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework which was adopted for the analysis of the data was Aixelá's proposed translation strategies for the transfer of CSIs (1996) and the parameter of Polysemiotics (Pedersen 2011). Aixelá notes that this frame allows us to decipher 'the general tendency of a translation as regards the double tension [...] (being a representation of a source text and being a valid text in itself)' (ibid.: 60). Aixelá thus devised a scale of possible degrees of manipulation of CSIs, which, based on the degree of manipulation that was observed in the target language translation, can fall under two main groups. The main strategies can be 'the conservation or substitution of the original reference(s) by other(s) closer to the receiving pole' (ibid.: 61).

Conservation	Substitution
<i>Repetition</i> : retention of the original reference	<i>Synonymy</i> : the translator uses 'a synonym or a parallel reference' to substitute the CSI in the target text (p. 63).
<i>Orthographic adaptation</i> : transcription or transliteration	<i>Limited universalization</i> : the translators 'seek another reference, also belonging to the source language culture but closer to their readers' (p. 63).
<i>Linguistic (non-cultural) translation</i> : '[T]he translator chooses in many cases a denotatively very close reference to the original, but increases its comprehensibility by offering a target language version which can still be recognized as belonging to the cultural system of the source text' (p. 61-62).	<i>Absolute universalization</i> : the translator eliminates the foreign connotation of the CSI and chooses a neutral one.
<i>Extratextual gloss</i> : an explanation of the CSI is offered in a footnote, endnote, glossary or in brackets.	<i>Naturalization</i> : '[t]he translator decides to bring the CSI into the intertextual corpus felt as specific by the target language culture' (p. 63).
<i>Intratextual gloss</i> : the translator includes the gloss as a non-distinct part of the text.	<i>Deletion</i> : omission of the CSI in the target text
	<i>Autonomous creation</i> : the translator decides to include 'some nonexistent cultural reference in the target text' (p. 64).

Table 1. Translation Procedures for the Transfer of Culture-Specific Items (Aixelá 1996: 61-65).

Procedure

As mentioned before, the study is a comparative analysis of the source and target text. A descriptive and non-judgmental procedure was followed. The process of analyzing the frames was as follows: firstly, the film was viewed. Then both the original soundtrack and the English subtitles were transcribed. At a third stage, the subtitles were analyzed, so as to determine which translation procedure was used for the transfer of CSIs. At a final stage, the verbal signs of the film were examined in comparison with the visual signs so as to decipher if there is a clash between the visual and verbal sign and if the visual signs help the viewer understand the CSIs. As Cómite Narváez and Valverde Zambrana, referring to the work of Yuste Frias, note:

[i]n any specialised translation of texts including images, translators never isolate verbal content from other semiotic codes, from a language into another, but they translate between languages weaving single words in an 'intersemiotic and multimedial relationship' within one or more codes. Thus, a translator should not forget that an informative and persuasive effect is also based on visuals. (Cómite Narváez and Valverde Zambrana 2014: 82)

I will agree with the aforementioned viewpoint and in this study I will distance myself from the position that audiovisual translation, and more specifically subtitling, is a 'constrained translation'. The visual signs in a film never work in isolation. Thus, the translator should not isolate verbal content but treat it in comparison with other semiotic codes that coexist in the film.

Interlingual and intersemiotic translation of CSIs in the film

In this section I will focus on the translation of CSIs in the target text, and will approach the issue both at the interlingual and the intersemiotic translation level. Some examples of CSIs will be treated according to the category of culture to which they belong.

Personal and geographic names

In the film that was analyzed, one of the most common categories of CSIs was the translation of personal names and geographic names. This category often poses problems in translation, since the foreign audience is rarely acquainted with these CSIs.

In the film there are many references to *Constantinos Palaiologos*, the last emperor of Byzantium. The references to this personal name acquire a comic character in the film, since the father of the protagonist (Pantelis) makes ironic comments to his wife, suggesting that she lacks important historical knowledge. The reference to the emperor is reminiscent of an era associated with glory for the Greek people. At the level of interlingual translation, the procedure of transcription is used. This procedure is quite common for the transfer of personal names. Pralas (2012: 13) makes a similar remark by concluding that '[i]n the translation of personal names the most frequently used procedure is transcription'. From the verbal message that precedes this dialogue, the viewer understands that they are speaking about an important historic figure. Nonetheless, he/she is not able to grasp the meaning of the specific reference and more importantly the connotation associated with this name. At the intersemiotic translation level, especially from the examination of body language, the viewer understands that Pantelis is disturbed by the fact that his wife mentions the name of the emperor, and the ironic tone of his voice brings to the fore his negative comments about his wife's lack of historical knowledge. One could acknowledge that this particular scene partially helps the viewer understand the connotation associated with the emperor's name. In this scene the level of polysemiotic interplay is quite intense. The dialogue exchange is intense, with gestures, intense body language. Thus the message is conveyed by the non-verbal visual channel (the picture, gestures and body language) and the verbal audio channel (the dialogue). Since there is a high level of polysemiotic interplay, the translator has opted to transcribe the reference to the last emperor of Byzantium.

[1] (ST: source text)

- Ο Παλαιολόγος.
- Και σένα τον Παλαιολόγο ποιος σε τον έμαθε;
- Το γράφουν όλα τα βιβλία.

(TT: target text)

- Paleologos.
- What do you know about Paleologos?
- All the books talk about him!

(BT: back translation)

- Paleologos.
- Who has taught you about Paleologos?
- All the books write about him.

In example 2 there is a similar reference to a former Emperor of Byzantium. The reference to this proper name has a dual function in the film: first, to awaken an association to the glorious era and secondly and most significantly to create a humorous effect, with the repetition of a similar exchange as the one explained in example 1. The exchange is between Pantelis and his wife (Soulтана). From

a verbal analysis of the dialogue, it is evident that every time Sultana makes a reference to a former king of Byzantium, Pantelis is frustrated and comments ironically on his wife's lack of historical knowledge. From an interlingual translation perspective, the selected translation procedure for the transfer of the CSI is that of transcription and of intratextual gloss. The translator transcribes the proper name and adds a gloss, namely the word *King* as a non-distinct part of the target text. In this way, he facilitates the understanding of the proper name. From an intersemiotic analysis of the scene, it is evident that the tone of voice and Pantelis' gestures help the viewer understand that they are having another argument about historic figures. From the verbal message the viewer can grasp the meaning of the exchange and the reason they are having an argument. He can also connect this scene to the previous scene analyzed in example 1 and therefore, the ironic comment and the humorous tone of the scene become evident. As far as Polysemiotics is concerned, we note that the level of polysemiotic interplay is not very high in this scene. The message is almost solely conveyed by the verbal audio channel (the dialogue). The translator has opted to add a gloss to the personal name (*King Voulgaroktonos*) explaining that he was an Emperor, possibly because from the non-verbal visual channel this information cannot be deduced and also he might have judged that this type of information might not be known to the majority of the TT audience.

- [2] ST:- Ο Βουλγαροκτόνος; Και συ το Βασίλειο τον Βουλγαροκτόνο, που τον ξέρεις;
 - Το γράφουν όλα τα βιβλία. Ο Βουλγαροκτόνος έτρωγε μόνο παλαμίδα.
 TT: Who was it that taught you
 about King Voulgaroktonos?
 All the books write about him
 and he ate yellow tail tuna.
 BT: Voulgaroktonos? And you, how do you know Vasileio Voulgaroktono?
 All the books talk about him. Voulgaroktonos only ate yellow tail tuna.

As far as geographical names (suburbs, regions, street names etc.) are concerned they are usually transcribed. Thus, *Τσιχανγκίρ* (a place in Turkey) is transferred as *Tsihangir*, *Πόλη* (a shorter form for *Κωνσταντινούπολη*) is transferred with the word *Constantinople*, *Φάληρο* (an area in Athens) is transcribed as *Faliro*. Similarly, street names that do not play an important role in the plot of the film are transcribed. Thus, the address *Οδός Θησέως* is adapted by transliteration to *Thisseas Street*, and *Οδός Αλκυόνης* is similarly adapted and becomes *Halcyone Street*. These references do not carry any significant meaning and do not create a humorous effect in the film. The translator has chosen the procedure of orthographic adaptation to help the viewer understand their meaning. From the verbal message, the viewer understands that they are geographical references. However, since there is no shared cultural knowledge, he/she might not understand the majority of the references.

The usual strategy for the transfer of CSIs referring to personal names or geographical names is conservation. However, there are some cases in which the translator chooses the strategy of substitution. Thus, a reference to *Μπαλουκλί* (an asylum in Istanbul) is universalized as *asylum*. The translator eliminates the foreign connotation of the CSI and chooses a neutral one. The procedure of absolute universalization is also used in other instances, where the translator judges that it is important for the understanding of the plot of the film to grasp the exact meaning of the reference. Hence, *Πατήσια* (a neighborhood in Athens) is absolutely universalized as *our neighborhood*. The choice of the substitution strategy and more specifically of the procedure of absolute universalization eliminates the foreignness of the film but in the instances that were examined it facilitates the understanding of the reference and hence the viewer can follow the plot of the film.

Along the same line of promoting the understanding of the culture-specific reference is a reference to *Καλαμάτα* (a region in Greece), which is translated using an extratextual gloss as *She's from*

Kalamata... (in Greece). In this example the translator opted for the translation strategy of conservation of the foreign cultural reference. The selected procedures were that of transcription of the geographic reference combined with an extratextual gloss in parenthesis. It is worth noting that the use of extratextual gloss is not a common procedure in subtitling, due to the spatiotemporal constraints involved in this particular AVT mode. Nonetheless, it is often chosen as a way to provide extra information on the CSI without eliminating the foreign character of the reference. In these two examples there is a low level of polysemiotic interplay. This means that there is little interaction between the semiotic channels. The message is solely transferred through the verbal audio channel. Thus we observe that the parameter of Polysemiotics is low and this factor influences the translator's decision to universalize a geographical reference (*Πατήσια* becomes *our neighborhood*) or to include an extratextual gloss explaining the exact location of the geographical reference *She's from Kalamata... (in Greece)*

References to geographical names can rarely be deduced through examination of the iconic visual signs of the film (based on the categorization of nonverbal semiotic systems made by Groupe μ. 1992), since they are included in the dialogue and usually no reference is provided by the image or the gestures to help the viewer understand their meaning or more specifically, the connotations associated with them. Therefore, the translator provides an explanation of the CSI whenever it is deemed necessary in the form of an extratextual or intratextual gloss, or sometimes prefers to eliminate the reference to the Greek culture and provide a neutral word to explain the reference.

Material culture

The film *A Touch of Spice* is permeated by CSIs that belong to material culture: food, clothes, objects, measurements, etc. which are specific to the source culture. The target viewer might be acquainted with some of them, but most of them pose problems when the translator decides to transfer them into the target language. In the following example, the translator has opted for the translation procedure of absolute universalization. We observe that the foreign connotation of the CSI (*ρακί: raki*, a strong alcoholic drink) has been eliminated and a neutral word (*drink*) was chosen. The translator has possibly judged that the average TT audience would not be acquainted with this CSI so he/she has opted for a neutral one.

- [3] ST: έτσι να πιούμε ένα ρακί για το καλωσόρισες.
 TT: so we can have a drink
 to welcome him.
 BT: so we drink a raki to welcome him.

In another sequence in the film, there is a scene in which Fanis' grandfathers' friends wait for the arrival of grandpa. They decide to have a toast to grandpa by drinking *raki*. The reference to *raki* is also absolutely universalized and becomes the neutral word *toast*. In this scene the polysemiotic interplay is not very high, since the message is conveyed by both the non-verbal visual channel (the picture, gestures and body language) and the verbal audio channel (the dialogue). From the analysis of the iconic visual signs of the scene, the viewer can deduce that they are having a toast and that they are drinking *raki*. So, in this case, the nonverbal signs aid the viewer in understanding the CSI.

- [4] ST: Να πιούμε πρώτα ένα ρακί στην υγεία του παππού;
 TT: Should we have
 a toast to grandpa?
 BT: Should we first drink a raki as a toast to grandpa?

In example 5, we have another case in which the verbal sign refers to a CSI associated with food (*μεζέδες* plural for *μεζές: meze*, a selection of small dishes served to accompany alcoholic drinks. These

dishes are used as appetizers mainly before serving the main dish in Turkey, Iran, the Balkans and the Near East). From an interlingual translation perspective, the translator has used a substitution strategy (absolute universalization). The culture-specific reference *μεζέδες* has been substituted by a neutral reference to food *appetizers*. The iconic visual sign in this scene does not help the viewer to understand the meaning of the word and the connotation of hospitality associated with it. However, it should be noted that this reference reoccurs in other sequences later on in the film, and there the iconic visual signs aid the viewer in visualizing the CSI and understanding the connotation.

[5] ST: Θα πούμε και σε μερικούς φίλους που έχει να τους δει από τότες. Εσύ θα ετοιμάσεις μερικούς μεζέδες...

TT: We'll call his old friends and you can cook some appetizers...

BT: We'll call his friends that he hasn't seen since then. You can prepare some *meze*...

Customs, institutions and historical references

Another category of CSIs that poses problems in translation are references to customs, institutions and historical events. Customs that belong to a particular culture bear specific connotations. Thus, in Greece, before a marriage it is usual to wish to a couple *Η ώρα η καλή*. It is a particular wish that means to have a nice and prosperous life together, and it bears positive connotations of prosperity. In example 6 we observe that this utterance was deleted in the target text. From the intersemiotic analysis, it is evident that Fanis' grandfather is smiling and makes comments about the wedding. The viewer cannot understand the particular reference to this custom. However, from the gestures, the smiling faces, and the body language, he/ she can deduce that there is a wish being made and positive connotations associated with it. The polysemiotic interplay in this scene is low, since the message is conveyed by the verbal audio channel and partially also by the non-verbal visual channel (the smiling face and the body language). The translator has opted to delete the utterance, probably because he/she has judged that it is not central to the plot of the film.

[6] ST: Άντε η ώρα η καλή.

TT: [no translation]

Another CSI that refers to an institution is example 7. In this example *η Μεγάλη του Γένους* is a shorter form for *η Μεγάλη του Γένους Σχολή* (Phanar Greek Orthodox College, in Greek known as the Great School of the Nation). This institution was established in 1454 and was a school from which important Greek ministers and politicians graduated. It should be highlighted that this school is considered the most prestigious Greek Orthodox School in Istanbul. In this scene, Pantelis mentions to his wife Sultana that he has graduated from Phanar Greek Orthodox College, thus connoting that he is a prominent figure with significant historical knowledge. From an interlingual perspective, it is observed that the translator has opted for the strategy of substitution and more specifically, the procedure of deletion. It should be stressed that the reference to this institution cannot be deduced from nonverbal signs in the scene. Therefore, the connotation associated with this specific reference is lost. In this example the polysemiotic interplay is rather low. The message comes almost solely through the dialogue (the verbal audio channel). The translator has opted to delete this CSI, probably because he has judged that not all TT viewers would be acquainted with it and secondly because it is not central to the development of the plot. In this particular example, the spatiotemporal constraints of subtitling might have also influenced the translator's decision to delete the CSI.

[7] ST: Εγώ τελείωσα τη Μεγάλη του Γένους. Ποτέ δεν μας είπαν ότι ο αυτοκράτορας έτρωγε κρέας με κανέλλα!

TT: I never heard that Paleologos
ate meatballs with cinnamon!

BT: I graduated from the Great School of the Nation. They never told us that the emperor
ate meat with cinnamon!

In the last example there is a reference to a historical event, namely the day (April 21, 1967) that the Greek military junta came to power and imposed a dictatorship which lasted until 1974. The reference to this historical event is rendered into English by using a parallel reference (instead of translating the utterance *αξιωματικοί* with a similar word such as officers, colonels etc. the translator uses the reference *military junta*) and the intratextual gloss (*Greek*). In the film, the director seeks to stress this tragic event by using a scene of military officers wearing uniforms and army tanks. The use of this iconic sign connotes a rigid era and also translates connotatively the verbal sign of a previous scene in the film, in which Fanis narrates that he was afraid of people wearing uniforms. In this scene of the film there is a high degree of interaction between the channels. The message comes through the verbal audio channel (a narrator speaking), the non-verbal visual channel (the iconic signs, namely the military officers and the army tanks), the non-verbal audio channel (the Greek national anthem is the background music) and finally the verbal visual channel (there is a caption with the date April 21, 1967, the date the Greek military junta came to power, in yellow capital letters). The translator has opted to add an intratextual gloss to the subtitles, possibly because this cultural reference would not be understood by the TT audience without an explanation. Finally, this cultural reference is central to the development of the plot, thus an intratextual gloss was deemed necessary to aid comprehension.

[8] ST: Έτσι οι αξιωματικοί εκείνο το πρωί, έπεισαν τον πατέρα μου πως για να ξεχάσω τη Σαϊμέ...

TT: The day the Greek Military Junta came to power.

My father was convinced that

in order to forget Saime...

BT: Thus the officers that morning, convinced my father that in order to forget Saime...

Conclusion

From the study and the results it is evident that the transfer of CSIs in subtitling entails significant difficulties. The translator is faced with the dilemma whether to maintain the diversity of the source text or make the target text more accessible to the target language culture. When faced with the translation of CSIs, the situation is further exacerbated. It is observed that cultural heterogeneity cannot be easily rendered in films, except in cases where the similarities between languages makes it possible. This difficulty is mainly due to the specificities of every language and culture and not to the spatiotemporal constraints of subtitling. More specifically, for references to customs or institutions where representations are not sharable, deletion is often the selected translation procedure. CSIs referring to personal or geographic names are usually transcribed and, whenever they bear connotations that affect the plot of the film, an intratextual or extratextual gloss is added. Most CSIs referring to food, drinks or measurements are rendered into English by using the procedure of absolute universalization. These items are usually intersemiotically translated in the film with the use of nonverbal signs (mainly iconic visual signs). Finally, we observe that the parameter of Polysemiotics partially influences the choice of translation strategies. In some cases when there is a high level of interaction between the polysemiotic channels, and the CSI is judged as central to the plot of the film and it is deemed that the TT audience will not be acquainted with it, there is an explanation in the form of an intratextual or extratextual gloss added to the subtitles.

NOTES

¹ The six-second rule was invented by d'Ydewalle et al. (1987). The researchers conducted a series of experiments concerning the time needed for the human mind to process a double-line subtitle. This time was estimated as six seconds for a double-liner and three seconds for a single line subtitle. Gambier (2003) expresses his disagreement with this rule, noting that every viewer has his/ her own reading pace. He thus stresses the need to cater for the real needs not only of an average viewer but of specific groups.

² Diaz Cintas (2005) mentions that in certain countries such as Turkey we might even encounter a subtitle of three lines. Furthermore, in countries where there are two official languages, such as Finland (Finnish/Swedish) and Belgium (French/Flemish), we might have four lines of subtitles: a double-liner for Swedish/ French and a double-liner for Finnish/ Flemish.

³ See Remael 1998 and Franco 2000.

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Retour de Babel: l'indécidabilité derridienne et la rétrotraduction en supplément

René Lemieux

Ce texte en deux temps questionne l'irréductibilité essentielle d'une division dans le langage dont la traduction doit faire l'épreuve. Dans une première partie est explicitée une réflexion sur le 'nom' dans le mythe de la tour de Babel. Dans une deuxième est présentée une difficulté particulière dans la traduction d'un texte en français d'un commentaire de Lawrence Venuti sur sa traduction en anglais de Jacques Derrida. Le lien entre les deux temps est allégorique: le mythe de la tour de Babel est aussi le récit de l'impossibilité d'un retour indemne avant la dispersion des langues, tout comme le retour par la rétrotraduction d'un commentaire sur une traduction se présente comme l'établissement possible d'un 'nom'. Ainsi, faire revenir la discussion d'un auteur traduit vers sa langue d'origine n'équivaut pas à 'rétablir' le discours dans sa simplicité ante traduction, mais au contraire produit une complication supplémentaire. Le 're-tour' de Babel, pour jouer sur la 'tour', ne signifie pas l'adéquation d'une langue, ici le français, avec elle-même. Tournant autour de l'indécidable relevance, à la fois propre et impropre à la pensée d'un auteur (Hegel, Gutt, Derrida ou Venuti), l'article se veut aussi une réflexion sur une des caractéristiques de la traduction et du commentaire de la déconstruction: elle nécessite toujours un surplus de langue en n'y laissant rien indemne.

MOTS-CLES Jacques Derrida; Déconstruction; Traduction; Tour de Babel; Lawrence Venuti

Introduction

Le présent article se constitue dans un dédoublement irréductible à celui entre théorie et pratique. S'il faut penser l'acte traductif, ce n'est pas en amont dans une théorisation utile que j'inscrirai ma contribution, mais plutôt, en aval, dans une réflexion sur une expérience. Cette expérience a ceci de particulier qu'elle entraîne à son tour un dédoublement: la traduction d'un traducteur. En effet, j'ai traduit un article du théoricien de la traduction Lawrence Venuti de l'anglais vers le français. Dans cet article, Venuti décrivait son expérience de traduction d'une conférence de Jacques Derrida du français vers l'anglais. Les difficultés exprimées par Venuti n'ont pas été les mêmes que celles que j'ai vécues. On le verra bientôt, faire revenir la discussion d'un auteur vers sa langue d'origine n'équivaut pas à 'rétablir' le discours dans sa simplicité ante traduction, mais au contraire produit une complication supplémentaire. Le 're-tour' de Babel, pour jouer sur la 'tour', ne signifie pas l'adéquation d'une langue, ici le français, avec elle-même. C'est ce phénomène sémiologique que j'aimerais aborder à partir de mon expérience et de la pensée de Derrida.

La conférence de Derrida traduite par Venuti, 'Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction "relevante"?' propose une déconstruction du discours traductologique à partir notamment de l'opposition hiéro-

nymite entre le 'mot-à-mot' et le 'sens-pour-sens'. Dans son commentaire, Venuti propose de voir dans cette conférence la continuation du 'dialogue' derridien amorcé dès 1971 dans 'Signature événement contexte' avec la théorie des *speech acts*. On pouvait déjà y voir l'enjeu entre la 'mention' et l' 'usage' chez Austin. L'affaire est bien connue, car elle connaîtra une suite avec cette fois John Searle.¹ Dans la conférence traduite par Venuti, Derrida travaille alors ce qui devrait se re-traduire en français par 'relevance' (si c'est une mention) ou 'pertinence' (si c'est un usage) en traduction qu'il est possible de relier à la '*relevance theory*' d'Ernst-August Gutt.

Entre la déconstruction de la théorie de la traduction exprimée par Derrida et les difficultés exprimées par le traducteur Venuti, je me propose de réfléchir à cette question en deux temps. Le premier se propose comme une relecture, en compagnie de Derrida, du mythe de Babel. Il s'agit bien sûr de revoir quelques notions théoriques concernant la traduction entre les langues telles qu'elles étaient interprétées par la déconstruction. Il s'agit plus encore de repenser la division originelle de la traduction, non seulement entre les langues, mais avant tout entre les fonctions textuelles. La deuxième partie se veut une présentation de certains problèmes pratiques rencontrés lors de la traduction d'un commentaire de Lawrence Venuti écrit dans la suite de sa traduction en anglais de Derrida. J'y fais alors quelques propositions sur la '*Relevance Theory*' et ce que la déconstruction peut y apporter avec la 'relevance'. Cette *relevance*, je tenterai de l'établir, nécessite toujours un *surplus* de langue: elle attaque toujours la souveraineté de la langue en ne la laissant jamais indemne dans son identité.

Le mythe de Babel comme allégorie du discours en traduction

Le mythe de Babel se présente souvent comme l'analogie idéale de la traduction: la dispersion des peuples et la multiplication des langues rendraient nécessaires la traduction perçue ainsi comme un retour à un temps où l'inter-communicabilité était totale. La traduction serait ainsi un refus de la condition babélienne des hommes, celle d'une impossible communion à travers une langue universelle. J'évoquerai rapidement dans les prochaines lignes le mythe et son interprétation par Derrida pour y voir quelque chose comme une théorie sur les 'noms' qui permettra d'aborder par la suite le problème de la '*Relevance Theory*' dans un commentaire par Lawrence Venuti d'une traduction qu'il a faite de Jacques Derrida.

Raconté dans la Genèse, le mythe se situe après le déluge auquel la famille de Noé a survécu et avant le récit d'Abraham. Précisément, le mythe est raconté immédiatement après la narration de la généalogie de la famille de Noé qui mentionne notamment ses trois fils Sem (ou Shem), Japhet et Cham. En résumé, l'épisode de Babel se présente comme le très court récit en neuf versets (chapitre 11, versets 1 à 9) de la construction et de la destruction d'une tour. L'humanité composée des fils et des filles des trois frères, alors unis par une même langue, avait trouvé, dit le mythe, une vallée pour que tous puissent y habiter. Là, ces gens formèrent le désir de bâtir une tour qui s'élèverait jusqu'au ciel. La suite du mythe est bien connue: Dieu voyant cela, craignant qu'à ces hommes nul projet ne demeurerait irréalisable, descendit du ciel, confondit leur langue et les dispersa sur toute la terre. Le dernier verset (9) conclut: 'C'est pourquoi on l'appela du nom de Babel, car c'est là que l'Éternel confondit le langage de toute la terre, et c'est de là que l'Éternel les dispersa sur la face de toute la terre' (trad. Segond).

Le mythe se compose de neuf versets et il serait possible de voir dans le verset central (le cinquième), le moment médian entre la volonté des hommes vers l'élévation et la contre-volonté divine de mettre fin à cet hybris. Les quatre premiers versets forment à cet égard une unité thématique, celle du désir des hommes à toujours plus d'union, dans la crainte d'une division qui menacerait leur pouvoir. Le quatrième verset se conclut par un souhait que les hommes se font à eux-mêmes. Ils dirent encore: Allons! bâtissons-nous une ville et une tour dont le sommet touche au ciel, et faisons-nous un nom, afin que nous ne soyons pas dispersés sur la face de toute la terre.

On sait déjà que la tour sera finalement détruite par Dieu, on sait aussi que Dieu dispersera les hommes, qu'en est-il de *se faire un nom*? En hébreu, le mot 'nom' se dit שֵׁם (ou *shem*), il ne sera répété qu'une seule fois, dans le tout dernier verset où le mot 'nom' désignera ce par quoi on peut nommer 'Babel'. Il y a donc à la fois une translation vectorielle de la première à la deuxième moitié de récit, mais aussi une symétrie dont l'axe est le cinquième verset : les hommes se rassemblent d'abord pour construire la tour et ainsi *se faire un nom*, ensuite Dieu *accorde bien un nom*, mais aux ruines de cette tour, c'est-à-dire 'Babel'. On a là en quelque sorte un chiasme entre l'ascendance des hommes pour se nommer et la descente de Dieu pour nommer l'événement de l'impossibilité de l'auto-nomination (qui ne va pas sans une autonomisation).

Le 'nom' Babel a intéressé Jacques Derrida dans un de ses textes les plus célèbres sur la traduction, *Des tours de Babel* (Derrida 1987 [1985]), dans lequel il commente la première traduction d'André Chouraqui (1992) de la Genèse (celui-ci fera par la suite publier une deuxième version dans sa traduction complète de la Bible). L'objectif de Derrida est en quelque sorte de confronter le projet traductologique de Chouraqui avec sa réalisation effective. Ce projet se voulait la traduction la plus littérale possible de la Bible (hyperlittérale, même), un peu à la manière d'un mot à mot. Un exemple bien connu est 'langue' devenant chez Chouraqui 'lèvre' puisqu'en hébreu, שָׂפָה (*safah*) signifie d'abord 'lèvre' avant de désigner métaphoriquement la 'langue' (qui n'est pas moins une métaphore en français). Le projet chouraquien ne peut toutefois pas s'exprimer entièrement sans équivoque, et Derrida notera un terme, non le moindre, qui ne peut pas fonctionner dans ce système. Il s'agit de 'Babel', mot incertain, indécidable, qui est à la fois un nom propre ('Babel' désigne les ruines de la tour, c'est son 'nom propre'), il peut aussi désigner un nom commun : 'confusion' ou 'brouillage'. Entre ces deux possibilités, Chouraqui refuse le choix et traduit 'Babel, confusion':

yhwh les disperse de là sur la face de toute la terre.
Ils cessent de bâtir la ville.
Sur quoi il clame son nom : Bavel, Confusion,
car là, yhwh confond la lèvre de toute la terre,
et de là yhwh les disperse sur la face de toute la terre (v. 8 et 9, cités dans Derrida 1987 [1985] : 206-207).

Alors que Chouraqui avait le choix entre le propre et le dérivé – le second, le commun –, il choisit de ne pas choisir.² Cette distinction entre le nom commun et le nom propre est particulier dans le cas de la grammaire hébraïque. Dans son *Abrégé de grammaire hébraïque*, Spinoza (2006: 65) rappelle au chapitre V que le nom est la base de la grammaire, et même que 'tous les mots hébreux ont la valeur et les propriétés du nom'. Le traducteur mentionne ainsi en introduction que:

la seule distinction grammaticalement fondée à l'intérieur du discours hébraïque est donc la distinction entre le nom commun et le nom propre: le nom propre n'exige pour être compris aucune détermination (qu'elle soit génitive ou indicative), il ne subit aucune modification de consonne ou de voyelle. (Spinoza 2006: 19)

Dans la perspective de Derrida, si le mot 'Babel' du mythe n'est qu'un nom propre, il est simplement intraduisible et doit se rendre par 'Babel'. Mais le 'tour' du texte est de *traduire* le mot par un commentaire métadiscursif : le texte même traduit la signification du nom propre (qui ne signifie jamais à proprement parler : il désigne) avec la paraphrase 'car là, yhwh confond la lèvre de toute la terre'. Jamais 'Babel' n'est qu'un nom propre, il est également le nom commun de la confusion.³ Le problème de Babel devient alors celui de la nomination, et Jacques Derrida fait de la nomination de la tour l'enjeu de ce récit de la Genèse :

Babel, nous le recevons aujourd'hui comme un nom propre. Certes, mais nom propre de quoi, et de qui? Parfois d'un texte narratif racontant une histoire (mythique, symbolique, allégorique, peu importe pour l'instant), d'une histoire dans laquelle le nom propre, qui alors n'est plus le titre du récit, nomme une tour ou une ville, mais une tour ou une ville qui reçoivent leur nom d'un événement au cours duquel yhw'ah 'clame son nom'. (Derrida 1987 [1985]: 208)⁴

Le problème posé par Derrida – si difficile à traduire, par exemple en anglais – sera de faire voir que le nom de Babel est aussi le nom de Dieu (ce à quoi ou à qui réfère le possessif 'son' dans 'son nom')⁵, un nom déjà, entre le *qui* et le *quoi*, à la jointure entre le commun et le propre. Avec Babel, Dieu qui a confondu le nom propre et le nom commun (Babel, *balal*) fait des jeux de mots, il fait de la poésie de telle manière que le texte ne peut pas être traduit dans son intégralité.⁶ Une part intraduisible se met au jour:

Cette histoire raconte, entre autres choses, l'origine de la confusion des langues, la multiplicité irréductible des idiomes, la tâche nécessaire et impossible de la traduction, sa nécessité *comme* impossibilité. [...] Et dans cette traduction, le nom propre garde une destinée singulière puisqu'il n'est pas traduit dans son apparition de nom propre. Or un nom propre en tant que tel reste toujours intraduisible, fait à partir duquel on peut considérer qu'il n'appartient pas rigoureusement, au même titre que les autres mots, à la langue, au système de la langue, qu'elle soit traduite ou traduisante. (Derrida 1987 [1985]: 208)

Or, il y a un autre passage du récit où la question de la nomination est importante; ce passage ne fait pas l'objet d'un examen aussi minutieux par Derrida que le dernier verset du mythe. Il s'agit du quatrième verset que je cite dans quelques traductions françaises :

Jean Calvin (1669):	et faisons-nous une réputation, de peur que nous ne soyons dispersés sur la face de toute la terre.
L.-I. Lemaistre de Sacy (1759):	et rendons notre nom célèbre avant que nous nous dispersions par toute la terre.
Louis Segond (1874):	et faisons-nous un nom, afin que nous ne soyons pas dispersés sur la face de toute la terre.
Bible du Rabinat (1899):	faisons-nous un établissement durable, pour ne pas nous disperser sur toute la face de la terre.
TOB (1975-1976):	Faisons-nous un nom afin de ne pas être dispersés sur toute la surface de la terre.

Des traductions consultées, *shem* (שֵׁם) est généralement traduit par 'nom' (dans le grec de la Septante 'ὄνομα', dans le latin de saint Jérôme 'nomen', dans l'allemand de Martin Luther 'Namen', dans l'anglais de la King James 'name'), sauf pour Calvin qui traduit par 'réputation', mais c'est au sens de 'renommé' ou de 'nom célèbre', et la Bible du Rabinat, sous la direction du Grand-Rabbin Zadoc Kahn, qui traduit par 'établissement'. Si le sens premier de *shem* est 'nom', il peut aussi posséder des sens dérivés: 'réputation', 'célébrité', 'gloire', il peut aussi désigner Dieu comme 'le Nom', et finalement référer à un 'mémorial' ou un 'monument'. L'interdit babélien pourrait se voir ici comme celui de la volonté des hommes à imiter Dieu: après avoir atteint le ciel avec la tour, se donner un nom pour célébrer l'exploit – et ce nom, est 'le' nom, y compris le 'nom de Dieu' qui n'en a pas (voir à ce propos Pommier 2013: 9-29). Plus simplement, il peut aussi se voir comme la condition d'être du 'nom' qui provient toujours de l'Autre – des parents, de l'héritage familial ou encore de la collectivité à laquelle on appartient.

Le mot hébreu *shem*, rappelons-le, peut se comprendre au moins de deux manières différentes: à la fois comme 'nom propre' et comme 'nom commun'. Dans le quatrième verset, les hommes construisant la tour de Babel ont-ils voulu se faire un nom propre (un nom de nation? un nom de peuple?), un nom commun (universaliser leur particularité? se donner le nom d' 'humanité'? par exemple) ou encore le nom de 'nom', le nom de Dieu qui confond le nom propre et le nom commun? Cela demeure indécidable – en français (alors qu'en anglais, l'opposition entre 'nom propre' et 'nom commun' est généralement rendue par *name* et *noun*). Or, Derrida indiquait en quelque sorte une piste de réflexion nouvelle lorsqu'il se demandait si Babel devait se traduire comme nom propre, mais de quoi ou de qui? Car entre le nom propre et le nom commun s'articulent les questions du *qui* ou du *quoi* de l'œuvre: traduire, c'est aussi se demander s'il faut traduire *quelque chose* ou *quelqu'un*, le sujet d'un texte (son énonciateur) ou son objet (l'énoncé). Même s'il n'en fait jamais mention explicitement, Derrida peut nous permettre de relier la problématique du nom (propre ou commun) et de la traduction du *qui* ou du *quoi* car à de nombreuses reprises dans son œuvre, le *qui* et le *quoi* sont problématisés. Par exemple, dans son séminaire sur le parjure et le pardon (à l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1997-1999), il formule ses premières questions ainsi:

Nous aurons plus d'une fois affaire aux effets d'une question préalable, antérieure à celle-ci, et qui est la question: 'qui' ou 'quoi'? Pardonne-t-on à *quelqu'un* [...], pardonne-t-on à *quelqu'un* ou pardonne-t-on *quelque chose* à *quelqu'un*, à *quelqu'un* qui, de quelque façon, ne se confond jamais totalement avec la faute et le moment de la faute passée, ni même avec le passé en général. Cette question – 'qui' ou 'quoi'? – ne cessera, sous de nombreuses formes, de revenir hanter le langage du pardon. (Derrida 2012: 15)⁷

La distinction entre ce qu'on pourrait appeler le *qui* et le *quoi* du texte, sans être particulier à la traduction des textes des sciences humaines, est quand même assez important dans ce type de traduction. En effet, lorsqu'il s'agit de traduire des textes qui relèvent plutôt du débat d'idées, la catégorisation du texte selon sa discipline (ce dont parle le texte), son genre ou architextualité (comment il en parle) ou encore celui ou celle qui parle (son auteur, ou le sujet du discours) est cruciale au point où ces éléments déterminent souvent comment seront traduits certains points problématiques du discours. Le terme anglais '*relevance*' de la *Relevance Theory* est, à l'intérieur de l'économie du texte de Venuti que j'ai traduit, traversé par une telle problématique. Il s'agit dans les prochaines lignes de l'explicitier à partir de mon expérience de traduction.

La rétrotraduction de la déconstruction en français

En 2001, Venuti traduit 'Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction "relevante"?' de Jacques Derrida sous le titre 'What Is a "Relevant" Translation?' dans la revue *Critical Inquiry* et fera publier un commentaire sur cette traduction deux ans plus tard dans le *Yale Journal of Criticism*. L'article de Derrida se présente comme une conférence prononcée en réponse à une demande de l'Association des traducteurs littéraires de France. Derrida qui travaillait alors à son séminaire sur le pardon réussit à insérer la problématique sur laquelle il travaillait dans une conférence sur la traduction, tout comme, inversement, il laisse pénétrer la question de la traduction dans son propre projet de réflexion sur le pardon. La conférence de Derrida prend appui sur un vers du *Marchand de Venise* de William Shakespeare qui s'énonce ainsi '*When mercy seasons justice*', que Derrida traduira par 'Quand le pardon relève la justice'. La longue conférence de Derrida devient ainsi une très longue note de bas de page d'un traducteur qui aurait eu à traduire ce seul vers. Toutefois, la conférence possède en outre toute la matière pour remettre en question ce que j'ai nommé plus haut la distinction du *qui* et du *quoi* de la traduction avec le seul terme indécidable 'relevance': le terme est indécidable dans son concept

(entre l'usage qu'on en faisait alors, et qu'on en fait encore aujourd'hui, en traductologie, et l'usage philosophique comme traduction française possible de l'*Aufhebung* de Hegel), il l'est dans sa langue (dans le premier cas, c'est en anglais, dans le second en français), ainsi que dans son origine auctoriale (Ernst-August Gutt, Hegel ou même Venuti). La rétro-traduction en français d'un discours sur la traduction en anglais d'un texte originellement dans un 'français' contaminé par l'anglais réanime le problème de l'indécidabilité du mot.

L'article-commentaire de Lawrence Venuti tentait quant à lui de réfléchir à la marginalisation de la traduction dans le monde universitaire américain d'aujourd'hui. Sa décision de traduire Derrida – c'est le seul texte de Derrida qu'il a traduit – était, écrit-il, stratégiquement motivé: '[Ce choix] invitait la reconnaissance, mais au même moment, visait à provoquer une défamiliarisation qui pourrait stimuler une nouvelle réflexion du statut institutionnel de la traduction' (Venuti 2013: 146). Il s'agissait, comme l'explique Venuti, d'une part de faire intervenir un auteur populaire des '*cultural studies*' en traductologie, afin que cette dernière puisse prendre conscience de l'importance d'une réflexion philosophique sur ses enjeux; de l'autre, et du même coup, mettre en scène un problème empirique typique des '*translation studies*' pour le public d'études plus spéculatives sur la culture afin qu'il puisse voir ce qui a lieu lors d'une transformation textuelle de type traductif. Il s'agissait en quelque sorte pour lui de s'adresser à deux publics, et la différence entre ces deux publics est hiérarchisée : rabaisser les uns vers l'empirique, relever les autres vers le spéculatif.

C'est dans la dernière partie de son texte que Venuti expose quelques enjeux traductifs. De prime abord, c'est surtout la réception de sa propre traduction qui cause problème. Les remarques des éditeurs et correcteurs sur la syntaxe derridienne, reproduite dans la traduction, est à cet égard symptomatique d'un rejet de ce que Venuti appelle la 'forainisation',⁸ c'est-à-dire la possibilité pour le traducteur d'ajouter de la *résistance* à la lecture, une stratégie pour inscrire sa 'visibilité' dans le texte contre les tendances d' 'invisibilisation' (ou d'effacement) du travail du traducteur.

Venuti commente un des enjeux qu'il perçoit dans le texte, celui de l'indécidable 'relevance'. Pour un lecteur francophone de Derrida, même assidu de son œuvre, mais qui n'aurait pas nécessairement des connaissances en traductologie, l'expression 'relevance' semble étrange (le terme est peu utilisé en français, même si, comme 'différance', il est une construction possible et même légitime dans la langue), au mieux, on l'associerait immédiatement à la traduction du terme '*Aufhebung*' suggérée par Derrida (la 'relève', voir Büttgen 2004). Toutefois, un traducteur de l'anglais noterait immédiatement la possibilité d'un 'faux-ami' dans le texte de Derrida. La '*relevance*' anglaise devrait alors se traduire en français par la 'pertinence' ou l' 'à-propos', ou encore, en retrouvant le concept développé dans les maximes de Paul Grice, on pourrait retrouver l' 'adéquation', la 'correspondance' ou même l' 'équivalence'. En effet, comme le note Lawrence Venuti, le terme '*relevance*' en anglais renvoie aisément aux théories de la pragmatique des échanges linguistiques, notamment aux quatre maximes conversationnelles : la qualité (*quality* : dire ce qu'on croit vrai), la quantité (*quantity* : autant d'information qu'il est nécessaire d'en donner), la pertinence (*relevance* ou *relation* : répondre en fonction de ce qui vient d'être dit) et la manière (*manner* : éviter d'être obscur, ambigu ou prolixe). Ces maximes visent toutes un principe général de 'coopération' entre les locuteurs et, au final, une adéquation entre eux dans une économie des mots, c'est-à-dire un équilibre à atteindre afin que la conversation puisse se poursuivre. La maxime de la pertinence (ou '*relevance*') est toutefois la seule à impliquer directement l'échange linguistique entre les locuteurs : la pertinence (ou '*relevance*') n'a de sens, pour un énoncé, qu'en rapport à ce qui vient d'être énoncé.⁹ Dans les deux cas – et un peu à la manière de Venuti qui distinguait stratégiquement les '*cultural studies*' des '*translation studies*' – la lecture est en quelque sorte toujours-déjà incomplète, le savoir du lecteur est clivé, il est pris, à moins d'avoir une bonne connaissance à la fois des problèmes typiques de la traduction de l'anglais au français et de la pensée de Derrida, dans un entre-deux inconfortable. L' 'adresse' de Derrida, et conséquemment celle de Venuti, importe aussi, car le texte lui-même se propose dans un double discours indécidable entre

le *quoi* – contribution à la question de la traduction (ou même de la traductologie) – et le *qui* – sa propre réflexion sur le pardon dans la continuation de son séminaire.

Si 'relevance' est problématique dans le discours derridien (dans le concept, la langue et l'auteur), comment cette problématisation s'est-elle transformée dans le discours vénusien? Le principal problème auquel Venuti devait faire face est que le terme, en anglais, n'est pas un indécidable : il fait entièrement sens pour celui qui le reçoit. Par exemple, Derrida affirme, dans 'Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction "relevante"?', que ce qui est dit 'relevant' est:

ce qui touche juste, ce qui paraît pertinent, à propos, bien venu, approprié, opportun, justifié, bien accordé ou ajusté, venant adéquatement là où on l'attend – ou correspondant comme il le faut à l'objet auquel se rapporte le geste dit 'relevant', le discours relevant, la proposition relevante, la décision relevante, la traduction relevante. (Derrida 2004 [1999]: 563)

Venuti traduit:

Whatever feels right, whatever seems pertinent, apropos, welcome, appropriate, opportune, justified, well-suited or adjusted, coming right at the moment when you expect it – or corresponding as is necessary to the object to which the so-called relevant action relates: the relevant discourse, the relevant proposition, the relevant decision, the relevant translation. (Venuti 2001: 177)

Le mot '*relevant*' en anglais se donne de manière très *relevant*, justement – ou malheureusement –, car l'anglais rend adéquat ou pertinent ce que le mot français tentait de rendre étrangement familier (ou *unheimlich*, pour employer l'expression freudienne). Venuti a déplacé cette problématique en partie en jouant sur d'autres termes que les anglophones auraient pu apercevoir en lisant la conférence d'origine, et qui deviennent plus évidents en anglais qu'en français. Je donne un passage de l'original, suivi de la traduction par Venuti; ensuite le commentaire de Venuti suivi de ma traduction en français :

Je ne suis pas sûr que cette transaction [traduire '*seasons*' et '*Aufhebung*' par 'relève' (verbe et nom)], fût-elle la plus économique possible, soit digne du nom de traduction au sens strict et pur de ce mot s'il en est. Ce serait plutôt une de ces autres choses en *tr.*, une transaction, une transformation, un travail, un *travail*, un *travel* – et une trouvaille (car cette invention, si elle semblait aussi relever un défi, comme on dit aussi, n'a consisté qu'à découvrir ce qui attendait ou à réveiller ce qui dormait dans la langue). (Derrida 2004 [1999]: 574 – l'intervention entre crochets est de moi)

I am not sure that this transaction, even if it is the most economic possible, merits the name of *translation*, in the strict and pure sense of this word. It rather seems one of those other things in *tr.*, a transaction, transformation, travail, *travel* – and a treasure trove [*trouvaille*] (since this invention, if it also seemed to take up [*relever*] a challenge, as another saying goes, consisted only in discovering what was waiting, or in waking what was sleeping, in the language). (Venuti 2001: 198 – l'intervention entre crochets est de Venuti)

In other instances, however, I was able to imitate the wordplay in English. Thus, the French 'marche' / 'marché' (step/purchase) became the English 'tread' / 'trade', while in an alliterative series that required an English choice beginning with the consonant cluster 'tr' the French 'trouvaille' (windfall, fortunate discovery, lucky break) became 'treasure trove'. (Venuti 2003: 253)

Dans d'autres cas, cependant, j'ai été capable d'imiter le jeu de mots en anglais. Ainsi, le français *marche/marché* est devenu en anglais *tread/trade* (le pas et le commerce), alors que dans une série allitérative qui requiert en anglais un choix de mots commençant par le groupe consonantique 'tr-', le français 'trouaille' (comme découverte heureuse) est devenu un *treasure trove*. (Venuti 2013: 150)

En déplaçant le 'jeu de mot' vers le mot '*travail*', Venuti fait voir ce *travail* à l'œuvre. Je donne un nouvel exemple, encore une fois en quatre étapes :

Ce mot [relevant] n'est pas seulement *en* traduction, comme on dirait en travail ou en voyage, *traveling, travailing*, dans un labeur, un *labour* d'accouchement. (Derrida 2004 [1999]: 562 – l'intervention entre crochets est de moi)

The word is not only *in* translation, as one would say in the works or in transit, *traveling, travailing*, on the job, in the *travail* of childbirth. (Venuti 2001: 177)

Another abuse in my translation hinges on the recurrent choice of the English word 'travail' to render the French noun 'travail' and the verb 'travailler'. At one point, Derrida himself uses the English form 'travailing' to pun on the English word 'traveling'. (Venuti 2003: 256)

Un autre abus dans ma traduction provient du choix récurrent du mot anglais *travail* pour rendre le nom commun 'travail' et le verbe 'travailler'. À un moment, Derrida lui-même utilise la forme anglaise *travailing* (enfanter) pour jouer sur le mot anglais *traveling* (voyager). (Venuti 2013: 154)

Si, dans la première série d'exemples, Derrida parle de 'travail' et fait suivre ce mot par sa répétition '*travail*' en italique, avec la même orthographe – ce qui risque d'échapper à la lecture d'un francophone –, Venuti avait bien compris qu'il s'agissait de la forme archaïque de *travel* et signifie le travail de l'accouchement (*labour*), ce qui lui permet, dans la deuxième série d'exemples, de changer les mots autour du 'labeur' tout en gardant un des sens du mot anglais *labour*. Venuti décrit cette traduction d' 'abus', expression qui vient de Philipp Lewis (2000) qui avait tenté de réfléchir, dès un colloque à Cerisy, la traduction de Derrida en suivant ce que Derrida avait déjà affirmé, à savoir qu' 'une "bonne" traduction doit toujours abuser'.¹⁰ On ne peut traduire l'in-traduisibilité qu'en *ab-usant*. Venuti explique ainsi que son choix de ne pas utiliser seulement le terme français 'relève', comme le font généralement les traducteurs anglais de Derrida, permet d' 'abuser de l'anglais'. Je donne encore une fois un exemple et le commentaire de Venuti :

[...] le pardon *ressemble* à un pouvoir divin au moment où il relève la justice [...]. (Derrida 2004 [1999]: 573)

[...] *mercy resembles* a divine power at the moment when it elevates, preserves, and negates [*relève*] justice [...]. (Venuti 2001: 197 – l'intervention entre crochets est de Venuti; dans ma traduction, j'indique en note de bas de page: 'Traduction libre: "quand il élève, préserve et nie [*relève*] la justice"')

Such expanded translations interrogate the French text by exposing the conditions of Derrida's interpretation. Because, as he observes, his use of *relève* to render the Hegelian *Aufhebung* has become canonical in academic institutions, the retention of the French term throughout my translation would silently participate in this canonization and work to maintain the relevance to Shakespeare's play of what is in fact an irrelevant anachronism,

a deconstruction of Hegel. The expanded translations, however, produce a demystifying effect by revealing the interpretive act that is at once embodied and concealed in Derrida's French. (Venuti 2003: 255-256)

De telles traductions élargies interrogent le texte français en exposant les conditions d'interprétation de Derrida. Parce que, comme il le fait remarquer, son utilisation de *relève* pour rendre l'*Aufhebung* hégélien est devenu canonique dans les institutions universitaires, le maintien du terme français le long de ma traduction participerait silencieusement à cette canonisation et travaillerait à maintenir le fait que la pièce de Shakespeare relève d'une déconstruction de Hegel, ce qui, justement, relèverait de l'anachronisme. Les traductions élargies, cependant, produisent un effet démystifiant en révélant l'acte interprétatif qui est à la fois incarné et caché dans le français de Derrida. (Venuti 2013: 153-154)

Je n'ai pas beaucoup *abusé* pour ma part des mots en 'tr-' dans ma traduction de Venuti, mais j'ai tenté, en reprenant de front le problème de la 'relève', de formuler une nouvelle manière de la comprendre, c'est-à-dire en *ab*-usant du discours vénusien. Si on relit les deux dernières citations, on peut remarquer que Venuti utilise la '*relevance*', presque inconsciemment, c'est-à-dire comme on devrait l'utiliser en anglais, ce qui, en retour vers le français, ne pouvait pas se faire (l'indécidabilité du terme derridien '*relevance*' fonctionne différemment en français). Le syntagme '[it] would [...] work to maintain the relevance to Shakespeare's play of what is in fact an irrelevant anachronism, a deconstruction of Hegel' a été traduit par '[cela] travaillerait à maintenir le fait que la pièce de Shakespeare relève d'une déconstruction de Hegel, ce qui, justement, relèverait de l'anachronisme'. La construction est un peu boiteuse, mais elle m'a permis d'éviter d'utiliser '*relevance*' tout en gardant un lien, même ténu, avec Derrida. Car c'est bien là le nœud du problème : à *quoi* ou à *qui*, dans une telle situation, doit-on être fidèle?

Un cas plus évident encore s'est présenté à moi lorsque j'ai eu à traduire un court texte pour le *Handbook of Translation Studies* en ligne, l'entrée 'Déconstruction' de Dilek Dizdar (2011), dans le cadre des travaux du groupe de recherche Traduire les humanités.¹¹ Dans un de ses sous-titres ('The relevance of deconstruction for Translation Studies') s'est posée la question de la traduction du terme '*relevance*'. Ce terme, bien que polysémique dans le contexte, n'est pas ambigu en anglais. Il devient difficilement traduisible en français puisque, s'il faut garder la double référence à Derrida et à la *Relevance Theory*, le risque est de choisir de diriger le lecteur dans une direction ou dans l'autre. Traduire 'the relevance of deconstruction' par 'la pertinence de la déconstruction' aurait produit chez le lecteur une référence à la théorie traductologique d'Ernst-August Gutt, et aurait alors eu pour objectif d'être une contribution dans le *quoi* de la discipline. Dans l'autre cas, traduire 'the relevance of deconstruction' par 'la relevance de la déconstruction' aurait conduit le lecteur à n'y voir qu'une référence au *qui* du texte, sa contribution dans la compréhension d'un auteur, ici Derrida. S'il y a 'traîtrise' en traduction, c'est la possibilité toujours ouverte d'une fidélité dédoublée, *bifrons* comme Janus. C'est une fidélité entamée, entachée ou clivée, ce n'est pas nécessairement – ou plus seulement – entre deux langues ou deux cultures, mais entre deux fonctions des textes.¹²

La solution qui s'est imposée, 'En quoi la déconstruction relève (de) la traductologie',¹³ permettrait de garder le terme relié à la '*relevance*' sans y décider entièrement si elle relevait de Derrida ou de la *Relevance Theory*. Cette solution, la locution '*relever de...*', n'est pas 'derridienne', elle ne relève pas (seulement, entièrement) de Derrida. Derrida utilise assez peu, sinon jamais, une telle formule, mais elle pourrait être vue comme très vénusienne. En effet, Venuti ramène souvent ses discussions à l'idée de subordination (*relever de* quelqu'un, c'est souvent lui être subordonné), et tout son discours sur Derrida visait à réfléchir à l'hégémonie de certaines disciplines sur d'autres. Ma 'trouvaille' n'est pas nécessairement la meilleure, mais elle change le cours du retour, elle permet de déplacer une équivalence trop facile, celle d'un retour à l'identique

qui, de toute manière, ne fonctionnerait qu'imparfaitement ici. L'identité (et laquelle? celle de la pertinence ou celle de la relevance?) feindrait l'adéquation exacte, elle s'imposerait comme une équivalence artificielle, s'institutionnaliserait dans une fidélité à l'une des deux options de l'indécidabilité. La formule, même boiteuse, permet l'ouverture à *plus d'une* interprétation. Ainsi, le 'retour de Babel', c'est-à-dire le retour de la traduction vers son 'origine' conceptuelle, linguistique ou auctoriale, implique un *plus un* : il y a toujours *plus d'une langue* en jeu dans la rétrotraduction, comme il y a plus d'un concept et plus d'un auteur.¹⁴ Du même coup se dévoile, comme épreuve dans le transport des signifiés, l'im-possibilité de l'adéquation, de l'équivalence ou de la relevance/pertinence totale entre les langues. Ce retour de Babel comme retour vers l'antériorité de l'unicité désirée, est toujours-déjà un *retour à Babel*: un questionnement sur l'origine des 'noms', en propre ou en dérivé.

Conclusion

Contre la division traditionnelle entre théorie et pratique, Antoine Berman (1999) dans *La traduction et la lettre ou l'auberge du lointain*, reprenant Heidegger, préconisait une division entre expérience et réflexion: une division sans division puisque l'une procède toujours de l'autre. C'est ce que j'ai tenté de faire ici en expliquant une difficulté particulière de la traduction des indécidables derridiens. En effet, en dehors de la dichotomie forme/fond, ce qui risque de poser problème dans le cas de la traduction des sciences humaines, ce sont les références que les lecteurs peuvent déduire du texte.¹⁵ Dans le cas des indécidables derridiens, il s'agit de conserver l'indécidabilité de la référence, ce que j'appelle le *qui* et le *quoi* de la traduction. Traduire *quelque chose* signifiait ici qu'on prenait Derrida pour ce qu'il apportait, dans l'interprétation qu'en donnait Venuti, c'est-à-dire une discussion sur la *Relevance Theory* d'Ernst August Gutt (1991). On pourrait aussi parler de son 'usage' et, dans ce cas, on traduirait *relevance* par 'pertinence', l'équivalent le plus convenu (ou pertinent) dans le contexte. Traduire *quelqu'un* signifie que Derrida devient la figure centrale du texte de l'interprétation vénusienne, *relevance* devient une autoréférence, une 'mention' à sa traduction d'*Aufhebung* par 'relève': *relevance* devient donc tout simplement 'relevance'. Choisir l'une ou l'autre de ces options, c'est réduire l'indécidabilité du terme original. La seule manière de poursuivre l'indécidabilité est de développer, parfois par des contorsions syntaxiques un peu singulières, des moyens pour rendre indécidables dans leurs références des syntagmes, au risque peut-être de perdre un peu de cette *relevance* voulue par la *Relevance Theory*.

Toutefois, le problème le plus profond de cette petite expérience de traduction se trouve peut-être du côté de la rétrotraduction. Traduire de l'anglais vers le français le commentaire sur la traduction d'un texte du français vers l'anglais ne signifie pas que le rendu sera plus simple ou que l'original apporte nécessairement les solutions aux problèmes posés par le texte à traduire. Le 'retour de Babel' n'ajoute pas les deux niveaux du nom, le commun et le propre, mais au contraire en amplifie le clivage. La rétrotraduction n'est pas en ce sens une 'mécanique' dont les lois mathématiques pourraient se déduire. Il s'agit plutôt d'une physique du temps où le retour en arrière n'est pas autre chose qu'un *surplus*: le français traduisant se donne en supplément au français traduit. Finalement, le malheur de Babel, s'il en est un, ce n'est peut-être pas une impossibilité de communiquer entre les langues, mais plutôt une question: communiquer, oui, mais communiquer quoi? La traduction, quant à elle, se pose alors comme un exercice questionnant : traduire qui ou traduire quoi? La réponse des traducteurs à ces questions détermine nécessairement la réception qu'auront les lecteurs de leurs traductions.

NOTES

¹ Sur ce débat, voir Derrida 1972, Searle 1977 et Derrida 1990 [1988]. On pourra aussi consulter Delphine Didier (2006) pour un bon compte-rendu.

² Dans une version ultérieure, dans l'édition d'*Entête* de 1987, Chouraqui 'choisit' en préférant le nom propre : 'ihvh-Adonai les disperse de là sur les faces de toute la terre :/ ils cessent de bâtir la ville./ Sur quoi, il crie son nom : Babèl,/ oui, là, ihvh-Adonai a mêlé la lèvre de toute la terre,/ et de là IHVH-Adonai les a dispersés sur les faces de toute la terre'.

³ Segond utilise l'expression de 'confusion', la Traduction œcuménique de la Bible (TOB, 1975-1976) parle plutôt de 'brouillage' et commente en note : '[e]n hébreu, il y a jeu de mots entre le nom de *Babel* (= Babylone) et le verbe traduit par *brouilla*'. La nouvelle traduction de la Bible publiée par Bayard et Médiaspaul (dite 'Bible des écrivains', la Genèse ou 'Premiers' est traduite par Frédéric Boyer et Jean L'Hour), pour sa part, traduit aussi par le verbe 'brouiller', et commente en note: 'Babel. L'étymologie de Babel par recours au verbe *balal* "brouiller, confondre", est fantaisiste, comme c'est souvent le cas dans les étymologies populaires' (Notes préparées par Jean L'Hour, p. 2735).

⁴ Notons que la plupart des traductions de ce passage du mythe ('son nom') ne pose pas le même problème du possessif.

⁵ La traduction du texte de Derrida par Joseph F. Graham, le directeur de la publication dans laquelle est publié la première fois *Des tours de Babel*, rend le passage de Chouraqui par '[o]ver which he proclaims his name : Bavel, Confusion', annulant l'équivoque du possessif Derrida 1985: 170). Lorsque Kathleen Davis (2001: 11) résumera la problématique pour un public anglophone, elle retraduit Chouraqui en incluant la doublure *his/its* dans le passage.

⁶ Pour la notion de poésie comme 'intraduisible', on pense évidemment à Roman Jakobson (1986).

⁷ À ma connaissance, c'est dans son séminaire *Politiques de l'amitié* (à l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1988-1991) que Derrida introduit aussi manifestement ce dédoublement dans la question, à partir d'une discussion sur la 'grammaire des questions' chez Aristote, *Éthique à Eudème*, 1234b, 18 et suivantes, qui fait référence au *Lysis* de Platon (214-216): 'Aristote n'est-il pas le premier, en effet, dans la tradition maïeutique du *Lysis*, certes (*Lysis è peri philías*) mais au-delà de lui, en lui donnant une forme directement théorique, ontologique et phénoménologique, à poser la question de l'amitié (*peri philías*), de savoir *ce qu'elle est (tí esti)*, *quelle et comment elle est (poión ti)*, et surtout si elle se dit en un ou en plusieurs sens (*monakhôs légetai è pleonakhôs*)? Il est vrai qu'au beau milieu de cette série de questions, entre celle de l'être ou l'être-tel de l'amitié et celle de la plurivocité possible d'un dire de l'amitié, il y a la question elle-même terriblement équivoque : *kai tís o philós*. Elle demande *ce qu'est* l'ami mais elle demande aussi *qui est* l'ami. Cette hésitation de la langue entre le *quoi* et le *qui* ne semble pas faire trembler Aristote, comme si c'était au fond une seule et même interrogation, comme si l'une enveloppait l'autre, et comme si la question "qui?" devait se plier d'avance à la question ontologique du "quoi?", du "qu'est-ce que c'est?" (Derrida 1994: 22).

⁸ En anglais, '*foreignization*', la traduction française 'forainisation' a été suggérée par un collègue, Simon Labrecque (voir Labrecque 2014 et 2015).

⁹ Voir Grice (1989 [1975]). Pour l'usage en traductologie, voir Gutt (1991). Pour un compte-rendu succinct de ces enjeux, voir Alves et Gonçalves (2010).

¹⁰ La citation provient du texte de Derrida (1987).

¹¹ Basé à l'Université du Québec à Montréal et à l'Université Concordia depuis 2013, le groupe de recherche fait partie du Laboratoire de résistance sémiotique (<http://resistancesemiotique.org/>).

¹² C'est justement ce qu'omettent les réflexions actuelles sur l' 'infidélité' de la traduction qui, trop souvent, la pensent dans une dichotomie entre langue-source et langue-cible. En outre, cela expliquerait beaucoup mieux la véritable distinction entre la philosophie dite 'continentale' et celle dite 'analytique' qu'on discerne souvent à partir de traditions culturelles différentes, alors que c'est

la fonction des textes qui devrait être pris en compte. À cet égard, la 'déconstruction' serait alors un point indécidable entre les deux types de philosophie (même si elle est généralement rejetée du côté de la philosophie analytique).

¹³ Cette solution a été longuement débattue dans le groupe de recherche. Je remercie Christine Althey, Marie Charbonneau, Simon Labrecque et Maxime Plante pour cette discussion.

¹⁴ Il s'agit d'une des 'définitions' de la déconstruction : 'Si j'avais à risquer une seule définition de la déconstruction, je dirais sans phrase : "plus d'une langue"'. (Dans le 'prière d'insérer' de Derrida 1996).

¹⁵ À partir de bases complètement différentes, celle de la citation, mais dans le contexte de la traduction de Derrida, Nayelli Castro (2011) offre une réflexion fort intéressante sur la traduction de Derrida dans le contexte hispanophone.

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Anthropological translation: A semiotic definition

Massimo Leone

*Drawing from Hjelmslev's theory of language, the article proposes a typology of translation difficulties, claiming that the most insurmountable one relates to cultural patterns that are invisible to cultures themselves. As a solution, the article suggests the establishment of a semiotic variety of translation, exemplified through a pair of case studies. Verses 22-45 of Canto XXVIII of Dante Alighieri's *Inferno* are usually problematic for Muslim translators: they describe the punishment in hell of Muhammad and Ali, the founders of Islam. Most Muslim translators choose not to render them in their language (Arabic, Farsi, etc.). The same verses have generated an iconography whose most famous instance is in the cathedral of San Petronio in Bologna. Giovanni da Modena's fifteenth-century fresco depicting Muhammad in hell became the object, at the turn of the twentieth century, of heated tension between local Muslim radical associations, which wanted the fresco to be removed, and Catholic commentators, who defended the integrity of the Christian artistic heritage. Taking as a point of departure these two interconnected case studies, the article explores the difficult role of translation at the conflict-ridden crossroads of different semiotic ideologies.*

KEYWORDS Linguistic patterns; Cultural patterns; Semiotic ideology;
Religious sensibility; Semiotic translation

Music falls on the silence like a sense,
A passion that we feel, not understand.
Wallace Stevens, *Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction* (1942)

Patterning the world through language

According to Danish linguist Louis T. Hjelmslev, language can be conceived as a function between two substances: on the one hand, an expressive substance that manifests content; on the other hand, a content substance that is manifested by expression (1943). Such function takes place because two correlated forms (respectively, the form of expression and that of content) pattern substances. Indeed, according to Hjelmslev, reality before language is just matter; it is either expressive matter, that is, everything that can be used to signify, or content matter, that is, everything that can be signified. Before language, reality is just potentiality. Patterning forms must intervene so as to turn this potentiality into actuality of either expressive or content substance. Forms therefore essentially consist in systems of choices, which essentially are matrixes of inclusion and exclusion.

Whatever is perceptible can be used to signify. For instance, every sound produced by the human

vocal apparatus may be adopted to manifest content. However, in no human natural language are all these sounds turned into substance of linguistic expression. That is due to several reasons. First of all, the production of sound by the human vocal apparatus is a continuous phenomenon. That means that, in terms of acoustics, differences among sounds are always gradual. We perceive that a sound 'x' is different from a sound 'y', but we can always imagine, produce, and hear a sound 'z', whose difference is intermediate between 'x' and 'y'. In order for this sound continuum to be used in signification, however, a matrix of inclusions and exclusions must be projected onto such a continuum, in order to transform it into a discrete pattern. The way in which a language excludes or includes sounds in its expressive substance is precisely the expressive form of that language. But why is it thus? Couldn't language indistinctively use all the sounds that the human vocal apparatus is able to produce? That is not the case, because the ultimate purpose of this patterning matrix of inclusions and exclusions is not simply to differentiate between admissible and non-admissible sounds, but to use such a matrix in order to distinguish between admissible and non-admissible thoughts. Indeed, just as whatever is perceptible can be used to signify, so whatever is thinkable can become content of signification. Moreover, just as the sounds produced by the human vocal apparatus form a continuous spectrum, so are thoughts produced by the human mind.

Content difference is no more discrete than expressive difference. Given the distinction between a thought A and a thought B, one can always imagine a thought C whose difference is intermediate between A and B. However, human beings cannot simply turn into signification whatever is thinkable, and cannot think reality as continuum. They must choose. They must distinguish between what is relevant in their environment and what is not. They must establish a grid of discrete differences. Language is certainly a means of communication among human beings. However, before that and more fundamentally, language is a means of *signification* among human beings. It allows human beings to differentiate among aspects of reality that are relevant for life, and aspects that are not (Chomsky 2012). Therefore, the expressive matrix patterns the sounds that are produced by the human vocal apparatus because such patterns must be used in order to express the content patterns that human beings impose on reality, and that constitute the content form of their language. The two phenomena can be distinguished only theoretically. Language is that which simultaneously turns reality into a matter of both thought and communication, content and expression.

Variety of patterning matrixes

Linguists and semioticians realize that language works as a matrix that creates patterns by excluding or including expressive and content elements, because alternative matrixes are possible. Staying within the patterned world shaped at both the expressive and the content level by one's language does not allow one to understand how this language works. It is only through contact with expressive and content patterns generated by alternative matrices that the linguist and the semiotician realize what choices constitute their own 'natural' language. Two orders of variety can be observed in language. On the one hand, as has already been pointed out, language distinguishes between what is relevant in reality and what is not. On the other hand, since reality is not always the same, language must also vary accordingly. Furthermore, language varies not only because reality varies, but also because human beings use language in order to differentiate among groups depending on the relevance that certain aspects of reality have for each of them. Not only do human beings speak different languages because they live in different worlds; they also live in different worlds because they speak different languages. Languages are often relics of past differences, whose subsistence is no longer justified by the relation between human beings and their environment, but by the relation between some groups of human beings and other groups of human beings. Socio-cultural groups that shape

diverging languages in response to different environments end up affirming their difference through language, even when the environment in which they live has changed and unified. Part of the reason for this inertia of language over reality is that it takes time and energy to adapt to a new linguistic articulation of reality. More significantly, members of the human species seem to be biologically constrained to develop such a linguistic grid of articulation of the world in the first years of life. It is through developing language, and in particular, through learning a natural language, that members of a group absorb and interiorize the traditional way in which that group turns reality into a series of meaningful patterns, often by contrast with the traditional articulations of other groups.

Degrees of variety

Understanding the variety of patterning matrixes through which human groups articulate their world is relatively simple as regards the multiplicity of expressive forms. For a citizen of Italy, for instance, it is sufficient to travel a few miles to realize that words are pronounced in a different way, that different words are used, and sometimes even to have the experience of not understanding, that is, to have the experience that different languages exist. In some other linguistic contexts, such experience of diversity might not be so immediate. In large communities that have long achieved a high degree of linguistic uniformity, experience of the 'linguistic other' is not as immediate. Nevertheless, realization of the expressive variety of languages is intimately connected with realization of their semantic variety at a fundamental level. When most present-day human beings hear other human beings utter sounds that the former cannot relate to any content whatsoever, they assume that those sounds are, nevertheless, language. In other words, they assume that the way in which human beings whom they do not understand use vocal sounds is analogous to the way in which they themselves use similar sounds in language. Many non-verbal signs contribute to give this impression. Most importantly, we assume that vocal sounds that we do not understand are, nevertheless, language because they seem to allow interactions among human beings that are similar to those that take place through language.

In 1970, the Hungarian novelist Ferenc Karinthy published a novel titled *Epepe* (2004; English translation *Metropole*, 2008). It tells the anguishing story of a linguist on his way to a congress in Helsinki who somehow takes the wrong plane and ends up in a city where inhabitants speak a language that is unknown to him. Despite all his efforts, the language remains a mystery to him, and yet he persists in the idea that the incomprehensible sounds that he hears all around, and the indecipherable signs that he sees in the city, *are* language. Only in a moment of utter despair, when every way out of the city seems precluded to him, is Budai, the protagonist, struck by the terrifying idea that those sounds actually *are not* language, and that each inhabitant of that city speaks an idiolect. However, the fact itself that citizens interact with each other in a seemingly functional albeit chaotic manner is sufficient to dispel such an anguished thought. Language indeed is potentiality of rational coordination, and potentiality of rational coordination is language.

Attributing linguistic dignity to unknown human sounds is an important element in attributing human dignity *tout court*. It is fundamental in order to recognize the other, whom I cannot understand, as a fellow human being. Other elements allow this inclusion of the other in the species, but language certainly is one of the most important. That has not always been the case. In the past, for instance, human groups whose language was unknown were called 'barbaric' exactly because they were thought to be less than human, and their vocal sounds judged closer to animal calls than to the sounds of properly human language. Those sounds were articulate enough to distinguish a group as different – exactly as an animal species is often distinguished by its call – but they were not articulate enough to include that group in the human fellowship. In subsequent historical epochs degrading the vocal sounds of another human group and attributing to them an 'animal character' has been and still is a common strategy of

dehumanization. Symmetrically, assuming that animals cannot communicate among themselves in the same way in which human beings do, and considering the sounds and other utterances that non-human animals produce as less than signs, is one of the greatest obstacles to perceiving the continuity between 'us' and 'them', and stressing, on the contrary, the discontinuity between the human species and the rest of the animal kingdom. Ideology therefore plays a crucial role in experiencing and realizing the existence of alternative matrices and patterns of linguistic expression, since observing the difference of linguistic sounds as linguistic sounds already implies the assumption that the world might be spoken about through different, and sometimes radically diverging languages.

Although realization of the expressive variety of languages is intertwined with realization of the content variety of cultures, the former is more readily accessible than the latter. Realizing that one does not understand the sounds of another language is a more immediate experience than realizing that one does not understand the thoughts of another culture. That is the case because incomprehensible sounds are still audible, and relatively easy to associate with the idea that, although undecipherable, they actually *are* the expressive side of a language, since they often co-occur together with other signs in human interactions that are therefore recognized as such. Other expressive systems of signification do not give rise to the same 'natural' assumption, especially when they are encountered and observed far from live interactions. Objects that are signifiers in an unknown culture, for instance, may well appear as mere objects, and not as signifiers, when they are encountered as isolated specimens. Rocks that Australian Aborigines use to signify their conception of the world appear as mere rocks to uninformed non-Aborigine observers. In general, the more a signifier is distant from the range of signifiers that we adopt to articulate and project a patterning matrix onto the world, the more difficult is to perceive it as a signifier and not as a mere object.

Experiencing diversity is generally easier at the expressive than at the content level. Articulations of thoughts that are not included in the form that patterns our world are simply invisible to us, or else they are stigmatized as unacceptable, exactly as sounds of a language may not be recognized as such but as barbaric cries, or even as mere noise, by someone who is not familiar with their linguistic nature. Language that human beings interiorize as children becomes a system of naturalized habits not only in the production of signifiers, but also in the production of meaning. Learning how to articulate the sounds of a foreign language might be difficult, or even impossible to many (remember the biblical story of shibboleth); however, learning how to articulate *the thoughts* of a different culture is harder, since such difference might not even be *conceived* in the first place. The internalization and naturalization of content patterning matrices is even deeper than the internalization and naturalization of expressive patterning matrices, since the latter are actually instrumental to the former. In many cases, we use different systems of signifiers because we want to express different articulations of reality.

If it is hard to perceive and understand unfamiliar systems of signifiers, it is even harder to do so with regards to unfamiliar systems of content. It is relatively easy for an anthropologist to understand that two societies diverge as regards their articulation of kinship, since kinship systems are usually formalized and expressed through verbal patterning matrices. The analysis of these matrices will therefore immediately reveal difference among the content patterning matrices that they express. However, understanding how different cultures live by diverging articulations of feelings is much harder. In general, the less these content patterns are explicitly signified by verbal language, the harder they will be to grasp.

Typology of Translation Tasks

Translating between diverging expressive patterns is a relatively easy task.¹ The hardest challenge that translators face is to detect diverging content patterns that do not explicitly find expression in

verbal language, but stay implicit or are manifested through other, subtler and more volatile, expressive codes. In this regard, the experience of watching a comic movie in a foreign country is illuminating. Foreign spectators might well be able to understand all the dialogue of the movie. They might also be capable of detecting and decoding the other codes that compose the filmic text, such as acting, editing, lighting, soundtrack, and so on. However, they will probably find out, to their unease, that they do not laugh at the same time that the native audience does, and not with the same rhythm and intensity. Even the most linguistically and culturally competent spectators will have the impression that they do not belong to the audience of that comic movie. They will feel that something separates them from it, something that they should learn to master and, above all, interiorize, in order for the enjoyment of the movie to be complete. That something is not an impressionistic, ungraspable, unfathomable essence. On the contrary, it can be precisely defined in semiotic terms.

In Hjelmslevian terms, two cultures differ not only as regards the different ways in which they articulate the expressive form of verbal language, and for the parallel way in which they pattern reality through a verbal matrix of categorization. Translators know well, for instance, that the English word 'humor' has no ready equivalent in many other languages, and quite often the word is left in English in the translation. However, the most challenging task is not to translate the word, and its visible difference from other words in other languages, but the complex cultural articulation to which the word refers. Translating the word 'humor' is one thing. Translating humor is a completely different, and more difficult, thing. How does a society laugh? On what occasions? About what topics? For or against whom? The way in which a society and its culture laugh result from an extremely complex rhizome of historical and socio-cultural determinations, which translate into a series of 'comic habits' implicitly handed down from generation to generation. We do not learn how to laugh as we learn how to read or write. The cultural form of laughing, in other words, is not explicitly codified into a grammar, taught and learned in schools. Conversely, we learn when and how to laugh through casual exposure to – and spontaneous internalization of – a certain 'laughing style' that surrounds us since birth. The great world comedians, such as Charlie Chaplin or, more recently, Mr. Bean, have been able to make people laugh cross-culturally because they have somehow adopted a comic style resonating with commonalities among different laughing cultures. Other comic styles, instead, which rely more on verbal language or socio-historical references, are impossible to export. The Italian comedian Maurizio Crozza, for instance, is a superstar in Italy. His Friday TV show is one of the most cherished by the Italian audience. However, his humor is so entirely based on irony and sarcasm toward the Italian socio-political panorama that it could never be 'exported' or translated. The most difficult aspect of this translation is not the specificity of the political panorama. Analogous socio-political settings could be found in other societies and provide the context for similar humor. The problem lies elsewhere: not all cultures laugh at their politicians in the way that Italians do. Not in all societies are politicians so prominently protagonists of the social and media *imaginaire*. The more one moves away from the Italian and especially the European cultural context, the more one will find that people laugh at other categories of people, in different situations and circumstances. Each society, for instance, has a designated category of laughing-stocks for its jokes. For Italians, it is the 'Carabinieri' (a police force); for Spaniards, it is the citizens of Lepe (Huelva); for the French, the laughing-stocks are always the Belgian. Certain features of laughter and humor provoking it are indeed cross-cultural, but others are not, and translating them into another language and culture may prove extremely difficult or even impossible.

Semiotics has long been working on translation, and one of the fathers of the discipline, Umberto Eco, has published a fundamental book on the topic, whose title in English is *Saying Almost the Same Thing* (*Dire quasi la stessa cosa*, 2003). The point that the present essay would like to stress is that 'saying the same thing' or, more modestly, 'almost the same thing', is not the most arduous objective in translation, since it essentially bears on finding an equilibrium between explicit, verbal

patterns of expressive and content articulations. But how can one 'say almost the same thing' if the concept itself of 'thing' varies across cultures? What if the notion of 'almost' varies as well? There are cultures in which approximation is considered as intrinsic to most human endeavors. The Italian culture is certainly one of them. Italians are not usually put off by the fact that a process is *near* to completion. However, there are other cultures in which a radically different notion of 'almost' and approximation prevails. Languages in these cultures usually have a word to translate the Italian 'quasi' (like in English, 'almost'). The problem is that the semantic aura of this 'almost' is different. 'Saying almost the same thing' can be lightheartedly acceptable in the Italian culture, while being painstakingly and barely tolerated in the German or Japanese one.

That is not to discourage translators or underline the unbridgeable persistence of cultural difference and incommunicability. Eco is perfectly right and, as always, praiseworthy when he seeks to find a rational solution to problems of human communication. At the same time, both translation theorists and translators should acknowledge and be aware of the fact that the difficulty of transposing a text from one language into another language or, more correctly, from one culture into another culture, has different degrees. Again, Hjelmslev's theory of language is ideal to differentiate them.

Isomorphic patterns

At the easy end of the spectrum of translation challenges, we shall find the task of translating a unit that is explicitly singled out by both the expressive and the content matrix of both source and target verbal language. That is the task that is more commonly associated with the work of translators and it is so simple that in most cases even machines can perform it. The fact that even machines can perform it, though, points out that it is an automatic task, one that does not involve any complex semiotic activity. The word 'cane' in Italian is recognized as a lexical unit (or 'lexeme') by both the expressive and the content matrix of the language. English has an entirely symmetric articulation, so that the English lexeme 'dog' can be straightforwardly used to translate the Italian 'cane'.

Partially isomorphic patterns

The case in which both the expressive and the content matrices of source and target language are not isomorphic is more complicated. The pair of English lexemes 'home/house', for instance, results from both an expressive and a content articulation that is different, and more complex, than the one that results in the Italian lexeme 'casa'. In this case, translating 'casa' into English will require a choice and, therefore, interpretation, that is, semiotic activity. The translator will have to choose whether the Italian 'casa' refers to a physical place, a 'house', or to an emotional place, 'home'. The opposite translation, from English into Italian, will not require an effort of choice but will entail one of disambiguation: in certain cases, the translator will have to specify whether 'casa' translates 'home' or 'house'. The translator will therefore resort to various strategies, such as periphrasis (for instance, translating 'home' as 'focolare domestico', literally, the 'house hearth'). Google Translator or other similar machines generally perform this task pretty well too, meaning that they are 'intelligent' enough to detect contextual cues that lead to the right choice.

Non-isomorphic patterns

The case in which the source language contains both an expressive and a content unit of articulation that has no equivalent in the target language is even more complicated. In most instances of

this type, Google translator and other machines fail, since they cannot rely on any mechanism that automatically retrieves an equivalent in the target language. For instance, if one inputs the Korean word ‘한’ [‘han’], Google Translators gives ‘one’ as output in English. However, such translation would be incorrect when ‘한’ is actually referring to a particular national feeling, which is central in Korean culture, but is absent or radically different in societies that have had a different history. Scholars who want to pinpoint and explain the nature of this feeling must therefore resort to a long periphrasis, which nevertheless fails in rendering the semantic specificity of the word. The English Wikipedia, for instance, needs some long and complex sentences just to give a pale idea of what ‘한’ means: ‘a collective feeling of oppression and isolation in the face of insurmountable odds (the overcoming of which is beyond the nation’s capabilities on its own). It connotes aspects of lament and unavenged injustice’. When the translator is translating from Korean into Italian a novel that is entirely impregnated with the notion and feeling of ‘한’, the task ahead is very hard. That is so because the way in which the Italian culture articulates the semantic field of feelings is different from the way in which the Korean culture does it. In certain cases, an equivalent or rather a ‘quasi-equivalent’ can be found. In other cases, on the contrary, the expressive and content matrix of the target language will contain no equivalent or quasi-equivalent. The translator will therefore have to explain the source culture in the target language (through an encyclopedic footnote, for instance) before being able to translate the word.

Invisible patterns

Nevertheless, an even harder task for a translator is to convey a semantic difference whose roots are deeper than verbal language. In all the three typologies discussed thus far, the expressive matrix of either both languages (in the first two cases), or at least one of them (in the third case) provided explicit clues for the translator to realize and possibly overcome the presence of cultural difference. In the fourth typology, by contrast, difference at the level of content matrices of articulation of reality will not be explicitly manifested by difference at the level of expressive matrices of articulation. This happens especially when cultural difference does not find overt expression in verbal language. If in the third case the translator has to translate a word from the source language that has no equivalent in the target language, in the fourth case, the translator has, at first, to give expression to a semantic peculiarity that is not manifested in the source language either, in order, subsequently, to be able to provide an equivalent, or quasi-equivalent, in the target language, or rather, in the target culture. This fourth kind of translation could be defined as ‘anthropological translation’, since it does not inhere in the work of the translator but in that of the anthropologist, or rather in the work of the translator as anthropologist.

Saying that translation allows the translator to better know not only the target language, but also the source language, to the point of changing the translator’s attitude toward it and the culture it expresses, is true at different levels. There is no particular anthropological discovery in translating ‘dog’ into ‘cane’ or vice versa, precisely because this translation must not overcome any significant discrepancy between the two expressive and content matrices. As regards the second type, having to choose between ‘house’ and ‘home’, or having to disambiguate the meaning of ‘casa’, already allows the translator to develop a subtler awareness of how the two languages, and the two cultures, articulate and signify reality. In the third category, the anthropological discovery will be even greater: the translator will either discover the existence of a new feeling (for instance, the Korean ‘한’) or she/he will discover that this feeling, so central in her/his own culture, is completely absent elsewhere.

The fourth kind of translation, that is, the one requiring the translator to find a suitable expression for a non-manifested cultural unit in her/his own culture before being able to search for an equiva-

lent, or for a quasi-equivalent, in another culture and language, is definitely the one that should be the most closely associated with the self-discovery aura of translation. In such an operation, indeed, the need to explain one's culture to another culture obliges one to elaborate a verbal articulation of one's own still unexpressed, or poorly expressed, socio-cultural peculiarities. But how can the need for such translation arise in the first place, since it cannot depart from any explicit verbal signification, from any codified expressive unit? Such need arises, most frequently, from an inter-cultural accident. An example will clarify the phenomenological dynamic of this fourth, and most impervious, typology of translation.

Case Study: Translating Outrage

<p>22 Già veggia, per mezzul perdere o lulla, 23 com' io vidi un, così non si pertugia, 24 rotto dal mento infin dove si trulla. 25 Tra le gambe pendevan le minugia;</p> <p>26 la corata pareva e 'l tristo sacco 27 che merda fa di quel che si trangugia. 28 Mentre che tutto in lui veder m'attacco, 29 guardommi e con le man s'aperse il petto, 30 dicendo: "Or vedi com' io mi dilacco! 31 vedi come storpiato è Mäometto! 32 Dinanzi a me sen va piangendo Ali, 33 fesso nel volto dal mento al ciuffetto. 34 E tutti li altri che tu vedi qui, 35 seminator di scandalo e di scisma 36 fuor vivi, e però son fessi così. 37 Un diavolo è qua dietro che n'accisma 38 sì crudelmente, al taglio de la spada 39 rimettendo ciascun di questa risma, 40 quand' avem volta la dolente strada; 41 però che le ferite son richiuse 42 prima ch'altri dinanzi li rivada. 43 Ma tu chi se' che 'n su lo scoglio muse, 44 forse per indugiar d'ire a la pena 45 ch'è giudicata in su le tue accuse?"</p>	<p>No cask ever gapes so wide for loss of mid- or side-stave as the soul I saw cleft from the chin right down to where men fart. Between the legs the entrails dangled. I saw the innards and the loathsome sack that turns what one has swallowed into shit. While I was caught up in the sight of him, he looked at me and, with his hands, ripped apart his chest, saying: 'See how I rend myself, 'see how mangled is Mohammed! Ahead of me proceeds Ali, in tears, his face split open from his chin to forelock. 'And all the others whom you see sowed scandal and schism while they lived, and that is why they here are hacked asunder. A devil's posted there behind us who dresses us so cruelly, putting each of this crew again to the sword as soon as we have done our doleful round. For all our wounds have closed when we appear again before him. 'But who are you to linger on the ridge? – perhaps you put off going to the torment pronounced on your own accusation.'</p>
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That is the original Italian text of verses 22-45 of Canto XXVIII of Dante Alighieri's *Inferno*, placed side by side with a recent English translation by Robert and Jean Hollander. The verses describe the position and punishment of Muhammad and Ali in hell. Considered by Dante as 'seminator di scandalo e di scisma', 'sowers of scandal and schism', they are condemned to be perpetually 'fessi', 'hacked asunder'. As Francesco Gabrieli, one of the most acclaimed Italian Orientalists, pointed out in several essays, this passage has given rise to discordant interpretations as regards the attitude of Dante toward Islam.

According to Miguel Asín Palacios – the renowned Spanish Catholic priest and specialist in Arabic studies who, in a famous book, first suggested that Dante might have been influenced by Arabic

and Islamic sources in composing his *Commedia* – the passage would actually be a manifestation of Dante's benevolence vis-à-vis Islam. Indeed, from the fact that the Italian poet does not place Muhammad among the heresiarchs, Asín Palacios deduces that Dante judged his sin as social rather than as theological and religious (Asín Palacios 1910: 328). According to most Dante scholars, though, including Francesco Gabrieli, Asín Palacios's interpretation is weak. As Crescini, Zingarelli, Rossi, Fubini, Momigliano, and others have emphasized, the passage in question is one of the crudest and most violent of the entire *Inferno*. It can hardly be read as a token of Dante's kindheartedness toward Muhammad and Islam.

All these scholars point out that Dante, in depicting Muhammad and Ali in hell as he did, mostly followed medieval tradition, which partly adopted the typical Byzantine anti-Islamic stereotypes and partly created some new clichés (D'Ancona 1912). According to this tradition, variously formulated in several medieval texts, Muhammad has given rise to the 'Islamic schism' encouraged by the rancorous ambition of a disappointed high prelate, variously identified as Sergius, Nicolaus, Pelagius, etc. In some versions, Muhammad himself is described as such a prelate, or even as a cardinal who, disappointed for not having been elected pope, or in order to fulfill various base desires, 'invents' Islam. This tradition, which completely ignores or distorts the historical and theological reality of both the genesis of Islam and its early relation with Christianity, was handed down with little variation to Dante through medieval encyclopedists such as Peter the Venerable, Jacques de Vitry, Martin of Opava, Vincent of Beauvais, Jacobus de Voragine, Brunetto Latini, etc. (Gabrieli 1921: 49-52, 103-4). According to Gabrieli, the scant attention that Dante devotes to the figure of Muhammad – while he dwells on that of his schismatic 'colleague' fra Dolcino, whose historical relevance is incomparably inferior – would be strong evidence of how wrong the hypothesis of Asín Palacios is: Dante, like most of his Christian contemporaries, despised Muhammad (Gabrieli 1965).

The *Divine Comedy* was first translated into Arabic between 1930 and 1933 by Abbud Abu Rachid, of Lebanese origin and teacher of Italian language and culture in Lebanon and Tripolitania. In his foreword, the translator declares that he refrained from translating the lines on Muhammad. In reality, the lines are not omitted in the translation of Canto XXVIII, but the names of Muhammad and Ali are (Osman 1955). In 1938, Amin Abu Shaar, a lawyer, authored a new translation of the *Inferno* into Arabic. He omitted Canto XXVIII entirely (ibid). The most acclaimed translation of Dante's *Inferno* into Arabic to date was completed by the Egyptian philologist Hassan Osman in the 1950s. It also omits the verses of canto XXVIII that bear on Muhammad and Ali (ibid). A translation into Farsi of the *Divine Comedy* was recently authored by Farideh Mahadavi-Damghani, probably the finest translator of Italian literature into the language of Iran. The translation also omits the lines about Muhammad and Ali. Questioned about this omission on the occasion of the presentation of her translation at a Dante festival in Ravenna, the Tehran-based translator declared: 'My hand does not move to translate these lines; my religious faith as a practicing Muslim does not allow me to act differently. However, I think that it is better to have the *Divine Comedy* without those verses than not to have it at all' (Bassi 2003, my trans.). Asked whether Iranian readers knew about the missing verses, she replied:

I have given a long explanation to readers about my choice, and I have spoken about Dante as the jewel of jewels. I sought to make people understand that, although those lines were against our religious and spiritual beliefs, the masterpiece was nevertheless worth reading. Furthermore, I have explained that Dante was influenced by medieval scholastics, who certainly knew little about the religion of Islam as a whole. At the time, after the terrible stories of the crusades, people were undoubtedly little inclined to give a positive judgment on Muslims. (Bassi 2003, my trans.).



Figure 1. Giovanni da Modena, *The Inferno* (detail), 1410, Cathedral of San Petronio, Bologna

Figure 1 reproduces a fresco that the Italian painter Giovanni da Modena, active from 1408 to 1455, painted to decorate the chapel of the Magi in the Cathedral of San Petronio, in Bologna. The fresco consists in a late Gothic representation of hell, clearly inspired by Dante's *Inferno*. In his pictorial interpretation of Canto XXVIII, Giovanni da Modena placed Muhammad in the top part of the image, on the immediate right of the monstrous Lucifer. Muhammad is represented as an elderly man with a long beard, naked and tied, lying on a rock while a demon tortures him. Muhammad's identity can be recognized also thanks to the caption 'Machomet' just beneath the pictorial representation of his tormented body.

On November 13, 1998, about a hundred Muslim migrants, mainly from Northern Africa and with regular visas, helped by the Italian members of local radical left-wing groups, occupied the cathedral of San Petronio in order to protest against their sudden eviction from public housing buildings that they had illegally occupied. Contradictory statements by the representatives of the Catholic Church in Italy followed the 23-hour-protest (Corriere della Sera 2002). Ernesto Vecchi, the auxiliary bishop of Bologna, declared that the occupation was 'a gesture of violence against our foremost urban temple. They are Muslims. I wonder what would had happened if Christians had occupied a mosque' (Cavadini, Buifi and Girola 1998, trans. mine). On the contrary, Raffaele Nogaro, the bishop of Caserta, declared that:

one must be able to understand. To realize what it means, to find oneself in the middle of the street, without a roof, not knowing where to go. Therefore, I believe that the first thing to do is to have comprehension for those who end up occupying a church [...] I don't believe that if a Muslim occupies one of our churches because he does not have a place to sleep with his family, others might feel offended in their own religious sensibility. (Cavadini, Buifi and Girola 1998, trans. mine)

Similar protests had occurred throughout the mid-1990s. The most famous one was probably the occupation, in 1996, of the church of Saint Bernard in Paris by the so-called 'sans papier', which attracted extensive media coverage (Simmonot 2002).

However, according to an urban rumor that it is impossible to verify, but whose cultural signifi-

cance is beyond doubt, it was on November 13, 1998, during the occupation of the Cathedral of San Petronio, that Muslim migrants living in Bologna first saw the depiction of Machomet/Muhammad in the fresco of Giovanni da Modena (Corriere della Sera 2002). On June 30, 2001, about three hundred Muslims demonstrated in front of the main mosque of Bologna, asking that Giovanni da Modena's fresco be removed. Representatives of the Union of Italian Muslims, a small Italian Islamic group often associated with radical initiatives, declared that the fresco represented a 'very serious and unacceptable offense' (Corriere della Sera 2001, trans. mine), and that they had written letters to the Pope and to the bishop of Bologna claiming that the painting 'was blasphemous and obscene and offended Muslims all over the world'. The most prominent Italian Islamic associations condemned this initiative.

However, on June 23, 2002, Italian police officials revealed that 'Amsa the Libyan', reputedly the main emissary of Osama Bin Laden's Al Qaeda in Europe, was planning a terrorist attack against the Cathedral of Saint Petronio, and that investigations by the European police and the consequent arrest of 'Amsa the Libyan' had prevented the attack (Fasano 2002). From then on, the Cathedral began to be under close surveillance by the Italian police. Undercover policemen began to be present in the Cathedral at all times. Two days after these disclosures by the Italian police, Francesco Cossiga, former President of the Italian Republic, known for his provocative initiatives, published a long letter addressed to Giacomo Biffi, the Cardinal of Bologna, in *Il Resto del Carlino*, the main newspaper of the city. In his letter, he invited the Cardinal to:

consider the opportunity of removing from the Cathedral of San Petronio the unsuitable depiction of Muhammad in Hell (it is a dogma, indeed, that we cannot know who really is in hell, except the fallen angels!) in order to keep it in a profane place, limited to its merely artistic values. The modern techniques for transferring paintings can execute the removal marvellously. It would be an exemplary act of tolerance, respect, and tangible attestation of the values of inter-religious dialogue promoted by the Council, which would honor the Diocese of Bologna and the Italian Church; an act of goodwill, which would facilitate relations with the more and more pressing and numerous 'Islamic invasion' of our Country. (Cossiga 2002)

Incidentally, this letter gave rise to an inflamed exchange of letters between Cossiga and the already mentioned Ernesto Vecchi, who was outraged by the former President's proposal. However, on August 21, 2002, the Italian press reported that four young Moroccan migrants, all workers in local factories with regular visas and no criminal records, as well as their Italian chaperon, had been arrested while videotaping Giovanni da Modena's fresco in the Cathedral of San Petronio (Monti 2002). The undercover police had confiscated the videotape, translated the young Moroccans' comments from Berber into Italian, and found that they contained the following declaration: 'That is what they have shown on the TV news. Yes, it's that one. You know what the idol [the idol being Osama Bin Laden] said? If they don't eliminate it, he'll knock everything down' (ibid, trans. mine). The following day, after all the Italian media had largely reported the news, the young Moroccans and their Italian chaperon were acquitted by the competent judge, who had found that their comments on Giovanni da Modena's fresco were not sufficient grounds to accuse them of terrorist plots (Sarzanini 2002).

On March 21, 2006, the Italian press reported the arrest of several young Moroccans and Tunisians accused of planning a terrorist attack against the Cathedral of San Petronio. Following a new policy of the Italian Ministry for Internal Affairs, they were not put on trial, but deported to their countries of origin (Corriere della Sera 2009). In March 2006, an Italian journal associated with Opus Dei, *Studi Cattolici*, published the following satirical cartoon about Giovanni da Modena's fresco (Fig. 2):



Figure 2. Cartoon published in *Studi Cattolici* ©, March 2006

Dante asks Virgil: 'Isn't the one over there, cut in half from head to cheeks, Muhammad?' And Virgil replies: 'Yes, he is cut in half because he brought about division in society [...] and the one over there with his pants down is Italian politics toward Islam' ('to pull one's pants down' is a not very elegant idiomatic Italian expression meaning 'to chicken out'). Representatives of the Italian Islamic communities as well as most Catholic and secular commentators condemned the cartoons.

Conclusions: The benefits of anthropological translation

What lesson can a semiotics of anthropological translation draw from such a series of accidents? The semiotic typology of translation difficulties sketched above can be applied to this case study. As regards the translation of the *Divine Comedy* into Arabic or Farsi, there is no doubt that Dante's text is a challenge to translators not only in these two languages but also in every other idiom. The *Divine Comedy* is such a harmonious, dense, and multilayered text, at both the expressive and the content level, that it is impossible to fully render it into another language. Only approximations are possible. The case study described above, however, does not concern the first three typologies of our categorization. Translators of Dante's text might encounter medieval Italian words that (1) have an exact equivalent in the target language; (2) have more or fewer equivalents in the target language; (3) have no equivalent in the target language at all. The skillful translator, however, can overcome all these difficulties. Nevertheless, the decision of not translating into Arabic or into Farsi a passage of the *Divine Comedy* because it contains a humiliating depiction of Muhammad does not result from these three categories of difficulties; it is rather a cultural accident stemming from unarticulated discrepancies between the source language and, above all, between the source culture and the target language, and primarily the target culture. That which does not translate from the former into the latter is not a lexical unit. It is an implicit semiotic ideology. Most members of Western, non-Islamic societies will be shocked at the idea that such a classic as the *Divine Comedy* might be 'mutilated' by a Muslim translator just for the sake of eliminating derogatory references to the prophet Muhammad that are

contained in the original text. On the contrary, many members of predominantly Islamic societies, and especially the most fervent among them, will be shocked at the idea that preserving the integrity of a Western text in its Arabic or Farsi translation might entail disseminating a disparaging depiction of the prophet. Who is right?

The purpose of a cultural semiotics of translation is not to pass judgment on this thorny case. It is rather to point out what underpins it. The source of incomprehension is not simply linguistic: both Arabic and Farsi are extremely rich and ancient languages, perfectly endowed to elegantly translate Dante's masterpiece. The source of misunderstanding is not simply cultural either, at least not in the frame of the third typology of translation described above. That which underpins the cultural accident is, instead, a deeper disparity, which bears on the different hierarchy of sociocultural values in the two societies concerned. Respecting in translation the *integrity of the text*, considered as expression of the individuality of the poet, is the highest value for most Western, secular societies; on the contrary, respecting *the image of the founder* of the religious community is the most important value for the Muslim reader. The first step in addressing this miscomprehension is therefore that of explicating what is implicit in the two cultural approaches. Both sides, indeed, have a tendency to 'naturalize' their perspectives: on the one hand, it seems absolutely 'natural' not to omit any part of the text when translating it; not doing so is immediately identified and subject to censure. On the other hand, it seems equally 'natural' not to offend the Prophet; translating verses that discredit him is immediately considered as blasphemy.

What is at stake here is not finding a compromise: Dante's lines on Mohammed are either translated or not. One either sides with the perspective of the West or with that of Islam. That is a personal choice, which cannot be discussed, motivated, or advocated in strictly scientific terms. What is at stake is, rather, the possibility of 'seeing' the cultural legitimacy of the other position, while still endorsing one's own. It is exactly in relation to this task that anthropological translation is needed. On the one hand, the translator will have to make the two positions above explicit, as has been done in the last paragraphs. However, the most difficult task ahead is not simply to identify which semiotic ideologies underlie the cultural clash, but to find a way to translate them. How is it possible, for the fervent Muslim, to understand how shocking it is, for a Westerner, that the *Divine Comedy* might be selectively translated on the basis of religious bias? And, vice versa, how could the Muslim feel outrage at the disparaging representation of Mohammed conveyed to the secular, Western reader of Dante?

Questioned by Italian journalists about the Muslim outcry against the cartoons sarcastically representing Mohammed, the current Pope Francesco Bergoglio recently proposed an interesting inter-cultural, anthropological translation. He could easily have said: 'Imagine if someone published the same cartoons about Jesus'. However, such translation would have been imperfect and ineffective. First, representations of Jesus are not prohibited in Christianity, on the contrary. Second, most predominantly Christian societies, including the Italian one, tolerate sarcastic or even openly blasphemous representations of Jesus. Wittily, the Pope proposed a different translation: 'If someone insults my mother, of course I give him a punch'. This sentence has been read and criticized by some as a justification of violence. That is not going to be discussed here. The interesting aspect of Pope Bergoglio's translation lies elsewhere: when faced with the task of producing an 'anthropological translation' of the Muslim outrage toward 'blasphemous' representations of Muhammad, Pope Francis did not evoke Jesus, but the Italian (or Argentinian, which is pretty much the same) mom. His translation intelligently sought to convey the meaning, and above all the feeling of Muslim outrage by projecting the same passion not onto an object of religious devotion, but onto an object of family devotion. If the former is increasingly dwindling in Italian society, the latter is not. Italians might tolerate that Jesus is insulted, but most will react passionately if their mother is under attack. In order to translate the deeply passionate, and deeply personal, and deeply irrational attachment of Muslims to Muhammad, Pope Bergoglio translated it through finding a similar emotional articulation in another sphere of

human life, that of family and in particular that of the mother-child relation in Italy. What is of interest here is not to appreciate or condemn the translation in itself (one could argue that both violent devotions, to one's prophet or to one's mother, are to be criticized), but to point out the efficacy of the translation. Even those Italian journalists who disapproved of the Muslim attitude toward 'blasphemy' were led to perceive more clearly the roots of the problem, and the difference of semiotic ideologies underpinning the cultural conflict. For the fervent Muslim, reading Dante's lines about the prophet produces an emotional effect that would be similar to that which the average Italian reader would feel if those lines were about his/her mother. That does not mean that the latter must justify the censorship of the former. Indeed, anthropological translation can and must be performed both ways. For the Muslim reader too should be encouraged to see that the shock that the Western and especially the Italian reader experiences at the idea of a mutilation of the *Divine Comedy* is similar to that which the Muslim reader would suffer, should a part of the Koran not be translated into Italian because of disparaging references to Christianity, or to Judaism, or to foreigners, or to women.

As we underlined earlier, performing this kind of anthropological translation will not solve the problem. Neither should it be considered as a way of attributing moral legitimacy to the opponent. For most Westerners, it will always be wrong not to entirely translate a text because of religious bias; for most fervent Muslims, it will always be wrong to translate a 'blasphemous' text. Something, nevertheless, can be achieved. Anthropologically translating the outcry of the other, finding a way to see the processes of internalization and 'naturalization' that led to it, does not eliminate either one's own indignation or that of the opponent. Understanding that we internalized our culture does not immediately turn us into cold observers of it. We keep spontaneously living in a language and in a culture even after we have understood how we have absorbed them. However, if an agreement cannot be found in terms of actual contents and practical solutions, anthropological translation, like every good translation, increases both awareness of the deep roots of the other's otherness and self-awareness of the equally deep roots of one's own identity. If reconciliation does not stem from it, at least what results is an enhanced ability to see the other as self at a more abstract level.

We humans do not get angry about the same things, but we get angry in similar ways.² Understanding that is already a step toward defusing anger.

NOTES

¹ The present essay mostly refers to the tradition of semiotic reflection on translation, culminating in Eco 2003.

² The dialectic of anthropological invariance and cultural varieties in the emotional structure of anger, as well as in its both verbal and non-verbal representations, would require an in-depth discussion, which is beyond the primary objectives of the present essay. An interesting introduction to a comparative cognitive study of angry reactions is in Kim 2013.

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Translation of semiotics into translation theory, and vice versa

Susan Petrilli

Reflection on sign processes and translation processes contributes to a better understanding of the problems involved in both and orients relative research methodologies. The dynamics involved is the same and concerns the dialogical relation between one sign and another where the latter as an interpretant confers meaning and sense on the preceding, the interpreted. Though different disciplines, sign theory and translation theory study the same process, albeit from different perspectives. Semiotics and translation act as interpretants of each other illuminating different aspects of the signs forming these processes, their specificities and interrelatedness. According to Thomas Sebeok and his 'global semiotics', all signs, verbal and nonverbal, are part of an overarching sign network. Considering that interpretation is translation, that the relation between interpreted sign and interpretant sign is a translation relation, that interpretants defer to each other in open-ended semiotic chains, global semiotics evidences the translational nature of semiosis, therefore the translational vocation of semiotics. Sebeok belongs to a tradition in sign studies that extends from Locke to Peirce and includes authors like Welby, Jakobson, Bakhtin, Morris. All deal with translation, whether directly through their sign theory (Welby, Jakobson), or indirectly with their reflections on dialogue and the relation between reporting and reported discourse (Bakhtin), or whilst searching for signs to talk about signs (Morris). Global semiotics opposes anthropocentric and glottocentric approaches to the life of signs: the entire biosphere is perfused with signs. As a general sign science semiotics has a propensity for dialogic encounter and translation. As an interpretive/translational phenomenon and thanks to its specificity as artistic discourse evolving in the 'great time' (Bakhtin), literary discourse best evidences the dynamics of semiosis and together the properly human, therefore the questions of dialogic otherness, responsive understanding, responsibility/responsivity, translatability/intranslatability, iconicity, visibility/invisibility, similarity/dissimilarity, the paradox of translation.

KEYWORDS Semiosis; Otherness/Alterity; Dialogism; Responsive understanding; Similarity

Semiotics and translation theory beyond anthropocentrism and glottocentrism

The question we wish to explore is whether semiotics can be translated into translation theory and whether translation theory can be translated as semiotics. This does not mean to suggest that translation theory and semiotics are the same thing. These two different disciplines are intent upon exploring the same process, i.e. that of semiosis, of the infinite deferral among signs, but under different aspects. Just as I say that Italian can be translated into English and vice versa does not mean to say that English and Italian are the same thing, to claim that there is a relation of translation between semiotics and translation theory does not at all mean to establish a relation of identification between

the two terms. Semiotics and translation theory are different disciplines, but between them there exists a relation of translation understood as the possibility of explanation and development as they respond to and interpret each other.

Translation across the infinite variety of different domains that constitute the semiosphere characterizes the semiotic perspective itself, which traverses both the natural sciences and the human sciences focusing on signs at once in their specificity and interrelatedness: signs of 'nature' and 'culture', human signs and nonhuman signs, verbal signs and nonverbal signs, natural languages and artificial languages, signs at high levels of plurivocality and dialogism and univocal and monological signs (or signals), signs at varying degrees of indexicality, symbolicity and iconicity, signs of the conscious and the unconscious.

The universe is perfused with signs, indeed, as Charles S. Peirce hazards (CP 5.448, n. 1), is perhaps composed exclusively of signs. Thomas A. Sebeok also contemplated the whole universe as a complex global sign. In Peirce's words, 'a vast representamen, a great symbol... an argument [...] necessarily a great work of art, a great poem [...] a symphony [...] a painting' (CP 5.119). Nor did such an approach mean to claim intellectual omnipotence, as intimated by some. Sebeok knew that to understand any one particular type of sign – such as the verbal – it was necessary to view that sign as part of the whole of which it is a part.

Sebeok envisaged a sort of *global dialogue* and *dialogic globality* interconnecting signs in a huge semiotic 'network' or 'web' (Sebeok 1975, 1995) where signs act as interpretants of each other beyond the strict limits of anthroposemiosis. He dubbed his ecumenical perspective with the apt expression 'global semiotics' (Sebeok 2001).

A fundamental axiom posited by Sebeok is that *signs* and *life*, human and nonhuman, converge so that to maintain and reproduce life and not only to interpret it at a metadiscursive level, necessarily involves signs (Petrilli 2014: 306-311). This position reveals an intimate connection between the biological and the semiotic and, inevitably, between the sciences that study them, biology and semiotics. *Semiotics with a claim to globality must keep account of its a priori status as a general science of signs and of its constitutive propensity for dialogic encounter and translation.*

Global semiotics accomplishes the overarching vision of 'interpretation semiotics', where *interpretation means translation, translation from one sign into another sign, its interpretant*. Interpretation semiotics attributes an inevitable and essential relation with the interpretant to the sign. The sign only subsists in relation to a given interpretant; it orients itself toward the subject according to a specific modality as expressed by its interpretant. Furthermore, the relationship between the interpreted sign and the interpretant sign is never one of convergence, repetition.¹ As Peirce says, the interpretant always adds something new as it shifts the sign toward the possibility of encounter with yet another interpretant sign.

The relation between interpreted and interpretant is a relation of translation, characterized by the tendency toward boundlessness, unlimitedness. Peirce talks of unlimited sequences of interpretants, open-ended chains of deferral, infinite semiosis. And Sebeok on his part, extending further Peirce's idea (Watt 2011), develops this possibility of opening and infinite deferral to a maximum degree. In fact, with global semiotics the *translational nature of semiosis*, therefore the *translational vocation of semiotics* are emphasized owing to the search by semiotics for interpretants that are always more distant, beyond the boundaries of the human and the conventional – which are also the boundaries of linguistics – to which it had been relegated by semiology.

Roland Barthes was perfectly right when in his *Éléments de sémiologie* (1964), with regards to the relationship between linguistics and *sémiologie* (as conceived by Saussure), he maintained that semiology was a part of linguistics and not vice versa. But with Sebeok and his 'global semiotics', semiotics fully recovers its dialogical and interpretive-translative character and emerges once again as a far broader and far more comprehensive sphere with respect to linguistics. Allusion here is not only

to the linguistics of the linguists, but also to Charles Morris's (1946) description of linguistics which he extended to the study of all that which he called 'language', therefore to all human languages, verbal and nonverbal. This conception of language is connected to the species-specific human primary modelling device also rightly denominated 'language' by Sebeok (1986, 1994), distinct from 'speech'.

Evidently, global semiotics thus described presupposes the critique of anthropocentrism and glottocentrism, which includes all those trends that turn to linguistics for their sign model. Verbal signs constitute only a tiny sector of the signs on our planet. And yet, they have been so exalted in the course of human history – especially in the West – that we must speak of 'arrogance', a form of arrogance closely connected with the anthropocentric vision, recurrent not only in the realm of common sense and in philosophy, but also in the sciences.

All the same, an explanation, which of course is not a justification, for exalting the verbal sign, a human prerogative, is *translatability*, precisely. All signs implicated in the great semio(bio)sphere can be translated into verbal signs. This is what such expressions as 'omniformativity' (Hjelmslev), 'universality of the noetic field', 'boundlessness of human language' (Chomsky), 'omniformative character of verbal signs' (De Mauro) all allude to (cf. Petrilli 2014: 304-306).

A dynamic approach to sign and language inevitably involves reflection on the role of translation. Victoria Welby, inventor of *significs*, as she calls her theory of meaning (cf. Petrilli 2009, 2015), is a pioneer on this front, having developed the latter in close association with translation theory. Welby understands "translation" not only in the obvious sense of the transferral from one language to another, i.e. interlingual translation, but also of the transferral of verbal signs into nonverbal signs and vice versa, i.e. intersemiotic translation, and of verbal signs into other verbal signs of the same language, i.e. intralingual translation. She takes translation as a method of interpretation and understanding, and our mental activities as nothing short of automatic translational processes. As foreseen by Peirce's own conception of the sign, the meaning of a sign is given in the relation to another sign that interprets it. In this sense *the sign is in translation*. Semiotic fluxes and signifying processes converge with translation/interpretation processes; semiosis is a translation/interpretation process.

Welby's theory of translation is an important aspect of her *significs* which she describes as a 'philosophy of significance', 'philosophy of interpretation' and 'philosophy of translation'. Moreover, with reference to communication in the human world and specifically to verbal language, her theory of translation is closely connected to her reflections on figurative language and on the role of metaphor, analogy and homology in expression and understanding. The acquisition of knowledge implies the capacity to establish links and connections in translational, interpretive processes (Welby 1983 [1903]: 89, 150, 161).

The more a sign translates into ever more numerous spheres of human knowledge and experience, the more its significance and ultimate value is enhanced. Different aspects of the processes of translation are expressed by the words transference, transformation, transmutation, transfiguration, transvaluation. *Significs* aims to develop critical awareness, the linguistic conscience, to empower and somehow master translational processes as the very condition for understanding. The sense, meaning and significance of an utterance are understood and enhanced through ongoing translational processes.

With reference to the question of subjectivity, the self emerges from intersubjective interpretive-translative practices involving the other; cultures are polylogic, the open, unfinalized expression of ongoing translational processes among different voices and worldviews; as sign activity of the 'meta' order, the sciences involve translational processes across different sign systems and orders of discourse (Kumar and Malshe 2005).

Though not thematized directly, translation is also essential to Mikhail M. Bakhtin's conception of interpretation, understanding and dialogism. His theory of language and meaning is rich in suggestions for a theory of linguistic and cultural translation (Ponzio 2005; Torop 2002), such that we may

claim that translation is central in the work of Bakhtin and his circle of collaborators (Bachtin e il suo Circolo 2014; Zbinden 2006). From this point of view Voloshinov's observations in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* on the problem of understanding are emblematic when he claims that:

any true understanding is dialogic in nature. Understanding is to utterance as one line of a dialogue is to the next. Understanding strives to match the speaker's word with a counter word. Only in understanding a word in a foreign tongue is the attempt made to match it with the 'same' word in one's own language. (Voloshinov 1986 [1929]: 102)

Rejecting the 'scientific fictions' of linguistics (including Saussure's), which identifies two partners in speech communication, an active speaker and a passive listener, Bakhtin argues:

The fact is that when the listener perceives and understands the meaning (the language meaning) of speech, he simultaneously takes an active responsive attitude toward it. He either agrees or disagrees with it (completely or partially), augments it, applies it, prepares for its execution, and so on. And the listener adopts this responsive attitude for the entire duration of the process of listening and understanding, from the very beginning – sometimes literally from the speaker's first word. (Bakhtin 1986 [1952-53]: 68)

The interpretant of active responsive understanding is specific to the sign; whereas the interpretant of identification is specific to the signal. The utterance, the dialogic word, the text call for responsive understanding; whereas the sentence, object of study of traditional linguistics, abstract and isolated from the real processes of dialogic interactive communication, simply calls for identification.

Interpretation, in the sense of responsive understanding, converges with translational processes at high degrees of otherness and creativity, whether it is a question of interpreting texts across different historical-natural languages or within the same language. Different types of interpretive-translative processes at varying degrees of otherness and responsiveness are present together in any given instance. For example, similarly to translation, whether intralingual or interlingual, the responsive interpretation of an utterance will depend on the capacity to identify syntactical structure. The utterance 'I read your letter to Frank' can be disambiguated either in the sense that the *letter* was addressed to Frank and I read it, or in the sense that the letter was addressed to somebody else and I read it to Frank. The capacity to disambiguate, which Noam Chomsky (1956) attributes to deep structures, consists in the generative capacity of interpretants that are not necessarily foreseen by the system of language, but rather are connected with the utterance, with its verbal and situational context and with translational relations of the endosemiotic and intersemiotic orders.

Iconicity, dialogism and otherness in textual translation

From a semiotic perspective we know that the text is made of sign material. This means that the text, any text whatsoever, is already a translation in itself, is already an interpretation, in fact, a sign is such thanks to its interpretant. Translation across languages is a specific case of translation across sign systems, what we may also call 'semiosystems', internally and externally to the same historical-natural language. And translation across languages is only possible on the basis of language understood as a modelling device. Language as modelling is an a priori condition for language as communication, that is, for verbal expression, speech which, instead, arises originally for communication and thanks to the predominance of iconicity in the relation among signs.

With reference to literary translation, if we understand 'fidelity' in terms of creativity and interpretation, and not just of imitation, repetition, reproduction of the same, of the 'original' text, a literal copy

in another language, the translant text must establish a relation of alterity with the text object of translation.² The greater the distancing in terms of dialogic alterity between two texts, the greater is the possibility of creating an artistic reinterpretation through another sign interpretant in the potentially infinite semiotic chain of deferrals from one sign to the next, to which belongs the so-called 'original'. With reference to Peirce's general theory of signs, in particular his triad 'icon', 'index', and 'symbol', if a translation is to be successful in terms of creativity and interpretation, the relation between the text object of translation and the translant text must be dominated by iconicity. A translation must be at once similar and dissimilar, the 'same other' (see Petrilli 2001). This is the paradox of translation. Therefore a text is at once translatable and untranslatable. This is the paradox of language.

The question of similarity is central to translation. In translation the relation between the text and that to which it refers, the original text, presents itself in terms of similarity. This similarity between the translation, that is, what we could call the 'translant text' and the original text, the 'translated text', is an *iconic similarity*. The translant text is predominantly an iconic sign, an icon.

The icon is one of the three types of signs identified by Peirce, the other two being the index and the symbol. The index is a sign that signifies its object by a relation of contiguity, causality or by some other physical connection. In Peirce's typology the symbol is the sign mainly in consequence of the mediation of a habit, or convention (see CP 4.531). Signs that are exclusively symbols, icons or indexes do not exist in the real world. The icon is never conceived as a pure icon but is always more or less mixed with indexicality and symbolicity, and vice versa. Consequently, iconicity is always, in Peirce's words, more or less *degenerate* (in a mathematic sense). This implies that icon, index, and symbol represent different levels of *degeneracy of the sign*, instead of being three separate and autonomous classes of signs.

The icon is characterized by a relation of similarity between the sign and its referent. However, similarity is not sufficient to determine an iconic sign. Twins look similar but they are not signs of each other. My reflex in the mirror looks like me but it is not an iconic sign. For iconic signs to obtain, the effect of convention, habit, social practices or special functions must be added to similarity. Iconic similarity is a special kind of similarity: it is an abstraction on the basis of a convention, and it privileges only certain traits of similarity. Similarity of a banknote to another banknote worth \$50 is no doubt a sign that the first banknote too is worth \$50. But if similarity is complete to the point that the serial numbers of both banknotes are identical, we have a false banknote that cannot carry out a legitimate function as an iconic sign on the money market.

All the same, as Peirce suggests, the icon is the most independent sign of all from both convention and causality/contiguity: 'an *icon* is a sign which would possess the character which renders it significant, even though its object had no existence; such as a lead-pencil streak as representing a geometrical line' (CP 2.304). Peirce analyzes the iconic sign in terms of 'firstness' or 'originality': the icon is an 'original sign', a sign whose significant virtue is due simply to its Quality (CP 2.92). Iconicity implies otherness as *absolute otherness*, and not the relative otherness of indexicality.

As in sacred icons, the icon maintains its otherness and resists converging with the directness of representation, with the boundaries of the object. Unlike the idol, the icon evades the logic of identity, of the totality and emerges in terms of figuration, depiction, presentation and not representation, but presentation of an absence, of the absolute other. As the great philosopher Emmanuel Levinas (1994: 123-148) would say, the icon with respect to its object is its shadow, its double, as Dostoevsky would say, in other words, its otherness, absolute otherness.

Translation is indirect discourse masked as direct discourse, all the same it is distanced from its (author-)translator. In fact, the translator says 'I' and nobody identifies him or her with the I of discourse, even in the case of oral and simultaneous translation. The Ambassador says: 'Grazie per l'accoglienza, sono davvero onorato di essere qui'; and the interpreter translates: 'Thank you for receiving me, I am indeed honoured to be here'; and nobody would dream of thinking that it is the

interpreter who is grateful or honoured. Numerous misunderstandings can and effectively do occur in an interpreter's translation. A hilarious episode occurred in relation to President Carter's visit to Poland when his interpreter told the audience not that I/Carter was interested in their desires for the future, but that he wanted to know them carnally.³ In any case, one thing is unequivocal and this is that even if the interpreter translates in the first person (direct discourse), and not in the third (indirect discourse), nobody would dream of thinking that it's the translator who wants the carnal experience! In the same way, no reader of an essay, novel or poem would ever attribute the author's words to the translator, as much as the latter normally reports the other's discourse in the form of direct discourse.

From this point of view and contrary to prejudice about the possibility of translating literary texts – especially a poetic text – the capacity for exotopy, distancing, extralocalization (Bakhtin), and the iconic relation of similarity that regulates translation as translation, somehow makes translation a privileged place for the orientation of discourse towards literariness. Such characteristics shared by the literary word and its translation in fact render them less distant from each other than would be commonly expected.

The question of translation may either concern 'simple' texts or 'complex' texts. In our view this distinction corresponds to that proposed by Bakhtin in *The Problem of Speech Genres* (1986 [1952-53]: 60–102) between 'primary genres' and 'secondary genres': 'simple texts' belong to primary genres, that is, to those discourse genres that are not part of literature; on the contrary, 'complex texts' are those of literary genres. For that which concerns problems of text semiotics, including the problem of translation, texts from secondary and 'complex' genres, as Bakhtin also calls them, shed light on primary or 'simple' genres and not vice versa, just as the anatomy of human beings helps to understand that of the monkey's, and not vice versa. This is also Walter Benjamin's perspective in his essay *The Task of the Translator* (1968 [1923]). In Bakhtin's words:

A one-sided orientation toward primary genres inevitably leads to a vulgarization of the entire problem (behaviorist linguistics is an extreme example). The very interrelations between primary and secondary genres and the process of the historical formation of the latter shed light on the nature of the utterance (and above all on the complex problem of the interrelations among language, ideology, and world view). (Bakhtin 1986 [1952-53]: 62)

The iconic relation between the text and that which it refers to is particularly obvious in the case of literary texts and of art texts in general, which are characterized by the relation of similarity among signs in terms of 'depiction', 'figuration', and not of mere imitation, representation, identification, or unification, that is, not as a mere copy in another language. Evoking Paul Klee, the text – literary, pictorial, artistic in general – does not picture or figure the visible (as instead occurs with theatrical texts in theatre performances or representations), but renders the invisible visible: *per invisibilia visibilia*, according to an ancient formula of the Fathers of the Church and the 2nd Nicene Council. It follows that the literary text, and more broadly the artistic text, can be characterized in terms of iconicity, that is, as an icon rather than as an idol (cf. L. Ponzio 2000, 2002, 2009). This means that, in so far as it is an icon, the artistic text gets free of the status of *eidolon*, that is, from the idolatry of a world that has been objectified and reified. The shift is from the idols of representation, where the subject and the object are frozen by the gaze and reified, to the icons of figuration, of depiction, according to a movement forward without return, a one-way, open trajectory according to the logic of alterity.

The *eidolon* (*eido*, *video*) gives itself in presence and is represented, in other words, it is captured by the gaze and possessed by the self, the subject. The idol offers itself directly to the gaze, satisfies the gaze, and the gaze, in turn, remains completely anchored to the visible, without ever attempting to surpass it or transcend it. The icon implies the capacity for transcendence, for surpassing boundaries of the visible, of the obvious, of representation. From sight to listening, listening to the other: this is the process of reading; this is also the process of translation.

As is obvious, to translate is not to decodify, nor to decipher, but to interpret. It follows that a semiotics of interpretation is a necessary basis for translation theory. And we know that the question of the translation of a text must be connected to the problem of the meaning of a sign. In fact, as Peirce, Welby and Bakhtin (among others) clearly demonstrated, meaning is not in the sign but in the relation among signs, whether the signs of a defined system, like those forming a code, a *langue*, or the signs of dynamic interpretive processes, which know no boundaries in the transition from one type of sign to another, from one sign system to another.

The more interpretation is not mere repetition, literal translation, synonymic substitution, but rather reelaboration, explanatory and creative reformulation, interpretation-translation that takes a risk given that it does not appeal to a pre-established code with its alibis and guarantees, the higher the degree of iconicity, of firstness and originality regulating interpretive-translative processes, and the more these are capable of fully rendering the meaning of a sign.

The identity of the sign calls for continuous displacement; each time the sign is interpreted-translated it becomes other, it is in fact another sign; the 'same other', as described above, which acts as an interpretant of the preceding sign. The sign's identity is achieved through its metempsychoses, through its translations-transmigrations from one sign to another. Identification of a sign is not possible if not by exhibiting another sign.

Meaning coincides with the interpretive trajectory which knows no boundaries of a typological or systemic order. This is particularly obvious when translative processes involve interpretants, whether verbal or non-verbal, belonging to another language, to another linguistic-cultural modelling system.

To translate across texts (whether this implies crossing over different historical natural languages or different languages within a single historical natural language) involves amplifying this movement, enhancing the iconic dimension of the relation among signs as signifying potential increases. This means to enhance the relation of absolute otherness and creativity between the interpreted sign and the interpretant sign,³ between the text object of translation and the interpretant, 'translatant' text as we search for and invent new interpretants to develop the meaning of the preceding sign, of the preceding text, in terms adequate to our times, to a new signifying context.

The relation between interpreted sign and interpretant sign is not decided or dominated by con- striction, by deduction as in the indexical relation. Deductive logic is replaced by associative logic, hypo- thetical, abductive logic, which is the logic of translation understood as reading-writing, it involves ac- tive participation and answering comprehension at the highest degree. As Barthes observed (1982, see also 1993-95), to read means to translate and to re-write. Translation across languages further enhanc- es the associative and personal character of the reading/writing (re-writing) process, and contributes to freeing the text from a single type or system of signs. *This is the task of translation*. Translative processes across languages evidence the dialogic intertextuality inherent to texts, such that textual practice itself in a single language is already an exercise in translation (see also Ponzio 2007).

A translation proposed by Antonin Artaud, translator of Lewis Carroll, is a case in which the text that comes after the original claims to be first, indeed claims to be the original itself. In this case, the translation interrogates the original, asserting its difference with respect to the original, the pre- scribed text. Here, not only does the translation dispute the original, but it also disputes the language into which it is translated, questioning the logic of discourse, the order of representation.

In *L'arve et l'aume*, a translation of the chapter on Humpty Dumpty in *Alice's Adventures in Won- derland*, Artaud works through Carroll's text (to read is 'to read through'), and does so not only in terms of a cruel antigrammatical enterprise against Carroll himself but also against the French lan- guage (Petrilli 1999). This is a case of translation where 'existence' and 'flesh', body and life are all at stake in the process, as in the theatre of cruelty. Word-play in Carroll does not go beyond a caricature of the exchange relation between *signified* and *signifier*. Carroll does not succeed in denouncing the hypocrisy and repression upon which the exchange relation is based. Nor does he deal with social

structures, the mechanisms of production, the ideological assumptions to which exchange is functional. Carroll glances at the looking glass, but keeps away from the double, the shadow which he catches sight of indistinctly, only to produce an infinity of heartless, psychic trickeries, an affected language.

As observed by Gilles Deleuze, the battle of the deep, its monsters, the mix-up of bodies, turmoil, subversion of order, encounter between the bottommost and the elevated, food and excrement, the eating of words, the underground adventures of *Alice's Adventures Underground* (which is the original title of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*), all this is supplanted by a play of surfaces: instead of collapse, there are lateral sliding movements (cf. Deleuze 1996: 37-38). Consequently, by comparison with Artaud's antigrammatical enterprise, Carroll's text is described as a bad imitation, a vulgar reproduction. The presumed original is only an edulcorated plagiarism, devoid of the punch and vigour of a work first written by Artaud. Indeed, Artaud wished to add a post-scriptum to *L'arve et l'aume* notifying the net sensation that he had himself first conceived and written the poem on fish, being, obedience, the sea, and God, revelation of a blinding truth (all of which is included in his translation of Carroll), centuries earlier, only to rediscover his own artwork in the hands of Carroll.

L'arve et l'aume: on the one hand, matter (*purport*) as understood by Louis Hjelmslev, on the other, human 'language' producing interpreteds and interpretants on the plane of content and expression. Similarly to Hamlet's cloud which changes aspect from one moment to the next, sign work invests matter, as understood by Hjelmslev, with different forms and it is on matter thus understood that every historical-natural language traces its specific subdivisions. In the same way, as regards linguistic work deposited in the different historical-natural languages, like sand which can be put into different forms, like a cloud which can take different shapes, matter may be formed or restructured differently in different languages (cf. Hjelmslev 1961, §13, *Expression and Content*). In spite of its alterity with respect to a given configuration, in spite of other possibilities, matter always gives itself as *signified*, it *obeys* a form and presents itself as matter. 'Obey' is a central verb in *L'arve et l'aume*.

The stiffening, the ossification of words, words that codify, block and paralyze thought, this is but one aspect of the general sclerotization of human signs. Instead, these must be restored the forgotten resources of language understood as an infinite modelling process, as writing. The consequence of such sclerosis, of such hardening and petrification, as claimed by Artaud in *Le Théâtre et son Double*, is that culture on a whole overwhelms life, dictating law to life instead of being a means to understanding and practicing life: 'Quand nous prononçons le mot de vie', specifies Artaud, 'faut-il entendre qu'il ne s'agit pas de la vie reconnue par le dehors des faits, mais de cette sorte de fragile et remuant foyer auquel ne touchent pas les formes' (Artaud 1964 [1938]: 19). On the one hand, life thus understood, *arbre*; 'matrix matter' (Carlo Pasi in Carroll 1993: 78), larva, embryo, egg; on the other, forms susceptible to petrification, *aume*, the *being* that human life has become.

To a petrified culture that perseveres in self-reproduction, there corresponds a petrified conception of theatre, theatre of representation, petrified theatre. But theatre has its *shadow*, that forms its *double*: 'Mais le vrai théâtre parce qu'il bouge et parce qu'il se sert d'instruments vivants, continue à agiter des ombres où n'a cessé de trébucher la vie' (Artaud 1964 [1938]: 18). The withering of verbal and nonverbal language, its limitation, has led to the loss of the relation to the shadow, to life, to the body. Official language must be broken in order to reach life, the human being's habitual limits must be refused, the boundaries of so-called reality must be infinitely broadened, beginning from the reconstruction of theatre, the specialized place of representation. This requires preparation, calculation. We cannot be content with being 'simples organes d'enregistrement' (Ibid: 133).

Being is repetition, victory over living, over the alterity of the body. Being is life which persevering in being, in self-repetition, on the level of words as well, in reconfirming itself, withdraws from life; *conatus essendi*, which economizes on itself, does not expose itself, does not want risks, preserves itself. Being is the present which by restraining itself, keeping itself aside, in reserve, for the sake of identity ends up losing itself. Being is death caused by obstination of presence, death as repetition.

As Jacques Derrida says, to refuse death as repetition is to assert death as expenditure, waste, present and without release. In this sense the theatre of cruelty could be considered as the art of difference and of expenditure without economizing, without reserve, without release and without history. Plato criticizes writing as body, Artaud as cancellation of body, of live gesture which only ever takes place but once (cf. Derrida 1961: xxx-xxxii).

In Artaud's translation of *Humpty Dumpty*, the translantant text exceeds the text claimed to be the 'original' and reunites with the matrix matter, the *arve*, through an act of cruelty – which had already been calculated and practiced for some time on the scene of the theatre of cruelty, even before having encountered this text by Carroll – against the text, against the English language, which Artaud knows well, and against the French language. The result is a metamorphosis-rebirth in a text that claims to be more original than the original text, because it carries itself over to and exposes itself to its very own origin more than the original had ever risked doing.

This gives rise to a sensation of maximum proximity among the two texts, which Artaud signals in his post-scriptum, but also of their maximum distancing and difference. 'Car on ne se rencontre pas avec un autre, like Lewis Carroll in his poem *Jabberwocky* in *Humpty Dumpty*, 'sur des points comme; être et obéir ou vivre et exister. Mes cahiers écrits à Rodez pendant mes trois ans d'internement, et montrés à tous le monde, écrits dans une ignorance complète de Lewis Carroll que je n'avais jamais lu, sont pleins d'exclamations, d'interjections, d'abois, de cris, sur l'antinomie entre vivre et être, agir et penser, matière et âme, corps et esprit' (Artaud 1989: 7-8).

The iconic relation between a sign and its interpretant plays a fundamental role in the rendition of the sense of discourse and this is also true in the case of interlingual translation. If translation processes stop at the level of conventionality and indexicality, translators will fail their task. In her discussion of translative-interpretive processes, Welby states that the *method of language is pictorial*, thereby evidencing an aspect of verbal signs that is irreducible to indexicality or to conventionality.

The translator must navigate in the iconic dimension of language and move beyond the conventions and obligations of the dictionary to enter the live dialogue among national languages, among languages internal to a given national language, and among verbal signs and nonverbal signs. The interplay between interpreteds and interpretants, translated signs and translantant signs at high degrees of semioticity necessarily involves iconicity, dialogism and alterity to lesser or greater degrees.

Iconicity implies that the relation between a sign and its object is not totally established by rules and codes, as in the case of symbols, that it does not pre-exist with respect to a code, as in the case of indices, but rather that it is invented freely and creatively by the interpretant. In the case of icons, the relation between a sign and its object is neither conventional nor necessary and contiguous, but hypothetical. And the interpreter, in our case, the translator, must keep account of all this when rendering the original interpretant with the interpretant of another language. When the relation between a sign and its object, and between different types of signs, is regulated by the iconic relation of similarity, affinity and attraction, as Peirce would say, the interpretive-translative processes forming the logico-cognitive and signifying universe at large develop according to the logic of dialogism, alterity, polyphony, polylogism and plurilingualism, to evoke Bakhtin's terminology.

These are all essential properties of language in addition to being necessary as a condition for critical awareness, experimentation, innovation, and creativity. What we claim *à propos* interlingual translation is also true in the case of intralingual and intersemiotic translation. We know that interlingual translation implies the other two types of translation. Therefore, translative processes always involve interaction among the three types of sign-object-interpretant relations, as identified by Peirce, or in our terminology interpreted-interpretant relations, and the three modalities of translation, as identified by Roman Jakobson (see Jakobson 1959; L. Ponzio 2015). Meanings subsist and flourish in interpretive-translative processes regulated by the relation between identity and alterity in a polylingual and plurilinguistic context, internal and external to a single language.

In this theoretical framework as delineated by interpretation semiotics, communication is not reductively understood in terms of message exchange. What we wish to underline in the present context is that, as regards in particular the human world, communication converges with the capacity for the unspoken, the unsaid, vagueness, ambiguity, inscrutability, concealment, reticence, allusion, illusion, implication, simulation, imitation, pretence, semantic pliancy, polysemy, polylogism, plurilingualism, alterity – all this presupposes the predominance of iconicity in semiosis and determines the very possibility itself of successful communicative interaction, of successful translational practice.

The translation process is regulated by the logic, or, better, the dia-logic of otherness;⁴ it emerges from and is oriented towards difference. Insofar as this is the case, translation is interpretation, writing, intransitive writing, re-creation: neither translation word by word, letter by letter (*verbo verbum reddere*, duly criticised by Cicero), nor translation on the basis of sense (St. Jerome's *non verbum de verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu*). The experience of translation, like literary writing, occurs with matter, it is a material process involving letters, the deferral of signifiers.

Translation encounters the twists and turns of language, its equivocations, the indirectness, the obliqueness of its interpretive trajectories. Whether we translate 'by the letter', 'literally' or 'on the basis of sense', we cannot leave the letter, the specificity of the signifier, its materiality, which construes difference in terms of that which cannot be homologated, leveled, or equalized. We cannot translate the letter understood as the materiality, the specificity of the signifier; the letter, that is, the signifying material, insofar as it indicates absolute otherness and excess, is not translatable.

Decisions play on ambiguities, not to dispel them, given that nothing can be decided, but to evidence their signifying import, the signifying import of interpreteds and interpretants, which is further enhanced through the deferral among interpreted-interpretants across other languages. Therefore translation is active, non transparent. It is connected with the work of re-reading and re-writing, re-creating.

Canonical translation is based on the code, convention, authority, authoriality, respect. Contrary to such an orientation, the task of the translator is not to give the impression that the translation is not a translation, but rather to convey the uniqueness, the specificity of the interpretant, its unrepeatability, the sense of its untranslatability, of its signifying materiality, specificity, absolute otherness. Translation should be construed as the specificity of the signifier, 'by the letter'. As such, translational procedure is dominated by iconicity whose signifying value is an "effect" of language provoked by the 'original', by virtue of what Peirce calls its quality.

Dialogic otherness and responsive understanding among interpretants in translation

To develop language and communication theory from a Bakhtinian perspective means to grasp the otherness dimension of language largely through the experience of literature. The inter-subjective and dialogical dimension of language (the very condition for signifying and communication processes) – which is grounded in the logic of otherness and extralocality and entails the 'ethical' dimension of life and language, it too grounded in otherness logic – tells of the disposition immanent in language to transcend its own limits as artificially imposed by the logic of identity and equal exchange. Literary language theories and philosophical language theories meet in the Bakhtinian perspective: both presuppose plurivocal and dialogical otherness structural to human discourse and as such are open to the ethical dimension of semiosis. Unlike special scientific languages and in line with literary language (especially Dostoevsky's polyphonic novel), philosophical language as well has its specificity in plurilingualism, pluristylism and pluridiscursivity, all capacities that find their sense, are enhanced and developed in relations of reciprocal translatability. So, as mentioned above, though

Bakhtin does not thematize translation theory directly, translation, insofar as it is inherent, structural to the sign, in fact is essential to his philosophy of the word, of the utterance.

Encounter between the word in the novel and the philosophical word can be clearly traced on a genetical level (Ponzio 2011). Bakhtin traces the origins of the 'polyphonic novel' in 'Socratic dialogue'. In turn, Socratic dialogue can be traced back to the carnivalesque orientation of popular culture which opposes the joyous relativity of a topsy turvy world to the monologism, univocality and dogmatism of hegemonic culture (Bakhtin 1984 [1963]: 106–114). A theory of sign, language and communication with any claim to adequacy should be based on the ethics of otherness, dialogism and translatability. Bakhtin evidences the vocation of philosophy for dialogized pluridiscursivity. This philosophical vocation is in fact the vocation of language. A philosophical perspective on language that focuses on the philosophical perspective of language, as does Bakhtin and his circle, evidences the dialogic capacity of the word – where reference is not only to the philosophical word, but to the word generally in the context of live expression, interpretation and communication.

Far from tending toward totalization or semiotico-philosophical imperialism, to reflect in a philosophical key on verbal and nonverbal expression, and on the translation processes that interconnect them, means to contribute to developing a detotalizing approach to the different areas of knowledge, praxis and human values, considering them from the perspective of their constitution in terms of sign material.

Thanks mainly to results obtained by experimenting with the word's dialogical potential in the laboratory of literary writing, the 'detotalizing' method of inquiry evidences the ethical or, better, 'semioethical' dimension of language. Literary writing highlights the human capacity for the indirect word, for extralocalization, the places of dialogization. Special mention can be made here of the parodic and 'carnivalized' genres of both the oral or written word. All such expressive devices are oriented by the logic of otherness and give full play to the word's internal dialogization, which renders it capable of self-awareness, self-critique and self-derision even, as Bakhtin demonstrates in his 1984 [1965] monograph on Rabelais. That the philosophy of language, or metalinguistics, evidences those places of discourse which resound as pluristylistic, pluridiscursive and plurivocal means to say that it evidences those places where the word is experimented in the encounter with another word, with a word that is other, where the meaning of a word is its translation into that other word and beyond. Translation is at once a modelling device and a communicative procedure that the condition of extralocalization presupposes and that, in turn, presupposes the condition of dialogic listening, responsive understanding and intercorporeity.

To be an adequate interpretant of the original text, the translating text like all interpretant signs not only repeats the interpreted sign, the object of translation, but establishes a relation of 'answering comprehension' (or 'responsive understanding') with it (Bakhtin 1984 [1963], 1990; Bachtin e il suo Circolo 2014). In the translation process, the relation between the text that translates, the interpretant, and the original text, takes place in terms of the logic of dialogism and alterity, in Peirce's terminology in terms of abduction.

In fact, translation involves inferential procedure of the abductive type; consequently, in semiotic terms, as we have seen above, it is dominated by 'iconicity'; from the viewpoint of ethics, to the extent that a good translation is dominated by otherness, abduction and iconicity, it inevitably recalls the associated question of responsibility/responsivity.

The text that translates, the interpretant sign, and the so-called 'original', the interpreted sign, are not connected on the basis of the logic of deduction. The original text is not connected to its translation on the basis of terms and conditions pre-established and predisposed once and for all. A given 'original' text does not inevitably generate a given translation. In other words, the text that translates does not relate to the text object of translation according to the logic of necessity, cause and effect logic. The fact that a text is a translation by no means excludes its autonomy, the possibility of its having a value in itself.

Let us reiterate then, *translation is not mere decodification*. To describe the relation between interpreted signs and interpretant signs in terms of decodification means to fall prey to the fallacy according to which to move from one historical-natural language to another, from one linguistic convention to another, simply implies transferral of the same meaning into different containers, or sign vehicles, or signifiers. Translation is not the transition of the 'same' meaning from the original text to the translating text.

As stated earlier, a good translation is one that attempts to establish a relation of *responsive understanding* with the original. Even more extraordinary is the fact that the meaning of the original is effectively explained and developed through this type of translative/interpretive work, until there appears another translation, another interpretation proposing yet another interpretant which somehow further enhances the meaning 'of the original'.

Even if it occurs according to itineraries that have already been delineated and are habitually followed, therefore as repetition, the interpretive movement is always characterized by the tendency to reach out for the other in the transition from the interpreted sign to the interpretant sign. The interpretant is such not because it repeats the interpreted but because it adds something new to it: between interpreted and interpretant there cannot be a mere relation of equality, absence of differences, total equivalence, substitution of the identical with the identical, not even at the lowest levels of interpretation: we must insist, then, that the interpretant is always the 'same other'.

Even when the interpretant is limited to identification, recognition of the interpreted sign (a given object is recognized as a 'notebook'; a given *phonia* or *graphia* as the *phonia* or *graphia* of 'notebook'), even when we are at the lowest levels of interpretation (when we read a written text, for example, as an exercise in phonic performance, as recitation), the interpretant sign distinguishes itself from the interpreted sign, it does not simply repeat it, but shifts it in a given direction, risks an opinion, offers something more with respect to the 'original' interpreted sign. In this sense the relation between interpreted and interpretant is a *relation of otherness*: the interpretant is always something else, different, with respect to the interpreted, and the more interpretation pushes beyond mere interpretation of the interpreted sign and becomes responsive understanding, the more the sign relation takes the character of a *dialogic relation*.

The interpretant responds to a 'question' posed by the interpreted, takes a stance toward it. Interpreted and interpretant are the *question* and *response* in a dialogue, which is *internal to the sign*, given that the interpreted/interpretant relationship is constitutive of signhood. All interpretive processes in which something carries out the role of sign can be analyzed in terms of 'parts', 're-joinders' in a dialogue where the interlocutors are the *given to be interpreted* and *the interpretant*. From interpretation at the level of perception to the critical interpretation of a written text, all signs present themselves as constitutively dialogical, given that they occur in a relation of alterity with the interpretant sign, without which the conferral of sense would not be possible. The logic of interpretation presents itself, therefore, as *dialogic*.

The materiality of the text is 'semiotic materiality' which opens to signification in the sense of significance. The text is endowed with its own irreducible autonomy with respect to the meaning that the interpreter attributes to it. And this is the case whether it is a question of the interpreter who 'reads' the text, the 'reader', or of the interpreter who 'produces' the text, the 'author': the text tells of a sense that is other from that conferred upon it by the I that is its interpreter. In this sense, by virtue of its otherness, absolute otherness, the text is endowed with its own objectivity, materiality, capacity for resistance with respect to the interpreting, signifying consciousness.

The sign's alterity determines the limits of interpretation. The limits of interpretation, whether on the side of the 'author' or of the 'reader', are determined by the sign's otherness, that is to say by its objectivity, its semiotic materiality, its autonomy with respect to the interpreting self, whether the latter be the 'reader', or whoever produces the text, the 'utterer' of the text, the 'author'. The problem of

the limits of interpretation is strictly connected to the problem of the sign's otherness and dialogism and cannot be addressed separately from it.

The constitution of the text is no different from the constitution of identity – whether individual or collective, which is also achieved as a semiotical process and in the relation of otherness – and even less so when there is a question of collective identity. Identity of the self, whether individual or collective, is constituted in the play of deferrals, no differently from the life of a text, whether in the strict sense of the written text, or in the broader sense of the cultural text, verbal but also nonverbal, above all when a question of a text that is capable of flourishing in the 'great time' (Bakhtin), in the deferral among signs, as in the case of the literary text (cf. Petrilli 2012: 53-58, 341-345).

Translation and similarity, between similar and dissimilar

There is no doubt that a translation must resemble the original. But the idea of resemblance to the original should not end up serving as an obstacle to the capacity for inventiveness, creativity and autonomy of the translation. On the contrary, it should be the condition itself for all this. A translation can make different claims and have different aspirations: it may simply limit itself to following the original text word by word, or it may recreate the original text in another language and do it so successfully as to have value in itself – in the case of a literary text, whether in prose or poetry, it may even reach such high levels in aesthetic value as to become an artwork itself. The relation between interpreted sign and interpretant sign that renders translation best is the 'dialogic' relation.

Just as the repetition of a sequence leads us to believe, as observed by David Hume, that what comes first is the cause of what comes after, and that these terms are connected by a relation of necessity, in the same way familiarity with a text, set frames and habits leads us to believe that the fact of their coming first with respect to their translation implies a relation of cause and effect with that translation, established according to a necessary and unchangeable order. Moreover, this line of thought can even lead to the conviction that any change in a text is a sacrilege: the text can only be that text there, in which case its translation in the last analysis is a fake.

This occurs, for example, in the case of the reader who normally reads *Don Quijote* in the Spanish original or *Divina Commedia* in Italian. In the *Divina Commedia*, *Inferno* can only begin with the line 'Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita' and any variant at all, not only in the sense of transposition into another language, but even of paraphrase in the same language may seem unbearable. Similarly, a reader like Borges even, accustomed to Spanish, may not tolerate variants for *Don Quijote* other than those – but only to a point – established by the publisher, layout, typesetter. On the contrary, for a reader unfamiliar with ancient Greek, the *Odyssey* can exist in numerous and different variants, no one of which – even though it is a translation – refers to an original acting as the criterion to measure fidelity. Nor does it make any difference whether these variants are in prose or in verse. The *Odyssey*, as Borges says, is a sort of international library of works in prose and in verse.

All the same, even though all versions of the *Odyssey* may appear at once sincere, genuine and divergent, Borges in his reflections on the Homeric translations betrays a weakness for English translations and transpositions which he cites. In fact, Borges associates the *Odyssey* to English literature which in a sense has always been intimate with this particular epic of the sea. Developing the observations made by Borges, we may remark that for texts familiar only in translation – the original being inaccessible due to linguistic ignorance – the same situations occur as those that concern the relation between the original text and its translation. For example, with reference to the Homeric texts, in Italy, Vincenzo Monti's translation of the *Iliad* carries out the role of original, especially for those who encountered this text for the first time during early school days and have continued reading it, to the point of not wanting to recognize any other version that is not Monti's. And yet, on Ugo Foscolo's ac-

count, Monti was not worth much as a scholar of ancient Greek. Indeed, it seems that his translation derives not so much from the original as from other translations at his disposal. Foscolo apostrophizes Monti as the 'Traduttore dei traduttori d'Omero'.

À propos Zeno's riddle about Achilles and the tortoise, the question is whether swift-footed Achilles who chases the tortoise but never reaches it is similar to a skilful and relevant translation (Derrida 1999-2000) which also tries to reach the original; and which, like the tortoise, has only a small advantage, that of having taken off first, of starting first. However, precisely because of this advantage, the original, like the tortoise, seems out of reach. The original always comes first.

In any case, it should be remembered that the *logoi* or argumentations used by Zeno of Elea to deny movement and becoming, like the riddle about Achilles and the tortoise, or the riddle about the arrow, were ultimately intended to support the Parmenidean thesis about unchangeable unity against the appearance of multiplicity (on Zeno's riddles, cf. Colli 1998). This confutation of the existence of the many to assert that only one is possible is also related somehow to the question of translation, of the relation between the only original text and its multiple translations. From this point of view, it is interesting to observe that Zeno's confutation of the multiplicity, as reported by Plato in *Parmenides*, is based on the notion of similarity, the same notion generally invoked to explain the relation between the text and its translations, as seen above.

Obviously, a translation is not identical to the original: not even Pierre Menard's *Quijote* by comparison to Miguel de Cervantes's *Quijote*, though it is 'rewritten' in the same language (cf. Borges 1939b). If a translation were totally similar to its original, it would be identical, simply another copy of the same text. But a translation must be at once similar and dissimilar, the 'same other'. This is the paradox of translation, the paradox of multiplicity.

To admit the possibility of translation is to admit, contradicting oneself, that something can be at once similar and dissimilar. We could use Zeno's argumentation, against the existence of the many, at once similar and dissimilar, as reported in Plato's *Parmenides* (1977: 127d-128e), to demonstrate the absurdity of admitting that a text can exist at once as the original text and as the translated text: given that it is impossible for the non-similar to be similar and for the similar to be non-similar, it is also impossible for translations to exist, given that they would be subject to impossible conditions. Instead, expressed with the paradox of Achilles and the tortoise, the 'paradox of translation' consists in the fact that in order to reach the text to be translated, the 'original', the translation must somehow recover the former's advantage which consists in being the first from the very outset.

With reference to Achilles and the tortoise, as reported by Aristotle in *Physics* (1983 239b: 14-20), the argument is that in the race the slowest will never be reached by the quickest. In fact, the pursuer must first reach the starting point of the pursued, so that the slower will always hold a lead. This argument is identical in principle to the paradox about the flying arrow which will never reach its target, because it must cross the infinite halves of the segment representing its trajectory, and this segment is divisible *ad infinitum*. But in Achilles's argument, unlike that about the arrow which never reaches its target, the distance which remains to be covered is not divided into halves each time he attempts to reach the tortoise.

Borges formulates this argument in slightly different terms (cf. 1932, 1939a): Achilles is ten times faster than the tortoise. Consequently, he gives it a ten metre advantage in the race. But if, as anticipated, Achilles runs ten times faster than the tortoise, it follows that while Achilles runs a metre, the tortoise runs a decimetre; while Achilles runs a decimetre, the tortoise runs a centimetre; while Achilles runs a centimetre, the tortoise runs a millimetre, and so forth *ad infinitum*. Therefore, swift-footed Achilles will never reach the slow tortoise.

Borges reports and examines various attempts at confuting Zeno of Elea's paradox: that proposed by Thomas Hobbes, John Stuart Mill (*System of logic*), Henri Bergson (*Essay upon the immediate data of consciousness*), William James (*Some Problems of Philosophy*) who maintained

that Zeno's paradox is an attack not only on the reality of space, but also on the more invulnerable and subtle reality of time, and lastly Bertrand Russell (*Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy, Our Knowledge of the External World*), being the only attempt Borges considers worthy of the 'original' in terms of argumentative force. Of the 'original' with 'original' placed in inverted commas, because all these successive argumentations, as argumentations in competition with Zeno's paradox, that attempt to equal it in argumentative ability, are nothing but variants or translations of the primary text.

Pierre Menard, author of *Quijote*, also turns his attention to the riddle of Achilles and the tortoise, as Borges informs us in his equally paradoxical tale dedicated to Menard in *Ficciones*. In the tale, Menard's *Quijote* is listed among his works as *Les problèmes d'un problème*, dated Paris 1917. Menard discusses different solutions, in chronological order, to the 'Achilles' paradox, and in the second edition reports the following advice from Leibniz in the epigraph: 'Ne craignez point, monsieur, la tortue'. Why should we fear the slow tortoise? Because of its advantage, because of the gap, the time-lapse that separates it in space and time, like a gulf, from swift-footed Achilles. To fear the tortoise is to fear the original in translation, which has the advantage of coming first. The text which translates the original is inevitably second.

To fear the original and faithfully respect it: to the point of deciding, as does Menard, that he will not just compose another *Quijote*, but the *Quijote*, the unique, the original. Of course, it was not just a question of imitating or copying the original. This would have meant to propose the advantage of the original once again, making of *Quijote*, as composed by Menard, a second text. Menard had a sacred fear of the original, however he did not fear producing pages that coincided word by word with the words of Cervantes. Menard succeeded in composing chapters IX and XXXVIII from the first part of *Quijote*. What was his expedient? He gave up competing with Cervantes, who had an obvious advantage simply because he had undertaken to write the same artwork much earlier. And therefore – after attempting to identify with his life, times, biographical context, and thus reach *Quijote*, having in a sense become Cervantes – Menard decided that the greater challenge was to reach *Quijote* while remaining Menard, through his own experience as Menard.

Menard's *Quijote* (a fragmentary artwork; one had to be immortal to bring it to completion) is only 'verbally identical' to Cervantes's *Quijote*. To prove the difference, in his tale Borges cites a passage from *Quijote* by Cervantes (part I, chapter IX) and the corresponding passage from *Quijote* by Menard. Even though these two passages correspond to the letter, the version by Menard, a contemporary of Williams James, clearly resounds with pragmatic overtones. Unlike Cervantes, for Menard, historical truth, discussed in exactly the same terms in both passages, is not what happened but what we judge happened. Achilles can recover the tortoise's advantage and overtake it simply because, even if it started first, he gave it an advantage, he let it be first. All things considered, the tortoise depends on Achilles, and thanks to his generosity for giving it an advantage, Achilles in fact beats it, surpasses it. Moreover, time also plays its part. The style of Menard's *Quijote* is inevitably archaic and affected, while Cervantes's *Quijote* is up-to-date and with the times with respect to the Spanish language as it was spoken in his own day.

The paradox of translation is the paradox of the text and of the sign

The paradox of translation is clearly the paradox of the text and of the sign. After all, if the question of similarity is central to translation,⁵ it is not less important in relation to the text, itself an interpretant before becoming an interpreted sign of other interpretants in reading and translation.

We have seen that the relation between the text and what it's about also presents itself in terms of similarity. And what characterizes the literary text, indeed the artistic text in general, as Bakhtin

above all has contributed to demonstrating, is that similarity is developed in terms of 'depiction' and not imitation, representation, identification, or unification (cf. Petrilli and Ponzio 1999).

In the case of the text translated across different languages, the relation between the text that translates, the translation, and the original, the translated text, is indirect, mediated, distanced. Translation requires the possibility of withdrawal, the possibility of a vision that is transgredient, an extralocalized relation among signs in the Bakhtinian sense. According to this orientation, the architectonics of the self – like that of the text – and the values associated to it are destabilized, detotalized and reconstructed in relation to the architectonics of the other, as Bakhtin would say.⁶

In terms of reported discourse, translation carries out a practice which involves all historical-natural languages, namely, reporting the discourse of others. And, of course, reported discourse involves both *langue* and *parole*. The individual *parole* is always more or less reported discourse in the form of imitation, stylization, parodization, direct or hidden controversy (according to all the modalities analyzed by Bakhtin in his two different editions of his monograph on Dostoevsky, the first published in 1929, the second in 1963).

The presence of the word of the other in one's own word, the fact that one's own word must make its way through the intentions and the senses of the word of others, and therefore its constitutive dialogic character, favours the dialogic disposition of the translating word. Therefore, because of the inclination of language, indeed of the utterance to report the discourse of others, the inclination to report the word of others from one language to another in the form of translation is already inscribed in speech, that is, in the linguistic function and linguistic translation which make speech possible. The main difficulties that the translator may encounter are those relative to the fact that the utterance or the text he translates belongs to special languages (sectorial or specialized) that he does not know well, or does not handle adequately. But this is no different from the difficulties presented by endolingual or intralingual translation, that is, the passage from one language or jargon to another in the same language. All the same, our claim is that such difficulties cannot be used to justify conceptions in support of the principle of interlingual untranslatability.

Our considerations on the distanced and indirect nature of the translating word with special reference to the literary text, above all the poetic text, most often referred to in support of the thesis of untranslatability, may instead contribute to validating the thesis of *translatability*. In fact, from this point of view, there emerge relations of similarity between the literary word, therefore the poetic word, on the one hand, and the translating word, on the other. This is not a question of superficial or surface similarity, but rather of homological similarity, that is, similarity in terms of formation and structure, similarity oriented by iconicity.

Both the literary word and the translating word can be distinguished from the word of genres, understood here with Bakhtin (1979) as primary or direct discourse genres. In this case, the word is the word that objectively identifies with the subject that produces it, with the subject's signifying intention. Instead, the literary word belongs to secondary or indirect discourse genres. The literary word is no longer a direct word, one's own word, an objective word that converges with the subject of discourse, as normally occurs in ordinary speech – or, at least, this is the claim. In ordinary discourse in fact the general expectation is for the word and the subject of discourse to converge. Here the subject is objectified in discourse, is finalized in it. On the contrary, secondary genres evidence the indirect character of the word, *the word and its shadow*, to evoke Levinas once again. The literary word evidences the indirect character of the word, presenting itself as an objectified word, distanced from the self of discourse. It is no longer the word with which the author identifies, but rather the word that is other, such that the utterer can pronounce the pronoun 'I' without identifying with it. This occurs, for example, in the novel narrated in first person, in drama where the playwright has his characters speak directly, even in lyrical poetry and in autobiography where a certain degree of distancing always occurs between the writer and the I of discourse. 'Exotopy'

understood in the Bakhtinian sense is the condition itself of literariness, as much as of artistic discourse in general.

We have made the claim that translation is indirect discourse masked as direct discourse, which all the same is distanced from its author-translator. As observed above, the translator can say 'I' and nobody expects to identify him with the I of discourse, even when a question of oral and simultaneous translation. Contrary to certain prejudices about the possibility of translating literary texts, especially a poetic text, this capacity for exotopy, distancing, extralocalization potentially present in translation as translation, in translation as such, lead us to claim that translation is in a privileged position with respect to the movement of discourse toward literariness. Such characteristics shared by the literary word and the translating word in fact render them less distant from each other than would be commonly expected.

But 'translatability' does not only imply the possibility of translation in interlingual terms. Translatability also denotes an open relation between a text in the original and its translations-interpretations in the same language. Therefore 'translatability' of a text, like 'interpretability', generally – with respect to which 'translatability' is a special case – also indicates that the translation of a text remains open and is never definitively resolved; that a translated text may continue to be translated, in fact may be translated over and over again, even in the same language into which it has already been translated, and possibly even by the same translator. The sign consistency of the text that is translated, its sign complexity, its semiotic materiality, its otherness and capacity for resistance with respect to any one interpretive trajectory, is evidenced by the fact that the original is not exhausted in the text that translates it. 'Translatability' understood in this sense must also be addressed when reflecting on the limits of translation, as in general of interpretation.

Dialogic and translation in the great time

The question of translatability implies the question of untranslatability, like two faces of the same process. I am alluding here to the question of translatability, interpretability, expressibility of the untranslatable, of the uninterpretable, of the unexpressible. By virtue of semiotic materiality, of the absolute otherness of the sign, of its capacity for resistance in the face of all attempts at interpreting-translating it, the concept of translatability implies the question of the untranslatable, that is, of that which cannot be englobed, which evades the limits of comprehensibility; it implies the infinite with respect to the finite, the totality; the unsayable with respect to the said in any linguistic system whatsoever, that which cannot be grasped; the unconscious with respect to the conscious, the impossible.

Language, the place of equivocation and misunderstanding, is reinvented always anew at each occurrence, it is the place where something always remains unsaid, the place of the absent. The speech act, assertion, statement necessarily imply leaving something out, something that escapes the will's control, that evades intentional signification, that is not exhausted in saying –absolute otherness. In translation, the other, the absent, the shadow engender new semiosical fluxes formed by interpretant signs which, in turn, resist control and elude the will, signifying intention, purpose, conscious awareness, authority of the ultimate word.

Language (*langue/lingua*) cannot be reduced to the status of a nomenclature. Otherwise, translation among languages would be immediate, in the sense that each word would have a corresponding concept in its own language and its immediate correlate in another language. But this is not how things stand. The relation is not between words and preconceived ideas, this is not a direct and finalized relation. To assert, to utter, to express oneself, to perform acts through words, speech acts, linguistic acts, means at once to repress, to remove, to silence – all this is clearly revealed by such phe-

nomena as dreaming, word play, artistic discourse, and symptoms. From this point of view language (*langue/lingua*) is the condition of the unconscious.

If repression, elimination, removal, silence, the unsaid, the shadow, absolute otherness are the other face of the word, this has consequences for the act of translation, as interlingual translation makes particularly evident. On the one hand, we have *mathesis universalis*: in other words, common speech, invariability, semiotic fluxes, synechism, energy, progress, succession, return, transitive writing, transcription, continuity; on the other hand, we have *mathesis singularis*: uniqueness, otherness, fragmentation, death, loss, intransitive writing, variability, unrepeatability, discontinuity. All these factors interact and overlap, evoking each other in uncertain, ambiguous relations, where plurivocality, indetermination and ambiguity prevail.

An act of forgetfulness, oblivion, neglect, denial, a slip, omission, oversight, inadvertence, negligence are all phenomena that show how language is discord and not harmony, dissidence and not a system of oppositional pairs. To evoke Freud, the self is not master in his 'own' home, the speaker is not at home in his 'own' mother-tongue; instead, the self, the speaker, is spoken by a language. The self is nomadic. We are always 'strangers to ourselves' (Kristeva 1988), to the extent that what we share and have in common with each other is the very condition of strangeness, delocalization, that is, absolute otherness.

In the flux of infinite semiosis signs flourish in the dynamics of the interrelation between the logic of continuity and the logic of discontinuity, distinction, discretion, fragmentation, specification, absolute otherness, to evoke together Bakhtin and Levinas. The relation of similarity among signs implies difference, dissimilarity, diversity, diffraction, irreducible alterity. As for the relation between reported discourse and original discourse, the relation between the text that translates and the original text develops in the tension between the centripetal forces and the centrifugal forces that operate in language, as Bakhtin says (1981: 272), between centralization and decentralization, monolingualism and plurilingualism, monologism and polylogism, identity and alterity, the same and the other.

Translation is the condition for the life of signs and of texts, which do not subsist if not in the semiotic process which, in turn, develops in terms of translational processes of deferral from one sign to another, from one utterance to another, from one text to another. From this point of view, interlingual translation is only possible in the tension between translatability and untranslatability.

In *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1986 [1929]), Voloshinov conceptualizes communication, social relations and verbal language in terms of a dialectic-dialogic interaction between the logic of identity and the logic of alterity. In this general perspective he introduces another two important categories which can be applied to nonverbal sign systems as much as to the verbal: 'theme' (*smysl*) and 'meaning' (*znachenie*), what he also denominates 'actual sense' and 'abstract sense' (ibid: 106). The second term in these pairs, 'meaning' or 'abstract sense', refers to the identical, reproducible and immediately recognizable each time the utterance is repeated, as in the case of linguistic elements, phonemes and monemes, which constitute the utterance. According to Voloshinov:

Theme is a complex, dynamic system of signs that attempts to be adequate to a given instance of generative process. There is reaction by the consciousness in its generative process to the generative process of existence. Meaning is the technical apparatus for the implementation of theme. (Voloshinov 1986 [1929]: 100)

'Meaning' thus understood corresponds to signality rather than to 'semioticity' or 'signhood'. In other words, in this particular paradigm, 'meaning' corresponds to the 'interpretant of identification', rather than to the 'interpretant of answering comprehension', to 'plain meaning', rather than to plurivocal meaning. In terms of translational processes, where 'meaning' as we are now describing it dominates, the degree of dialogism and distancing that regulates the connection between interpretant sign and interpreted sign is minimal.

Instead, 'theme', or 'actual sense' refers to all that is original and unrepeatable in the utterance, to the overall sense, purport, signifying import and to the evaluative orientation as these aspects emerge in any given instance of communicative interaction. 'Theme' accounts for expression, communication and translation among different languages and cultures, among different value systems, in terms of responsive understanding (answering comprehension), multiaccentuality, dialectic-dialogic responsiveness and responsibility.

Bakhtinian dialogics is rich in suggestions for translation theory and practice. It interrogates the literal interpretation of translation understood as transferral, transportation and shift of a text from one language to another, from what could otherwise emerge as one linguistic-cultural prison to another, evidencing its overall implications. Read in the light of Peirce's sign theory, Bakhtinian dialogics contributes to a better understanding of how translation is a practice that frees the sign from the limits of any one sign system and proposes itself, instead, as the condition on the basis of which that sign can develop as a sign.

The concept of 'responsive understanding' not only clarifies that to translate is to interpret, but also that translation involves a dialogic procedure in which understanding means above all to take a stance, to respond, to take responsibility.

To translate is to recreate, to create the conditions for the text to live its life fully, to free it from the limits of language and contemporaneity. As encounter among different historical-natural languages, among special languages, among different cultures, ideologies, and worldviews, among different texts and contexts, whether they are close or distant from each other, in proximity or remote, translation tells us about the condition of joyous relativity in the relation among signs, verbal and nonverbal, where barriers disappear and are no longer an issue. My allusion here is also to those barriers which are presupposed by the theoretician who, while distinguishing between intralingual, interlingual, and intersemiotic translation, forgets that to make such a distinction is only possible by abstracting from the context of the real life of the sign.

The reality of signs and sign processes is the reality of the dialogic relation, of interconnection among signs, intercorporeity, interconnection among bodies. Translation implies interpretation at the highest degrees of otherness, dialogism and responsiveness, which means to say of participative interpretation. All such modalities of living together and constructing texts constitute a translational device that most contributes to the resurrection of the text – which is also the resurrection of the self –, to its continuity, which in fact is no less than the continuity of life in 'the great time'.

NOTES

¹ On our use of the terms 'interpreted' and 'interpretant', see Ponzio 1990: 15-61; and Petrilli and Ponzio 2005: Introduction.

² On the terms 'translated' and 'translatant', see Petrilli 2010: ch. 8.

³ See: <http://www.lackuna.com/2012/04/13/5-historically-legendary-translation-blunders>.

⁴ On the concepts of dialogism and otherness in relation to signs, see Petrilli and Ponzio (2005, 2006, 2016).

⁵ An International Conference on *Similarity and Difference in Translation* was organized in New York in 2001 (see Arduini and Hodgson 2004).

⁶ See Bakhtin 1993 [1920-24] and in Russian original and Italian translation, see Bachtin e il suo circolo (2014: 33-168).

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Book Reviews

On the translational turn: Translation Studies as a global project

Titika Dimitroulia

Sandra Bermann and Catherine Porter (eds.), *A Companion to Translation Studies*. Blackwell Companions to Literature and Culture, Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2014, 654 pp., £129.00 (hbk), ISBN 978-0-47067-189-4; online ISBN 978-1-11861-350-4.

In the late 1970s, Translation Studies were struggling for their autonomy and legitimization. Werner Koller, for example, was stressing the 'legitimation crisis' they faced (1979: 10) and highlighted the main problems that remained unsolved, namely, the relationship between translation theory and practice, as well as that between Translation Studies and its source sciences. Today, as we pass through the second decade of the 21st century, what is at stake is the translational turn in the humanities and social sciences. The multitude of university programmes, journals and book series, as well as the ever increasing number of reference works, encyclopedias, dictionaries, handbooks and companions to appear in the last twenty years, which approach translation from diverse perspectives, bears testament to the consolidation and growth of the field of Translation Studies. The weighty *A Companion to Translation Studies*, edited by Sandra Bermann and Catherine Porter, is one of the most impressive recent additions to the steadily expanding constellation of reference books for translation. Its overall objective is to define what Mona Baker, right at the beginning, describes as the *changing landscape* of translation studies, in an age where, as Susan Bassnett puts it, in her 'Variations on Translation', the *translation consciousness* of societies is growing ever stronger through globalization. Intended both for the specialist, teacher and student, as well as for the general reader, the *Companion to Translation Studies* endeavours to map out the field of literary translation and theory in a manner that is attentive to its historical depth and its current configurations, and at the same time consistently focused on transculturality and interdisciplinarity.

Whether general or specialized, the volume's 45 wide-ranging articles, all written by distinguished experts in their field, are straightforward though never simplistic in their treatment of the subject, and frequently even eloquent. The *Companion*, as a whole, operates on two levels. First, it offers a historical retrospective in the field of translation, which, informed by Foucauldian archaeology, occasionally leads to focused conceptual analyses. Secondly, it postulates new approaches to the theory of translation, some of which are based on or emerge from genuinely intercultural comparisons.

The first Part (Approaches to Translation) focuses on aspects of the convergence of translation and translation studies with other disciplines, those with which it is traditionally linked, such as linguistics, both contrastive and computational, stylistics, comparative literature, sociology – what Holmes (1988:72) had called socio-translation studies – philosophy and semiotics, but also technology and the digital. The latter dimension, however, is represented by only two articles, one on Machine Translation and another on Localization. The radical changes brought into the field of translation from

recent developments such as networking, digital nomadism, web communities or computer assisted translation, could have been addressed more thoroughly.

The second Part (Translation in a Global Context), by far the most extensive, examines translation as the global-wide arena of a wide range of intercultural encounters, often on asymmetric terms, between languages and cultures. In this crucial arena, where individual and collective identities are negotiated and shaped, the disciplinary identities of comparative literature and of Translation Studies are also renegotiated, intertwining their respective problematics around the strategic role of a multi-accented concept of translation. Finally, the third Part (Genres of Translation) comprises a kaleidoscopic view of various types and sub-types of translation, including that of sacred texts, from fascinating and fresh perspectives. Particularly noteworthy is the extended reference to intralingual translation, which is quite often omitted by translation handbooks and companions, as well as to intersemiotic translation. Thus, the *Companion* covers all aspects of translation postulated by Jakobson.

The organization of the volume is highly effective, with the articles having a complementary relationship and being actively engaged in a dialogue among themselves, particularly within the sections. In the section 'Histories and Theories', for instance, all four contributors develop their individual insights into the history and theory of translation in a colloquium-like manner. This may initially surprise the reader, who will soon after appreciate the coherence and intelligibility afforded by this careful orchestration of the diverse authorial voices, as well as by the sustained combination of theory and practice in a way that ensures the user-friendliness of the volume.

The omission of certain important theoretical contributions in other languages, such as French or German, may seem inevitable in a work which is addressed to the English-speaking world. Evidently, the global spread of Translation Studies cannot possibly be exhaustively covered, even by a bulky volume of 654 pages. It is from such projects of high ambition and broad scope, however, that we expect a more daring and deliberate boundary-crossing.

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A semiotic approach to comics and (cultural) translation

Lia Yoka

Federico Zanettin (ed.), *Comics in Translation*. Oxon: Routledge, 2014, 322 pp., \$60.95 (pbk), ISBN 978-1-905763-07-8.

A second edition of *Comics in Translation* has appeared six years after the first. It is still as topical as it was. Though structured as a sober textbook for the (advanced) classroom, with four chapters on general theoretical aspects of comics in translation preceding eight case studies, it offers a delightful, even suspenseful, reading experience.

The field is generally held to be “emergent” or at best “newly established”. However, Zanettin’s opening Overview (pp. 1-32), a concise essay on “comics in translation”, as well as his closing Annotated Bibliography of no less than 149 titles of books and articles (pp. 270-306) provide secure proof that self-sufficiency, precision, broadness of perspective, as well as analytical clarity have already been gained. His introduction covers a lot of ground in response to the double question: *What does translation tell us about comics and what do comics tell us about translation? What are comics and what is translation after we have answered the first question?* Translation scholars and practitioners who are not necessarily great fans of comics are familiarized with the basic genres, taxonomies and concepts that are useful when dealing with comics, cartoons and graphic novels. Comics scholars and aficionados are treated to a comprehensible, lucid critical introduction to the semiotics of translation, its themes, research insights and levels of inquiry. Hard to ask for more.

Understanding comics in translation has changed a lot since Joseph H. Matluck write in the 1960s, about Mexican publications of US comic strips that ‘as in all countries where translated material has come from the United States, a too careless selection of translators or good translators too busy to devote the necessary time to paraphrasing carefully and natively, has resulted in the corruption of the speech habits of the barely literate group, who form a good part of the population and a better part of the comics readers and who are not well enough equipped intellectually to withstand the pressures of the written word’ (Matluck 1960: 228). For Matluck, who was quite progressive in his view that comics, and their translation, are perfectly legitimate objects of study, the perception of translated comics was merely a matter of adapting the strings of verbal language in a careful way. A translator’s carelessness could present a moral threat for the target reader, while a tasteful rendition could perhaps save them from expressing themselves in VROOMs, BLAMs and POWs: In any case, “americanization”, the flooding of global markets with American comics, was an affair of words only.

Today, most would agree that comics translation is more than ‘constrained’, that it is more than translation where ‘natural [verbal] languages are the only “systems” which are affected by translation’. It is acknowledged that comics translations must consider ‘visual and/or auditory channels in addition to the verbal channel of communication’ (Zanettin 2014: 20-21). Preparing manga for distribution in Germany or Disney cartoons for the Arabic market, entails a change of genre, readership and publication format. This kind of translation is intersemiotic, rather than merely inter-linguistic (if indeed there is such a thing as a purely and properly inter-linguistic translation). This argument is illuminated by the case studies included in Zanettin’s volume; drawn from different parts of the globe, they stay

clear from considering translation as a question of verbal equivalence or that 'visual' languages are somehow universal. Yet, the most important contribution of this volume is its insistence on medium and genre specificity: Intersemiosis (a series of adaptations of the source image/text/object into other media and languages) in translating comics is *much more crucial* than in translating other kinds (types, genres, media) of literature and art. Informed definitions of translation (going beyond, but grounded in inter-linguistic, *proper* examples) are applied to the history, the socio-cultural background and the current state of the comics market so fluently, that they encourage the reader to forget that medium-specific awareness combined with a functional understanding of intersemiosis in cultural translation (translation at large) have not always been self-explanatory.

The chapters on the general aspects of comics in translation enhance Zanettin's compelling idea that comics studies and translation studies cross-illuminate one-another in exemplary ways. Nadine Celotti deals with the verbal loci of translation in comics (balloons, titles, captions, paratext) in a relationship of tension with the 'meaning-making function of the visual message' (47). Valerio Rota examines the four main publication formats for comics, typical of the American, French, Italian and Japanese industries, to show that size, proportion and characteristics, when modified, will change the whole cultural context of the reception of comics. He argues against 'drastic adaptations aimed at hiding their origin', in favor of translation as 'tangible proof of [what Antoine Berman has called] the "experience of the foreign"', involving 'the recognition of, and respect for other cultures' (96). Heike Elisabeth Jüngst, in describing the gradually increasing 'Japaneseness' of manga translations in Germany, highlights another dimension of recognizing alterity and (linguistic/aesthetic) origin in comics translation: Today, readers 'like their manga to look as Japanese as possible' (74), and indeed this need for exoticism as part of the seduction of manga results in 'the translation tr[ying] to look more Japanese than the original' (ibid).

Tension rises here. Juxtaposing Rota's call for an ethical translation that respects cultural otherness and Jüngst's study of the growing trend for authenticity in translation, one is confronted with certain elementary questions regarding the semiotics of culture and the politics of communication: Does 'respecting' another culture coincide, or overlap with 'exoticizing' it? Does seeing the other as exotic automatically mean treating them as inferior? Does enjoying something for its (apparent) originality and authenticity, i.e. because it is foreign and strange to us, automatically create an asymmetrical cultural relationship?

I would argue that, while the paradigm of exoticism has been forged within a broader context of an objectifying and superior attitude of the dominant West towards other cultures (what has been called the 'colonizing gaze', but in fact it is a whole worldview underpinning technologies of war and devaluation), appreciating foreignness, authenticity, historicity, wonder and other characteristics that comprise the category of the exotic does not necessarily presuppose or endorse a self-conception of supremacy and dominance. Most primitivist modern art, certain scientific and experimental practices, and all good comics, are proof of that. So does exoticism rule out respect? It depends.

A thoroughly researched and ambitious book is bound to show up the very difficulties of devising workable models and generalizations of the translateability of semiotic systems such as verbal language, pictures and (all kinds of) media, genres and formats with reference to globalization. While Zanettin's text on 'Three Italian Translations of *La piste des Navajos*' convincingly argues for the relevance of the concept of [corporate product] 'localization' (as defined by the Localization Industry Standards Association) when examining the translation of widely distributed comics, we still have to understand translation strategies, (the 'localizing' one and its *others*, whether they aim to foreignize, aestheticize, stylize or to simplify the target product) more as a continuum, and less as equivalent cultural stakes in competition with one another. Competition implies the possibility of either one winning over the other, and in the cases of translation, the local has no chance of prevailing, unless it is itself the strategy of the global. 'Globalization' is always an asymmetrical power relationship. Part

of its sweeping force is exactly its structural ability to discover, appreciate the local, coopt isolated aspects of the local, and embody them within its own repertoire.

Discussing the globalization of French croissants and Mexican cuisine through an initial selection process in the USA, Goran Sonesson offers an exemplary formulation of this problem from the point of view of cultural semiotics: '[W]e really received [cultural] messages of a kind from other countries [France and Mexico]: but only one country, the United States, has at the moment the power to put those messages into circulation, and it does not do it without deforming them by means of its own code' (Sonesson 2004: 165).

Taking this condition (of localization as part of the strategy of globalization) into account, it is hard to fully subscribe to the main argument in Elena di Giovanni's essay on 'The Winx as a Challenge to Globalization' (220-236). The translation of the (Italian) Winx Club into English can hardly be seen as 'resisting the globalizing corporate strategies' on the grounds that the production managers supervise all English translations. Instead, the local (Italian) language should be understood as one of the attributes of the corporate product (however important an attribute it may be). The verbal language system in this case definitely enables the direct comprehensibility and thus consumability of the product in certain markets, yet it is no less important than packaging or other aspects of formatting and publication (what Zanettin would call the 'parameters of localization'). In other words, the use of a specific marketing method by the corporate managers of the (Italian) Winx Club cannot be seen as a sign of victory, or resistance of the 'local' language against the dominant 'global' English. It is an intrinsic part of the product's branding. In other words, nowadays, a national language can be part of the 'world creation' strategy of corporate products, i.e. only one of the rhetorical, aesthetic, stylistic and narrative elements that pervade, as constant and instantly recognizable features, all the ads, comics, dolls, clothes, and other merchandise related to a mass cultural commodity. This is confirmed not only in the conclusions drawn by Jüngst about the increasing Japaneseness of manga translations in Germany mentioned above, but notably also in the study, by Raffaella Baccolini and Federico Zanettin, of the translations of Spiegelman's *Maus*: The uneasy, at times marginally failing translations of an already complex narrative, where Vladek, the author's father, 'tell[s] of trauma without making sense of the Holocaust' (99) using broken English with yiddish elements 'further testify to the crisis in representation and language that often follows trauma' (128), and, I would add, point to the innate and inescapable historical and cultural hierarchies of verbal (and other) codes.

Having said that, di Giovanni's essay, to her credit, attempts to position the field of comics and translation in media theory and studies of mass communication. The future of this field lies, I believe, exactly in this approach of comics as a medium of mass communication and of cultural translation as a terrain of asymmetrical and antagonistic acts of communication operating within, and heavily determined by a material technological apparatus and a nexus of political realities.

Pressing matters of cultural semiotics aside, several noteworthy empirical observations are made in this compilation. Certain long-held assumptions about translation and comics are confirmed, for instance, that translations of low-brow comics are more target-oriented, while translations of high-brow comics tend to be more source-oriented, i.e. interested in achieving a certain equivalence to the author's style rather than appealing to the readers' expectations and pool of knowledge. Others are challenged. It seems that the internet has not affected comics production and consumption (through, for instance, the possibility of hypertextual links and scroll-down) as much as had been predicted by important scholars such as Scott McCloud and Mario Saraceni, and 'print has remained the main form of publication for comics' (9).

Comics in Translation has created a precedent. Conferences and articles have had to draw on its material and themes. Klaus Kaindl's dense and erudite summary entitled 'Comics in Translation' for the *Handbook of Translation* (Kaindl 2010) amply quotes articles from *Comics in Translation*. Nathalie Mälzer's *Comics – Übersetzungen und Adaptionen*, an edited collection of contributions to a

conference on 'The Translation and Adaptation of Comics' (Hildesheim, 31 October–2 November 2014), follows up on questions posed by Kaindl (keynote speaker at the conference) and by authors in Zanettin's book. Next to a series of engaging texts on the adaptation (as comics) of literary works (Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, Robert Musil's *Der Mann Ohne Eigenschaften*, Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, Dante's *Commedia Divina*, Arthur Rimbaud's poems), Mälzer's volume offers many contributions that discuss linguistic translation techniques and strategies in relation to the global/local, familiarizing/foreignizing trajectories, as well as theorize and apply broader definitions of translation, definitions that address issues of medium-specific aspects of communication, the taxonomy of genres and questions relating to modes of address and semiotic language systems (pictorial, verbal, and formal).

Since the 1990s, there seems to be a (relatively) common route followed by comics and translation studies in anglophone, francophone, Spanish- and German-speaking scholarship. This 'collaborative' growth is partly due to the youth of the field: A significant part of the discussion is online and not impossible to master. This allows for smooth cross-referencing, continuity, and work that obliges with both depth and detail. This book is a great contribution to this kind of ethos, that only a combination of fan and scholar would care preserve.

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