

On November 10–11, 2012, the Translation and Interpreting Section of the Department of English and American Studies of Palacký University in Olomouc, Czech Republic, hosted the second TIFO – Translation and Interpreting Forum Olomouc. The organizers' goal was to provide a platform for all parties with an interest in translating and interpreting, both academics and professionals, to meet and to discuss and critically examine relevant issues and often opposed viewpoints. The participants included representatives of universities, EU institutions, publishing industry, transnational corporations and language service providers. The present volume is a collection of selected contributions presented at the conference, which was held under the title *Tradition and Trends in Trans-Language Communication*.

OMLS Vol. 2

Tradition and Trends  
in Trans-Language Communication

Edited by  
Jitka Zehnalová  
Ondřej Molnár  
Michal Kubánek

## Tradition and Trends in Trans-Language Communication



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# **Tradition and Trends in Trans-Language Communication**

Edited by  
Jitka Zehnalová  
Ondřej Molnár  
Michal Kubánek

Palacký University  
Olomouc  
2013



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in Trans-Language Communication**

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November 10–11, 2012

The logo for TIFO 2012 features a stylized quill pen nib above the text "TIFO 2012".

Edited by

Jitka Zehnalová

Ondřej Molnár

Michal Kubánek

Palacký University

Olomouc

2013

Reviewers: Zuzana Jettmarová (Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic)  
Cecilia Alvstad (University of Oslo, Norway)

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## Editors' Note

Jitka Zehnalová, Ondřej Molnár, Michal Kubánek

Building on the experience drawn from the first Translation and Interpreting Forum Olomouc, the Translation and Interpreting Section of the Department of English and American Studies of Palacký University in Olomouc, Czech Republic, organized its sequel—TIFO 2012. The event took place on November 11–12, 2012, and once again it was intended as an open platform for all stakeholders in the field of translation and interpreting—academics (teachers and students), professional translators and interpreters, professional organizations, language service providers, “in-house” language departments of transnational corporations, and companies developing support tools and technology. For two days, more than two hundred participants could share and discuss their ideas and views on the conference’s theme “Tradition and Trends in Trans-Language Communication.” Speakers presented their contributions in eleven sections, which were complemented by two keynote speeches, a round-table discussion, and an opening speech to an exhibition.

The proceedings of the conference are the second volume of the *Olomouc Modern Language Series* (OMLS). It is available in printed as well as online form. All papers have been carefully reviewed and grouped into three sections: Translation Studies, Interpreting, and Literary Translation. Given the broad range of topics covered in the papers included in the volume, as well as the varied research methods of individual authors, the editors decided to follow the recommendations of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (16th edition) and employ both the author-date system and footnotes for documentation and citation of sources. The latter is used in articles dealing with literary translation and translation history where it is preferred for its high flexibility.

The first section of the proceedings deals with some of the current issues of translation studies. It is opened by Christina Schäffner’s article in which she reviews and critically assesses various approaches that have emerged in this field over the past decades as well as the terms and labels which have been coined to describe them. The author reflects on the concept of translation in relation to translation studies as a discipline, translator training programmes, and market demands. Other papers in this section address topics such as the challenges brought about by interlingual communication, issues of translation quality assessment, source text quality in the translation process, or the operation of translativity and related text legitimation strategies by comparing translated and non-translated texts.

The second section devoted to interpreting has a rather unusual opening—a speech by Theodoros Radisoglou, the author of an exhibition of photographs taken at the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg in 1945–1946.

Combining historical details and the art of photography, the author provides a unique view of the beginning of simultaneous interpreting. Other contributions in this section focus on various topics connected specifically with interpreting. These include issues of grammatical differences between languages, foreign accentedness of interpreters, and methods used in interpreter training.

The final section on literary translation is introduced by Josef Jařab of the host university. In his historical and cultural reflections, the author considers the role translators have always played in providing access to the knowledge of the world and world literature across languages. The section offers contributions on the translation of prose, poetry, and drama. The authors are concerned with both historical as well as contemporary works and approaches. In this section, the focus on the Central-European region, its history and culture, is perhaps most apparent in the papers on Czech translations of 19<sup>th</sup> century Dutch prose, poems by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Douglas Dunn, or Shakespeare's drama.

The aim of the conference organizers is to continue and develop the tradition of the open forum format on a bi-annual basis. While TIFO 2012 examined the current trends in trans-language communication in a broader context, including the domains of literary translation, culture, and history, TIFO 2014 will again focus on a specific topic which is, nevertheless, relevant for all translation and interpreting related activities. As reflected in its theme "Interchange between Languages and Cultures: The Quest for Quality," the aim of the organizers is to consider various aspects of quality issues, including models and approaches to translation and interpreting quality assessment, quality assessment and feedback in the translation classroom, literary translation criticism, quality standardization in the translation industry, or quality assurance provided by translation technology.

## Acknowledgements

The editors of these proceedings would like to express their gratitude to all who have contributed their knowledge and effort to the success of the TIFO 2012 conference and the preparation of this volume. These include the authors of the presentations and articles submitted for publication as well as to our reviewers, Zuzana Jettmarová of Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic, and Cecilia Alvstad of Oslo University, Norway, whose comments and advice proved immensely insightful and helpful in the process of accepting and reviewing papers. For their invaluable assistance in the editing of the papers, we are much indebted to Markéta Gregorová and Mathew Sonter.

We are very pleased that we could complement the speech by Theodoros Radisoglou with a selection of photographs from the time of the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg. The consent to use these unique photographs was generously granted by Stadtarchiv Nürnberg, Germany.

Both the organization of the conference and the preparation of the proceedings publication benefited from the ESF grant CZ.1.07/2.2.00/28.0095 (IFIT) financed by the European Union and the Czech Republic. The grant aims to promote innovation and development of translation and interpretation courses at the Philosophical Faculty of Palacký University in Olomouc. We truly believe that the conference and the proceedings will help to achieve this goal. Our faculty colleagues and students indeed showed great enthusiasm and active support for which we also remain genuinely grateful.

Jitka Zehnalová  
Ondřej Molnár  
Michal Kubánek



# TRANSLATION



# Trans-language, Trans-culture, Trans-translation?

Christina Schäffner

Aston University, School of Languages and Social Sciences,  
Birmingham B4 7ET, Great Britain.  
Email: c.schaeffner@aston.ac.uk

**ABSTRACT:** The growth of the discipline of translation studies has been accompanied by a renewed reflection on the object of research and our metalanguage. These developments have also been necessitated by the diversification of professions within the language industry. The very label *translation* is often avoided in favour of alternative terms, such as *localisation* (of software), *transcreation* (of advertising), *transediting* (of information from press agencies). The competences framework developed for the European Master's in Translation network speaks of experts in multilingual and multimedia communication to account for the complexity of translation competence. This paper addresses the following related questions: (i) How can translation competence in such a wide sense be developed in training programmes? (ii) Do some competences required in the industry go beyond translation competence? and (iii) What challenges do labels such as transcreation pose?

**KEYWORDS:** translation competence; translator training; European Master's in Translation (EMT); translation industry; transcreation; transediting

## 1. Introduction

There is no denying that translation (and interpreting) play a significant role in and for society in the widest sense. Over the last several years, the market research firm Common Sense Advisory has regularly reported growth rates in the translation industry in their annual studies on *The Language Services Market*. The global market for language services is a multi-billion dollar business (the 2010 report gave the figure of US\$26 billion [Kelly and Stewart 2010]). Recent reports commissioned by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation (DGT) on the *Contribution of Translation to the Multilingual Society in the EU* (European Commission 2010) and *The Status of the Translation Profession in the European Union* (European Union 2012) have confirmed the market trends and commented on consequences for translator training.

It is, however, not only the translation industry which has experienced growth, as the number of translator training programmes has also increased enormously over the last decade. The aims of translator training are widely seen to be in providing graduates who are qualified for the rapidly changing market. Quite a lot of progress has been made recently in agreeing on benchmarks for enhancing the quality of translator training programmes,

in particular at postgraduate level. Major initiatives in this respect have been the European Master's in Translation (EMT) project, initiated by the DGT (European Commission 2013), and the related OPTIMALE network (Optimising Professional Translator Training in a Multilingual Europe [OPTIMALE 2013]). The focus of both initiatives is on enhancing the employability of graduates, evident, for example, in the theme of the 2012 EMT conference "Translating Skills into Jobs." A challenge for universities is thus to design programmes which give their students good job opportunities, and then constantly ensure that the programmes are in line with the needs of the diverse and rapidly changing industry. A related challenge in this respect is to reconcile the requests of the industry for graduates who have practical and professional skills with the requests of the universities for graduates who have in-depth academic knowledge and intellectual skills. This also requires universities to reflect on their own concept of translation, which underlies programme development.

In this paper I will illustrate the EMT initiative as one model of characterising translation competence and discuss the challenges this model poses for the concept of translation in translator training programmes. I will then reflect on challenges posed by labels such as transcreation and transediting used in the translation industry.

## **2. The EMT Translator Competence Profile**

One attempt at specifying what graduates of postgraduate translation programmes need to know and be able to do in order to be employable is the EMT translator competence profile. The awareness of the diversity of the profession is reflected in the formulation that graduates should be able to work "in the rapidly evolving field of multilingual and multimedia communication" (Gambier 2009). The EMT competence profile is meant to be a reference framework. It sets out what is to be achieved, acquired and mastered at the end of training (as minimum requirement) at the second-cycle (postgraduate level). Competence is characterised as the "combination of aptitudes, knowledge, behaviour and knowhow necessary to carry out a given task under given conditions" (Gambier 2009). Six main competence areas are specified as follows:

1. Translation Service Provision Competence (with an interpersonal and a production dimension);
2. Language Competence;
3. Intercultural Competence (with a sociolinguistic and a textual dimension);
4. Information Mining Competence;
5. Thematic Competence;
6. Technology Competence.

Each of these six areas is then further characterised, leading to a total of forty-eight competences, which, however, are not meant to be exhaustive or definitive. They are rather intended to illustrate in a more detailed way how the six main areas are to be understood. Below I will give some indication of these detailed competences (see Gambier [2009] for the complete set).

(1) Translation Service Provision Competence

- knowing how to organise approaches to clients and potential clients (marketing);
- knowing how to negotiate with the client (to define deadlines, tariffs/ invoicing, etc.);
- knowing how to comply with instructions, deadlines, commitments, interpersonal competences, team organisation;
- knowing how to comply with professional ethics;
- knowing how to create and offer a translation appropriate to the client's request, i.e., to the aim/skopos and to the translation situation;
- knowing how to define and evaluate translation problems and find appropriate solutions;
- knowing how to justify one's translation choices and decisions.

(2) Language Competence

- knowing how to understand grammatical, lexical and idiomatic structures as well as the graphic and typographic conventions of language A and one's other working languages (B, C);
- knowing how to use these same structures and conventions in A and B.

(3) Intercultural Competence

- knowing how to recognise function and meaning in language variations;
- knowing how to understand and analyse the macrostructure of a document and its overall coherence;
- knowing how to grasp the presuppositions, the implicit, allusions, stereotypes and intertextual nature of a document;
- knowing how to compose a document in accordance with the conventions of the genre and rhetorical standards.

(4) Information Mining Competence

- knowing how to extract and process relevant information for a given task;
- knowing how to evaluate the reliability of documentary sources (critical mind);
- knowing how to use tools and search engines effectively.

(5) Thematic Competence

- knowing how to search for appropriate information to gain a better grasp of the thematic aspects of a document;
- learning to develop one's knowledge in specialist fields and applications.

(6) Technological Competence (mastery of tools)

- knowing how to effectively and rapidly use software, and to integrate a range of software to assist in correction, translation, terminology, layout, documentary research;
- knowing how to adapt to and familiarise oneself with new tools, particularly for the translation of multimedia and audiovisual material.

This reduced list of competences in the EMT framework should give us a good idea of the range of knowledge, abilities, and skills which are expected of a translator today. This of course raises the question: How can we achieve all these competences in a translator training programme? Or indeed: *Can* we achieve all these competences? We also need to bear in mind that we are dealing with a rapidly changing market, which means that programmes need to be flexible and adaptable to keep pace with industry needs. At the EMT and OPTIMALE conferences, a number of interesting case studies were presented, illustrating programme developments, in particular the integration of professionally-oriented practices (such as working on authentic translation projects, student-run companies, and other forms of activity-based and reflective learning, see also Schäffner [2012]) and the integration of a variety of (electronic) translation tools. Some universities have opted for offering specialised programmes, either as domain specialism (e.g., in legal translation, in medical translation) or in specific modes (e.g., in audio-visual translation, in localisation). However, this also raises additional questions, such as: What methods are we using for teaching practical translation classes? Which concept of translation is the basis of our teaching (and by extension: our complete programme)? In the following sections I will discuss these questions with reference to the concept of translation (i) within the discipline of translation studies and (ii) within the language industry. This discussion will be linked to reflections on programme content and teaching methodologies. In the final section, I will reflect on challenges for the discipline of translation studies.

### **3. The Concept of Translation in Translation Studies and Consequences for Training Programmes**

When we design our postgraduate (or also our undergraduate) translation programmes, we need to link learning outcomes with teaching and assessment

methods in a coherent way. This task is (to be) informed by a concept of translation we as teachers and programme developers (need to) have. However, there is no unified and generally agreed definition of translation in our field. Translation studies is now recognised as a discipline in its own right, which is inter- or multidisciplinary by nature. Although still a relatively young discipline, it has seen constant growth in terms of research topics and methods (see Snell-Hornby 2006; Bassnett 2012; Gambier 2012). These developments are also reflected in the way translation itself is defined and conceptualised. We have come a long way from an initially narrow focus on identifying similarities and differences in language systems to an investigation of the socio-political factors which have an influence on translation production and reception. Over the last fifty or sixty years, translation has been defined as meaning transfer, as a “source text induced target text production” (Neubert 1985, 18), as a purposeful activity (Nord 1997), as norm-governed behaviour (Toury 1995), as a cultural-political practice (Venuti 1995), and as socially regulated activity (Wolf 2002). The two quotes below illustrate this development by reflecting vastly different perspectives:

Translation from one language into another substitutes messages in one language . . . for entire messages in some other language. . . . The translator recodes and transmits a message received from another source. Thus translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes. (Jakobson 2012, 127)

The phenomenon of translation is inevitably involved in social institutions which to a high degree determine the selection, production and distribution of translations and as such the strategies adopted in the translation itself. (Wolf 2002, 34)

Moreover, the term translation is also used in other disciplines, in a more or less similar way to definitions used in translation studies. In criticising the use of translation for describing migrant or exile writing, Trivedi even argued that the concept had been taken over by monolingual literary theorists (Bassnett 2012). He warns that the discipline of translation studies is in danger of losing its subject of research and thus the very basis of its existence.

In translator training programmes, we tend to operate with a more traditional concept which involves transfer across languages and cultures, although we cannot claim that all members of staff teaching on one and the same programme also share the same understanding of what translation means. Which concept of translation we as trainers and scholars hold, explicitly or implicitly, inevitably has an influence on our teaching and assessment methods. For example, if teachers select (extracts of) texts on the basis of their own preferences, just instructing students to translate the text, asking them to read out their

translations sentence by sentence in class, comparing them to each other's versions (and maybe also to a model translation), and assessing the target text on how accurately it reproduces the source text (in content, form, structure, style), then this approach resembles the use of translation as an exercise for foreign language learning. It surely does not contribute to developing translation competence in the sense described by the EMT profile.

There is a wide range of literature illustrating how factors which are relevant to a professional environment can be included in a practical translation class, factors such as choosing an authentic text, providing a specific translation brief, or setting a deadline. We can also go beyond such teaching and assessment methods which are basically inspired by functionalist approaches (e.g., Nord 1996; Kiraly 2000; Colina 2009) by including even more innovative activities. For example, we can arrange a practical translation class in such a way that students act autonomously in managing a project, and activities can include negotiating with the customer, agreeing on tasks, building a glossary, revising a translation, writing the invoice. Such activities are closely linked to the translation service provision competence in the EMT profile. Not all of these activities will need to be done during the class time available. Some can be completed at different times, with the time-tabled session to be used for progress reports, sharing experience, reflecting on the learning process. The lecturer in such cases would have a different role (Kiraly [2000] speaks of facilitating and scaffolding) compared to the more traditional teacher whose task is seen as commenting on the accuracy of students' translations. Similarly, classroom activities are different to the more traditional forms where class time is mainly spent on letting students read out and discuss their translations.

Such innovative teaching methods would also require different methods of assessment. Assessment is traditionally focused on the product, and we often have detailed criteria for identifying errors and calculations for deducting points for errors, or occasionally for adding a point for a good solution, although we do not have standard criteria to decide what actually constitutes a *good* solution. Such a method, however, implies that we know what the optimal target text would look like so that the versions produced by students can be compared to it. To be fair, assessment is already often based on reflecting on the appropriateness of the translation for the specified purpose and marking criteria take various factors into account (see Hönig 1997). It is now also an accepted practice to let students make use of all relevant tools in a translation exam (including access to Internet), which is necessary if we want to test their translation competence and not simply their language competence. However, we do not yet seem to give sufficient recognition to the processes involved which led to the product. That is, how can we assess the critical reflection, the amount and nature of research, the thought processes? One possibility

could be asking for a submission of a revised version with additional reflective comments, and assess both. If we include student-managed authentic projects, we also need to devise assessment methods for them, for example, assessing the usefulness of (pre-)project glossaries, the reflective nature of work reports, the amount and nature of revisions made to the translation, and so forth. Another important point is how to include and account for CAT tools. If we want our students to be competent in the use of CAT tools, we need to incorporate their use into the classroom and examinations, and we need to devise criteria to assess both the product (a target text produced with the use of CAT tools) and the process (the critical and effective use of these tools).

In short: in order to be able to assess our students in respect of the translation competence achieved (as specified in the EMT profile), we need to integrate all aspects of the competence profile into our programmes. This is quite a challenge, and there is not much point in having a session, workshop or even a module which introduces CAT tools to students if such tools are not integrated in the practical translation classes. Similarly, a module on translation theories cannot be taught in total isolation if we want students to be able to talk about (and, if necessary, defend) their strategies and decisions and use the appropriate metalanguage for doing so. Another essential aspect for developing translation competence is the cooperation with the translation industry. Effective cooperation also requires speaking a common language, sharing concepts and aims, at least as far as possible. The question therefore is: what concept of translation is used in the translation industry?

#### **4. The Concept of Translation in the Translation Industry and Consequences for Training Programmes and for the Discipline of Translation Studies**

Above I mentioned the annual studies of the language services market conducted by Common Sense Advisory. This firm presents their reports as studies of the market for translation, localization, interpreting and other language services. What is immediately noticeable is that translation is set apart not only from interpreting (which is quite usual) but also from localization. When we look at the table of contents, the differentiation becomes even more prominent. Various activities in the language industry are covered as to their percentage of the annual Language Service Provision revenue. These are: Software Localization, Website Globalization, Translation Tools and Software, Machine Translation Post-editing, Transcreation, On-Site Interpreting, Telephone Interpreting, Video Interpreting, Interpreting Tools and Software, Multimedia Localization, Voice-Over Work, Subtitling, and Internationalization. Translation itself does not actually show up in the

table of contents, which may be explained by the company's aim of reporting on changes in the market which requires a more detailed analysis (as can also be seen in specifying on-site, telephone, and video interpreting, activities which are linked to local positioning and medium rather than constituting separate types of interpreting). Voice-over and subtitling are types of audio-visual translation, and machine translation post-editing is a specific task but not a type of translation. Post-editing of machine translation output, and also revision of translations, are important activities in the translation industry and are already included as exercises in a number of translator training programmes. These labels, however, do not pose conceptual and terminological challenges to translation studies as some of the others in the list above do. Localization, globalization, and internationalization are labels used in the context of (interactive) digital texts (e.g., software, websites, video games). Localisation refers to processes of modifying texts to make them "linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale (country/region and language)" where they will be used (Esselink 2000, 3), and internationalization refers to the "process of generalizing a product so that it can handle multiple languages and cultural conventions without the need for redesign" (Esselink 2000, 2). The label transcreation is typically used in the context of advertising. In addition, we find labels such as versioning (of audiovisual documents), transediting (of information from press agencies, newspapers, television), adaptation (for film, stage, and other forms of creative writing), multilingual and technical writing, and so forth.

The existence of such labels in the language industry (and also in theoretical literature) poses challenges both for training and for the discipline of translation studies. As said above, our training programmes have to be adapted in view of changing market needs. Having knowledge of such market changes is thus essential for programme leaders at universities. The 2012 Common Sense Advisory report listed transcreation, internationalization, and telephone interpreting among the fastest-growing services in the industry from 2010 to 2011 (Kelly, DePalma, and Stewart 2012). But does this mean we should develop Master programmes in transcreation and/or internationalization? In other words: how specific do our programmes have to be? Do we need highly specialised programmes or would it be more realistic to add activities in transcreation, localisation and internationalisation to existing programmes to account for such trends in the market? We would also need to bear in mind that (changes in) market needs are different in different countries and that university procedures for programme approval may be cumbersome.

Does asking these questions mean we accept that transcreation, localisation and internationalisation are different to translation? As said above, the concept of translation has seen a development within translation studies, a development

which accounts for the complexity of translation both as process and product within socio-historical contexts, which in turn are subject to various conditions and constraints. I will address this issue with reference to transcreation, the term often used by translation companies when offering their services. One definition which is repeatedly used by companies on their websites is the following:<sup>1</sup>

Transcreation is the creative adaptation of marketing, sales and advertising copy in the target language. It involves changing both words and meaning of the original copy while keeping the attitude and desired persuasive effect.

Other aspects which are stressed in company information about transcreation are: understanding the brand and the communicative objectives, conveying empathy, choosing language which resonates with the intended audience. Such an understanding of transcreation also implies a specific understanding of translation, which is sometimes made explicit, as in the following quote from a company website:

Translation is the process of transferring written text from one language into another. A successful translation is one that conveys the explicit and implicit meaning of the source language into the target language as fully and accurately as possible.

Another company uses a table to illustrate a broad spectrum of possibilities which lie between translation and creation, with transcreation being one of these possibilities.

|              | <b>Translation</b>                      | <b>Creation</b>  |
|--------------|---|--|
| Focus        | words and meaning                       | ideas and motivation   |
| Aim          | preserve meaning of words               | create something original  |
| Performed by | linguists with little copywriting skill | copywriters trained in using words to convince and motivate people to action |

Table 1: Comparing translation and creation.

The concept of translation which emerges in such views is a rather narrow one of literal translation and purely linguistic encoding which does not involve any creativity. Such a narrow view of equating translation with literal translation unfortunately also reduces the translator to a linguist, that is, translation competence is

<sup>1</sup> I deliberately avoid adding references so that companies can remain anonymous.

reduced to language competence. Scholars within translation studies, trainers of translators, and professional associations of translators have invested lots of time and effort to challenge such a narrow view and raise public awareness of translation as a professional activity which requires much more than knowledge of two languages. Creativity too is required much more frequently than a simple opposition between translation and transcreation implies (see, for example, Kussmaul 2000). There is nothing wrong as such in using labels such as transcreation for translation practices in specific domains and for specific kinds of text, and for highlighting that projects often involve more than one text and more than one medium (e.g., in a marketing campaign for a brand involving written texts, multi-media texts, multilingual copy, etc.). What I find worrying is that new labels tend to continue to maintain a widespread public perception of translation as a mechanic literal reproduction of the source text—which does not do justice to the profession and to the aims of training programmes. We still need to raise awareness that translation cannot simply be reduced to literal translation.

A similar case of raising awareness was the initial motivation of Karen Stetting when she coined the label *transediting*. Stetting presented this term at a conference in 1989, differentiating three types of *transediting* (1989, 377):

- cleaning-up *transediting*, as adaptation to a standard of efficiency in expression (e.g., cleaning up inadequate manuscripts);
- situational *transediting*, as adaptation of the translated text to the intended function in its new social context (e.g., shortening of text passages for subtitling);
- cultural *transediting*, as adaptation to the needs and conventions of the target culture (e.g., journalists drawing on material in other languages for writing their own texts).

More recently, the label *transediting* has become widely used for describing practices in news translation (see Schäffner [forthcoming] for an overview), and scholars often explicitly refer to Stetting when they adopt this label. For Stetting herself, journalistic text production was just one example of *transediting*. Her main aim in introducing the term *transediting* was to raise awareness of the complexity of the processes involved and to encourage a rethinking of the traditional views of translation. This is evident in the following quote:

I also hope that this new term will contribute towards opening up for a discussion of the legitimacy of improving and, to a certain extent, changing texts in the translation process. (Stetting 1989, 373)

We also need to bear in mind that her arguments were put forward at a conference attended primarily by English language teachers and at a time when trans-

lation was still widely understood as transfer of meaning and with reference to equivalence. As I have argued elsewhere (Schäffner, forthcoming), research into the role of translation in journalistic text production is not necessarily enhanced if the processes are called by another name.

## **5. Conclusion: Training Translators for Market Needs and Researching Translation**

There is no denying that the translation industry is diverse and that in designing and updating translator training programmes we need to take the needs of the rapidly changing market into account. The EMT translator profile outlines the competences required very well and also highlights the dynamic nature of these competences (i.e., learning to learn). Ensuring that graduates are job-ready for the market requires an understanding of translation which goes far beyond the traditional narrow sense of meaning transfer. Functionalist approaches which define translation as a purposeful activity are very well suited as a didactic method in that they make students reflect on the purpose of their activity, on the purpose of the text they are going to produce, on the knowledge and needs of the target text's audience. These reflections also necessitate thinking about the type and extent of research that needs to be done, the tools to be used, project planning and management in view of the deadline, and so forth. As mentioned above, working with authentic tasks and having students manage projects autonomously are useful methods for developing translation competence, and translation service provision competence in particular.

Such activities and projects may well be labelled as localisation or transcreation, and these labels may actually be used in the translation brief provided by the client. Reflecting on how to approach the task and the profile required of the target text are also opportunities for the students to compare their activities to those they would be engaged in for a task which is formulated as producing a translation. Such a reflection while completing a task should raise or reinforce awareness of the complexity of processes, whether they are called localisation, transcreation, or, indeed, translation. In any case, the processes involved are of a cognitive, textual, communicative and technological nature and embedded in and determined by socio-political, institutional, ideological conditions and constraints. In this way, it should also be natural for students (and trainers) to realise that these processes are interconnected and not discrete ones which take place sequentially. In other words: translation competence cannot be seen as a more limited competence in linguistic and/or cultural transfer which is then followed by additional competences beyond translation, such as localising the target text for a locale or adapting it for specific cultural needs of the audience.

In order to enable students to reflect critically on their work and on the concepts they use in doing so (and on whether or not to accept them) we need to have introduced them to the various terms and definitions of translation as they exist in the translation industry and in the discipline of translation studies. This also requires that teachers of translator training programmes are aware of both the developments in the translation industry and the research being conducted in our academic discipline. As stated above, translation studies today addresses a large variety of topics, and scholars investigate practices, agents and underlying policies in almost all areas where translation is involved (extended more recently to institutional translation, multimedia translation, volunteer translation) and the wider social and political implications of translation and translation agents. One of the challenges for the discipline is its relation to and engagement with other new, emerging disciplines, such as Localisation Research or Adaptation Studies, which involves conceptual and terminological challenges. However, with translation being more than transfer across languages and across cultures, and with this wider understanding reflected in the complexity of the notion of translation competence, the discipline of translation studies can only continue to grow and prosper if its research agenda is not constrained by a narrow definition of its key concept: translation.

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# Translation and Interpreting as Intercultural Communication

Edita Gromová, Daniela Müglová

Constantine the Philosopher University, Faculty of Arts, Department of Translation Studies,  
Trieda A. Hlinku 1, 949 74 Nitra, Slovak Republic.  
Email: egromova@ukf.sk, dmuglova@ukf.sk

**ABSTRACT:** The paper summarizes various approaches to culture from the perspective of anthropology, cultural studies, as well as psycholinguistics and focuses on the parallels between cultural-anthropological and psycholinguistic conceptions of interlingual understanding. The authors state basic differences between reception in direct interlingual communication and reception in mediated interlingual communication and monitor two superordinate factors determining the choice of optimal strategy of transfer. In terms of cognitive, affective and behavioural sub-competences of intercultural competence, the authors characterize intercultural differences and tendencies of various cultural communities towards binary oppositions. All sub-competences are documented via a number of examples in both verbal and non-verbal expression, while emphasizing the interdependence of the subcomponents in a real translation or interpreting situation. The chosen examples are aimed mainly at the differences that might cause difficulties in interlingual communication or which might lead to improper interpretation of verbal or somatic expressions.

**KEYWORDS:** translation; interpreting; intercultural communication; intercultural dimension; intercultural understanding; intercultural competence

## 1. Introduction

The concept of “culture as translation” defines culture as a space for the interaction of the components of the translation process and describes translation and interpreting as a reception interpretation of “the own” and “the foreign” (Wolf 2002, 186). In the process of translation every source text composed in a certain sociocultural environment is transferred into a new sociocultural situation and in the case of expressive (literary) texts also into a new literary-poetological context. The process of translation thus becomes a territory for the interaction of two language and cultural systems.

The aim of our paper is to encompass intercultural communication from the pragmatic-cognitive perspective in respect to Gert Hofstede’s (1999) classification on intercultural dimensions and a more detailed taxonomy of intercultural orientations. Since translation presently takes place under the influence of globalization processes and countervailing regionalization processes, our intention is to point out specific issues which must be dealt with by a future professional translator regarding the opposition of the foreign and the own. In the paper we therefore focus on the three principal sub-competences (cognitive, affective

and behavioural) which comprise the complex cultural competence of a translator and interpreter. We believe our article will contribute to the description of intercultural differences not only on a theoretical level but also on extensive illustrational material whose substance is documented in specific instances in oral and written transfer.

## **2. Theoretical Approaches to Culture**

### **2.1 Hofstede's Approach**

Hofstede (1999, 27) defines culture as a state of mind distinguishing members of one cultural environment from another. His definition of culture seems to emerge from a cognitive approach to culture, based on concepts of modelling, mapping and categorizing of super-individual experiences that enable the creation of certain generalized models characterizing a sociocultural community. This approach also reflects research of intercultural dimensions conducted by Hofstede for IBM at the end of the 1960s on a sample of 116,000 probands from fifty countries. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Hofstede's methodology was applied by American psychologist Ashleigh Merritt (2000), who verified Hofstede's conclusions on the definition of four basic intercultural dimensions: (i) Power Distance, (ii) Uncertainty Avoidance, (iii) Individualism–Collectivism, (iv) Masculinity–Femininity (Gromová and Múglová 2005). However, in this indubitably interesting, and for translation studies scholars inspirational, research, culture is presented as a static or “programmed” system. Newer approaches to the examination of cultural specifics emphasize that culture cannot be understood as a homogenous structure that can be easily handled, but as a phenomenon that is in its substance dialectical, variable and pliable (Katan 1999).

### **2.2 Murphy's, Rosch's and Fillmore's Approaches**

Another interesting view on culture might be observed in the approach of anthropologist Robert F. Murphy (1998), who believes that 90 percent of the culture of a nation is created as a compound consisting of adopted generalized, supranational cultural concepts from manifold and ontogenetically remote cultures. The remaining 10 percent then consists of the real cultural specifics of the community. Murphy (1998, 34) therefore defines culture as a mosaic made up of unique elements originating from remote countries. This could be then understood as the defining of cultures as a quota of cultural patterns that Murphy marks as “intercultural,” thus shared by more nations. This approach might be considered interesting, since parallels with interlingual understanding and communication can be observed. In particular, prototype semantics—a concept elaborated by psycholinguist Eleanor Rosch (1973)—must be mentioned.

Rosch was the first to point out the nowadays generally accepted fact that our conception of language, and therefore also our understanding, is resolutely influenced by our complex of experience, which means syncretism of the general (super-individual, culturally defined knowledge) and individual (own experience horizon). Global images, by which we perceive the world around us, are then determined as prototypes. Each prototype has its so-called solid core—a basic interculturally identical view of a certain concept—and then so-called fuzzy edges, specific, interculturally different views of those concepts (Rosch 1973, 211). For example, a basic prototype image “house” (solid core) is a residential building where people live. Fuzzy edges then specify various types of dwellings in various cultures (e.g., hacienda, yurt, igloo or wigwam). Prototype semantics was later developed by Charles J. Fillmore (1977) in scenes-and-frames semantics (Müglová 2009). In comparison with prototypes, scenes are understood as far more dynamic structures, since they also convey divergence from prototype images and are considered not only collective (super-individual) connotations but also effective (individual) connotations which might be added and then interpreted by the recipient. A different scene, “sea,” will be created by a person who has enjoyed a wonderful seaside holiday and a different one by a tsunami survivor. However, the basics of prototype semantics—solid core and fuzzy edges—are also maintained in this concept. Analogically, the substance of interlingual understanding should be transferred to intercultural understanding, where Murphy speaks (even though he uses different terminology) about something super-cultural (core) and something specific for a certain sociocultural community (fuzzy edges). The semantics of scenes-and-frames serves as a hypothesis for the explanation of understanding processes and re-verbalization. It can be efficiently used in translation and interpreting, and translation studies often use it as a useful tool (Snell-Hornby 1988).

Intercultural dimensions can be most explicitly observed in direct oral face-to-face interlingual communication. We can compare them, for example, using the example of business negotiations. Individualistically oriented countries perceive professionalism differently (as a defined role). To be professional means to be correct, committed, competent and always formal—that means always maintaining a certain distance from partners. In these cultures conflict situations are solved straightforwardly and business partners do not mind using sharper personal criticism. Conflict for them is not a personal matter but solely a professional concern. Problems are solved and analysed without subjective-emotional attitudes. Other differences can be seen for instance in time management. Time reliability plays a significant role when building trust between business partners. Perfectionism can be seen in precise organizational and procedural preparation of official negotiations and meetings. In collectively oriented cultures, official communication is also realized in a friendly informal atmosphere, sometimes even too forthcoming; this on the side of individual-

istic cultures, for instance, German culture, might not be perceived positively. The approach to time-management is also different in collectively oriented cultures, where it is usually more lax. When organizing official negotiations and meetings, a greater space is left for improvisation and the continuous remedy of emergent problems. Another significant sphere where intercultural differences can be observed is healthcare. Distinctions can be found in various aspects from the side of healthcare staff (cultural factors influence medical diagnostics, categorization of illnesses, approach to patients, etc.) as well as from side of the patient (sensitiveness to pain, reaction to pain, feelings of shyness, attitude to examination methods, refusing medical interventions, etc.). The task of the translator as a bilingual and bicultural mediator (e.g., within community interpreting) is not only to surpass the language barrier but also prevent or at least diminish psychological stress by explaining the cultural differences to both communication partners (e.g., medical staff and the patient).

### **3. The Otherness from the Perspective of Common Users as well as Translators and Interpreters**

Under the influence of globalization or Europeanization tendencies, the intensity, symmetry and pithiness of various cultures has markedly increased. Hana Pravdová (2005, 79) designates globalization as a spontaneous, uncontrolled process paradoxically leading to reciprocal interconnection—the integration of society. From the perspective of the common user, the opening of borders indubitably leads to the fact that the foreign is seldom perceived as a cultural shock and that we naturally learn not only to perceive otherness but also to accept it. Simultaneously we attempt to maintain the own in order to be protected from cultural assimilation. Therefore a process parallel to globalization and regionalization takes place (Bohušová and Müglová 2005).

In a simplified way it could be said that the opposition of the own and the foreign remains (as can even be seen in enduring dichotomies: East–West; North–South, etc.), but the approach to it—mainly in the last few decades—has been modifying in terms of both tendencies.

The role of a translator or interpreter is, in comparison to a common user, a bit different. A recursive relationship between own and foreign culture perceived from the perspective of its foreignness from outside is not sufficient anymore. It also cannot be decided whether and to what extent the foreignness is going to be accepted. The task of a translator or interpreter is to anticipate to what extent the scenes of the cultures of his or her maternal and working language are compatible and decide whether the elements of the source culture can be transferred to the target culture without changes, so that they are introduced to the recipient; whether they need to be explained or even substituted by domestic elements in

order to elaborate a readable and understandable translated product; or whether the target text offers a proportional representation of the element of the foreign culture and its substitutes. Cultural permeation of the text is a starting point for the selecting of the optimal conception of translation or interpreting. Conception of translation can be understood as a complex idea in the realization of the process of translation, determined by two superordinate factors:

- Communication situation: together with its linguistic and extralinguistic constituents (client, author of the source text and the intention of communication, intended recipient, function of the text, type, genre of the text, theme and linguistic markers). In interpreting, other elements must be considered: type of speaker, technique and way of communication transfer and translation direction.
- Interpretation activity: the ability of the translator to decode the text, which means the ability to deep read or listen in the case of interpreting; the understanding of the content (in interpreting, the identification of key information); and subconscious (natural) and/or conscious reflexive interpretation (Gromová 2011).

If the complex of experience of the author of the source text and the complex of the translator are compatible, understanding is provided automatically, emerging from the inference processes. Reflexive interpretation is used if the translator does not understand the meaning of the words or part of a text. In such a case, the translator has to use translation aids and research in printed or electronic dictionaries, encyclopaedias, on the internet or to look for parallel model texts or consult problems with an expert. An interpreter has to conduct research during the preparatory phase, according to the type of communication situation, since in the moment of transfer there is usually no possibility to use translation aids.

Besides the mentioned factors, the translator naturally has to possess text-creating competence in order to adequately formulate a target text and procedural skills (translation competence)—which means knowing the strategies and procedures necessary to achieve adequacy.

Since no text exists as an isolated unity but always as an inherent part of a bigger aggregate—a sociocultural context—it is not possible to transfer it without knowledge of both cultures. The culture is reflected both in lingual and extralingual elements of the text, therefore intercultural competence should be described as well.

#### **4. Intercultural Competence**

An important factor in achieving intercultural competence when preparing translation studies trainees is to direct their attention to the fact that intercultural-

tural differences must be seen on three layers: the rational, the emotional and the layer of behaviour. It is also important to point out that what is “different” is not only the culture of the target language and that a translator must perceive it distinctively to the common recipient.

Intercultural competence is a multi-layered structure which can be theoretically divided into three sub-competences: cognitive, affective and behavioural (Morgensternová and Šulová 2009, 10). In translation or interpreting practice an interdependent relationship among them exists: they mutually supplement and influence each other.

#### **4.1 Cognitive Sub-competence**

Cognitive sub-competence anticipates knowledge of intercultural differences in the modelling and categorizing of super-individual experience; internal mental connections between the cause and the consequence, which means ways of logical argumentation and ways of thinking—linear, monochronic thinking versus digressive, polychronic thinking; knowledge of differences in the extent of explicitness and implicitness in the text and context and knowledge of textual conventions and linguistic markers that represent these differences. Diversity in the ways of argumentation can be seen in the macrostructure of non-literary texts. For example, a comparison of indictments in Germany and in Slovakia displays differences: a German resolution starts with an accusation—namely, what the prosecutor wants to achieve; while a Slovak one starts with a description of events and at the end formulates what is required (Štefčík 2010, 48). The linearity of monochronic thinking typical of Anglophone cultures, mainly of the United Kingdom, is represented in the elimination of text recursion and thematically unimportant information. Longer parts of the text usually end with a summarizing statement and the following paragraph starts with graphical signals of text segmentation. In an item of business correspondence, linearity might be seen in an economy of style that uses *medias res* argumentation. In cultures with digressive polychronic thinking (also Slovakia) linearity is often interrupted by a higher rate of recursion.

The rate of explicitness and implicitness in a text is also conditioned socio-culturally. As early as 1976, Edward T. Hall distinguished cultures, according to the level of representation of context in realization of communication intention, between low context and high context cultures. David Katan (1999) arrived at an identical conclusion based on psychological research in the area of laterality of brain hemispheres. According to this research, the left hemisphere of a human brain is in charge of text—language, facts, logical thinking, perception of time and space, and so forth (Stein 1988); and the right hemisphere is in charge of relationships, non-verbal communication, holism and behavioural patterns. It provides a framework for text creation. It is also related to language produc-

tion, but it does not influence the text as such, only the framework of its interpretation. In this hemisphere attitudes and emotions are created. According to the publication *The Brain: A User's Manual* (1983), which is cited by Katan (1999), the influence of the left hemisphere prevails mainly in verbal and rationality oriented cultures in the West, while the right hemisphere is included in mental processes more in the artistically and mystically oriented cultures in the East. In relation to text and context it is represented in communication, where verbal and rationality based cultures are aimed at text (preference of written forms, e.g., in correspondence), while artistically and mystically based cultures are aimed at context (personal, visual contact). Following Hall (1976), Elena Ciprianová (2008) states that low contextuality (in Hofstede's terminology of intercultural dimensions) prevails in individualistic cultures (e.g., United States, Canada, Great Britain, Scandinavia, Germany, Switzerland). Significant for these cultures is punctuality, conscientiousness, directness and openness. On the contrary, high contextual communication can be characterized by identification with social values, attitudes and norms of behaviour and a general philosophy of the world and perception of relationships (Ciprianová 2008).

The difference between both communication techniques can be observed for example in a comparison of Slovak and English tourist promotional information. Anglophone tourists who come to Slovakia expect pragmatic information on opening hours for tourist sites, entrance fees, and so forth, which are a common feature of British tourist leaflets. In German promotional materials we might find a more obvious personal address towards the tourist aimed at persuasion to visit the tourist site, for example, in the form of an appellative sentence: *Come and experience the romantic atmosphere in Neuschwanstein castle. A carriage with four horses is expecting you. . . .* Low or high contextuality might also be observed in oral discourses. These cultures include the countries of the Middle East. Every utterance during the more important social or family events and occasions starts with praise of Allah—for instance formulae beginning with *In the name of Allah*—and ends with the phrase *Peace be upon you and Allah's mercy and blessings*. These phrases have ritual value and their semantic content is weakened, therefore in oral intercultural communication (in translation from Arabic into Slovak) it is the interpreter's task to consider, according to the communication situation, whether these phrases should be interpreted, commented upon, neutralized or eliminated. In the opposite direction, however, these formulae must be interpreted.

#### 4.2 Affective Sub-competence

Affective sub-competence is related to the knowledge of intensity and extraversion in emotive speech, in the case of official, semi-official or private contact with a different culture. This sub-competence also includes knowledge of topics

tabooed in the community, about ethical or value differences, courtesy signals or forms of address and use of academic titles, differences in affective connotations, stylistic markedness of swearwords, and also via paraverbal means.

Similar taxonomies as those conducted by Hofstede and applied by Merritt are also present in the field of affective interaction. The most famous is the research by Smith, Dugan and Trompenaars from 1996, which empirically proved intercultural differences according to so-called orientation and was mainly related to social interactions. One of the relevant intercultural orientations is the dimension of neutrality versus emotionality. Neutral cultures, such as the Finnish and Japanese, do not express emotions in the official communication sphere, and both verbal and non-verbal expressions of this type are socially undesirable. In contrary, people of Slavic cultures, the Italians and Spanish, who belong to more emotive cultures, have a relatively high expanse of emotive behaviour. What is specific is the position of countries in the Middle East, which also regard themselves as emotive cultures, but their affective expressions are conditioned not only culturally but also in terms of gender. Affective expressions are therefore acceptable in the case of the same gender—for instance, when meeting, men kiss each other four times. Analogical expression can be observed in the case of the meeting of two women. However, in the case of contact between different genders, a similar expression might be considered scandalous, even if the persons were husband and wife. In these cultures emotiveness is also expressed on a paralingual level; for example, loudness of expression leads—when not familiar with intercultural differences—to misinterpretation: normal dialogue is often interpreted as argument (Šebáková 2011).

From a translation studies perspective, intercultural differences in courtesy signals, including their linguistic and non-verbal markers, are very important as well. While inaccuracy in following macrostructural text creation indicators might still be acceptable for the recipient, ignorance of courtesy signals is considered a faux pas. An interpreter should therefore know, for instance, how to address their communication partners. In official communication in Germany, when addressing a group of people, besides the traditional forms (*Geehrte . . .*, *Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren*), the more responsive *Meine Damen und Herren* is often used. Compellation without the possessive pronoun *meine* (my) is then considered more reserved. In translation from German to Slovak, addressing people as *My Ladies and Gentlemen* would be unacceptable and therefore must be substituted by *dear* or *distinguished*. English in this case uses only the simple address *Ladies and Gentlemen*. In official and semi-official individual contact, German, English and also Slovak use traditional forms of address, for instance, *Mr. /Mrs. + name*. In contrast, in official communication the French follow the motto Less Is More. Addressing somebody with *Monsieur/Madame* without a name is more polite than combination with name. This collocation is more

familiar and in certain communication situations can elicit negative connotations—lasciviousness. The use of academic titles is also conditioned culturally.

Differences can also be found within pluricentric cultures. For example, in Austria, addressing somebody by their degree title is an unmistakable courtesy signal, while in Germany it is not used that much. Americans also prefer casual forms of address without academic titles or positions. In Scandinavian cultures, familiar forms of address are used even in communication between unequal partners—a student might address a teacher by their first name. Eastern, for instance Arabic, cultures are not familiar with the use of the second person plural in order to express a formal means of address. If a member of such a culture wants to express respect to a communication partner, a separate formula *had-ratak* (for a man) or *hadratik* (for a woman) is used (literally means: your presence). Older and more respectable people are usually addressed by the phrase *já tawíl al-umr* or *já tawílat al-umr* in the case of addressing a woman (literally means: you, having a long life; Khidayer 2010, 144–45). Intercultural differences can also be found in the differential or non-differential when using male and female forms of address. For example, in translation from German to Slovak a differentiated phrase *Liebe Mitbürgerinnen und Mitbürger* (dear citizens: male and female) is naturally condensed to *Dear Citizens*. In the opposite direction it is important to explicate, and address men and women separately. These differences are reflected in professional communication as well. For example, in Slovak legal texts a masculine form is usually preferred, for instance, *complainant* (male form), even if it is the mother of an under-aged daughter, while in German, differentiated forms are used, for instance, *Kläger* (complainant, male) and *Klägerin* (complainant, female). In this context certain parallels to Hofstede's differences among intercultural dimensions can be found. Slovakia in particular is considered one of the significantly masculine cultures in this case, and in comparison with other European countries has the strongest index of masculinity—ninety (to compare: the masculinity index in the Czech Republic is fifty-seven; Kolman 2001, 83).

For a translator it is important to identify courtesy signals, for example in business correspondence, where they are used to soften expression. Many cultures avoid categorical requests or direct refusals. They soften them by using modal verbs, modal particles, forms of questions, and so forth. In the countries of the Middle East it is impolite to say *no* or *I do not want to*. If members of the Arabic community do not want to or cannot do something they would normally use a courtesy phrase referring to a divine power—for instance, *Only Allah can do so*.

A translator or interpreter must thoroughly know the rate of stylistic markedness of nonstandard forms of language, including swearwords and vulgarisms. A common dictionary equivalent does not always identify the stylistic register properly. For example, the lexeme *Scheiße* is in the dictionary marked as *vulg.*

and its translation into Slovak corresponds with this marker. The semantic context of this lexeme in German culture is much more neutral and an adequate equivalent (instead of the dictionary one) could be easily found.

Different perceptions of the world can also be reflected in figurative expressions, which might recall positive connotations in one culture and negative connotations in a different one. For example, in Slovakia we sometimes say about a woman that she is a *camel*, which is a denomination with the meaning of being unwise and senseless. In Arabic countries, however, this might be associated with a positive evaluation or even admiration since a camel symbolizes strength and endurance.

Intercultural differences are also presented in ethical categories such as *truth*, *a lie*, *honour*, *love*, and so forth.

### 4.3 Behavioural Sub-competence

Behavioural sub-competence includes the knowledge of particular interculturally different forms of behaviour and non-verbal expression as well as cultural-historical or religious background, which are reflected in etiquette, protocol, and the acceptability or non-acceptability of particular social expressions.

In Japan, for instance, it is unacceptable to come to a funeral dressed in black, since sadness there is expressed by the colour white. In Georgia, and in Arabic cultures, it is common to see two men holding hands in public (usually by their little fingers), which in European cultures evokes expression of a different sexual orientation. In contrast, young couples or married couples holding hands in public, which is common in Europe, is, in the Arabic world, intolerable, as well as kissing. In many Eastern countries the left hand is considered unclean, therefore food or presents should not be accepted using it. This is important, for example, in the context of negotiating in Asian cultures, where it is considered good custom to bring a wrapped present. In Muslim countries it is not recommended to praise a child, because these cultures believe it could lay a curse. Gallant behaviour towards a woman in American culture (opening doors, pushing chairs, giving way) could be classified as sexual harassment or disparagement of an emancipated independent being.

Particularly interesting are differences related to time management. Differences in chronemics—from very lax understanding of time relation to absolute punctuality—decrease according to the geographical axis south–north. In Arabic cultures time does not play a crucial role. Arabs do not celebrate birthdays; very often they do not remember the birth dates of their nearest and dearest. If this intercultural difference appeared in the course of court interpreting, in the testimony of a husband who did not even know when his wife was born, the judge could mistakenly understand it as shallowness and ignorance. Business negotiations with Arabic or Asian cultures are usually long and begin with questions about the children and family of the communication partner. A serious viola-

tion of etiquette is if a business partner stops smiling, shows impatience by looking at his watch or states any real or fictional reason why the negotiation should be shortened. On the contrary, for Germanophone cultures punctuality is one of the basic preconditions of negotiation effectiveness. When building up trust with a business partner, punctuality is one of the main criteria.

## 5. Conclusion

Examples from European, American or more remote cultures of the Middle East and Asia document the importance of the knowledge of intercultural differences in verbal or non-verbal communication for both translators and interpreters. They should both therefore be bicultural mediators of a verbal message from source to target culture, trying to meet the expectations of the recipient. At the same time they should ensure the avoidance of so-called rich points—culturally determined communication barriers, which in cases of improper interpretation might lead to misunderstanding or the failure of an intercultural dialogue.

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# Tradition and Trends in Translation Quality Assessment

Jitka Zehnalová

Palacký University, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,  
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic.

Email: jitka.zehnalova@upol.cz

**ABSTRACT:** Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) is a delicate issue. Bowker (2000, 183) states that “evaluation is one of the most problematic areas of translation” and quotes Bassnett-McGuire, Mahn, Malmkjær, and Snell-Hornby who described it as “a great stumbling block,” “a complex challenge,” “a most wretched question,” and “a thorny problem,” respectively. The paper maps the relationship between traditional (Reiss 1971; 2000; Newmark 1988; House 1977; 1997; Levý 1963; Popovič 1971; 1975) and current approaches to translation quality evaluation in terms of terminology and assessment methods and procedures. It states what problems have been traditionally associated with this area of translation studies (subjectivity of evaluation, vagueness of assessment criteria, lack of a standardized terminology and of attention from both researchers and practitioners) and how contemporary authors address these issues. It presents the thesis that problems related to translation evaluation can be reduced by researching evaluation processes and by developing assessment procedures appropriate for specific situations and purposes of evaluation. Based on a survey of traditional approaches, the study seeks to explore the current terminology of the discipline and develops a three-level model of TQA and TQA terminology.

**Keywords:** translation quality assessment; TQA; translation criticism; TQA terminology; assessment processes; procedures and methods; target text analysis; source text–target text comparative analysis

## 1. Introduction: Translation Quality Assessment—A Thorny Topic?

The fact that translation quality assessment (TQA) is a delicate issue and a problematic area is acknowledged by numerous sources. Bowker (2000, 183) states that “evaluation is one of the most problematic areas of translation” and quotes Bassnett-McGuire, Mahn, Malmkjær, and Snell-Hornby who described translation evaluation as “a great stumbling block,” “a complex challenge,” “a most wretched question,” and “a thorny problem,” respectively. In an overview of approaches to translation quality assessment, Zequan (2003, n.p.; italics in original) offers a wider historical perspective:

What has long constituted the core and co-current concern of all debates in translation studies is what should be held as the criterion for translation quality assessment. Ever since the ancient thematic controversy over “word-for-word” (literal) and “sense-for-sense” (free)

translation (Munday 2001, 18–20), the history of translation theory has seen the theme as “emerging again and again with different degrees of emphasis in accordance with differing concepts of language and communication” (Bassnett 1991, 42). Notwithstanding the fact that there is no denying that the issue “what is a good translation?” should be “one of the most important questions to be asked in connection with translation” (House 2001, 127), “it is notoriously difficult to say why, or even whether, something is a good translation.” (Halliday 2001, 14)

TQA is a complex challenge indeed. Considering its problematic nature, we may logically ask: do we really need it? And if so, who needs it and why do they need it?

Hönig (1997, 15) offers a straightforward and practically-minded answer:

- Users need it because they want to know whether they can trust the translators and rely on the quality of their product.
- Professional translators need it because there are so many amateur translators who work for very little money that professional translators will only be able to sell their products if there is some proof of the superior quality of their work.
- Translatological research needs it because if it does not want to become academic and marginal in the eyes of practising translators it must establish criteria for quality control and assessment.
- Trainee translators need it because otherwise they will not know how to systematically improve the quality of their work.

Hönig (1997, 15) goes on to claim that “this makes TQA a central issue in university training courses. The way it is taught and carried out radiates into all aspects of the practice and theory of translation.”

All this seems to suggest that TQA is a notoriously problematic and at the same time a needful field. I believe that the way to approach it is to increase awareness of the significance of translation quality and its evaluation, to enhance understanding of the issues involved, and to research specific areas of interest. In the present contribution, I will argue that problems related to translation evaluation can be reduced by researching evaluation processes and by developing assessment procedures appropriate for specific situations and purposes of evaluation.

So what are the issues associated with evaluation of translations? The key problem is undoubtedly subjectivity of evaluation. Another problem, and partly a consequence of the first, is lack of research. Arango-Keeth and Koby (2003, 117) state:

For the last two decades, translation scholars have been working to develop the various fields involved in translation studies: theory, practice,

pedagogy, and evaluation (or quality assessment). Of these four fields, however, translation evaluation has remained the least developed, and for many scholars it is still perceived as a “probabilistic endeavour,” one in which subjectivity constitutes the most salient criterion.

There are two aspects to consider. First, subjectivity is inevitable—it forms an integral part of human communication, and its interpretation and assessment. Translation is a complex form of communication, engaging not only the subjects of the text producer and the text recipient but also the subject of the communication mediator—the translator. Subjectivity thus plays a greater role in translation than in non-mediated forms of communication; it is inevitably involved in the translation process and affects its product. Second, TQA is carried out by humans, thus the subjective component of the “human factor” is even more pronounced, “squared” as it were, here. Why should we expect then that a necessarily subjective evaluation of something subjective by its very nature will be perfectly objective? The aim of translation evaluation is not to produce absolute judgements or perfectly objective assessments. Such goals are not attainable. Just as a target text (TT) is not *the* ideal translation of the source text (ST) and needs to be targeted for a specific situation, specific purpose and a specific audience, translation quality evaluation needs to be targeted in the same way: for a specific situation, a specific purpose and a specific audience. Lauscher (2000, 163) claims:

The judgment itself fulfils a purpose. It may serve to examine a translator’s qualification for a particular translation job, to assess whether he or she has satisfied the requirements for a specific translation task, to inform a translation student about his or her progress, to inform the reader about the quality of the translation of a new work of fiction, etc. . . . A judgment is also oriented towards a prospective addressee. It will look different depending on whether it targets professional translators, the audience of the target text, clients or translation students.

Secară (2005, 1) makes a similar point: “The reason why no single standard will suffice is that quality is context dependent.” She refers to Sager (1989, 91) as saying that “there are no absolute standards of translation quality, but only more or less appropriate translations for the purpose for which they are intended.” Schäffner (1998, 4) stated that “quality is not ‘objectively’ given, but depends on the text user and his/her assessment criteria,” and posed the question of intersubjective reliability. Intersubjective reliability is undoubtedly something very difficult to achieve. It can be argued however that it is a matter of developing assessment criteria, processes and procedures, of identifying and exploring these parameters and of making the knowledge of what is relevant in what

situation a part of translator and evaluator competence. And this is a matter of research, translator education and integration of the academic and vocational sides of the profession. Recently, a great deal of research has been done and nowadays, TQA is no longer an under-developed or an under-researched field. A survey of current case studies can be found, for instance, in Mossop (2007a), the issue of evaluating translation quality in the language industry is addressed by Drugan's 2013 monograph and "Certification," a special 2013 issue of the journal *Translation and Interpreting*, is devoted to certification of translators and/or interpreters. Still, there are obviously many issues to be examined.

According to Arango-Keeth and Koby (2003, 119), the problems associated with translation evaluation can be divided into three groups:

1. Lack of a standardized terminology for evaluating translations;
2. Existence of a variety of assessment procedures resulting from different theoretical approaches to translation;
3. Lack of a consensus regarding what translation competence involves.

My aim is to address points 1 and 2. In the following survey of the traditional and current approaches to quality evaluation I will thus focus on the terminology and methods used by some of the prominent authors in the field, specifically on the terms "translation criticism," "TQA," and "assessment methods," namely, TT analysis only and ST–TT comparative analysis.

## **2. Traditional Academic Approaches**

### **2.1 Jiří Levý**

In his 1963 book *Umění překladau* (*The Art of Translation*, 2011), Levý deals both explicitly and implicitly with issues of evaluating literary translations. His insightful theoretical reflection on the issues involved in translating has profound implications for the quality of translation products and thus relates to translation evaluation implicitly. He explicitly refers to translation criticism when discussing disciplines applicable within translation theory and when elaborating his concept of dual norms in translation: the reproduction norm (the requirement of fidelity) and the artistic norm (the requirement of aesthetic value). He argues that the value of a work of art is determined by its relationship to artistic norms, which are to be conceived in historical context, and claims that the quality of translation is proportional to the translator's ability or inability to resolve these contradicting requirements of fidelity and beauty. Jettmarová (2008, 34) observes that his articulation of norms is "a tool that might be used in contemporary Czech translation criticism for establishing translation value."

## 2.2 Anton Popovič

Popovič, “considered one of the co-founders (and not merely a predecessor) of both descriptive translation studies and the manipulation school” (Špirk 2009, 5), pays considerable attention to translation criticism and focuses on literary translation. His monograph *Poetika umeleckého prekladu: Proces a text* (Poetics of artistic translation: Process and text) was published in 1971 (Špirk observes that Katharina Reiss’s famous monograph on translation criticism was published in the same year) deals with the axiological aspects of the translation critic’s job. In his 1975 monograph *Teória umeleckého prekladu: Aspekty textu a literárnej metakomunikácie* (Theory of Artistic Translation: Aspects of Text and Literary Metacommunication), he defines the term “literary critical axiology” as a theory of value criteria postulated by literary criticism in relation to the translator. He further discusses specific aspects, approaches and functions of translation criticism and develops its communication scheme. Especially significant in our context is his distinguishing between two types of translation criticism: type one is based on comparing translations and originals and type two deals with translations in the context of the target community and its literature without comparing translations with originals.

## 2.3 Katharina Reiss

Her groundbreaking monograph *Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Übersetzungskritik—Kategorien und Kriterien für eine sachgerechte Beurteilung von Übersetzungen* was first published in 1971. In 2000, the English translation *Translation Criticism—The Potentials and Limitations* appeared. In the translator’s preface, Erroll F. Rhodes states: “This work proved to be seminal and it remains today a classic, still valuable for anyone engaged in producing or evaluating translations” (Reiss 2000, ix). As the title indicates, Reiss uses the term “translation criticism” and claims that it requires a comparison of TTs and STs. She even postulates the maxim: “No critique without a comparison with the original!” (Reiss 2000, 9). However, she allows for “criticism based solely on the translation in the target language with no consideration for the original,” but stresses that it “can be useful only if its inherent limitations are acknowledged” and that it “can serve as the first stage, but must be followed by the second and indispensable stage of comparison with the source text” (Reiss 2000, 9–10). She thus ushers in later developments: evaluation based on the reading of the TT only and the step-based approach to evaluation. Her model is a general one, that is, it is not designed for a specific type of text. This is not to say that the text type criterion is not addressed. Determining the text type represents the first stage of the model.

## 2.4 Peter Newmark

In his 1988 work, *A Textbook of Translation*, Newmark devotes one chapter to translation criticism. His model entails a comparison of the ST and the TT and

he rejects evaluation based only on TT analysis, arguing that criteria such as smoothness, naturalness, easy flow, readability and absence of interference are often false standards. His approach is innovative for two reasons. First, for applying and connecting three aspects of translation criticism (already mentioned by Reiss 1971): academic, pedagogical and professional, and second, for drawing attention to the translator and his/her intentions. He urges the critic to see the text from the point of view of the translator and to empathise with him by distinguishing “between incompetence (inadequate knowledge of SL and/or topic) and a translation method which may be too idiomatic or too academic for [the critic’s] taste but which appears consistent” (Newmark 1988, 187). On the above mentioned issue of subjectivity, Newmark (1988, 192) adopts this stance: “But the fact that there is a small element of uncertainty and subjectivity in any judgment about a translation eliminates neither the necessity nor the usefulness of translation criticism, as an aid for raising translation standards and for reaching more agreement about the nature of translation.”

## 2.5 Juliane House

In her two monographs, *A Model for Translation Quality Assessment* (1977) and *Translation Quality Assessment: A Model Revisited* (1997), House employs the term TQA, making only occasional references to translation criticism. She develops a sophisticated general model of TQA rooted in Halliday’s systemic functional grammar and based exclusively on the ST–TT comparison. First, the ST is analysed along the parameters of genre and register. The resulting ST profile is then used as a benchmark to measure the TT quality. When critically commenting on functionalistic approaches to translation, House (1997, 15) states that they pay attention one-sidedly to “texts of quick consumption, ephemeral ‘one-off’ texts” and makes a plea for “academic, literary, and other preservable texts,” claiming that “these non-ephemeral written texts represent and preserve our intellectual world” (ibid.).

It is a strong argument for these “preservable” texts and at present, a plea for preserving our intellectual world is needed probably more than ever. It is to be understood as an attempt to strike a balance between attention paid to preservable and pragmatic texts, however, not as an attempt to disregard pragmatic ones. Ephemeral as they are, pragmatic texts form a significant segment of translation production.<sup>1</sup> Their quality (and frequent poor quality) may have

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1 “Pragmatic texts, or, general texts, are any contemporary non-literary documents intended for readers who share certain common interests but not necessarily specialized knowledge” (Brunette 2000, 170).

a strong, even if mostly unacknowledged, effect on target readers and possibly on target languages.

In our globalised and globally communicating world flooded with information, we are, consciously or unconsciously, under a steady influence of translated texts of all types. A field dealing with their quality would be expected to have a decisive say in determining whether this influence will tend to be beneficial or detrimental. Rather than disregarding any type of text, it would thus seem reasonable for research in this field to include all text types, explore quality requirements specific to them and design and test appropriate assessment processes, procedures and criteria. It might prove workable to address preservable texts within the traditional domain of translation criticism, a recognised field of translation studies with its own approaches and methods, and to address pragmatic texts within TQA, perceived as a more general framework that subsumes translation criticism as its sub-category.

### 3. TQA

#### 3.1 TQA as a Field

Recently, the term TQA has been widely used in the sense of a field dealing with translation quality. Interestingly, some authors consider the differing approaches and opinions and the challenge of reaching intersubjective reliability an incentive to develop it, as for example Alina Secară (2005, 39):

Quality in translation is certainly one of the most debated subjects in the field. The strong interest it continues to generate among different groups, from researchers and translation organisations to practitioners and translation teachers, has made it a field of inquiry on its own, called translation quality assessment (TQA). This interest is motivated by both academic and economic/professional reasons: the need to evaluate students' work and the translation providers' need to ensure a quality product.

She offers a survey of theoretical approaches to translation evaluation, highlighting the functionalist approaches of the 1990s and their focus on the end user, and a survey of approaches used in professional settings where she singles out the 1970s and Canada as bringing in new developments. She gives a detailed account of Sical (Canadian Language Quality Measurement System) and other professionally used TQA models (SAE J 2450 quality metrics, the European project Multidoc, and BlackJack, developed by the British translation agency ITR).

Terminology used in the professional area is discussed by Luise Brunette (2000, 172). She provides the following table of terms and definitions (see table 1):

| Assessment Procedures   |                    |                               |                               |              |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Assessment procedures   | Pragmatic revision | Quality assessment            | Quality control               | Fresh look   | Didactic revision        |
| Status of the TT        | non-final text     | final text                    | final text                    | final text   | non-final text           |
| Portion assessed        | entire text        | sample or entire text         | sample                        | entire text  | entire text              |
| Grid and grade          | no                 | yes                           | no                            | no           | general criteria         |
| Recipient               | client             | management                    | management and/or translator  | translator   | translator               |
| Explanations            | no                 | no                            | upon request                  | upon request | yes                      |
| Aim                     | qualitative        | administrative and decisional | administrative and decisional | qualitative  | qualitative and didactic |
| Comparison of ST and TT | yes                | yes                           | yes or no                     | no           | yes                      |

Table 1: Assessment procedures according to Brunette (2000).

### 3.2 A Three-Level Model of TQA and Its Terminology

In what follows I would like to introduce a similar survey of terms and definitions. My aim, apart from listing various terms used within the discipline for identical concepts, is to suggest a three level approach to TQA. The area of evaluating the quality of translations and translating is a complex one, as it covers a wide range of diverse topics, approaches, methods and issues that can be conceptualized at different levels of abstraction and generalization. That is why the model is designed as a three-level model incorporating the most general level of TQA as a field, the still rather general level of processes going on within this field and the level of specific procedures that can be further specified (e.g.

to include tools such as evaluation schemes or marking grids). The levels can be described as follows:

1. TQA as a field dealing with both translation process and product, subsuming traditional translation criticism, involving different groups of people and pursued in both academic and professional settings (cf. figure 2).
2. TQA processes (sets of procedures) that are utilized within these settings and are targeted for their specific purposes.
3. TQA procedures understood as individual steps or stages that processes consist of.

Running across these three levels is the “across the board category” of the two basic assessment methods (TT analysis only and ST–TT comparative analysis). They are conceived of as templates that can be varied and modified to serve specific evaluation aims. The following scheme (figure 1) is a representation of the proposed TQA model structure:

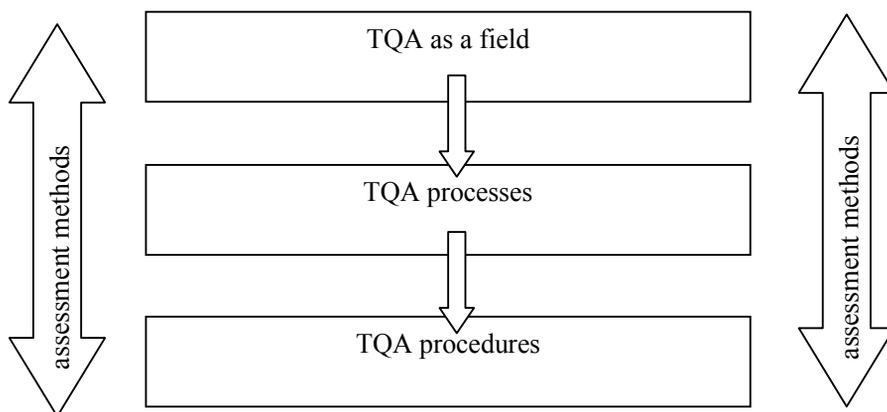


Figure 1: Proposed TQA model structure.

As the present paper argues that problems related to translation evaluation can be reduced by researching evaluation processes and by developing assessment procedures appropriate for specific situations and purposes of evaluation, the intention underlying the model is to provide orientation in the intricate domain of translation quality evaluation and to help identify relevant aspects of these specific situations: who the people involved are, what actions they are involved in, what their purposes might be, what methods they use, what texts they evaluate. Determining the relevant aspects of specific situations (i.e., formulating “scenarios” that correspond to different situations) will allow for the “targeting” of evaluation discussed above.

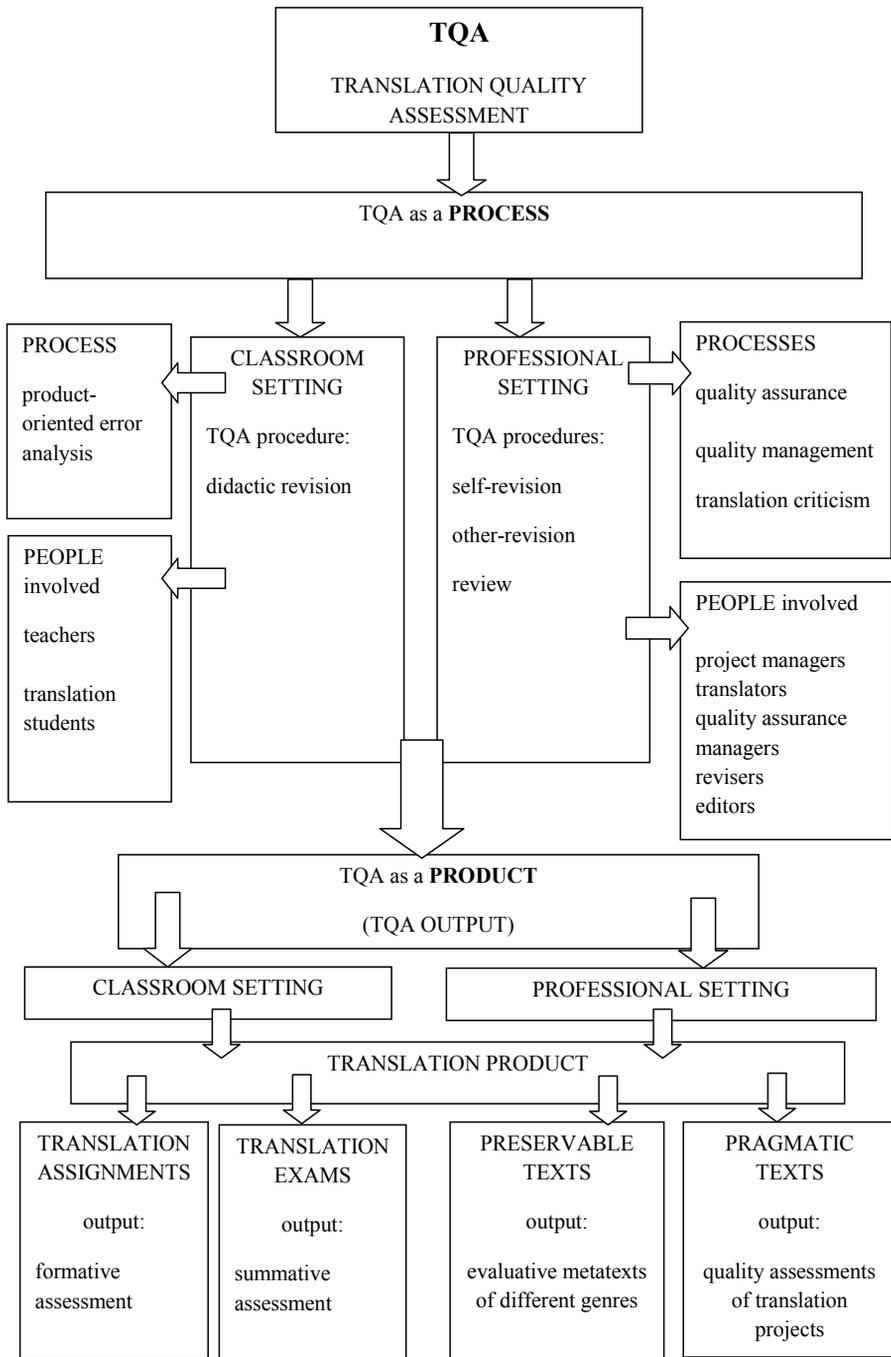


Figure 2: The first level of the TQA model: TQA as a field.

### 3.3 TQA Processes and Procedures

In her explorative study on translation revision procedures, Robert (2008, 3) comments on the terminological confusion within translation studies and TQA and states that “it will not come as a surprise that there is a halo of fuzziness around the concept of revision as well.” When suggesting a typology of revision, she differentiates several types of revision based on the “New Rhetoric formula” as used by Nord (2005, 41): “who revises what, when, how, and why” (Robert 2008, 4–8):

- the *what*-question serves to distinguish revision as the object of study of translation studies from revision in other disciplines: either the text under examination is a translation, or it is not a translation;
- the *who*-question identifies the person undertaking the action: either the person who revises is also the one who translated the text, or it is somebody else;
- the *when*-question relates to the moment of revision: either during the translation process, or after the translation process, yet before delivery to the client;
- the *how*-question deals with revision methods, which can be very diverse, and the *why*-question refers to the function of the revision.

Figure 3 captures TQA processes and was devised based on the *how*- and *why*-questions. It constitutes the second level of the proposed TQA model.

Figure 4 renders TQA procedures and was designed using the first three questions (*what*, *who*, *when*). It constitutes the third, most specific level of the proposed TQA model.

Based on the *who*-question, figure 4 distinguishes TQA procedures (white area) and procedures used for texts other than translations (grey area). The white area gives a survey of terms employed by different authors in translation studies, terms introduced by the 2006 European standard EN-15038 (European Committee for Standardization 2006) and terms recommended and defined by Pym (2011).

## TQA PROCESSES

| Term  | Definition   | Source   |
|---|--|--|
| quality assurance   | This is the full set of procedures applied before, during and after the translation production process, by all members of the translating organization, to ensure that quality objectives important to clients are being met. QA includes procedures to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– quality of service</li> <li>– quality of the physical product</li> <li>– quality of the translation</li> </ul>  | Mossop (2007b, 118–19; shortened)  |
| (implementing and running<br>a) quality management system | The TSP (translation service provider) shall have a documented quality management system in place that is commensurate with the size and organisational structure of the TSP. The quality management system shall include at least the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– statement of the quality management system objectives</li> <li>– process for monitoring the quality of delivered translation services and where necessary providing after-delivery correction and taking corrective action</li> <li>– process for handling all information and material received from the client</li> </ul> | European quality standard EN-15038 (European Committee for Standardization 2006) |
| product-oriented error analysis                           | It can be divided into three steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– description of errors (looking at the symptoms)</li> <li>– finding the reasons for the errors (diagnosis)</li> <li>– pedagogical help (therapy)</li> </ul> The criteria for error description are prospective, i.e., we try to describe the effect the translation, given a specific purpose, produces on the reader.   | Kussmaul (1995, 5)   |

Figure 3: TQA processes—the second level of the TQA model.

| TQA PROCEDURES   |  |   |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| Type of procedure  | Terms used in translation studies  | European quality standard EN-15038 term | European quality standard EN-15038 definition (European Committee for Standardization 2006)  | Term recommended by Pym (2011)  | Pym's (2011) definition                                      |
| the text is a translation, the evaluator is the translator                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evaluation</li> <li>- content comparison and control</li> <li>- revision</li> <li>- self-correction</li> <li>- self-checking</li> <li>- review</li> </ul>   | checking                                | Checking that the meaning has been conveyed, that there are no omissions or errors and that the defined service specifications have been met.  | revision including in-draft revising post-draft revising<br><br>self-revision | the translator revises their own work                        |
| the text is a translation, the evaluator is not the translator             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- bilingual revision</li> <li>- bilingual proofreading</li> <li>- bilingual editing</li> <li>- checking</li> <li>- revision of translation work</li> <li>- translation revision</li> <li>- quality control</li> </ul> | revision                                | [Examining] the translation for its suitability for purpose. This shall include, as required by the project, comparison of the source and target texts for terminology consistency, register and style.  | other-revision<br><br>review  | bilingual revision by another person                         |
| the text is not a translation, the evaluator is the author of the text     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- revision (studies in writing)</li> </ul>  | review                                  | Monolingual review to assess the suitability of the translation for the agreed purpose and recommend corrective measures. . . . [It] can be accomplished by assessing the TT for register and respect for the conventions of the domain in question. | review  | monolingual correction by a person other than the translator |
| the text is not a translation, the evaluator is not the author of the text | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- editing</li> </ul>  |   |  |   |  |

Figure 4: TQA procedures—the third level of the TQA model.

### 3.4 Assessment Methods and Their Application

Figure 5 presents assessment methods. In the present context, assessment methods include TT only analysis (monolingual analysis) and ST + TT analysis (bilingual analysis) and different ways of combining them. They are meant to be perceived as templates that can be varied and utilized within specific TQA procedures used in different processes, either in a one-step mode or in a two/more-steps mode.

| ASSESSMENT METHODS |                      |                         |                                |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| One-step methods   |                      | Two/More-steps methods  |                                |
| TT only analysis   | monolingual analysis | (ST + TT) + TT analysis | bilingual–monolingual analysis |
| ST + TT analysis   | bilingual analysis   | TT + (ST + TT) analysis | monolingual–bilingual analysis |

Figure 5: Assessment methods.

A concrete application of these assessment methods is exemplified by a small-scale research project (117 mails were sent and 48 valid answers analysed) conducted by Isabelle Robert (2008, 9) among translation agencies in Belgium in 2006.

Figure 6 presents a survey of procedures as described and used by Robert in her research. In this case, the assessment methods were applied as revision and review procedures (the evaluators were not the translators).

| Procedures   | Variants and their description |   | Research results |           |
|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------|-----------|
| the TT is read once, the ST is not read at all (or partly) | A                              | the reviser reads the TT alone without the ST, and makes changes  | 2%               |           |
|  | B                              | the reviser reads the TT alone, refers to ST when he thinks there may be a problem, and makes changes   | 5%               |           |
| the TT is read once, the ST is read once                   | C                              | the reviser compares ST with TT and makes changes   | 12%              |           |
| the TT is read twice, the source text is read once         | D                              | the reviser reads the TT, makes changes, then compares ST with TT, and makes additional changes if necessary                                  | 21%              | D/E<br>9% |
|  | E                              | the reviser compares ST with TT, makes changes, then reads the TT and makes additional changes if necessary                                   | 56%              |           |
| the TT is read twice, the ST is read twice                 | F                              | the reviser reads the ST, then compares ST with TT and makes changes, he finally reads the TT again and makes additional changes if necessary | –                |           |
|  | G                              | the reviser reads the ST, then reads the TT and makes changes, and then compares ST with TT and makes additional changes if necessary         | –                |           |

Figure 6: Assessment methods used as revision and review procedures.

Robert reported her research results by means of a chart (2008, 10):

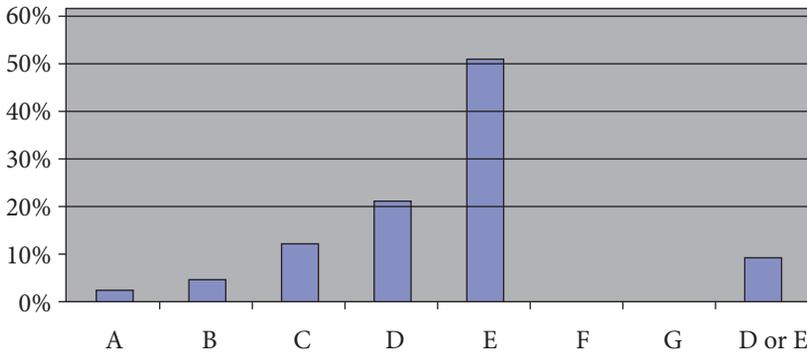


Figure 7: Results of Robert's (2008, 10) research.

#### 4. Conclusions

Evaluation of translation quality is a complex issue historically associated with many problems. The present study offers a survey of traditional and current approaches suggesting that the field has a strong tradition and a great potential for further research.

It proposes the thesis that problems related to translation evaluation can be reduced by researching evaluation processes and by developing assessment procedures appropriate for specific situations and purposes of evaluation. To support the thesis, a three-level model of TQA and its terminology was developed. The first level represents TQA as a field dealing with both “preservable” and pragmatic texts in both academic and professional settings. The second level is the level of processes that are utilized within these settings and targeted for their specific purposes. The third is the level of procedures understood as individual steps or stages that processes consist of. Running across these three levels is the category of two basic assessment methods (TT analysis only and ST–TT comparative analysis) conceived of as templates that are to be varied to serve specific evaluation aims. At present, the application of the proposed model could only be exemplified, namely by means of a small-scale research project referred to in a published research report. Even so, it does suggest that “fit-for-purpose” evaluation processes and procedures can be developed and researched and that subjectivity traditionally associated with translation evaluation can be reduced, though admittedly never completely eliminated.

The article is a pilot study of an ongoing research project. The notions presented here are to be further developed and investigated and the model and its applicability tested as well as supported by research and contributions by other members of the team.

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# Source Text Quality in the Translation Process

Ondřej Molnár

Palacký University, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,  
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic.  
Email: [ondrej.molnar@upol.cz](mailto:ondrej.molnar@upol.cz)

**ABSTRACT:** With respect to quality assessment, translation studies have traditionally put more emphasis on the quality of the output, that is, the target text, while the quality of the text to be translated has been taken for granted. This obviously stems from the perennial interest in translating literary texts, but the picture is quite different when considering what Newmark (1988) calls informative texts. Reasons to shift the attention to them are twofold: first, these source texts account for the majority of all translated material, and second, they are often of poor quality. As a result, “the majority of translations nowadays are better than their originals—or at least ought to be so” (Newmark 1988, 41). The aim of the present article is to confront the problem of source text quality, with particular attention paid to defect classification and potential strategies professional translators may adopt when facing a source text defect. Moreover, it offers results of a questionnaire survey carried out among in-house as well as freelance translators on source text quality in the translation process.

**KEYWORDS:** source text quality; source text defects; defect matrix; translation norms; cooperative principle

## 1. Introduction

In a globalizing world of science, technology, business and trade, and with a growing demand for information, there is an increasing volume of informative or “instrumental” texts which need to be translated.<sup>1</sup> A large portion of these texts is, nevertheless, produced by writers with no training in professional writing. Texts in English, both originally written and translated, are often produced by non-native speakers (Anderman and Rogers 2005), for instance, company or institutional employees working in the relevant departments who are assigned these tasks *ad hoc*.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, with a concomitant rise in demand for texts which are meant for recipients in many different communities simultaneously, English has acquired the status of a “relay” or “pivot” language for translating into other languages (Gouadec 2007). As a result, it serves as a “free floating” *lingua franca* in the majority of international communication contexts (*cf.*

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1 The term “instrumental texts” has been borrowed from Williams (2001).

2 Dunne (2006, 108) is of the view that one of the reasons why the source materials are authored by non-native speakers is offshoring and outsourcing.

also House 2001).<sup>3</sup> Snell-Hornby (2000) speaks about a reduced standardised form of language, that is, *McLanguage* or *Eurospeak*, while Wagner (2005) prefers to call it *sub-English*. All in all, the quality of such texts is rarely monitored and may be poor. Nida (2001, 8) points out that many texts “are difficult to comprehend because they are so badly written.” Newmark (1988, 41) goes even further when claiming (as early as in 1988) that “the majority of translations nowadays are better than their originals—or at least ought to be so.” Language service providers are aware of the possible problems connected with low quality source texts (ST) and include relevant provisions in the terms and conditions of their services:

The client is responsible for the professional and linguistic accuracy of the source text. Bxactly is not liable for any deficiencies due to a lack of specification and linguistic and/or terminological errors in the source text. (Bxactly 2011, 2)

The attitude of translation agencies in regard to the quality of STs subject to translation is thoroughly discussed in Kubánek (2013; see this volume). Although language service providers seem to be protected from the consequences of poor ST quality, it is usually no one but translators themselves who are confronted with defective texts and have to deal with them by summarizing, explaining or adapting according to the needs of the employer or reader concerned (cf. also Snell-Hornby 1992).<sup>4</sup> But to what extent are translators allowed to intervene? Are there any general guidelines to be followed? Is there any classification of defects with respect to their seriousness? What strategies do professional translators adopt when facing a ST defect? What are the factors that influence their solutions? Is it possible to ameliorate the ST if necessary, or is the ST an inviolable and sacrosanct entity which should be respected at all costs? Are there any objective criteria for evaluating the quality of a ST? This paper attempts to answer at least some of the abovementioned questions. In addition, it will offer the results of a survey undertaken among in-house as well as freelance translators. Last but not least, it will suggest one of many possible ways of dealing with defective STs.

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3 House (2001, 253) speaks about a change in global translation conventions, that is, “a conflict in translational processes between cultural specificity and universality in textual norms and conventions, with universality really standing for North European / North American Anglo-Saxon norms.”

4 Snell-Hornby (1992, 21) also points out that “these needs are at present inadequately provided for by the conventional translator training.”

## 2. Source Text in the Translation Process

### 2.1 Text Quality Control

Despite the fact that translation quality assessment (TQA) has long been at the centre of both academic and industry attention, there are no “generally accepted objective criteria for evaluating the quality of translations” (Williams 2009, 3). Yet, every day, clients expect quality guarantees and translation quality is evaluated. The lack of quality control is to blame for billions in losses within worldwide communication each year (cf. also Dunne 2006).<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, TQA tends to be restricted to the target text (TT) as the final product of the translation process, with the ST being somehow neglected or even omitted from consideration. Emphasis has often been put on the output because the quality of the input tends to be taken for granted. To put it in the words of Brunette (2000, 174), “professionals do not judge a translation on the basis of the original text and generally recognize that the poor quality of the ST can never be used to justify the poor quality of translation.”

### 2.2 Source Text from Different Perspectives

Although many writers on translation theory agree that ST analysis is a crucial part of the translation process, there are, of course, schools of thought that view the role of STs differently. Neo-hermeneutism, for example, whose adherents regard translation as an individual creative act, or behaviourism, associated with Nida’s (1964) work and dynamic equivalence, more likely ignore the ST and the relationship between the original and the translation. On the other hand, according to the equivalence-oriented approach, an ideal translation differs from its ST in the language in which it has been expressed, but matches the original in content, style, and in some cases also in effect (cf. Nida 1964; Göpferich 2007). But as Göpferich (2007) points out, it is an ideal which is hardly ever achieved, adding that translation cannot be restricted only to a linguistic transfer, but also involves a cultural transfer.

Functionalist scholars reduce the original to a simple “offer of information,” as the crucial role is assigned to the purpose, or, *skopos* of a translation (cf. Reiss and Vermeer 1984).<sup>6</sup> But as House (2001, 245) bluntly put it: “. . . the word ‘offer’ [makes] it immediately clear that [the] information can freely be accepted

5 Byrne (2006) is of the view that companies are usually not aware of the possible consequences of poor quality documentation and offers the example of a company called Coleco which lost a staggering \$45 million in 1983 as thousands of angry customers returned the Coleco computer, citing the terrible user guide as the reason.

6 It is often the translation brief which shapes the final function or *skopos* the translation is about to fulfil. The demand for fidelity is subordinate to the *skopos* rule and the observance of the *skopos* is performed prior to intertextual coherence with the ST (cf. also Nord 2005).

or rejected as the translator sees fit.” Whereas in the skopos theory, the ST remains the starting point for a translation, according to Holtz-Mänttari’s (1984) model of *translatorial action*, the ST is virtually non-existent—it is “viewed as a mere tool for realizing communicative functions” (Baker 1998, 120). It has no role to play and may undergo radical modifications in the interest of the target reader.<sup>7</sup>

Christiane Nord (2005, 1), who herself applies the functionalist approach to translation, has strongly criticized disrespect towards the ST, and suggested a translation-oriented text analysis, a part of which is a model of ST analysis which should help translators to “understand the function of the elements or features observed in the content and structure of the source text.” The analysis ensures that the ST has been wholly understood, by examining various aspects of the ST that might give rise to translation problems. For Nord (2005), the skopos of the TT must be compatible with the purpose of the ST’s author, albeit superordinate to the ST.<sup>8</sup> Her text analysis should enable the translator to discern whether the ST and TT are compatible or not. Moreover, Nord (2005) introduced the concept of *loyalty*, by which she means responsibilities towards the people involved, that is, clients and users, but also the author(s) of the ST.

Linguistically-oriented translation scholars take the relationship between ST and TT more seriously. Of course, the way they analyze texts to be translated and translations is different (cf. Catford 1965; Baker 1992; Hatim and Mason 1997). One of the best known linguistically-oriented scholars in translation studies dealing primarily with translation quality assessment, is Juliane House (1997). Her assessment model is based on the Hallidayan systemic-functional theory, analyzing and comparing the ST and its translation on three different levels, that is, the levels of language/text, register (field, tenor and mode) and genre (House 1997).<sup>9</sup> “The analysis yields a textual profile characterizing the individual textual function” (House 2001, 249).

To present a comprehensive overview of all translation schools and the way they treat ST would require a separate paper, or rather, a whole book. My aim is to illustrate the complexity of the problem, showing different approaches, and sometimes even extremes between them. Nevertheless, the abovementioned schools of thought only represent a small fraction of the field of translation studies.

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7 Holtz-Mänttari (1984) even deliberately avoids using terms such as “translate” or “translation,” in an attempt to avoid the connotations attached to these terms.

8 “In a skopos-oriented translation the observance of the skopos is performed prior to intertextual coherence with the source text. However, whenever intertextual coherence is compatible with the skopos, then this is what the translator should aim for” (Nord 2005, 29). By intertextual coherence Nord means the relationship of fidelity between ST and TT.

9 Register depicts the connection between texts and their “microcontext,” while genre, on the other hand, connects texts with the “macrocontext” of the linguistic and cultural community in which the texts are embedded (see House 2001).

### 2.3 Source Text in the Translation Process

Before offering a simple classification of ST defects, let me consider the origin of STs and their relationship with the participants involved in the translation process. Since the present paper deals with instrumental texts, at the very beginning of the translation model there is usually an initiator—for example, an organization aiming for a good presentation of its products or services—who initiates or commissions the production of the ST. The text is produced and, if not written directly in English, is often translated into a relay language, that is, English. These two steps may be taken by one and the same person, or by two different people. These writers, however, very often have no training in professional writing, and in some cases they are not native-speakers. Moreover, with machine translation pushing prices even lower and with cost-conscious ST initiators, the current quantity of instrumental documentation has not translated into quality (cf. Byrne 2006).<sup>10</sup> As a result, the translator is often confronted with defective STs. At this moment, several scenarios are possible. First, the defect may remain unnoticed due to a lack of text-type or domain specific knowledge, or due to no an absence of relevant context for disambiguation. Second, the defect may be noticed but remain uncorrected. Possible reasons for this include a lack of resources, time constraints or lack of contact with the initiator. Third, the defect is noticed and corrected accordingly.

Ultimately, who should the translator be loyal to when dealing with defective STs? To the initiator or client commissioning the translation? To the translation brief or to the function of the text? To the target text reader, that is, the end-user that the translation is produced for? Or to professional standards? According to Newmark (1988, 209), “in informative texts, the translator’s only loyalty is to the truth.” It is a truthful but evasive statement. McAlester (1999) offers slightly more specific advice:

Professional translators frequently handle texts that are far from being functionally perfect, and being responsible professionals and not adhering to the “garbage in, garbage out” principle (cf. Kussmaul, 1995, 146), they may well produce TTs in which there are indeed mismatches, but mismatches which represent functional improvements. McAlester (1999, 171)

Figure 1 represents the typical translation process, with 1–2a–3a–4a showing the mistranslation process or the “garbage in, garbage out” principle (cf. Kussmaul 1995, 146), whereas 1–2a–1b–2–3–4 represents risk management strategy or the “gabarge in, excellence out” principle (cf. Dunne 2006, 109).

<sup>10</sup> I agree with Byrne (2006) that the quantity of inadequate documentation is disturbing, especially when one considers that aside from certain legal implications, the quality of instrumental texts can spell success or failure for a company or for a product.

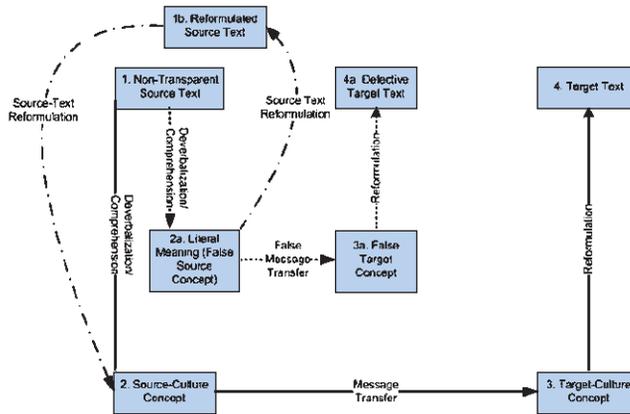


Figure 1: Translation process applied to defective STs  
(borrowed from Dunne 2006, 109).

To adopt an effective risk management strategy requires experience and the ability to identify the problematic issues, that is, specific defects. Moreover, a ST analysis is necessary. The following sections will attempt to cover both the classification of ST defects as well as a ST analysis.

#### 2.4 Source Text Defects

All translation efforts benefit when source materials are of high quality. There is no doubt that the use of defective or flawed source materials will seriously undermine the quality of the TT. To ensure a good quality translation, a thorough analysis of the ST and its context must be involved and ST defects must be identified and dealt with properly. Nevertheless, the seriousness of ST defects may differ as there is a wide range of ST quality-related issues. Instead of being in the domain of binary opposition of quality-defective STs, we are rather in the domain of a scale ranging from high-quality source materials through average to poor quality STs. The most frequent ST defects may be grouped into the following categories:

- factual correctness of the textual content;
- incomprehension or ambiguity;
- coherence;
- cohesion;
- terminology (use of incorrect terminology, inconsistent terminology, non-standard usage of standard terminology, unsuitability in a given domain, etc.);
- incompleteness (missing information, etc.);
- grammar mistakes (non-grammatical usage, typos, etc.);

- stylistics (failure to adhere to established style guidelines, informal register, overuse of jargon, inappropriate use of metaphorical language, etc.);
- spelling, punctuation (none or double space, etc.);
- defects in orthography, typography or formatting (inconsistency, ad hoc formats, page layout etc.);
- source file problems (cf. Dunne 2006);
- file structure and content that does not reflect the logical structure of the component(s), but rather the chronological history of development work);
- HTML embedded in XML;
- the use of competing orthographic rules and standards during authoring of source files.

The list is by no means exhaustive but reflects the most commonly encountered ST problems. It has already been stated above that the seriousness of ST defects may differ, with some defects being easy to correct (for example, typos, punctuation, spelling or grammar) while other defects are difficult to remedy, especially without the help of the ST initiator or any relevant context for disambiguation (various obscurities, ambiguities or lack of text coherence). A defect matrix in figure 2 demonstrates the relationship between defect clarity and defect seriousness on the one hand and established norms or subjective decisions which must be followed to remedy the defect on the other.

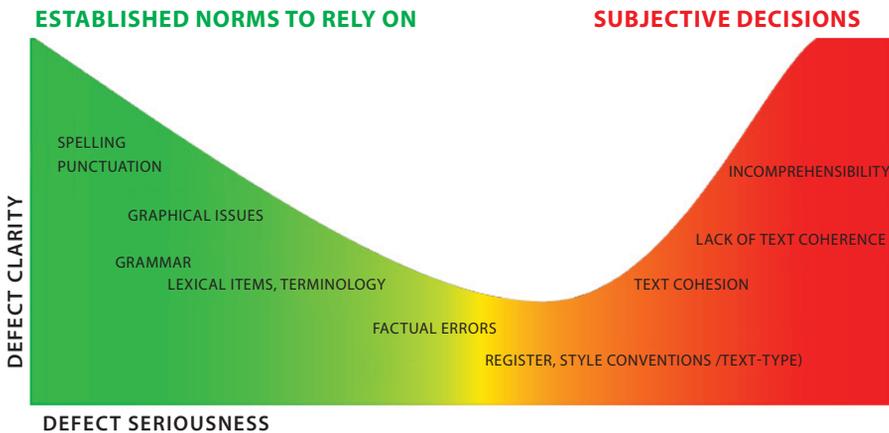


Figure 2: Defect matrix (Kubánek and Molnár 2012).

### 3. Surveying Source Text Quality

It is often argued that translation is invisible when done well—the so-called pane of glass analogy, with a “good” translation being represented by a clear,

smooth sheet of glass, while cracks and scratches represent flaws, which draw attention to the enterprise (cf. Chesterman and Wagner 2002). The same metaphor might be applied to ST quality. Flawless STs will always be easier for translators to deal with, in contrast to defective and poor originals. In order to gain more insight into the actual experience of translators and to offer some quantitative data, a questionnaire survey was carried out among in-house as well as freelance translators. This section will present the results.

The survey was performed in the second half of 2012 and first half of 2013. The questionnaire was compiled using Google Forms and sent via email to slightly more than 1,000 translators, out of which 280 responded.<sup>11</sup> The questionnaire contained contingency questions, multiple choice as well as checkbox questions, and open ended questions. The complete questionnaire is included in the appendix. The prime focus of the questionnaire was on the ST quality and ST defects. Some questions were related to the strategies employed by translators facing problematic ST issues, while other, more tangential questions were also presented to the survey participants. In the following paragraphs I decided to offer and comment on only the most relevant and interesting data. Nevertheless, all remaining details are presented in the appendix.

Let me start with the information concerning the profile of translators participating in the survey. The majority of them were experienced translators, with 59% (164) of them translating for more than 10 years, another 34% (95) between 5 to 10 years, and only 6 (2%) that had been translating for less than a year. In all, 61% (171) of were between 30–50 years of age, that is, 36% (100) 30–40 and 25% (71) 40–50. Only 11% (31) of those who took part in the survey were between 20–30 years of age, and there was no one younger than 20. For 52% (145) of the respondents, translating was their main source of income, while 48% (135) translated only part-time. More than half of the respondents had a university degree in a language-related discipline such as linguistics, translation, pedagogy, and so forth, with 47% (131) of them having a master's degree and 11% (32) a bachelor's degree. Among the most common languages translators worked with were, naturally, Czech, English and German—Czech is the most common ST language for 41% (115) translators, followed by English and German with 38% (107) and 22% (62) respectively.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, the most common target language for the respondents was Czech with 45% (126), followed by English and German with 28% (79) and 21% (58) respectively.<sup>13</sup> To close the section about the profiles of translators participating in the survey, figure 3 offers the most frequently translated text types

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11 Email addresses were collected using several Czech company search portals (e.g. [www.firmy.cz](http://www.firmy.cz) or [www.zlatestranky.cz](http://www.zlatestranky.cz)).

12 Respondents could mention multiple languages they translated from, so percentages added up to more than 100%.

13 Full details concerning other languages are given in the appendix.

or genres participants work with. As expected, fiction comprises only a small proportion of translated texts, while technical, scientific and economic texts constitute the bulk of the translation input on the translation market.

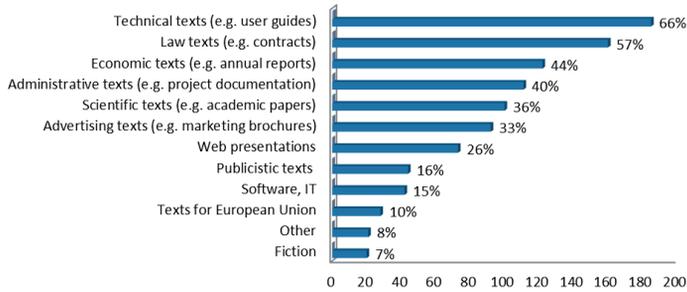


Figure 3: The most frequently translated text types.<sup>14</sup>

The next part of the survey focused on ST defects in more detail. In regard to the question whether participants of the survey encounter ST defects, 78% (219) stated they do encounter flawed originals, 19% (54) answered they do only occasionally and only 3% (7) stated they had never worked with a defective ST. Those who answered in the affirmative were offered a list of potential defects from which they could select as many as they considered applicable. The list was inspired by Nord (2005), Dunne (2006) and Kubánek and Molnár (2012), and the results are demonstrated in figure 4. Despite the fact that spelling and punctuation, selected by as many as 170 respondents, are among the most frequent ST problems, they can be easily coped with and do not need as much intervention as defects regarding stylistics or even incomprehensibility, which were the second most frequently problematic issues. Of particular interest are defect concerning file type or text extraction, ticked by 131 participants, which only proves the fact that translators should possess strong technological skills.

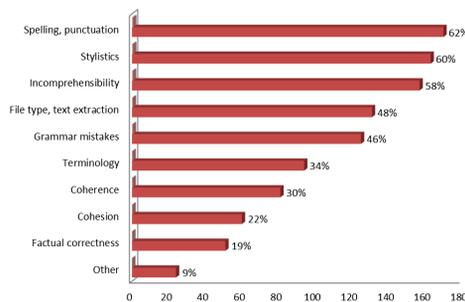


Figure 4: The most recurring ST defects.

<sup>14</sup> Respondents could select more text types, so percentages added up to more than 100%.

Despite the high number of participants who sometimes encounter flawed STs, only 23% (63) had ever refused an order as a result of poor ST quality. However, almost 60% (166) stated that they had contacted a client, agency or translation initiator due to poor ST quality. Regarding the question of what kind of ST defect could be a reason for translators to reject a translation job, 88% (231) stated *incomprehensibility*, 30% indicated *file type or text extraction* and 26% (67) selected *terminology*.<sup>15</sup> Almost 60% of the translators participating in the survey had been asked on at least one occasion to ameliorate a poor ST by correcting the defects, with 21% (58) of them doing so on a regular basis. The last two questions focused on the way respondents deal with defective STs. Before summarizing answers to the open question about individual approaches or strategies when facing a ST defect, see figure 5. Only 3% (9) of the respondents usually trust the ST and do not expect any defects to be there. In all, 72% (201) of the translators stated that they correct defects once they have consulted the translation initiator. No more than 6% (17) of the respondents take into account the time it required to remedy defects, correcting them unless it is too time consuming, and 15% (43) stated that they remedy defects regardless of the time required. It is of particular importance, but also defect-dependent, that as many as 72% of translators prefer to consult the initiator before dealing with defects.

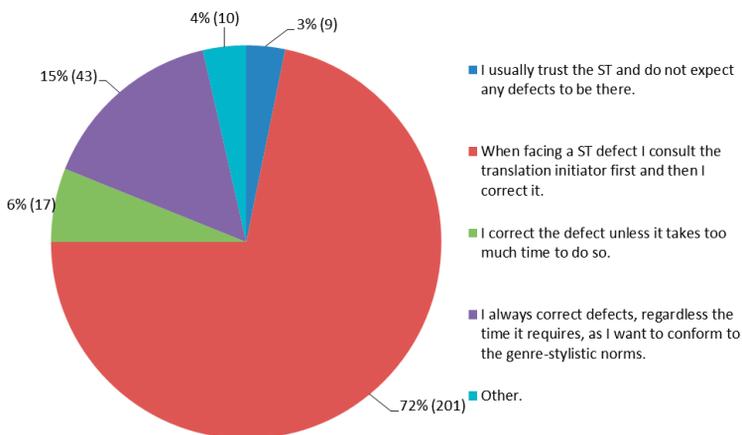


Figure 5: How do you deal with a ST defect when translating?

Due to space limitations, I cannot quote all individual strategies employed by the translators participating in the questionnaire survey. Moreover, many suggestions and recommendations occurred repeatedly and overlapped one another. As a result, a brief summary will be presented here, focusing on the most

<sup>15</sup> Similarly to some of the previous questions, this was a multiple-choice question, with participants selecting more than one checkbox. Full details are given in the appendix.

relevant answers. Since the open question concerning individual strategies was optional and was able to be left unanswered, only 128 respondents took the opportunity to describe their individual strategy. One translator refused to do so, stating it was part of his own know-how that he did not want to reveal.

The majority of translators concurred with each other in that they correct typos and obvious grammatical mistakes without contacting the initiator. Several respondents stated they always add commentary to explain their corrections so that the defective parts of the ST can be amended. The situation nevertheless gets more complicated when it comes to problems with terminology or incomprehensibility. In these cases, translators usually contact the initiator straight away, asking for clarification. Some of the respondents stated that they use various search engines, terminology databases or parallel corpora in order to find the best equivalent that would suit the co-text. About ten translators declared they never ameliorate a defective ST, but rather append commentary, offering possible solutions to the client or agency. In other words, they assign responsibility for the final decision to someone else. One respondent stated that they always leave the defects in the target text with an explanation, as he is “only a translator,” and cannot be blamed for faulty originals. Another participant complained that it is like casting pearls before swine to communicate with a translation agency which, in her opinion, does not usually care about the output quality of the translation.

The present survey demonstrated the relevance of the topic, that is, ST quality and ST deficiencies, since ST quality cannot be taken for granted. The following section will offer several tentative strategies on how to deal with ST defects when translating.

## 4. Dealing with Source Text Defects

No doubt the quality of STs is often low and cannot be taken for granted. This was also proved by the abovementioned questionnaire survey, with 78% of the participants confirming that they had encountered flawed originals. The following paragraphs will discuss some general advice on how to deal with ST defects and to what extent translators are allowed to intervene in problematic issues. In other words, I will look for an answer to Nida's (2001, 8–9) suggestion about intralingual translating, by which Nida meant “rewriting bad texts into a more understandable form . . . , [since] many texts submitted for translation are extremely difficult to understand . . . because they are so badly written.”

### 4.5 Source Text Analysis

Since ST defects impede the translation process, it is worth paying particular attention to the ST analysis and pre-translation phase, which makes the source

material ready for translation.<sup>16</sup> However, as Drugan (2013) points out, while pre-translation testing is common in software localization, it is relatively rare in other domains. Furthermore, the opportunity to improve ST quality prior to translation can prevent errors before they arise (cf. Drugan 2013; Kubánek, see this volume).<sup>17</sup> Gouadec (2007, 71) speaks about *translatability assessment*, that is, a quality control which should guarantee that the ST is up to standard and does not contain any language-related or fact-related errors, and that the material is in fact translatable. The translatability assessment, based on and adapted from Gouadec (2007, 70–72) and Nord (2005), should include:

- identifying any errors, obscurities, interference or real possible errors;
- making a note of any questions that—circumstances permitting—will be forwarded to the ST author or translation initiator;
- identifying any item which is not fully understood or which requires further documentation;
- identifying any items requiring special attention, in particular those ambiguities where several options may be open to the translator (e.g. should measurement units be converted?);
- listing all the terminology and phraseology requiring specific treatment (e.g. equivalents will have to be researched; specific terminology will need to be provided or validated; terminological consistency may be at risk, etc.).

Having performed the ST analysis, the translator is aware of the ST quality, which also gives him or her the right to negotiate, if need be, better conditions in terms of the price and time quotation. Moreover, the translator has more time to communicate with the ST authors or translation initiator in order to obtain necessary information or to clarify obscurities.<sup>18</sup> I thus agree with Drugan (2013, 104) who also accentuates the importance of source file analysis, stating that “if this is neglected, substantial extra work is likely to be needed later in the

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16 The present paper does not take into account the translation process carried out by a translation engine or machine translation, which would also have to include post-editing and revising. The paper focuses on the workflow carried out by human translators only.

17 Moreover, translation initiators or ST authors may appreciate the fact that having the text translated results in an improved source language version too, as the translator highlights all the ambiguities or defects in the original. This might be of particular importance if the ST is meant to be published.

18 Correcting any discrepancies or defects in the source material which are likely to affect the quality of the translation is not technically part of the translation process. Since this means additional work, an extra charge should be agreed upon with the stakeholder (Gouadec 2007).

project, when time is a premium.”<sup>19</sup> Last but not least, if the ST defects are too serious, the translator should refuse the order completely.

#### 4.6 Dealing with Source Text Defects

The time when translation as such was devalued “because it was felt that a TT could never reach the heights of an ST” (Bassnett 2002, 75) seems to have come to an end.<sup>20</sup> Since translators are not infrequently confronted with defective texts, in the following section I will discuss various ways of dealing with them, offering tentative recommendations.<sup>21</sup> However, there are hardly any prescriptive rules to follow. Moreover, translation theorists deal with poor STs only marginally, if at all.

Neubert and Shreve (1992, 17) speak about “a unique kind of critical translation analysis which is not comparative but . . . focuses on the source text to be translated and deals primarily with defective texts.” This approach seems to be very close to the *translatability assessment* discussed above. Moreover, it does not regard the original as an inviolable or sacrosanct entity which cannot be significantly altered. Similarly, as early as in 1540, a medieval writer on translation, Etienne Dolet, included in his five principles of how to translate well that “the translator must perfectly understand the sense and material of the original author, although he [sic] *should feel free to clarify obscurities . . . and avoid clumsiness*” (quoted in Munday 2008, 27; italics added). According to Newmark (1988, 204), translators have no right to alter or improve an authoritative text, but in the case of informative or instrumental texts, he states, it is perfectly all right if some facts (if necessary) are corrected and the style is “discreetly improved.” Nevertheless, he hastily adds translators should make “as few modifications as possible” (Newmark 1988, 204). In other words, some improvement on the original can take place, “but only if the original is defective in its writing or lacking in information essential to the putative reader” (Newmark 1988, 205).<sup>22</sup> In order to be more specific and avoid vagueness, Newmark (1988, 205)

19 In big translation projects, which include a project team, such as a project manager and a team of translators, a pre-translation phase and ST analysis is a must, as it prevents future complications. For example, if a ST defect is spotted after translation has been started in multiple languages, the project manager must go back to the numerous translators across the multiple languages and arrange for corrections, usually with additional payment.

20 Munday (2008, 29–30) discusses translation theory of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Britain, focusing on the status of the ST and the form of the TT.

21 See also Snell-Hornby 1992.

22 According to Newmark (1988, 205), “the main criterion for improvement is the translator’s conviction that he [sic] is helping the SL writer to get his message or information across without distorting it.”

develops the idea of ST improvement in further details, which is summarised in the following points:<sup>23</sup>

- idiolect should be normalised by the translator;
- unintentional ambiguity should be clarified by the translator, if not by the context;
- it is unnecessary to translate sense by metaphor, with original and colloquial metaphors being out of place;
- redundancies in the ST should be eliminated;<sup>24</sup>
- referential, grammatical or lexical slips, misprints, errors, miscopying should be corrected by the translator without any acknowledgement;<sup>25</sup>
- the translator should comment on any improbability;
- jargon should be reduced or completely deleted.

Newmark (1988) goes even further and calls for a translator's code of ethics, stating any racist, classist, religious, sexist or ageist propaganda should be treated with particular caution and requires a footnote pointing out the prejudice. On the whole, the abovementioned points establish the translators' right, if the ST has no stylistic pretensions to select an appropriate style, usually the clearest, most straightforward writing one can muster.

#### 4.7 The Concept of Norms in Translation Studies

It is impossible to seek prescriptive rules or recommendations for translators without mentioning the concept of norms which has been widely discussed in the last half-century (cf. Toury 1980, 1995; Hermans 2013). Norms are options in a particular socio-historical context translators might adhere to in the process of translation. They imply a particular behaviour which is expected, preferred and accepted as appropriate. In Hermans' words (2013, 2), norms work "as a problem-solving device by offering ready-made templates for action." According to Toury (1995, 61), translation is an activity governed by norms, which nevertheless involves a decision-making process. The idea of translation as a decision-making process was first formulated in 1967 by the Czech trans-

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23 It is important to emphasise that the recommendations apply to informative or instrumental texts only. Moreover, many of the suggested recommendations are situation-dependent and cannot be applied automatically.

24 Nevertheless, Newmark (1988, 209) aptly adds that "the translator has to use restraint in excising redundant SL features, confining himself to pruning here and there, since if he goes too far he is sometimes likely to find the whole text redundant."

25 There are, however, various cases in which the translator should write a note explaining the error and their reasons for making the change.

lation theorist Jiří Levý.<sup>26</sup> Levý (1967) elaborated on two norms governing the translator's decision making, that is, a reproductive norm which governs how to express and represent the original, and a productive norm which oversees the well-formedness and beauty of the target text. These norms should constrain the translator's freedom of choice (Levý 1967; Popovič 1975). For the needs of the present paper it is also worth mentioning Levý's (1967) *minimax principle*, which is involved in each translation and influences the decision making process. According to the minimax principle, "the translator resolves for that one of the possible solutions which promises a maximum of effect with a minimum of effort" (Levý 1967, 156). The scope of this principle can easily be broadened to defective source texts as well, since translators, when facing a defective text, have to correct or adapt according to the needs of the stakeholders concerned, while seeking a balance between the seriousness of the defects and the time required to correct them.

Gideon Toury (1980, 1995) further elaborated the concept of norms, which became a cornerstone of his descriptivist program for the study of translation. In his view, norms "determine the (type and extent of) equivalence manifested by actual translations," (Toury 1995, 61) operating at different stages of the translation process. While preliminary norms govern translation policy and the directness of translation, various operational norms direct decision making during the actual act of translation itself, with matricial norms affecting the macrostructure of the text and textual-linguistic norms governing microstructures. Initial norm, which is in fact superordinate over the abovementioned and more specific norms, steer the translator towards either preserving as much as possible of the ST or towards creating a new, well-formed TT.<sup>27</sup> Toury (1995, 57) explains:

Adherence to source norms determines a translation's adequacy as compared to the source text, subscription to norm originating in the target culture determines its acceptability.

Thus, in Toury's view, adequacy as a term is more source text-oriented, while acceptability, with its implication of a target reader, focuses on the target text. Relating this to defective originals, it can be stated that the aim of translators encountering a flawed ST is to achieve a high level of acceptability. This accept-

26 By decision-making process Levý (1967) meant a scale ranging between two extremes of total predictability (for instance, decisions required by grammatical categories) and total unpredictability, with each action chosen from a set of given alternatives affecting another action in the translation process.

27 In other words, translators can subject themselves to the norms of the source language and culture or to the norms realised in the TT. For more details see Toury (1995).

ability, according to Larson (1987, 69) can be attained “if the translator has a set of criteria which will guide him [sic] as he works and by which he can measure his final product.” These criteria vary from translation to translation and translational norms can be of much help.

Whereas Toury’s concept of norms focuses on describing the translator’s process of decision making and identifying translation patterns in order to formulate generally valid “universals of translation,” Chesterman (1997) also took the interaction between translators and audiences into account, and proposed another set of norms, some of them overlapping with Toury’s initial and operational norms.

According to Chesterman (1997), expectancy norms reflect the expectation of the readers in so much as what a translation should look like and what will be accepted as a proper translation. Professional norms are subordinate to expectancy norms and regulate the translation process itself. They are subdivided into three categories: first, an accountability norm, which is an ethical norm, regulates the relations of the stakeholders (for example, authors, commissioners, clients, readers, etc.); second, a communication norm, which is a social norm, considers the translator as a communication expert who should ensure maximum communication between the parties involved; third, a relation norm, which ensures that “an appropriate relation of relevant similarity is established and maintained between the source text and the target text” (Chesterman 1997, 69). Nevertheless, the appropriate relation is judged by the translator “according to text-type, the wishes of the commissioner, the intentions of the original writer, and the assumed needs of the prospective readers” (Chesterman 1997, 69).<sup>28</sup> It is important to state here that norms cannot guarantee a correct strategy when facing a ST defect. Nevertheless, they can adjust the strategy so that it is in compliance with the prevailing translational norms, that is, strongly preferred and accepted as proper. Needless to say no prescriptive rules can be applied to all situations automatically, as each situation is unique and requires individual treatment.

#### **4.8 Grice’s Cooperative Principle**

All texts, regardless of the quality in which they are written, are invitations to communication. Furthermore, they must be presented to readers in a way that secures their comprehension. Moreover, all participants must agree to cooperate in such a communication. However, an improper translation or a badly written ST is a failure to convince the reader to participate in the textual inter-

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28 Generally speaking, only the third of the professional norms is a proper translation norm, however, for the purpose of the present paper, which discusses defective source texts, the communication norm is also of particular importance, as it corresponds to Gricean Maxims (discussed in section 4.4).

action, as it violates the principle of cooperation (cf. Grice 1975; Neubert and Shreve 1992).

Grice (1975, 1991) first formulated what he called the *cooperative principle* to describe negotiation in conversation. Nevertheless, since linguistic communication is always interactional, this principle can be extended to also cover written discourse (Henry G. Widdowson 2012, personal communication; Neubert and Shreve 1992).<sup>29</sup> With the cooperative principle, Grice formulated a number of instructive maxims language users conventionally adhere to. Let me apply these maxims to defective STs, as the maxims may form a general guideline for translators. The maxims are as follows (Grice 1975, 1991):

1. Maxim of quantity: Make your contribution as informative as is required. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
2. Maxim of quality: Try to make your contribution one that is true.
3. Maxim of relevance: Be relevant.
4. Maxim of manner: Be perspicuous: avoid obscurity of expression; avoid ambiguity; be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity); be communicatively orderly.

The maxim of quantity advises translators to assess the information of the ST and make necessary adjustments such as compression or omission. Put simply, some “information must be sacrificed in order to protect the integrity of the communication” (Byrne 2006, 18). On the other hand, it may be necessary to add some information to a ST which lacks coherence or is incomplete, or to edit a sentence which is extremely concise or condensed.

The maxim of quality does not stipulate that translators determine what the truth is but gives them the right to correct mistakes in the ST instead of copying them to the TT. It must be emphasised here that it is crucial to respect a fine distinction between facts and opinions. This maxim is applicable only to informative texts and must be treated with utmost caution. Nevertheless, repeating once again Newmark’s (1988, 209) words, “the translator’s duty is to correct any mistakes of fact in the original,” since “the translator’s only loyalty is to the truth.” In addition, the maxim of quality requires the translator to preserve the internal-truth consistency of the text (cf. Neubert and Shreve 1992).

The maxim of relation facilitates the flow of information in the text, especially if it is not evident from the ST what its main ideas are. Generally speaking, relevant information contributes to the development of the text. In other words, “the maxim advises [translators] to render the target text in such a way that the reader may disregard irrelevant detail and recognize those elements which belong to the primary ideational structure” (Neubert and Shreve 1992,

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<sup>29</sup> According to Neubert and Shreve (1992, 75), despite the fact that many texts do not have the immediacy of face-to-face communication, “reading such a text does involve a cooperative mental attitude.”

79). The quest for relevance in the ST does not, however, imply that important information is worth retaining and emphasizing while less important information should be discarded. To be relevant means to make clear what the primary contents of the ST are, despite its deficiency.

The maxim of manner advises clarity, lack of ambiguity, brevity, and orderliness, which makes it one of the most important maxims, as STs are very often unclear, ambiguous, verbose, and poorly organised. But to what extent are translators allowed to intervene in their effort to correct ST defects? The answer to this question depends on the genre or text-type and the function or purpose of the text. For many theorists and practitioners, the purpose of a translated text is a dominant factor in the effective transmission of information (cf. Brunette 2000).<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, it would be a mistake to view the purpose of the text as the only and most important criterion in the translation process, as many other criteria are at play (translation brief, culture-specific genre conventions, stylistic conventions/register to name but a few).

To summarise, even though Grice's cooperative principle is not only restricted to the translation process and can be applied to any kind of communication, it offers a useful guideline for translators dealing with flawed originals.<sup>31</sup> Despite the fact that some of the abovementioned maxims might seem to be more significant or superior to the others, they operate in mutual interplay and complement each other.

## 5. The Translating Profession

The profile of translators in the professional world has been changing as the range of competence required of translators "is expanding to encompass diverse kinds of interlingual and intercultural mediation and rewriting, once considered as lying beyond the confines of translation proper" (Ulrych 2005, 5).<sup>32</sup> Professional translating entails multiple forms of communication. According to Ulrych (2005), the term *translation* simply cannot transmit the range of skills that are necessary for the profession.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, excellent translators can no longer be identified based only on linguistic ability, which is often taken for granted (cf. Dunne 2006). They must use CAT tools and translation memories, terminology

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30 Reiss (2000, 92–93) promotes the functional approach as necessary so that target texts "fulfil a specific function that is not addressed in the original."

31 The relevance theory is also of particular relevance for the present paper as it deals with situations in which the translator needs to not only reproduce the content but also the style, using various communicative clues (Gutt 2000).

32 The competences framework of modern translating profession is thoroughly in Schäffner (see this volume).

33 Localisation (of software), transcreation (of advertising), transediting (of information from press agencies) to name but a few (cf. Schäffner; this volume).

management tools, Internet research, various corpora and databases to encompass the increasingly technical-complex nature of the source materials available (cf. Gouadec 2007). In addition to this, translators have to deal with challenges in the form of poor and defective STs. Ulrych (2005) is of the opinion that the profession is moving closer to monolingual text production as translators are expected to clarify, edit and rewrite various defects. All things considered, the profile of modern-day translators should change accordingly. I am of the view that translators, in order to justify their role in the translation process, should assume the role of communication experts who can offer a broader variety of services, such as revising, editing, ameliorating the ST, post-editing, but also educating ST initiators or producers about the importance of achieving a certain quality of textual output. As a result, each translation commission should involve a two-way relationship: one which goes from the translation initiator, client or agency to the translator as well as one which goes the other way, that is, from the translator to the client. Without any doubt there is a long way to go, but it is a process which might lead to the widespread establishment of high-quality language services.

## 6. Concluding Remarks

The aim of the present article was to confront the problem of source text quality, a topic which is discussed only marginally in the literature of translation studies, but is worth considerable attention since many of the texts that are translated are defective. I discussed the frequently underestimated role of the source text in different translation schools of thought and in the translation process itself. I attempted to classify the most frequent source text defects and demonstrated the relationship between defect clarity and defect seriousness on the one hand and established norms or subjective decisions which must be followed to remedy the defect on the other.

The next part of the paper presented the results of a questionnaire survey among 280 in-house as well as freelance translators, with a primary focus on ST quality and ST defects. The survey demonstrated the relevance of the topic as 78% translators stated that they encounter ST defects. Apart from *spelling* and *punctuation* issues, defects regarding *stylistics* and *incomprehensibility* were selected as the most frequent problems. In all, 88% of translators indicated *incomprehensibility* as a valid reason for rejecting a translation, 30% *file type* or *text extraction* and 26% *terminology*. Nevertheless, only 23% of the respondents stated that they have ever refused an order as a consequence of ST quality. Almost 60% of the respondents had been asked to ameliorate poor STs by correcting the defects and 72% of the translators prefer to consult the initiator before correcting any defect. Comprehensive results of the survey are to be found in the appendix.

In the final part of the paper I offered several tentative strategies for dealing with ST defects, seeking inspiration amongst other things in ST analysis or translatability assessment, Newmark's suggestions, translatorial norms, Levy's minimax principle and Grice's cooperative principle. Considering the decreasing quality of STs, I came to conclusion that STs cannot be regarded as inviolable or sacrosanct entities and it is the translators' duty to deal with all defects that affect it. In order words, a poor quality translation can never be justified by the poor quality of the ST. Last but not least, I am of the view that translators should become communication experts with a broader variety of available services, which would not only include risk management strategy (when facing a defective text) but also educating the client about the importance of text and documentation quality.

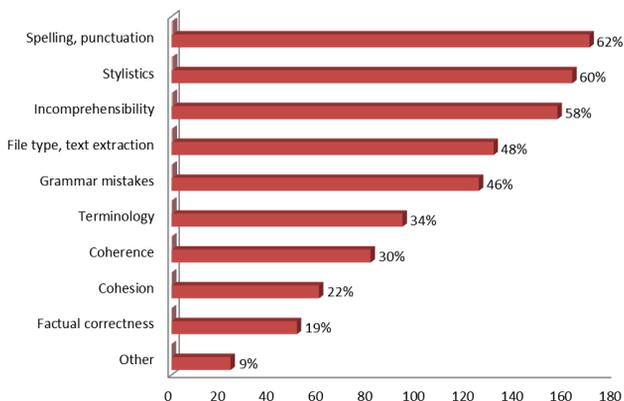
## 7. Appendix

### Questionnaire

1. Do you encounter defects in source texts? By source text we mean a text to be translated.

| Answer       | Responses | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Sometimes    | 219       | 78%        |
| Occasionally | 54        | 19%        |
| Never        | 7         | 3%         |

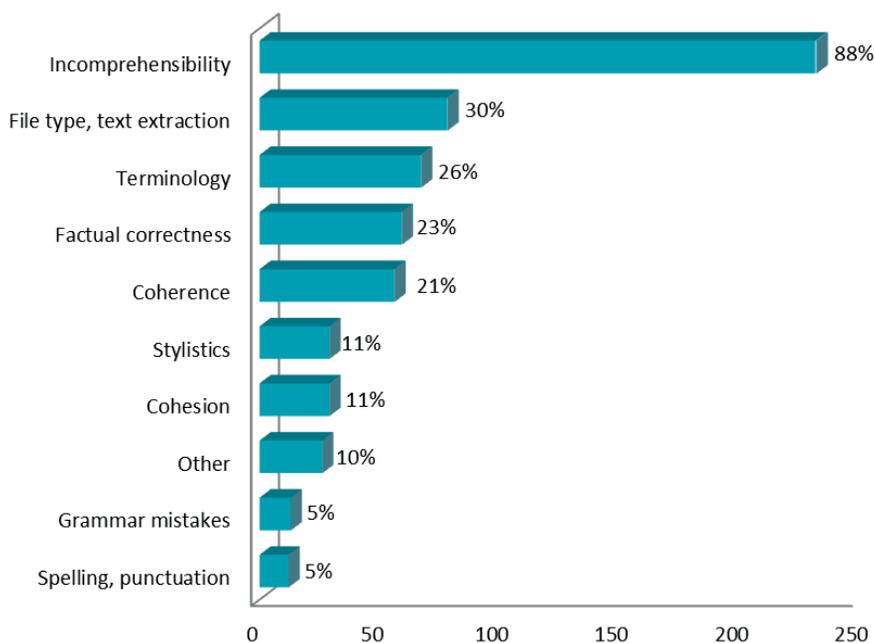
2. What source text defects do you encounter most often? You can select more than one checkbox.



### 3. Have you ever rejected an order because of poor source text quality?

| Answer   | Responses | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Yes, I have.   | 64        | 23%        |
| No, I have not rejected a translation order for this reason. | 217       | 78%        |

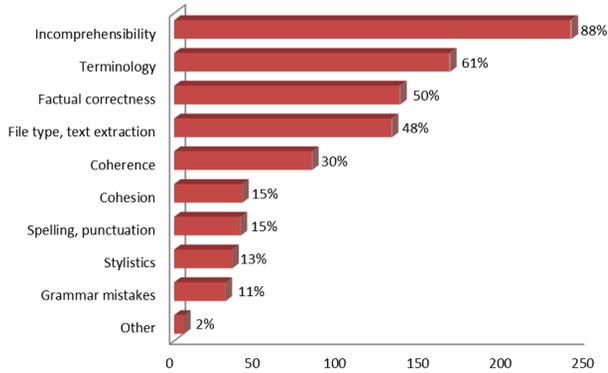
### 4. What kind of source text defect would be sufficient reason for you to reject a translation? You can select more than one checkbox.



### 5. Have you ever contacted your client/agency because of poor source text quality? The reason for that could be your effort to correct the defects or to change the terms and conditions regarding the delivery date or price.

| Answer        | Responses | Percentage |
|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Several times | 166       | 59%        |
| Exceptionally | 92        | 33%        |
| Never         | 22        | 8%         |

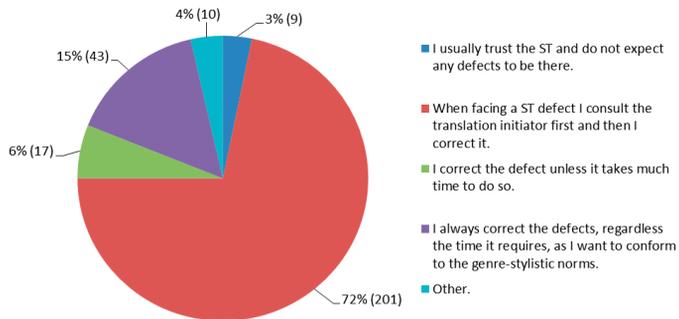
6. What source text defect has been a reason for you to contact the initiator of the translation (your client or translation agency)? You can select more than one checkbox.



7. Have you ever been asked to ameliorate a poor source text by correcting the defects?

| Answer                     | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes, it is common practice | 58        | 21%        |
| Occasionally               | 107       | 38%        |
| Never                      | 113       | 40%        |

8. How do you deal with a source text defect when translating?



9. Could you briefly describe the strategy you adopt when facing a source text defect?<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Answers to this open question are summarized in the article in section 3.

## Information about You

### 1. Are you a part-time or full-time translator?

| Answer    | Responses | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Full-time | 135       | 48%        |
| Part-time | 145       | 52%        |

### How long have you been commercially translating?

| Answer     | Responses | Percentage |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| < 1 year   | 6         | 2%         |
| < 5 years  | 15        | 5%         |
| 5–10 years | 95        | 34%        |
| > 10 years | 164       | 59%        |

### 2. Which age group do you belong to?

| Answer | Responses | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| < 20   | 0         | 0%         |
| 20–30  | 31        | 11%        |
| 30–40  | 100       | 36%        |
| 40–50  | 71        | 25%        |
| 50–60  | 49        | 18%        |
| > 60   | 29        | 10%        |

### 3. Do you have a university degree in a language-related discipline (linguistics, translation, pedagogy, etc.)?

| Answer                          | Responses | Percentage |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes, I have a master's degree   | 131       | 47%        |
| Yes, I have a bachelor's degree | 32        | 11%        |
| No, I do not                    | 227       | 42%        |

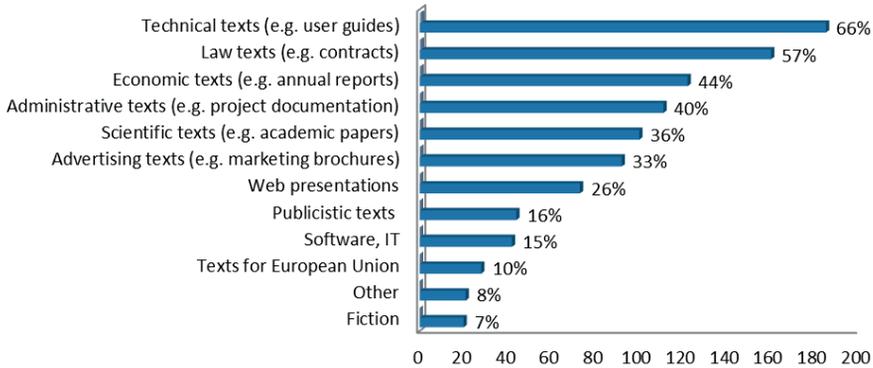
4. Do you find clients/translation jobs through translation agencies or by yourself?

| Answer                                      | Responses | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| I find clients through translation agencies | 34        | 12%        |
| I find clients by myself                    | 68        | 24%        |
| Both ways                                   | 178       | 64%        |

5. What language do you translate from? What language do you translate into?

| I usually translate from |     |       | I usually translate into |     |       |
|--------------------------|-----|-------|--------------------------|-----|-------|
| Czech                    | 115 | 41%   | Czech                    | 126 | 45,0% |
| English                  | 107 | 38%   | English                  | 79  | 28,2% |
| German                   | 62  | 22%   | German                   | 58  | 20,7% |
| Russian                  | 17  | 6%    | Russian                  | 20  | 7,1%  |
| Polish                   | 12  | 4,3%  | French                   | 15  | 5,4%  |
| French                   | 11  | 3,9%  | Spanish                  | 12  | 4,3%  |
| Spanish                  | 10  | 3,6%  | Polish                   | 12  | 4,3%  |
| Hungarian                | 7   | 2,50% | Italian                  | 11  | 3,9%  |
| Italian                  | 7   | 2,50% | Hungarian                | 9   | 3,2%  |
| Slovak                   | 5   | 1,80% | Slovak                   | 4   | 1,4%  |
| Norwegian                | 2   | 0,70% | Dutch                    | 3   | 1,1%  |
| Croatian                 | 2   | 0,70% | Japanese                 | 2   | 0,7%  |
| Swedish                  | 1   | 0,35% | Norwegian                | 1   | 0,4%  |
| Dutch                    | 1   | 0,35% | Ukrainian                | 1   | 0,4%  |

6. What text types do you most often translate? You can select more than one checkbox.



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# Source Text Quality in the Workflow of Translation Agencies

Michal Kubánek

Palacký University, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,  
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic.

Email: [michal.kubanek@upol.cz](mailto:michal.kubanek@upol.cz)

**ABSTRACT:** The paper aims to investigate the workflow in translation agencies (TAs) with respect to source text (ST) quality, which is not always optimal. Based on a review of ST related provisions of relevant quality standards, a questionnaire survey was performed among twenty-four participating Czech TAs. The results suggest that ST quality is indeed an important concern in the translation process. Even though they are analysed at the initial stage by TAs, technical issues and lower linguistic level related defects in STs are less likely to negatively affect the quality of target texts (TTs). On the other hand, terminology, understandability, and style related defects constitute problems throughout the whole process of translation, with the potential to negatively affect the quality of TTs. Therefore, more attention should be paid to these defect categories. Additional results show that the number of defect categories analysed initially is not inversely proportional to the number of TT defect categories.

**KEYWORDS:** source text quality; defects; translation agency; quality standards

## 1. Introduction

The fact that the quality of source texts (STs) which are submitted for translation is not always optimal has been recognized by scholars and researchers in the field of translation studies. To be able to deal with such texts in the process of translation, it should be recalled that texts widely differ in their nature, status, function or purpose. Discussing his set of translation methods, Newmark (1988, 45–48) distinguishes three major text categories: expressive, informative, and vocative texts. Reflecting the status of the texts' authors, the texts of the former category are also referred to as "sacred" and the texts of the latter two categories collectively as "anonymous." Expressive texts are usually translated using the semantic translation method, with the author of the text in focus, while informative and vocative texts are normally approached with the communicative translation method, with the readership as the primary factor influencing individual decisions. With respect to potential ST defects and the employment of the two major translation methods, Newmark (1988, 47) suggests: "Badly and/or inaccurately written passages must remain so in translation if they are 'expressive', although the translator should comment on any mistakes of factual or moral truth, if appropriate. Badly and/or inaccurately written passages should be 'corrected' in communicative translation."

In this respect, Neubert and Shreve (1992, 17) speak about “a unique kind of critical translation analysis” which does not compare the input of the translation process with its output, but “focuses on the source text to be translated and deals primarily with defective texts.” The authors assert that for this type of analysis the ST is not considered as inviolable, that is, as a translation entity of indisputable status, the appropriate quality of which is taken for granted. On the contrary, translators are encouraged to assess the texts critically and concentrate on their defects. These problematic issues of STs may be of various kinds but taken together, translators often have to deal with texts which in Nida’s (2001, 8) words “are difficult to comprehend because they are so badly written.”

It might be hypothesised that defects in STs are likely to impair the process of translation, having negative effects on the final product. This paper investigates the processes employed by translation agencies (TAs) relating to potential problems caused by defective STs. Although there are considerable differences among TAs, some of them being large corporations employing their own in-house translators and some being in fact sole traders who both translate and contract with other translators (see Samuelsson-Brown 2010, 18), they all function as mediators (agents) between clients (translation service buyers) and translators (translation service providers). The crucial point here is that they organize and manage the process of translation. The work of individual translators who encounter and have to deal with specific ST issues is investigated in Molnár (2013).

Protecting themselves from potential liability issues, some TAs include provisions in their general terms and conditions similar to the following which can be found on the website of STAR (2013), one of the top five translation service providers worldwide: “STAR accepts no liability for delays or deficiencies resulting from incorrect or incomplete communication of the source text or from unclear or incorrect formulations in the source text.” Furthermore, since at least some comprehension problems may be overcome through proper cooperation of translators with their clients, some TAs also include this aspect in their terms and conditions: “There is no liability for any defects which have occurred as a result of the breach of duty to cooperate by the Client, or from incorrect, incomplete, terminologically false or illegible source text” (Heppe-Smith Technical Translation 2013).

Nevertheless, as attested by a short review of their website presentations and as confirmed by the results of the survey presented in this paper, not all TAs include such provisions in their documents stipulating the terms and conditions of their services, at least not in those which are publicly accessible. And even if TAs provide for defective STs in this way, they still need to cope with them in their workflow. To help ensure higher quality and reliability of translation services and provide guidance to translation service providers (TSPs), a few quality management standards have been developed which also contain advice con-

cerning STs. In the following section, the most relevant standards are reviewed to establish a basis for the preparation and evaluation of a questionnaire which was sent to a number of Czech TAs for completion. The results are presented and discussed in the final sections of the paper.

### **1.1 Source Text Oriented Provisions in Translation Service Standards**

The practice of accrediting products and services provided by various businesses in accordance to standards has become quite widely-spread in recent years, with translation service provision being no exception: “The translation industry and profession are being swept along on the global tide of quality assurance and quality control. Many companies are now walking down the path to certification, which is seen as the best way to promote quality assurance” (Gouadec 2007, 241).

Translation service standards in their individual sections provide for various aspects of translation services, for instance, human and technical resources needed to carry out a translation task, a project and quality management system for the task’s regulation and supervision, provider-to-client relations, as well as a description of best practices for individual steps of the translation process. The following review concentrates on those stipulations which concern ST management in the broadest sense. These stipulations describe ST analysis and the assessment of available resources which are necessary to complete the translation order and regulate relations with the commissioner of the order. Most importantly, provisions concerning problems encountered in STs are presented.

#### **1.1.1 ISO 9001:2008**

Even though this standard is not specifically aimed at translation service provision, it is used in the translation industry as well since it establishes requirements for quality management systems in general. Gouadec (2007, 241) even thinks that the ISO 900X family “has now become a must for any translation company and is expected to become mandatory for all translation agencies and brokers.”

The following aspects of quality management which may be related to handling STs are promoted by the standard: proper resource management, which among other things enables adequate feasibility analysis of a commission and subsequent resource allocation; process approach, which concentrates on individual stages of service provision; recording and auditing, which allows problems in products to be traced back to their potential sources; and communication with the customers to determine their requirements, ensure continuous cooperation, and facilitate dealing with complaints (ISO 2008). All these aspects are reflected and of course elaborated in more detail in the individual standards which have been prepared specifically for translation service provision and which are described below.

### 1.1.2 EN 15038

The standard was developed and published in 2006 by the European Committee for Standardization (CEN). As a member state of the committee, the Czech Republic adopted the standard as ČSN EN 15038:2006. It officially replaced other national standards as well, namely the German DIN 2345 and Austrian ÖNORM D 1200 / D 1201 discussed below.

TSPs are required to analyse clients' enquiries to assess whether they have all the necessary resources to complete them (CEN 2006, 8; subsection 4.2). During preparation, which is one of the procedures in translation service provision, TSPs are obliged to check the STs to establish whether they comply with the initial agreements and clarify all discrepancies with the clients (CEN 2006, 9; subsection 5.3). The standard also requires that the STs are pre-processed to facilitate translation (CEN 2006, 10; subsection 5.3.2.2).

Concerning ST analysis, the standard contains Annex C which is referred to in subsection 5.3.3.1 (CEN 2006, 10). For the purpose of the present study, section c) of this Annex is most relevant since it concerns the microstructural level of textual analysis (CEN 2006, 14). At this level, attention should be paid to:

- pragmatics (presuppositions, implicatures and shared knowledge);
- grammar and syntax (grammatical cohesion, coherence, connectivity);
- lexis and semantics (lexical cohesion, terminology and phraseology);
- suprasegmentals (tone, rhyme and rhythm, alliteration, assonance, prosody, etc.).

### 1.1.3 DIN 2345

The standard was prepared by the German Terminology Standards Committee in cooperation with the Institute for Standardization (DIN; Das Deutsche Institut für Normung), primarily for the German-speaking countries, in 1998. It requires clients to provide wide-ranging support during the translation process. Depending on the nature of each individual project, this assistance may include specialist literature, terminology lists, glossaries, parallel texts, background texts, and on-site consultations (DIN 1998, 6; subsection 4.3).

Concerning the STs themselves, the standard contains a general provision which is much in line with what can be found in the terms and conditions of some TAs. It emphasises the clients' responsibility for ST correctness as well as for the solution of any defects which may be encountered:

The client is responsible for the technical and linguistic correctness of the source text. If, in the course of translating, the translator notices errors in the source text, the translator should draw the client's attention to these errors. Clarification of errors in the source text and answering

questions put by the translator are the responsibility of the client. (DIN 1998, 8; subsection 5.1)

In this standard, ST analysis includes primarily subject matter knowledge and availability of relevant terminology. Unlike the EN 15038, it is not concerned with the linguistic quality of STs (DIN 1998, 8; subsection 5.3).

#### 1.1.4 ÖNORM D 1200 / D 1201

These are two Austrian standards complementing one another drafted by the Austrian Standards Institute (ÖNORM; Österreichisches Normungsinstitut) in 2000. The D 1200 standard requires the client to submit the whole ST, or at least a representative portion of it, to the TA for a length and quality analysis, on the basis of which a quotation can be made (ÖNORM 2000a, 5; subsection 3.2.1). The D 1201 stresses the need for close cooperation between the client and the TA asking for support materials similar to the list in DIN 2345. Another similarity to the German standard can also be found with respect to translation oriented analysis of the ST since it also elaborates primarily on issues related to domain-specific information and terminology.

Concerning the liability for deficiencies in translations, the D 1201 specifies these issues in the following subsections:

Responsibility for the technical and linguistic correctness of the source text lies exclusively with the client. On principle, the client shall be liable for deficiencies resulting from the insufficient specificity in, or from the linguistic and terminological incoherence of, the source text. (ÖNORM 2000b, 2; subsection 4)

The translation of originals that are difficult to read, illegible or unintelligible, as well as the utilisation of abbreviations specific to the translation project, shall only be subject to liability for deficiencies if the service provider failed to inform the client about the existence of such circumstances. (ÖNORM 2000b, 5, subsection 14)

The former stipulation is very similar to the common liability disclaimers of TAs discussed in the introduction of this paper, but the latter provision adds one important aspect: the condition which presupposes that the TA communicates to the client all the defects encountered in the ST during the process of translation.

#### 1.1.5 CEPRES:2007

Developed by the National Council for Certification of Translation Services (CEPRES; Národní rada pro certifikaci překladatelských služeb) in the Czech Republic, the standard is based on the EN 15038 with the aim to make it more

specific and suitable for the Czech market. Like the previously discussed standards, CEPRES also requires clients to provide STs for the translation task analysis together with various support and reference materials for translation itself (CEPRES 2007, 10–11; subsections 7.2.4 and 7.2.5). Nevertheless, the standard explicitly urges TAs to refuse any translation tasks which are for any reason beyond their professional capacity (CEPRES 2007, 10; subsection 7.2.2). Also, individual translators are required to refuse orders if the nature of the ST prevents professional translation. It relates for example to complete or partial incomprehensibility of the ST which is not related to the professional competence of the translator (CEPRES 2007, 13; subsection 7.4.4.1).

The standard also maintains that clients are liable for the content of STs and the technical specifications of their media. This applies primarily to ST completeness and correctness (CEPRES 2007, 11; subsection 7.2.6).

In conclusion, all the standards reviewed above share these three requirements:

- Close cooperation between TAs and clients is necessary firstly at the point of enquiry to enable proper assessment of the task, and then also throughout the whole process of translation so that potential issues in the ST may be solved;
- TAs are required to analyse STs in order to identify potential issues;
- It is the clients' responsibility to ensure factual and linguistic correctness of STs. If target text deficiencies are caused by defects in the ST, the service provider is not liable for such issues. Still, it is advisable to inform the client about these issues in prior to the submission of the final product.

## **2. Surveying the Experience and Workflow Related to Source Texts in Translation Agencies**

As attested in the previous section, the standards related to translation service provision as well as the general terms and conditions of some TAs give prominence to ST related requirements and procedures. Based on these findings, a questionnaire survey was carried out in order to gain more insight into the actual experience and workflow adopted by Czech TAs with respect to potential issues in STs.

### **2.2 Modelling the Translation Process**

In order to facilitate the investigation of translation management in TAs, a basic model of the translation workflow (figure 1) was drafted reflecting the provisions of the relevant standards.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A more sophisticated model of the translation provision process in TAs can be found in Samuelsson-Brown (2010, 40; figure 4).

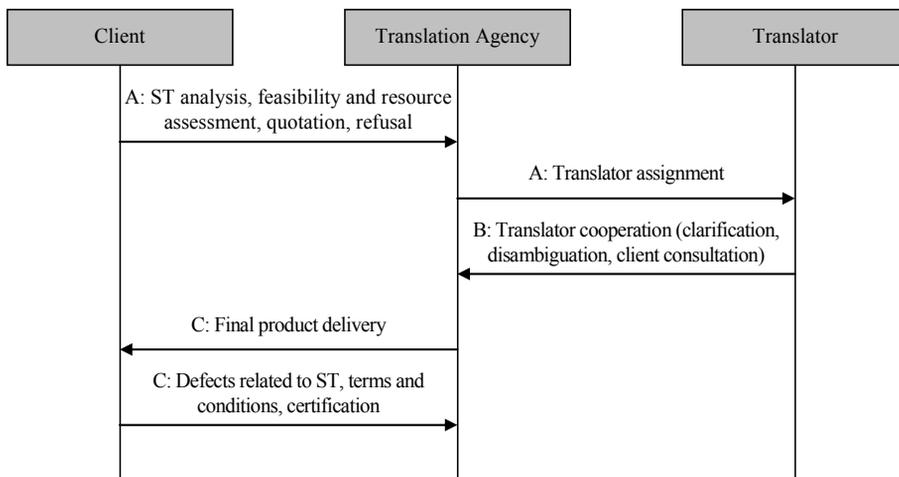


Figure 1: A simplified model of the workflow in translation service provision. Letters A, B, and C refer to the individual question groups in the survey.

Relating to the individual stages, a set of questions was prepared:

- A1: Do you analyse the quality of STs, especially with respect to possible defects?
- A2: Do you reflect ST quality in the price and deadline of translation?
- A3: Have you ever refused an order because of poor ST quality?
- B1: Do your translators contact you when facing defects in ST?
- B2: Do you provide direct contact between the translator and the customer?
- C1: Are there cases when a problem in TT is caused by a corresponding ST defect?
- C2: Do your terms and conditions explicitly exclude liability for defects related to ST quality?
- C3: Do you possess any certification that your services meet some recognized standards?

Answers to these questions were collected using a multiple-choice format with four to five response items (individual choices offered for each question are all presented in the Results section). If any of the questions A1, A3, B1, and C1 was answered in the affirmative, a follow-up question enquiring about the types of defects appeared. For example, if a participant checked that they do analyse the quality of STs (or at least some of them), the following question read: “What types of defects do you concentrate on in your analysis?” A list of potential defects was offered, this time leaving the option to tick any number of items which were considered applicable. The list had

been compiled partly on the basis of Nord (2005) and partly on the above mentioned Annex C of the EN 15038 standard (CEN 2006, 14). It included the following:

- file format and the option to extract editable text;
- graphic layout and text formatting;
- typos and spelling mistakes;
- grammar mistakes;
- terminology used, its correctness, consistency and suitability in a given domain;
- stylistic features of the text;
- cohesion, i.e. the internal textual structure;
- coherence, i.e. the logical consistency of the text;
- understandability;
- factual correctness of the textual content.

The defect categories are also presented in Molnár (2013; see this volume). The questionnaire was compiled using Google Forms and sent to one hundred TAs, out of which twenty-four responded.<sup>2</sup>

### 2.3 Research Aims

Firstly, the paper aims to find out whether TAs analyse STs as required by the standards discussed above and what types of defects they concentrate on. Since the degree to which individual defect categories impede the translation process presumably varies, it is also of interest to investigate which of them are focused on at individual stages of the translation process. More specifically, the aim is to establish whether defect categories which are most likely to make translators contact the TA or the client directly for consultations and clarifications and, as the case may be, are ultimately the causes of defects in TTs, correspond with those which are analysed in the initial stage when a commission arrives to a TA and which may constitute reasons for refusing the commission.

Secondly, the survey focuses on the managerial aspects of dealing with ST defects, attempting to quantify them. It was also hypothesized that the more attention that is devoted to ST analysis in the initial stage of the translation process, the fewer issues that should arise relating to the quality of the final product. Next, since defective STs impede a smooth translation process, more resources and greater effort on the side of the translator are required. It might therefore be supposed that the price and time quotation should reflect this.

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<sup>2</sup> Email addresses were collected by means of the Translation Agency Search feature of a translators' web portal, [www.translatorscafe.com](http://www.translatorscafe.com), as well as by listing the records in the Translation Services subsection on several Czech company search portals ([www.firmy.cz](http://www.firmy.cz), [www.zlatestranky.cz](http://www.zlatestranky.cz)).

Furthermore, if the ST defects do not allow the guarantee of a certain quality level of the translation product, the order should be refused completely. In addition, it might be expected that TAs certified in accordance to the reviewed standards analyse more defect categories and consistently reflect ST quality in their price and deadline quotations.

### 3. Results

The results of the questionnaire survey are presented in the following three subsections, corresponding to the translation model components in figure 1 (marked A, B, and C). Figure 2 summarizes the results of the four follow-up questions for A1, A3, B1, and C1 investigating what types of defects are considered most relevant.

#### 3.1 Source Text Analysis

This subsection presents the results of questions A1–A3, which are related to ST analysis, feasibility and resource assessment, quotation preparation, and the potential refusal of a commission. All STs are always analysed by fifteen participants (63%). Eight participants (33%) analyse their STs only in some cases. One TA (4%) in our survey does not analyse their STs. None of the participants used the “Other” response option to describe their own procedure. As shown in figure 2, STs are analysed primarily for defects relating to graphic layout and text formatting (20 responses), and file type and text extraction (18 responses). Lower scores were obtained for understandability (12 responses), spelling and punctuation, and terminology usage (both 11 responses). On the opposite side of the scale, factual correctness is analysed by four participants.

Concerning the reflection of ST quality in the price and deadline quoted for the clients, eleven participants (46%) take into account potential ST defects when quoting prices and deadlines, while nine participants (37.5%) do not consider these issues when preparing quotations. Out of the remaining four TAs, three (12.5%) reflect ST defects only when projecting deadlines and one (4%) only when quoting the prices.

The final question in this subsection concerns the possibility of refusing an order completely because of ST defects. None of the participants answered in the most affirmative way, i.e., that it happens time to time. The more restricted answer, i.e., that it happens only in very rare cases, was chosen by sixteen participants (67%). Seven participants (29%) claim that they never refuse orders because of poor ST quality and one (4%) used the “Other” response option, writing that they do not refuse any orders even though it would be desirable in some cases. The types of ST defects which are most likely to make TAs

refuse orders include primarily understandability problems (9 responses), which are followed by file type and text extraction issues (5 responses). On the other hand, spelling, punctuation, and grammar mistakes do not constitute reasons to refuse an order for any of the participants. Four TAs offered their own reasons beyond those included in the survey questions: in two cases the reason was ethical issues relating to the content of STs, for instance, human trafficking contracts, and in the other two it was the illegibility of (often handwritten) STs.

### 3.2 Translator Cooperation

Questions B1 and B2 relating to the cooperation and assistance provided by the TAs to their translators yielded the following results. All participating TAs state that their translators contact them when facing defects in STs (question B1). Out of the total twenty-four TAs, three (12.5%) claim that it happens only rarely, while for the remaining twenty-one TAs (87.5%) it is a common practice. Two participants also commented that they always encourage their translators to contact them whenever they feel they encounter potential issues in the STs. The most frequently consulted ST problems include terminology (19 responses) and understandability issues (17 responses). Spelling and grammar mistakes are on the other hand the least consulted issues (4 responses and 1 response respectively).

Question B2, investigating whether TAs provide direct contact between their translators and clients, yielded the following results: twelve (50%) of the TAs provide direct contact only when there is a specific problem to be solved and ten (42%) employ project managers who handle such problems and work as intermediaries in translator-client communication. One TA (4%) always provides contact information to the translators immediately at the beginning of the translation process as a part of the commission, while another (4%) claims that they never contact their clients during the process of translation.

### 3.3 TT Defects Related to ST

Question C1 investigates the possibility that a defect is discovered in a translation which has been submitted to the client as a final product and it proves to be caused by a related defect in the ST. Fourteen TAs (58%) state that it happens sometimes and six (25%) claim that it happens only rarely. Two TAs (8%) answered negatively, that is, that such cases never happen to them, and another two (8%) were not able to answer the question, choosing the “I don’t know” option. These ST related defects in TTs are most often connected with understandability (14 responses) followed by terminology, stylistic, and factual issues (11, 10, and 9 responses respectively). On the other hand, graphic layout, text formatting, and grammar mistakes in the ST are least likely to cause defects in TTs.

Concerning the provisions in the terms and conditions of the TAs relating to liability for defects in TTs caused by issues in STs (question C2), fourteen TAs (58%) have no such regulations in place. Five TAs (21%) provide for such situations in their terms and conditions while another five (21%) were not able to answer the question, choosing the “I don’t know” option. The final question (C3) investigated whether TAs hold some recognized certifications. Fourteen TAs (58%) do not possess any certifications, Eight TAs (33%) are certified to the general ISO 9001:2008 standard for quality management systems. In addition, four (16.5%) of them also hold the translation specific EN 15038 standard. One participant was not able to answer this question.

|                                 | <b>A1: ST analysis</b> | <b>A3: ST refusal</b> | <b>B1: Translator consultations</b> | <b>C1: TT defect related to ST</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| File type, text extraction      | 18                     | 5                     | 12                                  | 2                                  |
| Graphic layout, text formatting | 20                     | 2                     | 8                                   | 1                                  |
| Spelling, punctuation           | 11                     | 0                     | 4                                   | 3                                  |
| Grammar mistakes                | 6                      | 0                     | 1                                   | 1                                  |
| Terminology usage               | 11                     | 1                     | 19                                  | 11                                 |
| Stylistic features              | 8                      | 2                     | 6                                   | 10                                 |
| Cohesion                        | 6                      | 3                     | 6                                   | 3                                  |
| Coherence                       | 7                      | 3                     | 8                                   | 3                                  |
| Understandability               | 12                     | 9                     | 17                                  | 14                                 |
| Factual correctness             | 4                      | 1                     | 11                                  | 9                                  |
| Other                           | 0                      | 4                     | 1                                   | 0                                  |

Figure 2: The scores of individual defect categories as given in response to follow-up questions A1, A3, B1, and C1.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1 Defect Categories throughout the Translation Process

Concerning the correspondence between the defect categories which are analysed at the initial stage of the translation process by TAs and the defect categories which may constitute the reasons for refusing an order (figure 2,

column A1 and A3 respectively), or which may make translators contact their TAs and which are likely to be transferred to TTs (figure 2, column B1 and C1 respectively), the following observations may be made. Problems with file format and text extraction together with graphic layout and formatting, which may be considered rather technical issues, do not usually affect TT quality negatively even though they are relatively often the subject of consultations between translators and TAs. Also, these two defect categories are most often analysed at the initial stage by TAs. This finding is not surprising given that before any further analysis can be done, it is necessary to be able to access the content of the file. In addition, considering their role in the translation process, TAs are usually better equipped than individual (freelance) translators to perform ST extraction and manipulation. Since they perform these tasks in much larger volume, it is reasonable for them to employ a specialist and purchase dedicated software solutions to prepare the texts for translation.

Similar to the technical issues, spelling, punctuation, and grammar mistakes, which may be considered defects at lower linguistic levels, usually do not affect TT quality negatively to a larger extent. Still, these defect categories are included relatively often in ST analyses even though none of the participating TAs refuses orders based on these defects. In other words, it seems that translators are expected to be able to cope with these problems easily. It should be noted, however, that the performance of machine translation has been found to suffer from these issues (see, e.g., Aikawa et al. 2007).

On the other hand, the categories of terminology usage and factual correctness, which differ from the other categories in that they relate more prominently to the extralinguistic domain, scored relatively high as defects which may make translators contact their TAs as well as those which may cause troubles in TTs (terminology being the most often discussed issue). Here, translators provide a valuable service not only in ensuring the quality of the final product, but may also enhance the quality of the original text if it is still editable (e.g., a website presentation) by notifying the client about the observed defects. On the other hand, translators cannot be held liable if such defects are transferred into TTs.

While factual correctness is understandably difficult to analyse at the initial stage, as confirmed by the results, terminology usage analysis should be performed more extensively given its importance for TT quality. In addition, because a large portion of translated texts contain domain-specific technical information, translators need proper support in the form of up-to-date glossaries and other documentation, as well as the opportunity to consult these technical language matters with clients. Nevertheless, the survey results sug-

gest that direct contact between translators and clients is not a common part of the translation process.

Higher linguistic levels are represented by the categories of stylistic features, cohesion, coherence, and understandability. While defects connected with ST cohesion and coherence are not likely to negatively affect the quality of the TT, understandability and stylistic features scored relatively highly in this respect. It is a positive finding that defects related to ST understandability make TAs refuse translation commissions; nevertheless, they should be included more often in ST analyses. Given their impact on TT quality, this observation applies even more for stylistic defects.

Finally, the four reasons for commission refusal offered by TAs in the “Other” category are inspiration for future research. While issues connected with handwritten text illegibility may be subcategorized with technical issues such as file type and text extraction issues, ethical concerns related to the content and purpose of the text may constitute a new category of “Pragmatic Issues.”

#### 4.2 Quantifying the Workflow Procedures Relating to ST Defects

In this section, the relation of certain workflow procedures and the quality of the TTs is discussed. Figure 3 shows the responses of individual TAs which are relevant for this research question. The facts that almost all TAs participating in the survey include ST analysis in their workflow for at least some commissions and that a large majority of them encounter ST related defects in TTs indicate that ST quality indeed constitutes an element which plays an important role in the translation process. All four TAs which hold both the specialized translation service provision certificate EN 15038 and the more general quality management certificate ISO 9001 claim that they always analyse STs, which may be considered a positive finding because it is in line with the requirements of the standards. Nevertheless, more than one third of the TAs do not reflect ST defects in price or in deadline quotations. Moreover, refusing orders on the basis of poor ST quality seems to be rather sporadic. Certified TAs as a group do not differ significantly from the rest in these respects even though the EN 15038 standard requires the TAs to perform feasibility analyses and proper resource allocation. Here it seems that business interests in the pursuit of orders play a major role.

It was hypothesized that the more defect categories that are analysed in STs, the fewer defect categories that are encountered in TTs. For this purpose, a comparison was made between the number of defect categories analysed in STs (column 3 in figure 3) with the number of defect categories which were reported to appear in TTs (column 8 in figure 3). The two TAs which were

not able to answer the question relating to TT defects, choosing the “I don’t know” option, are excluded from the comparison. The correlation between the values of the two columns ( $\text{corr} = .05$ ) does not support the hypothesis. The number of defect categories analysed in STs is not inversely proportional to the number of defect categories which are encountered in TTs. It does not, however, reveal anything about the actual number of defects within each of the categories.

Concerning the relation between certification to quality management standards (specifically the EN 15038) and certain ST related procedures, the hypothesis that certified TAs (column 1 in figure 3) include higher number of defect categories in their initial ST analysis (column 3 in figure 3) was not proved. The four EN 15038 certified TAs analyse two to four defect categories, while the average for the remaining twenty TAs is 4.6 defect categories. It is, nevertheless, a positive finding that all four certified TAs claim that they always analyse STs, which is one of the requirements included in the standard. They are also aware of potential ST related defects in TTs since three of them include specific provisions on this issue in their terms and conditions. The proportion among the remaining TAs is much lower (two out of fifteen who were able to answer this question). On the other hand, the EN 15038 certified TAs are not consistent in reflecting ST quality in price and deadline quotation or in the option of refusing an order. Here it should be noted that proper feasibility assessment and resource allocation is also required by the standard.

Finally, some of the participating TAs also provided several comments relating to ST quality. Two TAs commented on the illegibility of STs, especially when they are scanned or even provided in handwriting. Another two TAs added problematic extraction of editable text from certain file formats (PDF, XLS), particularly when they are password-protected. These are all rather technical issues not related to the quality of the textual content as such, which is at the heart of the critical remarks of the scholars and researchers quoted in the introductory section of this paper. Nevertheless, given the requirements of CAT tools which are commonly used in the translation process today, they may also significantly hinder the translation process. One TA reported that texts which are themselves already translations as most problematic. In their experience, these texts often exhibit issues related to all surveyed defect categories. Indeed, the volume of translations produced from previously translated texts is likely to be on the rise given the economic considerations involved. It is usually cheaper to translate a text into a pivot language first (which is very often English) and then produce individual translations in the required target languages, especially when minor languages are involved.

| <b>1: Certifications</b>         | <b>2: ST analysis</b> | <b>3: #</b> | <b>4: Quotation</b> | <b>5: Order refusal</b> | <b>6: #</b> | <b>7: ST related TT defects</b> | <b>8: #</b> | <b>9: TT defect liability provisions</b> |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------|--|
| EN 15038 + ISO 9001              | Always                | 2           | Price / deadline    | Rare                    | 3           | Yes                             | 2           | No                                       |
| EN 15038 + ISO 9001              | Always                | 4           | None                | Never                   | 0           | Yes                             | 3           | Yes                                      |
| EN 15038 + ISO 9001              | Always                | 3           | Deadline            | Rare                    | 1           | Yes                             | 1           | Yes                                      |
| EN 15038 + ISO 9001              | Always                | 2           | None                | Rare                    | 1           | Rare                            | 3           | Yes                                      |
| ISO 9001                         | Some                  | 3           | None                | Rare                    | 1           | Yes                             | 3           | No                                       |
| ISO 9001                         | Always                | 8           | Price / deadline    | Rare                    | 1           | Rare                            | 2           | I don't know                             |
| ISO 9001                         | Some                  | 7           | None                | Rare                    | 1           | Never                           | 0           | No                                       |
| ISO 9001                         | Always                | 5           | None                | Rare                    | 3           | Yes                             | 6           | No                                       |
| Implementing EN 15038 + ISO 9001 | Some                  | 7           | Price / deadline    | Never                   | 0           | Yes                             | 5           | No                                       |
| None                             | Always                | 7           | Price / deadline    | Never                   | 0           | Rare                            | 1           | No                                       |
| None                             | Always                | 2           | None                | Rare                    | 3           | Yes                             | 2           | No                                       |
| None                             | Always                | 3           | Price               | Rare                    | 4           | Yes                             | 5           | I don't know                             |
| None                             | Always                | 3           | Price / deadline    | Never                   | 0           | Yes                             | 4           | Yes                                      |
| None                             | Some                  | 1           | None                | Rare                    | 1           | Rare                            | 1           | No                                       |
| None                             | Always                | 9           | Deadline            | Rare                    | 1           | I don't know                    | 0           | I don't know                             |
| None                             | Always                | 5           | Price / deadline    | Never                   | 0           | Rare                            | 1           | No                                       |
| None                             | Some                  | 5           | Price / deadline    | Rare                    | 2           | Yes                             | 1           | No                                       |
| None                             | Never                 | 0           | None                | Never                   | 0           | Rare                            | 1           | No                                       |
| None                             | Some                  | 3           | Price / deadline    | Rare                    | 2           | Yes                             | 2           | Yes                                      |
| None                             | Always                | 1           | None                | Never                   | 0           | Never                           | 3           | No                                       |

|              |        |   |                     |       |   |                 |   |              |
|--------------|--------|---|---------------------|-------|---|-----------------|---|--------------|
| None         | Some   | 9 | Price /<br>deadline | Rare  | 4 | I don't<br>know | 0 | No           |
| None         | Always | 3 | Price /<br>deadline | Never | 0 | Yes             | 4 | I don't know |
| None         | Always | 6 | Deadline            | Rare  | 1 | Yes             | 4 | No           |
| I don't know | Some   | 5 | Price /<br>deadline | Rare  | 2 | Yes             | 3 | I don't know |

Figure 3: Responses of individual TAs: column 1: certification to quality standards (question C3); column 2 and 3: ST analysis and the number of analysed defect categories (question A1); column 4: ST quality reflection in quotation (question A2); column 5 and 6: potentiality of order refusal and the number of defects constituting grounds for refusal (question A3); column 7 and 8: defects in TTs which are related to defects in STs (question C1); column 9: terms and conditions-based exclusion of liability for TT defects related to ST defects (question C2).

## 5. Conclusion

The survey indicates that ST related quality issues do constitute an important element in the workflow of the participating TAs. The majority of them analyse STs for defects, which corresponds with the requirements stipulated in the relevant quality standards. In their analyses, TAs concentrate primarily on technical issues and lower-level linguistic issues. More attention should be paid to the analysis of understandability and especially stylistic features of STs. Here, the call for clarity and consistency in ST writing is justified. Also, since defects related to the usage of terminology proved to be the most often discussed issues, communication and cooperation with clients should be supported and made more direct.

Regarding the quantifiable relation between the number of defect categories analysed in STs and the number of defect categories encountered in TTs, the results do not show any correlation. This is, nevertheless, difficult to interpret straightforwardly since the survey is not concerned with the actual quantity of defects within each category. Certified TAs as a group analyse ST defects, even though not in significantly more categories compared to the non-certified TAs. They also do not show any consistency in the reflection of ST quality in price and deadline quotations. On the other hand, they seem to be aware of the potential troubles connected with ST related defects in TTs and provide for them in their terms and conditions.

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# Exploring Legitimation-seeking Text-building Strategies in Book Back-cover Descriptions in the Context of Translativity

Renata Kamenická

Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts, Department of English and American Studies,  
A. Nováka 1, 602 00 Brno, Czech Republic.

Email: kamenick@phil.muni.cz

**ABSTRACT:** Inspired by investigations into lexical choices in translation versus non-translation, this paper presents a rationale for studying the text on the back-covers of translated and non-translated books within a comparative framework. A cross-legitimation hypothesis was formulated to explain previous findings and was tested with the back-cover texts: translations seek to legitimize themselves on the market by referring to the norm (at the level of choice) assumed with non-translations and vice versa. We could not confirm the cross-legitimation hypothesis with the material we focused on in this study. However, this failure is discussed taking into account factors which may have restricted the operation of translativity in this context, namely the limited awareness of target recipients of the tension between domestic and source language cultural norms assumed by the research, which may benefit future research into translativity and/or back-cover paratexts.

**KEYWORDS:** book back-covers; translativity; paratexts; translation; non-translation; cross-legitimation hypothesis; review quotes

## 1. Introduction

Inspired by investigations into lexical choices in translation versus non-translation, this paper presents a study in the textuality of back-cover descriptions of translated and non-translated books. We aimed to explore how low-level (microtextual) decisions that shape the translation or non-translation as a product competing for attention in the targeted market in a particular language culture are governed by high-level (macrotextual) decisions. Special attention was paid to potential signs of the dynamic operation of translativity regarding translations and non-translations as suggested previously by Březinová (2012).

## 2. Motivation from Previous Research

In her 2012 diploma thesis, Jana Březinová presented a corpus study of original and localized Czech manuals for software programs. Their main focus was on lexical and syntactic choices between variants marked with interference and loan-words on the one hand and their domestic counterparts on the other among references typical of the genre. The author was responding to a study by Hoffmanová and Šimandl (2008) of texts translated into Czech in EU in-

stitutions. Hoffmanová and Šimandl (2008) found a marked preference for domestic synonyms over synonymous loan-words, which they refer to as “the new purism.” In agreement with them, Březinová’s research confirmed a consistent preference for domestic synonyms over loan-words in localized manuals. However, thanks to the research design enabling comparisons between translated and non-translated texts, she was also able to identify an equally strong tendency to use loan-word variants in original Czech manuals.

The choices at the core of Březinová’s thesis were syntactic noun- versus verb-based ones such as *klepnutím/klepněte* (by a click/click [imperative]), *stisknutím/stiskněte* (by pressing/press), *zaškrtnutím/zaškrtněte* (by a tick off/tick off); or *IP adresa/adresa IP* and lexical ones such as *kliknout/klepnout* (for click), *konvertovat/převést* (for convert), *lokální/místní* (for local), *manuální/ruční* (for manual), *menu/nabídka* (for menu) (and their noun counterparts). Her study revealed a consistent set of tendencies skewed significantly in favour of the loan variants in original Czech manuals and in favour of the domestic variants in localized Czech variants.<sup>1</sup>

The tendency for high concentrations of domestic lexical and syntactic choices in translated texts—considered alone—can be explained by the effort of the translators to avoid too much SL influence, i.e. by indirect influence of the source language and text. However, the coexistence of *both* choice patterns calls for a more comprehensive explanation.

The dynamic operation of translativity offers a potential explanation for this phenomenon: one may assume that the choices by the authors of original Czech manuals sought to endow the texts with the high status attributed to (translated) manuals for globally distributed software (the assumption being that these localizations are characterized by loan variants). The translators, on the other hand, strove to legitimize their texts (and thereby the software products) by domestic choices (assuming that user-friendly lexis and syntax in quality manuals accompanying high-status products are both desired and favoured by users). The observed symmetrical complementarity led us to hypothesize that in both textual modalities—translation and non-translation—assumptions about how the in/visibility of elements of foreign provenance would be received by the users of the products were active in shaping the actual linguistic make-up of the texts and creating the desired illusion (Gouanvic’s [2010] *illusion*; Levý’s [2012, 39–40] *illusionistic translation*). The findings indicate that the translators sought to legitimize their translations as quality manuals to quality products by resisting the direct influence of source texts and opting for lexical choices they believed to characterize good Czech writing in the same genre. Meanwhile, the authors of the Czech manuals to Czech products, working without a physical source text or model, sought

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1 Characterizing Březinová’s thesis as focusing only on lexical and syntactic choices is an oversimplification. It also contains, for instance, an interesting chapter on the use of lists and list formats in original and localized manuals.

to legitimize their texts by adhering to lexical choices they believed to be typical of translated manuals to popular international products of renowned brands. In the text below, I will thus refer to this model/hypothesis of motivation of textual choices as ‘pursuit of complementary textual legitimation’.

Even though the thesis by Březinová remains empirical and does not seek to formulate general hypotheses, her findings, interpretable on the basis of pursuit of complementary textual legitimation, invite the question whether there are other types of texts and levels of translated and non-translated discourse where complementary patterns of choices arise due to the dynamic operation of translativity. This paper investigates such a dynamic of operation in legitimation strategies by exploring the textuality of back covers of translated and non-translated books.

### 3. Translativity

Popovič’s (1975) understanding of translativity as a translational phenomenon that involves tension (and the recipients’ being or not being aware of it) between the domestic and the foreign culture in the translation can be used as an initial introduction of the concept. According to him, this tension primarily concerns the extratextual and textual ontology of the translation/work, “colouring” it at the level of style (Popovič 1975, 31).

International translation studies discourse has however preferred related but qualitatively different concepts such as ‘domestication’/‘foreignisation’ (Venuti [1995] and others) or ‘adequacy’/‘acceptability’ (Toury [1995] and others) or, occasionally, ‘translatedness’. While these are treated as either-or choices (the two concept pairs) or a feature undesirable but close to inevitable in translated texts (translatedness), translativity in Levý’s and Popovič’s understanding is preferable as a higher-level concept, as Jettmarová (2012, 75) significantly points out. It moves the discourse on translation from perpetuating dichotomic dilemmas to using the exceptional explanatory power of a single concept. As the description based on Popovič makes clear, translativity brings together textual and extratextual as well as source culture and target culture factors, with emphasis on those of the target culture.

Jettmarová (2012, 80–81) rephrases Levý’s interpretation of translativity as “an inherent quality of any translation, conceived as a dynamic relationship between the author of the original and the receiver, with its salience on the thematic and/or linguistic level depending on contextual factors and human agents involved in the communicative act.” The word ‘dynamic’ needs to be underscored here: the perceived salience of translativity in a particular text will change with time due to the changing relationship between the two cultures involved as well as due to specific dispositions of individual readers.

Translativity, a concept originating in the Czech and Slovak structuralist tradition of translation studies, is thus one whose very nature bridges the “gap” in-

ternational translation studies, with its conceptual apparatus, has “constructed” between linguistic and sociological/cultural factors relevant to translation. The nature of the concept is complex in that it can simultaneously be viewed as a quality of specific translations (whose salience can be situated on a continuum between low and high translativity) and a normative force, with a narrower or broader scope, relating to the evolutionary continuum in the domestic genre or literature and target culture values. It is a consequence of the latter facet of translativity that it, i.e. its salience, may become an aesthetic value (Levý 2012, 90).

#### 4. Preliminary Considerations

Exploring the operation of translativity and related text legitimation strategies by examining book back-cover texts, and looking at the selection of types of material included as well as modes of presentation offers several benefits. Firstly, extending the inquiry into domestic versus loan-word lexical choices to other types of texts where similar selection preferences might be expected, would be a logical broadening of the research described above.<sup>2</sup> The decision to deal with patterns informing the textuality of back-covers takes us to where the decisions are not a matter of lexical choice but occur at higher levels. If we can confirm the hypothesis that text legitimation strategies used in translations and non-translations follow a pattern (which might be described as mutually supportive legitimation and explained within the translativity framework), the discussion of the operation of translativity could draw on qualitatively different evidence, thereby strengthening the hypothesis. The decision to address the textuality of book back-covers with this stronger hypothesis in view, however, risks frustrating the expectations of translativity-related legitimation strategies.

Secondly, the nature of the material excludes the possibility that the observed patterns might be influenced by a translation memory or style guide, a factor that could not be ruled out in the case of software manuals, assuming that a variety of publishers are represented in the samples. The third advantage of the present choice of material is that the complementary legitimation-seeking patterns, if they prove to exist, would not be based on the decisions of individual translators. Rather, they would be the result of the more or less coordinated decision-making of whole teams of people involved in preparing the translated or non-translated product for the market or people involved in the process apart from the translator *per se*. Such complementary legitimation patterns would thus be indicative of what happens in translation, signifying a wider concept of culturally embedded prac-

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2 Matějková's non-diploma Master's thesis focused on the distribution of loan word versus domestic lexical choices in original Czech medical articles and a comparable set of articles translated from English and German. Patterns observed by Březinová (2012) were not confirmed in the study.

tices rather than translation signifying a language transfer process undertaken by a translator or a group of translators to create the target text of the manual.

## 5. Methodology and Material

The shift from lexical choices to choices at the level of paratextual back-cover material required a new operationalization of the distinction between the “domestic” and the “borrowed” variants with roots in the source language-culture. This proved to be relatively easy as the back-cover variants low in translativity could be associated with the relatively simple and low-key solutions used in Czech book culture before the socio-economic turning point of 1989. Back-cover variants high in translativity would be, on the other hand, typically richer in content and consist of more types of material, echoing the trend in the book culture of English-speaking countries.

### 5.1 Reference Sample

To evidence this distinction, a sample of back covers of original Czech early post-1989 fiction (covering the period 1989–1995) was examined for occurrence and combinations of paratextual material. The years immediately following rather than preceding 1989 were sampled because book production, especially within the fiction sector, was much scarcer before 1989 and putting together a representative pre-1989 sample would have been very difficult. The period shortly after 1989, on the other hand, witnessed a boom, with many previously unpublishable books appearing in print while book production values were slower to change. The books included were first editions as well as new editions of classics (by Karolina Světlá or Vladislav Vančura). Even the 1989–1995 sample, however, was not very easy to put together, especially because with some of the hardback items, which otherwise met the inclusion criteria, there was no indication whether a sleeve possibly containing back cover material had been taken off before the book was included in the library stock or whether there was no sleeve at all.

The sample (of three dozen back-covers) shows very clearly that the standard early post-1989 solution was a blank cover without any text or striking graphic features, mostly just echoing the colour scheme or simple graphic pattern from the front page. The exceptions which did feature textual or photo material, amounting to one third of the sample, were more likely to be of the whodunit or suspense genre rather than other genres (e.g. *Symbol zůstal mramorový*, Anna Sedlmayerová, 1989; *Zlodějina*, Zuzana Brabcová, 1995; *Cizí tvář v mém zrcadle*, Ilona Borská, 1995; *Až ti zastřelí bráchu*, Václav Bartuška, 1995) and also tended to be published towards the end of the sampled period rather than at its beginning (most of the above and *Deník aneb Smrt režiséra I*, Igor Chaun,

1995; *Mně třináct*, Filip Topol, 1994). These back covers typically included one type of material rather than combinations of material: a short book description, a book description with a hint of evaluation taken from a review, an outline of the beginning of the plot, a text sample from the book, or a short list of other books in the same series. The back cover which stood out most conspicuously in the sample was the one to Filip Topol's 1994 novella *Mně třináct* which features as many as three types of material: the author's photograph, a brief bionote, starting off with an original "surprisingly still alive" following the author's name, and a medium-sized quotation from a review by Jiřina Dolejší.

The other reference sample, to gauge what back covers high in translatability may look like, included fifty back covers to contemporary English fiction. The sample was split evenly between books classified in the library catalogues as British and American (25 items each). The books in both the reference samples were selected from the catalogue of the Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno. Children's books and poetry were not included.

Since the textuality of the back covers to fiction in English was much richer than that of their Czech counterparts, a system of classification of the material had to be developed. Each sample item was documented for easy future access (the front cover and back cover were photographed) and described using a set of classifiers. Firstly, the presence of text and striking graphic features (other than just colour or a fine pattern) on the back cover was recorded. Textual material was classified into several categories: *bionote/information about the author*, *book description*, *text sample* (each of the above being sub-divided into *short*, *medium and long*) and *review quotes* (by number thereof). The items were also marked for text combining several of the above categories—such as a paragraph merging information about the author with information about the book. Within the graphic features category it was recorded whether the book cover included any, and if so whether they were graphic features spilling over from the front page (such as illustrations) or photographs (of the author or something else). Other types of features occasionally present and recorded were advertising elements (such as the address of the author's or publisher's website or pictures or a list of other books by the author/publisher/in the series) or literary prizes the book won or was nominated for. Any other relevant information not covered by classifications within these categories was recorded in the form of a note.

Book covers to British and American books most often featured several types of material, which sharply distinguished them from the older Czech norm: none of the books had a back cover without any text or graphic features and it was extremely rare for them to contain one type of material only. This happened in two cases out of fifty when only one type of textual material was included. The number of types of material varied between one and six (including minor items such as a reference to the website of the author). The average number of types

of back-cover material was 3.24 including the minor items and 3.04 excluding them. Most importantly, all of the back covers in this sample included some text. They were, in order of frequency with which the individual types of text occurred: praise from reviews (44 book covers in 50); book description (36/50); information about the author (8/50); and text sample (3/50). Book prizes and book prize nominations were mentioned on seven book covers but they should be considered as a separate category as their status is somewhat different from the remaining types of textual material; their inclusion was clearly less of a free choice of the publisher, being mostly affected by the fact whether the book was awarded or nominated or not.

In agreement with common knowledge, the “Praise for . . .” section is the feature which most clearly marks the difference between English back covers and the 1980s Czech norm. Not only is this section virtually missing from the Czech sample, but this type of material also dominates its English counterpart—both in terms of frequency of occurrence (44 back covers out of 50) and by virtue of its overall share of total text. The number of—usually short—quotes from the reviews ranged between one and seven; the average number of the quotes where they were included was 3.2 per book. Brevity is an important feature of these quotes: the inclusion of a single one usually does not mean that the quote is longer than most in a series. The quotes are signed with the name of the author of the review, the name of the periodical or a combination of both. What also stands out as a format specific to fiction back covers in English and is closely related to the “Praise for . . .” section is the order in which the material is typically presented: the back cover often opens with one review quote (occasionally preceded by prizes awarded or prize nominations), followed by a description of the book after which more quotes from reviews are listed. The author’s bionote, if any, usually follows the last of the quotes from reviews. In other back covers, however, review quotes are listed in a single series.

The importance of the “Praise for . . .” section in back covers in English calls for a closer examination of its counterparts in Czech. Merely stating that the section is missing in the traditional Czech norm would not fully account for what interests us. A typical review quote appears on only one Czech back cover (*Mně třináct*, Filip Topol, 1994), and the fact that the book is from the end of the period sampled when the norm was likely to start changing might be relevant here. But there is more. The most frequently represented type of back-cover paratext in the sample was a book description (16.7%; 6/36), followed by a text sample (5.6%; 2/36). A closer look however reveals that the Czech book descriptions are often mixed-type texts, in that they not only give some hints about the plot but also contain traces of evaluation and some features bringing them close to book reviews (e.g. the back cover to Radoslav Nenadál’s *Tudy chodil K.*, 1992, or to Anna Sedlmayerová’s *Symbol zůstal mramorový*, 1989), even though they are

not signed with a name or attributed to a periodical. There are also back cover texts which are book descriptions by virtue of their length and content but are nevertheless attributed to a particular author (as is the case with the text on the back cover of *Morčata* by Ludvík Vaculík, 1991). The text on the back cover of *Deník aneb Smrt režiséra* by Igor Chaun (1995) fully blends the features of book description and review quote by virtue of its ambiguous length and descriptive content on the one hand, and presentation within inverted commas and attribution to a source (E R M) on the other. In contrast to this, the book descriptions found in the English sample were unambiguous text types.

The reference sample only focused on fiction because attempts at collecting a non-fiction reference sample were thwarted by difficulties concerning its Czech as well as English component. Most importantly, the libraries available in the Czech Republic were not able to provide a sufficient number of non-fiction books in English compared to the translated and non-translated Czech samples, especially in terms of targeted audience. The non-fiction in English bought by these libraries is usually much more specialized than the largely popular fiction included in the Czech samples. Besides this, putting together a large enough and yet compact enough non-fiction sample in Czech covering the pre-1989 or early post-1989 period comparable with more recent samples would also have been very difficult. The books looked at however also indicated a trend towards low-key back covers featuring one type of material, if any, in the Czech component compared with a trend towards greater profusion of text and graphic features in the English component.

## 5.2 Back Covers to Translations and Non-translations

The material used for the core comparison in this study included book covers of both literary fiction and non-fiction. In each of the two categories, the samples consisted of back-covers of fifty translations and fifty non-translations. The samples were based on books from the holdings of the libraries of the Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Social Sciences, Masaryk University, Brno. The idea behind the sampling was to make the distribution of books across the range of publishers representative of the current market. To get as faithful a picture of current practice on the book market as possible, sampling was done by focusing on ten major publishers in the particular market segment where possible (original Czech fiction, fiction translated from English, original Czech non-fiction in the humanities; non-fiction in the humanities translated from English), each represented by five books. Exceptions were made for book availability. Another inclusion criterion was the date of publication of the book items. Recently published books were preferred to older ones. In no case was a book older than 2000 included; most of the books were published between 2010 and 2013.

Even though the same sampling method regarding publishers would have been preferable for the reference sample in English, it was not feasible due to the books having been preselected by the libraries. This pre-selection, based on the diverse needs of various university departments, was nevertheless considered as a sufficient means of selecting publications containing back-cover material representative of the selection on the market in English books.

## 6. Results

If the trends observed by Březinová (2012) in her study of lexical choices in Czech software manuals and software manual translations manifested themselves in back-cover paratextual choice, this would mean that back covers of translated books would tend to prefer what was identified as the traditional domestic norm, thereby legitimizing the translations on the Czech market. Books by Czech authors would, in contrast, readily adopt back-cover paratextual strategies identified as typical of the books in English, thus legitimizing them as part of the bigger market in “world literature” or the body of knowledge relevant in the international context.

The basic figures obtained for fiction and non-fiction are summarized in tables 1 and 2.

|                  | Text | Author info                 | Book description | Review quotes | Graphic features | Photo material | Adverts | No. of features             |
|------------------|------|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|---------|-----------------------------|
| Non-translations | 30   | 7                           | 18               | 1             | 28               | 5              | 6       | 1.42<br>(1.34) <sup>1</sup> |
| Translations     | 37   | 7<br>(3 of them very brief) | 19               | 9             | 32               | 4              | 17      | 1.72<br>(1.52)              |

Table 1: Back-covers—fiction (the figures state the number of items from a sample of 50 containing the feature).

|                  | Text | Author info | Book description | Review quotes | Graphic features | Photo material | Adverts | No. of features |
|------------------|------|-------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| Non-translations | 39   | 12          | 32               | 1             | 27               | 14             | 5       | 1.66<br>(1.64)  |
| Translations     | 37   | 10          | 30               | 3             | 29               | 4              | 14      | 1.82<br>(1.66)  |

Table 2: Back-covers—non-fiction (the figures state the number of items from a sample of 50 containing the feature).

The figures concerning the *number of features* as well as the other figures in the tables refute the cross-legitimation hypothesis with regard to back-cover material. For both fiction and non-fiction the *number of features* was greater with

translations and, along with the other figures, this contradicts rather than supports the hypothesis. Overall, there was more divergence between translated and non-translated books with fiction than non-fiction.

In fiction, non-translations have not yet broken with the domestic tradition of not necessarily presenting any textual material on the back cover. Only 30 out of 50 book covers of non-translations contained text, while the number of back covers with text in the translation sample was higher (37), between the domestic norm and the norm in the English-language market (where all 50 fiction book covers contained text). The difference in inclusion of quotes from reviews, a marked feature in back covers of books in English, is another tendency confirming the association between translations and back covers in English in contrast to what the cross-legitimation hypothesis would suggest. The nine (often multiple) review quotes found on back covers of translated fiction confirm the influence of the packaging of fiction available on the English book market on back covers of translations into Czech.

So too in non-fiction, there is nothing which would confirm the cross-legitimation hypothesis with sufficient force. The differences in inclusion of textual and other material are too small to be regarded as support for the hypothesis even where inclusion of individual types of material was slightly higher with non-translations. The overall averages of the types of material included again show translations are under the influence of norms in the English-language market rather than vice versa.

Even though the cross-legitimation hypothesis has been refuted, the information about back-cover material may be interesting in its own right. One of the things that has already been mentioned is that in non-fiction, back covers of translations and non-translations are less dissimilar than in fiction. This is achieved by virtue of inclusion of review quotations, which are less important as a feature in the non-fiction category in general, and inclusion of text, which is generally more common.

The salient distinguishing feature between the two samples of non-fiction is the inclusion of a graphic feature (illustration) or some photo material, which is surprisingly more frequent with non-translations (14 compared to 4). Such a difference, perhaps interpretable as a tendency towards graphic illustrativeness, easier to achieve with domestic material, is not found in fiction. The fourteen instances are relatively evenly distributed between five sets of photographs illustrating the subject-matter, four illustrations distinct from the graphics on the front cover, and five photographs of the author. Combinations of these options did not occur.

Another salient tendency was that back covers to translations rather than non-translations contained some advertising features. These included typically the address of the publisher's website but in some instances also pictures of back

covers of other books by the publisher or a list of other books by the publisher. That this is due to simple direct influence of the norm on the English book market does not seem very likely. A similar number of fiction back-covers (17 out of 50) contained some advertising, an occasional reference to the author's website being an added variant, as this type of material is short (a web address) and therefore easily adopted by a publisher publishing non-translated books. For some reason however back covers of non-translations only rarely contain this feature (see table 3 below).

What also had to be checked was that the tendency for translation back covers to contain advertising elements was not skewed by their use by isolated publishers, while a majority did not use any advertising elements on their back covers. Although there were publishers—like BB Art, a multi-genre publisher—who happened to be covered in all four samples and adopted this advertising option across the range of categories, this was not typical. Table 3 below shows the distribution of advertising elements by publishers and confirms that a majority of *publishers* represented in the samples used advertising elements in the category of translations (75% and 54%), while this was not true of publishers in the non-translation category.<sup>3</sup>

|             |                  | Advertising<br>(out of 50) | Publishers who<br>DID use adver-<br>tising | Publishers who<br>DID NOT<br>use advertising | Publishers<br>total |
|-------------|------------------|----------------------------|--|--|---------------------|
| Fiction     | Non-translations | 6<br>(12%)                 | 5<br>(17%)                                 | 24<br>(83%)                                  | 29                  |
|             | Translations     | 17<br>(34%)                | 9<br>(75%)                                 | 3<br>(25%)                                   | 12                  |
| Non-fiction | Non-translations | 5<br>(10%)                 | 4<br>(24%)                                 | 13<br>(76%)                                  | 17                  |
|             | Translations     | 14<br>(28%)                | 7<br>(54%)                                 | 6<br>(46%)                                   | 13                  |

Table 3: Advertising elements by publishers.

Even though this study did not compare translation back covers with back covers of the source texts, it is clear that a simple direct dependence between a particular ST back cover and a TT back cover is not common. The direct

3 When a publisher represented by several books used an advertising element in one/some back cover/s only, it was counted as a publisher who did use advertising. The varying numbers of publishers in the individual categories, which are higher for non-translations, are due to the fact that more publishers with fewer books had to be included to cover the domestic market (with non-translations).

influence that we observe (in the sense of refutation of the cross-legitimation hypothesis) must have originated in a more complex way. While it is difficult to see why publishers should find it less desirable to advertise their websites and books with domestic literature, this is what we observe. If the numerous factors (fiction vs. non-fiction, translation vs. non-translation, advertising of a publisher on all vs. only on some back covers in the samples, its distribution with respect to the previous factors, year of publication) are taken into account, the situation is very complex and hard to characterize. This degree of complexity, arising from individual decisions and resulting in the overall tendency as a statistical fact rather than as a product of clear-cut causality, can be demonstrated using an example. The major publisher of non-fiction, Lidové noviny, was represented by five items each in the translation and non-translation categories. Contrary to the overall tendency, none of the items in the translation category contained any advertising elements; there were two back covers (from 2009 and 2011) in the non-translation category which featured the publisher's website information and three back covers which did not (from 2008, 2011 and 2013). Explaining this set of decisions alone is hardly possible (it is clear that the publisher did not start using the advertising element at a certain time) and the overall tendency probably has to be accepted as a fact. A very tentative explanatory hypothesis might be that in the more competitive market with translations, publishers are more likely to use every opportunity to increase their chances of sales success.

Given what has been said above, let us return once more to the phenomenon of review quotes, at the level of back cover "syntax"—i.e. combinations and ordering of material. This is a level offering potential for translativity to lead to creolization (rather than exoticization or naturalization). While the number of review quotes on a single back cover in English (fiction) ranged between one and seven, the ranges for translated fiction and non-fiction were one to five and one to four respectively. The most interesting sample in this regard were translations of fiction: the nine back covers where review quotes were used were by four publishers, Argo (3), Host (2), Jota (2), and Paseka (2), out of a total of twelve. It is worth noting that three of these publishers were among those who used advertising elements. Elements reminding the reader of the foreign context thus tend to be used by some publishers more than others. A search for the features (one leading quote plus a series of other quotes, highlighting the quotes by using a different colour, drawing attention to the authority of the source, i.e. media source and/or author,) typical of review quotes on back covers in English revealed the following: The one plus a series of review quotes layout does not occur on Czech back-covers. Unlike English back-covers, when the Czech ones do use review quotes, they do not combine them with other text. This did not happen in the fiction sample and there

was one occurrence among the non-literary translations. The review quotes were similarly short as in the English, and in two cases (Host, Paseka) the format included highlighting the sources in a fashion similar to the English. Particularly interesting was the case of *Nepřítel, přítel, ctitel, milenec, manžel* (*Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage*) by Alice Munro (Paseka). Moreover, the highlighted sources, marked with a high degree of translativity, were respected Czech ones (Jan Rejžek, *Respekt*; Klára Kolinská, *iliteratura.cz*; Hana Ulmanová, *MF Dnes*)—which resulted in an interesting creolizing sequence of material. Another back cover, to the Czech translation of Updike's *The Widows of Eastwick* (*Vdovy z Eastwicku*, Paseka) is special in that it combines several quotes from Czech sources with a final one by John Banville. The single back cover with review quotes (two) in the sample of non-translated fiction, of *Radostné bezdomovectví Krlíčka a jeho přítel* by M. Kepka (Kalich), was not a creolizing paratext though, as the reviews are significantly longer than is common on English back covers and play the role of a book description as we have seen in the early post-1989 Czech reference sample.

## 7. Discussion

Even though the cross-legitimation hypothesis which seemed to explain the domestic versus loan-word lexical choices in software manuals and translations of software manuals explored by Březinová (2012) was not confirmed with the qualitatively different paratextual material on book back covers, the exploration may be seen as valuable in several respects. One of them is the formulation of the hypothesis itself. Should the hypothesis prove true for a range of choices and texts beyond those explored by Březinová, it would put the operation of translativity in a new light. This would shift considerations of translativity from a phenomenon underlying choice in translations (or pseudotranslations) to a phenomenon pertaining to choice in texts which do not necessarily claim the status of a translation. This is, again, a qualitatively important shift because it puts translation as a phenomenon into an active role. Translation becomes something more than just a kind of textual transformation occurring alongside original writing, with some specific rules of its own, going beyond the ways in which translation has been envisaged as important so far (“all writing is translation etc.”). The hypothesis posits translation as an influence reaching beyond its own domain.

The hypothesis being refuted at the level of back-cover material choice and not being confirmed with lexical choices in medical papers explored by Matějková (2013) calls for an explanation. The failure to confirm the hypothesis with lexical choice in a different type of text may seem particularly disappointing, but is not necessarily a reason to discard the hypothesis as such.

The significant difference between the two types of material may be a lack of *tension*, a concept crucial to the definition of translativity (see above in the reference to Popovič), between the two types of choices. The authors and translators of the medical texts seem likely not to have responded to a tension between the two kinds of choices but to have merely communicated the information without colouring their texts in the way the hypothesis presupposed for the sake of influencing the recipients' attitude to the texts. Paratextual material choice, on the other hand, meets the requirement of a potential tension between domestic and exoticizing choices, and yet the hypothesis did not prove valid in this area. The stumbling block here may have been the limited awareness of the two kinds of norms among the recipients of the paratexts. In other words, it is not sufficient for the translator to be aware of the different degrees of translativity; what it takes is a broad enough awareness of the competing norms among the recipients which may be missing across the readership. This might explain why the interesting creolizing and exoticizing solutions were more or less limited to back covers of translated fiction, especially by some publishers. This is perhaps where the publishers counted on awareness of the norm in the English-speaking world in the reader, targeting cultured readers who, even though choosing to read translations may have the experience of what a typical back cover to fiction in English looks like and may appreciate their choices.

Thirdly, a closer inspection of the Czech sample beyond the cross-legitimation hypothesis reveals some other nuances of current paratextual back-cover choice in Czech, under the influence of English as the most-translated-from language in the Czech Republic, which may serve as starting points for further research in this area not necessarily in connection with the hypothesis discussed here.

## 8. Conclusion

The study of the tension between domestic and exoticizing choices of back-cover paratextual material in book translations from English and domestic book production has failed to support the cross-legitimation hypothesis formulated on the basis of a previous study focusing on different-level material. The discussion of the theoretical implications of the hypothesis which takes the dynamic nature of translativity one step further, beyond what was envisioned by Levý and Popovič, as well as of the specific circumstances of and possible reasons for this failure, may nevertheless shed some light on the operation of translativity and inspire further research into paratexts accompanying translation as a rich source for exploring the intricacies of the role of social agency and psycholinguistics in translation.

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## (Footnotes)

- 1 The figures in brackets (in both tables) give the average number of back-cover material types, excluding information about the publisher's website.



# Calque Idioms Translated from English: Degrees of Acceptability Explored

Jiří Rambousek

Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts, Department of English and American Studies,  
Arna Nováka 1, 602 00 Brno, Czech Republic.  
Email: jiri.rambousek@phil.muni.cz

**ABSTRACT:** The paper deals with the influence of English on Czech lexis, specifically with calques of multi-verbal lexical units. Their introduction into Czech is usually initiated by translators, whether consciously or not. The paper discusses several examples of idioms and other phrases that were introduced into Czech and are in various stages of acceptance in the Czech system, from completely integrated to those that are in the process of being adopted, to completely unacceptable isolated translation blunders. The paper shows that the borders between the categories are fuzzy and tries to suggest which features of the idioms influence the chance of their through-translations being accepted in the lexis of the receiving language.

**KEYWORDS:** idioms; calques; through-translation; influence of English; lexis

## 1. Introduction

The notion of Czech—and virtually any other language—being influenced by English has become commonplace. When the lexical level of this influence is examined, material is most often found among univocal expressions, where the influence consists almost solely in Czech borrowings of English expressions. In multi-verbal lexical units, on the other hand, borrowings are rare (although they do exist, for instance, the French *c'est la vie* that has been in use in Czech for decades, or *high five*, the recent borrowing from English into the Czech youngsters' slang), and they often remain in the special position of fixed expressions, or rather quotations, that are still perceived as belonging to another language and seldom actually enter the Czech language system, that is, are included in the morphological system, or used as part of a Czech sentence without a separating signal. In the present paper, another type of multi-word units will be examined, namely idioms and collocations in English that entered the Czech language by means of a calque translation (or through-translation, to use Newmark's term).<sup>1</sup> Several examples of English idioms and their Czech

<sup>1</sup> The two terms are essentially synonyms; in the present paper, “through-translation” is used to refer to the actual process of translating, often in isolated cases that need not necessarily become newly coined Czech idioms, and indeed are often considered plain translation errors. The term “calque” is used rather to denote lexical units that aspire to become a part of the Czech lexical repertory.

calques will be presented that represent various degrees on the scale from rejection to complete acceptance in Czech, and the reasons for these multi-word units being included or rejected in the receiving language will be discussed.

The methodology of such an attempt is necessarily inconsistent. Too many factors come into play, and the paper cannot aspire to fully map the area. A detailed discussion of correctness and acceptability of calque idioms and phrases in Czech pertains to Czech lexicology and lexicography. The purpose of this paper is to point out the role of translation—as well as individual translators and translation acts—in this process, and demonstrate that texts by non-professional writers and translators participate, together with professional texts, in forming the lexical and phraseological tendencies in the receiving language. In the future, translator training might benefit from studying these non-professional texts in more detail.

Approximate numbers of occurrences will be given for the individual renderings of the phrases, but the paper does not aim at a quantitative view of the topic: the methods of filtering and counting occurrences in corpora and on the Internet differ greatly, and the number of examined phrases is extremely low. They are chosen as examples of various types of translated phrases but they cannot be representative of all phraseological calques from English.

It would be difficult to document exactly how a certain calque phrase entered the receiving language. However, for relatively recent phrases that came directly from English it seems reasonable to assume that their calque renderings in translations preceded their use in original Czech texts. This may include both written and recorded translations: dubbed films and TV series are probably a very important source of phraseological coinages. However, these could not be included for technical reasons; the examples below come only from written texts.

The very term “idioms” in the title of this paper does not cover the whole range of phenomena in question. All fixed lexical units consisting of more than one word were considered, that is, collocations, proverbs, sayings, and idioms. The other part of the title—“translated from English”—brings more problems. It could mean (1) actually found in a translated (written) text, regardless of the number of occurrences, as well as (2) coined by calque-translation, that is, introduced into the Czech language as a new unit. The former eventuality may clearly include isolated instances of mistranslation by incompetent translators, as there is hardly a way of differentiating between “correct” and “wrong” other than frequency of use in the receiving language. The latter eventuality, coinage, involves another problem—that of intentionality: a through-translated phrase usually first appears in translated texts, and it is impossible to decide whether the translators were aware that they were using an unusual formulation, and were deliberately trying to introduce it into the target language, presumably with the intention to refresh or extend the lexical repertory of Czech. It could,

however, be considered a sign of calque-coinage (in progress, or completed) when the expression is used in an original Czech text, provided we can sort out covert translations that are common in journalism and even more on the Internet. The inclusion of such expressions in dictionaries may, of course, serve as another signal of the integration in the receiving language. The few examples analyzed below will demonstrate that there is a continuum between a one-time mistranslation and a fully accepted, “domesticated” phrase/idiom.

## 2. From Translation Blunders to Accepted Lexis

Example (1) represents one extreme point on the scale: a clear mistranslation of an idiom which has no chance of ever being accepted in Czech in the through-translated form. It comes from a translation provided by an advanced student of translation in a team project; such clear mistranslations are not found often in published texts but are, as will be shown further, quite common with non-professionals, mainly on the Internet. However, this is not the case of this particular idiom as it is not frequent even in English, and appears mainly in literary texts that are not among those typically translated by non-professional translators.

(1) brown study

Original (note the underlined sentence):

“That’s all right,” he agreed and stood silent for a few moments, tapping the key against the palm of his left hand and staring absent-mindedly about the room. Suddenly he emerged from his brown study and walked across to the mantelpiece. (Detection Club 1980)

First draft of a student’s translation:

Najednou se vynořil z hnědé pracovny a přešel ke krbové římse.  
(He emerged from his brown office. . .)

Final wording:

Najednou se probрал ze zadumání a přešel ke krbové římse.  
(He woke up from reverie. . .)

As mentioned above, the possibility of the calque of this particular idiom entering the Czech phraseology is virtually non-existent: the emergence of the *brown office* makes the through-translation too obviously nonsensical in most contexts. And, once recognized as an idiom, the *brown study* does not present an obstacle for the translator: it is found in most English dictionaries (for instance, “a state of deep thought; a mood of deep absorption or thoughtfulness; reverie” [“Idioms” 2013]) as well as in larger English-Czech bilingual dictionaries (“hluboká zamyšlenost, zadumanost, snění ♦ *in a ~ v* zamyšlení, zamyšlen, zadumán” [Hais and Hodek 1984–85]).

The *brown study* phrase adheres very well to the often rephrased characteristics of an idiom: it is fixed in its form, and unintelligible, that is, its meaning cannot be derived from its individual constituents. In reality, as Gottlieb (1997) and others pointed out, many idioms do not fully meet these characteristics. As to the latter, idioms are often based on a metaphor, and their through-translation is therefore understandable in the target language, as we shall see in the next example.

The “fixedness” presumption does not always hold, either: idioms are often used in varied forms. Gottlieb (1997, 315) claims that it is only the core expression of an idiom that has to be present. This is well documented in example (2). It comes from the opposite end of the spectrum—the idiom *skeleton in the closet/cupboard* has been taken over into Czech and, as will be shown, gradually became an integral part of the language. This is clear from the variety of formulations found in Czech texts (see example [2] below): while the first author still feels the necessity to mark the idiom by quotation marks, others expect it to be activated in their readers’ minds even if the exact wording is not present:

(2) *skeleton in the cupboard/closet*

Stále ale městu zůstává „kostlivec ve skříni“ v podobě žaloby stavitele mostu. (*Lidové noviny*, August 7, 2009) (The town is still left with the “skeleton in the closet” in the form of a lawsuit filed by the bridge builder.)

To je takový náš kostlivec ze skříně. (*Mladá fronta DNES*, April 26, 2008)

(This is a sort of a skeleton from a closet for us.)

Tenhle kostlivec chrastil původně v jeho skříni (*Reflex* 16, 2008)

(This skeleton had originally rattled (its bones) in his closet.)

Je spolehlivě vyzkoušeno, že dobře zmedializovaný kostlivec má téměř neomezenou životaschopnost. (*Týdeník Rozhlas* 20, 2005)

(It has been reliably proven that a skeleton well disseminated in the media has an almost unlimited lifespan.)

**Kostlivec ve výloze** / Nazývat to překvapením je málo. BIS oznámila, že našla disky. . . (*Respekt* 46, 2007)

**(Skeleton in the shop-window** / To call it a surprise is not strong enough. The BIS<sup>2</sup> informed they have found discs. . .)

In the newspaper title in the last sample, one of the two core elements (*skeleton, closet*) is not even present, having been playfully replaced with its opposite to create ironical effect.

2 BIS, Bezpečnostní a informační služba (Security and Intelligence Service), is the intelligence agency of the Czech Republic.

In view of the high degree of integration of the idiom in the Czech lexis, it is useful to remember that some fifteen to twenty years ago, it would still have been cited in translator training as an example of inappropriate through-translation from English into Czech. Even today, some Czech speakers who are aware of the calque origin of the phrase still refuse it. A search for *kostlivec* in *InterCorp* proves that the idiom is found much more frequently in journalistic articles and in translations of fiction than in original Czech fiction. It is worth noting that Ivan Klíma, a prominent Czech writer, gave his 2005 book of sketches the title *Kostlivec pod kobercem* (Skeleton under the carpet), thus deliberately combining the *skeleton* through-translation with the corresponding Czech idiom *zamést něco pod koberec* (to sweep something [away] under the carpet), which was often recommended to and used by translators as a substitution for the English *skeleton/closet* phrase. Klíma's "blended idiom" suggests that he still considered the integration of the *skeleton* idiom into Czech an issue.

The acceptance of a new coinage can be expected to be reflected in dictionaries. And this is indeed the case with the idiom *kostlivec ve skříni*. The first edition of the largest dictionary of Czech phraseology (Čermák et al. 1988) did not include it at all. However, in the second edition of 2009 we read:

**kostlivec ve skříni** nevyrovnaný, nepříjemný a zamlčovaný účet, dluh, chyba z minulosti; . . . který se připomíná a může vystoupit ostudně ven. Z angl. *skeleton in a cupboard*. (Čermák et al. 2009a, 147)  
**(kostlivec ve skříni** an unsettled, unpleasant and concealed bill, debt, past failure; . . . that keeps being remembered and could be revealed with shame. From the English *skeleton in a cupboard*.)

The two editions of the same dictionary thus document the process of this particular calque idiom being accepted into the Czech language. Another edition in ten to twenty years may probably round off the process by leaving out the note about the English origin of the phrase.

In the case of another phrase, *to je/není můj šálek čaje/kávy* (it is/isn't my cup of tea/coffee), however, the authors of the above dictionary took a different approach: even though the idiom is commonly used in Czech and is more frequent than the *skeleton* one,<sup>3</sup> it does not appear in Čermák et al. (2009a, 2009b). It is not easy to see the reason why these two idioms, both clearly calques from English, are not dealt with in the same way.

Different idioms enter the Czech language with different vigor and speed. Spoken language is affected as well. The sweeping attack of *být o něčem* (to be about something) in the 1990s can serve as an example. The phrase was greeted

3 397,000 hits for *můj šálek čaje* and 688,000 for *můj šálek kávy* were found on the Internet, compared to only 109,000 hits for *kostlivec ve skříni*.

with strong disapproval by many users of Czech, including Václav Havel. A year or two later, it was virtually omnipresent in the media. Today, the authoritative handbook of Czech describes it as fashionable and vague and concludes cautiously that “the phrase is not considered incorrect but it should not be over-used” (Institute of the Czech Language).<sup>4</sup> Kraus (1997, 109), however, considered it acceptable as early as 1997 in all situations where it can be—even very loosely—seen as an operational definition (that is, one that “defines its object as a result of certain activities, operations”);<sup>5</sup> he even maintains that “if the denominated event, thing, or being are perceived as sources of a narrative, the speech act becomes more dynamic and attractive than it would be if static definitions were used” (Kraus 1997, 110).<sup>6</sup> This is probably influenced by the fact that he finds the origin of the phrase in the metonymical shift from stories/narratives being about something to other subjects being about something. While this is a correct observation, it should be also noted that the said development took place in English, and the phrase was then imported into Czech via a through-translation. The metonymical background, being similar in the language systems of English and Czech, could probably have helped it take root in the receiving language.

### 3. Degrees of Acceptability

It goes without saying that through-translation is not the only method of dealing with an idiom in translation, nor is it the one recommended to translators. Translation scholars have come up with various typologies of translation strategies for dealing with idioms, and through-translation is usually not among them at all: in Gottlieb’s (1977, 319) eight strategies, for example, it would come under the first, that is, congruence, but that only if the TL already has the identical idiom in its repertoire. This happens quite often as European languages share a lot of metaphors and idioms due to their common cultural background: *to look for a needle in the stack of hay* is just one—and often quoted—example for many. However, if the identical TL idiom is not at hand, a word-for-word rendering of an idiom is hardly ever justified. This is an obvious and generally accepted rule, although Newmark (1988, 84) points out that coining a new TL phrase or idiom after the ST model can enrich the receiving language: “In fact, through-translations in contiguous cultures sometimes fill in useful gaps.”

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4 Original wording: “Tuto vazbu nepovažujeme za nesprávnou, neměla by se však nadužívat.”

5 Original wording: “svůj objekt vymezují jako výsledek určitých činností, operací.”

6 Original wording: “chápeme-li pojmenovanou událost, věc, bytost jako zdroje vyprávění, stává se tím řečový projev dynamičtější a poutavější, než by tomu bylo při užití statických definic.”

In reality, through-translations more often result from the ignorance of translators who do not notice they are dealing with an idiom.<sup>7</sup> The destiny of some of these newly coined—or sometimes rather “dragged in”—expressions in Czech will be discussed below, namely the literal Czech counterparts of the expressions *headhunters*, *the rest is history*, and *stiff upper lip*. They have all appeared in Czech translations. While the acceptance of the above mentioned *skeleton* idiom is confirmed by its frequency in printed Czech texts as well as by dictionaries, more recent neologisms must be looked for mainly on the Internet. Their occurrence there will be compared to that in corpora where the inclusion of texts is more selective.

### (3) *headhunters* > *lovci lebek*

The case of *headhunters* > *lovci lebek* is not altogether typical. The expression—rather a two-word term than an idiom—has existed in Czech for a long time, and is not a straightforward calque: the literal back-translation would be *skull-hunters* rather than *head-hunters*.<sup>8</sup> Its only meaning used to be, in Czech as well as in English, the anthropological one, denoting certain tribes on the basis of their practice. The dependence on English came into play later, when the expression began to be used to cover a new meaning: a new type of personnel recruiting. In this case, however, the tendency to follow the English model did not take the form of a new calque coinage (that would have led to a new phrase \**lovci hlav*), but rather that of a concordance-based transfer: the translators were aware of the existence of the original term in English, and imitated the transfer of meaning using the existing Czech expression. The result is rather ironical: while the English expression meets the description of the new activity very nicely, and the transfer of meaning is therefore almost playful and its result natural, the same transfer in Czech leads to a rather disturbing image if the phrase is taken literally: the recruitment agents probably do not want the *skulls* of the executives they seek.

It is worth noting that the Czech “skull-hunting” concept has probably played its role in the development of yet another meaning of the term in Czech, one that is not present in English at all: the term *lovci lebek* has recently been used for members of police task force tracking down and arresting high-profile criminals. This meaning was the most frequent among Internet occurrences, which could have been influenced by the very topical search for a group of

7 This seemingly rare case becomes quite common once we make the decision to consider not only professionally edited, printed texts but rather all translated texts available to readers on the Internet.

8 Czech often formed its naming units on the basis of German. This is, however, not the case: the German term *Kopffäger* corresponds to the English one in its structure.

Czech suspects abroad that was underway at the time of the search. *Lovci lebek* appeared 30 times in the *Czech National Corpus* and more than 200 000 times on the Internet.<sup>9</sup> It is difficult to arrive at exact numbers as the results include such items as numerous pages on the TV series entitled *Lovci lebek*, links to a musical CD with the same title, and repeated reports on a Prague exhibition. When these hits are filtered out, the original anthropological meaning clearly prevails in the CNC, while the most frequent one in a Google Internet search is the *police task force* meaning.

(4) stiff upper lip > pevný/tuhý horní ret

The idiom does not exist in Czech, and even its through-translations are extremely rare. It can be considered an example of a phrase that definitely should not be through-translated into Czech. Unlike the *brown study* idiom above, however, it does appear in Czech—albeit mainly in peripheral texts—and can serve as a prove that virtually any idiom can appear in through-translated form in isolated instances in the environment where a great proportion of translated texts is produced by untrained dabblers.

The calque of the idiom has two versions in Czech: *pevný horní ret* and *tuhý horní ret*. None of them is found in the *Czech National Corpus*,<sup>10</sup> which proves that it does not appear in professional texts. Google found ten results for *pevný horní ret*, and twenty-five for *tuhý horní ret* but most of the latter were products of automated translation.

Following are three examples of the Czech through-translation in use:

Také by nám pomohlo, kdybychom měli . . . pevný horní ret, schopnost zasáhnout odvážně, když je to třeba.

(It would also help us if we had . . . a stiff upper lip, the ability to intervene courageously when it is necessary.) (*Mužský kruh* 2013)

Myslím si, že předávání dharmy zapřičiňuje, že reprezentujeme určitý styl a měli bychom být schopni ten styl udržet (tak zvaný „pevný horní ret“).

(I think that passing on dharma causes us to represent a certain style, and we should be able to keep up that style [the so-called “stiff upper lip”]). (“Marek Witek” 2002)

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9 Only nominative and genitive forms were searched for in the *Czech National Corpus* as well as on the Internet for this purpose.

10 There were ninety-nine results for *horní ret* (upper lip) but none was related to the English phrase *stiff upper lip*.

Salisbury je anglické město se vším, co k tomu patří. Zdejší lidé byli stateční, měli známý „pevný horní ret“ a drželi si styl, i když byli jejich nepřátelé podporováni zbraněmi z celého světa. (Nydahl 2004, 123)<sup>11</sup>  
 (Salisbury is a proper English town. Local people were brave, had the notorious “stiff upper lip” and maintained their style even though their enemies were supported by arms of the whole world.)

Most occurrences of the Czech idiom come from texts that show signs of being peripheral texts by non-professionals that have not undergone a regular editing process. It is unlikely that the idiom should become part of the core lexis of Czech but it will probably hover on its periphery, even if fed almost exclusively by Internet translations.

#### (5) the rest is history

The English phrase *the rest is history* represents yet another type: its through-translation is quite common and seemingly intuitively understood. In reality, however, Czech translators/authors and readers often do not get its proper meaning: it has little to do with *history*, that is, it does not mean “and the rest of the story has entered the (more or less official) history and can be retrieved from historical books.” Rather, the meaning is (“Idioms”):

*Fig. Everyone knows the rest of the story that I am referring to. Bill: Then they arrested all the officers of the corporation, and the rest is history. Bob: Hey, what happened between you and Sue? Bill: Finally we realized that we could never get along, and the rest is history.*

The phrase would be best translated into Czech by a different Czech idiom or formulation, that is, *a dál už to každý zná, a zbytek si už dovedete představit, a dál už to nemusím vykládat, no a už to šlo jako vždycky*, and so forth. The meaning intuitively inferred from the through-translated idiom is not as distant from the correct one as to make the text incomprehensible but it certainly increases its vagueness and spoils its coherence. The wordings found in Czech are as follows:

*zbytek je historie*: 0 occurrences in the *Czech Nation Corpus*, about 21,400 results on Google;

<sup>11</sup> Surprisingly, according to the editor’s information in the colophon, the book is a translation from German.

*zbytek už je historie*: 1 occurrence in the *Czech Nation Corpus*, about 14,500 results on Google.<sup>12</sup>

Like the *stiff upper lip* calques above, this idiom is almost non-existent in the *Czech National Corpus*. However, the number of Internet occurrences differs substantially, showing that the phrase has already become common in the Czech language to a certain degree. In addition, some of the occurrences clearly come from original Czech texts rather than from translations. That can be seen as proof that the through-translation has found its way into the lexical repertory of Czech; this may be the case regardless of the fact that it is not codified, its meaning is understood incorrectly, and it would probably be refused by most educated speakers of Czech.

Just the day before this paper was presented, a dubbed film on TV included the Czech dialogue line *políbil jsem ji, a zbytek už je historie* (I kissed her, and the rest is history). Following are a few occurrences from written texts. The first two very likely come from translations:

Steve však práci pro americkou vládu nepřijal a místo toho se v roce 1997 vrátil do Applu a zbytek už je historie. (Pospíšil 2012)

(Steve, however, did not accept the job for the U.S. government and returned to Apple in 1997 instead, and the rest is history.)

O desetiletí později oslovili Bruckheimera a zbytek už je historie. (“Vzhůru na palubu!” 2013)

(A decade later they turned to Bruckheimer, and the rest is history.)

The following examples, on the other hand, most likely came from original Czech texts rather than translations. The first one could probably still depend on an English model text but the remaining two seem to be genuine Czech originals. It is not easy to ascertain which exact meaning the authors had in their minds—and it is equally difficult to guess whether this vagueness of the Czech calque will hinder its taking hold.

. . . vydal Gira sólovku *I Am Not Insane*, na níž fanouškům nabídl exkluzivní materiál . . . a pocit vlastního zapojení. Zbytek už je historie. Výsledkem fundraisingové kampaně je deska. (“Swans” 2013)

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12 For the former wording, a certain number of machine-translated texts can be included among the Google results; a random check did not, however, confirm their high proportion. In any case, they should be considered a legitimate part of the amount of texts that are available to on-line readers. As for the latter, it is not a word-for-word translation but the added *už* (already) is still within the limits of through-translation.

(. . . Gira released the solo album *I Am Not Insane*, where he offered his fans exclusive material . . . and the feeling of participation. The rest is history. The result of the fundraising campaign is the album.)

Když se mě po tom prvním setkání lidi ptali, kdy bude další setkání, tak už mi holt nic jiného, než to začít organizovat, nezbylo. A zbytek už je historie. (“Když jsem pořádal první setkání Cashflow, schovával jsem se před lidmi” 2012)

(When people asked me after the first meeting when the next meeting will take place, well, I could do nothing but start organizing it. And the rest is history.)

Hodně mi ale chyběla liga, kde „o něco jde” a tak jsme přišli s návrhem založit oddíl a zahrát si oficiální soutěž ČFbU. A zbytek už je historie. (“Interview s Mikim” 2013)

9But I missed a league where “something is at stake” so we came with the idea to found a sports club and play the official ČFbU competition. And the rest is history).

#### 4. Conclusion

More material would have to be compared, and analysis done with a more detailed and refined set of characteristics, to arrive at a detailed description of the mechanism of coining new calque idioms. Random processes will always be at play and no exact prediction of the fate of individual coinages will be ever possible. The presented examples and the limited material they were chosen from seem to suggest that any such model should take into consideration the influence of sub-standard texts, including automated or amateurish translations. Many active and passive language users interact with and through such texts, and these influence their notions of language. The dividing line between language professionals and publishing amateurs is becoming increasingly fuzzy, which further supports the influence of low-quality texts.

The chance of a through-translated idiom to take hold in Czech seems to depend on the following: (1) understandability of the resulting Czech phrase; this applies even if the intuitive understanding is not in full accordance with the meaning of the SL phrase, as was seen in the case of *the rest is history*; (2) frequency of the English idiom—a frequent idiom appears more often in through-translations, and has therefore better chance to be remembered and repeated; the meme theory could possibly be employed for describing various aspects of their spreading; (3) existence of a semantic gap in the receiving language system that the newly coined idiom can fill; however, while this factor is often mentioned, it does not seem to be of ultimate importance: a catchy phrase can take root even if it is synonymous with existing language means (see the above mentioned Czech *být o něčem* [to be about something] with its strong competitors *jde o něco*, *jedná se o něco*).

The influence of the stylistic level of the source and target texts would require further consideration, as well as the conditions under which the coined expression is regarded as acceptable in the target language.

New coinage candidates seem to appear very often, as is manifested by the difference in their occurrence in the *Czech National Corpus* vs. on the Internet: it takes a while before a new phrase “makes it” into a corpus, not to speak of dictionaries. Moreover, most of them are likely to disappear without permanently influencing the target language. However, even without more detailed research, it seems clear that poor-quality translations may, at least in some cases, have the power to influence the TL language usage.

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# Czech Translation Equivalents of the Marginal Modal Need to in Administrative Texts

Václav Řeřicha

Palacký University, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,  
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic.

Email: vaclav.rericha@upol.cz

**ABSTRACT:** The meaning and usage of the English verb *need to* are analysed as a part of the trend of recently emerging modals. The relevancy of recent corpora and semantic approaches to this “marginal modal” are considered. Translations, being accessible and reliable sources of meaning, are used with SL texts as empirical material. The changes in the meaning and usage of *need to* are reflected by Czech professional translators of administrative texts, who have to consider typological differences as well as stylistic constraints. It is apparent from the translation equivalents that the emerging directive deontic meaning of *need to* has relevant Czech equivalents in central modal verbs. The analysis of the translated texts demonstrates translators’ permanent balancing act between style and typological differences reflected by grammatical categories.

**KEYWORDS:** marginal modals; *need to*; English; Czech; translation equivalents; administrative style

## 1. *Need to*: Trends and Usage

There has been a trend of some English modal verbs falling in frequency of use, and of an overall growth of marginal modal verbs in the last fifty years, accompanied by a shift in their usage. The trend has been explained as colloquialization, democratization, grammaticalization and so on (Aijmer 2004; Collins 2009; Krug 2000; Taeymans 2004). The verb *need to*, labelled as emerging, marginal or quasi-modal, has been a central part of this trend. The semantic change and resulting shift in usage of the marginal modal *need to* has been described by intralingual analysis (Collins 2009; Smith 2003; Vine 2004).

This paper studies this semantic change in a small corpus of the Czech translation equivalents of administrative documents in English. Our paper is based on the presupposition that the recent semantic changes of the verb *need* with infinitival complementation *to* will be reflected by Czech professional translation equivalents. It is an established method of translatology, and translation equivalents have become a part of it.<sup>1</sup> The advantages of this approach become apparent as a more detailed semantic analysis of the source language data is

1 Aijmer (2004, 58) considers translations to be more accessible and reliable as sources of meaning and uses than native informants since they are produced by trained translators without any theoretical concerns in mind.

provided for. The abstracted semantic components established through Czech translation equivalents could help re-classify the relevancy of the TL translation equivalents of the semi-modal verb *need to*.

### 1.1 Recent Corpora and Semantic Approaches to Marginal Modals

The changes in frequency and usage of the marginal modal *need to* have been a subject of quantitative corpora analyses, often focusing on the ratio between the auxiliary *need* and modal marginal *need to*. Some of the analysts do not consider the usage. Krug (2000) analyses a single non-differentiated set of *need (to)* focusing on formal criteria and in addition to syntactic analysis he claims that *need (to) /ni: tə/* is phonologically closer to the newly emerging class of developing modals. According to Krug the increase in the frequency of the marginal modal *need to* is a proof of its grammaticalization. Aijmer (2004, 70) uses the same argument, stating that the marginal modal *need to* represents a second stage of grammaticalization.

Our approach does not address the increase in the frequency of *need to* as a case of grammaticalization. The verb *need to* has not undergone the semantic bleaching, which enables grammaticalization, nor has it started to behave syntactically like a modal auxiliary.

Proof that the syntactic behaviour of the marginal modal *need to* has not acquired the syntactic features of auxiliaries is offered by Collins (2009, 56), who shows that the extremely small numbers of auxiliary *need* contrast dramatically with those for its quasi-modal counterpart *need to*. The quantitative methods of corpus studies are well equipped to capture the trends; however the objective quantitative analyses are not always complemented by verifiable semantic interpretations.

Taeymans (2004, 97) repeats the grammaticalization frequency argument, arguing that “changes in frequency will tell us more, . . . as grammaticalization goes hand in hand with increasing text frequency.” The semantic changes of *need to* are described as a shift from “internal necessity” to “a modal marker denoting external necessity” (Taeymans 2004, 105). There are other Taeymans (2004, 106–7) allegations which might be difficult to verify; he describes *need to* as “a strong deontic marker in disguise” and claims that from external necessity “it is but a short step to compulsion or obligation.” According to him *need to* is a weakened *must* or *have to*, with which it competes in affirmative contexts (Taeymans 2004, 105–6).

Similarly to Taeymans, Nicholas Smith (2003, 260) believes that sometimes in affirmative contexts *need to* “competes with MUST and HAVE TO (and [HAVE] GOT TO).” He adds that pragmatically it can acquire the force of an imposed obligation, but—something which does not apply to the other markers—the writer or speaker can claim that the registered action is merely being recom-

mended for the doer's own sake. This ambiguity allows the writer or speaker to appear more cognizant of the individual's requirements and at the same time downplay his or her own authority. Examples suggest that the necessity of obligation expressed by *need to* is in the addressee's best interest and at the same time in accordance with the speaker's wish (Smith 2003, 260).

Some degree of vagueness is evident in Bernadette Vine's (2004, 112) analysis, which claims that the examples in her data with *need to* also have the meaning of *must*. The use of *need to* is "softer" than *must*, but the meaning is "similar." *Need to* allows speakers to avoid a direct reference to their own authority while implying that external forces require the task to be done. In another meaning *need to* can acquire the force of an imposed obligation, but the writer or speaker can claim that the required action is merely being recommended for the doer's own sake (Vine 2004, 112). Evoking the democratization argument, Vine stresses that this ambiguity allows the writer or speaker to appear more cognizant of individual's requirements, and at the same time downplay his or her own authority and the necessity of obligation expressed by *need to* is in the addressee's best interest and at the same time in accordance with the speaker's wish (Vine 2004, 112).

We believe that the additional semantic feature of "democratization"<sup>2</sup> provided *need to* with a convenient meaning, increasing its frequency of use while no grammaticalization with semantic bleaching has taken place; on the contrary *need to* is enriched by additional semantic components. The documented trend of an overall growth of marginal modals should not be attributed to democratization only. Smith (2003, 235) mentions the strong tendency for increased use of *be going to*<sup>3</sup> in American English and in spoken British English being possibly due to semantic bleaching, which is however not applicable in the case of *need to*.

## 1.2 *Need to* as a Directive Deontic Modal

Peter Collins repeats the argument of the quasi-modal *need to*, the meaning of which expresses an obligation which is in the addressee's best interest. However, his quantitative research is presented within the epistemic, deontic and dynamic

2 Smith (2003, 263) implicitly acknowledges democratization as a factor of the trend describing *must* in its root sense as prototypically subjective and insistent, sometime authoritarian-sounding, and likely to be increasingly avoided in a culture where overt markers of power or hierarchy are much less in favour. Meanwhile *need to* has the potential to be used as an indirect means of laying down obligations. In contrast to *must*, it is (ostensibly at least) not an overt marker of power.

3 Leech (2004, 59–60) describes two semantic components of *be going to* referring to the future, "the train of events leading to the future happening is already under way" and the "culmination of present intention." Their semantic weakening may result in the periphrastic construction *be going to* referring to future without the previous semantic nuance.

structures. According to Collins (2009, 74), the ratio between the quasi-modal *need to* and the modal auxiliary is 88 percent and 12 percent, while 30 percent of *need to* instances are deontic tokens. When Collins is commenting on the rising frequency of *need to* he returns to the democratization argument, saying that

... one possible explanation is to be found in the attractive option offered by its deontic use (which has developed as an extension of its intrinsically dynamic use) of enabling the speaker to formulate a requirement that at the same time acknowledges and endorses the subject-referent's needs. Such a sense is not expressed by any of the other expressions of deontic necessity. (Collins 2009, 161)

The writer or speaker can claim the required action is merely being recommended for the doer's own sake.

For our analysis of the Czech translation equivalents of administrative texts in English<sup>4</sup>, Collins' claim that subjectivity/objectivity and modal strength correlate with the grammatical person is relevant since most of the analysed examples are in the 3rd person singular/plural. Our examples with the 3rd person singular/plural will involve an implicit authority on which Collins makes an important note, saying that in contexts where there is an apparent authority structure the utterance will have the force of a directive. He mentions directive deontic *need to*, which is used with the 1st person plural *we* to convey a speaker-delivered directive, and as a rhetorical marker. Although the 1st person plural is not explicit in our examples of administrative style, the authority structure of the translated documents suggests the author of the document as an objective force. Collins claims that with the 3rd person subjects deontic *need to* is typically objective, as in the following example, where the deontic source is an institutional requirement. Cf. *Could you also inform me whether individual members receive the journal or whether they need to be journal subscribers as well?*

There is another meaning of the marginal modal *need to* rarely mentioned in the analyses, but introduced in *Oxford English Dictionary*, specifically "to be required to do" or "to be something in order to fulfil a purpose" ("Need" 2013).

The above described semantic criteria establishing the scale of meaning of *need to* necessarily overlap. However, there has been an agreement on an emerging marginal modal *need to* with a directive deontic meaning involving external authority. Before we start assessing how the Czech translation equivalents reflect the recent semantic changes of the verb *need* with the infinitival complementation *to*, the modal strength of *need to* and its authority context should be clearly defined. A semantic analysis of the marginal modal *need to*,

4 The analysed administrative texts are copied from the website of *EUR-Lex*, the archives of European Union public law and other documents.

preceded by an analysis of the authority structure of the text, will not only distinguish between dynamic and deontic use of *need to*, but may help to establish its modal strength, differentiating between, for instance, directive, requirement and recommendation. We suppose that *need to* with directive deontic meaning involving external authority can be found within contexts with a clear authority structure. A weak authority structure will help define *need to* broadly as a recommendation, a medium authority structure as a requirement resulting from a process or procedure and a strong authority structure as a directive.

The directive meaning may be explicit if an administrative document itself is described as a directive; in this case the authority structure would be strong and the Czech equivalents of *need to* should be translated accordingly.

## 2. Czech Translation Equivalents in an Authority Structure Context

In the analysed administrative texts the Czech translation equivalents of the marginal modals *need to* differ more than expected, considering the relatively compact authority structure of the analysed administrative documents. The analysed Czech translation equivalents of *need to* include the following:

- *je třeba/potřeba*
- *potřebovat*
- *měl by*
- *je nutné/nutno*
- *by musela být*
- *muset*
- *je zapotřebí*
- *ale stále ještě zbývá*

There are several typical sentence structures and contexts in the analysed administrative texts in which the marginal modal *need to* is frequent: as a passive construction, personal pronouns + *need/s to do* and the phrase *it needs to be done*.<sup>5</sup>

Passive as a grammatical category suggests a degree of (grammatical) objectivity when an authority structure is concerned. The examples in passive with the inanimate subject *it* may be hypothetically classified as having weak or medium authority structure because in administrative style this passive construction implies a general human agent. There are other potential agents of passive, specifically an implicit author, person or entity not relevant for the activity, and

5 All the examples have been extracted from the *EUR-Lex* database. A few were shortened and subsequently verified by native speakers. Therefore the full bibliographical reference to *EUR-Lex* is given only with these examples when the relevant authority structure is analysed.

an unspecified or avoided agent. The potential agents with the exception of an author would imply weak or medium authority structure. However, the Czech translation equivalents of *it needs to* include both *je třeba* (it is necessary) and *muset* (must). The analysis has to differentiate between the anaphoric *it* and the phrase *it needs to be (done)*. The Czech translation equivalents of the phrase *it needs to be (done)* are mostly translated with the equivalent *je třeba/potřeba* implying that the agent of the activity is suppressed. Cf. the following sentence and examples:

- (1) *In those circumstances, it needs to be verified whether an interpretation by the Court of Justice of Directive 98/59 is required in the main proceedings.*  
 (1a) *Za těchto podmínek je třeba ověřit, zda je nezbytné, aby Soudní dvůr ve věci v původním řízení výklad směrnice 98/59 . . .*<sup>6</sup>

There may be stylistic considerations determining the usage of the translation equivalent *je třeba/potřeba* because the verb *muset* can have the Czech passive reflexive equivalents *musí se* (Dušková et al. 2012). However, in Czech administrative style there is a strong tendency to avoid passive reflexive. The stylistic approach to the translation of the phrase *it needs to be done* becomes more evident when applied in a wrong context. In the next example, *Croatia* is the subject of both coordinated clauses *is advanced* and *needs to remain vigilant*. The tendency to translate the phrase *it needs to be done* with *je třeba* results in the incorrect Czech equivalent, with the translator focusing on *need to* before undertaking a proper syntactical analysis which would have determined the implicit anaphoric pronoun subject.

- (2) *In this area, Croatia is advanced, but needs to remain vigilant given the important challenges as regards organised crime activities in the region.*  
 (2a) *V této oblasti Chorvatsko pokročilo, ale je třeba nadále podrobně sledovat situaci vzhledem k významným výzvám, pokud jde o organizovanou trestnou činnost v regionu.*<sup>7</sup>

It seems that the suggested analysis of authority structure will be mostly relevant for the active voice sentences with an anaphoric pronoun subject because there is a strong stylistic tendency to translate the phrase *it needs to be (done)* with the cliché *je třeba*. The anaphoric *it*, referring to an institution with the marginal modal *need to*, is frequently translated with the Czech equivalent *muset*, implying a strong authority structure, cf.:

6 United States v. Christine Nolan, C-583/10 (CJEU 2010).

7 European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Main Findings of the Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Croatia's State of Preparedness for EU Membership* (Brussels: European Union, 2012). Henceforth abbreviated as *Report on Croatia*.

- (3) *Thus, in order to put its powers to determine its own internal organisation to useful effect, it needs to be in a position to limit the inconveniences arising as a result of having numerous places of work.*
- (3a) *Užitečný účinek jeho vnitřní organizační pravomoci tedy znamená, že musí být schopen omezit nevýhody vyplývající z plurality jeho pracovních míst.<sup>8</sup>*
- (4) *On these grounds, I am of the opinion that, if a Member State chooses to provide the option of VAT grouping, it needs to be open to economic operators active in all sectors in the Member State concerned.*
- (4a) *Z těchto důvodů jsem toho názoru, že pokud se členský stát rozhodne poskytnout možnost vytvořit seskupení pro účely DPH, toto seskupení musí být přístupné všem hospodářským subjektům činným ve všech odvětvích v dotyčném členském státě.<sup>9</sup>*

If an anaphoric *it* implies a strong authority structure, then the Czech equivalent *muset* should be found in other contexts with personal pronouns. Cf.:

- (5) *stresses that the European Supervisory Authorities have a crucial role to play in safeguarding market stability and that they need to be adequately funded in order for regulatory reforms to be effective*
- (5a) *zdůrazňuje, že evropské orgány dohledu hrají klíčovou úlohu při zajišťování stability trhu a že musí být dostatečně financovány, mají-li být reformy regulačního rámce účinné.<sup>10</sup>*

## 2.1. Semantic versus Stylistic Considerations of Czech Translation Equivalents

We shall attempt to find out if the differing Czech translation equivalents are determined by different authority structures. More than one approach is available for the classification of the authority structure. We start with a classification of the Czech translation equivalents within a specific SL authority structure to determine the modal strength of *need to*. For this purpose the English-Czech bilingual document *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Main Findings of the Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Croatia's State of Preparedness for EU Membership* (henceforth *Report on Croatia*) with an expected high frequency of the modal marginal *need to* has been selected.

The document *Report on Croatia* includes frequent passive constructions with a specific subject or anaphoric personal pronoun, translated with the Czech modal verb *muset* and adverbial *je třeba/zapotřebí*:

8 French Republic v. European Parliament, C-237/11 and C-238/11 (CJEU 2011).

9 European Commission v. Kingdom of Sweden, C-480/10, "Opinion of the Advocate General," (CJEU 2010).

10 European Parliament Resolution of June 23, 2011 on the Mandate for the Trilogue on the 2012 Draft Budget (2011/2019(BUD)), 2012/C 390 E/05.

- (6) *The Commission needs to be established and start operating without delay.*<sup>11</sup>  
 (6a) *Je zapotřebí, aby byla komise bez prodlení ustanovena a začala pracovat.*  
 (7) *A comprehensive process to review the cases of missing persons needs to be carried out.*  
 (7a) *Musí být proveden komplexní přezkum případů pohřešovaných osob.*

When considering the authority structure it seems reasonable to expect that almost identical or similar contexts in passive form will have comparable authority structures and identical Czech translation equivalents. However, virtually identical SL contexts within the same document have different Czech equivalents which do not differentiate between *muset* and *je třeba*, cf.:

- (8) *Implementation of the legal framework on the seizure and confiscation of assets needs to be consolidated.*  
 (8a) *Musí být konsolidováno provádění právního rámce o zabavení a konfiskaci majetku.*  
 (9) *Implementation of the legislative framework on trafficking needs to be strengthened.*  
 (9a) *Je třeba posílit provádění právního rámce v oblasti obchodování s lidmi.*

Active voice examples of the *Croatia needs to continue* type are less frequent. Most examples with *Croatia* as the subject have the Czech equivalent *muset*, cf.:

- (10) *However, Croatia needs to continue to foster a spirit of tolerance towards minorities.*  
 (10a) *Chorvatsko musí nicméně nadále podporovat atmosféru tolerance vůči menšinám.*  
 (11) *Croatia needs to allocate the necessary additional funding.*  
 (11a) *Chorvatsko musí vyčlenit nezbytné dodatečné financování.*  
 (12) *Croatia needs to provide further information on the remaining ones for the Commission to complete its assessment.*  
 (12a) *Chorvatsko musí Komisi poskytnout další informace o zbývajících případech, aby Komise mohla dokončit posouzení.*

There are active voice examples with demonstrative pronoun or inanimate subjects and the Czech translation equivalents *je třeba*, cf.:

- (13) *Croatia has further developed its track record. . . . This needs to continue to develop.*  
 (13a) *Chorvatsko dosáhlo dalších výsledků. . . . V tomto ohledu je třeba dále pokročit.*

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<sup>11</sup> The examples 6–16 are extracted from European Commission, *Report on Croatia*.

The analysis of a single administrative style document with a high frequency of the selected marginal modal *need to* shows that the translation equivalents are strongly influenced by stylistic and consistency considerations. Although the analysed *Report on Croatia* is highly suitable in this respect, the analysis is furthermore hindered by the issue of relevancy of the Czech translation equivalents. The following Czech translation is vague to a degree of unintelligibility and needs to be excluded from the analysis.

- (14) *However, the track record of implementation of the new system of disciplinary proceedings needs to be further developed.*  
 (14a) *Musí být dále rozvíjeny dosavadní výsledky provádění nového systému disciplinárních řízení.*<sup>12</sup>

Another example which should be considered separately has the Czech translation equivalent *by měl* (should). Cf.:

- (15) *The recruitment needs to continue to reach the Schengen standards.*  
 (15a) *Nábor by měl pokračovat i nadále, aby bylo dosaženo schengenských standardů.*

The meaning of the Czech equivalent *by měl* describes desired or conditional activity. The equivalent *by měl* may result from the translator's strategy to follow the word order of the SL sentence with the secondary predication infinitival complement *to reach*.

An almost literal translation ignoring English–Czech differences in typology and word order has semantic consequences. There is another example with a Czech conditional equivalent weakening the modal force of *need to*.

- (16) *The preparation of a new migration strategy needs to continue without delays.*  
 (16a) *Je třeba, aby nová migrační strategie byla i nadále připravována bez zpoždění vůči časovému plánu.*

The neglected typological differences described by functional sentence perspective again forces semantic changes weakening the modal force. The standard translation equivalent acceptable in passive voice *je třeba* complicates the structure of the sentence in Czech.<sup>13</sup> The English active voice with the subject *the preparation of a new migration strategy* provides for the Czech modal predicate *muset*, Cf.: *Bez zpoždění musí pokračovat příprava nové migrační strategie.*

12 The meaning of SL may therefore be translated as: *musí být dále zlepšován způsob vedení záznamů o tom, jak se uplatňuje nový systém disciplinárních řízení.*

13 Cf. the possible equivalent: *Příprava nové migrační strategie musí i nadále pokračovat bez zpoždění.*

The detailed analysis of the Czech translation equivalents in *Report on Croatia*, considering the authority structure to establish the modal force of the marginal modal *need to*, is not on the one hand objective due to the inconsistencies of the Czech translation equivalents, while on the other hand the frequent Czech equivalents *je třeba* and *muset* are proof of the translators' awareness of the trend of the marginal modal *need to* acquiring directive deontic meaning involving external authority.

Another important result of the analysis of the Czech translation equivalents is the translators' preference for the set phrase *je třeba* before FSP analysis has been undertaken, which is undoubtedly related to their unwillingness to use the Czech reflexive passive *musí se* (Dušková et al. 2012).

Another approach determining the relevancy of the Czech translation equivalents of *need to* in administrative texts may be based on the description of the markers of authority structure in the SL context. The active voice in SL examples will be considered. *Report on Croatia* is an ideal text for the analysis of the modal force of the marginal modal *need to* because of its directive style. The text aims to describe the "state of preparedness for EU membership" and provide a list of measures which needs to be taken before the desired result is achieved. The Czech translation equivalents reflecting the authority structure should not change their modal force.

There are two contexts of the marginal modal *need to*, active and passive, with the potential Czech active voice equivalent *muset* and passive reflexive *muset se*. As we noted before, the latter is avoided in administrative style and *muset se* is replaced by the periphrastic *je třeba* (*it is needed*). In administrative texts the Czech central modal equivalent of English central and marginal modals *muset* appears polysemous, seemingly neutralizing the meanings of *must*, *have to*, *need to*, and *should*.<sup>14</sup> In *Report on Croatia* the modal *muset* is the Czech translation equivalent of *need to* (over twenty-five tokens), *remain to be* (two tokens), *shall be taken* (one token) and *be required* (two tokens).<sup>15</sup>

There are three tokens of *have to* in the text, including one grammatically mistranslated but with a correct lexical equivalent, cf.:

(17) *Sisak has yet to reimburse the aid received.*

(17a) *Podnik Sisak již musel vrátit podporu, kterou obdržel.*<sup>16</sup>

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14 These Czech translation equivalents can be found in the case *European Commission v. Kingdom of Sweden* (2010).

15 The English *must* (three tokens in the *Report on Croatia* [European Commission 2012]) does not have the Czech equivalent *muset*, it is translated as *je třeba* in *Report on Croatia*.

16 *European Commission, Report on Croatia*.

## 2. Conclusion

The polysemous marginal modal *need to* semantically defined as a directive deontic with external authority is frequent in English administrative style. The directive deontic meaning of *need to* is determined by the context of the analysed documents where an external authority, for instance, the Commission, lists the items which *have to* be implemented.<sup>17</sup> The authority structure defining the modal force of *need to* is therefore clearly determined. The Czech translation equivalents have been abstracted to semantic components which could on the one hand help to determine how Czech reflects the emerging directive deontic meaning of *need to*, and on the other hand to determine whether the Czech equivalents would make use of a grammatical category, confirming the incipient grammaticalization, or whether they would draw on lexical means, confirming the polysemy of *need to*.

Most Czech professional equivalents confirm the strong modal force of *need to*, translating it with the equivalents *muset/je třeba*. The tendency to use the stylistically convenient cliché *je třeba* is very strong and sometimes stylistic considerations influence the structure of translated sentences and lead to mistranslations. The Czech professional equivalents of the directive deontic *need to* could be reduced to the Czech central modal *muset* and passive reflexive *muset (se)*, depending on the passive or active verbs of SL. However, there are evident and established style and usage factors of administrative translations influencing the Czech equivalents. The specificity of the Czech translation equivalents of administrative style forces the Czech professional translator to maintain a balance between the style, its inertia and clichés, and the observation of typological differences reflected by grammatical categories.

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. *In the course of the negotiations, Croatia has agreed to a number of commitments, which have to be implemented by the date of accession, at the latest, unless specific transitional arrangements have been agreed* (European Commission 2012).

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# INTERPRETING



# Interpreters and Translators at the Nuremberg Trials, 1945–1946

Theodoros Radisoglou

Hinterm Bahnhof 26, 90459 Nuremberg, Germany  
Email: dr.radisoglou@t-online.de

## Opening speech at the exhibition, Olomouc, November 10, 2012

I do not need a lawyer, I've never had anything to do with lawyers in my life, they would be useless in this trial. What I really need is a good interpreter. (Taylor 1992, 133)

This, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, is what Hermann Goering said, the number one of the defendants at the trial of the major war criminals before the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg in 1945–46, and it demonstrates the fundamental role which interpreters and translators, of course, were to play there.



Figure 1: The consequences of World War II.

The four great powers, the winners of the war—the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France—from very early on were aware of the importance of translation and realised that the trial would be impossible without interpreters.

Therefore, special machines for simultaneous interpretation were developed by IBM in order to facilitate communication between judges, prosecutors, defendants, lawyers, witnesses, experts and the press. This was a first in the history of interpretation, since until then, only consecutive but not simultaneous interpretation had been known. One channel was reserved for the original language, four channels for interpretation in the four official languages: German, English, French and Russian. In this way, the appropriate language was available to all participants via headphones.

In the courtroom, there were six microphones: four for the judges, one for the witnesses and one for the lectern. Moreover, the interpreters could use differently coloured light bulbs to indicate to the speakers to speak more slowly, to repeat or even to stop completely (see figure 1).



Figure 2: The speakers' equipment—a headset, a microphone, and two light bulbs to signal the requests of the interpreters.

The open interpretation booths were arranged in such a way that the interpreters had a good view of the defendants, the lectern and the judges' bench (see figure 3). For the four working languages, there were three teams, with twelve interpreters each. In each booth sat three interpreters (see figure 4). For example, in the English booth one interpreter each was responsible for the transmission of the other official languages into English. One of the three teams

of interpreters had a day off and so the young interpreters visited the beautiful Bavarian cities (the university town of Erlangen, Regensburg, Würzburg, Bayreuth, Munich, and so forth). The other two teams worked alternately: one was working directly in the courtroom, while the other followed the action from an adjoining room and was ready to help if a colleague was having difficulties. The interpreters translated into their native languages.



Figure 3: An overview of the courtroom with the interpreter booths.



Figure 4: A detailed picture of the booths with the teams of three interpreters.

It is safe to argue that the interpreters were very crucial participants at the Nuremberg Trials. They were the only people who could be heard constantly in the courtroom—certainly not only spiritually and intellectually demanding work but sometimes also a great psychological strain. A young (female) interpreter, for instance, who had recently witnessed atrocities committed by the Germans in her hometown, requested to be freed from booth service, because the detailed account of the misdeeds all too forcefully brought back memories of her terrible experiences.

The first encounter between Chief Prosecutor Jackson and Goering, which had been highly anticipated by the international press, turned out a disaster for the American, specifically due to a translation error. I quote from the original minutes of the session:

JUSTICE JACKSON. And you also find, “These preparations include in particular”—a) and b) are not important to my present question—“c) Preparation for the liberation of the Rhine.”

GOERING. Oh, no, here you have made a great mistake. The original phrase—and this alone is the point in question—is: “c) Preparation for the clearing of the Rhine.” It is a purely technical preparation that has nothing at all to do with the liberation of the Rhineland. Here it says, first, mobilization measures for transportation and communications, then, “c) Preparation for the clearing of the Rhine,” that is, in case of mobilization preparations the Rhine is not to be overburdened with freighters, tugboats, et cetera, but the river has to be clear for military measures. Then it continues: “d) Preparation for local defense,” et cetera. Thus you see, it figures among small quite general, ordinary and usual preparations for mobilization. The phrase used by the Prosecution. . . (The International Military Tribunal for Germany, vol. 9, Eighty-Fifth Day)

The language at the Nuremberg Trials was not only a linguistic vehicle, but often played an important tactical and juridical role too which is apparent from the seating arrangement with two British and two American judges sitting next to each other while the Russians and the French were seated on their sides. It is clear that the Anglo-American judges were able to communicate in their own language at any time and could thus spontaneously influence the process of the trial—a linguistic and tactical manoeuvre in the process of filling the bench for which the American judge Biddle was responsible, as we know from his correspondence with his wife.

The defendant Sauckel was an extremely difficult case for the interpreters—his German was simply awful. Even his lawyer said: “Sauckel speaks such bad German that the audience almost suffer.” Sauckel thought until the very end

that he had only been sentenced to death by hanging due to an error in translation. I quote from the original minutes of the session:

SAUCKEL. I was never an SA man. . . .

THE PRESIDENT. Defendant, I do not understand the German language, but it appears to me that if you would not make pauses between each word it would make your sentences shorter; and pause at the end of the sentence. It would be much more convenient for the interpreter. I do not know whether I am right in that. That is what it looks like. You are pausing between each word, and therefore it is difficult, I imagine, to get the sense of the sentence.

SAUCKEL. I beg your pardon, Your Lordship. . . . The Fuehrer sent for me and in a lengthy statement explained the position of the German war production and also the economic situation. He said that he had nothing against my program as such if he had the time; but that in view of the situation, he could not wait for such German women to become trained and experienced. At that time 10 million German women were already employed who had never done industrial or mechanical work. Further, he said that the results of such a rationalization of working methods as I had suggested, something like a mixture of Ford and Taylor methods. . . .

DR. SERVATIUS. One moment. The interpreters cannot translate your long sentences properly. You must make short sentences and divide your phrases, otherwise no one can understand you and your defense will suffer a great deal. Will you please be careful about that. . . .

SAUCKEL. On account of the necessities which I have mentioned, I considered the employment of foreign workers justifiable according to the principles which I enforced and advocated and to which I also adhered in my field of work. I was, after all, a German and I could feel only as a German.

DR. SERVATIUS. Herr Sauckel, you must formulate your sentences differently, the interpreters cannot translate them. You must not insert one sentence into another. (The International Military Tribunal for Germany, vol. 14, One Hundred and Fortieth Day)

Dr. Alfred Seidl from Munich (a longtime Bavarian minister of the interior after the war), who defended Rudolf Hess and Hans Frank, always tried to demonstrate the cooperation of the Soviet Union with the Nazis immediately after the beginning of World War II (at the expense of Poland and the Baltic). His plea for Hess became a disaster because he did not have it translated into the language of the judges. I quote from the original minutes of the session:

DR. SEIDL. The Prosecutor for the Soviet Union states that he has no knowledge of the existence of this secret document which shall be es-

tablished by this affidavit. Under these circumstances I am compelled to move that Foreign Commissar Molotov of the Soviet Union be called as a witness, so that it can be established, firstly whether this agreement was actually concluded, secondly, what the contents of this agreement are, and thirdly. . .

THE PRESIDENT. Dr. Seidl, the first thing for you to do is to have a translation of this document made, and until you have a translation of this document made the Tribunal is not prepared to hear you upon it. We do not know what the document contains.

DR. SEIDL. As to what the document contains, I already wanted to explain that before. In the document there is. . .

THE PRESIDENT. No, the Tribunal is not prepared to hear from you what the document contains. We want to see the document itself and see it in English and also in Russian.

I do not mean, of course, you have to do it yourself, Dr. Seidl. If you would furnish this copy to the Prosecution they will have it translated into the various languages and then, after that has been done, we can reconsider the matter. (The International Military Tribunal for Germany, vol. 10, Ninetieth Day)

And now a few words about the photographer. Ray D'Addario (1920–2011) came to Nuremberg in late 1945 with a group of young American army photographers. He told me that like his Russian colleague, he had to take pictures for the press every day. It is amazing how perfectly D'Addario captures the character of the people with his camera—regardless of whether they were judges, prosecutors, lawyers or defendants—and how brilliant his pictures still are today.

One example is the portrait of General Nikitchenko. Telford Taylor, the American prosecutor, describes the Russian judge as follows:

General Nikitchenko, despite his inability or unwillingness to speak English, was at once impassive and impressive. His dialectical abilities were remarkable and his replies were often pointed, though never discourteous. He never raised his voice or showed irritation, and was the soul of patience. On business matters he was very impersonal, but on the rare social occasions provided or attended by the Russians he was witty and engaging, even through the fog of translation. His young interpreter, Oleg Troyanovky, was personable and gracious, but, despite his American educational background, he was never alone with foreigners and never went beyond the measured cordiality that the Russians deemed suitable for official entertainment. (Taylor 1992, 84).



Figure 5: The Nuremberg Trials established simultaneous interpretation as a valued and much needed profession.

### Conclusions

The Nuremberg Trials were a milestone not only for historians and lawyers, but also for the guild of interpreters, as it is considered the birthplace of simultaneous interpretation. Interpreters from the Nuremberg team under the supervision of Colonel Dostert founded the Simultaneous Interpretation Service of the United Nations in 1946. Today, simultaneous interpretation in English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Russian and Arabic is provided there.

The European Union, with its twenty-seven Member States and twenty-three official languages (506 possible language combinations), employs the largest service of translators and interpreters in the world.

Without simultaneous interpretation the trial would certainly have taken a few years longer and, I would argue, the Nuremberg trial would never have come to an end, because shortly thereafter the Cold War began, and from then on the two great powers—Russians and Americans—were no longer able to understand each other—not even with the help of interpreters.

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# The Impact of Grammatical Differences on Simultaneous Interpreting

Miao (Sabrina) Wang

University of Leicester, School of Modern Languages, Research Centre for Translation and Interpreting Studies, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH, United Kingdom.

Email: mw234@le.ac.uk

**ABSTRACT:** The paper examines the impact of grammatical differences on English–Mandarin Chinese simultaneous interpreting by drawing upon an empirical study of professional and student interpreters. The primary focus is on the effect of post-modification in English noun phrases (NPs) on Mandarin Chinese simultaneous interpretations (SIs) of entire NPs. English NPs are divided into those with pre-modification only (NP1), those with post-modification only (NP2), and those with both pre- and post-modification (NP3). We compare the SIs of NP1s, NP2s and NP3s in terms of content accuracy and delivery appropriateness. The results show that post-modification (which is not permitted in Chinese NPs) in English NPs had a significant impact on the interpreting performance of both professionals and students. The presence of post-modification in NPs correlates with more omissions, more substitutions in content, more grammatical errors, and more corrections in delivery in the Chinese interpretations.

**KEYWORDS:** grammatical differences; noun phrases (NPs); simultaneous interpreting; content accuracy; delivery appropriateness

|       |   |          |   |
|-------|---|----------|---|
| ASSOC | Associative ( <i>-de</i> ) <sup>1</sup> | M        | Mean                                    |
| BT    | Back translation                        | NOM      | Nominalizer ( <i>-de</i> ) <sup>2</sup> |
| CG    | Good in content                         | NP       | Noun phrase                             |
| CL    | Classifier <sup>3</sup>                 | NP1      | NP with pre-modification only           |
| CO    | Omission in content                     | NP2      | NP with post-modification only          |
| CS    | Substitution in content                 | NP3      | NP with both pre- and post-modification |
| DC    | Correction in delivery                  | <i>p</i> | <i>p</i> -value                         |
| DCO   | Complete omission in delivery           | SD       | Standard deviation                      |
| DG    | Good in delivery                        | SI       | Simultaneous interpretation             |
| DGE   | Grammatical error in delivery           | ST       | Source text                             |
| GS    | Gloss                                   | TT       | Target text                             |

## List of abbreviations and terms used in the paper

- 1 ASSOC is the gloss of the Chinese particle *-de* of associative phrases. An associative phrase consists of a noun phrase (NP) and the particle *-de*, together pre-modifying the head noun in a Chinese NP (Li and Thompson 1981, 113).
- 2 NOM is the gloss of the Chinese particle *-de* of nominalized parts. A nominalized part consists of an attributive adjective, relative clause, verb, verb phrase, sentence, or a portion of a sentence including the verb, and the particle *-de*, together pre-modifying the head noun in a Chinese NP (Li and Thompson 1981, 116, 575).
- 3 CL is the gloss of a Chinese classifier (a word) that “must occur with a number, and/or a demonstrative or certain quantifiers before the noun” (Li and Thompson 1981, 104).

## 1. Introduction

This article discusses the impact of post-modification of English noun phrases (NPs) on the simultaneous interpretations of entire phrases. According to Quirk et al. (1972, 857), English nouns can be pre-modified or post-modified or modified in both ways at the same time, as illustrated in examples (1a)–(1c) below.<sup>4</sup> English NPs which only have pre-modification or post-modification are called simple NPs, whereas those with both are called complex NPs. According to Li and Thompson (1981, 104), the most striking and well-recognized distinction between English NPs and Mandarin Chinese NPs is that the latter only contains pre-modification.

In the research project reported here, English NPs were categorized into three groups, namely NPs with pre-modification (NP1s) only, as shown in (1a), NPs with post-modification (NP2s) only, as in (1b) and NPs with both pre- and post-modification (NP3s), as in (1c).

- (1a) ST: our interdependent world  
TT: 我们相互依存的世界  
GS: we each other depend NOM world  
BT: our interdependent world

The source text (ST) in (1a) is a NP1. “Our interdependent” pre-modifies the head noun “world” in the ST, and the Chinese translation of the ST is also a NP with pre-modification as shown in the target text (TT) and the English gloss (GS).

- (1b) ST: the failures of the Human Rights Commission  
TT: 人权委员会的失败  
GS: human right commission ASSOC failure  
BT: the failures of the Human Rights Commission

The original phrase in (1b) is a NP2. “Of the Human Rights Commission” post-modifies the head noun “the failures” in the ST. According to Peng (1995, 360), English articles are often omitted in translation into Chinese as Chinese has no corresponding class of item. Consequently, although English articles are a type of pre-modification, in the current analysis, NPs only pre-modified by articles will not be further discussed and NPs which are pre-modified by articles and also post-modified will be regarded as NPs with post-modification only. In (1b), the post-modified NP is translated into a pre-modified one in Chinese as shown in the TT and the gloss.

- (1c) ST: deep divisions among Member States  
TT: 成员国之间严重的分歧

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4 Example (1a)–(1c) are from the experimental source text; the target text, the English gloss and the back translation of each one of these examples are my own.

GS: member state ASSOC middle serious NOM division  
 BT: deep division among member states

The source NP in (1c) is a NP3 with a pre-modifier “deep” and a post-modifier “among member states” and its Chinese translation is a NP with pre-modification only. In the target NP, the translation of the English pre-modifier “deep” remains as a pre-modifier “serious” and the English post-modifier “among member states” is translated into a pre-modifier of the Chinese head noun.

As Peng (1995, 362) points out, if an English NP modification is a word, it is usually positioned as pre-modification; if it is a phrase or a subordinate clause, it is likely to be positioned as post-modification. However, Chinese nouns are only pre-modified. Therefore, according to Peng (1995, 362), in the process of translation from English into Chinese, English post-modification is often “re-positioned” to pre-modify the translated Chinese head noun. However, depending on the meaning of a specific sentence, English post-modification may also be translated into a compound sentence, an independent sentence or an adverbial component.

Given the limited time and limited processing capacities of simultaneous interpreters, they are very likely to prefer to preserve the word order of the original text with minimal changes. In the case of NP1s as illustrated in (1a), interpreters can easily follow the original word order, while in the case of NP2s and NP3s as illustrated in (1b) and (1c) respectively, interpreters are likely to either reorganize the original NPs by changing the position of post-modification or resorting to other means, such as translating a NP into a compound sentence, independent sentence or adverbial component, depending on the meaning of a specific sentence. In this article, I try to determine whether post-modification in an English NP has a significant effect on the SI of the entire phrase. I compare the SIs of NPs with pre-modification only (NP1s), those with post-modification only (NP2s), and those with both (NP3s).

## 2. Hypotheses and Methodology

The hypothesis was that post-modification would pose challenges to simultaneous interpreters and the expected results were that:

- due to the presence of post-modification, interpretations of NP2s and NP3s would display a lower percentage of good content (CG) and good delivery (DG)<sup>5</sup> and include more content omissions (CO), more content substitutions (CS), more grammatical errors in delivery (DGE), more cor-

5 Good deliveries refer to interpretations which are fluent, smooth, have maintained continuity and have no grammatical errors or corrections made by the interpreters themselves.

- rections (DC) in delivery, and more complete omissions (DCO) in delivery than those of NP1s;
- the difference between interpretations of NP2s and NP3s would not be as significant as that between interpretations of NP1s and NP2s and interpretations of NP1s and NP3s, because the key problem lies in post-modification, which NP2s and NP3s both have;
  - although both professionals and students, to different extents, would be affected by English post-modification in simultaneous interpreting, professionals would be better than students in dealing with all three types of NPs, but the difference in level of success would be greater for NP2s and NP3s than for NP1s because professionals would deal with grammatical differences more effectively than students.

In order to establish whether there was a correlation between post-modification in English NPs and the SIs of those NPs, twenty-one participants, of whom nine were professionals and twelve were students, were invited to participate in an experiment. All of them were given an experimental English text to do simultaneous interpreting and their interpretations were recorded and transcribed for analysis. The experimental English text had eighty-four pre-modified-only NPs (NP1), fifty-two post-modified-only NPs (NP2) and thirty NPs with both types of modification (NP3). Each participant produced 84 SIs of NP1s, 52 SIs of NP2s and 30 SIs of NP3s, which made the total number of SIs of NP1s 1764, that of NP2s 1092 and that of NP3s 630.

### **3. Error Analysis: Seven Parameters**

The analysis of SIs of the three types of NPs was carried out in terms of seven parameters, good in content (CG), omissions in content (CO), substitutions in content (CS), good in delivery (DG), grammatical errors in delivery (DGE), corrections in delivery (DC) and complete omissions in delivery (DCO). Each parameter is illustrated below with one example of NP1, one of NP2 and one of NP3 from the experimental outputs.<sup>6</sup>

#### **3.1 Parameter 1: Good in Content (CG)**

If both the head noun and the modification of a NP are interpreted correctly in terms of content, the interpretation is considered good in content. A disturbance at the NP position might cause problems elsewhere because of the extra

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<sup>6</sup> All the examples of NP1s, NP2s and NP3s are from the experimental outputs; the simultaneous interpretation of each example is from the participants; the English gloss and back translation of each example are my own.

effort given to the NP, but I did not examine this phenomenon, since I would like to maintain a clear focus on the NP alone.

- (2a) ST: six months  
 SI: 六个月  
 GS: six CL month  
 BT: six months

As shown in (2a), the original English NP “six months” is only pre-modified by a number and was interpreted into “六个月” (six CL month). Here, the classifier “个” was added and the plural form was interpreted into a singular form to follow Chinese grammatical conventions, so they are not classified as substitutions. According to Peng (1995, 360), Chinese classifiers rarely have equivalents in English, and an appropriate Chinese classifier is often added in the Chinese translation of an English NP. With regard to depluralization, “there is no need to indicate whether a noun is in the singular or in the plural in Chinese” (Tsai 2001, 246). In most cases, therefore, an English NP in plural form is translated or interpreted into a singular Chinese NP. So this SI is considered a good interpretation.

- (2b) ST: the spread of disease  
 SI: 疾病的扩散  
 GS: disease ASSOC spread  
 BT: the spread of disease

As shown in (2b), the original English NP “the spread of disease” is only post-modified and was interpreted into “疾病的扩散” (the spread of disease) in Chinese. It is a good interpretation.

- (2c) ST: basic principles—of democracy, of human rights, of rule of law  
 SI: 基本的民主的原则，人权的原则，法制的原则  
 GS: basic NOM democracy ASSOC principle, human right ASSOC principle, rule of law ASSOC principle  
 BT: basic principles of democracy, human rights and rule of law

In (2c), the original English NP has both a pre-modifier “basic” and three post-modifiers “of democracy, of human rights, of rule of law” and all the post-modifiers were re-positioned to be pre-modifiers in the SI to follow Chinese conventions. The original meaning is well preserved, and it is a good interpretation.

### 3.2 Parameter 2: Omission in Content (CO)

If the head noun or the modification of a NP or the entire NP is omitted, it is considered as an omission in content.

- (3a) ST: The Organization remains fully engaged in conflict resolution, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, defence of human rights, and development around the world.  
SI: 联合国高度参与 . . . , 维和, 人道和发展世界发展的各项工作。  
GS: United Nations highly participate . . . , peacekeeping, humanitarian and development, world development ASSOC all kind work.  
BT: The United Nations highly participates in . . . , peacekeeping, humanitarian and development, all the work relating to development around the world.

In (3a), there are two pre-modified NPs in the ST, one is “conflict resolution” and the other is “humanitarian assistance.” The first one is completely omitted in the SI and the pre-modification of the second one is omitted in the interpretation. Both are regarded as omissions in content.

- (3b) ST: meet the threats we face and seize the opportunities before us  
SI: 应对挑战, 创造机会  
GS: meet challenge, create opportunity  
BT: meet challenges and create opportunities

In (3b), there are two post-modified NPs in the ST. The first NP “the threats we face” was interpreted into “challenges.” In this case, the post-modifier “we face” was omitted, so it is regarded as an omission in content. The second modified NP “the opportunities before us” was interpreted into “opportunities” and the post-modifier was omitted as well. It is an omission in content.

- (3c) ST: basic principles of democracy, of human rights, of rule of law  
SI: 人权, 民主, 法制  
GS: human right, democracy, law rule  
BT: human rights, democracy and rule of law

As in (3c), the original English NP has both a pre-modifier “basic” and three post-modifiers “of democracy, of human rights, of rule of law.” In the SI, the pre-modification “basic” and the head noun “principles” were omitted. It is an omission in content.

### 3.3 Parameter 3: Substitution in Content (CS)

If the head noun or the modification of a NP or the entire NP is replaced by something else or is not interpreted accurately in terms of content, it is considered a substitution in content.

- (4a) ST: the clear danger  
SI: 非常明显的危险

GS: very clear NOM danger

BT: the very clear danger

In (4a), the original NP is only pre-modified by “the clear” but the pre-modification was interpreted into “非常明显的” (the very clear) in Chinese with the meaning slightly changed. It is a substitution.

(4b) ST: a convention against nuclear terrorism

SI: 这个反对核扩散的公约

GS: this CL against nuclear proliferation NOM convention

BT: this convention against nuclear proliferation

In (4b), the original English NP is post-modified. As mentioned above, articles need not be represented by any Chinese forms and representing them is unnatural in Chinese. In this example, “a” has been interpreted into “这个” (this), adding meaning (definiteness and proximal deixis) to the original text. The post-modifier “against nuclear terrorism” was interpreted into “反对核扩散” (against nuclear proliferation) and the meaning was changed. Therefore, it is a substitution.

(4c) ST: the early reactions of Member States as well as my own conviction that our work must be based on respect for human rights

SI: 我们成员国的一些反应和我们的条件, 我们的工作必须要基于人权

GS: we member state ASSOC some response and we ASSOC condition, we ASSOC work must need base on human right

BT: some reactions of our member states and our condition that our work must be based on human rights

In (4c), there are two pre- and post-modified NPs in the ST. The first one “the early reactions of Member States” was interpreted into “我们成员国的一些反应” (some reactions of our member states); the pre-modifier “early” was interpreted into “一些” (some) and the head noun “Member States” was interpreted into “我们成员国” (our member states). This interpretation is considered a substitution. In the interpretation of the second NP “my own conviction that our work must be based on respect for human rights”, the pre-modifier “my own” was changed into “我们的” (our), the head noun “conviction” was changed into “条件” (condition) and the post-modifier “that our work must be based on respect for human rights” was changed into “我们的工作必须要基于人权” (our work must be based on human right). It seems that “respect for” in the post-modifier was omitted and it should be counted as an omission, but because although it is only a partial omission within the post-modifier and the post-modifier is still partially preserved but replaced by something else, this is also regarded as a case of substitution.

### 3.4 Parameter 4: Good in Delivery (DG)

If all components of NPs, including head nouns, pre-modification (if any), and post-modification (if any), have all been interpreted grammatically correctly and the SIs conform to the conventions of Mandarin Chinese grammar, and if the interpretations are fluent, smooth and have maintained continuity and have no corrections made by the interpreters themselves, we will regard the interpretations as good deliveries.

- (5a) ST: this podium  
SI: 这个大厅  
GS: this CL big hall  
BT: this hall

In (5a), the original English NP is only pre-modified. Although the head noun “podium” was interpreted into “大厅” (hall), there is no grammatical error in the interpretation and the output is good in delivery.

- (5b) ST: renew negotiations on this vital issue  
SI: 在这个问题上进行谈判  
GS: at this CL problem on carry out negotiation  
BT: carry out negotiations on this issue

In (5b), the original NP is only post-modified. Part of the post-modifier “vital” was omitted but there is no error in grammar in the interpretation, and it is an example of appropriate delivery.

- (5c) ST: to improve our success rate in building peace in war-torn countries  
SI: 我们同时要让那些战乱国家重建和平  
GS: we meanwhile need let those war chaos country again build peace  
BT: meanwhile, we need to rebuild peace in those war-torn countries

In (5c), the English NP has both pre- and post-modification. It is obvious that in the interpretation, the pre-modifier and the head noun were omitted, but again, there is no error in the grammar of the interpretation and it is still good in delivery.

### 3.5 Parameter 5: Grammatical Error in Delivery (DGE)

If any part of a NP has not been interpreted grammatically correctly, or if the interpretations of the original whole NPs do not follow the grammatical conventions of Mandarin Chinese, the interpretations will be considered as grammatical errors in delivery.

- (6a) ST: another Rwanda

- SI: 另外一个这样的  
 GS: another one CL this ASSOC  
 BT: another one like this

As shown in (6a), in the interpretation, the original head noun “Rwanda” was substituted by “like this.” The interpretation does not make sense because “Rwanda” hasn’t been mentioned in the ST before and is like an incomplete Chinese sentence. It is regarded as a grammatical error in delivery.

- (6b) ST: a convention against nuclear terrorism has been finalized  
 SI: 会议,关于恐怖主义已经完结  
 GS: conference, about terrorism already finalize  
 BT: the conference, on terrorism has already been finalized

In (6b), putting aside the content accuracy of this interpretation, it starts with a head noun “会议” (the conference), followed by a modifier “关于恐怖主义” (on terrorism), which conforms to the structure of the original English NP. It seems to be two separate and fragmented parts because Chinese NPs can only be pre-modified, therefore, the interpretation is ungrammatical in Chinese. This type of grammatical error is typical in the SIs of post-modified English NPs, because interpreters tend to save time and processing capacity by following the original structure, which makes the output unnatural and ungrammatical to a Chinese audience.

- (6c) ST: vital breakthroughs in other areas as well  
 SI: 重要的突破, 在所有的上述领域  
 GS: important NOM breakthrough, in all NOM above area  
 BT: important breakthroughs, in all the areas mentioned above

In (6c), the Chinese interpretation begins with a pre-modified NP “重要的突破” (important breakthroughs), followed by a modifier “在所有的上述领域” (in all the areas mentioned above). The Chinese interpretation copies the structure of the original English NP but post-modification is not permitted in Chinese, and the interpreted post-modification “在所有的上述领域” (in all the areas mentioned above) seems to be an incomplete and fragmented sentence, therefore, it is regarded as a grammatical error in delivery.

### 3.6 Parameter 6: Correction in Delivery (DC)

Corrections in delivery include repetitions, restarts or corrections of errors in the interpretations of any part of a NP.

- (7a) ST: the United Nations  
 SI: 美国、联合国  
 GS: the United States, the United Nations  
 BT: the United States, the United Nations

In (7a), it is very noticeable that the original English NP “the United Nations” was first interpreted into “美国” (the United States) and then was corrected afterwards. It is a correction in delivery.

- (7b) ST: terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever, for whatever purpose  
SI: 各种形式的这个恐怖主义, 不管是谁, 在哪, 为了什么目标, 进行的恐怖主义活动  
GS: all kind ASSOC this CL terrorism, no matter who, at where, for what objective, carry out NOM terrorism activity  
BT: all kinds of terrorism, terrorism activities committed by whomever, wherever, for whatever purpose

In (7b), the presence of two post-modifiers in the original English NP increase difficulty in simultaneous interpreting because their short-term working memory does not allow simultaneous interpreters to start interpreting after hearing the entire NP and it is likely that interpreters will interpret segment by segment in cases like this. The first post-modifier “in all its forms and manifestations” was re-positioned to pre-modify the translated Chinese NP and the interpreter also changed the second post-modifier “committed by whomever, wherever, for whatever purpose” into a pre-modifier by repeating the head noun “恐怖主义活动” (terrorism activity) after it to make it sound complete and grammatically correct in Chinese. I classify this repetition of the head noun as a correction.

- (7c) ST: the sweeping and fundamental reform that I and many others believe is required  
SI: 一个基础性的一个变革或是非常重要的一个变革, 这种变革恰恰是我们需要的  
GS: one CL fundamental NOM one CL reform or very important NOM one CL reform, this kind reform just BE we need NOM  
BT: a fundamental reform or a very important reform, the reform is just what we need

In (7c), the original NP has both pre- and post-modification; it also has two parallel pre-modifiers “sweeping” and “fundamental.” It seems that the interpreter was struggling to deliver a complete interpretation, and to avoid fragmentation the head noun “reform” was delivered three times as “变革” (reform) in the interpretation. It is obviously an example of repetition which is classified as correction in delivery. This type of correction or the repetition of head nouns is very common in the SIs of pre- and post-modified English NPs in order to save time and release pressure on memory, therefore interpreters tend to interpret the long NP as shown in the example into shorter NPs rather than placing both

original pre-and post-modifications before the interpreted head noun to make a really long Chinese pre-modified NP.

### 3.7 Parameter 7: Complete Omissions in Delivery

The scenario on complete omissions in delivery includes the omissions of entire NPs, which has been illustrated in parameter 2, omissions in content, and will not be repeated here.

## 4. Discussion and Conclusion

### 4.1 Discussion and Conclusion on the Impact of Post-modification on SI

In order to establish whether the post-modification in English NP2s and NP3s had a significant impact on the SIs of the entire phrases, three separate comparisons were carried out between the interpretations of NP1s and NP2s, NP1s and NP3s, and NP2s and NP3s. The comparisons were made in terms of percentages through the SPSS paired *t*-test.<sup>7</sup> The test also produced a *p*-value for each parameter. We can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference only if the *p*-value is less than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ). As there were two categories of participants differing in level of expertise, that is, professionals and students, I carried out three sets of comparisons with the outputs produced by professionals first and then another three sets of comparisons with the outputs delivered by students. The results of the comparisons obtained from the professional group and the student group were consistent.

The conclusions on the impact of post-modification on SI are as follows:

| Scenario | Position | Mean (%) | Standard Deviation | p-value        |
|----------|----------|----------|--------------------|----------------|
| CG       | NP1      | 45.22    | 8.67               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP2      | 17.73    | 6.86               |                |
| CO       | NP1      | 30.96    | 9.59               | <0.01 (0.001)  |
|          | NP2      | 42.10    | 12.61              |                |
| CS       | NP1      | 23.80    | 6.39               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP2      | 40.18    | 6.63               |                |

<sup>7</sup> I used a paired *t*-test for matched data. For instance, each subject needed to produce a SI for a group of eighty-four NP1s and also for a group of fifty-two NP2s, which means the SI of the two different groups was produced by the same participant. In this case, the data of the two groups are called matched data, and a paired *t*-test is the appropriate choice.

|     |     |       |      |                |
|-----|-----|-------|------|----------------|
| DG  | NP1 | 79.22 | 8.50 | <0.05 (0.034)  |
|     | NP2 | 73.71 | 8.87 |                |
| DGE | NP1 | 1.07  | 1.26 | <0.001 (0.000) |
|     | NP2 | 6.44  | 2.65 |                |
| DC  | NP1 | 1.73  | 1.48 | <0.01 (0.008)  |
|     | NP2 | 6.62  | 3.99 |                |
| DCO | NP1 | 18.40 | 7.55 | >0.05 (0.091)  |
|     | NP2 | 14.98 | 6.95 |                |

Table 1: Professionals: NP1s–NP2s analysis/paired *t*-test.

The following analysis is based on the test on data produced by professionals.

As shown in table 1, in terms of content accuracy, more NP1s ( $M = 45.22$ ,  $SD = 8.67$ ) were interpreted accurately than NP2s ( $M = 17.73$ ,  $SD = 6.86$ ) and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). Interpretations of NP1s display fewer omissions ( $M = 30.96$ ,  $SD = 9.59$ ) and fewer substitutions ( $M = 23.80$ ,  $SD = 6.39$ ) than interpretations of NP2s (omissions:  $M = 42.10$ ,  $SD = 12.61$ ; substitutions:  $M = 40.18$ ,  $SD = 6.63$ ). Also, the effects of the position of modifiers on omissions and substitutions are both significant (omissions:  $p < 0.01$ ; substitutions:  $p < 0.001$ ).

With regard to good delivery, the percentage of NP1s which were interpreted well ( $M = 79.22$ ,  $SD = 8.50$ ) is higher than that of NP2s ( $M = 73.71$ ,  $SD = 8.87$ ) and the difference is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Interpretations of NP1s display fewer grammatical errors ( $M = 1.07$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ) and fewer corrections ( $M = 1.73$ ,  $SD = 1.48$ ) than interpretations of NP2s (grammatical errors:  $M = 6.44$ ,  $SD = 2.65$ ; corrections:  $M = 6.62$ ,  $SD = 3.99$ ). The correlation between the position of modifiers and grammatical errors and corrections is significant (grammatical errors:  $p < 0.001$ ; corrections:  $p < 0.01$ ). Although interpretations of NP1s display more complete omissions in delivery ( $M = 18.40$ ,  $SD = 7.55$ ) than interpretations of NP2s ( $M = 14.98$ ,  $SD = 6.95$ ), the correlation between position and complete omissions in delivery is insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ).

| Scenario | Position | Mean (%) | Standard Deviation | p-value        |
|----------|----------|----------|--------------------|----------------|
| CG       | NP1      | 32.35    | 7.30               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP2      | 9.93     | 5.49               |                |
| CO       | NP1      | 39.19    | 7.60               | <0.05 (0.046)  |

|     |     |       |      |                |
|-----|-----|-------|------|----------------|
|     | NP2 | 44.72 | 8.80 |                |
| CS  | NP1 | 27.65 | 6.62 | <0.001 (0.000) |
|     | NP2 | 45.35 | 8.14 |                |
| DG  | NP1 | 75.00 | 9.44 | <0.05 (0.012)  |
|     | NP2 | 64.89 | 8.78 |                |
| DGE | NP1 | 2.00  | 1.39 | <0.001 (0.000) |
|     | NP2 | 17.67 | 6.70 |                |
| DC  | NP1 | 2.30  | 1.57 | <0.01 (0.004)  |
|     | NP2 | 9.29  | 7.15 |                |
| DCO | NP1 | 21.14 | 9.54 | <0.01 (0.001)  |
|     | NP2 | 10.61 | 5.08 |                |

Table 2: Students: NP1s–NP2s analysis/paired *t*-test.

The following analysis is based on the test on data produced by students.

As shown in table 2, the proportion of NP1s which were accurately interpreted in terms of content ( $M = 32.35$ ,  $SD = 7.30$ ) is higher than that of NP2s ( $M = 9.93$ ,  $SD = 5.49$ ) and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). With regard to content errors, interpretations of NP1s display fewer omissions ( $M = 39.19$ ,  $SD = 7.60$ ) and fewer substitutions ( $M = 27.65$ ,  $SD = 6.62$ ) than interpretations of NP2s (omissions:  $M = 44.72$ ,  $SD = 8.80$ ; substitutions:  $M = 45.35$ ,  $SD = 8.14$ ), and the effects of position on omissions and substitutions are both significant (omissions:  $p < 0.05$ ; substitutions:  $p < 0.001$ ).

The percentage of NP1s which were interpreted well in terms of good delivery ( $M = 75.00$ ,  $SD = 9.44$ ) is higher than that of NP2s ( $M = 64.89$ ,  $SD = 8.78$ ) and the difference is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Interpretations of NP1s include fewer grammatical errors ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = 1.39$ ) and fewer corrections ( $M = 2.30$ ,  $SD = 1.57$ ) than those of NP2s (grammatical errors:  $M = 17.67$ ,  $SD = 6.70$ ; corrections:  $M = 9.29$ ,  $SD = 7.15$ ). The correlation between position and grammatical errors and corrections is significant (grammatical errors:  $p < 0.001$ ; corrections:  $p < 0.01$ ). Interpretations of NP1s display more complete omissions in delivery ( $M = 21.14$ ,  $SD = 9.54$ ) than those of NP2s ( $M = 10.61$ ,  $SD = 5.08$ ) and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.01$ ).

The comparison of the interpretations of NP1s and NP2s as shown in tables 1 and 2 suggests that English post-modification in NP2s has a significant impact on the interpreting performance of both professional and student interpreters in terms of content accuracy and delivery appropriateness and causes more

omissions, more substitutions in content, more grammatical errors, and more corrections in delivery.

| Scenario | Position | Mean (%) | Standard Deviation | p-value        |
|----------|----------|----------|--------------------|----------------|
| CG       | NP1      | 45.22    | 8.67               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP3      | 14.80    | 10.68              |                |
| CO       | NP1      | 30.96    | 9.59               | <0.01 (0.004)  |
|          | NP3      | 45.92    | 14.82              |                |
| CS       | NP1      | 23.80    | 6.39               | <0.01 (0.002)  |
|          | NP3      | 39.24    | 10.37              |                |
| DG       | NP1      | 79.22    | 8.50               | <0.01 (0.005)  |
|          | NP3      | 69.61    | 8.57               |                |
| DGE      | NP1      | 1.07     | 1.26               | <0.01 (0.001)  |
|          | NP3      | 8.89     | 4.42               |                |
| DC       | NP1      | 1.73     | 1.48               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP3      | 15.19    | 5.81               |                |
| DCO      | NP1      | 18.40    | 7.55               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP3      | 8.14     | 6.90               |                |

Table 3: Professionals: NP1s–NP3 analysis/paired *t*-test.

The following analysis is based on the test on data produced by professionals.

As shown in table 3, in terms of correctness in content, the percentage of NP1s which were accurately interpreted ( $M = 45.22$ ,  $SD = 8.67$ ) is larger than that of NP3s ( $M = 14.80$ ,  $SD = 10.68$ ) and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). Interpretations of NP1s display fewer omissions ( $M = 30.96$ ,  $SD = 9.59$ ) and fewer substitutions ( $M = 23.80$ ,  $SD = 6.39$ ) than interpretations of NP3s (omissions:  $M = 45.92$ ,  $SD = 14.82$ ; substitutions:  $M = 39.24$ ,  $SD = 10.37$ ). The effects of the presence of post-modification on omissions and substitutions are both significant (omissions:  $p < 0.01$ ; substitutions:  $p < 0.01$ ).

From the perspective of good delivery, the percentage of NP1s which were interpreted well ( $M = 79.22$ ,  $SD = 8.50$ ) is higher than that of NP3s ( $M = 69.61$ ,  $SD = 8.57$ ) and the difference is statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). Interpretations of NP1s generated fewer grammatical errors ( $M = 1.07$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ) and fewer corrections ( $M = 1.73$ ,  $SD = 1.48$ ) than those of NP3s (grammatical errors:  $M = 8.89$ ,  $SD = 4.42$ ; corrections:  $M = 15.19$ ,  $SD = 5.81$ ). The correlation between the presence of post-modification and grammatical errors and corrections is

significant (grammatical errors:  $p < 0.01$ ; corrections:  $p < 0.001$ ). Probably due to the length of the NPs, interpretations of NP1s display more complete omissions in delivery ( $M = 18.40$ ,  $SD = 7.55$ ) than those of NP3s ( $M = 8.14$ ,  $SD = 6.90$ ) and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.001$ ).

| Scenario | Position | Mean (%) | Standard Deviation | p-value        |
|----------|----------|----------|--------------------|----------------|
| CG       | NP1      | 32.35    | 7.30               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP3      | 2.50     | 3.52               |                |
| CO       | NP1      | 39.19    | 7.60               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP3      | 55.83    | 9.87               |                |
| CS       | NP1      | 27.65    | 6.62               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP3      | 41.39    | 9.25               |                |
| DG       | NP1      | 75.00    | 9.44               | <0.01 (0.001)  |
|          | NP3      | 55.55    | 10.68              |                |
| DGE      | NP1      | 2.00     | 1.39               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP3      | 26.67    | 14.35              |                |
| DC       | NP1      | 2.30     | 1.57               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP3      | 14.99    | 5.78               |                |
| DCO      | NP1      | 21.14    | 9.54               | <0.001 (0.000) |
|          | NP3      | 4.43     | 4.78               |                |

Table 4: Students: NP1s–NP3 analysis/paired *t*-test.

The following analysis is based on the test on data produced by students.

As shown in table 4, more NP1s ( $M = 32.35$ ,  $SD = 7.30$ ) than NP3s ( $M = 2.50$ ,  $SD = 3.52$ ) were accurately interpreted and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). Interpretations of NP1s display fewer omissions ( $M = 39.19$ ,  $SD = 7.60$ ) and fewer substitutions ( $M = 27.65$ ,  $SD = 6.62$ ) than interpretations of NP3s (omissions:  $M = 55.83$ ,  $SD = 9.87$ ; substitutions:  $M = 41.39$ ,  $SD = 9.25$ ), and the effects of the presence of post-modification on omissions and substitutions are both significant (omissions:  $p < 0.001$ ; substitutions:  $p < 0.001$ ).

In terms of good delivery, more NP1s were interpreted well ( $M = 75.00$ ,  $SD = 9.44$ ) than NP3s ( $M = 55.55$ ,  $SD = 10.68$ ) and the difference is statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). To be more specific, interpretations of NP1s include fewer grammatical errors ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = 1.39$ ) and fewer corrections ( $M = 2.30$ ,  $SD = 1.57$ ) than those of NP3s (grammatical errors:  $M = 26.67$ ,  $SD =$

14.35; corrections:  $M = 14.99$ ,  $SD = 5.78$ ). The correlation between the presence of post-modification on the one hand and grammatical errors and corrections on the other is significant (grammatical errors:  $p < 0.001$ ; corrections:  $p < 0.001$ ). Possibly due to the length and complexity of the NP1s, interpretations of them generated more complete omissions in delivery ( $M = 21.14$ ,  $SD = 9.54$ ) than those of NP3s ( $M = 4.43$ ,  $SD = 4.78$ ) and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.001$ ).

The comparison of the interpretations of NP1s and NP3s as shown in tables 3 and 4 suggests that the presence of English post-modification in NP3s has a statistically significant effect on both professionals' and students' interpretations in terms of content accuracy and delivery appropriateness and generated more omissions, more substitutions in content, more grammatical errors, and more corrections in delivery. Interestingly, when NP3s are long and complex, their interpretations display fewer complete omissions in delivery than those of simple and only-pre-modified NP1s.

| Scenario | Position | Mean (%) | Standard Deviation | p-value       |
|----------|----------|----------|--------------------|---------------|
| CG       | NP2      | 17.73    | 6.86               | >0.05 (0.204) |
|          | NP3      | 14.80    | 10.68              |               |
| CO       | NP2      | 42.10    | 12.61              | >0.05 (0.454) |
|          | NP3      | 45.92    | 14.82              |               |
| CS       | NP2      | 40.18    | 6.63               | >0.05 (0.834) |
|          | NP3      | 39.24    | 10.37              |               |
| DG       | NP2      | 73.71    | 8.87               | >0.05 (0.240) |
|          | NP3      | 69.61    | 8.57               |               |
| DGE      | NP2      | 6.44     | 2.65               | >0.05 (0.259) |
|          | NP3      | 8.89     | 4.42               |               |
| DC       | NP2      | 6.62     | 3.99               | <0.01 (0.005) |
|          | NP3      | 15.19    | 5.81               |               |
| DCO      | NP2      | 14.98    | 6.95               | <0.05 (0.028) |
|          | NP3      | 8.14     | 6.90               |               |

Table 5: Professionals: NP2s–NP3s analysis/paired *t*-test.

The following analysis is based on the test on data produced by professionals.

As shown in table 5, the proportion of NP2s which were accurately interpreted ( $M = 17.73$ ,  $SD = 6.86$ ) is larger than that of NP3s ( $M = 14.80$ ,  $SD = 10.68$ ), but the difference is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). With regard to content errors, interpretations of NP2s display fewer omissions ( $M = 42.10$ ,  $SD = 12.61$ ) and more substitutions ( $M = 40.18$ ,  $SD = 6.63$ ) than interpretations of NP3s (omissions:  $M = 45.92$ ,  $SD = 14.82$ ; substitutions:  $M = 39.24$ ,  $SD = 10.37$ ). However, the effects of the existence of pre-modification and the complexity of NPs on omissions and substitutions are insignificant (omissions:  $p > 0.05$ ; substitutions:  $p > 0.05$ ).

In terms of good delivery, the percentage of NP2s which were interpreted well ( $M = 73.71$ ,  $SD = 8.87$ ) is higher than that of NP3s ( $M = 69.61$ ,  $SD = 8.57$ ), however, the difference is insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Interpretations of NP2s include fewer grammatical errors ( $M = 6.44$ ,  $SD = 2.65$ ) and fewer corrections ( $M = 6.62$ ,  $SD = 3.99$ ) than those of NP3s (grammatical errors:  $M = 8.89$ ,  $SD = 4.42$ ; corrections:  $M = 15.19$ ,  $SD = 5.81$ ). However, the correlation between the existence of pre-modification and the complexity of NPs and grammatical errors is insignificant, while that between position and corrections is significant (grammatical errors:  $p > 0.05$ ; corrections:  $p < 0.01$ ). Probably due to the length and complexity of the NPs, interpretations of NP2s display more complete omissions in delivery ( $M = 14.98$ ,  $SD = 6.95$ ) than those of NP3s ( $M = 8.14$ ,  $SD = 6.90$ ) and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

| Scenario | Position | Mean (%) | Standard Deviation | p-value       |
|----------|----------|----------|--------------------|---------------|
| CG       | NP2      | 9.93     | 5.49               | <0.01 (0.001) |
|          | NP3      | 2.50     | 3.52               |               |
| CO       | NP2      | 44.72    | 8.80               | <0.01 (0.009) |
|          | NP3      | 55.83    | 9.87               |               |
| CS       | NP2      | 45.35    | 8.14               | >0.05 (0.291) |
|          | NP3      | 41.39    | 9.25               |               |
| DG       | NP2      | 64.89    | 8.78               | <0.05 (0.010) |
|          | NP3      | 55.55    | 10.68              |               |
| DGE      | NP2      | 17.67    | 6.70               | >0.05 (0.066) |
|          | NP3      | 26.67    | 14.35              |               |

|     |     |       |      |               |
|-----|-----|-------|------|---------------|
| DC  | NP2 | 9.29  | 7.15 | >0.05 (0.053) |
|     | NP3 | 14.99 | 5.78 |               |
| DCO | NP2 | 10.61 | 5.08 | <0.01 (0.001) |
|     | NP3 | 4.43  | 4.78 |               |

Table 6: Students: NP2s–NP3s analysis/paired *t*-test.

The following analysis is based on the test on data produced by students.

As shown in table 6, more NP2s ( $M = 9.93$ ,  $SD = 5.49$ ) were accurately interpreted than NP3s ( $M = 2.50$ ,  $SD = 3.52$ ) and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). Interpretations of NP2s generated fewer omissions ( $M = 44.72$ ,  $SD = 8.80$ ) and fewer substitutions ( $M = 45.35$ ,  $SD = 8.14$ ) than interpretations of NP3s (omissions:  $M = 55.83$ ,  $SD = 9.87$ ; substitutions:  $M = 41.39$ ,  $SD = 9.24$ ), and the effect of the complexity of NPs on omissions is significant ( $p < 0.01$ ) while that on substitutions is insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ).

In terms of good delivery, more NP2s ( $M = 64.89$ ,  $SD = 8.78$ ) were interpreted well than NP3s ( $M = 55.55$ ,  $SD = 10.68$ ) and the difference is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Interpretations of NP2s display fewer grammatical errors ( $M = 17.67$ ,  $SD = 6.70$ ) and fewer corrections ( $M = 9.29$ ,  $SD = 7.15$ ) than those of NP3s (grammatical errors:  $M = 14.99$ ,  $SD = 5.78$ ; corrections:  $M = 13.04$ ,  $SD = 6.26$ ), however, the correlation between complexity of NPs on the one hand and grammatical errors and corrections on the other is insignificant (grammatical errors:  $p > 0.05$ ; corrections:  $p > 0.05$ ). Probably due to the length and complexity of the NPs, interpretations of NP2s generated more complete omissions in delivery ( $M = 10.61$ ,  $SD = 5.08$ ) than those of NP3s ( $M = 4.43$ ,  $SD = 4.78$ ) and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.01$ ).

The comparison of the interpretations of NP2s and NP3s as shown in tables 5 and 6 strongly suggests that the presence of English pre-modification in NP3s does not have a significant impact on professionals' and students' interpretations in terms of content accuracy and delivery appropriateness; the interpretations of NP3s only display fewer complete omissions when NP3s are long and complex.

In conclusion, post-modification (which is not permitted in Chinese NPs) in English NPs seems to have a significant impact on the interpreting performance of both professionals and students in terms of content accuracy and delivery appropriateness. The presence of post-modification either in simple or complex NPs correlates with more omissions, more substitutions in content, more grammatical errors, and more corrections in delivery. Another interesting finding is that the more complex the NPs are, the fewer complete omissions in interpretations there will be. According to Gile (1995, 169–70),

in simultaneous interpreting, a delicate balance of processing capacity requirements among four Efforts, namely, the Listening and Analysis Effort (L), the Short-Term Memory Effort (M), the Speech Production Effort (P) and the Coordination Effort (C), must be maintained for interpreting to proceed smoothly, and saturation may be attributed to an increase in processing capacity requirements in any one of these Efforts. Also, according to Gile (1995,174–75), word order differences will require the interpreter to lag further behind the speaker before encoding into target language, which will increase processing capacity requirements in the Short-Term Memory Effort and might cause problems in SI including “deterioration of the *content* of the target-language speech” in the form of errors and omissions, and “deterioration of its *delivery*” which would affect “linguistic output, voice and intonation,” in this way, the current research has provided further empirical support to the hypothesis derived from Daniel Gile’s (1995, 174–75; italics in original) Effort Models.

#### 4.2 Discussion and Conclusion on the Impact of Level of Expertise on SI

As there are two groups of participants differing in level of expertise in the experiment, a comparison between students and professionals was carried out. The comparison was done through the SPSS independent sample *t*-test.<sup>8</sup> Given that the previous section has shown that the presence of post-modification has a significant effect on interpreting performance, I compared the professionals’ interpretations with the students’ interpretations of NP1s, NP2s and NP3s respectively.

| Scenario | Expertise | Mean (%) | Standard Deviation | p-value       |
|----------|-----------|----------|--------------------|---------------|
| CG       | Stu       | 32.35    | 7.30               | <0.01(0.002)  |
|          | Pro       | 45.22    | 8.67               |               |
| CO       | Stu       | 39.19    | 7.60               | <0.05 (0.041) |
|          | Pro       | 30.96    | 9.59               |               |
| CS       | Stu       | 27.65    | 6.62               | >0.05(0.197)  |

<sup>8</sup> I used an independent *t*-test for independent data. For instance, each student produced a SI for eighty-four NP1s and each professional produced a SI for eighty-four NP1s as well. The two sets of SI of NP1s were produced by two categories of participants, one group of students and one group of professionals, therefore, the data of the two sets are called independent data and the SPSS independent sample *t*-test is the proper method.

|     |     |       |      |               |
|-----|-----|-------|------|---------------|
|     | Pro | 23.80 | 6.39 |               |
| DG  | Stu | 75.10 | 9.53 | >0.05(0.318)  |
|     | Pro | 79.22 | 8.50 |               |
| DGE | Stu | 2.00  | 1.56 | >0.05(0.159)  |
|     | Pro | 1.07  | 1.26 |               |
| DC  | Stu | 1.80  | 1.49 | >0.05(0.441)  |
|     | Pro | 1.33  | 1.11 |               |
| DCO | Stu | 21.44 | 9.54 | >0.05 (0.486) |
|     | Pro | 18.40 | 7.55 |               |

Table 7: NP1: Student (Stu)–Professional (Pro) analysis/independent sample *t*-test.

The following analysis is based on the test on data on NP1s.

As shown in table 7, the proportion of content accuracy of student interpretations ( $M = 32.35$ ,  $SD = 7.30$ ) is lower than that of professional interpretations ( $M = 45.22$ ,  $SD = 8.67$ ) and level of expertise correlates significantly with performance quality ( $p < 0.01$ ). Students made more omissions ( $M = 39.19$ ,  $SD = 7.60$ ) than professionals ( $M = 30.96$ ,  $SD = 9.59$ ) and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Students ( $M = 27.65$ ,  $SD = 6.62$ ) made more substitutions in content than professionals ( $M = 23.80$ ,  $SD = 6.39$ ), however, the difference is insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Students ( $M = 75.10$ ,  $SD = 9.53$ ) produced fewer good deliveries than professionals ( $M = 79.22$ ,  $SD = 8.50$ ) but level of expertise does not correlate significantly with the quality of delivery of interpretation ( $p > 0.05$ ). More grammatical errors and slightly more corrections can be observed in student interpretations (grammatical errors:  $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = 1.56$ ; corrections:  $M = 1.80$ ,  $SD = 1.49$ ) than in professional interpretations (grammatical errors:  $M = 1.07$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ; corrections:  $M = 1.33$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ), but the correlation between level of expertise and grammatical errors and correction is not significant (grammatical errors:  $p > 0.05$ ; corrections:  $p > 0.05$ ). Although student interpretations display more complete omissions in delivery ( $M = 21.14$ ,  $SD = 9.54$ ) than professional interpretations ( $M = 18.40$ ,  $SD = 7.55$ ), the correlation between level of expertise and complete omissions in delivery is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ).

| Scenario | Expertise | Mean (%) | Standard Deviation | p-value       |
|----------|-----------|----------|--------------------|---------------|
| CG       | Stu       | 9.93     | 5.49               | <0.01(0.009)  |
|          | Pro       | 17.73    | 6.86               |               |
| CO       | Stu       | 44.72    | 8.80               | >0.05(0.581)  |
|          | Pro       | 42.10    | 12.61              |               |
| CS       | Stu       | 45.35    | 8.14               | >0.05(0.137)  |
|          | Pro       | 40.18    | 6.63               |               |
| DG       | Stu       | 64.89    | 8.78               | <0.05(0.031)  |
|          | Pro       | 73.93    | 8.77               |               |
| DGE      | Stu       | 17.67    | 6.70               | <0.001(0.000) |
|          | Pro       | 6.44     | 2.65               |               |
| DC       | Stu       | 7.85     | 6.91               | >0.05(0.354)  |
|          | Pro       | 5.37     | 4.24               |               |
| DCO      | Stu       | 10.61    | 5.08               | >0.05 (0.112) |
|          | Pro       | 14.98    | 6.95               |               |

Table 8: NP2: Student (Stu)–Professional (Pro) analysis/independent sample *t*-test.

The following analysis is based on the test on data on NP2s.

It is obvious in table 8 that the percentage of accurate student interpretations ( $M = 9.93$ ,  $SD = 5.49$ ) is lower than that of professionals ( $M = 17.73$ ,  $SD = 6.86$ ) and level of expertise correlates significantly with performance quality ( $p < 0.01$ ). Students made more omissions ( $M = 44.72$ ,  $SD = 8.80$ ) and more substitutions ( $M = 45.35$ ,  $SD = 8.14$ ) than professionals (omissions:  $M = 42.10$ ,  $SD = 12.61$ ; substitutions:  $M = 40.18$ ,  $SD = 6.63$ ), but the correlation between level of expertise and omissions and substitutions is not significant (omissions:  $p > 0.05$ ; substitutions:  $p > 0.05$ ).

The student interpretations ( $M = 64.89$ ,  $SD = 8.78$ ) include fewer good deliveries than those of professionals ( $M = 73.93$ ,  $SD = 8.77$ ) and level of expertise correlates significantly with the quality of delivery of interpretation ( $p < 0.05$ ). More grammatical errors ( $M = 17.67$ ,  $SD = 6.70$ ) and more corrections ( $M = 7.85$ ,  $SD = 6.91$ ) are displayed in student interpretations than in professional interpretations (grammatical errors:  $M = 6.44$ ,  $SD = 2.65$ ; corrections:  $M = 5.37$ ,  $SD = 4.24$ ). The correlation between level of expertise and grammatical errors

is significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) while that between level of expertise and corrections is insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ). It is interesting to see fewer complete omissions in delivery in student interpretations ( $M = 10.61$ ,  $SD = 5.08$ ) than in professional interpretations ( $M = 14.98$ ,  $SD = 6.95$ ), however, the difference is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ).

| Scenario | Expertise | Mean (%) | Standard Deviation | p-value       |
|----------|-----------|----------|--------------------|---------------|
| CG       | Stu       | 2.50     | 3.52               | <0.01(0.001)  |
|          | Pro       | 14.80    | 10.68              |               |
| CO       | Stu       | 55.83    | 9.87               | >0.05 (0.081) |
|          | Pro       | 45.92    | 14.82              |               |
| CS       | Stu       | 41.39    | 9.25               | >0.05(0.623)  |
|          | Pro       | 39.24    | 10.37              |               |
| DG       | Stu       | 55.83    | 10.57              | <0.01(0.004)  |
|          | Pro       | 69.99    | 8.82               |               |
| DGE      | Stu       | 26.67    | 14.35              | <0.01(0.002)  |
|          | Pro       | 8.89     | 4.42               |               |
| DC       | Stu       | 13.04    | 6.26               | >0.05(0.977)  |
|          | Pro       | 12.97    | 5.37               |               |
| DCO      | Stu       | 4.43     | 4.78               | >0.05 (0.161) |
|          | Pro       | 8.14     | 6.90               |               |

Table 9: NP3: Student (Stu)–Professional (Pro) analysis/independent sample *t*-test.

The following analysis is based on the test on data on NP3s.

As shown in table 9, students ( $M = 2.50$ ,  $SD = 3.52$ ) produced fewer accurate interpretations than professionals ( $M = 14.80$ ,  $SD = 10.68$ ) and level of expertise correlates significantly with performance quality ( $p < 0.01$ ). Students made more omissions ( $M = 55.83$ ,  $SD = 9.87$ ) and more substitutions ( $M = 41.39$ ,  $SD = 9.25$ ) than professionals (omissions:  $M = 45.92$ ,  $SD = 14.82$ ; substitutions:  $M = 39.24$ ,  $SD = 10.37$ ), but the difference for both parameters is insignificant (omissions:  $p > 0.05$ ; substitutions:  $p > 0.05$ ).

Students ( $M = 55.83$ ,  $SD = 10.57$ ) produced fewer good deliveries than professionals ( $M = 69.99$ ,  $SD = 8.82$ ) and level of expertise correlates significantly with the quality of delivery of interpretation ( $p < 0.01$ ). Student interpretations ( $M = 26.67$ ,  $SD = 14.35$ ) include more grammatical errors than professional interpretations ( $M = 8.89$ ,  $SD = 4.42$ ) and the difference is significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). Although student interpretations ( $M = 13.04$ ,  $SD = 6.26$ ) display more corrections in delivery than professional interpretations ( $M = 12.97$ ,  $SD = 5.37$ ), the correlation between level of expertise and correction is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). There are fewer complete omissions in delivery in student interpretations ( $M = 4.43$ ,  $SD = 4.78$ ) than in professional interpretations ( $M = 8.14$ ,  $SD = 6.90$ ), but the correlation between level of expertise and complete omissions in delivery is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ).

The conclusion we have drawn from the three groups of comparisons is that post-modification has a significant effect on SIs; however, it does not change the impact of level of expertise on interpretations. In the analysis of the interpretations of NP1s, NP2s and NP3s, the impact of level of expertise is consistently observed through the better performance of professionals than students in terms of content. It is interesting that in terms of interpretations of NP1s, significant correlation between level of expertise and interpretations is only displayed at the content level, while in terms of interpretations of NP2s and NP3s, significant correlation between level of expertise and interpretations is shown not only at the content level but also at the delivery level, and in the fact that students made more grammatical errors than professionals, which means that students have more problems in dealing with NPs with post-modification in terms of delivery than professionals who seem to handle them better. It seems that problems caused by grammatical asymmetries could be dealt with experience and practice, but a further study on the solutions to the problems would be necessary.

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# Automatic Imitation or Poor First-Language Inhibition? Why Foreign-Accentedness Increases during Interpreting

Václav Jonáš Podlipský, Šárka Šimáčková

Palacký University, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,  
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic.

Email: vaclav.j.podlipsky@upol.cz, sarka.simackova@upol.cz

**ABSTRACT:** Interpreters often listen to their native language (L1) and immediately speak in their second language (L2). In a pilot experiment with twenty-two Czech students of interpreting from and into English, we showed that the Voice Onset Time (VOT) of their English /t/s gradually became more Czech-like (i.e. shorter) only when they responded in English to Czech auditory prompts and not when they responded in English to English prompts or when they spoke without hearing any prompts. We propose a methodology that will test what contributes to this effect: (i) impoverished inhibition of the L1 phonological system (they reduced the VOT of L2-English /t/ because their L1-Czech /t/ category was not effectively inhibited immediately after hearing Czech speech), or (ii) automatic imitation of pronunciation properties of recently heard speech (they reduced VOT of /t/ because the recently heard [t] tokens, whatever the language, had had short VOTs).

**KEYWORDS:** foreign-accentedness; first-language use; first-language inhibition; phonetic imitation; voice onset time.

## 1. Introduction

The starting point of the investigation reported in this paper was the informal observation that student interpreters tend to have poorer second-language (L2) pronunciation when interpreting from their first language (L1) into their L2 than when they are just speaking in the L2. While this may largely be a consequence of the increased strain of having to process two languages at once, which interferes with self-monitoring, it is very well possible that other factors are at play.

One possible factor pertains to L1 use. In L2 phonology, the role of transfer from L1 is unquestionable. There is also ample evidence that the degree of L1 influence on L2 is not constant for all speakers. Among the various reasons for why this is so (see Piske, MacKay, and Flege 2001) is the amount of L1 use, in other words, how often speakers use their native language. Specifically, it appears that the greater the overall amount of L1 use by a bilingual speaker, the greater the effect of L1 on her or his L2 production (Flege, Frieda, and Nozawa 1997). For instance, Guion, Flege, and Loftin (2000) studied L1-Quichua L2-Spanish bilinguals and found that higher overall L1 use resulted in a stronger L1-Quichua accent in L2-Spanish. What is more, the degree of L1 influence

on L2 varies not just between but also within individual speakers, also due to, in part at least, the extent of L1 use. For example, Sancier and Fowler (1997) reported that a Brazilian Portuguese learner of English studying in the United States always had less English-like stops (voiceless stops with shorter Voice Onset Time, reflecting shorter aspiration) after a summer vacation in Brazil.

It is even possible that using the L1 may have immediate consequences for L2 production that are observable within one conversation, or, in our case, within a single act of interpreting. Available evidence suggests that a bilingual's languages are not impervious to each other. For example, the phonetic implementation of sound categories by successive as well as simultaneous bilinguals in each of their languages has been shown to differ from monolinguals' implementation (see Flege, Schirru, and MacKay [2003] and Sundara, Polka, and Baum [2006] for successive and simultaneous bilinguals respectively). It is unclear then how bilinguals achieve the necessary selective activation of the language they are using and suppression or inhibition (e.g. Green 1998) of the other. It is equally unclear to what extent such suppression is complete, or how early bilinguals differ from late bilinguals in this respect (see, e.g. Kutas, Moreno, and Wicha [2009] for a discussion). For an interpreter from L1 into L2, the activation of L1 sound categories and processes that occurs during L1 perception may well result in a temporary inefficiency of L1 inhibition which will surface during subsequent L2 production as more L1-accented speech.

In this paper we first report on the results of a pilot study that aimed to explore the potential immediate effects of L1 use on how L1-accented L2 speech is. The study questioned whether L2 productions following L1 auditory prompts would be more L1-accented than L2 productions following L2 auditory prompts and/or no prompts. In the next section, we discuss another factor that may cause the greater L1-like accent in L2 after exposure to L1, namely, automatic subconscious imitation of the phonetic characteristics of recently perceived speech. We propose a methodology for a follow-up experiment that would allow us to separately assess the contribution of inefficient L1 inhibition and automatic imitation to increased L1-accentedness.

## 2. Pilot Study

In our pilot study we questioned whether interpreters' L2 (English) production would be different after listening to L1 (Czech) prompts as compared to L2 prompts and no prompts. Changes in L2 production were operationalized as changes in Voice Onset Time (VOT) of /t/ and /d/, a contrast present in both languages. In Czech, /d/ is realized as [d] with negative VOT, that is, voicing during closure or "prevoicing," and /t/ as unaspirated [t] with short positive VOT (see figure 1, left panel). In English on the other hand, word-initial /d/ is

realized as [d̥] voiceless during closure and /t/ is [t<sup>h</sup>] with a long positive VOT perceived as aspiration (see figure 1, right panel).

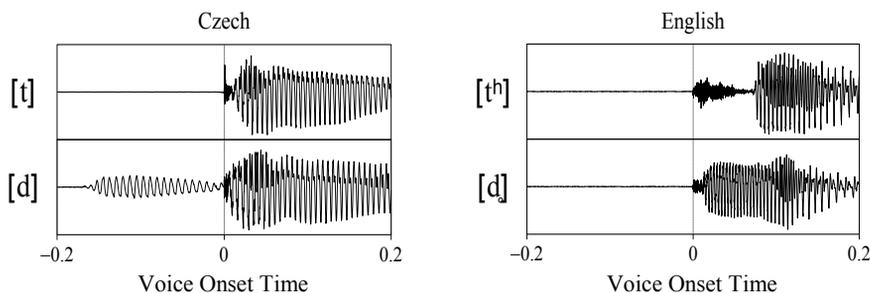


Figure 1: Example tokens of Czech and English /t/ and /d/ illustrating the difference in phonetic implementation.

## 2.1 Method

In order to examine whether our interpreters' production of VOT in English *t* and *d* is affected by recently heard Czech speech, we needed to collect specific *t*- and *d*-initial target words in precisely defined prosodic positions. In designing the experiment our aim was to approximate the situation of interpreting while removing the processing load of the actual mental translation from the source to the target language (understanding and remembering the message, finding Czech equivalents, etc.) and at the same time ensuring that participants, like interpreters, attend to the meaning of what they hear.

Twenty-two Czech students of Czech-English interpreting, sixteen females and six males, between twenty-one and twenty-eight years of age, participated individually in the study. Their pronunciation of forty-two target words, half *t*-initial and half *d*-initial, and forty-two fillers, was recorded under three conditions (fourteen target words and fourteen fillers per condition, see table 1). In the English Condition, participants heard through headphones twenty-eight English prompts, which were utterances between seventeen and twenty-two words in length. To discourage accommodation to a specific speaker, the prompts were pre-recorded by four male native speakers of different English accents (the standard southern British, Northern English, General American, and Australian accent). Immediately after each auditory prompt was presented, two written statements appeared on a computer screen. The participant had to choose and say out loud the statement that was an appropriate reaction to the prompt, for example, an answer to a question. The order of the appropriate/inappropriate statements on the screen was counterbalanced across the twenty-eight trials: the fourteen trials in which the appropriate statement was the

first one were randomly mixed with the fourteen trials in which the appropriate statement was the second one. For example, the participant heard the prompt in (1), then silently read the two statements in (2), and pronounced the one he or she considered to be more appropriate, in this case statement (2a).

- (1) The party is just getting started and my sister will be here in a few minutes. Can't you stay just a bit longer?
- (2) (a) Sorry, it's time for me to leave.  
(b) The attack could have been fatal.

One of the offered statements was always obviously incongruent with the context. Crucially, the appropriate statement contained one of the pre-selected target words and fillers, italicized in (2a), not italicized in the experiment. The sentences were constructed so that the target words would always bear word-level stress and stand in the pre-accentual position, which was to reduce prosodic variation that could affect VOT. Target words starting with /d/ were always utterance-initial to enable measurements of negative VOT. The inappropriate statements were similar in length as well as in the prosodic structure.

In the Czech Condition, the procedure was identical except that the participants heard auditory prompts pre-recorded by four male native speakers of Czech, two with a Bohemian and two with a Moravian accent. Their English responses contained another set of fourteen target *t*- and *d*-initial words (see table 1) and fourteen fillers.

Attempting to keep the three conditions comparable in the processing demands, the control No Prompts Condition involved a non-linguistic picture recall task. On each trial, two simple similar pictures were displayed on the computer screen (such as two daisies, two spoons, two keys, two wine glasses, etc.) for 1.5 s for participants to remember. Next, a statement containing one of fourteen new target *t*- and *d*-initial words (see table 1) and fourteen new fillers in the defined prosodic position appeared on the screen and the participant pronounced it out loud. An example statement is given in (3), target word italicized here.

- (3) The price on the *tag* was unreadable.

Finally, one of the two pictures presented earlier appeared again and the participant decided if it was the one they had seen on the left or the right side of the screen and responded by saying "left" or "right." The recall task was also to divert participants' attention from the statements and to minimize overarticulation. The target *t*- and *d*-initial words in the last condition provided baseline data for evaluating potential changes in the experimental conditions.

To avoid variation in VOT of word-initial stops due to a difference in height of the following vowels (e.g. Klatt 1975), high vowels were excluded. The target

words were all monosyllabic. Infrequent words were avoided. Table 1 lists all target words in each condition.

| English Condition |        | Czech Condition |       | No-Prompt Cond. |      |
|-------------------|--------|-----------------|-------|-----------------|------|
| damn              | Tad    | dad             | tab   | dance           | tag  |
| dark              | tap    | debt            | talk  | darts           | tall |
| dead              | taught | dense           | task  | Dave            | tan  |
| death             | test   | dog             | text  | deaf            | tank |
| dice              | time   | don't           | top   | die             | tax  |
| down              | toast  | duck            | touch | dive            | tone |
| dull              | type   | dump            | tell  | doubt           | town |

Table 1: Target words by Condition and initial stop.

All participants always completed the No Prompts Condition first, and the order of the English and Czech Conditions was counterbalanced across the subjects. Each participant took all three tests in one day with at least five-minute breaks in between.

## 2.2 Results

Measurements of prevoicing in /d/ had to be excluded because examination of the recordings revealed that whether or not participants prevoiced their /d/s probably depended to a large extent on how loudly they were speaking, which is a factor we did not control for. This is why we report here only the results for positive VOT (aspiration) in L2 English /t/.

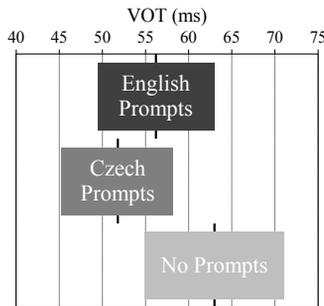


Figure 2: Mean VOT of /t/ split by Condition. Lines show means and block widths show 95 percent confidence intervals.

Figure 2 shows mean VOT of /t/ as a function of Condition. We submitted the data to a repeated-measures analysis of variance with Condition as the within-subject

factor (three levels: English Prompts, Czech Prompts, No Prompts) and Order of Tests as the between-subject factor (two levels: No Prompts – English Prompts – Czech Prompts, and No Prompts – Czech Prompts – English Prompts). The latter factor was not found to have a significant main effect ( $p > .34$ ), nor its interaction with Condition ( $p > .18$ ), and so it is not included in figure 2. It is not surprising, looking at figure 2, that Condition did have a significant main effect ( $F[2, 40] = 15.2$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Pairwise comparisons using a post-hoc Tukey HSD test found significant differences between the No Prompts and the other two conditions ( $p < .05$ ), except for the insignificant ( $p > .7$ ) difference between the No Prompts and the English conditions when the Order of Tests was No Prompts – Czech Prompts – English Prompts. However, we were most interested in the difference between VOT values in the Czech Prompts and the English Prompts Conditions. Recall that the research question for the pilot study was whether participants would produce stops with different VOT values when responding to Czech prompts as compared to English prompts. As shown in figure 2, there was a difference in the mean VOT of /t/ in the expected direction (shorter VOT in the Czech Condition). However, the post-hoc Tukey HSD test did not find the difference between Czech and English Prompts Conditions to be significant for those participants who took the tests in the order No Prompts – English Prompts – Czech Prompts, and for those who took them in the other order the difference only approached significance ( $p = .083$ ).

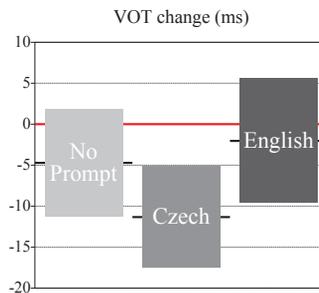


Figure 3: VOT Change during each condition averaged over all participants. Lines show means and block heights show 95 percent confidence intervals.

So far we have only looked at VOT values averaged across all the tokens elicited in each of the three tests. We also wanted to examine if and how VOT of initial /t/ in the English target words developed within each condition. This is why for each participant's /t/s in each condition we computed the score *VOT change*, (in ms), which was defined as

$$c = \bar{v}_1 - \bar{v}_2 \quad (1)$$

where is  $\bar{v}_1$  the mean VOT of the participant's first three tokens of /t/ in one condition and  $\bar{v}_2$  is the mean VOT of the last three tokens of /t/ in the same

condition. If equaled zero, it meant that the participant's VOTs did not change in the course of the test, while a negative value of indicated VOT decrease and a positive value an increase. Figure 3 shows in each condition averaged over all participants. We used one 1-sample *t*-test for each condition (with  $\alpha$  Bonferroni-corrected to .05/3) to test if the mean VOT change in each condition differed significantly from zero. The results showed that in the No Prompts and English Prompts Conditions mean VOT change was not significantly different from zero ( $p = .15$  and  $.58$  respectively) whereas in the Czech Prompts Condition it was ( $t[21] = 3.808$ ,  $p = .001$ ). This means that participants started with relatively long VOT values of /t/s in their L2 English productions following Czech prompts and at the end of that test, having heard more Czech utterances, they reduced VOT. This did not happen in the English Prompts Condition or in the control No Prompts Condition.

### 2.3 Discussion

The main research question addressed in the pilot study was whether L2 English production would be different following exposure to L1 Czech speech as opposed to exposure to L2 English speech. When all tokens from each test for each speaker were pooled together, the mean VOT of L2 English /t/ was indeed found to be affected by the experimental condition. However, this effect was mainly due to the longer VOTs in the No Prompts Condition in which participants read sentences while performing the picture recall task. The reason why the VOT values were longer in the No Prompts Condition could be ascribed to two methodological limitations. First, it is possible that the picture recall task and the prompt-response tasks did not burden the participants while they were pronouncing the target sentences to a comparable extent and, as a consequence, there could have been a difference in the degree of self-monitoring. Also, all participants completed this condition first and they could have been less fatigued than in the subsequent tasks. Thus, the VOT values elicited in the No Prompts Condition cannot be treated as a valid baseline.

More importantly for the research question, the main effect of Condition on the mean VOT values averaged over each test was *not* due to the hypothesized difference between Czech Prompts and English Prompts Conditions, which was in the expected direction but did not reach statistical significance (at  $\alpha = .05$ ). Nevertheless, when VOT development over the time course of each condition was examined, speakers' L2-English /t/s were shown to become gradually more L1-Czech-like *only* when they kept responding in English to Czech auditory prompts and *not* when they kept responding in English to English prompts or when they spoke not having heard any prompts. We interpret this finding as support for our hypothesis that using the L1 has immediate consequences for L2 production that are observable after several minutes after switching between the languages.

### 3. Proposed Methodology for a Follow-Up Study

In the pilot study we observed that a phonetic property of L2 speech immediately following L1 use gradually became more L1-like. In the introduction we discussed inefficient inhibition of the L1 as one reason why L2 utterances produced right after using the L1 may sound more L1-accented. There is another factor that can perhaps produce the same result. It is known that speakers' interactions in the same language can lead to a convergence (or divergence) of their accents over time depending primarily on their social closeness, role, and gender. The convergence of accents can be observed over longer time spans (e.g. Pardo, Gibbons, Suppes, and Krauss 2012), but it occurs even within one conversation (e.g. Pardo 2006). Moreover, apart from the socially-modulated alignment of talkers, it has been shown that speakers automatically and subconsciously imitate the fine-grained phonetic characteristics of recently perceived speech in their own productions. Such imitation is not a purely sociolinguistic phenomenon since it occurs even after exposure to a collection of unrelated words recorded by an unknown person (e.g. Nielsen 2011). We think it is worth considering the possibility that bilinguals speaking in one of their languages may imitate the phonetic properties of recently heard utterances in the other language. This is referred to as cross-language imitation hereafter.

Imitation is considered to have an automatic basis (Pickering and Garrod 2004). If a successive bilingual's languages are interconnected not only lexically (e.g. Fox 1996; Thierry and Wu 2007) but also on the level of sound (Flege 1995; Flege, Schirru, and MacKay 2003; Sundara, Polka, and Baum 2006) then imitation may even occur across the bilingual's languages. Kim and colleagues (Kim, Horton, and Bradlow 2011; Kim 2011) examined the hypothesis that interlocutors with overlapping phonetic "repertoires" are more likely to converge with each other because speech adjustments within one's repertoire are more likely than adjustments involving the production of speech sounds falling outside one's repertoire (Babel 2009). The authors tested if there was a greater convergence with a same-dialect speaker than with a different-dialect or a non-native speaker of a language. The results were mixed. In Kim, Horton, and Bradlow (2011) convergence, measured by perceptual judgments, was the more likely the smaller the interlocutors' language "distance," whereas in Kim (2011), who this time measured convergence acoustically, it was the other way round. Several other studies did attest cross-dialectal convergence (Delvaux and Soquet 2007; MacLeod 2012; Nguyen, Dufour, and Brunellière 2012). Therefore, language distance itself does not preclude imitation. Moreover, even if imitation could only take place within one's phonetic repertoire, (imbalanced) bilinguals are likely to have L2 phonetic repertoires skewed towards their L1 phonetics and hearing L1 speech could result in the use of those L2 sound properties that are

closer to the L1. Thus, returning to the situation of an L1-to-L2 interpreter, cross-language imitation cannot be excluded as a possible cause of greater L1-accentedness during L2 production following exposure to L1.

The purpose of our follow-up study is to disentangle the potential effects of ineffective L1 inhibition from the potential effects of cross-language imitation. The question we will address is whether the VOT reduction of L2 English /t/ after Czech prompts observed in the pilot study occurred because activation of the L1 /t/ category could not be inhibited or because the recently heard short-VOT [t] tokens, irrespective of the language, were automatically imitated.

In the new experimental design, the three elicitation conditions (Czech Prompts, English Prompts, No Prompts) will be supplemented by two new conditions: Czech prompts containing /p/, /t/, /k/ with artificially extended VOT values (longer aspiration) and English prompts containing /p/, /t/, /k/ with artificially reduced VOT values (shorter aspiration). Table 2 presents an overview of the predictions ineffective L1 inhibition and cross-language imitation make for the different experimental conditions. The predictions are not different if the exposure material is natural Czech with short VOT in /p/, /t/, /k/ or natural English with long VOT in /p/, /t/, /k/. However, they do differ for conditions using manipulated VOT (extended Czech and reduced English VOT). If speakers reduce VOTs when responding to prompts in Czech, regardless of the actual VOTs of the [p], [t], [k] tokens they have heard, then impoverished L1 inhibition is the cause. If speakers shift VOTs depending on the actual VOT values of the [p], [t], [k] tokens contained in the prompts they have heard, whatever the language, then imitation is the cause.

| Exposure language | Predictor                | Exposure VOT values |               |
|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
|                   |                          | Short/Reduced       | Long/Extended |
| L1 Czech          | Poor L1 inhibition       | Reduced VOT         | Reduced VOT   |
|                   | Cross-language imitation | Reduced VOT         | Unchanged VOT |
| L2 English        | Poor L1 inhibition       | Unchanged VOT       | Unchanged VOT |
|                   | Cross-language imitation | Reduced VOT         | Unchanged VOT |

Table 2: Predictions for VOT of L2 English voiceless stops after exposure to L1 Czech or L2 English with natural or manipulated VOT.

There are some additional methodological improvements to consider. First of all, it is necessary to control the selection of target words more strictly. Specifically, cognates, loanwords, and interlingual homophones need to be avoided since it is difficult to predict how bilinguals treat words that are not unambiguously language-specific. Also, since imitation is more likely in low-frequency words, it is important to ensure that the target words in different experimental conditions do not differ in their mean lexical frequency and variation. This can either be achieved by a careful selection of target words or by using identical targets in all conditions, while further controlling for the potential repetition effect (by randomizing the order of conditions for each participant differently).

Next, the goal of the study is to assess how L1-accented L2 speech is under various conditions. In the pilot study this was done by acoustic measurements of one particular phonetic characteristic. The advantage of this approach is that it is sufficiently sensitive to capture the slight exposure-induced shifts in production. The disadvantages are that only one characteristic is examined while everything else is ignored and also that it is not certain how closely the acoustic shifts towards L1-like values correlate with perceived accentedness. This is why acoustic measurements should be accompanied by foreign-accent ratings by native listeners.

Finally, the follow-up study could measure bilinguals' inhibitory skills (e.g. Green 1998) in an independent test (such as the one used by Lev-Ari and Peperkamp [2013]). If the results of the follow-up study point to the conclusion that L2 production following exposure to L1 was L1-accented due to inefficient L1 inhibition, then we should find a negative correlation between participants' inhibitory-skill scores from the independent test and foreign-accentedness scores (obtained by acoustic measurements or accent ratings).

#### 4. Summary

The usual *modus operandi* of an interpreter involves continuous quick switching from their native to their second language. While long-term L1 use has an undisputed influence on bilinguals' L2 pronunciation, in this paper we were interested in the immediate effects of switching from L1 to L2. In the pilot study, we found that speakers' L2-English pronunciation became more L1-Czech-like when they kept responding in English to Czech auditory prompts. We proposed a follow-up study that will test what produces such an effect. By using natural and manipulated Czech and English prompts we will be able to gauge separately the contribution of inefficient L1 inhibition and automatic imitation to increased L1-accentedness of L2 pronunciation following exposure to L1 speech.

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# Tackling Redundancy at the Delivery Stage—Using Peer Evaluation as a Teaching Method

Marie Sanders

Palacký University, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,  
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic.

Email: marie.sandersova@upol.cz

**ABSTRACT:** The last stage of the process of conveying a message for interpreters is “re-formulation,” during which they prove how they have mastered a wide spectrum of interpreting strategies. In addition, it is essential for listeners because they can finally receive the speaker’s message. In this paper I examine evaluation of redundancy as a tool for teaching interpreting. I define “redundancy” in interpreting as using speech constituents that are unnecessary for the transfer of the invariant of information and which may harm effectiveness of communication. I look at the origins of redundancy on the side of student interpreters and at its types and causes. I also explain how I incorporate peer assessment and peer feedback into the process of evaluation, since several studies consider this method to be beneficial for the student formative process. Finally, I show how redundancy may affect perception of an interpreter by listeners and the understanding of the message by listeners—students of interpreting.

**KEYWORDS:** interpreting; redundancy; delivering the message; evaluation; peer assessment

## 1. Introduction

Reformulation is for interpreters the last stage of the process of conveying a message, during which they can prove how they have mastered a wide spectrum of interpreting strategies. At the same time, it is essential for listeners because they can finally receive the speaker’s message. In this paper, I examine redundancy as a tool for teaching interpreters. In the following section I will introduce the initial stage of my attempt to develop a strategy through which students can learn to assess peer performance in interpreting objectively. They can also eliminate redundancy in their own performance and abandon bad habits which might lead to redundancy at the delivery stage of the message. Also, I provide a detailed description of the test. For the purpose of the evaluation process described below, I define “redundancy” as using speech constituents which are not necessary for the transfer of the invariant of information and which may harm effectiveness of communication or may even prevent the listener from comprehending the essence of the message. Further, I look at the origins of redundancy on the side of student interpreters, at its types and causes. Finally, I show how listeners—peer assessors—perceive redundancy.

## 2. Methods of Evaluation

Evaluation and assessment are fundamental components of training and development. It is the role of a teacher or a lecturer to assess their students and to steer them towards assessing their own performance objectively and effectively. I believe, however, that self-assessment, peer assessment and peer feedback also serve as valuable teaching and self-development tools. This view is supported by numerous research projects into peer assessment which indicate a positive formative impact on students' performance; in fact, in some cases they can be more beneficial than teacher assessment (Topping 1998, 249). Peer and self-assessment do not have to be performed separately. For example Brown, Rust and Gibbs (1994) explain that when these exercises are combined they have many advantages. They observe that "peer assessment can help self-assessment. By judging the work of others, students gain insight into their own performance. Peer and self-assessment help students develop the ability to make judgements, a necessary skill for study and professional life" (Brown, Rust, and Gibbs 1994).

For lecturers in interpreting in our department, it is common to assess students' performance and to provide feedback to students during their course mainly through one-to-one interaction in seminars. This method of feedback is requested by students most often, however peer assessment and peer evaluation are used frequently too.

### 2.1 Initial Stage of Assessment

In the following paragraph I will describe the practice of detecting redundancy that I most often use in my seminars for non-beginners in interpreting. The reason for not focusing on redundancy with real beginners is that, at the introductory level, we steer students towards mastering the essence of interpreting skills, that is, remembering the segment of the source text, note-taking, and smooth reproduction. At the initial stage of assessment, it is my practice to assign individual assignments into identifying redundancy in one's own performance. Once we reach a definition of redundancy and its various forms at the delivery stage together, I tend to present the most fitting examples. Students then start analysing their own recorded performance. They are instructed at first to identify redundancy, next to explain its causes, and finally to find ways of eliminating it and correcting the particular section in the text. The outcomes of this exercise have suggested that students are generally rather critical towards their own performance when they assess it in an interaction with their teacher; they can easily realise where the problem was and can find a way to remedy the problematic section of the text.

## 2.2 Further Stage

At the next stage we proceed towards guided evaluation and guided identification of redundant constituents of interpreter performance—this time aimed at the performance of peers. The aim of such an exercise is not only to help students objectively assess a friend's performance, but also to be able to explain the reasons for such evaluation and to avoid making the same mistake in one's own interpreting work. During the exercise, students are instructed to bear in mind methodological principles of interpreting and interpreting strategies, such as the principle of economy, time versus length ratio, the need to convey a message instead of individual words, and so forth.

## 3. Description of the Evaluation Exercise

During the first stage of this experiment, I took a random selection of student recordings from our repository which I considered suitable material for identifying and analysing redundancy. After this, I explained my definition of redundancy to the students as given in section 1 above. I asked them to consider if the definition was satisfactory or whether they would like to extend it. Then, I showed students a table with various categories of redundancy. Students were asked to identify the particular category in the provided recording, to list examples and to grade them in a provided table with individual categories of redundancy. The scale was from 10 (for the most severe interference or the most irritating redundant speech constituent) to 1 (almost no interference or the least irritating redundant speech constituent) and 0 (for no identified interference). There was also a column where students could mark if they perceived the redundant constituent so strongly that it prevented them from understanding the message.

The categories and their order in the table were as follows:

- (a) sounds of hesitation;
- (b) frequent or unjustified use of demonstrative pronouns (*this, that, these* . . .);
- (c) habitual use of certain words (e.g. adverbs such as *like, actually, in fact*, etc.);
- (d) pleonasm and tautology;
- (e) repetition of the same structures which have already been stated but repeated or rephrased.

I did not want students to work merely on the level of individual speech constituents, individual words, individual sentences and word-to-word translation because this is not the purpose of interpreting. I wanted them to get deeper into

the analysis of the content of the message and coherence of the text. I therefore added one more category, defined as:

- (f) useless or unnecessarily detailed parts of information in the form of longer sentence structure or longer sections of text *which the listener did not need to receive to understand the message*

To give the reader an example of a typical instance of such a type of redundancy which I hoped students could identify and eliminate, I highlighted the final part of the previous sentence which repeats the already mentioned information in its preceding section.

#### **4. Identifying the Causes**

When we look at various categories of redundant elements, we can class sounds of hesitation or habitual use of certain words just as bad habits or possibly as part of the individual style of a speaker. Simple repetition of individual words or very short structures can be explained by lack of practice when a student interpreter does not know how to start a sentence or how to continue in a sentence that has already started. The other reason behind these elements may be stage-fright, forgetting part of a message or not remembering connections between individual arguments. However, there are more problematic causes of redundancy, and the last category in the table—“useless or unnecessarily detailed parts of information”—indicates more serious problems with the interpreter’s competence. It is possible to define them as:

- (a) not understanding a message;
- (b) incorrect or missing analysis and deverbalisation, not having mastered or applied interpreting strategies such as, for instance, condensation or generalisation;
- (c) insufficient preparation of a student–interpreter, which also plays an important role and leads to poor knowledge of the topic.

Consequently, students may fail to locate the invariant of information and therefore they work on the level of conveying individual words instead of conveying the main ideas.

#### **5. Time/Length Ratio**

Although I did not include exceeding the recommended time/length ratio between a speaker’s speech and an interpreter’s delivery into redundancy, I still

wanted students to bear this in mind when judging redundancy. This is because not respecting the principle and exceeding the length of speech on an interpreter's side may also lead to redundancy. Therefore, I instructed the students not to forget about this principle in their evaluations. To gain information concerning this factor, I added space for verbal commentary asking:

- (a) What is your overall impression of the recording? Grade on the scale 10 max–1 min and briefly explain why.
- (b) What is your overall impression of the interpreter? Grade on the scale 10 max–1 min and briefly explain why.

## **6. The Experiment**

I took two attempts at the guided evaluation. The experiment was performed over one ninety-minute interpreting seminar. In the first attempt, I prepared a simple table with the categorisation of redundancy and I chose four shorter recordings, none of them exceeding fifteen minutes. The recordings were of varying standards and different redundant elements were present. The assessors could identify the interpreters—their schoolmates—because they recognised their voices. The assessors were divided into two groups, and each group listened to two recordings. The recordings were different for each group. I instructed the students to listen to each recording at their own pace, to make notes and finally to fill in the table. The results were rather disappointing and I cannot fully confirm Topping's (1998, 249) assertion of "a very positive attitude of students towards peer assessment." The students once critical of their own performance during one-to-one feedback with their teacher were suddenly reluctant to critically evaluate their friends' performances. The evaluations showed marks between 2 to 0 with no specific examples of redundancy encountered. The results did not reflect the real situation and I could not use them.

The second experiment was therefore redesigned with a completely new assessor's sheet which contained an extended table (see table 1) and a request to answer the two questions listed above in section 5. Although the questions, which were to be answered using the students' own words, were related to the topic of the experiment, students were verbally instructed to focus on completing the table.

| <b>Category of redundancy:</b>  | <b>Examples:</b> | <b>Distracts from understanding:</b><br>(10 max–0 min ) | <b>Prevents understanding:</b><br>(10 max–0 min) |
|---|------------------|---|--|
| Code of the recording:  |                  |   |  |
| (a) Sounds of hesitation  |                  |   |  |
| (b) Frequent or unjustified use of demonstrative pronouns ( <i>this, that, these . . .</i> )  |                  |   |  |
| (c) Habitual use of certain words (adverbs such as <i>like, actually, in fact . . .</i> )   |                  |   |  |
| (d) Pleonasm/tautology  |                  |   |  |
| (e) Repetition of the same structures which have already been stated but repeated or rephrased later                                      |                  |   |  |
| (f) Unnecessary or even useless or too detailed parts of information in the form of longer sentence structures or longer sections of text |                  |   |  |

Table 1: Assessment sheet.

Compared to table 1 I used during the first experiment, I inserted the final category (f) and added space for the assessors' own verbal commentary.

This time I selected three recordings of differing lengths where the assessors did not know the speakers. I also provided assessors with a partial transcript of the recordings and thus guided them to some problematic parts of the delivery. Each assessor was asked to listen to all three recordings and to assess them during one ninety-minute seminar. This time the results showed a more critical approach than during the first attempt and this can be seen in the appended tables 2, 3 and 4.

| <b>Category:</b>  | <b>Distraction range: (10-0)/total</b> | <b>Distraction <math>\emptyset</math>:</b> | <b>Prevents receiving the message:</b> |
|---|--|--|--|
| (a) Sounds of hesitation  | 10-5/83                                | 6.9  | 1                                      |
| (b) Frequent or unjustified use of demonstrative pronouns ( <i>this, that, these . . .</i> )  | 7-0/33                                 | 2.75                                       | 0                                      |
| (c) Habitual use of certain words (adverbs such as <i>like, actually, in fact . . .</i> )   | 10-1/46                                | 3.83                                       | 1                                      |
| (d) Pleonasm/tautology  | 4-0/14                                 | 1.16                                       | 0                                      |
| (e) Repetition of the same structures which have already been stated but repeated or rephrased later                                      | 8-0/43                                 | 3.58                                       | 1                                      |
| (f) Unnecessary or even useless or too detailed parts of information in the form of longer sentence structures or longer sections of text | 6-0/29                                 | 2.41                                       | 0                                      |

Table 2: Recording 1 (code AAJ), 12 valid assessment sheets.

| <b>Category:</b>  | <b>Distraction range: (10-0)/total</b> | <b>Distraction <math>\emptyset</math>:</b> | <b>Prevents receiving the message:</b> |
|---|--|--|--|
| (a) Sounds of hesitation  | 8-0/33                                 | 3.0  | 0                                      |
| (b) Frequent or unjustified use of demonstrative pronouns ( <i>this, that, these . . .</i> )  | 4-0/17                                 | 1.54                                       | 0                                      |
| (c) Habitual use of certain words (adverbs such as <i>like, actually, in fact . . .</i> )   | 7-0/11.5                               | 1.04                                       | 0                                      |
| (d) Pleonasm/tautology  | 6-0/12                                 | 1.09                                       | 0                                      |
| (e) Repetition of the same structures which have already been stated but repeated or rephrased later                                      | 10-0/50                                | 4.54                                       | 0                                      |
| (f) Unnecessary or even useless or too detailed parts of information in the form of longer sentence structures or longer sections of text | 7-0/25                                 | 2.27                                       | 0                                      |

Table 3: Recording 2 (code MČ1), 11 valid assessment sheets.

| Category:   | Distraction range: (10-0)/total | Distraction $\emptyset$ : | Prevents receiving the message: |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (a) Sounds of hesitation  | 8-0/25                          | 2.27                      | 0                               |
| (b) Frequent or unjustified use of demonstrative pronouns ( <i>this, that, these . . .</i> )  | 5-0/6                           | 0.54                      | 0                               |
| (c) Habitual use of certain words (adverbs such as <i>like, actually, in fact . . .</i> )   | 7-0/18                          | 1.63                      | 0                               |
| (d) Pleonasm/tautology  | 7-0/22                          | 2.0                       | 0                               |
| (e) Repetition of the same structures which have already been stated but repeated or rephrased later                                      | 8-0/31                          | 2.82                      | 0                               |
| (f) Unnecessary or even useless or too detailed parts of information in the form of longer sentence structures or longer sections of text | 4-0/10                          | 0.91                      | 0                               |

Table 4: Recording 3 (code MČ 2), 11 valid assessment sheets.

As for the questions listed in section 5, assessors generally avoided those which needed a verbal answer, and only a few assessors allocated points for questions (b) and (d). Since these responses do not represent reliable data, I am not listing them in this paper. However, I plan to re-visit the topic in the future.

## 7. Conclusions and Outcomes

Table 5 shows totals in individual categories. It also shows that when students evaluated their peers they generally found sounds of hesitation most annoying, followed by repetitions and rephrasing of the same structures and habitual use of certain words.

| Category    | AJ $\emptyset$ | MČ1 $\emptyset$ | MČ2 $\emptyset$ | Total |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------|
| (a) SoH     | 6.90           | 3.0             | 2.27            | 12.17 |
| (c) Habit   | 3.83           | 1.04            | 1.63            | 6.5   |
| (e) Repet   | 3.58           | 4.54            | 2.82            | 10.94 |
| (f) Unneces | 2.41           | 2.27            | 0.91            | 5.59  |

Table 5: Totals in individual categories.

These results are a bit disappointing because they indicate that students mostly pay attention to “cosmetic aspects,” that is, the surface of a conveyed message. Students also highly valued the fact that the interpreter “managed to say everything.” This shows that students do not pay enough attention to those useless or unnecessarily detailed parts of information during longer sentence structure or longer sections of text which the listener did not need to receive to understand the message that I have stated above. At this point I am returning to my initial comment about looking underneath the surface layer of individual words or sounds and the importance of concentrating on the essence of the message when interpreting—and also when assessing redundancy in interpreting.

These results show that students can identify redundancy and that they know theoretical principles and interpreting strategies. However, not all of them can apply these principles effectively in practice. From this point of view, it was interesting to compare the allocated grades in the table with verbal evaluations. When students could verbally articulate the problem, their evaluation was more accurate than when they were asked to allocate grades—that is, there were considerable discrepancies between a lenient numerical assessment of, for instance, 3 points out of 10, where 10 marked a serious problem, and a verbal description, which was harsher. For a lecturer of interpreting this exercise into peer evaluation could have outcomes on two levels: firstly, students need to be constantly steered towards systematic and thorough analysis of the original and different interpreting strategies need to be practiced regularly in practical training. Also, it is useful to search for and develop an effective methodology for peer evaluation that would eliminate discrepancies between numerical and verbal evaluation and peer versus teacher evaluation.

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# LITERARY TRANSLATION



## Translations as Ways to the Knowledge of the World and to World Literature

Josef Jařab

Palacký University, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,  
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic.

Email: josef.jarab@upol.cz

**ABSTRACT:** Has the confusion (plurality) of languages brought mankind more problems or benefits? Still an open question but a fact we have to live with, and deal with the consequences. Translation has proved a profitable way of enlarging and deepening our knowledge of the world, of each other and ourselves. It also proved itself useful means of communication and keeping our past alive. Globalization and the rebirth of nationalism are two forces influencing the tendency towards a new, modern, lingua franca. Europe boasting of the cultural wealth represented by the variety of nations should be braver in formulating a language policy, including educational programs. World literature should be read as a “gene bank of culture.”

**KEYWORDS:** foreign languages; diversity of tongues; translation; lingua franca; world literature globalization; nationalism; cultural and language policy

Readers of the Bible can find in the Book of Genesis (11:1–9) a story about the Tower of Babel which, at a conference like ours, deserves at least a short mention, if not a thought or two.

According to the story, a united community of the generations following the Great Flood roaming around, mostly eastwards, came to the land of Shinar (a reference in Hebrew to Mesopotamia) and decided that they would settle there and build a tower that would reach up to the skies. We may ask, why? Why skyscrapers? In praise of God, to his glory? No, rather the opposite—to express man’s own greatness.

A manifestation of human pride, Franz Kafka, who tried to understand much of the queerest human behavior, wrote a short text that he dedicated to a speculation on this biblical event (“Das Stadtwappen,” written around 1920). And he reminded us that whenever an idea was born, however strange and odd, humanity would never give up on it.<sup>1</sup> So, there too, the citizens of Babylon started building the proud tower, which we can enjoy visualizing with Peter Breughel in his lively pictures, or in any other attempt by artists who tried to imagine it. Anyway a warning should have ensued from the story that we had better humbly beware of the skies and of God himself who, obviously, did not like

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1 See Franz Kafka, “Das Stadtwappen,” in *Poseidon und andere kurze Prosa* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1994), 125.

and could not tolerate the misguided ambitions of his people. Not only did he smash the spiteful tower, letting it fall or collapse in another way, as many versions of the destruction story from history and pre-history present it. For us the most interesting part is the following: the Lord came down to see the city and the tower and decided to take the language of the people (which was one and the same at that time for all the speakers) and divide it into many languages so *that they would not understand each other*. And consequently he scattered the people all around the world. And, alas, this is exactly the general situation we have even now.

The penalty God chose was a strange one, we may think, but then this could be our view influenced by the fact that we mostly are interpreters and translators who actually live on the efforts of overcoming the diversity of tongues.

George Steiner, a philosopher with Central-European roots and one of the most eminent scholars of world culture, tried to analyze, understand, and interpret the world after Babel in a book of the same title.<sup>2</sup> It has so far seen three editions, each new one always enlarged and enhanced, which only confirms the difficulty and complexity of the task the author had assumed. The years of publication have been 1975, 1992, and 1997. And I am certain that his dialogue with the community of experts and, above all, translators is not over yet.

Whether the confusion of languages brought mankind more problems or benefits, whether it has proved to be a curse or a blessing, remains another open issue. So, let me borrow a witty metaphor from the most recent edition of the widely debated book by which Steiner expresses his wish that his book may have an impact on all those “who are ready to understand the affair at Babel as a calamity,” but allow as well the etymology of the word “disaster”—and read it also as “a rain of stars upon man.”<sup>3</sup>

Keeping these two possible readings of the disaster at Babel in mind, Steiner still wonders why “should the *homo sapiens sapiens*, genetically and physiologically uniform in almost all respects, subject to identical biological-environmental constraints and evolutionary possibilities, speak thousands of mutually incomprehensible tongues, some of which are only a few miles apart?”<sup>4</sup> All that while the pragmatic, material, economic, and social advantages of using one single language should be evident. And bringing the question into the present time, we may ask again to what extent is the growing linguistic hegemony of the “American speech,” the Anglo-American esperanto, as Steiner calls it,<sup>5</sup> a desirable trend, as the advocates of globalization believe it to be. It looked

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2 See George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (3rd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

3 Steiner, *After Babel*, xviii.

4 Steiner, *After Babel*, xiii.

5 Steiner, *After Babel*, xvii.

irreversible and it still may be so, taking into account the world of technology, science, commerce, and popular culture, as well as the powerful impact of “McWorld,” as the American sociologist Benjamin Barber calls the forceful and influential phenomenon.<sup>6</sup> But resistance also appears to the god of globalization, even a backlash, which Barber calls “Jihad”—“the parochial impulse to reject and repel the homogenizing forces wherever they can be found.”<sup>7</sup> But there also appear, alongside anti-globalization protest movements all over the globe, more moderate forms of resistance, such as hybridization of global and local culture—products of a process which another American sociologist, Roland Robertson, calls “glocalization.”<sup>8</sup>

For instance, the influence of popular culture, rock music, and jazz on local, national pop and even folk culture and the whole entertainment industry in various countries; or, a closer example—the impact of American country and western culture on the Czech tramp and scout movements, including the tramp songs where the spirit and the idea are American but the music and the contents of the songs are undoubtedly localized into the Czech country and territory.

Unexpectedly, perhaps, the reduction of languages in use, as a result of the drive of globalization, saw a slow up with the revival of nationalist sentiments after the disintegration of the Soviet Bloc and the falling apart of the Soviet Union itself into a number of independent states. Stressing their political independence of Moscow and the Kremlin and of the Soviet Russian imperial hegemony, they went back to their national languages for both official and unofficial communication.

The complexity of the relations between languages and the process of globalization calls for serious studies, as the results of the work by the Research Center at the University of Hawaii already confirm; they consider the impact of growing migration, tourism, language learning, media, scientific publications, and discourses on the linguistic situation of the world.<sup>9</sup>

So, despite the gradually more accepted idea of the usefulness of English as a lingua franca, it would most likely be agreed even in a wider debate that the death of languages (and they disappear in large numbers) takes away from our cultural wealth, the human riches of mankind on the planet. “When a language dies, a possible world dies with it,” George Steiner has to admit too.<sup>10</sup>

6 Benjamin R. Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalization and Tribalism Are Reshaping the World* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996).

7 Manfred B. Stegner, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 73.

8 Roland Robertson, “Glocalization: Time–Space and Homogeneity–Heterogeneity,” in *Global Modernities*, ed. Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson (London: Sage, 1995), 25–44.

9 See Stegner, *Globalization*, 82–83.

10 Steiner, *After Babel*, xiv.

From a number of politicians of our continent, from representatives of the European Union and advocates of the idea of a common Europe, we hear that continental plurality of cultures and diversity of *languages* should guarantee European values. Perhaps, and most likely yes. But is there a readable policy visible anywhere which would pursue such objective?

For eight years I took part in the activities of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. Here are a few observations and thoughts ensuing from the experience: there were general complaints heard that interpreting every word into twenty plus languages is very costly, which is undoubtedly true. But in the Council of Europe, and even more in the European Union, it is at present quite understandably a matter of national pride to have speeches in whatever language translated or interpreted into your own, especially for small countries from the former Eastern Bloc, like the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, and so forth. (Besides the fact that, regrettably, some of the political representatives from those, and some other countries too, are not in command of any major language and have to rely on complicated interpreting in an often relay-like style, that is, the translating and interpreting being done in a number of languages, with results of dubious understandability to be expected. Obviously, when reason finally wins, and political representatives will have to prove they can communicate in international gatherings in at least one of the three or four major languages, as a maximum, we will have guaranteed success in general communication. And the resources, the money saved, could then be spent on financing foreign language education and training, projects in all countries of the continent. The most useful and practical way would appear to be studying combinations of major and a smaller languages (along with literature and culture). Thus we would be addressing not just the needs of the present day but of the days to come as well. So far, however, there seems to be little political courage to even open such a debate seriously.<sup>11</sup> But if cultural diversity is so vital a quality for our future, should not Europe speedily launch an intelligent and fruitful cultivation project that would take care of this wealth?

It seems to be generally accepted now that translation and the process of translating are formally and pragmatically implicit in every act of communication, in the emission and reception of each and every mode of meaning, be it in the widest semiotic sense or in more specific verbal exchanges. "To understand is to decode, to decipher. To hear significance is to translate."<sup>12</sup> Which applies not just to different languages and cultures of our own time, as we find them today, but also to the attitudes we take towards our own history and tradi-

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11 See Josef Jařab, "Culture, Knowledge and European Unity," in *The New Frontiers of Europe: The Enlargement of the European Union; Implications and Consequences*, ed. Daniel S. Hamilton (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 2005), 97–98.

12 Steiner, *After Babel*, xii.

tions. To keep the legacy of the past alive is seminal for the present state of our culture. The Austrian philosopher, Konrad Paul Liessmann, in his book called *Theorie der Unbildung* (The theory of miseducation), and in his lecture delivered at this university last year, “The Value of Man,” reminded us in the discussion that followed his presentation of the cultural and moral wealth and of the pedagogical power still latently present in classical education and in reading and teaching classical texts.<sup>13</sup> And a wisely provocative and interesting Dutch philosopher and scholar of Asian studies, Kristofer Schipper, went even further in his appreciation of old myths, legends, classical literacy, and stories that he calls an important storehouse of inspiration and innovation, and literally, “the gene bank of culture,” which would include Plato, Socrates, Seneca, Homer, and many others.<sup>14</sup>

What we decide to consider our past is both a cultural and political choice. George Steiner in his lecture and published essay called *The Idea of Europe* designates our heritage as the legacy of two cities, Jerusalem and Athens.<sup>15</sup> Not even mentioning Rome may have been caused by the author’s strong focus of particular argumentation and thus it can be considered an innocent omission. When, however, the French humanist of the nineteenth century, Ernest Renan, and quite a few others in their ethnocentric views declared that all our scientific knowledge comes directly from Greece, it may hurt some individuals, but above all, it may hurt the truth. . . . Not to take away from any of the deserved merits of the Greeks, but it is still fair to see the contribution of others, mainly the Arabs and Chinese. More sincere historians of science have to give the credit to the Arabic scientists (that is, mainly Middle Eastern individuals primarily using the Arabic language but including Arabs, Iranians, Christians, Jews, and others). And, even more importantly for us here is the reminder that those who should not be forgotten are the intermediaries, the translators. “The monumental translation feat in Spain, Sicily and Italy made available to the West in scarcely a hundred years, during the 12th and 13th centuries, the corpus of Aristotle and his commentators along with other seminal Greek and Arabic works.”<sup>16</sup> The translators must have mastered, besides Greek and Arabic, a few more languages of the Near East. They generously spread the knowledge of the world, ready to share it with all who might be interested. They could have felt satisfied with a possible reading of a message from the Koran (49:19), namely, “Man! I have created you differently, so that you may learn from each

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13 See Konrad Paul Liessmann, *Theorie der Unbildung* (Vienna: Paul Zsolnay, 2006).

14 Kristofer Marinus Schipper, *The Gene Bank of Culture: Reflections on the Function of the Humanities* (Wassenaar: NIAS, 1994).

15 See George Steiner, *The Idea of Europe* (Tilburg: Nexus Institute, 2004).

16 Schipper, *The Gene Bank of Culture*, 7.

other.”<sup>17</sup> Let us wish that such a reading of the Koran becomes a common one in the future of the world.

Omissions and suppressions of facts and information may in some regimes become true instruments of reigning for the rulers. In modern times, despite the technological possibilities of spreading information and knowledge (and perhaps also due to them), such rulers were able to install a total control over their “truth” and develop a system of totalitarian government which we had to experience for a great part of the last century. A book was just published which presents interviews with twenty-seven renowned translators from various languages into Czech, and it tells us in their personal accounts a great deal of their life experience—both with the literature they offered to the Czech readers in their translations and with censors and censorship they had to frequently face. The whole range of it—from bans of publications by the authorities, cooperation, and lack of it with publishers and editors to self-censorship. It is called *Slovo za slovem* and could be translated as “Word after word,” or “Word from the afterword,” or “A word and the afterword.”<sup>18</sup>

Or maybe even differently. I would leave this to experts in translation studies or translato­logists who deserve our recognition, or to the translators who deserve our admiration.

It is only fair to remember that our translators along with our writers kept our language alive and tested its potential against the best texts of world literature. Be that during the revival period of the Czech nation and language within the Habsburg Austrian Empire, and later in the twentieth century. Translators and their translations confirmed the vitality of our own language, encouraged and supported our national and human identity, helping us, at least as readers, break out of our isolation into the larger, luckier, and also freer world. The pioneering achievements of individuals, indeed cultural personalities, such as Jaroslav Vrchlický, Karel Čapek, Otto František Babler, Pavel Eisner, Jan Záb­rana, Josef Škvorecký, Luba and Rudolf Pelar, Jaroslav Kořán, and many more helped to keep alive both our language and its users, as we used to have a deserved reputation as a nation of readers.

Let me conclude with a note on exactly this concept of world literature—die Weltliteratur—to pay tribute to the author of the idea, the truly canonical and yet open-minded German writer, Johann Wolfgang Goethe. Already in his time of wide-spread nation building he saw in national literatures some patriotic narrowness that he hoped would be overcome and absorbed into human universalism. The fulfillment of his ideal of world literature, which he thought was rapidly developing, would “come about mainly when the disputes within

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17 Schipper, *The Gene Bank of Culture*, 5.

18 See Stanislav Rubáš, ed., *Slovo za slovem: S překladateli o překládání* (Prague: Academia, 2012).

one nation are settled by the opinions of others.”<sup>19</sup> The Czech novelist Milan Kundera picked up this sadly deserted idea of Goethe and looked around at how much progress had been achieved in the two centuries regarding the German writer’s dream. For the Czech author, who switched to French as his language of expression, national literatures and the business of teaching them as special bodies of letters makes little sense and smells of provincialism. For Kundera, literary genres travel freely across national borders, and if we want to study their history and development we should even forget the languages they assume when they move between nations. Yet a statement that literature does not exist in the plural does make sense, only in a limited way. The bold claim that one does not have to even speak the language of a book to appreciate it is, and certainly remains, very problematic.<sup>20</sup> And it is, fortunately, in another essay that Kundera corrects the view, admitting that one condition for world literature in Goethe’s (and his own) understanding to be perceived as such are true, which means good translations of the important literary works.<sup>21</sup> Based on his own experience as a writer from a small Central European country and a successful immigrant to France, he then describes the inability of small nations as well as large nations to see themselves in the larger context of world literature due to their provincialism, of which he recognizes two versions, small and large (none being great).

Every truly good book written and published, and its adequate translation into another language or languages, may enhance the chances for the humanist vision of world literature of both Goethe and Kundera to come true.

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20 See Milan Kundera, “Die Weltliteratur,” *New Yorker*, January 8, 2007.

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## A Moravian Picture of Dutch Literature

Wilken W. K. H. Engelbrecht

Palacký University, Philosophical Faculty, Department of Dutch Studies,  
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic.  
Email: wilken.engelbrecht@upol.cz

John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Dutch  
Language and Literature, Al. Raclawickie 14, 20-950 Lublin, Poland.  
Email: wilken.engelbrecht@seznam.cz

**ABSTRACT:** Dutch is the third largest Germanic language. Since the nineteenth century Dutch literature has been translated into many foreign languages, with the work of Hendrik Conscience (1812–1883) often being the first to be translated. Among Dutch philologists it is a common idea that Conscience’s popularity was due to his nationalistic novels, especially among suppressed nations such as, for example, the former Czechoslovakia and Hungary. A closer look, however, shows that his social novels were by far more popular. An explanation could be offered by the way that his work has been translated. The Czech translation tradition goes back to the National Revival. Among the major theoreticians were Josef Jungmann (1773–1847) and Jakub B. Malý (1811–1885). Jungmann recommended the adaptation of foreign literature to a Czech setting. This process was known as “Czechisation” or “localisation.” In the 1850s Malý discussed the correctness of this practice, recommending localisation only for popular literature such as the novels of Paul de Kock (1793–1871). By considering how Ladislav Hodický changed the setting of Conscience’s novels to Moravian surroundings, it becomes clear that the relatively positive and widespread Czech reception of Conscience was not due to his nationalistic tendencies.

**KEYWORDS:** translation; Dutch literature; Hendrik Conscience; Josef Jungmann; Jakub B. Malý; Ladislav Hodický; Czechisation; localisation; nineteenth century

### 1. Some Background

Dutch is, with over twenty-three million native speakers in Europe and some two million abroad, after English and German the third most spoken Germanic language. It has an extensive literature going back as far as the twelfth century when the first complete literary work, the *Legend of Saint Servatius* (around 1170) by Henric van Veldeken was written. Most speakers make a distinction between the northern variant of Dutch as spoken in the Netherlands and the southern one spoken in Flanders and the neighbouring southern provinces of the Netherlands, usually called Flemish or Standard Belgian.

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, Dutch literature has been translated into nearly all major languages, including Russian and Chinese. Thus, several writers became internationally known. In the nineteenth century the Flemish writers Hendrik Conscience (1812–1883) and Guido Gezelle (1830–1899) and the Dutch writers Nicolaas Beets (1814–1903), Eduard Douwes Dekker (1820–1887,

better known by his pseudonym Multatuli), and Louis Couperus (1863–1923) acquired international fame by means of numerous translations of their work.

Czech is the Slavonic language into which the most translations from Dutch have been made, with over eight hundred from the year 1846 until present. Between 1846 and 1918 some eighty titles were translated into Czech, giving a good overview of the leading Dutch and Flemish literary protagonists of the period.<sup>1</sup> As is customary in handbooks on literature from the Low Countries, in this paper the term Dutch literature will be used for literature from both parts of the language area.

## 2. Hendrik Conscience

In many languages, such as Czech, Danish, Hungarian, Norwegian, Slovak or Swedish, the work of the Flemish writer Hendrik Conscience was the first Dutch written literary work to be translated. Furthermore, in other languages such as English or French, where the work of other writers was translated earlier, Conscience's work is the one most translated. In the database *Literatur im Kontext* of the University of Vienna the list of translations from Conscience's work totals 910 items (see table 1).<sup>2</sup> This is an impressive translational corpus that has not been surpassed by any other Dutch writer.

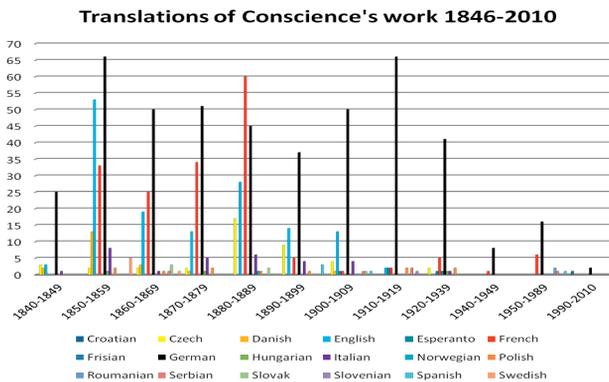


Table 1: Translations of Conscience's work 1846–2010.

- 1 See Wilken Engelbrecht, "Von Conscience bis Fabricius: Das Bild der niederländisch-sprachigen Literatur in tschechischer Übersetzung in der Zwischenkriegszeit," in *An der Schwelle: "Eigen" und "fremd" in der niederländischen Literatur*, ed. Herbert Van Uffelen et al. (Vienna: Praesens Verlag, 2010).
- 2 The figure is based on the database *Literatur im Kontext* and the translation database of the *Nederlands Literatuurfonds* with additions thanks to the author's own research (Czech and Slovak translations). See *Literatur im Kontext*, University of Vienna, accessed February 14, 2012, <https://www.ned.univie.ac.at/node/13725>; see *Translations Database*, Dutch Foundation for Literature, accessed February 14, 2012, <http://www.letterenfonds.nl/vertalingendatabase/search.php>.

Hendrik Conscience was born on December 3, 1812 as the son of a French navy man and his Flemish wife. After the liberation of the Low Countries from French occupation the family stayed behind in Antwerp. When his mother died in 1820, Hendrik and his younger brother lived alone with their father until 1826, when he remarried another, much younger Flemish woman. At the age of seventeen Conscience left his parental home to become a tutor in Antwerp. During the Belgian Revolution of 1830 Conscience volunteered in the revolutionary army and took active part in several battles. He left active service at the rank of sergeant-major in 1837.

Even though his mother tongue was French, Hendrik Conscience (he now used the Dutch variant of his first name) decided to start writing in Dutch, and in 1837 he published his first novel *In 't Wonderjaer 1566* (In the miraculous year 1566). Conscience met the court painter Egide Wappers who introduced him to the Belgian King Leopold I. In 1838, with the patronage of the king, Conscience published his successful historical novel *De Leeuw van Vlaenderen* (*The Lion of Flanders*), which still holds its place as his masterpiece. In 1842 he married Maria Peinen, with whom he had five children.

In 1845 he was made a knight of the Order of Leopold. By then, the Belgians had ceased to regard Dutch as just a minor “language of kitchen maids and crofters,” unsuitable for real literature. The success of Conscience’s novels, especially in Germany, played a major role in this process. In 1868 the position of custodian of the Royal Museums in Brussels was created for him. This enabled Conscience to concentrate on his writings. During his life he wrote exactly one hundred novels.

Conscience’s seventieth birthday was celebrated as a national festival but soon after that he fell ill and died after a long spell of sickness on September 10, 1883. He received a state funeral and an official memorial stone at the cemetery of Antwerp. He is called “the man who taught the Flemish people reading.” His death was announced in newspapers all over Europe.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Conscience in Translation

Translations from Conscience’s works began early in German, English, Danish, Italian and Czech. The very first was the German translation of the three short novels *Wat eenen moeder lijden kan*, *Hoe men schilder wordt* and *Siska van Rosemael* in the volume *Flämishes Stilleben in drei Erzählungen* (A Flemish Still Life in Three Tales) by the clergyman Melchior von Diepenbrock in 1845. The first translations in the other mentioned languages, as well as other German translations, were made in 1846. These other German translations were of Conscience’s first published novel of 1837 *In 't Wonderjaer 1566*, in several par-

<sup>3</sup> See Willem van den Berg, “The Nineteenth Century, 1800–1880,” in *A Literary History of the Low Countries*, ed. Theo Hermans (Rochester: Camden House, 2009), 376.

allel editions; of his *Avondstonden* (Evening Tales), a collection of twelve tales written in the same year; and several reprints of the *Drei Erzählungen*. The *Drei Erzählungen* was the transmitter for the first Czech (*Siska van Rosemal and Co matka sněsti múze* [1846]; *Jak se člověk malířem stane* [1848]), Italian (*Vita domestica dei Fiamminghi descritte in tre racconti* [1846]) and English (*Sketches from Flemish Life in Three Tales* [1846]) versions; the first Danish (*Mirakelaaret 1566* [1846]) translation was that of the *Wonderjaer*.<sup>4</sup>

Considering the translations of Conscience, it is clear that the major period of his glory abroad was between 1850 and 1890, when over 60 percent of the translations were published. His peak was in the 1850s with more than 150 editions in German, French and English translated. In German a small surge in popularity can be seen during World War I and II when the German authorities supported translations from Flemish literature for propaganda reasons. Of the lesser spoken languages, Czech with forty-three editions and Danish with twenty are relatively well represented. The Czech, as well as the French translations, peaked during the 1880s.

As translations of Conscience's work usually stand at the forefront of translation of Dutch literature, and their success caused publishers to solicit the translation of other Dutch and Flemish writers, Conscience may be called not only the writer who "taught the Flemish people reading" but also "the writer who taught foreign people to read Dutch literature." During the nineteenth century his position was that of the Flemish writer *par excellence*.

The reason for the prevalent position of his work has been attributed to the fact that the Belgian Revolution of 1830 was the first in nineteenth century Europe to be successful.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, it was Conscience's work that started, within the same Belgium, the emancipation of the Flemish people by giving them a literature of their own. These two related facts—a successful revolution and the more or less successful emancipation of a suppressed majority—were thought to have been the reason for his attractiveness.

This idea of Conscience as a "revolutionary prophet," however, does not correspond with the fact that his most known work *De Leeuw van Vlaenderen* (1838) was translated into Slavonic languages relatively late: the first such translation being into Serbian in 1906, into Polish in 1915 and into Czech as late as 1935. The ab-

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4 See Wilken Engelbrecht, "Hendrik Conscience, de man die de Tsjechen Nederlandse literatuur leerde lezen," in *Praagse Perspectieven: Handelingen van het colloquium van de sectie Nederlands van de Karelsuniversiteit te Praag op donderdag 24 en vrijdag 25 maart 2011*, ed. Zdenka Hrnčířová et al. (Prague: Universitas Carolina Pragensis, 2011), 83–84.

5 See Aad Troost, "Nederlandse literatuur in Polen," in *Handelingen regionaal Colloquium Neerlandicum: Wrocław, 1993*, ed. Stanisław Prędoła (Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski, 1994), 296; see Hans Krijt and Olga Krijtová, *Průvodce dějinami nizozemské literatury* (Prague: Panorama, 1990), 104; see van den Berg, "The Nineteenth Century, 1800–1880," 408.

sence of a good intermediary translation cannot have been the reason because the German translation was published in 1846 and the English in 1856. The emphasis of the translations in all Slavonic languages was on the social novels of Conscience.<sup>6</sup> His social novels were internationally as popular as similar novels of the French writer of Flemish descent Charles Paul de Kock. De Kock (1793–1871) was a voluminous writer, not to say an ink-slinger, who wrote even more than Conscience did. Many of his titles were translated into Czech, more or less in the same period as Conscience's, that is, in the 1880s and 1890s, and partly by the same publisher I. L. Kober, who was also one of the Prague publishers of Conscience.<sup>7</sup>

#### 4. The Czech National Revival

The Czechs are proud to have a long history of statehood, reaching back into the ninth century when the Great Moravian Empire was the first Slavonic state. In 895 the Czechs founded their own principality, becoming a kingdom in 1198. In 1620, however, the Battle of the White Mountain put an end to Czech independence till 1918. The kingdom of Bohemia became a mere province of the Habsburg realms. After 1627 German became the main official language until 1774 when the Austrian Empress Maria Theresa reformed the education system. Her *General School Ordinance* established obligatory education at the primary school level for all children of both genders from six to twelve years of age in their mother tongue, that is, Czech in the Czech countryside and in all minor Czech cities. This started the so-called Czech National Revival.

This National Revival lasted from the 1780s till 1848. The main protagonists were the clergyman Josef Dobrovský (1753–1829) and Josef Jungmann (1773–1847) who proposed and shaped the orthography of modern Czech. In the 1840s, this orthography was introduced into Czech publishing by Karel Havlíček Borovský (1821–1856). An important feature of the orthography was a deliberate decision to connect with the Czech tradition of the Reformation in the sixteenth century and, on the other hand, to ignore the developments of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries that were seen as the Czech Dark Age. In fact, this decision caused knowledge of the “Dark Age” to be erased from the Czech collective memory and the literature of the National Revival to often be viewed as anticlerical.

Also among the personalities engaged in the last phase of the National Revival in the first half of the nineteenth century was František Kampelík (1805–1872), who, in his *Obrana českého jazyka* (Defence of the Czech Language), intro-

6 See Engelbrecht, “Hendrik Conscience,” 87–88.

7 Findings based on the general catalogue of the Czech National Library in Prague. See *Electronic Catalogue of the National Library of the CR*, National Library of the Czech Republic, accessed February 14, 2012, <http://www.en.nkp.cz/catalogues-and-databases>.

duced Conscience and the Flemish Movement to the Czechs. His pamphlet had an appendix with the title “Slavnost jednoty Flamandských literárních spolků” (Glory of the Unity of Flemish Literary Associations) in which he printed an integral translation of an article from the periodical *Vlaemsch België* (Flemish Belgium) by Conscience from March 12, 1844.<sup>8</sup>

Of the aforementioned leaders of the National Revival, Jungmann and Havlíček Borovský were concerned with translations. The latter translated Conscience’s novel *Wat eene moeder lijden kan* as a feuilleton in his periodical *Česká včela* (Czech Bee) in February 1846.<sup>9</sup>

## 5. Czech Translation Tradition in the Nineteenth Century

The leaders of the National Revival greatly valued translations of foreign literary work. Translations were necessary to introduce foreign literature to Czech people and to enrich the reviving Czech language. During the nineteenth century two contradictory translational schools came into vogue: one school that wished to keep the idea of the original text but to adapt language and eventually also verse to Czech practice, the other favouring a translation as literal as possible, even at the cost of using constructions and verse foreign to Czech language.<sup>10</sup> The discussion is strongly reminiscent of the idea of Friedrich Schleiermacher that there are only two paths open for the translator:

Either the translator leaves the writer in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him, or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him.<sup>11</sup>

It is the well-known opposition between foreignisation and domestication.<sup>12</sup> In the last decades of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth, the popularisation of foreign literature for as many Czech readers as possible was one of the aims of the translators. Thus Josef Jungmann said:

The tastes of people are different, and therefore it is impossible to state which type of translation should be preferred, a translation that is a free

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8 See František Cyril Kampelík, *Obrana českého jazyka proti utrhačům a odpůrcům* (Prague: Karel Vetterle, 1847).

9 See Engelbrecht, “Hendrik Conscience,” 88–89.

10 See Jiří Levý, *České teorie překladu* (Prague: SNKLHU, 1957), 73.

11 Friedrich Schleiermacher, “On the Different Methods of Translating,” trans. Susan Bernofsky, in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (2nd ed.; London: Routledge, 2004), 49.

12 See Jeremy Munday, *Introduction to Translation Studies: Theories and Applications* (3rd ed.; London: Routledge, 2012), 218–21.

rendering of the idea of the original, without taking into account words, the number of syllabics and verses, and just trying to give to the readers a similar experience as the original writing had on its public . . . ; or such a translation that does not try that much to keep the idea but rather aims to achieve with its own and transferred words, figures, measure and sound, fallow and stock, a work that resembles the original one. . . . Whether the translation of books from foreign languages is a treat to the national language? Let us answer that it is not, as far as it will be done well. What is suitable to be translated and how? Our statement is: the best is to translate it thus that it seems to be written originally in Czech.<sup>13</sup>

His own requirement that a translation should resemble an original Czech work caused Jungmann to go as far in his domestication as to replace the setting of the original work with a completely Czech one. This process was called “lokalisace” (localisation) or “čechisace” (Czechisation).<sup>14</sup>

Towards the end of the National Revival some translators began to doubt whether it was really correct to use localisation in all cases. The first professional Czech paper on translational theory was published by Jakub Malý (1811–1885) in 1854. In this article “O překládání klasiků” (On the Translation of the Classics) he states, after several introductory notes, the following:

From this it is clear that the translator of, for instance, the novels of Paul de Kock, has a different task than the translator of Cervantes or Bocaccio, and all these a different task than the translator of Heliodore or other writers of Miletian tales. Our contemporary French novelist sketches the morals of our time that are everywhere, where European education reigns, essentially the same. If there are differences, they are just minor local ones. The aim of his writings is entertainment with some moral base, and his translator cannot have anything else in mind than to put in his readers’ hands a book that entertains them in the same way as the original does the French public. For this aim it is enough if the translator faithfully maintains the narration, and from local features just those that are closely joined with the narration or serve to characterise persons and events; all else that is just incidental and irrelevant, may be changed and adapted to domestic circumstances and customs. . . . Our local people have another way of speaking, and if the translation should be comprehensive for a Czech reader, the originally French peasant or townsman should speak Czech and not French in Czech words. Trying

13 Josef Jungmann, *Slowesnost; aneb, Náuka o výmluvnosti básnické i řečnické se sbírkau příkladů newázané i wázané řeči* (3rd ed.; Prague: České museum, 1846), 25–27. My translation.

14 Levý, *České teorie překladau*, 96–98.

to behave oneself as a philologist and to maintain a literal fidelity to the original would be inappropriate, ridiculous or clumsy.<sup>15</sup>

In other words, Malý preferred to maintain some golden middle way. Acknowledged classics such as Cervantes or Bocaccio should not be domesticated but entertainment material such as Paul de Kock's novels should be domesticated as much as possible, including localisation of names, and so forth.

When in 1851 the periodical *Lumír*, which was devoted to translated literature and original Czech literature, was founded, the attitude towards translation changed. The new translators for *Lumír* rather followed Schleiermacher's own choice for foreignisation and tried to preserve as many stylistic elements as possible from the original text, and at the same time to create aesthetically pleasing Czech texts, rephrasing the original works. Of course, the Czech language of the mid-nineteenth century was by far more developed than that of the end of the eighteenth century. The decadents and symbolists at the end of the century, such as Jiří Karásek ze Lvovic or Arnošt Procházka, tried to express in their translations the psychical disposition of the author by preserving his original means of expression.<sup>16</sup>

## 6. Conscience in “Czechisated” Translation

As far we know now, between 1846 and 1936 forty-three translations of twenty-three works and three tales of Conscience were made in total. In comparison: of the precisely hundred novels of Conscience, seventy-five have been translated into German, fifty into French and thirty-seven into English. For the Czech language the record was reached in the 1880s when nineteen translations, including three reprints, of his works were published.<sup>17</sup>

The majority of the translations have clearly been made with the German translations as an intermediary, notwithstanding the fact that the translators mostly state “z flámského Jindřicha Conscience” (from the Flemish of Hendrik Conscience), “z flámštiny na český jazyk převedl” (transferred from Flemish into Czech language) and similar. This was quite usual in the case of most translations till the middle of the nineteenth century, and into the second half of the century for lesser spoken languages such as Dutch.

An interesting feature is that in at least four cases “Czechisation” of Conscience's text has been used. This concerned *Paní stará* (1863; a translation of *Moeder Job*), *Slepá Roza* (1865; a translation of *Blinde Roza*), both by

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15 Jakub Malý, “O překládání klasiků, se zvláštním zřetelem na Shakespeara,” *Časopis českého Museum* 28, no. 4 (1854): 504–5. My translation.

16 See Milan Hrala, ed., *Kapitoly z dějin českého překladu* (Prague: Karolinum, 2002), 153–54.

17 For a complete list of Czech translations see Engelbrecht, “Hendrik Conscience,” 96–98.

Ladislav Hodický, and in *Věrná Ludka* (1882; a translation of *De Loteling* by the not-identified A. J. K.) and *Nepřítel člověka* (1904; *De plaeg der dorpen*) partially by Jan Kosina.<sup>18</sup>

In the case of the partially localised translations, the translators confined themselves to replacing, for instance, the specific names of villages and buildings, with neutral localities such as: “Krajina, kudy je vedla cesta, byla překrásná hornatina,”<sup>19</sup> (the landscape through which the road led, was a beautifully hilly one) for the Dutch: “Het oord waer zy zich bevonden was een allerschoonst landschap in het Haegeland”<sup>20</sup> (the place where they were was a very beautiful landscape in the Hageland);<sup>21</sup> “een glas Diestersch bier”<sup>22</sup> (a glass of beer from Diest) is changed in “jedinou sklenice piva”<sup>23</sup> (a single glass of beer). Personal names have been changed to their Czech equivalents or left out where possible. Names without a clear Czech equivalent such as Beth have been replaced by common Czech names, in this case Marta.

Hodický was a traditional “Czechisator.” His otherwise very precise translation of *Blinde Roza* has been completely localised to the surroundings of the Moravian Haná including place names: “Op eenen schoonen zomerdag van het jaer 1846, rolde de diligentie van Antwerpen op Turnhout, volgens gewoonte, over den steenweg,”<sup>24</sup> (one beautiful summer day of the year 1846 the stage-coach from Antwerp to Turnhout rolled, as usual, along the main road) became: “Za krásného letního dne roku 1845 rachotil rychlík po kamenité cestě z Bohuslavic do Dobromyslic”<sup>25</sup> (one beautiful summer day of the year 1845, the fast coach rolled along the stone road from Bohuslavice to Dobromyslice); “Ik weet nog wel dat ik hem eens, al worstelende, van het brugskén op de Kalvermoeren in de beek geworpen heb,”<sup>26</sup> (I remember that I threw him while wrestling from the little bridge in the Kalvermoeren into the brook) was localised to: “Vím ještě, jak jsem jej jednou v hádce s mostu u Koleděje do potoka shodil”<sup>27</sup> (I remember that I threw him during an argument from the

18 *Moeder Job* (Mother Job) was not translated into English; *Blinde Rosa* and *De Loteling* were first translated into English in “*The Conscript*” and “*Blind Rosa*”: *Two Tales in One Volume* (1850); *De plaeg der dorpen* was translated in *The Village Innkeeper* (1855).

19 Jindřich Conscience, *Nepřítel člověka*, trans. Jan Kosina (Prague: V. Kotrba, 1904), 3.

20 Hendrik Conscience, *De plaeg der dorpen* (Antwerp: J. P. van Dieren, 1855), 7.

21 The Hageland is the eastern part of Belgian Brabant, around the city of Louvain.

22 Conscience, *De plaeg der dorpen*, 13.

23 Conscience, *Nepřítel člověka*, 7.

24 Hendrik Conscience, *Blinde Rosa* (1850; Antwerp: J. P. van Dieren, 1857), 5.

25 Hendrik Conscience, “Slepá Roza: Dle flámského Henrika Consciencia [sic],” trans. Ladislav Hodický, in *Moravan: Kalendář na rok obyčejný, 1866* (Brno: Antonín Nitsch, 1865), 49.

26 Conscience, *Blinde Rosa*, 10.

27 Conscience, “Slepá Roza,” 51.

bridge near Koloděj into the brook); the Flemish Baes Joostens became Strýc Zabranský, the gravedigger Peer-Jan was renamed in Klokota, and so on.

It is no surprise that Czechisation was used in editions published by Catholic printers intended for a broader, less educated reading public. The amazing exception is, however, the first previously mentioned translation that was published in the *Lumír* periodical. The translators around *Lumír* normally did not prefer Czechisation and sharply criticised it. This translation follows the domestication process in an even more traditional way by omitting scenes that did not add anything extra for Czech readers, as is shown in the following lines:

Daer loopt **de knaap van St.-Sebastiaens-Gilde** al roffelende rond de kerk; hy heft de gespierde armen boven het hoofd, en laet ze met zooveel kracht nedervallen als wilde hy het donderend ezelsvel aen stukken slaen. –

De man is wel zonderling uitgedost: op zyn hoofd staet een wondergrote vouwhoed, waerboven eene roode veder, met groenen top, heen en weder wappert; zyne kleederen zyn met geele boordsels afgezet; hy heeft witte kousen, boven zyne knien met banden van klatergoud bevestigd; hemelsblauwe linten versieren zyne schoenen. **Gansch zyne borst en een gedeelte van zynen rug zyn met zilveren voorwerpen behangen; het voornaemste dezer is eene plaet waerop het beeld van St.-Sebastiaen gedreven is; daer rondom glinsteren eerepenningen, zilveren lepels, drinkbekers, ja zelfs eene peperbus en twee suikertangen. Het zyn de pryzen welke de Gilde sedert haer bestaen op andere dorpen met den edelen handboog heeft behaald; deze gedenkteekenen der gemeenschappelyke overwinningen maken deel van het plegtgewaed des Gildeknaeps, en hy zal ze blyven dragen, al moest hy, by meerderen zegeprael des gezelschaps, er eenmale onder bezwyken.**

Terwyl hy den luidruchtigen oproep der schutters naer al de uiteinden der gemeente stuert en dat de kinderen juichend voor hem heendansen, keert **een gedeelte der dorpelingen** huiswaerts;

**Dráb** obejde kostel; vyzdvihuje svalovité rámě vysoko nad hlavu, a takovou silou je nechá padati, jakoby hučící kůži oslovskou na kusy rozbití chtěl.

Muž ten podivně vypadá. Na hlavě má ohromný klobouk, na němž houpá se červené péří; kabát i spodky jeho opatřeny jsou žlutými portami; na nohou má bílé punčochy šňůrkami z pozlátka na kolenama upevněné; světlomodré stužky zdobí jeho střevíce.

[The next lines are in the Czech translation completely omitted. They are describing the dressing of the boy with several signs and prices of St. Sebastian's Guild.]

Co dráb hlučně oznámění své všem střelcům v městečku ohlasuje, poskakují dítky okolo něho, radostí jásající, a **větší část Těšetických**

de overigen begeben zich, door eene linden dreve, tot voor eene groote herberg, wier gevel met bloemen en loofkransen is gesierd en uit wier zoldervenster **de drykleurige vlag** nederhangt.<sup>28</sup>

vrací se do bytů svých; ostatní ubírají se lipovým stromořadím k veliké hospodě, jejíž štít kvítím a věnci ozdoben jest, a z jejíhož nejvyššího okna vlaje **pestrobarevná korouhev**.<sup>29</sup>

A comparison with the German translation of B. Giese shows that the alterations in the Czech translation were clearly made by Hodický himself. The German text is as follows:

Da macht **der Weibel der St. Sebastiansgilde** wirbelnd die Runde um die Kirche; er hebt die kraftvollen Arme hoch über sein Haupt und läßt sie mit solcher Macht niederfallen, als wollte er das donnernde Eselsfell in Stücken schlagen. –

Der Mann ist gar seltsam ausstaffirt; auf seinem Kopfe sitzt ein gewaltig großer Schützenhut, worauf eine rothe Feder mit grüner Spitze hin und her schwankt; Rock und Beinkleider sind mit gelbem Tressen besetzt; er trägt weiße Strümpfe, über die Knieen mit Schnüren von Rauschgold befestigt; himmelblaue Bänder verzieren seine Schuhe. **Seine ganze Brust und ein Theil des Rückens sind mit silbernen Gegenständen behangen; das vornehmste Stück darunter ist ein Schild, worauf das Bild von St. Sebastian eingegraben ist; ringsherum schimmern Ehrenpfennige, silberne Löffel, Becher, ja sogar eine Pfefferbüchse und zwei Zuckerzangen. Es sind die Preise, welche die Gilde seit ihrem Bestehen auf andern Dörfern mit der edeln Armbrust errungen hat; diese Denkzeichen der gemeinschaftlichen Siege machen einen Theil von der Festtagsuniform des Gildweibels aus und er wird sie auch ferner tragen, und müßte er auch bei neuen Triumphen der Gesellschaft einmal darunter zusammenbrechen.**

Während er den geräuschvollen Aufruf an die Schützen bis zu den äußersten Grenzen der Gemeinde hinträgt, und die Kinder jauchzend vor ihm hertanzen, kehrt **ein Theil der Einwohner** nach Hause zurück; die Uebrigen begeben sich durch einen Linden-Allee bis vor ein großes Wirthshaus, dessen Giebel mit Blumen und Laubkränzen geziert ist und aus dessen oberstem Fenster **die dreifärbige Fahne** herniederhängt.<sup>30</sup>

28 Hendrik Conscience, *Moeder Job* (Antwerp: J. P. van Dieren, 1856), 7–8.

29 Jindřich Conscience, “Paní stará: Povídka; Z flámského Jindřicha Conscience,” trans. Ladislav Hodický, *Lumír: Týdenník belletristický a literární*, November 12, 1863, 1082.

30 Heinrich Conscience, *Mutter Job* (Münster: Aschendorff’sche Buchhandlung, 1856), 6–7.

This method of translation is exactly what Jungmann recommended. But his “standard” was no longer in fashion. Thus, we have to look further. An idea of which is presumable the case gives the already quoted remark by Jakub Malý:

For this aim it is enough if the translator faithfully maintains the narration, and from local features just those that are closely joined with the narration or serve to characterise persons and events; all else that is just incidental and irrelevant may be changed and adapted to domestic circumstances and customs.<sup>31</sup>

## 7. A Re-interpretation of the Czech Reception of Conscience

The general idea is that Conscience’s popularity was due to his nationalistic tone and to the success of the Belgian Revolution. We have already seen that the absence of his most nationalistic work *The Lion of Flanders* in Slavonic translation during the nineteenth century casts some doubt on this idea. In Czech translation—but the same is true for Slovak, Polish and Hungarian—it is mainly the social novels of Conscience that featured. The discussed ideas on localisation (Czechisation) seem to underline that Conscience was seen by contemporary Czech translators as being on a similar level as the French writer Charles Paul de Kock, whose work served as an example to Jakub B. Malý of foreign literature that freely may or even *should* be localised.

That Conscience’s work has even been published in a periodical like *Lumír*, where Czechisation was *not* preferred, in a clearly localised translation, corresponds with what has been translated from his oeuvre. Only two novels translated before World War I can be characterised as a patriotic work: his early novel *In ‘t Wonderjaer 1566* from 1841, translated as *Obrazoborci antverpští* in 1884, and the novel *De Boerenkrijg* from 1853, translated as *Selská vojna* in 1881 (2nd ed. in 1884). His most popular novels in Bohemia, *Siska van Rosemael* (1844; Czech translations 1846, 1857 and 1881), *De Loteling* (1850; Czech translations 1880, 1881 and 1906), *Houten Clara* (1850; Czech translations 1889, 1891 and 1903), and *De Gierigaerd* (1853; Czech translations 1871, 1879 and 1888) were characterised by one of his translators, the rector of the grammar school in Pelhřimov Václav Petrů, as “especially thanks to their poetic language cute tales, sketching the national Flemish way of life . . . that are valuable pearls of narrative art.”<sup>32</sup>

Thus, with the exception of the first reviews in the 1840s, Conscience was considered to be a contemporary Flemish writer of popular social novels that could be interesting for a broader, not necessarily literarily oriented public.

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31 Malý, “O překládání klasiků, se zvláštním zřetelem na Shakespeara,” 504.

32 [Václav Petrů], “Conscience,” in *Ottův slovník naučný: Ilustrovaná encyklopaedie obecných vědomostí*, vol. 5, C-Čechůvky (Prague: J. Otto, 1892), 587. My translation.

Seen from the perspective of the Czech reception of his work, his importance is mainly that by translations of his work, Dutch and Flemish literature was introduced to the Czech reader. The idea, however, of Flemish nationalistic literature as an inspiration for suppressed Slavonic nations can be abandoned.

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(Footnotes)

- 1 Hendrik Conscience, *Moeder Job* (Antwerp: J. P. van Dieren, 1856), 7–8.
- 2 Jindřich Conscience, "Paní stará: Povídka; Z flámského Jindřicha Conscience," trans. Ladislav Hodický, *Lumír: Týdenník belletristický a literární*, November 12, 1863, 1082.

# Drama Translation as a Cultural Barometer? Shakespeare during the Great War

Ivona Mišterová

University of West Bohemia, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, Department of English  
Language and Literature, Univerzitní 8, 306 014 Pilsen, Czech Republic.

Email: yvonne@kaj.zcu.cz

**ABSTRACT:** The article explores the connection between significant socio-political events and the choice and rendition of Shakespearean translations in the Czech lands during the Great War. It focuses on Shakespearean cycles held at the National Theatre in Prague and the Municipal Theatre in Pilsen in 1916. A chronological perspective is used to argue that Shakespearean productions and translations at the time acted as a specific reflection of the Czech world of politics. The article furthermore attempts to trace specific aspects of selected productions/translations of Shakespeare's works (e.g., *Henry IV*, *Hamlet*, etc.) in the Czech national context. The research is based on data derived from surveys of archival material (e.g. period reviews, theatre journals, posters, almanacs, and periodicals).

**KEYWORDS:** drama translation; literary-oriented translation; stage-oriented translation; William Shakespeare; Shakespearean cycle; the National Theatre in Prague; the Municipal Theatre in Pilsen; 1916

## 1. Translation, a Child of the Original?

The art of translation can undoubtedly be addressed from various points of view, and assigned numerous definitions which reflect different approaches and terminology. Naturally, the choice of a particular expression often a priori indicates the presumed relation between the original and its translation. Though it is beyond the scope of this article to explore the history of translation studies, let us briefly recapitulate the most significant theories and approaches. Peter Bush emphasised the importance of reading, but drew a clear distinction between the writer's, the translator's and the recipient's readings.<sup>1</sup> In his view, translatable reading stimulates otherness within the subject of the translator. Translators' subjectivities are framed and shaped by style, interpretation and research within professional conception that is reinforced by an ethical and emotional involvement. Josephine Balmer perceived translation as a recontextualisation, juxtaposed with the original and deriving from a dialogue between

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<sup>1</sup> See Peter Bush, "The Writer of Translations," in *The Translator as Writer*, ed. Susan Bassnett and Peter Bush (London: Continuum, 2006), 25.

translator and text, between original and new version.<sup>2</sup> Translation thus represents a form of communication.

Jacques Derrida's rethinking of Walter Benjamin enabled us to perceive translation not only as a form of communication but also as a poetic transposition, development, and continuity. In Derrida's view, translation represents a moment in the growth of the original, which will complete itself by enlarging itself.<sup>3</sup> Yet the growth which is to "accomplish, fill, [and] complete" must be rectified through the relationship with the original.<sup>4</sup> In his discourse Derrida re-evaluated and significantly expanded Benjamin's theory:

It is what I have called the translation contract: hymen or marriage contract with the promise to produce a child whose seed will give rise to history and growth. Benjamin says as much: in the translation the original becomes larger, it grows rather than reproduces itself—and I will add: like a child, its own, no doubt, but with the power to speak on its own, which makes of a child something other than a product subject to the law of reproduction. It directs towards a kingdom where languages will be reconciled and fulfilled, which is the most Babelian note. The sacred and the being-to-be translated do not let themselves be thought one without the other.<sup>5</sup>

Translation is thus a process that creates a new birth or rebirth through which continuity of the original is ensured. Moreover, in another culture the translated text will be read as an original. Translation thereby becomes an act of both inter-cultural and inter-temporal communication in which each language context, that is, source text and target text, adds something unique to itself.<sup>6</sup> As Edward Sapir observed, "no two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The words in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached."<sup>7</sup> Translation hence functions as a device through which the readership/spectatorship encounters the difference between the linguistic (and possibly also cultural) context between the source and target languages. This concept in a sense coincides with Mary Snell-Hornby's notion of translation as

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2 See Josephine Balmer, "What Comes Next? Reconstructing the Classics," in *The Translator as Writer*, ed. Susan Bassnett and Peter Bush (London: Continuum, 2006), 192.

3 See Jacques Derrida, *Psyche: Inventions of the Other*, Vol. 1 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 210.

4 Derrida, *Psyche*, 211.

5 Derrida, *Psyche*, 213.

6 See Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies* (3rd ed.; London: Routledge, 2008), 9–10.

7 Edward Sapir, *Culture, Language and Personality: Selected Essays*, ed. David G. Mandelbaum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), 69.

“a text type in its own right, as an integral part of target culture and not merely a reproduction of another text.”<sup>8</sup> In Theo Hermans’s view, however, any translation implies a certain degree of manipulation of the source text for a particular purpose.<sup>9</sup>

Recent decades have opened up space to new translation discourse and practice in terms of post-colonial theory, corpus linguistics and gender studies. Owing to the global nature of the contemporary world, the role of translator as a bridge builder and cultural mediator has become even more significant.

Having reached this stage of our discussion on translation, let us try to recapitulate, clarify, and in part reformulate some of the most significant theses. In the light of the aforementioned reflections, we may assume that translation is developed from and in relation to the original, with which it exists in a symbiotic, albeit autonomous, bond. A juxtaposition of their relationship creates a tension, which stems from both their connectedness and their separateness and produces a unique fusion of qualities, derived from the self and the new. Every translation is set in its own specific context and receives a different response from its readers/audience. In the light of reader-response theory, we can even argue that each translation created in the past is a reflection of both historically conditioned attitudes and reactions to antecedent assessments. The art of translation thereby emerges as a highly sophisticated process rooted in a given time period, while being simultaneously conditioned by the translation practice and the reader/audience response.

## 2. Drama Translation

The specific position of drama in the literary canon naturally predetermines its specific position within translation studies and conditions particular types of translation practice. Over the years, drama translation has undergone radical changes. With the new emphasis on culture in the 1980s, the focus of interest has shifted from a linguistic to a culture-bound perspective, and consequently from literary (i.e., text-oriented) to theatre (i.e., stage-oriented) translation. In the first case, translation serves a literary purpose, whereas in the latter one it is transformed into a theatre production, in which language, that of the source text or translation, represents just one constituent, along with other theatrical elements, such as set design, costumes, music, lighting, and so forth. In this context Susan Bassnett (2008, 119) argues that a dramatic text is read as incomplete, since it develops its full potential only in performance. Bassnett’s no-

8 Mary Snell-Hornby, *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1988), 24.

9 See Theo Hermans, “Translation Studies as a New Paradigm,” in *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, ed. Theo Hermans (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 11.

tion of incompleteness recalls, whether intentionally or not, Jauss's concept of a horizon of expectations which constantly changes according to the target text and presents the readership/spectatorship with variations and modifications. Discussing the nexus between text and performance, Anne Ubersfeld notes that a dramatic text cannot be separated from a performance, because theatre consists of a dialectical relationship between both.<sup>10</sup> She, however, subverts the idea of semantic equivalence between text and performance, since in her view the totality of signs created in performance exceeds the text. Vice versa, a number of textual structures may be erased by the actual performance.

Drama translation thus makes demands not only on translatability but also on performability with respect to the necessity to clearly render the source text in the target language within the receiving culture, whether as literature or as stage practice. In his *Drama as Literature*, Jiří Veltruský examined the intense and reciprocal nature of the relationship between the dialogue and the extra-linguistic situation.<sup>11</sup> In his view, the actual sense of the individual units of meaning thus depends on both the linguistic content and the extra-linguistic situation. Furthermore, performance provides the dialogue with tempo, rhythm, cadence, and loudness (voice), which may not be immediately apparent from the process of reading. In this context, however, Robert Corrigan's concept of "speakability," based on the translator's ability to hear the actor speaking and claimed to be the primary intention of drama translation, can surely not be fully accomplished, since the translator cannot render what Corrigan calls "the whole gesture of the scene."<sup>12</sup> It is nonetheless very close to Peter Bogatyrev's theory of theatre discourse, in which a theatrical speech, understood as an attribute of a protagonist's social status quo, is juxtaposed to other signs of the *situation sociale*, such as the actor's body language, the costume, set design, and so forth.<sup>13</sup> The issue of performability takes the discussion back to the specific position and complexity of drama translation and to the distinction between literary and stage translation. A text translated for performance is to be provided with specific features, enabling its playability, which is, however, further affected and complicated by changing concepts of performance and the role of (different) national contexts.

Stage-oriented translation hence acquires a new dimension of complexity, in which the text represents just one constituent (or sign) of theatre discourse.

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10 See Anne Ubersfeld, *Reading Theatre* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 4–5.

11 See Jiří Veltruský, *Drama as Literature* (Lisse: Peter de Ridder Press, 1977), 10.

12 Susan Bassnett, "Theatre and Opera," in *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation*, ed. Peter France (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 97.

13 See Susan Bassnett, "Ways through Labyrinth Strategies and Methods for Translating Theatre Texts," in *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, ed. Theo Hermans (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 96.

Moreover, the text of the play contains within itself the undertext, or the so-called gestural text, which mediates an actor's performance and cannot be ignored by the translator. In line with Susan Bassnett we may thus argue that, first and foremost, the drama translator ought to consider the function of the "text as an element of and for performance."<sup>14</sup>

Shakespeare in translation is a cornerstone of drama translation. As Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha note, it is possible to measure the cultural significance of Shakespeare in translation in both quantitative and qualitative terms.<sup>15</sup> Shakespeare is one of the most frequently translated writers and one of the most widely performed playwrights. His oeuvre has helped to shape national identities, ideologies, literary and linguistic concepts, and theories of theatre across the world. Shakespeare has attracted the attention of theatre practitioners, writers, scholars, politicians, and so forth. His life and work have been explored in depth by numerous scholars. Shakespearean translation has even served as a touchstone for proving or disproving theoretical assumptions (e.g. the influence of descriptive studies on Heylen and Delabastita). Translations of Shakespeare's originals provoke various discussions on normative and descriptive attitudes towards translation, thereby implying a borderline between translation and adaptation. Yet the significance and exact position of the dividing line between them is speculative, since the translation may be perceived as a form of rewriting or adaptation. In their critical anthology of *Adaptations of Shakespeare*, Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier state:

The understanding of translation moves from that of a faithful transformation of an original work to the processing, with inevitable critical differences of a source text that is already a rewriting of prior cultural material. . . . Adaptation, like translation and parody, is part of a generalized cultural activity that posits reworking in new contexts as more characteristic of cultural development than are originality in creation and fidelity in interpretation.<sup>16</sup>

Since rewriting is inherent in both translation and adaptation, the difference between them thus seems to depend on the degree of rewriting and

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14 Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 131.

15 See Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha, eds., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (2nd ed.; Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 264.

16 Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier, "General Introduction," in *Adaptations of Shakespeare: A Critical Anthology of Plays from the Seventeenth Century to the Present*, ed. Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier (New York: Routledge, 2000), 5.

the presumable and implied objectives of the go-between. The close relationship between translation and adaptation may be expressed through Michel Garneau's twofold concept of tradaptation, which is, in general, intended to preserve a particular minority culture, struggling for its autonomy, through the Shakespearean text. The notion of tradaptation is perhaps best exemplified in Garneau's *Macbeth, traduit en Québécois* (1978). Translating Shakespeare's tragedy about the rise and fall of the tyrant and usurper not into Canadian French or the official French, but into *joual*, two years before the first referendum on Quebec sovereignty, had considerable political and social implications. Macbeth's struggle for power, transposed into Québécois and relocated from Scotland to the New France, clearly indicated that Quebec has its own language and self-identity. An analogous quest for self-identity in a strictly regimented world can be found in *Hamleteen* (2012), an adaptation (or a specific tradaptation) of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, directed by Jakub Vašíček and specifically intended for young audiences. In this case, Shakespeare's tragedy provided a provocative framework for rethinking both the contours and meanings of Hamlet's transition to adulthood. Not only did the emphasis on the prince's adolescence (with all its hormonal, societal, and physical pressures) add a new dimension to the play, but it also contributed a grotesque effect in the representation of the world's distorted values. Hamlet's pursuit of truth was thus interconnected with his search for identity and autonomy. Similar examples of transpositions can be found within many postcolonial locations, especially in Asia and Africa. In some cases, the translation-cum-adaptation, as Ton Hoenselaars aptly calls it, subverts the canonical status of Shakespeare, such as Tom Lanoye's *Ten Oorlog*, the postmodern re-interpretation of Shakespeare's histories.<sup>17</sup>

Shakespeare's texts have been rendered in many languages, and Shakespeare in translation has also developed vividly and distinctively in the Czech Republic. To understand how Shakespearean translation exists within the target culture, it is essential to be aware of the multidimensional relationship between drama, translation, theatrical production, and recipient, whether readership or spectatorship. Being perceived through the prism of the target language, culture and history, Shakespeare in translation activates many verbally and culturally relevant issues. Wolfgang Iser even notes that "the specific nature of the culture encountered can be grasped only when projected onto what is familiar," which

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17 See Ton Hoenselaars, introduction to *Shakespeare and the Language of Translation*, ed. Ton Hoenselaars (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2004), 16.

applies to the Czech environment as well.<sup>18</sup> As Jiří Levý stated in his *České teorie překladu* (Czech Theories of Translation):

Fischer's translations of Heine, Goethe and Kipling, Bohumil Mathesius's translation of *The Government Inspector*, Saudek's translation of *Julius Caesar* . . . were not only literary facts, but intentional, opinion-based responses to the contemporary situation of the Czech nation. Likewise, the Great Shakespearean Cycle staged at the National Theatre in Prague was felt as homage to England.<sup>19</sup>

In this regard, Susan Harris Smith's perception of drama as a cultural barometer responding to regional and national problems can be extended to the notion of drama translation, and specifically Shakespeare in translation.<sup>20</sup>

The second part of the article examines the connection between the era of the Great War and the choice and rendition of Shakespearean translations in the Czech Republic at the National Theatre in Prague and the Municipal Theatre in Pilsen.

The research relied on data derived from surveys of archival material (period reviews, theatre journals, posters, almanacs, periodicals, and unpublished memoirs of Vendelín Budil, director of the Pilsen Theatre from 1902 to 1912 and later a theatre archivist). The documents researched are housed at the J. K. Tyl Theatre Institute in Pilsen, the Theatre Institute in Prague, the State Regional Archive in Pilsen, the Pilsen Archive, and the Education and Research Library in Pilsen. They represent a necessary complement to any understanding of the crucial socio-political climate of the time as well as the original stage productions.

### 3. Shakespearean Translations and Productions during the Great War

#### 3.1 Shakespearean Cycle in Prague: Kvapil, Vojan, and Sládek

In the second year of the Great War the world commemorated the tercentennial anniversary of Shakespeare's death. As Clara Calvo points out, the commem-

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18 Quoted in Rui Carvalho Homem, "The Feast and the Scraps: Translating *Love's Labour's Lost* into Portuguese," in *Shakespeare and the Language of Translation*, ed. Ton Hoenselaars (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2004), 116.

19 Jiří Levý, *České teorie překladu: Vývoj překladatelských teorií a metod v české literatuře*, Vol. 1 (2nd ed.; Prague: Ivo Železný, 1996), 228–29. My translation.

20 See Susan Harris Smith, *American Drama: The Bastard Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 9.

oration of the poet's death in Britain epitomised the defence of the spiritual property of the nation, which was threatened by a German invasion.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, the tercentenary celebration in the Czech lands can be understood not only as a great theatrical achievement but most importantly as a presentation of national self-awareness and identity. It furthermore attempted to strengthen the autonomy of Czech theatre and demonstrate a pro-Allied attitude during the days marked by the omnipresent hostile exhortation *Gott strafes England*. In Jan Mukařovský's view, Shakespeare's glorification on that occasion was immense and incomparable to any other European theatrical event of the time.<sup>22</sup>

Prague contributed to worldwide celebrations with a cycle of fifteen productions of Shakespeare directed by Kvapil using Sládek's translations.<sup>23</sup> Owing to rigid censorship, the initially planned production of *King John*, employing a symbolic image of Austria's severed head, was banned. The premiere of both parts of *Henry IV* was first allowed as an exception, but later postponed to the autumn (2 November 1916). Though the production was marked by considerable cuts, it still represented a serious threat to the monarchy: the spectacularly staged coronation scenes might have been connected with rumours that the new independent Czech state was to be ruled by George V of England. The cuts led to the downplaying of the major political issue of the play. Instead, the production was dominated by the figure of Falstaff, portrayed in a rather traditional way as a protagonist typical of nineteenth-century comedies. Overwhelmed by Falstaff's monumental presence and his humour, the audience "did not even notice the intricate political implications of the Falstaff-Hall relationship."<sup>24</sup> The production, however, climaxed in the aforementioned coronation scene that symbolised the longstanding Czech aspiration to national sovereignty. The royal inauguration, accompanied by the handing over of the royal insignia, represented de facto a theatrical act, the symbolic recreation of the nation.

The festival commenced on 27 March 1916 with an introductory lecture delivered by F. X. Šalda, the renowned Czech art critic. In his speech entitled *Génius Shakespearův a jeho tvorba: Apostrofa kritická* (Shakespeare, the genius,

21 See Clara Calvo, "Shakespeare and Cervantes in 1916: The Politics of Language," in *Shifting the Scene: Shakespeare in European Culture*, ed. Ladina Bezzola Lambert and Balz Engler (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), 81.

22 See Allardyce Nicoll, ed., *Shakespeare Survey*, Vol. 9 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 108.

23 *The Comedy of Errors* (27 March), *Richard III* (30 March), *Romeo and Juliet* (1 April), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (4 April), *The Merchant of Venice* (7 April), *The Taming of the Shrew* (9 April), *Much Ado about Nothing* (13 April), *As You Like It* (15 April), *Measure for Measure* (17 April), *Twelfth Night* (19 April), *Hamlet* (23 April), *King Lear* (25 April), *Macbeth* (28 April), *Othello* (30 April), and *The Winter's Tale* (4 May).

24 Martin Procházka, "Shakespeare and Czech Resistance," in *Shakespeare: World Views*, ed. Heather Kerr, Robin Eaden, and Madge Mitton (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1996), 52.

and his oeuvre: the critical apostrophe), Šalda perceived Shakespearean drama as “the moment of liberation from the determinism of Fate in ancient tragedy, and the establishment of concrete humanity consisting in the fullness and complexity of dramatic characters.”<sup>25</sup>

The cycle centred on Eduard Vojan, the famous Czech actor, whose Hamlet (1906) still represents one of the best Shakespearean renditions on the Czech stage.<sup>26</sup> During the festival he also played the parts of Shylock, Petruchio, Benedick, Lear, Macbeth, and Othello.

The festival was undoubtedly an important event in the Czech Shakespearean theatrical tradition. Notwithstanding, however, the attempt to transform Shakespeare’s work into cultural capital, due to the character of the National Theatre, it rather preserved its status as a sacred gift.<sup>27</sup> At a time of distress, however, Shakespeare’s plays mediated through Sládek’s translations served as a channel for communication, offering spiritual consolation, courage, and a new perspective on the future.

### 3.2 Shakespearean Cycle in Pilsen: Počepický, Karen, and Sládek

Pilsen Theatre, open as usual to influence from Prague, attempted to spark national enthusiasm and bolster national feelings against Austro-Hungarian oppression. Although theatre found itself in the steel grip of censorship, its repertoire was oriented toward democratic drama (e.g. Shaw, Shakespeare, etc.) with emphasis on national plays showing national strength and courage (e.g. Tyl, Jirásek, etc.). In many productions of the time it is possible to trace theatrical attempts to break through autocratic restrictions and to establish closer contact with the audience (e.g. *Hamlet* 1916).

The Pilsen celebration of Shakespeare’s anniversary was not as magnificent as in Prague; however, four Shakespearean productions, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*, and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* were staged (in Sládek’s translations) at the beginning of May 1916. Of these four, *Hamlet* met with an especially large response.<sup>28</sup> It was produced on 4 May under the direction of Jaroslav Počepický in Sládek’s translation.

25 Procházka, “Shakespeare and Czech Resistance,” 51.

26 Vojan’s communicative and expressive power lay, among other things, in his eye contact and body language. His Shakespearean renditions wavered between sensitive romantic acting and psychological realism, leading to a complex portrayal of characters. The Shakespeare Festival in 1916 was a real climax to his theatrical career. See Jan Mukařovský, “Shakespeare and Czech Theatrical Criticism,” in *Shakespeare and His Contemporaries: Eastern and Central European Studies*, ed. Jerzy Limon and Jay L. Halio (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993), 251.

27 See Procházka, “Shakespeare and Czech Resistance,” 51.

28 See Ivona Mišterová, *Angloamerické drama na plzeňských scénách* (Pilsen: University of West Bohemia, forthcoming), 37–38.

An important clue to Hamlet's character, particularly with regard to his mental suffering, was provided by the "To be or not to be" soliloquy, probably interpreted as a reference to the issue of national independence.<sup>29</sup> Though the period review commented mainly on particular artistic performances and did not mention any censorship cuts or suspect metaphors,<sup>30</sup> it is conceivable that the idea of a search for (not only moral) freedom was shared in a circumspect way with the audience, which might have been involved in Hamlet's quest. Even the prince's comment on "the time out of joint"<sup>31</sup> or Rosencrantz's remark that "their [players'] inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation"<sup>32</sup> might have alluded to a political subtext.<sup>33</sup> It is apparent that in the case of *Hamlet*, Sládek's translation combined with the elusive nature of theatre to represent the social and political reality of the time.

During the years 1914 to 1918, seven Shakespeare productions premiered at the Pilsen Theatre.<sup>34</sup> Though period reviews commented mainly on artistic performances, in the case of *The Merchant of Venice* (1914) Sládek's translation was explicitly mentioned and acclaimed for its poetic value. Reviewers were notably generous and furthermore compared Beníšková's speech (Portia) to crystal pearls trickling out of her mouth.<sup>35</sup>

### 3.3 Sládek's Translations

Sládek's literary-oriented translations maintained their dominant position on Pilsen stages throughout the 1920s and the mid-1930s, when they were gradually superseded by Bohumil Štěpánek's renderings, implementing a different, stage-centred concept of translation. Some aspects of his translations were already being criticised by the end of the nineteenth century, however. In the 1890s the Czech literary historian and critic Jan Voborník commented on the problematic performability of Sládek's translations. In his view, Sládek's smooth and content-saturated poetic texts made great demands on both actors (their memory and rendering) and audience as well. The dominant position of Sládek's translations was further disputed in 1916 by the Celtic and Indo-European scholar Josef Baudiš, who in his article en-

29 See Josef Bureš, "Hamlet," *Divadlo a umění*, *Český deník*, May 6, 1919, 4.

30 In the case of other productions (e.g., *Androcles and the Lion*) period reviews openly talked about "a steel grip of censorship." S—ý, "Z plzeňského divadla: Androkles a lev," *Divadlo a umění*, *Český deník*, January 5, 1916, 6.

31 Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 1.5.189. References are to act, scene, and line.

32 Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 2.2.332.

33 Soon after the outbreak of the Great War the Municipal Theatre was closed.

34 Apart from the above-mentioned productions, *The Merchant of Venice* (October 1914), *The Tempest* (1915), and *The Comedy of Errors* (1915) were staged during the period under consideration.

35 See S—ý, "Kupec benátský," *Divadlo a umění*, *Český denník* [sic], March 2, 1914, 5.

titled *Příspěvky ke kritice českých překladů shakespearovských* (Contributions to the Criticism of Czech Shakespearean Translations) observed that Sládek's passion for accuracy had resulted in the multiplication of lines and occasional diffuseness, weepiness and over-refinement of characters, and efforts to soften the bawdiness of Shakespeare's original.<sup>36</sup> In the same year, Antonín Fencel, theatre manager, director, actor, and translator, criticised Sládek's insufficient familiarity with stagecraft. Otokar Fischer, translator, critic and dramatist, pleaded for "greater freedom" in Shakespearean translation.<sup>37</sup> Fencel and Fischer did not limit themselves to mere criticism, however, but sought to build up their translations on the basis of the principles they espoused. Both Fencel's *Merchant of Venice* (1916) and Fischer's *Macbeth* (1916) thus primarily attempted to avoid the unwelcome multiplication of lines. Sládek's translations were furthermore subjected to harsh criticism by René Wellek, the literary scholar and comparatist, then a university undergraduate, who expressed his objections in a study entitled *Okleštěný Shakespeare* (A Curtailed Shakespeare). Sládek's translations were defended by František Chudoba, the Czech Anglicist and literary historian, who presented his arguments in the periodical *Naše věda* (Our Science) in 1924.<sup>38</sup> Though the dispute was mostly subjective in nature, it may be perceived as a clash of two generations of translators, who maintained different approaches to drama translation.

Despite the criticism, however, Sládek's translations represent the most significant achievement of the third generation of Czech Shakespeare translators.

#### 4. Conclusion

During the Great War, drama served as an effective channel of communication, often addressing the audience with the secret language of irony and metaphor. The same can be said of translations created or staged at critical moments of national history and formed by ideological concerns and new theatrical tastes.<sup>39</sup> The stage became a *locus communis* where the audience was symbolically con-

36 See Karel Horálek, "O překladatelský sloh jevištní," *Naše řeč* 43, nos. 5–6 (1960). Accessed October 29, 2012. <http://nase-rec.ujc.cas.cz/archiv.php>.

37 Otokar Vočadlo, "Shakespeare and Bohemia," in *Shakespeare Survey*, Vol. 9, ed. Allardyce Nicoll (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 104.

38 Chudoba criticised Wellek's reviews of Sládek's translations, and in his article *Nový pokus o překlad Shakespeareova Hamleta* (A new attempt to translate Shakespeare's *Hamlet* [1926]) critically analysed Štěpánek's new translation of Shakespeare's tragedy (1926).

39 See Michael Dobson and Stanley Wells, eds., *The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 482.

fronted with the actuality of war through both the translation and the fictional world of the play.

During the Great War, Shakespearean productions were particularly frequent and successful. They can be regarded as a solid portion of the repertoire of Czech theatres of the time. The monumental cultural landmark of the wartime period was the Shakespeare Festival arranged in Prague in the spring of 1916. The opening event was a lecture on Shakespeare by F. X. Šalda, delivered on 27 March. At that time, even Czech periodicals devoted considerable space to pictorial material and articles on Shakespeare and Shakespearean translations/productions by famous scholars and reviewers. For instance, *Český deník* (The Czech Daily) observed:

Shakespeare is perhaps the greatest poet of all time. His sombre lyric touches many strings, and the music of his words, the prism of knowledge, includes within itself everything on which his eyesight had rested. And the poet unfolds his perceptions into golden rays, full of colours, albeit intermingled with dark stripes of disappointment and sorrow.<sup>40</sup>

The critic's homage to Shakespeare naturally concerns Sládek's poetic translation as well, since it served as a means of communication between Shakespeare's original and Czech audiences.

As there are still many aspects to analyse and issues to solve, however, this brief discussion on the production-translation relationship within the framework of social and political events symbolically concludes with the words of the Shakespearean scholar Graham Holderness, which are applicable not only to the secrets of Shakespeare myth, but to Shakespeare in translation as well: "Shakespeare is, here, now, always, what is currently being made of him."<sup>41</sup>

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40 Bureš, "Hamlet," 4. My translation.

41 Graham Holderness, preface to *The Shakespeare Myth*, ed. Graham Holderness (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), xvi.

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# A Marginal Phenomenon in the Field of Literary Translation: The (Im)possibility of “Translating” Literature into a “Simplified” Version

Eva Skopečková

University of West Bohemia, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, Department of English  
Language and Literature, Univerzitní 8, 306 014 Pilsen, Czech Republic.

Email: skopecko@kaj.zcu.cz

**ABSTRACT:** The present paper focuses on some of the crucial issues relating to a somewhat marginal and controversial phenomenon in the field of literary translation, that is, graded readers. This phenomenon is explored with respect to literary translation as well as the specificity of literature and its use in the EFL classroom. Graded readers, adapted classics or just simplified versions of original readers are produced in order to enable thousands of readers to enjoy “without great difficulty” the best books written in English language. Following functionalist approaches, the purpose or function of a text is the most important aspect concerning translation. Nevertheless, the question is whether it is still possible to consider the final product of the specific process of translation of literary language into something new, graded and “more digestible” as literature, and whether the graded readers still fulfil their original function, that is, to make thousands of readers enjoy literature.

**KEYWORDS:** literary translation; functionalism; graded readers; specificity of literature; aesthetic function

## 1. Introduction

“Much time and ink has been wasted attempting to differentiate between *translations*, *versions*, *adaptations* and the establishment of a hierarchy of ‘correctness’ between these categories.”<sup>1</sup> The objective of the present paper is not to merge into the abundance of the above mentioned writing, but rather to draw attention to some of the most disputable aspects of the process of “translating” literature into a graded version and to raise a few questions relating to the growing phenomenon of graded readers.

In recent years, graded readers have achieved a dominant position in the area of foreign language learning, especially as far as English as a foreign language

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1 Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies* (3rd ed.; London: Routledge, 2002), 81. Italics in original.

is concerned.<sup>2</sup> EFL courses and programmes, including the Czech school curriculum, usually offer graded readers instead of authentic literary texts, believing that the graded version of the original literary text makes the reading of the world's classics easier and more accessible to language learners in the early stages of second language acquisition, and thus more enjoyable.<sup>3</sup> In accordance with this favourable approach to graded readers, such texts are often presented as a sort of literary translation, "translating" literary language into a new and graded one. The final product is consequently, despite all the profound and often dramatic changes that take place during the process of text condensation, considered as literature. Nevertheless, despite all the definitely positive features of graded readers and their useful role in the ELT context, the concept of literary translation is a very complex one and the translation of literature requires naturally more than a mere transmission of a plot line and a list of characters. What is more, there are certain aspects concerning literature that just cannot be simplified since they represent the very essence of any literary text. Therefore, the paper aims to discuss the somewhat challenging question as to whether it is possible to translate literature into a simplified version at all and whether we can consider graded readers as a regular type of literary translation.

## 2. Defining the Concept of Literature

In order to explore the practice of transforming literature into a simplified or abridged version, it is important to start with an accurate definition of the basic concept to realize all the necessary aspects that have to be taken into consideration. As far as the definition of literature is concerned, there have been many attempts to define this concept. These attempts have always reflected a particular point of view or a particular theoretical approach. In consequence, such definitions might be somewhat contradictory. In general, these characterisations os-

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2 The phrase foreign language learning is used here to refer to the context of language learning (usually in a classroom setting), where the target language is not so widely used in the community, such as English or German in the Czech Republic. In accordance with the topic of the paper, it concerns the EFL context in particular. We also use the phrase second language acquisition to refer to basically the same context (taking here Stephen Krashen's division of these two terms into consideration. See Stephen D. Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning* [Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1981].).

3 Following the results of a research study that was conducted at the Faculty of Education of Charles University in Prague in cooperation with several Czech grammar schools (2007–2009) in order to create and verify a didactic model for the optimal use of English literature in the EFL classroom in the context of the current trends and changes of the Czech school curriculum. See Eva Skopečková, *Literární text ve výuce anglického jazyka: Specifické aspekty didaktiky anglicky psané literatury ve výuce anglického jazyka v kontextu současných proměn české vzdělávací soustavy* (Pilsen: University of West Bohemia, 2010), 155–56.

cillate between two rather extreme positions, that is, perceiving literature either as highly specific phenomenon that can hardly be described by means of some exact terminology or viewing literature only as a mere reflection of a particular time and ideology.<sup>4</sup> Despite these apparent differences and diverse attitudes to literature, it seems that all of these more or less successful definitions lead to one inevitable conclusion: literature is an exceedingly varied and complex concept and the effort to define it is a never-ending and highly complicated process (caused on the one hand by the particular attitude or theory utilised and on the other hand by the very nature of literary work).

To define the concept of literature and avoid either of these extreme positions, it seems sensible to start with the distinguishing of literary and non-literary texts and focus on the very heart of what makes a text a literary one. The very essence of any literary work consists namely in its aesthetic function, that is, in its ability to “release its whole as well as its individual parts from the usual context” and to establish completely novel and unprecedented relations.<sup>5</sup> This distinguishes literary texts from non-literary factual texts, which on the contrary try to “describe and if possible also evoke concrete life situations” and lead to specific, comprehensible conclusions.<sup>6</sup>

Following the above-mentioned definition of literature, the very heart of literature consists in its aesthetic function, that is, a function drawing our attention not only to *what* the literary text says, but also *how* it is said and how we as readers are able to understand it.<sup>7</sup> Contrary to disciplines that prefer observable and undeniable facts leading to unambiguous conclusions, literature offers its readers constant searching and discovery, uncovering new relations and new meaning. It is a “singular and wholly autonomous phenomenon,” whose aim is the process of searching and discovery itself rather than some sort of final and

4 Petr V. Zima explains all the theories and debates concerning literary scholarship as a sort of movement between two antagonizing positions and the individual schools and theories move either to or from one of these poles. On the one hand, there are theories perceiving literature as a completely autonomous unit, which can hardly be defined and described, but rather enjoyed in terms of “uncommitted delight.” On the other hand, there are theories, according to which literature only reflects a particular ideology or “historical consciousness.” The first group of theories is represented, for instance, by Russian formalists, Prague structuralists or New Criticism, but in many respects also reception aesthetics. The other pole is mainly connected with Marxist theories. Petr V. Zima, *Literární estetika*, trans. Jan Schneider (Olomouc: Votobia, 1998), 15–17.

5 Nezkusil describes here the aesthetic function referring to Jan Mukařovský and his notion of the work of art.

6 Vladimír Nezkusil, *Nástin didaktiky literární výchovy (čtyřletá gymnázia a třídy víceletých gymnázií): Z praxe pro praxi* (Prague: Faculty of Education, Charles University, 2004), 26.

7 Zima refers to Jan Mukařovský and his definition of poetic language. See Zima, *Literární estetika*, 196.

incontrovertible conclusion and clearly definable ascertainment.<sup>8</sup> This incompleteness and multivocality resulting from the very essence of literature is the basis for the specificity of this phenomenon.<sup>9</sup> Reducing a literary text in this function or even eliminating it completely may therefore equal the destruction of the literariness of such a text.

### 3. Definition of Translation Following the Functionalist Perspective, Including the Concept of Literary Translation

Attempts to choose a broad but at the same time concise and clear definition of translation—to embrace all the possible nuances of the issue—might cause similar difficulties like those concerning the concept of literature. Since the present paper aims to make a sort of critical analysis of graded readers in terms of their ability to perform one of their main functions (i.e., to make readers in the early stages of second language acquisition enjoy L2 “literature”)<sup>10</sup> and consequently to question their status as a type of literary translation, we chose functionalist approaches to translation as a governing perspective for our definition of translation.

Functionalist approaches describe translation as “a specific kind of communicative action.” Accordingly, like any other communicative action, translation needs to have a specific purpose or function, and thus this purpose is seen as “the most decisive criterion” for any translation.<sup>11</sup> Following this definition of translation, it would be possible to consider graded readers as a regular—though of course marginal—type of translation. As implied above, graded readers are created in order to help L2 learners enjoy L2 literature. Undoubtedly, graded versions of a text make the reading of such texts easier and apparently also more enjoyable. Moreover, shortened or adapted versions of a particular text correspond to the concept of intralingual translation, that is, the rephrasing of a text in the same language. Looking at the relation of graded readers and translation from this angle, it may seem that graded readers actually perform their main function and can be perceived as a type of translation. Nevertheless, graded readers try to translate literary text, and the translation of literature is a very specific process, during which the translator has to transfer “not only the message of the source text but also *the specific way* the message is expressed in

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8 Nezkusil, *Nástin didaktiky literární výchovy*, 79.

9 See Skopečková, *Literární text ve výuce anglického jazyka*, 22.

10 L2 stands for second language.

11 Christina Schäffner and Uwe Wiesemann, *Annotated Texts for Translation: English-German; Functionalist Approaches Illustrated* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 2001), 9.

the source language.”<sup>12</sup> In other words, the translated literary text should not only consist of basically the same plot line, as graded readers definitely do, but it should also have the same literary effect. It should be in fact “an independent, parallel work of art.”<sup>13</sup> Graded readers, however, fail to transfer this specific aspect of literature and the final product can hardly be called a work of art.

#### 4. Graded Readers: The Main Problems and Difficulties Concerning the “Translation” of Literature into a Simplified Version

As far as ELT context is concerned, it is clear that it is not possible to introduce unabridged authentic literary texts in the EFL/ESL classroom before students reach a particular level of proficiency.<sup>14</sup> What is more, the reading of authentic literary texts requires more than even a very good command of a language. To understand such texts and to be able to search for and discover new relations and meaning in them, which is characteristic of reception and interpretation of literature, the reader has to possess certain experience and the ability to undergo such a process. Nevertheless, to exclude authentic L2 literature on these grounds from the EFL/ESL classroom would certainly be wrong. In terms of comprehensibility, there are, naturally, easier as well as more difficult literary texts. Moreover, the way that these texts are introduced in the classroom or what sort of EFL materials are used to set the particular task are important, and may in the end influence whether a literary text is enjoyed by the language students or not. As implied above, graded readers aim to make the learning of English easier and more enjoyable. It seems in fact that graded texts try to create “a sort of *shelter*” from all the difficult and confusing vocabulary and stylistic constructions, and genuinely want to introduce language learners to the realm of the world’s classics in the early stages of second language acquisition.<sup>15</sup> In order to “suit the learner’s own language ability,” the authors of these simplified versions of original readers grade the vocabulary, style, as well as the content of every book, always in reference to a particular language level.<sup>16</sup> In addition to that, they supply each of their readers

12 Katharina Reiss, *Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Übersetzungskritik* (Munich: M. Hueber, 1971), 42, quoted in Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity: Functionalist Approaches Explained* (Manchester: St. Jerome, 2007), 89. Italics mine.

13 Christiane Nord, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity: Functionalist Approaches Explained* (Manchester: St. Jerome, 2007), 89.

14 As implied above, the discussion concerning graded readers refers mainly to the context of English language teaching, i.e., EFL: English as a foreign language, though of course the issue also relates the area of language learning and second language acquisition in general.

15 Skopečková, *Literární text ve výuce anglického jazyka*, 71. Italics in original.

16 Pearson ELT, “What Are Penguin Readers?,” Pearson, accessed October 28, 2012, <http://www.penguinreaders.com/pr/teachers/what-are-they.html>.

with plenty of resource materials, for teachers as well as students, “to ensure an enjoyable and successful learning experience.”<sup>17</sup> Such effort undoubtedly plays an important and useful role in the EFL/ESL classroom. Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, it is highly questionable whether the final product of this process of simplification retains the features of a literary work of art, which continuously evokes new responses from its readers and makes them want to read further and discover new and unprecedented meaning. This raises the question whether these texts really introduce language learners to the world of literature or whether they are just another sort of graded non-literary text. Furthermore, simplifying an authentic literary text and reducing or completely eliminating its original though less comprehensible charm may paradoxically discourage a reader from finishing the book.

Despite the often heated and intense discussions that are provoked by the issue of graded readers versus the use of authentic literary texts in the EFL classroom, there are certain aspects that cannot be disputed. In order to create a graded reader a literary text has to undergo various—and depending on the particular language level—often dramatic changes. It could be said that the literary text goes through a whole process of transformation or even a sort of translation into a new and more comprehensible form. Such translation usually starts with a radical abridgement of the literary text, which entails further reductions and includes changes on a lexical as well as syntactic level that exclude everything but the main plot line, that is, elimination of long and complex descriptions, replacement or complete reduction of literary figures, humour, especially irony or author’s comments, complete loss of dialect and all the more complicated vocabulary, and so forth.<sup>18</sup> To reduce the literary text to such an extent means that the new text loses some or even much of its richness, frequently including its literary effect and the original voice of the writer. Consequently, the reader of such a text may in fact enjoy the reading of a text that perfectly suits his or her language level, but he or she will hardly enjoy the process of searching for and discovering of new relations and meaning.

To illustrate the above mentioned points, let us introduce an example of an authentic literary text, which is often graded and abridged, and contrast it with its graded version. An excerpt from the first chapter of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) by Oscar Wilde, which opens this colourful *fin de siècle* novel, demonstrates the huge translation loss and the wide gap between the original and its graded version:

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17 Cambridge University Press, “Cambridge English Readers,” Cambridge University Press, accessed October 28, 2012, <http://www.cambridge.org/cz/elt/catalogue/subject/project/course/item404822/Cambridge-English-Readers-About-the-product/>.

18 See Ronald Carter and Michael N. Long, *Teaching Literature* (Harlow: Longman, 1991), 146–51.

## Chapter 1

The studio was filled with the rich odour of roses, and when the light summer wind stirred amidst the trees of the garden, there came through the open door the heavy scent of the lilac, or the more delicate perfume of the pink-flowering thorn.

From the corner of the divan of Persian saddle-bags on which he was lying, smoking, as was his custom, innumerable cigarettes, Lord Henry Wotton could just catch the gleam of the honey-sweet and honey-coloured blossoms of a laburnum, whose tremulous branches seemed hardly able to bear the burden of a beauty so flame-like as theirs; and now and then the fantastic shadows of birds in flight flittered across the long tussore-silk curtains that were stretched in front of the huge window, producing a kind of momentary Japanese effect, and making him think of those pallid jade-faced painters of Tokio who, through the medium of an art that is necessarily immobile, seek to convey the sense of swiftness and motion. The sullen murmur of the bees shouldering their way through the long unmown grass, or circling with monotonous insistence round the dusty gilt horns of the straggling woodbine, seemed to make the stillness more oppressive. The dim roar of London was like the bourdon note of a distant organ.

In the centre of the room, clamped to an upright easel, stood the full-length portrait of a young man of extraordinary personal beauty, and in front of it, some little distance away, was sitting the artist himself, Basil Hallward, whose sudden disappearance some years ago caused, at the time, such public excitement, and gave rise to so many strange conjectures.<sup>19</sup>

Compare with the graded version, which this time is the whole first chapter:

### The Artist

*'I have put too much of myself into this painting.'*

Through the open windows of the room came the rich scent of summer flowers. Lord Henry Wotton lay back in his chair and smoked his cigarette. Beyond the soft sounds of the garden he could just hear the noise of London.

In the centre of the room there was a portrait of a very beautiful young man and in front of it stood the artist himself, Basil Hallward.<sup>20</sup>

19 Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890; London: Penguin Books, 1994), 7–8.

20 Sample page taken from Oxford Bookworms Library, graded reader, Stage 3, 1,000 Headwords, CEF level B1. Oxford University Press, "Read Your Way to Better English," Oxford University Press, accessed November 8, 2012, <http://www.oup-bookworms.com/find-your-reading-level.cfm>.

## 5. Conclusion

To conclude, graded readers definitely represent a special category, a sort of marginal phenomenon that on the one hand shares certain features with the concept of translation, especially an intralingual one, but on the other hand cannot be regarded as literary translation. Despite the fact that the readers rephrase original literary texts, they cannot be perceived as a type of literary translation because the final product beyond all doubt fails to correspond to the definition of literature and unfortunately does not invite its readers to meet the original author's voice or discover new meaning and interpretation possibilities in the text. What is more, from the functionalist perspective it seems questionable to consider graded readers as translation since they raise many doubts about the fulfilment of their function or the purpose for the creation of these materials. Nonetheless, graded readers play an important role in the ELT context and they definitely represent a phenomenon worth further study. However, it would be rather incorrect to provide learners of English with only such reading material and equate graded readers with original readers, literature or literary translation.

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## When Kubla Khan Travels Abroad: Czech Translations of the Poetry by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Pavλίna Flajšarová

Palacký University, Philosophical Faculty, Department of English and American Studies,  
Křížkovského 10, 771 80 Olomouc, Czech Republic.

Email: pavlina.flajsarova@upol.cz

**ABSTRACT:** The article first focuses on the translational strategies used in translating poetry. It outlines a historic survey of Czech poetry translation and compares it to international scholarship. Chosen translation strategies are applied for an analysis of “Kubla Khan” (1798), an epic poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, a representative of British poetry of the Romantic period. Although his poetry has caught the attention of the Czech translators relatively late in comparison with translations into other languages, the Czech translators have attempted to be dutiful to the English original in spite of the abundance of symbols and nature images employed by the poet. A special attention is paid to the cultural and literary context necessary for a successful translation of “Kubla Khan.” The article also examines various translation options made by individual translators—Josef Václav Sládek (1897), Vladimír Renč (1965, 2010), and Zdeněk Hron (1999)—and it tries to indicate denotations and connotations that were either lost or added in Czech translation in comparison with the English original text.

**Keywords:** English poetry; Romanticism; Samuel Taylor Coleridge; “Kubla Khan”; Václav Renč; Zdeněk Hron; Josef Václav Sládek; Bohuslav Mánek

### 1. Introduction

In United Kingdom, Romantic poetry has experienced great fashion in the first third of the nineteenth century. Czech translators and publishers have, however, not expressed any great interest in introducing the British Romantics to Czech readers in a timely manner. Bohuslav Mánek has proved that the attention of the Czech translators in the nineteenth century was unfortunately devoted to other four groups of English authors.<sup>1</sup> The translations of Shakespeare constitute the first group. A second group of translations are Czech translations of authors of English Classicism (for instance, Alexander Pope and Matthew Prior). These were translated by Josef Jungman, Jan Nejedlý, Bohuslav Tablic, Václav Stach and Jarmil Krezar. The third group are authors of the English sentimental and preromantic movement, such as James Thomson, Thomas Gray, Oliver Goldsmith, Edward Young and James Macpherson. Czech readers were acquainted with the English texts due to translations by Jan Nejedlý, Bohuslav Tablic, František Palacký, František Ladislav Čelakovský and

1 See Bohuslav Mánek, *První české překlady Byronovy poezie* (Prague: Karolinum, 1991).

František Doucha. Last but not least, the fourth group comprises authors of the Romantic Movement. Within this group, surprising as it may be, only authors of the second generation of Romantics, such as the poets George Gordon Byron and John Keats and the novelist Walter Scott were popular for Czech translators. The poetry of the first wave of British Romanticism represented by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth and Robert Southey went almost unnoticed by Czech translators. Therefore, whereas in the course of the nineteenth century Byron and Shelley were translated by František Doucha, the “older Romantics” appeared in Czech translation only in the nineties of the nineteenth century.

## 2. Czech Translations of English Romantics

Czech translations of English Romantics were, however, not primary translations but rather translations made from translations. Jiří Levý and Ladislav Cejp independently have shown that due to the lack of access to English originals and due to a worse command of English, Czech translators succumbed to German and Polish translations.<sup>2</sup> Translation problems were based not only on the insufficient knowledge of English and restricted access to the originals, but also on purely linguistic difficulties. Whereas translations of prose can cope with higher degree of semantic density of English much better, in case of poetry translations, the different level of semantic density in Czech and in English causes increase of length in the target language. Such an increase in length is unacceptable because the poets in the Romantic period preferred traditional poetic forms with not very flexible line length, rhyming schemes and given number and placement of accents. As early as in 1877 Primus Sobotka urged Czech translators to be true to the original in terms of prosody:

It shall be not reiterated often enough that our poets [referring to translators however] should be very attentive to accent rules because a poem with wrong accents has the effect for the ear as if it was a guitar out of tune. If this flaw is even accompanied by slant rhyme and common idiom, then the reader faces mere prose which does not warm but cool [the reader's experience].<sup>3</sup>

Another problem with English to Czech poetry translation arises with the end rhymes: whereas English most frequently uses masculine, that is, one-syllable

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2 See Jiří Levý, *Umění překlada* (3rd ed.; Prague: Ivo Železný, 1998); Ladislav Cejp, “Jungmannův překlad *Ztraceného ráje*,” in *Překlady I*, by Josef Jungmann (Prague: Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, hudby a umění, 1958), 422–30.

3 Primus Sobotka, “O překladech v novočeské literatuře,” *Osvěta* 7 (1877): 317. My translation.

rhyme due to the character of English pronunciation, Czech prefers feminine, that is, two syllable rhymes. However, in order to be true to the diction of the English original, Czech translators of Romantic poetry tended to coin new monosyllabic words that were not natural for Czech. Although the translators might have kept the original number of feet in the verse and were keeping the rhyme scheme, their Czech translation was very stale and the emotional essence that constituted the core of Romantic poetry was completely lost.

### 3. Methodology of Czech Translations

The quality of translation of British Romantics into Czech was also influenced by a tendency identified by Bohuslav Mánek. He believes that there was a group of translators that can be labelled “academic translators” that were active especially “in the second half of the eighties of the nineteenth century until about the half twenties of the twentieth century.”<sup>4</sup> The following characteristic features of “academic poetry translations” are based on Mánek’s classification:

- only authors of older generations or already dead are selected for translation;
- the choice of author depends more on his fame in the source language literature rather than depending on the needs and interest of the domestic, that is, Czech readers;
- the primary role of the poetry translations have informative, documentary, educational and representative function;
- translation are made exclusively from originals;
- translators are philologists and historians by training, not poets themselves;
- the form of the poems with all its characteristic features including diction, metre, rhyme are truthfully kept which leads, however, to very mechanical translation;
- translators are concerned about details in their choice of vocabulary and collocations;
- there is a high frequency of neologisms;
- cultural references are kept to a minimum;
- colloquial speech is avoided at all costs.<sup>5</sup>

As a result, it is possible to claim that such translations lacked in quality especially in respect to the emotional content delivered by English Romantics.

The choice of poetry for translation was influenced not only by the academic training of Czech poetry translators, but also by the lack of poetry translation theory into Czech. The quality of poetry translation fundamentally improved

4 Mánek, *První české překlady Byronovy poezie*, 116. My translation.

5 See Mánek, *První české překlady Byronovy poezie*, 116–18.

after Jiří Levý published *Umění překladau* (1963; *The Art of Translation*, 2011), in which he suggested strategies fit especially for poetry translations. For a successful poetry translation, he proposes:

- finding rhyming couples in both source and target language—the process of finding rhyming couples might include a semantic shift or a shift in the theme-rheme scheme
- treating higher semantic density of English by
  - using shorter, especially monosyllabic words which lead to semantic shifts towards either poetic or archaic diction;
  - adding extra lines;
  - leaving out some meanings or condensing the meanings into one expression.<sup>6</sup>

If the below analysed English-Czech translations of Coleridge's poetry are to be considered within the modern international translational scholarship, then especially vital is the theory of Hönig and Kußmaul, who believed that a translation should be a cultural rather than linguistic transfer.<sup>7</sup> Similarly J. H. Prynne emphasized the role of transculturation. He maintains that

translation is for sure a noble art, making bridges for readers who want to cross the divide between their own culture and those cultures which are situated in other parts of the world; and yet a material bridge is passive and inert, without life of its own, whereas a poetic translator must try to make a living construction with its own energy and powers of expression, to convey the active experience of a foreign original text.<sup>8</sup>

In his opinion, the role of the translator is to make the foreign context of the English poem accessible for a foreign reader by explaining the cultural references contained in the source language.

#### **4. Analysis of Czech Translations of “Kubla Khan” by Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

All the above mentioned theoretical strategies were at play when the Czech translations of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's “Kubla Khan,” an epic poem

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6 See Levý, *Umění překladau*, 225–40.

7 See Hans G. Hönig and Paul Kußmaul, *Strategie der Übersetzung* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1982).

8 J. H. Prynne, “Some Aspects of Poems and Translations” (unpublished manuscript, September 8, 2008), PDF file. <http://babylon.acad.cai.cam.ac.uk/students/study/english/chinese/po-trans.pdf>.

first published in English in the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798, were made. To my knowledge, there exist three published Czech translations of the poem. The first translator was in 1897 Josef Václav Sládek.<sup>9</sup> Then the poem went unnoticed by the Czech translators for a number of decades until Václav Renč attempted a new translation. His version was published in *Dračí křídlo stesku: Výbor z lyriky* in 1965, a volume which presented a selection of Coleridge's poetry. Renč translated "Kubla Khan" as "Kublaj Chán; aneb, Vidění ve snu, fragment."<sup>10</sup> His translation of the poem was published once again in 2010 in *Tušivá rozpomnění: Jezerní básníci*.<sup>11</sup> The translation of the poem in question was not revised but for the first time ever, the "Introduction" to the poem was available to Czech readers. Although the "Introduction" constitutes an integral part of the poem, it has been omitted by all other translators before. In the period between the first and the second edition of Renč's translation, Zdeněk Hron in *Jezerní básníci* in 1999 published his version of the English poem.<sup>12</sup>

Looking at some sample lines of Czech translations of "Kubla Khan," it becomes evident that there are different approaches to treating the meaning and emotional impact of the original.<sup>13</sup> For example, line 2 renders the original text in translation in the following way:

- (1) Coleridge: "pleasure dome" (line 2)
- (a) Sládek: "nádherné sídlo" (beautiful settlement)
- (b) Renč: "letohrad" (pleasure dome)
- (c) Hron: "palác vznešený" (noble palace)

The English expression "pleasure dome" denotes the joy in abiding in such a palace. Whereas Sládek ("beautiful settlement") and Hron ("noble palace") highlight the physical beauty of the object, Renč by choosing the word "letohrad" ("pleasure dome") rather prefers the pleasure of being in such a place, therefore

9 See Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Kublaj-Chán," in *Skládání o starém námořníku; Christabel; Kublaj-Chán*, trans. Josef Václav Sládek (Prague: Otto, 1897), 69–71.

10 See Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Kublaj Chán; aneb, Vidění ve snu, fragment," in *Dračí křídlo stesku: Výbor z lyriky*, ed. Josef Kostohryz, trans. Václav Renč (Prague: Mladá fronta, 1965), 92–94.

11 See William Wordsworth, *Tušivá rozpomnění: Jezerní básníci*, ed. Zdeněk Stříbrný, trans. Václav Renč (Prague: Jitro, 2010).

12 See Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Kublaj Chán," in *Jezerní básníci: William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Southey*, ed. and trans. Zdeněk Hron (Prague: Mladá fronta, 1999), 131.

13 See Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Kubla Khan," in *The Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (Ware: Wordsworth, 1994), 295–98. Henceforth cited parenthetically in text with reference to line numbers.

he emphasizes feelings over appearance which is very in tune with the Romantic theory of learning.

In the further course of the poem, Coleridge describes the palace and its surroundings including the river:

- (2) Coleridge: “Where Alph, the sacred river, ran” (line 3)  
(a) Sládek: “kde svatý Alf skrz nezměrné” (where sacred Alph through vast)  
(b) Renč: “kde svatá řeka Alf má spád” (where sacred Alph runs rapidly)  
(c) Hron: “posvátný Alf tam protékal” (where sacred Alph flowed)

All three translators keep the river “sacred.” However, only Renč adds to the Czech translation the general identifier “river” which certainly helps in deciphering the message. As “Alph” might also be a name for a patron saint or something of a similar nature, the general identifier in translating this line into a different culture is necessary. In addition, it is also only Renč who manages to convey the rapid speed of the river which “runs” in English and which in Renč’s Czech “má spád” (runs rapidly). Unlike Renč, Sládek includes the verb (flow) only in the next line and the speed of the water running in the river that is lost in his translation. As for Hron’s choice, he decided to use Czech “protékal” (flowed slowly) which denotes rather a peaceful pace of the flow of the river.

The river continues into deeper structures of the earth. Coleridge starts here the interplay of contrasts of opposites: for example, sun versus moon, or light versus darkness.

- (3) Coleridge: “Through caverns measureless to man” (line 4)  
(a) Sládek: “tek’ sluje v moře příšerné” (flowed through caverns into a horrible sea)  
(b) Renč: “skrz obřích slují tmu a chlad” (through vast caverns dark and cold)  
(c) Hron: “labyrint skrytý v nitru skal” (labyrinth hidden in the heart of the rocks)

It is remarkable that all the translators keep exactly eight syllables of the original in the Czech translation. Sládek expands the attribution of the ocean to “příšerné” (horrible) which adds to the original a meaning of frightful, fiendish, brutal sea; yet such connotation does not appear in the original. Renč similarly to Sládek uses the Czech word “sluje” as an equivalent for “cavern” instead of, for instance, “jeskyně” (cave). By doing so they both suggest the vastness of the space of the cave and its Czech collocations might also possibly evoke a potential danger. Hron makes a different use of the English original “caverns” being

a plural; where Sládek and Renč only use the word “sluj” in plural, Hron transposes the number of caverns into a labyrinth.

In the line that follows, Coleridge works with several images simultaneously: it is the sea, the sun and the sunless sea that together constitute an overwhelming image.

- (4) Coleridge: “Down to a sunless sea” (line 5)  
 (a) Sládek: “kam slunce nezavítí” (whereto the sun does not shine at all)  
 (b) Renč: “v neslunný oceán” (into sunless ocean)  
 (c) Hron: “do moře věčné tmy” (into a sea of eternal darkness)

Whereas Sládek’s translation (“whereto the sun does not shine at all”) might suggest that there is an everlasting shade cast upon the ocean, Renč prefers a word-to-word translation (“into sunless ocean”) although the Czech word “neslunný” is a new coinage rather than a commonly used adjective. In his version, Hron opted for “into a sea of eternal darkness” which, however, does also carry the connotation of something abyssal. All the translations work fairly well although the level of the sunshine not penetrating the ocean differs and the emotional impact of the original is seen in different perspectives.

Coleridge describes the physical appearance of the palace and in addition wants to emphasize that the palace is very old and stands for history.

- (5) Coleridge: “And here were forests ancient as the hills” (line 10)  
 (a) Sládek: “a byly lesy staré jak hor boky” (and there were forests ancient as the slopes of the rocks)  
 (b) Renč: “byly tam lesy staré jak ty skály” (there were forests ancient as the rocks)  
 (c) Hron: “a les jak kopce starý se tam táh” (forest ancient as the hills was stretching there)

The original line has ten syllables and only Sládek managed to keep the same number of syllables whereas both Renč and Hron had expanded the number to eleven. As regards the semantic meaning, both Sládek (“and there were forests ancient as the slopes of the rocks”) and Renč (“there were forests ancient as the rocks”) prefer the Czech equivalent “rocks” for the English original “hills.” Their solution is definitely more appropriate than Hron’s usage of “kopce” for hills as the association with rocks subconsciously connotes the age of such a formation (for instance, through the process of orogeny). When the Czech word “kopce” (hills) is used in Czech, the semantic relationship between the ancient forests and the ancient hills stays obscure and the Czech reader has probably difficulty in creating the correct association chain.

The palace is set in a wonderful garden that is full of trees which provide much desired shade and scents.

- (6) Coleridge: “Enfolding sunny spots of greenery” (line 11)  
 (a) Sládek: “a slunečné v nich byly pažitý” (sunny meadows were in there)  
 (b) Renč: “kropené hrstmi lučin slunečných” (showered with handfuls of sunny meadows)  
 (c) Hron: “stín kolem teček slunné země” (shadow around spots of sunny land)

Sládek engages the word “to be” in the past tense “byly” (were) which does not fully convey that the forests enfolding the spots of greenery. Renč uses the word “kropené” (showered) which is not used appropriately either as there is no source of water, nothing can supply a shower of water and in the original there is no reference to rain whatsoever. Hron’s version with word-to-word translation of “spots” as “tečky” does not work because it spoils the English poetic image of the pleasure gardens of the palace where there are sunny and shady places. Moreover, the Czech word “tečky” (spots) denotes primarily tiny dots and if the garden was to be perceived as suggested by Hron’s image, there would have to be an aerial view, which is not the case here.

The essence of Romantic sensitivity is well represented in the following lines:

- (7) Coleridge: “And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,  
 As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,  
 A mighty fountain momentarily was forced” (lines 17–19)  
 (a) Sládek: “A z této rokle v neustálém varu,” (out of this chasm in ceaseless turmoil)  
 “jak zem by těžce oddýchala k zmaru,” (as if the earth was panting)  
 “zdroj mohutný co mžik hnán ze skaliska;” (a source every second was forced from the mountain)  
 (b) Renč: “Z té rokle v prudkých, stálých poryvech,” (out of the chasm in abrupt, continuous outbursts)  
 “jako když zem tu chrlí horký dech,” (as if the earth was bursting hot air)  
 “mohutný proud je tlakem zvnitř hnán” (strong current under pressure was forced)  
 (c) Hron: “A z dna propasti, vřením otevřeně,” (out of the bottom of the abyss, opened with turmoil)  
 “jak by dech tam popadala země,” (as if the earth was panting)  
 “mohutný pramen chvíli vyvěral;” (a strong spring was flowing for a while)

In order to interpret and translate these lines properly, the knowledge of Romantic poetry, poetics and philosophy of pantheism is absolutely essen-

tial. Therefore it proves that the translator has to be well acquainted with the cultural and historical background of the language. In this case, Coleridge like other English Romantics excessively uses the image of the fountain. The fountain, as he explained in his theoretical work *Biographia Literaria* (1817), stands for the flights of poetic inspiration and imagination. It is in particular the outburst of creative energy that is so cherished.

I retired to a cottage in Somersetshire at the foot of Quantock, and devoted my thoughts and studies to the foundations of religion and morals. Here I found myself all afloat. Doubts rushed in; broke upon me “from the fountains of the great deep,” and fell “from the windows of heaven.” The fontal truths of natural religion and the books of Revelation alike contributed to the flood; and it was long ere my ark touched on an Ararat, and rested. The idea of the Supreme Being appeared to me to be as necessarily implied in all particular modes of being as the idea of infinite space in all the geometrical figures by which space is limited. I was pleased with the Cartesian opinion, that the idea of God is distinguished from all other ideas by involving its reality.<sup>14</sup>

None of the Czech translators employed the Czech word “fontána” which would probably be too weak to denote the outburst of energy and instead used correctly “zdroj” (source; Sládek), “proud” (current; Renč), “pramen” (spring; Hron). Whereas Sládek and Renč captured the ceaseless turmoil as “v neustálém varu” (in ceaseless turmoil) and “v prudkých, stálých poryvech” (in abrupt, continuous outbursts)—which in Coleridge’s poems stands as another metaphorical embodiment for the creative poetic process—Hron diminished the power of the energy in question. However, if his choice was “chvílemi” (from time to time) instead of “chvíli” (for a while), it would have denoted the outbursts of a geyser. The importance of the idea of the fountain is pertinent; it is repeated later in the poem (line 34) and the fountain together with the cave create a miracle of rare device (lines 34–35).

After an upsurge of energy, the poem proceeds with a slow pace in order to create contrast to the outbursts of creative power.

- (8) Coleridge: “Five miles meandering with a mazy motion” (line 25)  
 (a) Sládek: “Pět mil tok svatý spavým proudem plyne” (for five miles the holy stream was flowing in a sleepy manner)  
 (b) Renč: “Pět mil pak lesním údolím a v kvítí” (five miles through the woody valley and into the flowery place)

14 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, ed. Nigel Leask (1817; London: Everyman, 1997), 117.

- (c) Hron: “lesem i strží pět mil protékal” (through forests and gorge for five miles it flowed)

The English original contains alliterating words: “miles,” “meandering,” “mazy” and “motion.” Although Sládek did not imitate an alliteration, his choice of Czech words and the word order similar to the original suggests the slow motion and the sense of harmony. Renč does not have an alliteration either, yet he compensates it with repetition of the sound of long [i:] (“í”) within the Czech words. Hron neither attempts an alliteration, nor does he use euphony.

Coleridge maintains throughout the poem the word combination “pleasure”–“dome.”

- (9) Coleridge: “A stately pleasure-dome decree:” (line 2)  
 “The shadow of the dome of pleasure” (line 31)  
 “A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!” (line 36)  
 “I would build that dome in air,” (line 46)  
 “That sunny dome! those caves of ice!” (line 47)
- (a) Sládek: “nádherné sídlo” (beautiful settlement)  
 “Nádherného zámku stíny” (a beautiful castle shadows)  
 “slunečný zámek a sluje z ledu!” (sunny castle and caves of ice!)
- (b) Renč: “ten zámek postavil bych zas,” (that castle would I built again)  
 “slunečný zámek, sluje z ledu!” (sunny castle, caves of ice!)
- (c) Hron: “letohrad” (pleasure dome)  
 “Letohrad nad vodami visí,” (a pleasure dome over the water hangs)  
 “lehohrad slunný s ledovými sklepy,” (a sunny pleasure dome with icy cellars)  
 “vystavěl bych zámek, vzdušný klam,” (I would built a castle, a fallacy of air)  
 “ten slunný zámek, sluje z ledu!” (that sunny castle, caves of ice!)
- (c) Hron: “palác vznešený” (noble palace)  
 “Stín rozkošného pavilónu” (shadow of a charming pavilion)  
 “tak slunný palác – a v těch slujích led!” (such a sunny palace—and ice in those caves)  
 “palác postavil bych zas.” (I would built a palace once again)  
 “Ten slunný dům! V těch slujích led!” (That sunny house! Ice in those caves!)

Sládek at the beginning of the poem uses a more general word “sídlo” (a settlement) and then in the second half of the poem switches to “zámek” (castle).

Hron could have used “zámek” (castle) already in the first stanza as it would fit the rhythm pattern and would add colour to the imagery conveyed in the translation. Renč uses consistently the “letohrad” (pleasure dome). This Czech equivalent of a pleasure dome works very well here because it maintains the same image throughout the poem and the concentration of the Czech reader has more capacity for the new images appearing. Hron in this particular case uses first “palác” (palace), in line 31 “pavilón” (pavilion), and finally “palác” (palace) again which creates a bit of a confusion as in his translation it remains unclear whether the castle has an extra pavilion or not. All three translators, however, nicely kept the typical Coleridgean opposite that becomes an oxymoron: sunny pleasure-dome as opposed to caves of ice (light versus darkness, warmth versus cold).

Coleridge in the further course of the poem switches to what is believed to be a dream. In his vision, the speaker experiences an encounter of a femme fatale who plays a dulcimer.

(10) Coleridge: “A damsel with a dulcimer

In a vision once I saw:” (lines 37–38)

- (a) Sládek: “Já vzácnou pannu u vidění” (I saw a rare maiden in a dream)  
“jsem spatřil jednou, loutnu měla” (I saw once, she had a dulcimer)
- (b) Renč: “Spatřil jsem jednou ve vidění” (I saw once in a dream)  
“dívčinu s loutnou při rameni” (a young lady with a dulcimer at her shoulder)
- (c) Hron: “Jednou mě dívka s citerou” (Once a lady with a dulcimer)  
“ve vidění navštívila” (visited me in a dream)

“Dulcimer” is a string instrument usually with a sounding board. Coleridge as an enthusiastic linguist and etymologist was aware of the fact that the word *dulcimer* arrived in English via Old French word of *doulcemer* which derived its form probably from Latin *dulce melos* (sweet melody). It was the quality of sweet melody that Coleridge embedded in his verse as the Abyssinian maid playing the instrument lulled the listeners into a sleep during which they had a vision. Moreover, first generation British Romantics repeatedly used the metaphor of an Aeolian harp which stood similarly to the fountain metaphor for poetic imagination and flights of inspiration. As the wind or air was coming through the strings and the strings were touched by the player, music was produced. On a similar principle, the dulcimer image works here. From what has just been said, it is obvious that without the knowledge of literary and cultural background a proper translation would be impossible. In Coleridge’s era, there were two types of dulcimers. For the Czech translators to decide whether dulcimer is more “loutna” or “citera” type is extremely difficult. Yet,

as long as they keep the instrument as a string instrument, the image still works even in Czech.

Coleridge, fascinated by the music images, prolongs the musical setting.

(11) Coleridge: “Singing of Mount Abora” (line 41)

- (a) Sládek: “o Aborské to hoře pěla ” (she was singing about Mount Abora)
- (b) Renč: “k písni o hoře Aboře” (a song about Mount Abora)
- (c) Hron: “k písni o hoře Aboře” (a song about Mount Abora)

Lines in English that follow this particular line denote “symphony” and “song” of “such a deep delight” that they lull the listener/reader into a second dream (or a dream within a dream). Czech translations of this line 41 are unfortunately almost cacophonous—all Czech translations contain the multiple repetition of the “o” and “ř” sound which creates a very harsh effect. However, it is fair to admit that a Czech suitable translation solution that would reflect the original denotations is extremely difficult if not impossible.

The speaker in the poem abides in a dream and he is so delighted that he is able to perceive the sublime which here materializes in the form of a dome in air.

(12) Coleridge: “That with music loud and long,

I would build that dome in air!” (lines 45–46)

- (a) Sládek: “ve vzduchu že hudbou zvučnou” (in the air music resounding)
- (b) Renč: “ten zámek postavil bych zas,” (would I built the castle again)  
“že bych mocí hudby zas” (with the power of music)  
“vystavěl zámek, vzdušný klam,” (I would built a castle, a fallacy of air)
- (c) Hron: “že z té hudby ve vzduchu” (out of the music up in the air)  
“palác postavil bych zas.” (I would built the palace once again)

Only Renč succeeded in conveying the meaning of the illusion, of dream vision, of no real foundations to the dreaming visions—it is the power of imagination supported by the dream within the dream setting that makes the whole vision only illusory and completely unreal. Hron’s and Sládek’s solution of “ve vzduchu” (in the air) might connote the illusion but, in my opinion, they emphasize the location of the building rather than ascribing it with unreal quality.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, all three translators—Josef Václav Sládek, Václav Renč and Zdeněk Hron—have the same cultural background and therefore had to me-

diate the English original by Coleridge into the Czech culture. From the point of view of the poetics, it was at times extremely difficult to keep the original number of syllables alike in both languages due to the different language typology. Yet, the Czech translators succeeded in doing so in most cases. It is to be admired as the charm of the poem rests not only in the quality of the poetic images and metaphors devised by Coleridge, but also in the rhythm and rhyming pattern. All Czech translations worked with the rhythm and rhyme and although their choices of the rhyming pairs were different, the rhyme was employed skilfully. The complex metaphorical and oppositional images have been translated with the help of constructing images familiar to Czech readers. The translations of “Kubla Khan” by Sládek, Renč and Hron thus have mediated one of the major poems of the British Romanticism for a Czech reader.

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## Translations of the Poetry of Douglas Dunn into Czech and Slovak and the Issues of Time and Identity

Peter Trizna

University of Prešov, Faculty of Arts, Institute of Translation and Interpreting,  
17. Novembra 1, 080 01 Prešov, Slovak Republic.

Email: petoliterat@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT:** In our paper we analyze and compare the Czech and Slovak translations of poetry by the Scottish poet Douglas Dunn as they appeared in collections of his poetry *Terry Street a dál* (2007) and *Hudba v ovocnom sade* (2009) with their original versions. The paper primarily focuses on the issue of time and identity, using the theoretical background of both the skopos theory and the older, more traditional structuralist approach. Although both Czech translators (Ivo Šmoldas and Zdeněk Hron) and their Slovak counterpart (Jana Kantorová-Báliková) are seasoned professionals, Dunn's poetry, simplistic as it may seem at first glance, nevertheless presents a serious challenge to any translator. This is especially true when trying to get across the identity of the verse, both in terms of Dunn's writing style and his Scottishness, while also aiming to retain the aspect of time—being able to express Dunn's affinity to Scottish history and also his sense for modernity of poetic expression.

**KEYWORDS:** literary science; comparative analysis; translation criticism; identity; time

Our paper focuses on the analysis and comparison of the Czech and Slovak translations of the Scottish poet Douglas Dunn that have appeared in book form. It spans from the Czech language anthology of contemporary British poetry *Ostrovy plovoucí k severu* (1989), up to the first-ever selections consisting entirely of his poetry, the Czech *Terry Street a dál* (2007) and the Slovak *Hudba v ovocnom sade* (2009). All the featured translators (Ivo Šmoldas, Zdeněk Hron and Jana Kantorová-Báliková) are seasoned veterans of the craft, yet Dunn's poetry, simplistic as it may seem at first glance, presents considerable challenges even for such well-established professionals.

These challenges and their solutions strongly relate to a concrete sense of space, time and identity in translation. Identity should, in our opinion, be considered not only when talking about Dunn's Scottishness and its manifestation in his poems and their translations, but also when talking about the style of his writing, about his poetic voice. It is characterized mainly by the usage of the simple, rather emotionally neutral, yet in a way sharply analytical language. Dunn's expression of identity has gradually become more complex in his later works, although without becoming too intellectual or ornate in its form.

The theoretical background used in our analysis is based mainly on the connection of important features of the skopos theory with the more traditional structuralist approach. The idea of the non-disparateness of the two approaches was put forward by Zbyněk Fišer. He compares the skopos approach to the anti-adaptational approach of Milan Hrdlička, who strongly opposes the validity of skopos in relation to the translation of artistic literature, or using the terminology of Katharine Reiss, expressive texts: “The skopos theory presents a calling for a liable stance towards the translation process and the target text. A translator of artistic texts should aim to fulfil the artistic function of the work, if on the part of the commissioner (the recipient, hypothetical reader) such a fulfilment is expected.”<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, as Jeremy Munday stated about the skopos theory, it “focuses above all on the purpose of the translation, which determines the translation methods and strategies that are to be employed in order to produce a functionally adequate result.”<sup>2</sup> Later, he concludes that “in other words, if the TT [target text] fulfils the skopos outlined by the commission, it is functionally and communicatively adequate.”<sup>3</sup> In relation to the requirements for the translation of an expressive text formulated in the skopos theory, in Munday’s words “the TT [target text] of an expressive text should transmit the aesthetic and artistic form of the ST [source text]. The translation should use the ‘identifying’ method, with the translator adopting the standpoint of the ST author.”<sup>4</sup> Based on the aforementioned citations we think it is reasonable to assume that, when considering primarily expressive texts, if the purpose of the target text remains largely identical to the purpose of the source text,<sup>5</sup> then also judging it at least partially within the structuralist framework can prove useful. Thus, the correlation of a purpose-oriented approach with a structuralist-based analysis of the chosen translation strategies

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1 Zbyněk Fišer, *Překlad jako kreativní proces: Teorie a praxe funkcionalistického překládání* (Brno: Host, 2009), 146. My translation.

2 Jeremy Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications* (2nd ed.; London: Routledge, 2008), 79.

3 Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*, 81.

4 Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*, 73–74.

5 We are well aware of the problematic connotations of the expression “identical” here. Thus by using the expression “largely identical” we point to the fact that the existence of absolute concord is an imaginary concept. However, if for example the expected reader of the translation of a poem aimed at an adult reader with at least secondary education has roughly the same characteristics, the translation can be considered as being adequate only when retaining the majority of the most important original features. Deciding what constitutes such features is a different problem altogether, and it is closely connected with the translator’s own interpretation of the source text, which of course has its subjective factors. At the same time as evidenced by Vilikovský, “it is important to realize that choosing one of the options does not present an alteration of the original, but a demonstration of its polysemantic qualities.” Ján Vilikovský, *Překlad ako tvorba* (Bratislava: Slovenský spisovateľ, 1984), 101. My translation.

comprises our attempt for an at least partially integrated insight into poetry translation. In this respect, the claim of Juliana House, concerning the use of the term equivalence in the sense of a totum-pro-parte metonymy also corresponds with our view on the widespread rejection by functional-orientated theorists of structuralism and prescriptive analysis as to the translation of expressive texts in general:

If equivalence is used in the relative sense of the broadly differentiated equivalence frameworks described above, it certainly remains a useful, indeed indispensable concept. It is, however necessary to make the concept more precise, so that we can define the limits of equivalence and so distinguish a text that is a translation and one that is some sort of adaptation or version of the original.<sup>6</sup>

Our paper can therefore also be seen as an attempt to reconcile the two theories, as negative stances occur, on both sides of the spectrum. Zbyněk Fišer, in line with the time-will-tell approach, claims there is no need for such reconciliation, although paradoxically he himself partially attempts it, at least from the functionalist point of view.<sup>7</sup> We think such a stance is useful for further development. It does not, of course, mean that this should lead to the end of individual research within the scope of each of the theories. It should be seen as an attempt to broaden the range of possibilities and interrelation and soften the radical opinions of both theories' most avid proponents.

When talking about the twofoldness of identity in Douglas Dunn's poetry, we believe that its evidence in translation is not only apparent when talking about the specific cases of individual poems by the author. It is also strongly connected to the rationale by which a selection of his poetry is assembled. Such a collection should, unless in correspondence with the skopos theory stated otherwise in the foreword, the afterword or the book's title, reflect as many aspects of the author's work as possible. Of course, this accounts for both the form and content. To be able to conclude as to why the translator made the given choices, we need to take a brief look at their professional background.

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6 Juliana House, *Translation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 33.

7 See a special chapter in Fišer's book, meant as a partial defense of the skopos approach against Hrdlička's anti-adaptational theory, called "Smíření teorií" (Reconciliation of the theories), in which he argues that some of Hrdlička's own requirements concerning artistic translation are very similar to those formulated by Reiss and Vermeer. See Zbyněk Fišer, "Smíření teorií," in *Překlad jako kreativní proces: Teorie a praxe funkcionalistického překládání* (Brno: Host, 2009), 144–46.

The Slovak translator Jana Kantorová-Báliková focuses mainly on the translation of Anglophonic poetry. She has mainly translated poets from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as Robert Burns, William Blake, the Lake Poets, Percy Bysshe Shelley and Edgar Allen Poe. The only writers alongside Dunn whose work belongs to the post-war era are the Caribbean Derek Walcott and the Irishmen Seamus Heaney and John F. Deane.<sup>8</sup> The last author mentioned, alongside with a translation of the poetry of G. K. Chesterton, points towards Kantorová-Báliková's own beliefs as a practicing Christian.<sup>9</sup> Ivo Šmoldas, on the other hand, mainly specializes in prose translation, focusing on contemporary writers, including science-fiction authors.<sup>10</sup> The third featured translator, whose contributions are also featured in the Czech selection, is Zdeněk Hron. Like Kantorová-Báliková he focuses mainly on poetry translation, with the majority of his efforts being dedicated to pre-twentieth century authors. These include the contemporaries of Shakespeare, the Metaphysical poets, William Blake and the Lake Poets. Of more contemporary writers he has, amongst others, translated the poetry of Phillip Larkin, Tony Harrison and Seamus Heaney.

The Slovak collection of poems translated by Jana Kantorová-Báliková and assembled in her book *Hudba v ovocnom sade* presents a much more balanced overview of Dunn's work than the Czech one. It draws from all of his books up to and including *Dante's Drum-Kit* (1993), with each of them being represented by at least four texts, with the exception of the book *Love or Nothing* (1974), from which only two poems are included. Furthermore, the selections from *Elegies* (1985) as well as *Northlight* (1988) are not limited to free verse poetry, as is the case with Šmoldas and Hron. The only exception to this rule made in the Czech collection is the inclusion of Šmoldas's translation of the closing part of the poem "The Deserter" ("Dezertér") from Dunn's collection *St. Kilda's Parliament* (1981). It is characterized by the use of half-rhymes and eye-rhymes, roughly resembling the regular rhyming scheme *aabb*, which is also found in the poem's original version. In this case, we consider the adherence towards the original scheme especially important, because the nursery rhyme-like regular iambic rhythm emphasizes the ironic tone of these lines: "I shall possess your soul, bereaved / Of everything for which it lived.

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8 See for example the database of English translations found at the website of *The Slovak National Corpus*. See *Slovenský národný korpus*, Jazykovedný ústav L. Štúra Slovenskej akadémie vied, accessed February 14, 2012, <http://korpus.juls.savba.sk>.

9 The most evident proof of this is Kantorová-Báliková's own book of poems, *Modlitbičky pre detičky* (Little prayers for little children), which she published in 2010. See Jana Kantorová-Báliková, *Modlitbičky pre detičky* (Bratislava: Eastone Books, 2010).

10 On Šmoldas and Hron see for example the database at *Czech Literary Translators' Guild*. See "Bibliografický soupis českého uměleckého překladu po roce 1945," *Obec překladatelů*, accessed February 14, 2012, <http://www.obecprekladatelu.cz/cz/databaze-umeleckeho-prekladu>.

/ I am the specialist of tears. / I weep the world's, let me weep yours,"<sup>11</sup> versus "Posednu vám duši, bude má / všeho, proč žila, zbavená. / Jsem expert na slzy, jsem na ně odborník. / Pláču je za svět, i za vás je odroním."<sup>12</sup> What is much more of a problem is the fact that even the two rhymed poems from *Northlight*, "Going to Aberlemno" ("Cestou do Aberlemna") and "Tay Bridge" ("Most přes řeku Tay"), were translated by Šmoldas using free verse. Based on the aforementioned theoretical claim by Jeremy Munday, such a solution is not in line with the skopos of the expressive target text, as there is no mention of neglecting rhymed texts in the book whatsoever. Thus a reader of the translation, expecting to read a rather representative selection of the author's work, might end up thinking that Dunn almost exclusively uses free verse in his poetry.

On a more general note, we believe that the absence of other poems using regular rhyming structures in the Czech collection was caused by two factors. One of them stems from Šmoldas's own translation practice. Due to his preoccupation with prose translation, which of course does not require adherence to rhythmical patterns and rhyming structures (both of which he has relatively little experience with when compared with the two other translators), Šmoldas chose the easier way out and thus opted not to include more such poems. Given Hron's previous experience, such reasoning is absurd. The second reason is related to the concept with which the collection was assembled. We assume that the translators had to work with an insufficient time frame. This was most likely either caused by the fact they had to deal with other projects at the same time, or the publisher had set the date of publication too early. This would also explain why Zdeněk Hron himself has no more than three of his own translations included in the book, and the last decade of Dunn's work (the 2000s) is not represented at all. While these are only speculative suggestions, they nevertheless seem very plausible, when looking at the book's concept and content.

The title of the Czech selection is an early indicator that most of the poems (nineteen out of a total of thirty-six) are taken from Dunn's debut, *Terry Street* (1969). Of course, this is a legitimate choice. The remaining texts, creating the *And Further* (A dál) section of the book, are culled from his latter collections, ending with 1993's *Dante's Drum-Kit*. However, only two selections from Dunn's critically acclaimed collection, *Elegies* from 1985, are presented in the book. This is all the more puzzling when considering that Zdeněk Hron mentions the book rather extensively in his afterword to the selection, point-

11 Douglas Dunn, "The Deserter," in *Selected Poems 1964–1983* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), 302.

12 Douglas Dunn, "Dezertér," in *Hudba v ovocnom sade: Výber z poézie*, trans. Jana Kantorová-Báliková (Bratislava: Literárna nadácia Studňa, 2009), 50.

ing out that the leading figure of British poetry of the 1950s and 1960s, Philip Larkin, who liked to indulge in feelings of self-harm himself, praised Dunn for *Elegies*, stating that “he came much further in suffering.”<sup>13</sup> Both of the poems included from *Elegies*, “A Summer Night,” translated by Ivo Šmoldas, and “Reading Pascal in the Lowlands,” translated by Zdeněk Hron, are once again written in free verse. What is more, neither of them portrays the grief of the subject over his loss on a level explicit enough so that the reader could decipher the aforementioned background and principal inspiration behind their creation—the untimely death of Dunn’s wife from cancer, and Hron does not even mention this crucial biographical detail explicitly in his afterword. However, there are two other poems from *Elegies* translated by Šmoldas: the free verse poem “The Sundial” and the sonnet “The Kaleidoscope.” They were included in the anthology of contemporary British poetry *Ostrovy plovoucí k severu*, which came out in 1989, eighteen years prior to the individual collection of Dunn’s work. Also supporting our theory about a lack of time for the translation and editing process is the fact that the only significant change between the two versions of all the texts which appear in both Czech sources is found in the poem “Renfrewshire Traveller.” In the verse “This wiping of windows to see a city / Rise from its brilliant lack, / Its fixtures in transparent butter,”<sup>14</sup> the last word is translated as “máslo” instead of the previously used “tuk,” which does not alter the meaning of the line, nor of the verse as a whole, only making it a little more expressive, as the word “máslo” is part of everyday language, and has a more informal quality to it.

On the other hand, the Slovak translator Jana Kantorová-Báliková did not include any texts which predominantly refer to Dunn’s Scottishness, although identity, in this case understood as nationhood, is, as previously mentioned, a very important factor of his poetry. The Czech one, however, includes for example the title poem of *St. Kilda’s Parliament*. It presents a quiet celebration of the hard, yet in a way satisfactory life of the Scottish people of the Hebrides, and also of what may be called their “practical wisdom.” An even more straightforward expression of Dunn’s Scottishness can be found in the poem “The Renfrewshire Traveller.” The poem includes references to the Scottish towns of Renfrewshire, Clyde, Kilmarnock and Glasgow, the Johnny Walker brand of Scottish whisky, and even the traditional Scottish chequered cloth of tartan, used in the making of kilts. It seems that Kantorová-Báliková purposely avoided the inclusion of such poems in her selection of Dunn’s work because she wanted to emphasize his universality and at the same time

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13 Zdeněk Hron, “Biografická poznámka,” in *Terry Street a dál*, by Douglas Dunn, trans. Ivo Šmoldas and Zdeněk Hron (Prague: BB art, 2007), 66.

14 Douglas Dunn, “Renfrewshire Traveller,” in *Selected Poems 1964–1983* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), 75.

to liken the author's experiences of living in Hull in the late sixties to the life people in Slovakia lived in blocks of flats like those in Petržalka in the 1980s, to which she confesses in her afterword to the collection.<sup>15</sup> So it is in line with the skopos of her own translation, which she partially explained in her afterword.

Another important feature of Dunn's early poetry which Kantorová-Báliková has largely neglected is the more straightforward politically and socially critical aspect of his poetic voice. The only partial exceptions to this are the poems "The Patricians," with its title inappropriately translated as "Dôstojní" (The honourables), from *Terry Street* and "Concert" from Dunn's third book *Love or Nothing*. However, neither of these poems is overtly expressive with regards to the explicitness of the theme or of the language itself. In the Czech collection, there are two such poems—"Po zavírací hodině" ("After Closing Time"), mentioning "the street tarts and their celebrating trawlermen"<sup>16</sup> and "Zima" ("Winter"), mentioning among others "dog-shits under frost," "coughing woman" and "the old men who cannot walk briskly groaning."<sup>17</sup> The question here is whether the translator did not include any of these poems in her selection because she did not consider them to be of appropriate quality when compared to the other ones she selected, or whether it was the result of her own self-censorship in avoiding vulgar expressions or scenes, which may be partially based on her own religious beliefs. The most probable answer is that it is the outcome of both of these factors, as it seems that Kantorová-Báliková subconsciously avoided including texts that would diminish Dunn's stature of a poet creating "high art," even though she does emphasize his "poetics of the ordinary" approach when commenting on his *Terry Street* collection in the afterword.

As for the manifestation of the issue of identity in a concrete text, let us look at the poem "The Kaleidoscope." Coming back to the issues of Šmoldas's translation, it is obvious that the form, more specifically adhering to the use of the regular rhyming pattern of the original, presents the basic problem. The words and phrases Šmoldas uses in some of the lines of the poem present a significant stylistic diversion from the original on the semantic level, even though the main idea of the poem—the feeling of an irrational need for forgiveness as a result of grief over the death of one's beloved—remains largely identical. It points to his predominant leaning towards prose translation.

15 Jana Kantorová-Báliková, "Tá istá rieka, nikdy však nie rovnaká," in *Hudba v ovocnom sade: Výber z poézie*, by Douglas Dunn, trans. Jana Kantorová-Báliková (Bratislava: Literárna nadácia Studňa, 2009), 84.

16 Douglas Dunn, "After Closing Time," in *Selected Poems 1964–1983* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), 18.

17 Douglas Dunn, "Winter," in *Selected Poems 1964–1983* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), 19.

And that type of translation obviously has, generally speaking, much more in common with the less metaphorical, more colloquial approach of poems like those from *Terry Street*, than with poems more stylistically as well as formally compact, which use a poetical voice rich with tropes and figures and a regular rhyme scheme.

The pressure of the form—the *abba, cdcd, efef, gg* rhyming scheme of the sonnet is clearly evident in his translation of the lines: “To climb these stairs again, bearing a tray, / Might be to find you pillowed with your books, / Your inventories listing gowns and frocks / As if preparing for a holiday.”<sup>18</sup> Using irony, the lyrical subject refers to the fact that his wife had a fondness for organizing, inventorying and classifying things around her. This image is further developed in the next few lines, in which this approach shifts from these inanimate objects towards the lyrical subject, the husband, while also expressing the wife’s attitude towards his different “faces”—the different personal qualities or traces of his character: “My presence watched through your kaleidoscope, / A symmetry of husbands, each redesigned / In lovely forms of foresight, prayer and hope.”<sup>19</sup> In Šmoldas’s translation, the image of pillows is not present, and thus the translation weakens this aforementioned irony, as well as the chain of causality between those images: “jak píšeš do sešitů / soupis svých svršků, halenek a šatů / jako bys měla odjet na prázdniny.”<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, Šmoldas does not correctly decipher the syntactic relations between the words in the line “in lovely forms of foresight, prayer and hope,”<sup>21</sup> which, along with the inappropriate translation of the word “foresight” being referred to simply as sight, result in the line being understood as the woman’s view being “full of hope and broken pieces,”<sup>22</sup> while Dunn rather speaks about the way the wife viewed her husband than about the character of the view itself: “Z přestávky schodů snad zas bych uviděl / sám sebe zmnoženého v tvém kaleidoskopu, / dav manželů, jež něžně přetvářel / tvůj pohled plný naděje a střepů.”<sup>23</sup>

The translation of Jana Kantorová-Báliková does not have such morpho-syntactic issues, but unlike Šmoldas, she does not translate the part about “a symmetry of husbands,”<sup>24</sup> but leaves it out, most probably to adhere to the rhyme scheme: “Či, keď sa zvrtnem na podeste, zistím – / kaleidoskopom

18 Douglas Dunn, “The Kaleidoscope,” in *Selected Poems 1964–1983* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), 239.

19 Dunn, “The Kaleidoscope,” 239.

20 Douglas Dunn, “Kaleidoskop,” in *Terry Street a dál*, trans. Ivo Šmoldas and Zdeněk Hron (Prague: BB art, 2007), 110.

21 Dunn, “The Kaleidoscope,” 239.

22 Dunn, “The Kaleidoscope,” 239.

23 Dunn, “Kaleidoskop,” in *Terry Street a dál*, 110.

24 Dunn, “The Kaleidoscope,” 239.

zas mieriš na mňa / a premieňaš ma ním v svoj symetrický / tvar lásky, viery, krásy, predvídania.”<sup>25</sup> This then results in the distortion of the original meaning, referring to the different “faces” of the lyrical subject.

Another important element which none of the translators have taken into the account is the adjective “absurd” in the phrase “for the absurd forgiveness,”<sup>26</sup> found in the last line of the poem. It comments on the absurd need for forgiveness which the lyrical subject—husband—feels because of his grief over the death of his wife: “My hands become a tray / Offering me, my flesh, my soul, my skin. / Grief wrongs us so. / I stand, and wait, and cry / for the absurd forgiveness, not knowing why,”<sup>27</sup> versus “z rukou je podnos, na něm nabízím / své tělo, kůži, všechno v co věřím. / To dělá smutek. V stoje, v hrdle pláč, / čekám snad odpuštění, a nevím zač,”<sup>28</sup> and “tácňa—moja ruka—ti moje telo, dušu, kožu núka, / tak mení nás žiaľ. Stojím, čakám s plačom / na odpustenie, neviem presne začo.”<sup>29</sup> Thus, by neglecting the aforementioned word, the translators diminish the feeling of absurdity in the verse and the percipient is unable to recognize that the subject is well aware of this absurdity.

Unlike Kantorová-Báliková, Šmoldas adds another phrase to the third to last line, “všetchno v co věřím,”<sup>30</sup> which is not implicitly or explicitly present in the original text. He does so because, as was the case with one of the previously mentioned examples, he wanted to adhere to the rhyme scheme. And while the phrase does not give much sense in the context of the verse or the poem, its overall message, tone and authorial style are not distorted or altered by it.

All in all, most of the deficiencies or deformations in the translated texts occur on a stylistic level, often in the form of textual nuances. This is especially the case when taking into account the more free-flowing, story-based colloquial side to Dunn’s poetic voice, which is most evident in his first collections. In such cases, some translators may subconsciously fall into a sort of routine, based on their previous professional experience. This is the case with the majority of the free verse poems translated by Jana Kantorová-Báliková. It is caused by the clash of the stylistic register she most commonly uses in her translations with that of Dunn’s poetry. As can be seen especially in his earlier collections, Dunn writes with a keen sense of concrete place and time. He is a modern poet, mostly reflecting on the life of ordinary middle-class men living in the second half of the twentieth century. However, the Slovak translator

25 Douglas Dunn, “Kaleidoskop,” in *Hudba v ovocnom sade: Výber z poézie*, trans. Jana Kantorová-Báliková (Bratislava: Literárna nadácia Studňa, 2009), 51.

26 Dunn, “The Kaleidoscope,” 239.

27 Dunn, “The Kaleidoscope,” 239.

28 Dunn, “Kaleidoskop,” in *Terry Street a dál*, 110.

29 Dunn, “Kaleidoskop,” in *Hudba v ovocnom sade*, 51.

30 Dunn, “Kaleidoskop,” in *Terry Street a dál*, 110.

very often employs a rather archaic, flowery style of expression which results in diversion from the author's original sense of place and time, as well as from the already mentioned "poetics of the mundane," which he applied in his first poetry books. While the use of such expression is perfectly fine when translating poetry of the Romantic period or most of the poetry written in the early twentieth century, or poetry written to resemble the style of writing from such periods, in the case of the poetry of Douglas Dunn it seems to be rather counterproductive.

An example of such stylistic diversion can be found at the end of the formally as well as thematically similar poem with an irregular rhyming scheme—"Savings" ("Úspory") from the book *St. Kilda's Parliament*. In it, the subject reflects on an old woman's (probably his grandmother's) tin with her savings she laid aside for her funeral, and what the tin evokes in him now, years later: "That was her funeral fund / I was too young to understand. / When I did, she was dead, / It wasn't death that I could see in tea-leaves sifting from a spoon / That came out of a Chinese tin. / I saw the life she'd shovelled in."<sup>31</sup>

The Czech translation closely emulates the colloquial character of Dunn's language, as well as the more regular form of the second half of the poem: "Strádala peníze na pohřeb / a já byl moc mladý, abych to pochopil. / Když mi svitlo, byla už po smrti. / Smrt jsem však neviděl / v té změti lístků, jež se sesypala / ze lžičky vypadlé z té čínské plechovky. / Viděl jsem život, který tam vhažovala."<sup>32</sup>

In opposition to the approach of Ivo Šmoldas, Jana Kantorová-Báliková employs expressively charged, archaic lexemes and inverse phrases, such as: "Keď pochopil som a jej už niet, / v čajových lístkoch na lyžičke, / čo naberam si z čínskej plechovky" as well as the word "zmar"—"nevidím smrť, zmar, no jej roky / života navrstvené do plechovky."<sup>33</sup> Also of note is the repetition of the word "plechovky." In this case, the used expressions evoke an unwanted pathos which contradicts the overall style, as well as the sombre elegiac tone of the original. Such a practice goes against Kantorová-Báliková's own aim to present Douglas Dunn as a contemporary Scottish poet to contemporary Slovak readers, as they are left with a poem commenting on contemporary, everyday life and its struggles, while using archaic, slightly Parnassianist language.

In conclusion, it can be said that our paper stands as another in the line of proofs of the complexity of the process of translation, and the factors that

31 Douglas Dunn, "Savings," in *Selected Poems 1964–1983* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), 163.

32 Douglas Dunn, "Úspory," in *Terry Street a dál*, trans. Ivo Šmoldas and Zdeněk Hron (Prague: BB art, 2007), 46.

33 Douglas Dunn, "Úspory," in *Hudba v ovocnom sade: Výber z poézie*, trans. Jana Kantorová-Báliková (Bratislava: Literárna nadácia Studňa, 2009), 44.

influence the process. Rather than raising questions, we have decided to go down the path of merging various approaches of insight into the translation of a literary text. Of course, we do not claim to present a definitive analysis, rather, to use an image from Dunn's poetry, it should be seen as an attempt at another look at some of the connections and causalities of the kaleidoscope that is translation.

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