

# GETTING TRANSLATED



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Edited by  
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Dear friends and colleagues, the editors – and surely the readers as well –  
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#blessed



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## FOREWORD

KÁROLY PINTÉR

It is my great pleasure to introduce this volume of essays in Translation Studies published under the auspices of the Department of Language Pedagogy and Translation Studies of Pázmány Péter Catholic University (PPCU). Our Translation and Interpreting Master's program is relatively young, looking back on a history of less than a decade (founded in 2012), yet it quickly developed into the second most popular MA course within the field of Translation Studies in Hungary. This remarkable success can be attributed to several factors: the successful cooperation of various modern philology departments within the Faculty of Humanities of PPCU; the small but professional community of scholars and instructors, reinforced by a devoted circle of part-time specialists, who created a program of high academic standards while also geared to the expectations of the job market; and also our ceaseless efforts to keep up with the current trends of international Translation Studies and establish our modest professional workshop within the European network of specialized institutions.

One step towards this goal was the first international conference on Translation Studies organized by the Department on April 5-6, 2016 under the title of *Getting Translated*. It was a major success, attracting over 30 participants from six countries. The current volume is the outcome of the conference, selecting from the best Hungarian presentations and offering a broad cross-section of the variety of topics and approaches presented at the conference. All essays in the volume underwent a double blind peer-review process and multiple rounds of editing to ensure that the outcome meets the highest standards of contemporary Translation Studies.

Professor Anthony Pym's fascinating essay – which was first presented as a plenary lecture at the conference – expands the scope of Translation Studies into a thoroughly interdisciplinary venture: he takes his cue from an incident in contemporary European politics presented via the electronic media in order to take readers on a wide-ranging journey and ultimately arrive at the conclusion that translators and interpreters should not merely aim for linguistic precision: they should strive for affective faithfulness to convey the subjective emotional overtones and idiosyncracies of the original message. Melinda Dabis also focuses on an intersection of politics and Translation Studies when she examines the emergence of the standardized terminology of space missions out of efforts to ease tensions between the two superpowers during the *détente*, followed by regular international space cooperation after the demise of the Cold War.

The largest group of essays pinpoint a variety of specific subjects within the broad field of the discipline. Gyöngyvér Bozsik tackles a very specialized translation problem by comparing seven different Hungarian versions of the lyrics of Mozart's classic opera, *The Marriage of Figaro*, focusing on the crucial aspect of singability. Zsuzsanna Csikai examines British and Irish translations of Czehkov's classic dramas through the theo-

retical lens of postcolonial theory to reveal different strategies of domestication at work. Márta Kóbor concentrates on the peculiar challenges presented by website translation, one of the most dynamically growing sectors of the industry. Edina Robin's contribution looks into the problem of whether the revision of translated texts may be partially responsible for the marked presence of language universals, that is, the phenomenon that translations utilize more standardized lexical elements and rely on strategies of explicitation and implicitation to create less individual and idiosyncratic text than the source material. Éva Viola delves into the theoretical intricacies of Rhetorical Structure Analysis, with particular focus on the comparative examination of elementary discourse units in English and Hungarian.

Three essays in the volume are related to challenges produced by the training of future translators and the translation needs of the academia. Márta Lesznyák and Mária Bakti present the conclusions of their survey among translation and interpreting students about the importance of various subcompetences related to language mediation. Anikó Makkos draws attention to the importance of developing students' skills in their own mother tongue when she examines a large corpus of their Hungarian compositions as well as translated texts and locates a number of recurring language-skills related problems in both. Krisztina Zimányi's survey focused on academics at a Central Mexican university to find out how much they would need the assistance of professional Spanish–English translators to publish their research in the international language of modern scholarship.

I hope this short introduction is enough to whet readers' appetite for the volume, and let me express my conviction that it will be followed by a number of further publications to showcase the varied academic activities of the fledging research group of our Institute.

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associate professor and chair  
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# INTRODUCTION

## MERKEL RESPONDS TO REEM: WHAT WE SHOULD BE TRAINING MEDIATORS FOR

ANTHONY PYM

### 1. Introduction

On July 15, 2015, German Chancellor Angela Merkel participated in a televised question-and-answer session with schoolchildren in Rostock. Reported on Spanish television, fourteen-year-old Palestinian Reem Sahwil asked the Chancellor why she, Reem, could not stay in Germany; Merkel answered that Germany could simply not accept everyone from the Middle East and Africa, adding that “politics is hard”; Reem began to cry; Merkel went to comfort her—politics is hard, but the Chancellor, affectionately known as “Mutti” (Mum) can be soft. She responded.

That response is what first interests me here. According to a certain theory of “communicative capitalism” (Dean 2005), our media circulate messages of resistance and dissent—social media, but mainstream as well—in such a way that those in power are curiously not required to respond:

Rather than responding to messages sent by activists and critics, they counter with their own contributions to the circulating flow of communications, hoping that sufficient volume (whether in terms of number of contributions or the spectacular nature of a contribution) will give their contributions dominance or stickiness. (Dean 2005: 53)

The occupation of media space by dissenters is thus countered by an opposed occupation, without engagement or debate. Dean finds her prime example in the public resistance to George W. Bush’s invasion of Iraq, when there was widespread coverage of arguments for and against the existence of weapons of mass destruction and the like. When the numbers of people in the street and messages on social media seem overwhelming, when you are sure that everyone you know is in complete agreement with you, when it seems, further, that the world’s most powerful technologies are also on your side and, yes, there are even signs of your views in the mainstream media, still those in power are strangely exempted from action: they need offer no response.

Something similar happens where I live. Catalonia has now spent several years pushing for independence from Spain, with truly massive public demonstrations, election of a regional government committed to independence, and sustained representation in all media. Yet the official response from the Spanish government has not varied: “Do not ask for what we cannot give.” That is, no response.

All of us can find further examples around us, wherever people speak to power and power only responds by filling up its own communication space.

So is it really impossible to get a response? Can we find examples of that? If we knew how to elicit sincere response, we might know how to promote dialogue in our democracies. The question is of some importance.

A few other responses spring to mind. The Irish singer Bono met with French President Nicholas Sarkozy on January 8, 2008, leaving with a promise that France would restore a \$29-million contribution to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. A short meeting with the President could produce more funds than a rock concert for charity.

Or closer to home, the translation scholar José Lambert taught me a valuable lesson when we arrived at a hotel, perhaps in Prague, too late to get anything to eat or drink. So José goes and soon returns with food and a beer, against all the house rules:

- How did you do that, José? Everything is closed!
- I just asked, “And if it were for me...”

If it were for me... Me here, you there, and we are in face-to-face direct communication. Virtually the same phrase appears in the Merkel’s exchange with the Palestinian girl Reem:

Merkel: So wenn du jetzt vor mir stehst bist du ja ein unheimlich sympathischer Mensch. Aber du weißt auch, in den palästinensischen Flüchtlingslagern in Libanon gibt es noch Tausende und Tausende....  
 [Now that you are here in front of me, you are an exceptionally nice person. But you also know that in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon there are thousands and thousands...]

I and you, Ich und Du: I recall that *Ich-Du* is one of Martin Buber’s “primary words” (1923/2000), the other one being *Ich-Es*, the relation between the self and the world of objectified things. Ethical dialogue, for Buber, is framed by the *Ich-Du*, the space of direct, unmediated communication (which for him was prayer, but we might try to extend the idea to the realm of social dialogue).

What happens then? As the Chancellor leaves the *Ich-Du* space, she recognizes that “politics is hard,” then she starts to talk about third-person things: the thousands in the refugee camps in Lebanon, and then the whole of Africa – we really can’t accept them all (and, in an earlier part of the exchange, she thoughtfully adds that asylum-seekers from Syria are in even greater need of help). Further, in the logic of Merkel’s world, the solution is to speed up the decisions on who can stay and who has to be sent back, so that situations like Reem’s no longer occur. And as the Chancellor discusses the third-person numbers, the world of *Ich-Du* erupts into visibility: Reem starts to cry, Merkel is emotionally moved, then she physically moves across the studio to comfort the young girl.

This change of frames is quite complex. As Merkel moves, she speaks to Reem but the moderator interjects:

Merkel: Du hast das doch prima gemacht.  
 Moderator: Ich glaube nicht, Frau Bundeskanzlerin, dass es da ums Primamachen geht, sondern dass es natürlich eine sehr belastende Situation ist ...

Merkel: Das weiß ich, dass es eine belastende Situation ist. Und deshalb möchte ich sie trotzdem einmal streicheln, weil ich, weil wir ja euch nicht in solche Situationen bringen wollen und weil du es ja auch schwer hast und weil du ganz toll aber dargestellt hast für viele, viele andere, in welche Situation man kommen kann.

Merkel: There there, you did that really well.

Moderator: I don't think, Madam Chancellor, that it is about doing things well. It is a very difficult situation...

Merkel: I know it is a difficult situation. That is why I want to comfort her [third person], because I [first person singular], because we [first person plural] do not want to put you [*euch*, second person plural] in such situations and because it is very difficult for you [*du*, singular] and because you have presented really well for many, many others the kind of situation that one can find oneself in.

The moderator resists: No, we are showing reality. The politician insists: We are enacting our own reality.

There are at least three communicative frames here: Merkel and the moderator refer to Reem in the third person (*sie*), objectifying the situation of the asylum seekers; then Merkel momentarily addresses an imaginary collectivity of asylum seekers (*euch*), as if they were there and as if she really could speak to them all; she starts that address in the first person singular (*ich*) but shifts immediately to the plural “we” (*wir*), since she is supposed to be representing the situation of her government and possibly her society; and quickly that we-you plural illusion collapses as she addresses Reem in the second-person singular (*du*), about how well she, Reem, has *represented* the first frame and has spoken on behalf of the people in the imaginary second frame, and has actually addressed and moved the plural “we” of the television audience. In effect, Merkel shifts Reem's position from the world of things to part of a second-person collectivity, and then to a new role as spokesperson for that collectivity. She implicitly sees in Reem someone who is involved in the same performance that she, Merkel, is producing: both Reem and Merkel are representing human situations, although one is doing so in more human terms than the other, and is certainly winning more sympathy. *Du hast das doch prima gemacht*: you did it really well – as one artist to another, I appreciate your art.

Reem has indeed since been elevated to the level of media spokesperson, becoming something of a cult figure (known in the German press as the Palestinian *Flüchtlingsmädchen*, the “refugee girl”). Her opinions are sought, reproduced, and commented upon, including her opinion of Chancellor Merkel, whom she describes affirmatively as an understanding person who has her own opinions. Just as Merkel judged her, so she judges Merkel. As for the Chancellor, her decision to “comfort” Reem went viral as a video fragment (losing much of the previous discussion) as *#merkelstreichelt* became a trending topic in 2015, producing much mockery of the Chancellor's attempt at conciliation. Perhaps because of the extensive media space occupied by that mockery, but perhaps also because of the encounter with Reem itself, Merkel has led Germany to adopt a much more open stance with respect to Syrian refugees, despite much resistance from elsewhere in Europe. She has responded.

One further aspect of the encounter interests me. The language used by both Merkel and Reem is colloquial, culturally embedded, and quite hard to translate. When Merkel

sees Reem as an “unheimlich sympathischer Mensch,” each of those three words allows for several possible renditions in English. And when Merkel describes her comforting act as “streicheln,” there is no English word that is entirely happy in that function: “stroke her” (for cats?), “pat her” (for dogs?), indeed “comfort her” (shades of “comfort women”?), so perhaps we would do better with something like “I want to be with her a while”? (Spanish, as it happens, has the entirely acceptable verb “acariciar” to describe the Chancellor’s action.)

The same embeddedness characterizes Reem’s language. Much as the initial reports in Spain had her simply asking why she could not stay in Germany, she actually states a clear goal, a positive aspiration, with repeated markers as such:

Ich habe ja auch Ziele, so wie jeder andere. Ich möchte studieren. Es ist wirklich ein Wunsch und ein Ziel, das ich gerne schaffen möchte.

[I also have goals, like anyone else. I would like to study [at university]. It’s really my aspiration and something that I would really like to do.]

This is not a discourse of complaint or vindication; there is no asking for human justice or special favors. Reem is presenting her situation in positive and future-oriented terms. And then she gives a linguistically sophisticated account of her current situation:

Und es ist wirklich sehr unangenehm zuzusehen, wie andere wirklich das Leben genießen können und man es selber halt nicht mitgenießen kann.

[And it is really unpleasant to see how others can really enjoy life and one cannot enjoy life along with them.]

This “mitgenießen” structure (literally “to enjoy with”) sits poorly in English: as a concept, it envisages a benefit that is shared, gained without taking anything from anyone. And the one thing separating the present from that future goal is the uncertainty of a girl who has had a temporary status for four years.

All the newspaper accounts of the exchange insist on how well Reem speaks German, after just four years of school in Germany. She got the top grade in her German class; she likes languages (English, Swedish, French, as well as German and Arabic); she hopes to become an interpreter or a teacher. In short, she wants to become one of us. But surely she would do better as a chancellor?

## 2. What does this have to do with translation?

The exchange between Merkel and Reem is not translational. It is formally unmediated (once Merkel removes the moderator from the discussion), whereas translation involves mediated communication. So what would happen if the exchange *were* mediated, for example by an interpreter working between German and Arabic?

Our knowledge of translation tendencies (from Levý 1963/2011) suggests that the language would not have been so colloquially embedded or discontinuous: the hesitations and false starts would have been wiped away; the words most specific to spoken German (especially the modal particles) would have disappeared or have become more generic; there would be less lexical variation; a few explications might have made things

accessible to the wider audience but less engaging for the two people involved. In sum, the translated encounter would not have spoken so directly to intimate experience. Would Reem have cried? Possibly so, since it is during the technical third-person world of numbers that she breaks down. But would Merkel have responded? Possibly not, or at least not in the same way: there would always be the possible excuse that “this is just the way they speak in their language.”

For the past few years my Translation Practicum class in Monterey has included an activity where each student has to write 250 or so words, in their L1, on a personal experience, usually called “The Most Wonderful Moment in my Life” (I stole the idea from Andrew Chesterman). Then those paragraphs are translated into L2 by both the author and another student, who then revise each other’s translations. The aim of the exercise is to give students the experience of being translated. But we invariably discover other things as well: even when revised by the author, the translation never has the evocative power of the non-translation, basically because the L1 forms part of the experience itself, or more exactly of the way it is recalled. The authors often remark that the translation is correct but not moving, not engaging, not authentic. The information can be there, the details, the technical understanding, all present and correct, but not the kind of discursive engagement that the sociolinguists Gumperz and Tannen, in their studies of conversations, call “involvement.” That is, the translations are not associated with the kind of the features we have located in a one-on-one encounter in spoken colloquial language, the kind that can elicit response.

### 3. The reception of translations

For some time my research group has been looking at the way translations are received. The little empirical research that has been done on reception is rather disheartening: there seem to be very few significant differences between the way different translations are received, or rather, there are greater differences between the receivers themselves: the nature of mediated communication could depend as much on *who* is involved as on *what* the translation is like. This seems to be a case in which empirical comparison is not going to take us a long way, as indeed is the situation in many areas of contemporary Translation Studies.

An alternative approach to reception is nevertheless possible: instead of asking what happens when translations are received, we can speculate on what we would *like* to see happening. After all, if we cannot envisage a positive effect of some kind (even if it involves no more than avoiding a negative effect), why study this kind of communication at all? Hence my interest in Merkel’s response.

As part of this inquiry, I have turned to a rather different kind of empiricism. I have been interviewing students and scholars who grew up in ideologically totalitarian regimes and who then started to see the cracks in the ideologies. I have, for example, interviewed three women who grew up in Syria, believing in the Assad regime, and who began to question that ideology in secondary school or the first year of university. And I have interviewed South African scholars who went through a similar process with the ideology of apartheid. I initially hoped that the more polyglot the person, the more cultural spaces would be in play, and the easier it would have been for them to see beyond ideological closure. Thanks to the same modeling, I asked about translations, translators,

translated literary works, in the hope that they too might have opened a plural ideological space. In all cases so far, the results have been the same: things translational play only a minimal role in opening the cracks. On the other hand, in all cases, the one common factor is one-to-one exchange with a particular person. It could have been a teacher, an uncle, an older sister, often someone who had traveled but not always. The encounters that these people most remembered as having influenced them were always personal, spoken, local, unmediated. The encounters were not, by any stretch of the imagination, translational. And they had nothing to do with the occupation of media space.

#### 4. So what is wrong with translations?

There is nothing wrong with mediated communication. It has its place, its strong points, its social functions. But it cannot achieve everything, and it cannot, I suspect, guarantee a response.

This becomes an important problem when an entire political system chooses to operate on the basis of translations, or of mutually complementary texts that have been produced translationally. The European Union, on paper, is one such system. If you look at its websites, you find myriad translations giving all the public information you could ever desire: accessible, linguistically correct, written information. It is also bland, impersonal, devoid of location or personality, and necessarily all in the third person, in the discourse of things. True, we can write to our political representatives in Brussels (as if we knew who they were) and receive signed letters that have been translated, and some political representatives can have their spoken language rendered into many other languages, thanks to a technical marvel that gets messages across but necessarily loses in the process most of the prosodics, the subtle shifts of frame, the emotional communication, in short the involvement found between the Chancellor and the *Flüchtlingsmädchen*. True, too, that the anodyne technical prose is well suited to a democracy of anonymous technocrats and leaders whose names nobody cares about. Translation has its place, but that place is not to be confused with moving dialogue or engaging lasting emotive response.

Can translational discourse be improved? Undoubtedly. Much can be done to widen the range of acceptable translation solutions, implementing the full panoply that runs from reproducing the foreign through to complete adaptation (this is what I try to show in Pym 2016)—we need to play the full orchestra, not a flute solo. Like Cicero (46CE/1996), we can train translators to be public speakers (*ut orator*), but unlike Cicero and the long tradition that has followed him, we must recognize that there are far more than just two ways to translate (there is no simple opposition with *ut interpres*).

More than that, however, I suggest we should be training people who are more than translators and interpreters, as indeed we seem to be doing without taking account of the fact—in the few surveys that I have seen in Germany and Spain, only about a third of our graduates find stable employment in translation and interpreting; the rest go elsewhere. A person with foreign languages, translation talent and communicative skills can work not just as a mediator, but also as a direct communicator, a spokesperson, a commentator, a presenter or re-presenter, in the widest and most active sense—including use of the first person, addition and deletion. Translation has its role and place, but so does the more active communication of experience, and it is the latter, I suggest, that is most lacking in European social and political discourse.

Do you want to be translated, or do you want your ideas to be communicated so that they receive a response? Or would you prefer to speak directly, and receive a response directly, in an ongoing dialogue?

The social challenge facing European societies is to build a new kind of paradise, a place with different cultural and linguistic groups that form a polity, where dialogue enables all to sense they are co-authors of their laws, as Habermas (1995: 130) puts it. A sociologist like Joachim Renn (2006) can theorize this kind of paradise in terms of translation, imprecisely understood as a mode of communication where understanding is possible but initial cultural differences are not abolished. As an abstract model, that kind of concept is appealing to those who otherwise have to rely on nationalist essentialisms. For those of us who know the issue first-hand, though, a regime of translated information will not be enough. It will not provoke the responses needed for active dialogue; it will never allow everyone to sense they are co-authors of their laws. For that, we need to train more communicators like Reem.

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**PART ONE:  
TRANSLATOR AND INTERPRETER TRAINING**



# FIRST-YEAR TRANSLATION/INTERPRETING STUDENTS' VIEWS ON SUB-COMPETENCES NEEDED FOR LANGUAGE MEDIATION

MÁRTA LESZNYÁK AND MÁRIA BAKTI

## 1. Introduction

Both translation and interpreter competence have become popular research topics in recent decades. Most of the research efforts, however, focus on theoretical models and their validation (e.g. Göpferich 2009, Malmkjaer 2009, PACTE 2003, 2008, 2011, 2014, EMT expert group 2009, Kalina 2000, Albl-Mikasa 2013), and only relatively few studies (Chodkiewich 2012) deal with how the participants of the mediation process, namely translators and interpreters think of translation and interpreter competence and their constituents. This paper attempts to start filling this gap.

The fact that translation and interpreter competence are most often discussed as independent concepts in the literature posed a special problem for the research. It is indisputable that translation and interpreter competence differ in some essential aspects, but it is also undeniable that they share specific elements. Whether similarities or differences are emphasized depends on the perspective that is taken. If the researchers 'zoom out' and observe translators and interpreters from a broader perspective, translators'/interpreters' competence will be compared to that of other professionals (e.g. teachers, doctors, managers etc.) and the similarities will be more salient. It was exactly this perspective we took in our research, taking a compound or integrated view of translation and interpreter competence and using the term 'language mediation competence' for the construct. The research was carried out with students of translation and interpreting at a phase of training where they had not chosen a specialization yet. As a result, for the sake of simplicity and readability, they will be referred to as 'translation students' throughout the paper.

The study has two aims: one is to shed light on translation students' conception of language mediation competence and the other is to gain a deeper insight into how students perceive training in relation to specific translation/interpreter sub-competences. The results reported here emerged as by-products of a larger investigation into the intercultural competence of translators/interpreters and trainees (Bakti and Lesznyák 2015, Lesznyák and Bakti 2017). The background information collected in that study also provided us with data on language mediation sub-competences based on the PACTE model. The present study is closely connected to a similar research carried out with professional translators and interpreters (see Lesznyák and Bakti 2015).

In the next sections translation and interpreter competence will be discussed and contrasted briefly. Then it will be argued that the roots of translation and interpreter competence are the same, and that, as a result, it is possible to use an integrated model to represent both of them. Subsequently, data collection methods will be described, followed by the discussion of the main research findings.

## 1.1. Translation Competence

The term competence is used and has been defined in several disciplines, including applied linguistics, cognitive psychology, work psychology, and pedagogy (Hurtado Albir 2010: 55-56), however, there is no commonly agreed definition (Grbić and Pöschhacker 2015: 69-70). In Translation Studies, the first attempts to define translation competence date back to the 1970's (Wilss 1976), and translation competence has received increasing research attention since the 1990's. There is a proliferation of translation competence models (for reviews see Lesznyák 2007, or Malmkjær 2009), but in this paper, only two competence models will be presented in detail, those of the EMT (European Master's in Translation) expert group and the PACTE (Process in Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation) group. These two models are not only the most wide-spread ones, but they also proved to be the most suitable for practical application in our questionnaire survey.

The EMT expert group defines translation competence in translation training as “the combination of aptitudes, knowledge, behaviors and know-how necessary to carry out a given task under given conditions. This combination is recognized and legitimized by a responsible authority (institution, expert)” (EMT expert group 2009: 3). According to the EMT expert group, translation competence is made up of six interdependent competences (EMT expert group 2009: 4-7), which together form the minimum requirement to carry out translation. Other, more specific competences can be added to these six competences in special(ized) fields of translation. The six competences listed by the EMT expert group are the following: translation service provision competence, including an interpersonal and a production dimension, language competence, intercultural competence, including a sociolinguistic and a textual dimension, information mining competence, thematic competence and technological competence (EMT expert group 2009: 4-7).

The PACTE group defines translation competence as “the underlying system of knowledge required to translate” (PACTE 2011: 318). The first version of the model (1998) underwent some changes following empirical testing PACTE (2003, 2011). Below, the 2011 model is presented in detail. Translation competence is expert knowledge, predominantly procedural, and comprises inter-related sub-competences, including a strategic component. The PACTE model includes six sub-competences, some of which overlap with the competences listed by the EMT expert group. The PACTE model includes *bilingual sub-competence*, which is procedural knowledge required to communicate in two languages. It is made up of pragmatic, socio-linguistic, textual, grammatical and lexical knowledge. *Extra-linguistic sub-competence* is declarative knowledge, comprising general world knowledge, domain-specific knowledge, bicultural and encyclopaedic knowledge. *Knowledge about translation* is declarative knowledge about translation and the aspects of the profession, on how translation functions and about professional translation practice. *Instrumental sub-competence* is procedural knowledge, which is related to the use of documentation resources and ICT applied to translation. *Strategic sub-competence* is procedural knowledge, related to the efficiency of the translation process, including problem-solving strategies, the planning of the translation process, the evaluation of results and processes, the activation of sub-competences and the identification of translation problems. The *psycho-physiological components* include cognitive components such as memory, perception, attention and emotion, together with attitudinal

aspects such as intellectual curiosity, perseverance, rigor, and the ability to think critically, as well as other abilities, for example creativity, logical reasoning, and analysis and synthesis.

The idea of componential models has received some criticism, stating that translation competence is a two-fold functional competence involving the ability to generate more than one target text solution for a source text and the ability to select one viable target text from among these solutions (Pym 2003). However, the two views can be reconciled and combined in a model where sub-competences described in multi-component models contribute to generating these alternatives and to selecting alternatives from the target language.

## 1.2. Interpreter Competence and its Links to Translation Competence

The issue of whether translation and interpreting require the same or similar competences or not, and what constitutes requisite competence in translation and interpreting (Gile 2004, Fraihat and Mahadi 2011) is rather controversial. Still, this question is of crucial importance in translator and interpreter training programs with the first year of studies has no separate translator or interpreter track.

The definitions of interpreter competence in many cases resemble the definition of translation competence described by the PACTE group. For example, Albl-Mikasa defines interpreter competence as “a general term for everything an interpreter needs to know and be able to do to perform a professional task” (Albl-Mikasa 2013: 19). According to Kalina, the competence of a professional interpreter is “the competence to process texts within the scope of a bi- or multilingual communication situation with the aim of interlingual mediation. It is also the capability of acting and performing in a situation characterized by externally determined constraints, such as the pressure of time, lack of semantic autonomy and the potential interference between closely connected processes of production and comprehension” (Kalina 2000: 5).

For conference interpreting, Albl-Mikasa's process- and experience-based model of interpreter competence (2013) comprises five groups of skills, where skills are grouped in relation to the interpreting assignment. *Pre-process skills* include high-level command of languages, low-level terminology management, informed semi-knowledge, and streamlined preparation. *Peri-process skills* include teamwork, co-operation, unimposing extroversion, instinct and realism, and pressure resistance. *In-process skills* are comprehension skills, transfer skills, and production skills, and *post-process skills* include terminology warm-up and quality control. *Para-process skills* are business know-how, customer relations, professional standards, lifelong learning predilection, and meta-reflection.

When contrasting and comparing the PACTE competences and the skills listed by Albl-Mikasa with each other, it can be seen that skills specific to interpreting might be unimposing extroversion and pressure resistance (both falling under the category of peri-process skills). As concerns in-process skills, such as comprehension skills, transfer skills, and production skills, they are also among translation competences, the key difference being that in interpreting, comprehension is the comprehension of oral texts and production is oral production.

In spite of some differences, such as the time available for completing a task, the distinctive working environments, the nature of the product (oral vs. written) and some personality traits needed to complete the task, Gile (2004) argues that there is a strong link between translation and interpreting, and that the competences needed for translators and interpreters largely overlap.

In consequence, for the purposes of this investigation, we tried to find a model that can integrate both translation and interpreter competence elements. In spite of being originally a translation competence model, the PACTE model seemed to be a sound candidate for this because of its ‘all-inclusive’ nature: the elements of interpreter competence listed above can be fit into the model with relative ease. While a detailed harmonization and synchronization of the PACTE model with interpreter competence models lies outside the scope of this paper, it can be suggested that interpreting-specific sub-competences (or skills, as they are referred to by some scholars) usually fall into the categories of strategic sub-competence and psycho-physiological sub-competence in the PACTE model. In the preparation phase of our research we designed a questionnaire with items that cover both translation and interpreter competence elements and that can be grouped into the categories of the PACTE model. The questionnaire was first used in 2015 with professional translators and interpreters (for a brief summary of Lesznyák and Bakti 2015, see next section) and it was slightly modified for the purposes of the present study to fit students’ experiences.

### 1.3. Previous Empirical Research on Beliefs about Translation Competence

The present study has two immediate antecedents. Based on Kelly’s model of translation competence (2005), which lists seven competences including interpersonal competence, Huertas Barros (2011) investigated the acquisition of interpersonal competence via collaborative learning. She used the methods of focus groups and questionnaires to survey translation students in Spain and found that 45.5% of translation students “are aware of the importance of interpersonal competence in their translation training” (Huertas Barros 2011: 55).

Lesznyák and Bakti (2015) conducted a research with 31 professional translators and interpreters. The sample consisted of 13 males and 18 females, whose mean age was 38.3 years and had, on the average, 11.8 years of professional experience. Data on translators’ and interpreters’ views on the components of translation/interpreting competence were collected using an anonymized questionnaire based on the PACTE groups’ competence model. Results of the study showed that, according to professionals, *language competencies* are the most important sub-competencies within translation competence followed by *instrumental sub-competencies* and *extralinguistic sub-competencies*. In addition, some significant differences were found between males and females, translators and interpreters and more experienced and less experienced subjects. Lesznyák and Bakti’s 2015 study was the immediate antecedents of the present investigation, similar research question were asked (see below) and the modified version of the questionnaire was used in the research project with trainees.

## 1.4. Research Questions

Based on the literature and on the apparent gap in related empirical research, we aimed at answering the following research questions in our study:

1. How do translator and interpreter trainees perceive the importance of sub-competences in the work of professional translators and interpreters?
2. How do translator and interpreter trainees see and rate the weight of different sub-competences in translator and interpreter training?

## 2. Methods and Data Collection

In order to answer our research questions we carried out a questionnaire survey in paper and pencil format. The Questionnaire included four groups of questions. The first group of questions focused on the demographic background of the participants, and on their previous translation and/or interpreting experience. The second group of questions concerned the perceived importance of sub-competences in the work of professional translators/interpreters. The third group of questions included items on the weight of sub-competences in translation training. The fourth part of the questionnaire was an intercultural competence test, the results of which are not reported in this paper. The students were asked to fill in the questionnaire in class, data collection was anonymous.

The second and third parts of the questionnaire (questions 10-25) measured the perceived importance of PACTE sub-competences in the work of professional translators/interpreters and the weight of different PACTE sub-competences in translator and interpreter training on a Likert scale. The perceived importance was measured on a 5-point-scale with values ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 indicated not at all important and 5 indicated very important. The weight of sub-competences in training was rated on a 4-point-scale, the values were codes as follows: 1 = not dealt with in training at all, 2 = little attention is devoted to a particular sub-competence, 3 = medium amount of attention is devoted to it and 4 = a lot of attention is devoted to it. Questions 10, 11 and 15 measured *bilingual sub-competence*, with questions on source language, target language and specialized/technical language competence. Questions 12, 14, and 16 measured the perceived importance and the importance in training of *extra-linguistic knowledge*, with questions on general knowledge, specialized knowledge, intercultural knowledge and competence. Questions 18 and 25 were on the role of *instrumental sub-competence*, including aspects like the use of dictionaries, digital competences, and terminology. Question 19 was about the importance of the knowledge about the translation process. Questions 21, 22 and 23 concerned elements of the *strategic sub-competence*, such as identifying and solving problems, planning and harmonizing of the translation process. Questions 13, 17, 20 and 24 concerned the *psycho-physiological sub-competences*, that is STM, attention, stress management, and empathy (see Appendix 1 for the translation of the questionnaire).

### 3. The Sample

Our sample included 99 translation trainees, 54 of them were surveyed in 2015, 45 of them in 2016. There were 23 male and 75 female participants, in one case gender information was missing. The mean age was 25.68 years.

The students were attending either a four-semester MA program of translation and interpreting or a three-semester, postgraduate specialist training course in translation and interpreting at the University of Szeged, Hungary and the University of Pécs, Hungary. In Hungary there are two types of training programs for translators and interpreters. In the four-semester MA programs students have three working languages, that is a B and a C language in addition to their mother tongue. The interpreting stream of these programs includes only consecutive interpreting. Postgraduate specialist training courses are aimed at professionals who already have a degree, but wish to add a new specialization, in this case, translation and interpreting, to their degree. In Szeged, the post-graduate specialist training course in translation and interpreting offers only two working languages, that is, a B language in addition to the mother tongue of the students. Other Hungarian universities might have different requirements concerning the number of working languages. The interpreting stream of the post-graduate specialist programs includes training in simultaneous interpreting as well.

Out of the 99 students, 82 were first semester students, 8 were second semester students, 6 were in the third semester of their studies, and 3 in the fourth semester. An even distribution of sampling would obviously offer a more balanced picture of students' views in general, but as data collection was extended to more than one year, involving second year students in the research would mean that some students would fill in the questionnaire twice (e.g. in 2015 as first-year and in 2016 as second-year students), which could lead to distorted results, as well. The overrepresentation of first-semester students in the sample definitely means that our results are representative of the views of first year students.

Table 1. summarizes the language combination of the participants. As can be seen, all of them have English as a working language. The other languages reflect the popularity of specific languages in Hungary (Eurostat 2014).

	A language	B language	C language
Hungarian	99	0	0
English	0	66	33
German	0	16	23
Spanish	0	6	8
French	0	4	5
Italian	0	5	6
Russian	0	2	8
Total	99	99	83 <sup>1</sup>

**Table 1.** Working languages of the participants

As concerns the first degrees of the students, 81 (81.8%) have a first degree in modern languages, 18 students (18.2%) have other first degrees, including economics/finance (6), international relations (5), cultural anthropology (2), tourism, medicine, law, education or IT. Students with different types of first degrees were also compared on how they perceive the importance of translation sub-competencies.

#### 4. Results

In this section, results of the questionnaire survey will be presented. First, students' previous experiences with translation and interpreting are discussed, then students' views on the importance of translation sub-competences are analyzed. Finally, it will be shown how students perceive translation training: what weight is given to specific sub-competencies in training.

##### 4.1. Students' Previous Experience with Translation and Interpreting

In the first part of the questionnaire, we asked students whether they had had any professional experience with translation and/or interpreting before. Professional experience was defined as a paid assignment. The rationale behind the question was that we hypothesized that students with even a minimum experience might have a different view of language mediation competence than those who only have an idealized picture of the profession.

As Table 2 shows, more than half of the students have some experience when they enter translation training. The proportion of experienced students is somewhat higher in the postgraduate group. Students' previous experience is an important factor that should be relied on in training, although we must add here that it can have positive and negative aspects as well. As subject numbers in some sub-categories were extremely low (see Table 2), students were classified into two groups for later analysis: inexperienced (no experience at all) and experienced (all other) subjects.

	MA	Postgrad	$\Sigma$
No experience at all	36 (53%)	9 (29%)	45
Translation	17	11	28
Interpreting	7	1	8
Both	8	9	17

**Table 2.** Students' previous experiences with translation and interpreting (n=98; a subject gave no answer at all)

##### 4.2. The Importance of Sub-competencies—As Seen by Students

Students' views on the importance of sub-competencies provide valuable insight into their translation-related beliefs, which, in turn, might explain certain attitudes and behaviors instructors meet in the translation classroom. Discovering students' views may also help us pinpoint the theoretical issues we should focus on in order to modify stu-

dents' possible false beliefs that may negatively affect the choice of their translation strategies, and thus, their performance as well.

The second part of our questionnaire, which surveyed students' views on the weight of individual sub-competencies, consisted of 16 items, each representing a sub-competency. The test of internal consistency indicated that the sub-test is reliable (Cronbach  $\alpha = 0.80$ ;  $n = 99$ ), suggesting that repeated measurement would bring similar results.

As can be seen in Table 3, students perceive *language competencies* to be the most important constituents of language mediation competence. Problem solving, general knowledge and some psychological components were judged to be fairly important, too.

We used a 5-point Likert-scale in this part of the questionnaire, and the large number of sub-competencies that have a mean value above 4.00 suggests that students are in a phase where they are just becoming aware of the importance of several skills and find it hard to rank them. (A previous study with professionals showed that experts were more likely to find larger differences in the weight of the sub-competencies. See Lesznyák and Bakti 2015).

The most important sub-competencies	Mean (Std. Dev.)	Std. Dev.
<b>Target language competence</b>	4.85	0.41
<b>Source language competence</b>	4.72	0.53
Attention, focusing, concentration	4.52	0.73
Identifying and solving problems	4.45	0.64
Short-term memory	4.15	0.76
General knowledge	4.21	0.70
<b>Special (professional/technical) language competence</b>	4.20	0.82

**Table 3.** The most important sub-competences in translation in rank order (language related sub-competences are in bold)

Table 4 suggests that less practical, that is, meta-type or theoretical skills are thought to be the least important by students. The significance of these sub-competencies is probably less obvious, particularly for beginners, who are overburdened with the more immediate requirements of the job.

The least important sub-competencies	Mean	Std. Dev.
Planning the translation process	3.44	0.91
Empathy	3.27	1.02
Psycholinguistic processes of translation	2.43	0.93

**Table 4.** The least important skills in translation

An unexpected and somewhat surprising finding is that *digital competencies* (3.52) and *specialized knowledge*, that is, professional knowledge of the field that a particular source text is coming from (3.58) were rated relatively low. An obvious explanation is that

students are not aware of the importance of these competencies. Because of the lack of technical equipment, the Hungarian academic environment does not mirror the real-life requirements of the profession, as a result, students might not be conscious of the pace computers make their way into translation.

Not worrying about specialized knowledge might be a phenomenon related to students' first degree, which was in modern languages in most cases. Language students have simply no specialized knowledge (or only very rudimentary), and as a result, they do not even know what it is to have specialized knowledge. In other words, most often they do not even realize that they misunderstand texts or use inappropriate register. Hence, they tend to underestimate the importance of specialized knowledge. Our everyday experiences as translation teachers indicate that this attitude often leads to sign-oriented translation (instead of sense-orientation). Consequently, raising consciousness concerning specialized/professional knowledge seems to be an important aspect of translation training.

The sixteen items of the second part of the questionnaire can be arranged into six groups, each corresponding to a PACTE translation sub-competence (see Section 2 above). We also calculated the mean values of these sub-competencies and their rank order. Figures in Table 5. show that students consider *bilingual competence* to be far the most important and *knowledge about translation* to be the least important.

	Mean	Std. Dev.
<b>Bilingual competence</b>	4.59	0.58
Extra-linguistic competence	4.05	0.61
Psycho-physiological competence	4.03	0.52
Strategic competence	3.97	0.55
Instrumental sub-competence	3.74	0.69
Knowledge about translation	2.43	0.93

**Table 5.** The importance of PACTE sub-competencies—as perceived by translation trainees

#### 4.2.1. Gender-, Age- and Experience-Related Differences within the Sample

Next, we wanted to explore whether particular groups within the sample differ in their views on the importance of translation skills and sub-competencies. Therefore, we compared male and female participants; younger and older respondents, master and postgraduate students and experienced and inexperienced subjects. Independent samples t-tests were carried out to check for statistical significance in each comparison. Normality was not tested because of relatively small sub-sample sizes.

Gender differences were only found on one factor, *digital sub-competencies*, which were rated to be more important by women (Mean values: men = 3.09; women = 3.65,  $F = 1.65$ ,  $t = -2.94$ ; ( $p < 0.01$ )). A possible explanation for this might be that more female students tend to struggle with the use of certain software and applications, which may increase their awareness of the weight of these sub-competencies. This is, however, only

a tentative explanation based on our observations and should be backed up by structured research asking students about their digital know-how and possible problems.

To investigate age differences within the sample, two groups were created: a younger group and an older group. The mean age of the sample was 25.8 years but there were some subjects who were considerably older than the others, which simply numerically increased the mean value. Dividing the group along the mean would have led to an imbalance in sub-sample size (younger  $n = 74$  older = 24). As a result, the median (24) was chosen as a cut-point: this way we could create two equal groups. Thus, the younger group consisted of students younger than 24 ( $n=48$ ) and the older group comprised students 24 or older ( $n=50$ ). This division seems to make sense from other aspects, as well: in the Hungarian education system, students 24 or older are likely to have work experience and possibly, a second degree, too. Again, only one significant difference was found between the groups: the younger age group attached more importance to *intercultural competence* than the older group (mean values: 4.25 vs. 3.90,  $F = .15$ ,  $t = -2.13$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). It is relatively difficult to explain this finding. A possible reason for the increased sensitivity of the younger generation might be the emphasis put on intercultural differences in contemporary university courses, particularly in Faculties of Arts and Humanities. The older generation might not have met such courses or approaches, or their later experiences may have led to a change in their perceptions.

Another aim of the comparisons was to find out whether the type of the training program students take part in influences their perceptions. The t-tests revealed only one significant difference between the two groups: the postgraduate group ( $n=31$ ) gives more weight to *specialized (professional) language competence* than the MA group ( $n=68$ ) (means: 4.47 vs. 4.09,  $F = .002$ ,  $t = -2.42$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). There are several possible explanations for this result. First, the ratio of students with a first degree other than modern philology is higher in postgraduate programs. In consequence, they are more aware of the existence of registers and the need to use them appropriately. Also, postgraduate students tend to have more work experience. These two factors may have an impact on how they see the importance of the skills needed to translate.

It was also assumed that the type of first degree (i.e. subject area) might influence how students see the importance of sub-competences. To test this hypothesis, philologists ( $n=81$ ) and other professionals ( $n=18$ ) were compared. Independent t-tests revealed one significant difference: philologists place more importance on *intercultural competence* and *cultural background knowledge* than non-philologists (means: 4.16 vs. 3.67,  $F = 1.86$ ,  $t = 2.35$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). This can well be the outcome of their previous training.

The last group of comparisons, those between the experienced and the inexperienced group, highlighted only one significant difference: students who already had at least one paid assignment placed higher importance on *stress management skills* than their inexperienced peers (means: 4.26 vs. 3.91,  $F = .715$ ,  $t = 2.07$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). It seems possible that stress is a relatively unexpected aspect of the profession, which students become truly aware of when they leave the academic environment and face the demands of everyday work life.

Studying the effect of background variables provides us with valuable information on the strengths and weaknesses and the particular needs of certain groups in training. Gender differences on the importance of IT skills suggest that more attention should be paid to digital competencies in training. The possible reasons for the differences should be investigated and less skilled groups should be offered more support if necessary. Older

students might benefit from intercultural sensitization, and similarly, MA students could be made more aware of the importance of professional knowledge and specialized language. It is somewhat surprising that many students think of translation as a relatively stress-free activity where you cannot lose face (Sewell 2004). Although sooner or later students will realize how mistaken this belief is, it would definitely help them if we prepared them for the psychological and emotional demands of the profession and taught them some techniques of stress management.

#### 4.3. The Weight of Sub-Competencies in Translation Training

Similarly to the second part of the questionnaire, the third part consisted of 16 items, which asked students to rate the weight of sub-competencies in translation training. This time we used a 4-point Likert-scale. The sub-test, again, proved to be reliable (Cronbach  $\alpha = 0.82$ ).

N = 99	Mean (max. 4.00)	Std. Dev.
<b>Language B competence</b>	3.54 (0.64)	0.64
Problem solving	3.49 (0.64)	0.64
Language A competence	3.15 (0.81)	0.81
<b>Language C competence</b>	3.03 (0.77)	0.77
Short-term memory	2.99 (0.81)	0.81
Harmonizing translation processes	2.97 (0.83)	0.83
<b>Specialized language competence</b>	2.94 (0.94)	0.94

**Table 6.** The weight of sub-competencies in translation training – as perceived by students (language related sub-competences are in bold)

Table 6 shows that, according to students, *language B competence* and *problem solving* are the skills that translator training focuses most on. *A and C language competences* and *specialized language competences* are on the top of the list, too; however, the significant difference in the mean scores indicates that less attention is devoted to developing these skills – at least, this is how students see it. We must note here that these results are in line with our observations and they may highlight possible problems in training. Apparently, students have markedly less opportunity to develop their A, C and specialized language competences, which are exactly the competences that would need some upgrading. Our observation is that students' performance is often very poor when they work with their C language. In addition, they often have a naïve, non-conscious attitude to and knowledge of their mother tongue, which hinders the deliberate construction of translation alternatives as well as a well-informed choice between them. These observations are in line with the findings of Makkos (2014), who highlighted several shortcomings in students' L1 writing skills. Also, because of deficiencies in competence, in many cases students cannot handle technical language. However, these are only our views on the issue, and further research should be carried out with instructors to shed light on the weight of the problem.

## 5. Summary and Conclusions

In this paper we aimed to investigate translation students' conception of language mediation competence. In addition, we wished to map how students perceive translation training in relation to specific translation sub-competencies. We carried out a questionnaire survey with a sample of 99 translation and interpreting trainees; the questionnaire used skill and sub-competencies from the PACTE model.

Our investigations show that students, similarly to experts (see Lesznyák and Bakti 2015), consider *language competencies* to be the *central* constituents of language mediation competence. Problem-solving and some psychological abilities (attention span, short-term memory capacity, etc.) were also seen as important elements by students. It is somewhat surprising that digital competencies and specialized knowledge were rated relatively less important—at least, less important than we had expected. Students' judgments shed light on their naïve views of language mediation competence and are useful for trainers in as much as they show what aspects of these views are not realistic (see, for example, underrating digital competencies and specialized knowledge). These findings indicate possible points for intervention, too.

Some significant differences were also found between selected groups in the sample (gender-, age-, training type- and experience-related differences). These differences may be indicative of either the strength of particular groups or of the individual needs of groups. As for the courses in translation training, they emphasize roughly the same skills and competencies that students perceive as important.

The findings of our study provide valuable insights for translation program designers and instructors. Language competencies emerged as pivotal in language mediation competence. However, program designers often think of language proficiency as a prerequisite for translation (which is certainly justified), and suppose that it is a given (which, often, is not the case). This raises the issue of language courses in translation programs: the question is whether there are a sufficient number of courses to develop language skills, particularly in language A and language C. In teacher training MA programs there are advanced level language courses even at this stage of the program, so it seems justifiable and reasonable to include them in translation programs, too. In addition, the content and the structure of language courses should be reviewed and revised if necessary. Our experience shows that most programs do include a small number of language courses, but the syllabus of these courses is not tailored to the needs of translation students. Furthermore, programs should also provide assistance with acquiring general and specialized knowledge, and form the translators' ability to recognize when he or she lacks knowledge to fulfill the translation task. Apparently, students also need some guidelines on how to develop psychological skills that influence interpreter or translator performance (short term memory, attention span, stress management).

In conclusion, our results can be used in translator training in order to rethink curricula and also to help students to understand other aspects of the profession, in addition to language proficiency.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Not all 99 students in the sample have a C language.

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## APPENDIX 1.

### Questionnaire for translation students

#### Demographics and professional experience

1. Gender: M / F
2. Age:
3. Languages A:  
B:  
C:  
other:
4. Type of translator training
  - a) MA
  - b) post graduate
  - c) other
5. How many semesters of translator training have you completed?
6. Have you had any paid assignment in translation and/or interpreting?
  - a) no
  - b) yes, in translation
  - c) yes, in interpreting
  - d) yes, both in translation and interpreting
7. Which of the statements below apply to you?
  - a) I have a BA in languages.
  - b) I have a BA in a field other than languages. Field:

**How important do you think the following competences related to linguistic mediation are in translation / interpreting?  
Please mark the appropriate number.**

	Not important (1)	Moderately important (2)	Important (3)	Very important (4)	Is of outstanding importance (5)
8. Linguistic competence in the <i>source language</i> (pragmatic, textual, grammatical and lexical knowledge)					
9. Linguistic competence in the <i>target language</i> (pragmatic, textual, grammatical and lexical knowledge)					
10. General world knowledge, encyclopaedic knowledge					
11. Good short-term memory					
12. Domain-specific knowledge related to the translation/interpreting assignment					
13. Domain-specific terminology related to the translation/interpreting assignment					
14. Knowledge about the source and target culture					
15. Ability to concentrate					
16. Dictionary skills, terminology					
17. Understanding the psycholinguistic background of translation/interpreting					
18. Stress management					
19. Recognizing and solving translation / interpreting problems					
20. Planning the translation process					
21. Simultaneous activation and coordination of the skills and knowledge required for translation and interpreting					
22. Empathy					
23. Digital competences, ICT applied to translation					

**How important role do you think the development of the following competences play in translator and interpreter training?  
Please mark the appropriate number.**

	Not important (1)	Moderately important (2)	Important (3)	Very impor- tant (4)
24. Linguistic competence <i>A language</i> (pragmatic, textual, grammatical and lexical knowledge)				
25. Linguistic competence <i>B language</i> (pragmatic, textual, grammatical and lexical knowledge)				
26. Linguistic competence <i>C language</i> (pragmatic, textual, grammatical and lexical knowledge) <b>if appropriate</b>				
27. General world knowledge, encyclopaedic knowledge				
28. Development of short-term memory				
29. Domain-specific knowledge related to the translation/ interpreting assignment				
30. Training in technical language				
31. Knowledge about the source and target culture				
32. Developing the ability to concentrate				
33. Dictionary skills, terminology				
34. Understanding the psycholinguistic background of translation / interpreting				
35. Developing stress management skills				
36. Recognizing and solving translation/interpreting problems				
37. Planning the translation process				
38. Simultaneous activation and coordination of the skills and knowledge required for translation and interpreting				
39. Developing empathy				
40. Digital competences, ICT applied to translation				

**41. Is there any competence listed under 24-40 that should be focused on more in training?**

**42. Any comments / suggestions in connection with the questionnaire?**

**43. Would you participate in further research? Yes / No**

*Thank you for your help.*

# PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL LESSONS ON AND FROM WEBSITE TRANSLATION

MÁRTA KÓBOR

## 1. Introduction

My personal experiences as a project manager and a translator myself led me to the realization that the translation of websites often needs specific treatment and practices that can be learned and improved. This implies that the methodology of website translation can be taught in translator training, continuous learning or LLL programs and that focusing on its peculiarities might be beneficial for the theory of translation and terminology.

Practical experiences seem to play a vital role in translating websites, as well as in theorizing and teaching it. Quite interestingly, this sector has seen a very dynamic development since the first website, created by Sir Tim Berners-Lee, went live to the public 25 years ago, but it has not attracted much attention from translation scholars and pedagogy. According to a recent survey carried out in Hungary (Szabó–Seidl–Péché–Ugrin 2018), none of the Hungarian translator training institutes and programs provide any special courses (or any kind of formal teaching) in this field of activity. Personal interviews conducted in 2015 with two Hungarian translators at the Web Translation Unit of the European Commission also confirmed that even translators of EUROPA (europa.eu) were left to learn by doing, without real methodological, let alone theoretical guidance.

A study on (and entitled) *Web translation as a genre*, published in 2009 by the Directorate-General for Translation of the European Commission, explicitly claims that “Writing for the web is the subject of great amounts of literature. [...] Though much less has been written on the actual translation of web texts” (DGT 2009: 6). This study builds upon practical experiences of ten web translators and editors and seeks to highlight the importance of a practice-based approach to “web translation,”<sup>1</sup> clearly defined by the authors as a distinct “genre.”<sup>2</sup> Another key feature of this study is its focus on human factor in the translation of web pages, which is often neglected in recent studies about multimedia translation. Studies published around 2000 (Cattrysse 2001; Gambier and Gottlieb 2001) mostly concentrated on the multi-semiotic nature of the web pages, and proposed to integrate, in the translated version, the verbal component with the non-verbal (pictorial, graphic, acoustic etc.) features. After 2005 we can observe a shift to translation technology-oriented studies (e.g. Pym et al. 2006; Dimitriu and Freigang 2008). Translation pedagogy has also tended to consider web translation as part of a complex process, and has focused much more on the efficient and cost-effective use of localization and CAT technologies (e.g. Mileto and Muzii, 2010), than on the human translation skills and practices required by this type of activity. Despite its interesting findings and points, DGT’s study (2009) analyzes the characteristics of website translation:

- within the specific context of the multilingual EUROPA website;

– with a main concern for adaptation to the cultural context of the readers of EU web pages;

– within the specific context of practice, not translation training or theory.

In what follows, I would like to contribute to the analysis of the website translating practice by shading some light

– on the specific skills and techniques needed to translate web pages outside the EU;

– on the importance of linguistic optimization (and terminological variation in particular), rather than cultural adaptation, and on the key role of search engines in it;

– on the pedagogical and theoretical lessons of practical experiences.

In the first part of the paper, we will see if external translators working for the EU, as well as translators working outside the EU-context have similar experiences to those of DGT's in-house translators. Examples will illustrate how non-DGT translators have solved situations where standard approaches to translation and terminology would not have worked, and what lessons they have learned from these experiences. The second part of the paper will include a proposal for a special training program on website translation integrating the findings of this study; and finally, we will focus on some theoretical lessons we can learn from the translation of websites.

## **2. Practical Lessons from Website Translation**

The following examples highlight various text types and file formats, as well as various contexts with different levels of service required by customers, ranging from “traditional” translation of a word list to multilingual localization<sup>3</sup> of a complex site. Despite their differences, these projects have invariably taught practitioners (translators, revisers, terminologists, PMs, etc.) interesting lessons about various aspects of website translation.

### **2.1. User-Friendly Translation of Search Words**

Let us start with a simple but salient example for the limits of standard approach to translation and terminology when it comes to dealing with a website or a web page for the general public. The following short, seemingly simple job (Project 1) was submitted, without any explicit instruction, by one of the DGs of the European Commission to an external translator.

A	B
<b>English</b>	
2 year guarantee	
Advice	
Agency	
Alternative dispute resolution	
Benefits	
Buy online	
buyers' guide	
<b>buying on the internet consumer rights</b>	
<b>buying online consumer rights</b>	
<b>buying online rights</b>	
cancelled flight	
cancelled flight refund	
car consumer complaints	
car hire in Europe	
chargeback	
charging extra	
change my mind	
complaint consumer protection	
Complaints	
complaints form	
Consumer	
Consumer law	
Consumer protection	
consumer protection complaints	
consumer rights	
<b>consumer rights buying online</b>	
consumer rights complaints	
<b>consumer rights when buying online</b>	
consumer services	

**Figure 1.** A short list of terms and phrases in an Excel file (Project 1)

A young translator, regularly in charge of jobs for the same client, specialized in EU translations and trained to a very consistent use of terminology quickly prepared the assignment with a comment saying that there were many “synonyms” (see in bold) for which she put the “usual official term” everywhere. But if we examine this list more closely (as the reviser did), we must realize it is a list of keywords or search phrases that “simple users,” EU citizens who are not necessarily specialists of customer protection issues and terminology, would type in their search engine if they met a problem with an online deal. The “synonyms” (alternative phrases) the translator referred to, such as: *buying on the internet consumer rights*; *buying online consumer rights*; *buying online rights*; *consumer rights buying online*; *consumer rights when buying online*; *customer rights when buying online*; *internet buying consumer rights*; *internet buying rights*; *on-line buying rights*; *rights when buying online* obviously needed a special treatment here; instead of trying to find official, legal EU terms, the translator should have chosen simple alternative target words and phrases that users would use spontaneously for their web searches. Other official but too sophisticated terms like *megfontolási időszak* for “cooling off period,” *elállás* for “withdrawal” also had to be replaced by simple words that average citizens would use: *gondolkodási idő* (consideration period), *visszalépés* (step back). The best solution here is to imagine the potential, non-specialist target readers (e.g. by means of brainstorming or ideation), and to use their words and phrases in the translation.

What translators may learn from this experience is that real life does not always follow the patterns they have learned at “school” – even in a context considered as having a standard and clearly defined terminology, like customer protection<sup>4</sup> in the EU. To find the

potentially most effective target words and phrases, translators of websites often need to prefer an alternative or a “non-term” to a professional one, or at least to use it along with official or in-house terms. Apparently, external translators’ experience converges here with that of DGT’s colleagues, who came to the following conclusion in 2009: “While in legal translation it is important to ensure the unambiguous understanding of the text by using the terms already used in earlier related texts, in typical web texts it is vital to use words which non-specialists use” (DGT 2009: 15).

Practical experiences of both in-house and external translators seem to rule out in web texts (especially in case of a search queries list) standard approaches to “official” EU-terminology and to encourage translators to use their empathy and opt for a user-friendly terminology adapted to the needs of target readers.

## 2.2. Search Engine and User-Friendly Translation of Web Content

The following examples are taken from a more complex but not EU-related project (Project 2) within which several hundreds of commercial web pages for the new Hungarian website of a French car manufacturer were created. This job was part of a large-scale multilingual localization project to more than 30 languages. In what follows we will see that this even more “typical” web text, dedicated to the general public, also requires adaptation to the needs of non-specialist users who are supposed to visit the target website.

### 2.2.1. Meta Data Optimization

In Project 2, the translators’ task was to translate “in an SEO-friendly language” hundreds of French or English source .xls files with the same structure everywhere: a Title and a short Description cell in the so called SEO part dedicated to what web developers call “meta data,” as well as a couple of other cells below with the specific content of the web page.

safety technology 3			
SEO	Title (70 characters max)	Citroën technology - Safety - Driving - LDWS	
	Description (160 characters max)	The lane departure warning system combats drowsiness or momentary inattention when	
	URL		
		44 101	
nom de la tranche	Visuel de la tranche	Étiquettes	Textes
Technologie détails		Titre	<b>Lane departure warning system</b>
		Chapeau (Réutilisé en page galerie environ 35 mots)	The lane departure warning system is a driver aid that combats drowsiness or momentary inattention when at the wheel. This innovative system significantly improves road safety.
		Texte	This technology collects data using Infrared sensors facing the road surface to warn the driver when the vehicle crosses solid or dotted white lines.  The system's ECU raises an alert when the vehicle crosses a white line, without first switching on the indicator lights. The driver is warned by a beep and/or vibrations in the side of the driver's seat corresponding to the direction of drift. The system does not take any further action and the driver remains in complete control of the vehicle.
		Voir la vidéo	see attached folder

Figure 2. Sample of a file submitted to translators of Project 2

SEO stands for “search engine optimization” and means making a web page visible for search engines (SE) and for users by ranking highly on the SE result pages (SERP). As for SEO-friendly language, it means that the language used on the web page is adapted to the specific needs of search engines. Thus, along with internet users whose needs seemed to play a key role in our first example, another factor seems to influence website translation: search engines like Google, YouTube and Yahoo! just to mention the most popular SEs in the European context.

To understand how the content of a web page can be optimized for search engines, it is important to know that today, when indexing (i.e. including in their database) web pages, crawling bots or spiders of SEs seem to focus on the “title,” the “description,” and some other so called “meta data captions” featuring at the beginning of the html code:

```

11
12
13
14
15 <meta http-equiv="X-UA-Compatible" content="IE=edge" />
16 <title>Lane Departure Warning System | Citroën Technology - Citroën UK</title>
17 <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=UTF-8" />
18 <meta http-equiv="Content-Script-Type" content="text/javascript; charset=UTF-8" />
19 <meta http-equiv="Content-Style-Type" content="text/css; charset=UTF-8" />
20 <meta name="description" content="Find out how the lane departure warning system contributes even further to on-the-road safety." />
21 <meta name="dc.description" content="Find out how the lane departure warning system contributes even further to on-the-road safety." />
22 <meta name="Author" content="Citroën UK" />
23 <meta name="google-site-verification" content="COL4xLFDIRMid2_FKpuyCuWWSuq2Ox1GpVeeYem14Q" />
24 <meta property="og:type" content="website" />
25 <meta property="og:image" content="https://media.citroen.co.uk/design/frontend/images/logo.png" />
26 <meta property="og:image:width" content="280" />
27 <meta property="og:image:height" content="150" />
28 <meta property="og:url" content="https://www.citroen.co.uk/about-citroen/technology/lane-departure-warning-system" />
29 <meta property="og:title" content="Lane Departure Warning System | Citroën Technology" />
30 <meta property="og:site name" content="Citroën UK" />
31 <meta property="og:description" content="Find out how the lane departure warning system contributes even further to on-the-road safety." />
32 <meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width,user-scalable=no" />
33 <meta name="apple-mobile-web-app-capable" content="yes" />
34 <meta name="apple-mobile-web-app-status-bar-style" content="black" />
35 <meta name="format-detection" content="telephone=no" />
36 <meta name="robots" content="all" />

```

**Figure 3.** Sample of the html code of a web page from Project 2

What web specialists call “meta data optimization” is a crucial step in web development, an important part of SEO, involving two important language-related elements:<sup>5</sup> the title and the description tag. The title tag is the meta tag that tells both search engines and users what the web page is about. Long title tags are truncated when they are displayed in the results pages, so the most important idea(s) and words must always appear within the first cc. 70 characters. The meta description is also pulled-in automatically by search engines to let users know what the content of the page is about. For languages using the Roman alphabet, the character limitation for this tag is 160, above which the description is truncated. Therefore, it is very important to control the text that is displayed on the SERP to attract SE bots as well as human users, and to have them click on the link. It is obvious that to meet the needs of both search engines and human internet users, content writers need an approach that considers search engine optimization (SEO) from the beginning, and uses a highly controlled, specific language.

If we focus on this specific, “SEO-friendly” language, we might be surprised to see to what extent it contains variations.

SEO	Title (70 characters max)	Citroën technology - Engines - <b>Hybrid4</b>	38
	Description (160 characters max)	Citroën's first <b>full hybrid</b> drive train combines the performance of <b>HDI diesel</b> engines and the qualities of <b>electric</b> motors.	124
	URL		

**Figure 4.** The title and the description cells of a web page from Project 2

For instance, In the SEO cells of Figure 4, taken from a web page about Hybrid4 engines, we can find words for every potential engine type (*hybrid4*, *full hybrid*, *HDI diesel*, *electric*) along with several synonyms for engine (*motor*, *drive train*, etc.) in order to enhance the chances of this page to be found firstly by crawling robots, and then by human internet users (via SEs).

To make sure the translated web pages will also be visible to users and rank highly in SERPs, translators must have at least a basic but regularly updated knowledge about SEO. The indexing techniques as well as the math formulae used to match the searched keywords to the results stored in their database vary from one search engine to another. In addition, the algorithms (kept secret by SEs) change constantly to avoid manipulation of keywords and other tactics by site developers. To produce SEO-friendly translations, it can be useful for specialists of website translation to keep abreast of the most popular SEs' algorithms, and to choose all words of the meta data captions not only according to the needs of the "ideated" human searches, but also to those of SE robots.

The role played by SEs in the use of alternative terms and non-terms is admitted in the DGT study as well, but its authors insist more on drawing the attention of target readers via search engines than on catching the attention of search engine spiders or (ro)bots:

The web translators seem to agree that the greatest difference between their output and that of other DGT translation departments is that they **choose their wording first and foremost with the reader in mind**, choosing well-known words and expressions understood even by the occasional visitor and with a strong likelihood of being typed in search engines (DGT 2009: 15; bold as in the original)

*Web translation as a genre*, focusing mostly on human factors, does not seem to pay much attention to SEO-friendly translation that according to SEO experts (SEO Translator, Chase, etc.) targets SEs and focuses on the translation of every textual attributes like titles, tags, anchor texts, script messages, etc. on a web page to make it visible and attractive for the search engines in the target language as well. Ideally, translators should be aware of and able to handle both human and SEO aspects.

Despite differences in their main focus, DGT's and non EU translators' experiences invariably show that when translating metadata, they have to include as many alternative terms as possible, so that search engines as well as human SE users are more likely to find the translated page. This optimization leads to considerable variations in terminology, which seems to contrast with what is (very reasonably) taught about terminological consistency in standard translator training (Fischer 2015). In the next section, we will examine if this practice is limited to meta data or if it applies to the content of the web pages as well.

### 2.2.2. Content Optimization

If we examine the language of the content cells, we can observe an equally high level of terminological variability that also requires optimization strategies from translators.

Citroën technology – Safety – LDWS	
The <u>lane departure</u> warning system combats <u>drowsiness</u> or <u>momentary inattention</u> when at the wheel.	
bellés	Textes
Titre	<b>Lane departure warning system</b>
Chapeau (Réutilisé en page galerie environ 35 mots)	The <u>lane departure</u> warning system is a driver aid that combats <u>drowsiness</u> or <u>momentary inattention</u> when at the wheel. This innovative system significantly improves road safety.
Texte	This technology collects data using infrared sensors facing the road surface to warn the driver when the vehicle <u>crosses</u> <u>solid or dotted white lines</u> .  The system's ECU <del>raises an alert</del> when the vehicle <u>crosses</u> a <u>white line</u> , without first switching on the indicator lights. The driver is <del>warned by a beep and/or vibrations</del> in the side of the driver's seat corresponding to the direction of <u>drift</u> . The system does not take any further action and the driver remains in complete control of the vehicle.
Voir la video	see attached folder

Figure 5. Sample of the SEO and the content cells of a web page from Project 2

On the English language source page about the lane departure warning system of the manufacturer's cars (shown by Figure 5), synonyms and other alternative words used to express the same concept are highlighted to show to what extent terminological variation is a crucial feature of the content cells too. The original page indicates the different terms, non-terms and phrases for each of the basic concepts of this function in different ways:

- squiggly underline for *white lines/solid or dotted white lines* for the concept of LINES on the road;
- underline for *lane departure/drift/crossing the lines* for the concept of LEAVING the lane;
- strikeout for *alert, bip and/or vibrations* for the WARNING component; etc.

If translators do not render these variations in the target texts and they do not alternate terms, the translated page has to run the risk of not being found by many internet users and also of being penalized by SEs, as some of them are said to apply sanctions against web pages with too many repeating keywords. To know how to proceed it is useful to examine the strategies used by the authors of the original web contents. To identify all possible terms content writers can put in their source texts, SEO experts use a range of special techniques, such as competitor analysis and in-country keyword research (Haddow). Competitor analysis focuses on local and regional competitors' activities. To find the words that get the most clicks, SEO experts compare the search frequency and the search words used by competitors and make recommendations to their clients based on this analysis. In-country keyword research means checking the traffic volume and competition for keywords in the target language, and customizing the content accord-

ingly. Google's Keyword Planner is an excellent, free tool, but there are many others, especially for English, among which keywordtool.io, KWFinder, mergewords.com are some of the best-known ones.

Translators are not supposed to be SEO experts, but they still must be aware of the importance of terminological variations in both the source and the target content and see the limits of standard translation practices when treating web contents. The lesson of competitor and keyword analyzing practices for translators is that they must concentrate on identifying keywords in the source text and in the target context. They can use the source keyword list as a basis, a reference for their research, but they (or their colleagues, for example, the PM or terminologists) have to create a "localized" keyword list based on competitors' and existing target language sites. Then, instead of translating the keywords, they must rewrite the content for SE and customers using the localized wordlist even if they have their "usual" in-house term list or a CAT-compatible term base.

This is exactly what translators of Project 2 did to translate content pages: for each product or service, terminologists made a keyword research to ensure that target keywords are appropriate to the content and to the local context as well. Once the localized keywords were generated, they asked the translators to include them in their translations to make it as variable as possible. This procedure proved to be a real challenge for translators having been trained to and used to a consistent use of terminology and their good old TBs.

### *2.2.3. Stylistic Optimization*

We have seen in 2.2.1. and 2.2.2. that web pages have features that make translators' work similar to that of web specialists. Hungarian web translators at DGT claimed a "journalistic flair" was often needed to meet the special requirements of their activity. One can also remark that in many respects, website translators' work resembles marketing peoples' job, which also has to reduce the distance between specialists and users, insiders and outsiders. They do not write for a company or brand but for the potential customers, so they often need a lot of creativity to find ways of building bridges to enhance linguistic proximity. Nevertheless, the DGT study, referring to Luukkonen, a Finnish specialist of web texts, remarks that "brochure or marketing-style texts should be avoided on websites, because they do not satisfy the specific needs of the user" (DGT 2009: 9). Web content seems thus to require a "special web style" to which the authors of the DGT study devote a whole section. They define style as consisting of "elements such as terminology, ways of addressing the reader, length of sentences and paragraphs, and level of complexity or simplicity" (DGT 2009: 18). Whereas in Project 2, the main challenge for the translators of the content cells proved to be terminological optimization, translators of the EUROPA web pages consider terminology as part of the overall style that must be "clearer, shorter and less jargony" (DGT 2009: 4) than in other text types, for example, administrative documents. They claim that the translated contents must be able to gain the interest and the confidence of its readers within a few seconds, and sometimes different registers or stylistic effects must be used in the target text.

Although according to the DGT study (2009) most professionals agree that web translation requests a special style, opinions vary considerably about stylistic requirements. Some web translators are convinced that their work is subject to higher stylistic requirements than others' because it always goes for publication, and is usually intended for

the “general public” (not “only” experts). Other interviewees, in contrast, consider the style of ephemeral web pages less important than that of printed documents. Hungarian web translators of the DGT drew our attention to the importance of text types treated by web translators. Websites may include news items, polls, consultations, administrative forms, etc., many of which do not require special treatment and much (if any) creativity.

Regardless of these differences, the main lesson translators of web contents can learn from practical experiences is that in many cases their work involves both terminological and stylistic adaptation. These adaptations to the SEs and to the ideated target users, for which I use the umbrella term “linguistic optimization,” require special skills and techniques, such as the ability to identify source and to alternate target terms and non-terms, the use of special techniques of user and keyword analysis, and the capacity to master different styles.

Linguistic optimization of both meta data and page content often gives priority to creativity over consistency, to unorthodox term treatment and style over consistent use of TBs and TMs. Linguistic optimization often needs to be completed by cultural adaptation, which is very extensively presented in the DGT’s study with lots of interesting examples taken from different cultural contexts to which relevant pages of the EUROPA website needed to be adapted.<sup>6</sup>

### 2.3. Technical Challenges of Website Translation

Translating for the web needs other specific skills and competences, including technical ones. We have already mentioned the importance of being informed about SEO techniques, as well as the basic structure of html, xml and other markup languages. Translators and other colleagues from LSPs have certainly experienced that clients do not always provide Excel or Word files, but other formats, like xml files full of tags with programming or formatting information, as you can see in the FAQ section of another French car manufacturer’s website (Project 3):

```

When you are on the home page of <a href="https://mypeugeot-
fr.peugeot.com/my-peugeot/Sidentifier/" target="_blank">MyPEUGEOT</a>,
click on "Activation link lost". Enter the email address associated with your account,
then click on "CONFIRM".<br>An email containing a new password will be sent to
you.

To delete your account:<ul>
<li>Connect to your personal space at <a href="https://mypeugeot-
fr.peugeot.com/my-peugeot/Sidentifier/" target="_blank">MyPEUGEOT</a>.
</li>
<li>Click on "See my profile" at the top right of the website. </li>
<li>Then click on the tab "My access codes" and click on "Unregister from
MyPeugeot".</li>
</ul>

Go to the MyPEUGEOT section of the website http://www.peugeot.fr, accessible at the
top right of the home page, or go directly to the website at <a
href="https://mypeugeot-fr.peugeot.com/my-peugeot/Sidentifier/"
target="_blank">MyPEUGEOT</a>.
<ul>

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Figure 6. Extract of a translation file from Project 3

Although it is widely known that today most of the CAT tools are able to cope with these file formats (Varga 2016), it is often a challenge for the translators to recognize text parts that must not be modified if they do not want to destruct the translated file; especially in a language with a very different word order, like Hungarian. This is again something students and translators can learn easily provided they are sufficiently informed about markup languages.

In some file formats, it is difficult to see how the different parts are linked with each other and what the final product will look like after publication. In formats which permit preview (e.g. xml), translators must learn how to shift between the *editing* mode for translating and the *preview* mode for viewing the approximate result, or to verify the translated text that is displayed to see if it is correct and it attracts users.

In some cases, translators are given a login to the content management system of the client and they have to translate directly on-line. Unfortunately, not all clients use the same CMS or software for their websites. Apart from being time consuming<sup>7</sup>, this situation often demands a great amount of creativity from translators.

In addition to “tricky” formats, localization software and content management systems, character limits also require a lot of creativity on the part of website translators. In addition to meta tag limits, character limitations may be necessary for aesthetic reasons, mainly in case of responsive websites designed for smartphones. Hungarian DGT web translators also reported that they often had to adapt the text in the process of translating to make it easier to read, shorter or more suitable for the web environment. To designate this translation mode, DGT uses a specific term, *trediting* (from translating + editing) (DGT 2009: 7) that has been used largely among web translators lately.

Our final lesson is that website translators perform technical work, as they have to understand how the Internet, CAT and other IT tools work. Despite all of their potential to treat most formats and markup languages,<sup>8</sup> the basic technical aids of website translators are not CAT-tools, as in most cases TMs or TBs can be used as a reference only. To be able to produce appropriate target websites, translators need technical meta-knowledge about basic SEO practices, markup languages, CMSs and localization software, but in many cases they need creativity and adaptability above all to cope with technology.

Before moving on to the next part, let us draw a conclusion for project managers. According to the first, but not yet significant results of a survey I am conducting, if we ask PMs how they choose translators for website translating projects, most of them answer that they assign these jobs to the translators regularly working for the client, because they know the in-house terminology. However, the problem is that most users (and potential new customers) who will make searches for their web pages do not necessarily know these terms. We have seen so far that the use of in-house terms often puts a distance between specialists and users; that website translators’ task includes stylistic and cultural adaptations as well as technical challenges; and we have seen also that this type of activity requires personal qualities, like empathy, creativity and adaptability. Mastering the in-house terminology is far from being enough to produce appropriate website translations, so project managers have to be aware of the fact that the “usual” translator is not necessarily the best choice for the translation of a client’s website.

### 3. Pedagogical Lessons on Website Translation

We have seen so far in this article that in many respects, from a terminological through a stylistic to a technical point of view, translators of web pages often need creativity and specific strategies more than standard approaches and practices. Nevertheless, recent translation graduates are trained more on a systematic use of CAT-tools and on terminological consistency (the use of TMs/TBs is encouraged but term alternation is often penalized or explicitly banned by teachers or PMs). As translating for the web (that is for a target composed of web crawlers and “laymen” internet users) is playing an increasing role in translators’ life, I found it important to develop a course material that could be used in translators’ training and LLL programs.

The Symposium on the *Translator Profile: What Skills for a Changing Market?* organized by the Directorate-General for Translation in 2011 concluded that “The danger is that tools will play too large a role in education and translator training so that basic skills will be neglected” (DGT 2011). In line with this idea, I have concentrated on the human factors of translating websites, and tried to exploit synergies between trainers and professionals to focus on basic skills and practices that are specific to this type of activity. The curriculum consists of 4 modules of minimum 4 hours each, based on group work (ideation, brainstorming) and individual activities. With regard to the practical needs, the program should include:

- 1) a PREREQS module that would provide students with basic knowledge about web pages (types, trends, targets) and web texts; markup languages (html, xml...) and CMSs; current SEO practices; the role of CAT-tools and localization software in the translation of websites;
- 2) a PREPARATION module comprising analyses and research exercises of source keywords; target audience (specialists/non-specialists, young/old etc.); competitors’ choices and preferences; target keywords;
- 3) a PRACTICE module composed of creative writing and “trediting” exercises of style variation (writing for a company/customers); keyword alternation; cultural adaptation; character limitation and “tag-respect;”
- 4) a PERFORMANCE module based on simulations, group (ideation, brainstorming) and individual activities, e. g. research exercises to identify the highest searched and most lucrative keywords in the target market. This module also includes exploration of the potential for two-way communication offered by web 2.0 (blogs, social networks, forums etc.).

This practice-oriented training material, developed for (future) translators would not comprise much theory, but I am convinced that website translation can provide food for thought for both translation and terminology scholars. In the last part of this paper I will shortly present some theoretical conclusions we can draw from practical experiences of website translations.

#### 4. Theoretical Lessons from Website Translation

There is no doubt that website translation is one of the most dynamic sectors of the language industry, and activities devoted to website translation or localization will continue to grow and provide jobs for many translators for many years to come. The translation of web pages deserves indisputably the attention of translation scholars, inasmuch as they provide researchers with a large and ever growing corpus of authentic research material.

Practical examples of this article as well as EU translators' experiences taken from DGT's study all seem to prove that website translation can only be accounted for by a theoretical framework that takes into account the multisemiotic perspective of web texts, the role of localization software and CAT-tools extensively studied during the last 10-15 years (see Introduction), the intended users and the necessary linguistic and cultural adaptations to their needs, as well as the role search engines play in shaping source and target texts.

Apparently, traditional approaches should be reconsidered to integrate all these aspects. The authors of the DGT study suggest that "a functional approach ('skopos') to translation would seem appropriate for examining web translations" (DGT 2009: 6). Functional and skopos theories (Nord 1997; Vermeer 1996) focus on translation as a purposeful activity, on the intended readers and on text as the unit for functional equivalence, but as they were originally designed for monomodal (written) texts, they should be considerably reshaped to include the multisemiotic perspective of web texts. The necessary linguistic and cultural adaptations could be better accounted for by a process-centered theoretical approach that considers translation as a dynamic process of knowledge management (Lederer 2016), provided it takes into account distance/proximity parameters of expert–non-expert communication. And last but not least, an appropriate theoretical approach to website translation should absolutely integrate the role of search engines in shaping source and target web texts, by the terminological variations that they generate and that are worthy of interest for terminology scholars and theory.

In the past decades, traditional, normative approaches to terminology have been actively criticized by representatives of a so called "variationist" movement. French terminologist Gaudin claimed already in 1993 that it was time to focus on alternative terms and terminological variations, and instead of minimizing their importance and fighting against them, they should have been analyzed and explained (Gaudin 1993). Since around 2000, more and more scholars, among them practicing translators, have been interested, especially in French and Catalan speaking countries, in terminological variations and in what causes these types of variation. A series of socio- and pragma-terminological studies have researched extensively the use of alternative terms and synonyms in different text types (Freixa 2002 2006; Condamines 2010; Pelletier 2012), and have established typologies taking into account either the types of variations (graphic/orthographic; morpho-syntactic; lexical, etc.) or the reasons (dialectal, functional, interlinguistic, cognitive, diachronic etc.) for them. But to my knowledge, up to now, none of the studies have taken into consideration one of the apparently most efficient "motors" of terminological variations in our days: search engines that seem to generate a huge amount of term alternation in texts written for the web. I am strongly convinced that the specific needs of search engines generate dramatic changes in term treatment that not only (future) translators but also terminologists as well as translation scholars must absolutely be aware of.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The term *web translation*, conceived as a type of multimedia translation, was introduced by Gambier and Gottlieb (2001), but it is also widely used to refer to a web-based service that provides machine translation between two or more languages. In order to avoid ambiguities, I prefer and use in the present article the term “website translation” or the phrases “translation of websites”/“translation of web pages.” This distinction also permits to set aside much of the complex activity that “web translation” comprises, in addition to translating web pages, for the interviewed DGT “web translators:” e.g. the translation of online polls, consultations, data bases (registers), hotlines, software localisation, etc.
- <sup>2</sup> “[...] the word *genre* [...] can legitimately be applied in relation to web translation activity, as it can refer both to the translation of texts of a particular genre (texts written for the Internet environment) and a type of translation with special features connected to the form in which they are published and read” (DGT 2009: 7).
- <sup>3</sup> As defined by Esselink (2000: 1) “Localization is the translation and adaptation of a web product, which includes all related product documentation. The term ‘localisation’ is derived from the word ‘locale’, which traditionally means a small area or vicinity.” Localisation comprises thus the translation of the linguistic elements and all the necessary adaptations to ensure the success of the product in the new locale.
- <sup>4</sup> According to Gaudin (2003), a leading figure of the French variationist approach to terminology, in some specific areas, amongst which he mentions customer protection, the terms are not object to variation: *Il est évident qu’il existe tout un secteur de dénominations réglementaires qui ne peuvent connaître de variations: en matière de sécurité, de droit, de protection des consommateurs ou des citoyens* (Gaudin 2003: 179). Pelletier (2012), a French-Canadian proponent of the variationist approach, also refers to customer protection as an example for one-to-one term equivalences.
- <sup>5</sup> Search engine optimization places great value on a number of other features such as URLs, alt tags, integrated backlinks, the frequency of publishing and/or updating the website, etc. In this paper, we only concentrate on language-related factors of SEO that are more likely to concern translators.
- <sup>6</sup> For details and examples, see pages 25-37 of the DGT (2009) study about “localization.”
- <sup>7</sup> “Today, the Web Translation Unit spends a significant amount of time sorting out different kinds of software and systems” (DGT 2009: 22)
- <sup>8</sup> As one of our Hungarian interviewees remarked their CAT-tool sometimes proved to be a definite hindrance to crediting that would demand a more flexible treatment of segment limits.

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# MOTHER TONGUE IN TRANSLATION TRAINING

ANIKÓ MAKKOS

## 1. Introduction

To the best of my knowledge so far there has been no research which has tried to use the same set of criteria to evaluate mother tongue compositions and texts translated into the mother tongue produced by the same people and which has drawn conclusions concerning the relationships between these two different text production skills. Motivated by the fact that there has been very little work done in this field, the present research wants to record text production features based on a comparable corpus and hopes to make practical suggestions for improving mother tongue text production skills of translator trainees.

Thus the objective of the present study was to compare mother tongue writing and translation competence and performance of translator trainees by examining and analysing original mother tongue compositions and comparing them with texts translated into the mother tongue examined and analysed similarly. The main aim of the research was to map the two competencies mentioned above, explore their relationship and reveal the two performances through empirical research. I also wanted to discover if existing mother tongue writing skills have an influence on the quality of translations into the mother tongue, and if there are direct, quantifiable links between the problem areas explored by text analysis. Finally, I wanted to show how the results can be implemented in higher education generally and in translation training specifically.

## 2. Theoretical Background

The study falls within the scope of communicative, language and translation competencies, and is focused on mother tongue and translated text production. I discuss communicative and translation competencies as comparable entities since both of them are productive skills and require text production competence. If we examine mother tongue texts and texts translated into the mother tongue, the competencies in mother tongue and in target language text production coincide. The research hypothesises that translation is a special type of text production which is induced by another text and makes the source text accessible, that is why it is characterised by both reproductive and productive features, and its product functions as an independent text (cf. Neubert 1985, Jakobsen 1994, Williams 2005, Heltai 2014, Károly 2014).

As far as text production in the mother tongue is concerned, Hungarian educational documents, school-leaving exam tasks and skills development at secondary school are not well coordinated. The exam tasks in text production are outdated and not varied enough, and because of the exam's backwash effect, writing skills development is not versatile and not in the focus of Hungarian mother tongue education at secondary level.

As a consequence, state education is unable to prepare students fully for the challenges they face in higher education when it comes to writing. The lack of coordination also has a significant influence on the mother tongue text production skills of university students specialising in translation and interpreting, whose texts formed the material of my research.

In Hungary a BA degree is required to enter an MA course in translation and interpreting, and usually most of the translator students have a BA degree in a modern foreign language. That means they do not use their mother tongue during their BA studies, and do not get any formal education in their mother tongue. To be more precise, this second remark is true of any higher educational course in Hungary except for Hungarian major students. Consequently, the students' writing skills in the mother tongue do not improve, or might decline before they start their further studies in translation and interpreting.

The lack of high level mother tongue competencies of translator trainees is not an isolated phenomenon; we can read several studies describing similar problems faced by different training institutions (Lang 1994, Pollmann 2004, Kujamaki 2004) or showing that a significant amount of mother tongue training is a must and can lead to much better text production of translator trainees (Zlatnar Moe, Mikolič Južnič and Žigon 2015).

Nowadays, target language approaches are in focus in Translation Studies, which reflects the demand of the translation market; translators are increasingly faced with tasks which require the ability to finalise raw texts coming from different sources (e.g. machine translations). Due to this shift in everyday practices several scholars and professionals believe that the development of mother tongue competences should be more emphasised in translation training (cf. Ulrych 1995, Dróth 2011, Horváth 2011, Kovalik Deák 2013, Robin 2013).

According to Klaudy (2005) there are different contexts of translation evaluation (training, exam and professional translation situations), so the possibilities and procedures of quality assessment, focusing primarily on analytical approaches and translator training situations also vary to a great extent. As a result, earlier studies cannot be compared to each other because the evaluation situations and the aims of the evaluators have a significant effect on the methods used.

Due to the differences between the evaluations, both translation professionals and researchers look for more unified evaluation methods (cf. Dróth 2001, 2013; Conde 2012), and one possible solution could be the evaluation procedure for mother tongue texts introduced in this article.

The evaluation procedure I applied in the study is based on the assessment guide used for the school-leaving exam in Hungarian language and literature.<sup>1</sup> Besides the content, the main areas which are evaluated in the exam papers are: construction of the sentences and the text (structure, coherence, proportion), quality of the language (norm, style, tone, vocabulary), spelling and punctuation. Furthermore, I relied on Hungarian text production literature which introduces the possibilities of text production assessment in educational context (cf. Kernya 1992, Bárdos 2002, Molnár 2002, Nagy 2013).

The most detailed methodology of writing evaluation which the studies mentioned above also rely on was produced during the IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) research on written composition in 1984-85, the Hungarian results of which were summarised by Kádárné in 1990. The study assessed eight types of writing (five letters and three essays) according to the dimensions of overall

impression and six analytical aspects as content, organization, style, use of language, spelling and penmanship (cf. Gorman, Purves and Degenhart 1988). My evaluation model is also based on this methodology but is modified according to the needs of my study. For instance, some argue that spelling should be excluded or evaluated separately, but I insisted on its inclusion as I am convinced that the quality of a composition is highly influenced by these superficial errors. But then I did not examine either penmanship (for obvious reasons) or content, for it cannot be interpreted for translated texts. Finally, I find overall impression an important evaluation aspect, but I did not want to use it because of two reasons. On the one hand, detailed error analysis gives a more precise and objective result, on the other hand, under overall impression content is inevitably evaluated, which I wanted to avoid.

I uncover errors, not mistakes. I see these errors as inevitable attributes of the learning process (cf. Séguinot 1989) which are caused by lack of competence. I do not grade them because my aim is not to evaluate the texts but to determine the types and rates of errors.

### **3. Material Used in the Study, and Participants**

The texts forming the material of the empirical study belong to two corpora: the texts originally written in Hungarian make up the first corpus, and the texts translated from English into Hungarian make up the second corpus. The total number of words in the first corpus is 32,494, while in the second corpus the total number of words is 32,990. The proportion of the two corpora is 1.015, so their lengths are very similar, which makes them directly comparable. Each text was between 250 and 300 words in length.

None of the texts were specialised texts, since during the first year of MA studies students work with standard language in seminars teaching translation techniques. In my study I definitely wanted to exclude specialised vocabulary because the participants' lack of its knowledge may lead to distorted results. Accordingly, all the texts for translation belonged to standard language usage of educated people. Because mother tongue compositions had to meet the same requirements, the two comparable corpora were stylistically similar. However, the topics were different, as the Hungarian compositions were always structured essays expressing the writers' attitudes, opinions or arguments. Through this personal approach, I tried to assure spontaneity of the compositions and the students' positive disposition to share their thoughts.

Altogether there were 220 texts produced by 110 native Hungarian university students (one Hungarian composition and one translation by each) doing a translation and interpreting MA course in their first or second academic year with English as their language B and German or French as their language C. All of the students attended ten 45-minute lectures on Hungarian language usage problems in translation in the first semester of their studies and passed the related exam, but that was the only formal tuition in their mother tongue they received.

### **4. Methodology**

The study started with the selection and compilation of the texts belonging to the two corpora and continued with detailed error analysis. The classification of errors and the compilation of a final list of errors were based on a pilot study of the works of 25 transla-

tor trainees different from the ones who produced the 220 texts for the study. The groups and types of errors are summarised in Table 1.

Groups of errors (for both Hungarian compositions and translations)	Types of errors (17)
Vocabulary (4)	
	repetitions without good reason
	inadequate words
	wrong phrases
	inadequate style
Sentence structure (3)	
	ill-proportioned sentences
	incomplete structures
	wrong word order
Connectivity (4)	
	wrong or missing reference words
	wrong or missing articles
	wrong or missing linking words
	wrong concordance
Spelling (6)	
	misspelling of compound words
	misspelling of foreign words
	misspelling of proper names
	punctuation problems
	typing errors
	other

**Table 1.** Groups and types of errors identified in the texts

## 5. Results of the Study

### 5.1. Vocabulary

The students' vocabulary is not varied and rich enough, as the most typical error is repetition of words without a good reason. This indicates that it is difficult for the students to find a suitable synonym, although teachers of Hungarian language constantly focus on this problem as Hungarian readers are quite sensitive to repetition. This error is closely followed by words and phrases used incorrectly. The most apparent problem here is a superficial or vague knowledge of their meaning or usage which leads directly to confused wording. Examples are *a helyzet nem egyoldalú* (meaning: the **situation** is not one-sided), instead of *a vélemény nem egyoldalú* (meaning: the **view** is not one-sided), or *hangulatot ébreszt* (meaning: **raise** an atmosphere) instead of *hangulatot kelt* (meaning:

**make/create** an atmosphere), or *körülmények mellett* (meaning: **beside/next to** circumstances), instead of *körülmények között* (meaning: **in/under** circumstances). I recorded only a few classical errors of phrases like *újat húz valakivel* (*új* is new and *ujj* is finger), where the correct phrase would be *ujjat húz* (meaning: bid defiance), or mixing up words which are close in their forms, like *fáradtság-fáradtság* (*fáradtság* meaning tiredness and *fáradtság* meaning trouble). Most of the vocabulary errors belonged to the error categories mentioned above. Each composition contained on average 5 vocabulary errors, and each translation had 9.6. Arguably, secondary school education does not foster a wide vocabulary although it is needed in higher education, especially in translation training. However, the style of vocabulary was appropriate to the genres and functions of the texts, so mother tongue education seems to be successful in conveying formal register.

## 5.2. Connectivity

Establishing connectivity proved to be a more prominent problem than assumed earlier; Hungarian compositions contained an average of 3.3 errors, while translations contained an average of 5.4 errors of this type. Lack of connectivity is the second most frequent error type in translations, and the third most frequent error type in Hungarian compositions. For instance, reference words and conjunctions like *here, there, as, that* between clauses and sentences are often left out, definite articles are missing or indefinite articles are inserted when they are not needed, or referential linking words are mixed up (*ami/amely*). As a result, text components are connected more loosely than expected and necessary in written communication, and the logic of the text is more difficult to follow. This is typical of a situation in which the writers of the text cannot see their text from the viewpoint of the reader, so they are not able to see the gaps and inaccuracies which impede understanding. The students who produced the texts have not reached a level of awareness which would make it possible for them to take up the position of the reader (cf. Kellog 2008). This is due to the lack of firm knowledge and enough practice in writing, which makes it impossible or difficult for them to detect mistakes in their own texts.

Errors in agreement, especially in the person and the number of pronominal linking words are salient, too, and this may be due to the influence of spoken language on written text production. These types of mistakes are often found in long, structurally complex sentences which are difficult to follow.

## 5.3. Sentence Structure

Most syntactical problems, which did not prove to cause many errors (Hungarian compositions contained an average of 1.4 errors, while translations contained an average of 1.3 errors of this type), lead us again to the nature of spoken language: incomplete structures, overlong, simple sentences, complex and compound sentences consisting of too many clauses and wrong word order are among the most typical problems here. Some of the uncertainties of punctuation may also result from the vague knowledge of sentence structure, such as short parenthesis not separated by adequate punctuation marks, or accumulated adjectives not separated by commas according to the meaning of the noun structure. The students producing these texts generally do not exhibit a high level of structural awareness of their mother tongue. An interesting finding in this area

was that original mother tongue compositions contained 10% more errors of this type than translated texts. My understanding of this phenomenon is that the students had to make more decisions on their own as there was not given a structure to follow when they put their own sentences together.

#### 5.4. Spelling

Finally, spelling is not a fully developed skill of the students involved in the research although it is assumed to be by the time they take their school-leaving exam. The findings reflect the fact that spelling mistakes form the second biggest group of errors in Hungarian compositions and the third biggest group of errors in translations: an average of 4.8 and 4.7 mistakes in the two types of texts. Lack of knowledge is obvious as the number of misspelled words not indicated by the spell-checker is high in the texts, which were created with word processing software. It must be highlighted that when finalizing their texts, text producers cannot rely exclusively on the spell-checker, as its scope is limited. A similar problem is the spelling of compounds as one or more words, which is becoming a prevailing error in different printed texts, and which is common in the texts of translator trainees. The rate of typos is very low (4.8% and 5.8% of all spelling mistakes in original Hungarian texts and translations), so students must have been careful in this regard.

A second example from this area is the problem of punctuation. Commas are frequently left out between clauses or accumulated adjectives; furthermore, they are often placed wrongly or unnecessarily before linking words. Colons and semicolons are rarely used in places where they would be needed. Based on the results, the disregard of punctuation in the course of education and at the Hungarian language and literature written exams cannot be justified as misplaced or missing punctuation marks led to a substantial number of errors. As Hungarian spell-checkers cannot show the wrong positioning of commas, teaching materials should be changed to focus on this problem as well. In a wider sense our mother tongue education has to keep up with the changing social environment and demands. Texts are more often typed than handwritten and educational providers must ensure that they pay attention to this phenomenon.

#### 5.5. General Remarks

The overview table below shows the numeric features of the two corpora in a more comparable way, indicating how the areas examined relate to each other in percentages and in the actual number of errors found in the texts. Based on these figures we can state that the students' performance in spelling and sentence structure is the most balanced. These two parameters seem to be invariable no matter how the texts are produced—whether they are written originally in the mother tongue or translated into the mother tongue from a source text. Although vocabulary and connectivity errors are easier to avoid in the mother tongue, they are still responsible for a high percentage and number of inaccuracies.

	Vocabulary		Sentence structure		Connectivity		Spelling	
	%	No/ comp.	%	No/ comp.	%	No/ comp.	%	No/ comp.
Hungarian texts	34,3%	5	9,9%	1,4	22,9%	3,3	32,9%	4,8
Translated texts	45,5%	9,6	6,1%	1,3	25,9%	5,4	22,4%	4,7

**Table 2.** Percentage and number of errors per composition in the two text types and their division into main error categories

In brief, every second line of an average 26-line original Hungarian composition contained one error, which means 14.5 errors on average per composition. This statement relates to the type of creative writing that students produce at secondary level, where they arguably do not have to pay so much attention to the rather rigid rules of academic writing. However, in higher education writing is a tool for demonstrating professional knowledge and its imperfect use seriously influences the judgment of the content. Therefore, the text production problems discovered in the Hungarian compositions make successful learning in higher education more challenging or even impede studies which require frequent written text production.

To compare the quality of original mother tongue compositions with the quality of translated texts, we also have to look at the number of errors identified in the latter: this amounts to 21 on average (compared to 14.5 in the original compositions), which is 45% more than in the original Hungarian texts. Furthermore, based on Spearman's rank correlation there are statistically significant links between the types of errors found in the two text types concerning vocabulary, connectivity and spelling errors, and close to statistically significant correlations are revealed in the area of sentence structure.

Because of these links, mother tongue text production can rightly be considered a starting point for translation quality. According to the results, translated text production from a foreign language into the mother tongue can either build on or be built from mother tongue text production. Consequently, if we correct the imperfections of mother tongue text production, we can reasonably expect an improvement in the quality of translated texts.

## 6. Implications of the Study

The results of the study show that further development of text production competence in the mother tongue is necessary and this is particularly true of translation training. I find the level of mother tongue text production competence of translator and interpreter trainees problematic as these students must know and use their mother tongue as the prime target language of translation and interpreting proficiently during their studies and later in their profession.

At the present time, to get into higher education an advanced level school-leaving exam in Hungarian language and literature is a requirement only for students whose major will be Hungarian language and literature, so most students take the intermediate level exam and—according to their GCSE exam—possess an intermediate knowledge

of their mother tongue. It would be reasonable to require an advanced level GCSE exam in Hungarian language and literature to be able to start a translator and interpreter major.

The most surprising finding of the study is the high number of vocabulary errors, spelling and punctuation mistakes and the relatively high percentage of connectivity problems not only in the translations but in the mother tongue compositions as well. Judging from the text production performance of the students examined, I deem it necessary to expand mother tongue skills development into higher education. At best it should cover oral skills as well because these two text production competencies are interdependent. However, the present study attempted to give a picture of the developmental level of written text production only, so it cannot provide relevant information about oral production.

Concerning future translators and interpreters it is clear that they need more compulsory tuition in their mother tongue and special mother tongue writing development targeted at the problem areas which the study uncovered so that they can develop into confident professionals when it comes to mother tongue text production. It would also be important to map the mother tongue text production difficulties of all first year translator trainees at the beginning of their studies and offer special tuition. As the study shows, translator and interpreter training courses simply cannot avoid this developmental work.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> [http://dload.oktatas.educatio.hu/erettsegi/nyilvanos\\_anyagok\\_2018tavasz/magyar\\_melleklet\\_2018\\_maj.pdf](http://dload.oktatas.educatio.hu/erettsegi/nyilvanos_anyagok_2018tavasz/magyar_melleklet_2018_maj.pdf). Accessed May 15, 2018.

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# UNIVERSITY LECTURERS' TRANSLATION NEEDS IN CENTRAL MEXICO

KRISZTINA ZIMÁNYI, LUZ MARÍA MUÑOZ DE COTE AND JOHN O'SHEA

## 1. Introduction

For better or for worse, English has become the *de facto* language of communication in academic circles, bringing with it a long-coveted goal of approaching the elimination of linguistic boundaries between researchers on the one hand, while simultaneously creating socio-politico-economic boundaries between native and non-native-speaking scholars on the other. This paper details an effort to describe the situation at a central Mexican university with regard to the translation of academic material, either for classroom use or for publication in academic journals. The research was prompted by a combination of the ever more pressing demands of universities where tenured academics justify their positions by publishing a certain number of articles per year in indexed journals (which to a considerable degree means publishing in English), the need to communicate material published in English to groups without a firm grasp of the language, and the increasing and closely related pressure in non-Anglophone education systems to adopt a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach to many of its subjects, which, in the majority of cases, means teaching through the medium of English and which may involve professors having to translate their own research.

This necessarily means that many academics who have reached their positions for reasons unrelated to their command of English must, if they are to continue in those positions, either very rapidly acquire an advanced knowledge of the language, or, more likely, seek the aid of those who already possess such knowledge. While it would seem to be both to a university's advantage in terms of its prestige and simply fair to its non-linguist academics to institute some sort of system that would facilitate the publication of their research in English, it is far from clear how this is achieved, nor what the demand for such a service may be. It is this gap in knowledge that instigated the research project detailed below. As both members of the university staff and translators, the researchers were intrigued by the question of how the academic staff ultimately managed to fulfill academic expectations, both in relation to publication in English-language journals and the use of their own and other non-Anglophones' texts in class, specifically in terms of their need and use of translation services.

## 2. Justification for the Research: Power in Numbers

By the end of the twentieth century, according to several meta-scholars (see, for example, Ammon 2006 or Hamel 2007), the percentage of articles and theses or dissertations published in English increased to the extent that some estimate 80-90% of the output is now published in this language (van Weijen 2012: n.p.). This occurred first gradually

after the victory of the *Triple Entente*, then exponentially during the Cold War (Ferguson 2007: 12), and it is well documented that the academic publishing market and educational arena, far from being a level playing field, often favours native-English speakers from a Caucasian background (Drubin and Kellog 2012, Huttner-Koros and Perera 2016, Lobachev 2008, Paasi 2005, Perera 2011). As a result, countless non-native English speakers (NNES) are required to publish in academic English—and the numbers affected are far from insignificant.

China and India, the two most populous countries on the planet, have delivered a great share of the academic output over the last two decades, with China in particular contributing to the scholarly production. Young Asian scholars are also making a mark abroad: based on US National Science Foundation figures, Montgomery writes that, by 2009, “foreign students, especially those from China and India, earned no less than 33% of all doctoral degrees granted by US institutions in the sciences and 57% in engineering” (2009: 4). According to more recent figures, the number of international, and especially Asian, students is steadily rising, and for the period 1993-2013 show that the top four countries (China, India, South Korea and Taiwan) account for 57% of the temporary visas issued to international students (National Science Board, 2016). However, as Montgomery remarks, this does not convert into an increase in the number of publications in any of the languages spoken in these Asian countries. In fact, the case is quite the contrary. In 2010, Cyranoski reported that “In November 2009, scientists from China became the second-most prolific publishers of scientific articles in international scientific journals,” but that many of the journals published in China have been “switching to publishing in English to increase their impact factors, and more than 200 English-language science and technology journals are now based in China” (2010: 261).

As a substantial proportion of the articles published in English is written by NNES, apart from the deterioration of scientific language in the vernacular (Bianco 2007), linguistic expression in English may suffer from one of the following afflictions: “journals that receive more manuscripts than they can process may immediately reject poorly written ones without evaluating the science” (Benson et al. 2010: 189); due to the preference for publishing in English, the scientific vernacular in local national languages is diluted, as perhaps is happening in Scandinavia (Kuteeva, 2015); the English used by NNES perpetuates new patterns of language use, mostly at the level of the lexicon (Ädel and Erman 2012). Although “poor English” alone does not seem to be a determining factor regarding the acceptance or rejection of submissions (Bocanegra-Valle 2015, Curry and Lillis 2013, Lillis and Curry 2015, Paltridge 2017), it does not take the edge out of the peer reviewers’ comments (Majumder 2016). Publishers also actively encourage authors to “have their texts proofread” before submission as well as expect peer reviewers to include linguistic expression among their evaluation criteria (Elsevier 2017, Jones 2017). Fortunately, there are some welcome exceptions, such as the publishers of *Ecology and Evolution*, who recommend to their peer reviewers to be “more lenient, however, with inexperienced authors or someone who does not have English as their first language” (British Ecological Society 2013: 32).

Undeniably, this is an international phenomenon, with large populations of scholars in Europe, Latin-America, Asia and Africa that are negatively affected and evidently disadvantaged by this development. NNES academics are left with a variety of choices that include: writing the article in their native language and having it translated, ideally

by someone who is not only a trained translator but also has subject knowledge and/or a wide range of translation competences (Hurtado Albir 2017, Pym 2003); writing the article in their native language and translating it themselves; writing the article in English and having someone to edit and proofread it; or writing the article in English and sending it without any intervention from a native English speaker (see, for example, the Taylor and Francis Editing Services).

### 3. Context

In our particular case, we became interested in the translation needs of the lecturers working at the University of Guanajuato, a large public institution in Central Mexico with four campuses: Guanajuato, the State capital; León, the biggest city in the State; a campus sharing locations between the towns of Irapuato and Salamanca; and, finally, another between the towns of Celaya and Salvatierra. These are further organized into Divisions—essentially the equivalent of Faculties at other universities—based on the interests of the catchment area of each campus. These Divisions, in turn, contain various Departments that offer both undergraduate and sometimes postgraduate programs. At the time of the research, the University employed 840 full-time lecturers. However, we were unable to obtain information regarding the number of part-time or contract researchers who were working at the four campuses. It is important to note that full-time and part-time tenured lecturers, that is, those with contracts similar to indefinite employment, enjoy, for example, health care benefits and greater job security, that are unavailable to lecturers on part-time temporary contracts.

Full-time tenured lecturers in Mexico are often urged to join the National System of Researchers (or SNI, after its acronym in Spanish) which brings prestige to their university, and, in turn, can be converted into financial gains both at an individual and at an institutional level. When distributing funding, for example, preference is given to members. During the initial selection and periodic re-approval processes, the most sought-after “products” are articles published in peer-reviewed, indexed international journals, preferably with a high impact factor, which in almost every field means publishing in English. Despite the recent efforts on the part of the Mexican federal government and the geographical proximity to the key actor on the academic publishing market, the level of written academic English of Mexican scholars cannot compete with that of their Anglophone colleagues. As a result, they often need assistance with publishing their articles, either in the form of editing and proofreading, or often even translating entire contributions.

### 4. Methodology

Bearing in mind the international perspective and our own context, we set out to explore the translation needs of tenured lecturers at the University and to find out if either tenured or even part-time lecturers would be interested in engaging in translation in their own field. This double-prong approach arose from two related research projects we were involved in at the time, one on the general state of affairs of translation in the State of Guanajuato and the other a feasibility study on establishing a diploma course in translation that we were specifically requested to carry out by the faculty council.<sup>1</sup> The

twofold nature of our enquiries influenced the research design as well as our hypotheses, which we construed in four different strands: first, we anticipated that the most common language combination would be Spanish-English; second, we expected to find that full-time lecturers would require translation and/or editing services mostly for their articles; third, we assumed that natural science lecturers may be more inclined to work directly in English and only require editing services, while lecturers in other sciences may ask for full translation services, as their second language may be a language other than English; finally, we envisaged that part-time lecturers may become involved in specialized translation as an alternative to their teaching activities, especially considering the difficulty in obtaining tenure.

Given our principal interest regarding the translation needs of lecturers at the University of Guanajuato, our project evidently falls into the participant-oriented category as established by Saldanha and O'Brien (2013) and we chose to apply an online questionnaire. In an effort to increase response rates, we followed Langdridge and Hagger-Johnson's advice (2009) and tried to keep the questionnaire as short as possible and use a relatively conservative layout. For ethical reasons, we included a short disclaimer in the heading of the questionnaire and intended to aim for validity in trying to elicit answers (for examples, in questions 2, 5 and 6 below) that would corroborate the responses across the questionnaire as well as use a variety of responses, including Likert scales, open-ended questions or closed multiple options (Saldanha and O'Brien 2013).

We designed a ten-question survey using SurveyMonkey (Translation Research Group 2016), as follows:

1. Indicate your affiliation and field of interest within the University.
2. Regarding your own field, what types of translation do you require? (with the following multiple options: articles, research reports, essays, theses, other publications, course descriptions, none of the above)
3. On average, how many translations do you require a year?
4. In what language pairs?
5. Have you ever used the services of a professional translator or a translation software? (multiple options: yes, through the office of the Director for Research and Postgraduate Support (DAIP for its acronym in Spanish); a private translator; you translated the publication yourself with the aid of a native speaker; Google translator; none of the above)
6. If you required reviews, editing and correction, by what means? (multiple options: a professional translator, peer assistance; CAT tools; online services; none of the above)
7. On a scale of 1 to 5, how satisfied were you with the translation of your texts?
8. Would you consider taking part in a Diploma in Translation if it were offered by the University?
9. Based on your experience, would you consider that translators with no formal training who are currently offering their services should take a course?
10. What modality do you think would be most suitable for the Diploma course? (options: face-to-face, online, mixed modality)

The link to the online survey was distributed by the Office of the DAIP by email among the total tenured-lecturer population of 840 potential participants and to the wider uni-

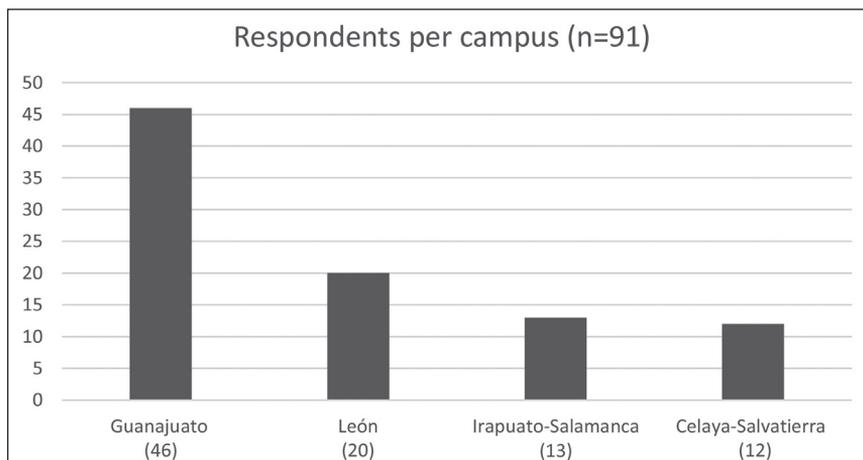
versity community on all four campuses through the newsletter of the same office. As such, the sampling method could be considered purposive with an element of convenience and volunteer sampling (Mellinger and Hanson 2017). In the following section, we provide our analysis of the data collected through these questionnaires. It should be noted that we approached the process of data analysis through a critical lens, whereby we as a group drew on our own contextual knowledge and experience. Furthermore, we considered it essential to maintain an open mind as to how the data collection instrument could be improved in the future.

## 5. Results and Analysis

Contrary to our expectations, no part-time lecturers who could potentially diversify into specialized translation participated, and only full-time tenured lecturers took part in the survey and shared their views regarding translation. Within this group, out of the 840 potential participants at the time of the data collection, we received 92 responses, which corresponds to 10.95% of this very clearly defined population. On the following pages, we provide an analysis of their responses in three sections: first, we will draw up a more detailed participant profile; second, we will evaluate the responses with regard to the participants' translation needs and previous experience of translators' work; and third, we will give a brief overview of their opinions as regards the proposed diploma course in translation, bearing in mind that the final questions were primarily aimed at part-time lecturers and not the respondents who participated in the survey in the end.

### 5.1. Participants' Profile

As one of the respondents declined to provide information on their place of work or area of interest, a total of  $n=91$  can be analyzed for the first question. The numbers in Figure 1 represent the distribution of the respondents according to the Campus they work on, with 46 participants from Campus Guanajuato, 20 from León, 13 from Irapuato-Salamanca, and 12 from Celaya-Salvatierra. However, as we were unable to obtain the official figures for the percentage of full-time tenured lecturers for each campus, we are unable to confirm whether these numbers are proportionate to the campus populations.



**Figure 1.** The participants' Campus affiliation

When trying to analyze the second part of the responses given to the first question, we encountered further difficulties. Due to the flexibility that the Academic Statutes of the University of Guanajuato (Universidad de Guanajuato n.d.) give to each campus, historically, various areas of science have been grouped together, depending on the potential student population and the expertise of the lecturers working at the particular Campus at the time of changing over to a campus-based structure a decade ago. This resulted in the formation of so-called Divisions, the equivalent of faculties, with overlapping composition across the Campuses, for example, Health Sciences on Campus León compared to Health Sciences and Engineering on Campus Irapuato-Salamanca and Engineering on Campus Guanajuato, or, to give another example, Social Sciences and Humanities both on Campus Guanajuato and Campus León in contrast with Social and Administrative Sciences on Campus Celaya-Salvatierra again, compared to Economic and Administrative Sciences on Campus Guanajuato. This leaves Life Sciences on Campus Irapuato-Salamanca, Architecture, Art and Design as well as Law, Politics and Government and finally Natural and Exact Sciences on Campus Guanajuato as the only distinctly defined entities, making the identification and analysis of the results rather complicated.

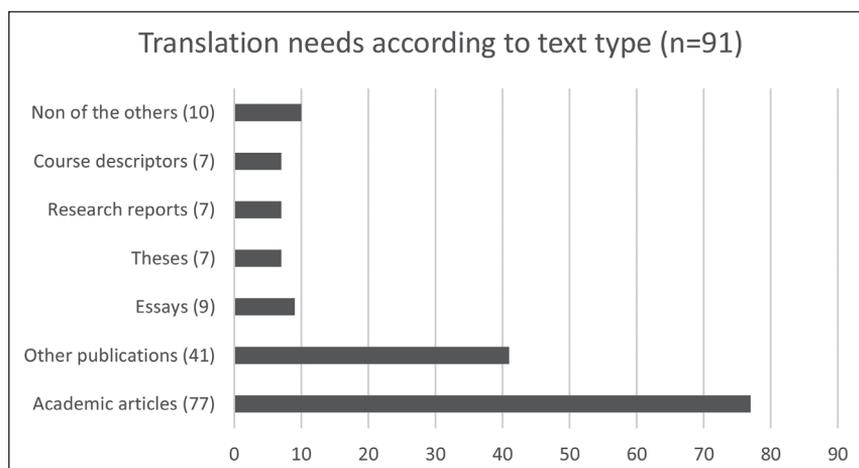
Notwithstanding this, classifying the Divisions under a unifying umbrella, we can see certain tendencies among the participants. The large majority belong to hard science and engineering Divisions, followed by social sciences, humanities and administration, and, in third place, health and related sciences, with arts and law being represented by the lowest figures.

Upon further probing, the correlations become even more complicated, as the Departments within the Divisions also overlap regarding their disciplinary definitions. In addition, in terms of their own disciplines, the lecturers provided designations from very generic terms, such as "transdisciplinary studies," "medicine" or "economics," to very specific areas that could rather be considered lines of research, such as "environmental toxicology," "molecular epidemiology," "oxidative stress," "the history of the religious imagination," "simulation of chemical processes," "thermofluids," "electoral processes" or "extragalactic astrophysics," alongside some mid-range answers, such as "ethnomusi-

cology,” “art history,” “organizational development,” “applied linguistics,” “sociology” “organizational administration systems,” “visual arts,” “statistics,” “pharmacobiology,” “cosmology,” “agroindustrial engineering,” “metallurgy,” “constitutional law” or “clinical psychology,” that were more like what we had expected.

## 5.2. The Participants' Translation Needs and Their Experience Regarding Translation

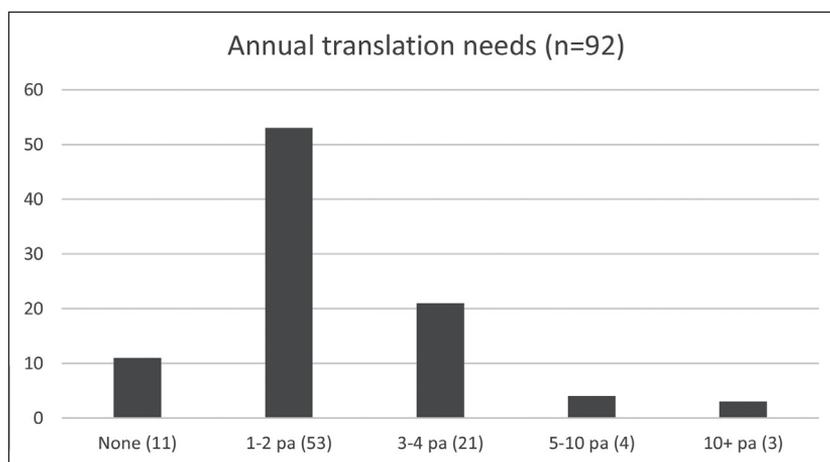
Moving on from the participants' profile to discuss their translation needs, first we were interested in the kind of texts they needed to have translated, and specifically whether these were source texts they required in Spanish or their own academic output produced in Spanish to be translated into other languages, primarily English. At this stage, we gave them a series of options from which they could select more than one. Unsurprisingly, we identified that among the 91 participants who replied to the question (see Figure 2), the translation of academic articles is represented with highest percentage of 84.62% (n=77). The category “other publications” came second with 45.05% (n=41), where two respondents mentioned specific requirements in the optional comment field, which include translation and subtitling of videos in musicology and conference presentations in political sciences. Although at this stage we had not specifically asked about who carried out the translations, in the same comment section, two lecturers in astronomy and one in pharmacology indicated that they write their articles in English and only need editorial and proofreading support, which partially confirmed one of our hypotheses as regards the different kinds of assistance lecturers might need. The other options received far fewer responses, with none of the above at 10.99% (n=10), essays at 9.89% (n=9), and, finally, theses, research reports and course descriptions all at 7.69% (n=7).



**Figure 2.** Translation needs by text type

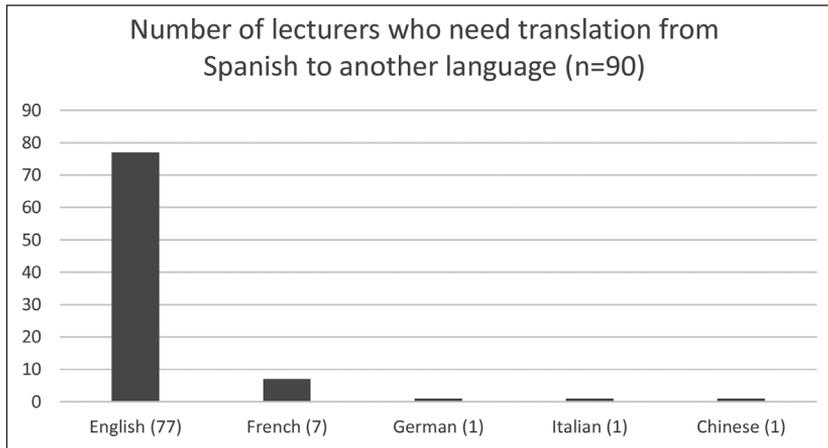
The following question, concerning the annual need for translations among the respondents, was equally open in the sense that the figure could refer to the translation of both the respondents' academic production and other sources they may require to be translated for research or educational purposes (see Figure 3). The values of one or two transla-

tions per year at 57.61% (n=53) and three or four translations a year at 22.83% (n=21) would seem to correspond to the personal academic output, while the annual translation figures of five to ten at 4.35% (n=4) or more than 10 at 3.26% (n=3) perhaps refer to the exclusive availability of academic texts in other languages that the lecturers translate for use in their own projects or their classrooms. 11.96% (n=11) of the 92 respondents to this question answered that they did not require any translation, which confirms the results of the previous question.



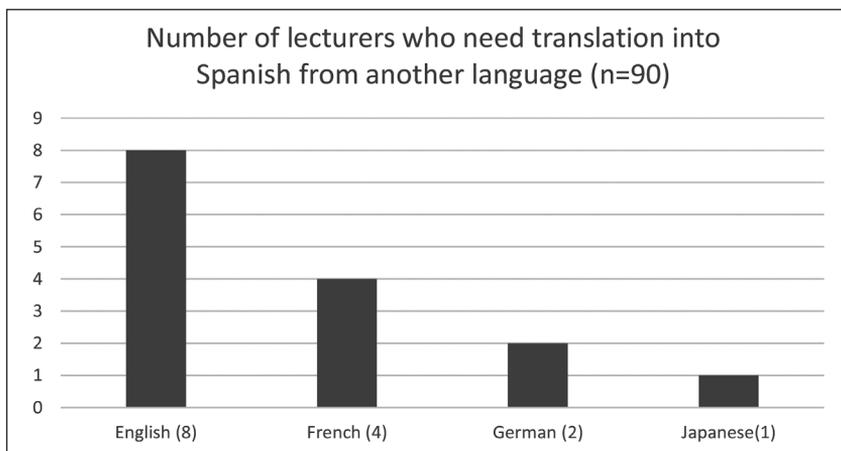
**Figure 3.** Number of translations required per year

In terms of the language pairs and direction shown in Figure 4a, the results seem to correlate with Question 2 on the source text types, given that the 85.56% (n=77) of the 90 valid responses, almost exactly corresponds to the percentage of the participants who need “articles” to be translated. This would seem to suggest that the articles in question refer to their own work that they wish to publish in English. Similarly, the fact that 10% (n=9) of the respondents answered that they did not need any translation at all, coincides with the 10.99% (n=10) who gave a similar response to Question 2 concerning the type of text which they needed translated as well as the 11.96% (n=11) who confirmed they needed no translation at all in Question 3. This lends a certain validity to the survey, as “the results match as closely as possible the real state of the world” (Saldanha and O’Brien 2013: 28). It also confirms our hypotheses, whereby we assumed that, firstly, the lecturers at the University of Guanajuato have availed themselves of different kinds of translation services (including no translation, self-translation, working with translators, working with proofreader-editors), secondly, the highest proportion have used the services of translators rather than the other three categories; that is, few of them write their own articles in English or translate them from Spanish into English themselves or avail themselves of editing services only.



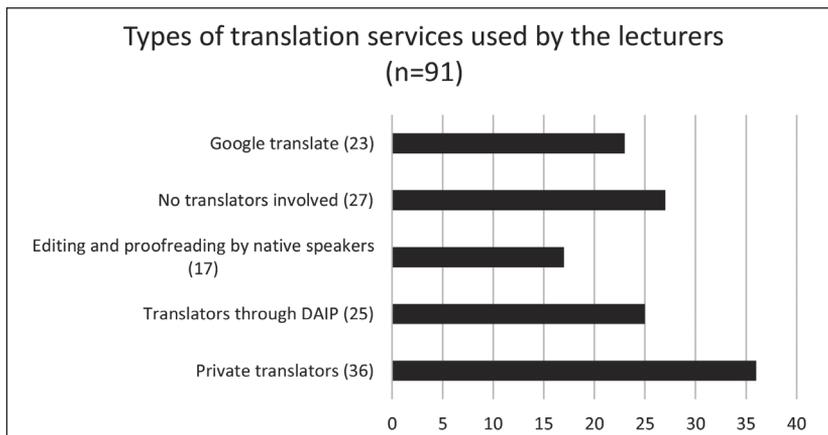
**Figure 4a.** Translation needs per language pairs with Spanish as ST

Furthermore, it appears that there is a limited number of lecturers who require texts to be translated into languages other than English, with French being the most popular target language at 7.78% (n=7), followed by German and Italian both at 1.1% (n=1). As regards direct translation into Spanish from other languages, English is still in the lead with 8.89% (n=8), French once again coming second with 4.44% (n=4), German third with 2.22% (n=2) and Japanese with 1.11% (n=1). In the optional comment section, language pairs that were not envisaged during the time of the design of the survey were also mentioned, including Portuguese to Spanish and Latin to Spanish in history and Spanish to Chinese in administrative sciences. These perhaps more unusual necessities probably arise from field-specific interests, for example, a historian may read secondary literature published in Portuguese. or due to the fact that academic publishing is on the increase in China, as mentioned above. It is noteworthy that, once again, two lecturers in astronomy and one in economics commented that they needed editing and proofreading services rather than translation.



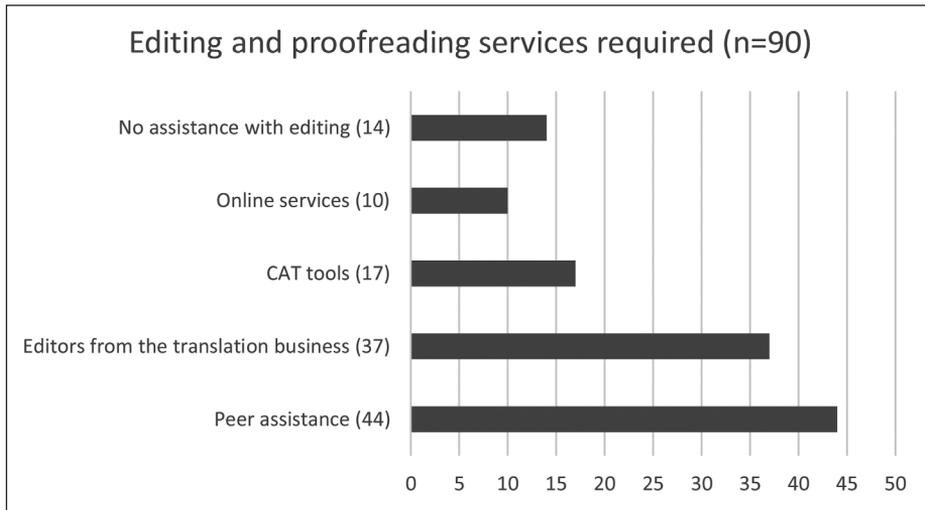
**Figure 4b.** Translation needs per language pairs with Spanish as TT

Trying to delve deeper into the nature of translation services the respondents have used, we provided them with five options as to who carries out the translation. There is an obvious overlap between certain responses; in other words, 40% of the respondents chose more than one possible answer. One of the most surprising results is, perhaps, that 29.67% (n=27) of the 91 respondents who answered the question selected the “none of the above” option, which seems to contradict the previously established pattern of about 10-11% who do not require translation services, presumably because they either write their articles in English or they translate them themselves. 18.68% (n=17) specified that although they translate themselves, they also ask for help from native speakers of the language of publication. In addition, 39.56% (n=36) employ the services of private translators, while 27.47% (n=25) contact the office of the DAIP that officially oversees the translations within the university. Unfortunately, neither of these latter options guarantees that the assignment will end up in the hands of a trained and professional translator, since the employment and vetting procedures the department uses are not overseen by a language professional and are, in essence, a matter of good faith. Finally, it is rather alarming that 25.27% (n=23) seem to use Google Translate, especially as it is unclear whether they later request assistance from a proofreader-editor or not. However, this strategy is reportedly not uncommon in other countries, either (Gnutzman, Jackisch and Rabe 2015).



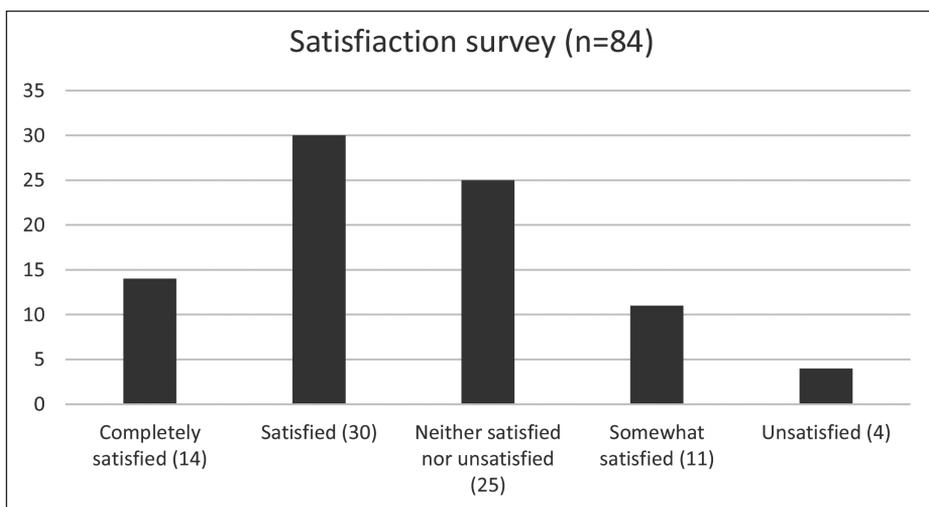
**Figure 5.** Types of translators

As we have already seen in the answers given to other questions, a substantial majority of the survey participants benefited from the editing and proofreading of their articles by somebody else (see Figure 6.). Almost half of the 90 respondents to this question 48.89% (n=44) said they have asked a peer to help with the final version of their publications. Meanwhile, 41.11% (n=37) have used the services of people working in the translation business. Insofar as CAT tools are concerned, 18.89% (n=17) reported to have used electronic tools, while 11.11% (n=10) online services, which may include dictionaries, glossaries, field-specific texts and, as we can gather from the answers to the previous question, online translation servers. A somewhat unexpected 15.56% (n=14) claimed not to have used any kind of assistance with the translations. The four qualitative observations do not reveal any further detail.



**Figure 6.** Editing and / or proofreading services used

Considering the 10% of the respondents who consistently indicated that they were not using translation services, as they wrote or translated their articles themselves, it is not surprising that almost 10% of all the participants declined to answer the questions regarding the evaluation of such services. The 84 valid answers displayed in Figure 7. were more or less distributed along a bell curve with a leaning towards the more satisfied end of the scale. Only 4.76% (n=4) replied “unsatisfied” and 13.10% (n=11) “somewhat satisfied.” Around a third were “neither satisfied nor unsatisfied” (29.76% (n=25)) or “satisfied” (35.71 (n=30)), while 16.67% (n=14) expressed that they were “completely satisfied” with the services.



**Figure 7.** Evaluation of translation services

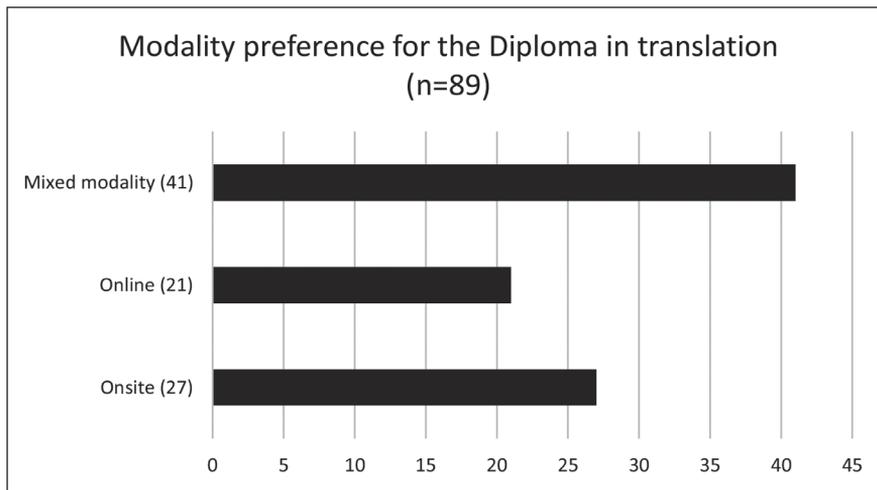
However, the comments section nuances the numeric results. One of the respondents who works on a campus an hour's drive away from the office of the DAIP, observed that their online registration service was not always available. In more substantive comments, three lecturers who work in hard sciences reflected that in their experience the translated documents lacked the scientific precision of the original. Specifically, one lecturer in medical sciences stated that the translated texts tend to be more generic and less field-specific, while an astronomer explained that translators cannot manage technical terminology. Perhaps for the same reason, a lecturer in engineering expressed that he preferred to do the technical translations himself. In comparison, and quite interestingly, a lecturer working in visual arts, apparently sensitive to ethical issues regarding translation, alluded to the translators' visibility (Venuti 1995) by sharing his concern that there is no credit given to the translator, which the respondent finds misleading, as the reader may be led to believe that the writer is also the translator or that s/he wrote the work in the language of presentation.

Given that the penultimate question bears a closer relation to the participants' assessment of the quality of translation they have seen, we are going to discuss these results before moving on to exploring their interest in a translation course. Out of the 86 respondents to this question, 82.55% (n=71) clearly identified the need for professional development for working translators. Additionally, the more explicit answers correspond to previous commentary on the translator's lack of terminological knowledge in natural sciences. For example, a lecturer in pharmacy and another one in civil engineering highlighted the need for subject specialization. A participant from the field of astronomy echoed the peer reviewers' comments discussed above and lamented the lowering of the standards of English in scientific journals. Finally, a lecturer in applied linguistics suggested that a diploma course is not enough, which would seem to suggest that completing a master's degree would be more appropriate for professional translators.

### 5.3. The Participants' Interest in a Diploma in Translation

In the third section of the survey, our intention was to discover if the participants would be interested in taking a diploma course in translation themselves. At first sight, almost two thirds, 61.96% (n=57) were in favor and 38.04% (n=35) were certain that they had no professional or personal interest in such an undertaking. However, a closer look at their comments reveal that the answers fall into three categories. First, a considerable number of the participants mentioned that they would be interested and could benefit from such a course because it would prepare them to translate and/or write their own articles. Second, some of them are under the misconception that a translation course would help them improve their level of English. While this may well be the case, the focus and aim of a translation course in a diploma context is to provide the students with profession-specific competences, and they are expected to already have sufficient knowledge of the languages involved. Nevertheless, these answers have uncovered another potential area of opportunity in helping lecturers with their academic English. Furthermore, some seem to believe that they could save money and time by completing the translations themselves.

Finally, with regard to the modality in which a diploma in translation could or should be offered, out of the 89 respondents who shared their view, 30.34% (n=27) would prefer face-to-face, 23.60% (n=21) believe it would be best imparted online, while 46.07% (n=41) thought that a mixed-modality would be most befitting.



**Figure 8.** Preferred modality of a diploma in translation

While this does not have an immediate implication in terms of course structure, as mixed-modality is only being explored as an option at the University of Guanajuato, this may be useful to consider in the future.

## 6. Conclusion

The motivation for the research was based on two objectives: firstly, to obtain a general picture of the need for translation and editing services among the university community and, thus, contribute to the rationale for opening a course aimed at producing professionals capable of supplying this need; secondly, to investigate whether any of the academics felt that they might benefit from a course in translation methodology themselves, either to further their careers in their particular area of research or to diversify into translation as an additional source of income. We were surprised to find that not one of the respondents fell into our anticipated category of part-timers with aspirations to diversify. In fact, only full-timers took the time to respond, something which may indicate their greater investment in participating in institutional practices of this kind, although the overall response rate was, in any case, not as high as we had hoped, something which will have to be remedied in any subsequent research.

Nevertheless, the responses received clearly demonstrate an overall need for aid in preparing texts for publication in foreign languages that ranges from simple proofreading to full translation. Furthermore, it appears that currently there is no mechanism within the institution for supplying this need in any consistent fashion, and that some academics even avoid using the means that do exist. As expected, the principal need is for English language texts, due to its status as the academic *lingua franca*, and nearly 85% of the texts requiring translation were articles for publication. However, a significant number of academics—principally those involved in hard sciences—mentioned that the technicalities of their disciplines were often beyond translators' capabilities, resulting in a tendency to "fudge" their renderings in such a way as to fall into inaccuracy. These

scientists thus prefer to write their research up in English themselves and then, perhaps, look for a proofreader. The indications here are clear for any fully-rounded course for translators as regards both specialized terminology and proof-reading techniques.

Outside the hard sciences, the tendency is to write in Spanish and then seek a translator, with whom the overall level of satisfaction was moderate to high. However, owing to our wish to keep the questionnaire as simple as possible in order to encourage responses, there is no data as to what this satisfaction is based on, apart from the supposition that their articles were accepted for publication, which is not in itself an indication of linguistic quality, making this an area that may be fruitful for subsequent research. Notwithstanding this, many respondents also recognized the need for specialist professional translators with credentials up to postgraduate levels, perhaps mirroring the respondents' own criteria for academic trustworthiness, another interesting avenue of research.

The overall results of the survey create a picture of a situation that is diverse to the point of confusion and one that is clearly in need of fixing if the university and its academics are to compete in the international marketplace. Among the options to remedy the situation, the university does have programs in place to improve the English of its academics, and one possibility might be to impose a language qualification on future academic applicants. However, neither of these seems practicable, simply because people's second-language capabilities are not necessarily a reflection of their other talents. A better solution, we believe, is to select and train talented linguists and/or subject experts who can then serve as an aid to the dissemination of specialist knowledge. This research has shown that the demand for such people exists within this university and that the institution can only benefit by directing resources to this area. We are confident that, through wider research based on the instrument developed here, a similar situation can be demonstrated throughout higher education institutions in Mexico and beyond.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Projects titled "Estudio de factibilidad: servicios, formación e investigación de traducción en Guanajuato" (SAD-229/2015) ["Feasibility study: translation services, training and research in Guanajuato] and "Formación y desarrollo profesional en la traducción en la Universidad de Guanajuato" (SAD-307/16) ["Translation training and professional development at the University of Guanajuato] approved by the Divisional Council of the Division of Social Sciences and Humanities, Campus Guanajuato, University of Guanajuato. Research group members: Hilda Karina Caselis Ramírez, Luz María Muñoz de Cote, John O'Shea, Christof Sulzer and Krisztina Zimányi.

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**PART TWO:  
TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING RESEARCH**



# SINGABILITY IN OPERA TRANSLATION: SEVEN TRANSLATIONS INTO HUNGARIAN OF MOZART–DA PONTE’S *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO*

GYÖNGYVÉR BOZSIK

## 1. Opera: Music and Text Combined

According to the German philosopher Gadamer (2007), opera is “primarily an attempt to preserve Greek tragedy for the modern Christian and humanist world by reviving it” (Gadamer 2007: 29, my translation). This description might sound surprising, but the roots of opera are closely linked to ancient Greek tragedy. Linguistically, opera is a multi-semiotic and multimodal genre, meaning that during a performance, verbal, non-verbal, visual and auditory channels are used to convey the message to the audience through various sign systems.

Although this genre is now known as opera, at its outset (prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century) nobody referred to it as such. Even during Monteverdi’s lifetime it was referred to as a ‘tale with music.’ The word *opera* has been in use only since 1639 (Eősze 1961), and derives from the expression *opera in musica*, meaning ‘work in music’ (Várnai 1975).

Most people are of the opinion that—as opera is a classical musical genre—the music should take precedence over the lyrics, and the text is nothing but an obligatory supplement. This is a view which ought to be challenged: good music is not enough for an opera, a high quality libretto is also an integral, vital element, and just as important as the music. “Music conveys the message intoned further by the text; it expresses everything that cannot be put into words” (Baranyi 1995: 9, my translation). However, one should not conclude from this that opera is an ‘ordinary’ play with singing instead of speaking. In an opera the emphasis is not on the logical conveyance of information, but rather on conveying emotions and ideas deeply rooted in the soul.

In order to convey the message of an opera to the audience, it is of vital importance that both music and text co-exist in some form of symbiosis; i.e. the music should support the lyrics, and vice versa. Though such a harmony between music and text usually exists in the original, this is not necessarily the case in translated, so-called singing (or singable) versions.

This can be explained by linguistic variation. Languages differ in their phonology, syntactic structure, vocabulary, literary history and prosody (Raffel 1988). For the purposes of singing translations, the phonological and prosodic differences are even more vital than in a straightforward prose text, since if the prosody, i.e. the syllabic rhythm (Hall 1964) of the target language text is not reflected in the musical setting of the words (Apter and Herman 2016), the audience will sense a continual disconnect between music and text.

## 2. Aims and Objectives

Although researchers and linguists with an interest in audiovisual translation began investigating the field of opera translation long ago, the majority began by focusing only on textual aspects. The first really valuable study on the connection between singability and opera translation was written by Ronnie Apter (1985), who pointed out potential technical problems which might arise from inappropriately translating singing versions for operas. Studies on the translation of music, songs and operas have recently become more popular among researchers, and some truly ground-breaking works have been published (Low 2017, Apter and Herman 2016, Minors 2012, and Susam-Saraeva 2014). These publications investigate in great detail a range of areas which had previously been neglected, such as the criteria of songs to be sung to existing tunes, the consideration of rhythm and rhyme, musical and verbal constraints, and matching the right words with the rights notes, to mention but a few.

In this paper my aim is to discuss certain central aspects of singability based on my experience as an opera singer, then move on to the following research questions: Which aspects of singability are usually taken into consideration by translators of singing translations? When analysing the rewritten (modified) versions of already existing translations, what kind of improvements (if any) can be detected from the viewpoint of singability? According to Peter Low (2005) the process of translating sung words is governed by five main criteria: singability, sense, naturalness, rhythm, and rhyme. Of these, I will focus on singability and rhythm (which, to my understanding, are both closely related to performability, and on how important it is for the singer to make his/her performance intelligible).

Through the analysis of various translated versions of the same opera, this study aims to point out why both targeted training and a conscious, profound knowledge of the opera's music and genre are necessary for translators if they are to produce enjoyable, singable and comprehensible texts in the target language.

## 3. Research Corpus

The libretto of Mozart and Da Ponte's *The Marriage of Figaro*, or to be more precise its various Hungarian translations, are the focal point of my study. The corpus (or rather sub-corpora) of the research consists of the following translations:

1. Ferenc Ney (1858; known under the title of *Figaro lakodalma* (*The Wedding of Figaro*); singing translation)
2. Dezső Vidor (1926; singing translation)
3. Unknown translator, labelled: Ney\_2 (~1935-40; singing translation)
4. Ágnes Romhányi (1987; singing translation, on the basis of Vidor's version)
5. Unknown translator, labelled: Dallos\_1 (unknown date; singing translation, on the basis of Vidor's version)
6. Unknown translator, labelled: Dallos\_2 (unknown date; singing translation, on the basis of Vidor's version)
7. Unknown translator, labelled: Köteles (unknown date; singing translation, on the basis of Vidor's version)

In order to identify the various versions, I use labels that clearly refer to the translator (and the type of translation, if necessary), or, in the case of an unknown translator, the musical score containing the text.

This study is part of a more extensive one that is planned to analyse every scene of the opera. However, as besides the musical analysis the complete project also involves a linguistic one (which is much more complicated to carry out than the musical part), the current paper only focuses on a single scene (Act 1 Scene 1) to give an insight into the project methodology.

Recitatives are not considered in the musical analysis, only in the linguistic one (not discussed herein), because their lines are sung with a rhythmically free vocal style trying to imitate the natural inflections of speech, thus the analysis of singability in their case would provide misleading results.

#### 4. Method of Musical Analysis

Musical analysis of the corpus was conducted in several steps. The preparatory stage was the most time-consuming part of the analysis. During preparation the texts (and words) had to be broken down into syllables and matched with the appropriate musical sounds. The resulting tables include the musical notes in their order of appearance (column 1), and the seven singing texts (columns 2-8) (plus the Italian original in column 9) broken down into syllables, showing line by line which syllable is sung to a certain musical sound. (For the identification of musical notes the 12-tone scale letter notation was used. In the Tables **a** stands for the concert pitch, which in the English notation system is usually referred to as **A4**. The numbers behind the letters show the octave interval(s) compared to their numberless equivalent; e.g. there is an octave interval between **c** and **c1**.)

Note	Ney	Ney_2	Vidor	Dallos_1	Dallos_2	Kóteles	Romhányi	Italian original
<b>a</b>	ez	há-	öt	har-	más-	más-	har-	Cin-
<b>d</b>	öt	rom	ez	minc	fél	fél	minc	que
<b>h</b>	ez	öt	ez	negy-	há-	há-	negy-	die-
<b>g</b>	tíz	hat	tíz	ven	rom	rom	ven	ci
<b>c1</b>	tíz	tíz	most	öt-	ez	ez	öt-	ven-
<b>a</b>	húsz	húsz	húsz	ven	négy	négy	ven	ti
<b>d1</b>	har-	har-	har-	nyolc-	öt	és	nyolc-	tren-
<b>h</b>	minc	minc	minc	van	még	még	van	ta
<b>g</b>	és	és	har-	nyolc-	négy	négy	nyolc-	tren-
<b>g</b>	ez	har-	minc-	van-	és	és	van-	ta-
<b>f#</b>	negy-	minc-	há-	há-	há-	há	há-	se-
<b>a</b>	ven	hat	rom	rom	rom	rom	rom	i
<b>a</b>	i-	így	és	és	más-	más-	és	qua-

Note	Ney	Ney_2	Vidor	Dallos_1	Dallos_2	Köteles	Romhányi	Italian original
a	gen	jól	har-	nyolc-	fél	fél	nyolc-	ran-
a	me-	le-	minc-	van-	meg	meg	van-	ta-
d	gyen	szen	hat	öt	öt	öt	öt	tre

**Table 1.** Example of musical analysis, step 1.

After this preparatory stage the translations were analysed from various aspects, based on my experiences as an opera singer. First the lyrics (i.e. their natural rhythm, if spoken and not sung) and the rhythmic pattern of the music had to be compared, and all dissonances were highlighted. Table 2 (serving only illustration purposes) shows a few examples of the potential dissonance between the two rhythmic patterns of the same text: column 1 includes the Hungarian text (in brackets see the original Italian serving as the basis of the Hungarian version), column 2 the musical rhythm (i.e. the rhythm to be followed by the singer when performing the given line), whereas column 3 shows the natural speech rhythm that would match the line if uttered in natural circumstances (i.e. in prose). At some instances the rhythmic differences listed in the table might seem minor, however, for a Hungarian audience they are indeed disturbing, because the lengthening of notes changes the length of the vowels too, and unless they were originally ‘long’ (in Hungarian indicated by an accent), even the meaning of the given word might disappear. To make matters worse, in Hungarian stress always falls on the first syllable, but if the natural rhythm pattern changes, stress might fall on the wrong syllables, thus again distorting the intelligibility of the text.

text	musical rhythm	natural speech rhythm
a ka-lap mily szé-pen áll ( <i>sembra fatto inver per te</i> )		
hol-to-mig-lan a ti-ed ( <i>che Susanna ella stessa si fe'</i> )		
csak ket-tőt szö-köllsz ( <i>in due passi da</i> )		

**Table 2.** Example of the rhythmic comparison

In the following step the use of the sound *h* was analysed, which is a particularly sensitive issue. The use of this phoneme is usually problematic when sung, because of the significant air loss accompanying its pronunciation. This phenomenon is especially critical when the *h* stands at the beginning of a word, because in the Hungarian language the stress always falls on the first syllable, and unless this phoneme is pronounced fully,

it might become (almost) silent, thus distorting intelligibility. Here the problematic instances were also highlighted (indicated in dark gray in Table 1).

The third aspect involved the use of vowels and consonants. Here I was searching for instances when the same vowel or consonant appeared at the end and beginning of consecutive words, as problems might arise if these sounds are identical (if there is no pause between the words), because singers cannot separate such words properly, which might again lead to misleading utterances. Here again inappropriate solutions had to be listed (indicated in light gray in the example of Table 1).

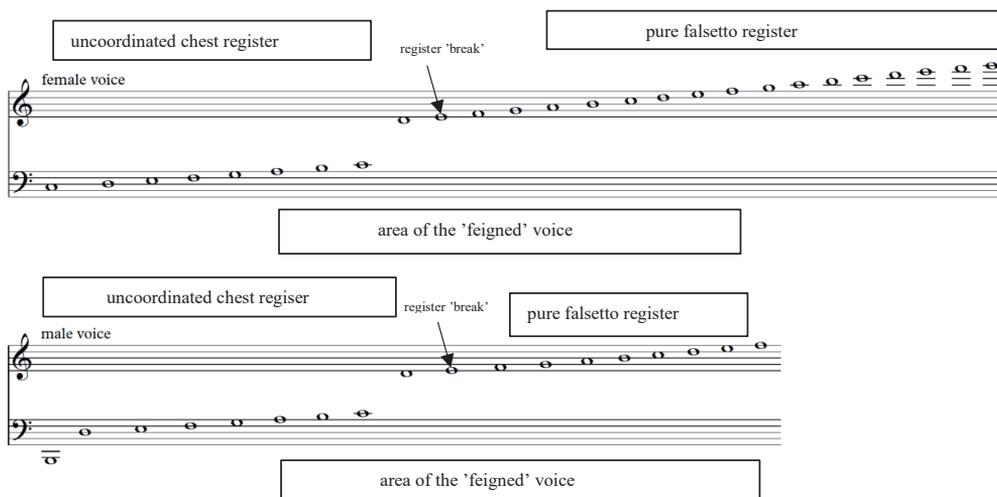
Finally, the use of vowels was investigated. According to Reid, “vowel purity is the same thing as physiological rightness. There is only one way for the vowel to be pure” (Reid 1984: 38). For this the principal resonators need to adjust precisely. Regarding vowel purity, the most important question for the study was whether translators took the vocal range of singers into account. This is a vitally important concern, as for singers with differing vocal ranges the most challenging pitch level from the point of view of proper vowel pronunciation will vary.

As far as intelligibility is concerned, pitch level plays a preeminent role. As pitch—and therefore sound frequency—rises, intelligibility decreases. Furthermore, increasing pitch also reduces the articulatory abilities of singers, and certain sounds tend to become very severely distorted. Accordingly, a text only becomes suitable for singing if the sounds used at a high pitch (in conformity with the given vocal range) are less susceptible to distortion. It is an oft-neglected but crucial issue, because opera singers rely highly on the so-called singing formant, which is the frequency range (~2000-3500 Hz) where the most pleasing sound quality can be achieved. (The Acoustical Society of America (1994) defines formant as: “a range of frequencies [of a complex sound] in which there is an absolute or relative maximum in the sound spectrum.”) It is also, unfortunately, the range most susceptible to distortion. “The ringing sound of the singer’s formant can only occur if the appropriate sound is fed into the vocal tract by the vibrating vocal folds” (McCoy 2004: 48). It means that unless sound selection is perfect, singers must compromise on either the quality of their singing voice or the intelligibility of the sounds pronounced.

Studies have proved (Deme 2011) that the perception of the sounds *á* /a:/ and *ú* /u:/ is good even at a high pitch, whereas *í* /i:/ and *é* /e:/ are often misheard (Deme 2014). The perception of the latter two severely deteriorates even at a medium-high pitch. If one wants to sing at a higher pitch, lowering the jaw helps maintain a pleasing resonance-balance and timbre. However, this action also lowers the formants, and while formulating a front vowel a back-vowel position is approached, lowering the intensity of the upper harmonic partials. If, on the other hand, the jaw is not lowered, lateral mouth posture upsets the resonance balance and the timbre can become shrill or simply too bright (Miller 2004). As a result, translators (and librettists) should primarily use these vowels at a lower pitch level.

Another related consideration is register crossing. Register crossing happens when “[t]he singer, in order to continue without strain, is obliged to make the necessary readjustment and transfer to a new register” (Reid 1990: 67). It applies to every type of voice, male and female alike. This problem is often referred to as the ‘break,’ and concerns the range from **d** to **f** above middle **c**. Notes under the breaking point work with the so-called ‘chest,’ while those above it work with the ‘falsetto’ mechanism

(Reid 2004). It is important that a singer passes from one register to another in a manner inaudible to the audience, but the register break still remains a sensitive range, a sort of Achilles' heel for the singer, so appropriate vowel use is even more important here than in other areas.



**Figure 1.** Register break for various vocal ranges (Reid 1990: 89)

For this part of the analysis I separated the lines sung by the various characters, and after having eliminated the consonants from the syllables, I created a table which showed the combination of notes and (Hungarian) vowels sung by the different characters in the different versions (see Table 3).

Note	Ney	Ney_2	Vidor	Dallos_1	Dallos_2	Köteles	Romhányi
a1	e	e	u	e	e	e	e
a1	í	i	í	e	e	e	e
a1	a	e	ó	e	e	e	e
a1	i	i	i	i	i	i	i
a1	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
a1	ó	ó	ó	ó	ó	ó	ó
a1	é	i	é	é	é	é	é
a1	e	e	a	é	a	é	a
a1	e	e	e	e	e	á	e
a1	e	e	e	e	e	a	e
a1	e	e	ó	ó	á	ó	ó
a1	é	é	e	á	o	á	á

**Table 3.** Example of the musical analysis, step 2

Then I generated statistics about every single note sung by the various characters (belonging to different vocal ranges) showing the vowels attached to them in the different translated versions (see Table 4).

	a	á	e	é	i/i	o/ó	ö/ő	u/ú	ü/ű	Total
<b>Ney</b>	8 (30%)	3 (11%)	<b>5 (19%)</b>	<b>3 (11%)</b>	<b>7 (26%)</b>	0	1 (4%)	0	0	27
<b>Ney_2</b>	8 (30%)	3 (11%)	<b>5 (19%)</b>	<b>3 (11%)</b>	<b>7 (26%)</b>	0	1 (4%)	0	0	27
<b>Vidor</b>	6 (23%)	1 (4%)	<b>6 (23%)</b>	<b>5 (19%)</b>	<b>6 (23%)</b>	2 (8%)	0	0	0	26
<b>Dallos_1</b>	5 (19%)	1 (4%)	<b>6 (23%)</b>	<b>7 (27%)</b>	<b>5 (19%)</b>	2 (8%)	0	0	0	26
<b>Dallos_2</b>	5 (19%)	1 (4%)	<b>6 (23%)</b>	<b>7 (27%)</b>	<b>5 (19%)</b>	2 (8%)	0	0	0	26
<b>Köteles</b>	4 (15%)	1 (4%)	<b>7 (27%)</b>	<b>6 (23%)</b>	<b>5 (19%)</b>	2 (8%)	1 (4%)	0	0	26
<b>Romhányi</b>	4 (15%)	0	<b>10 (38%)</b>	<b>5 (19%)</b>	<b>6 (23%)</b>	1 (4%)	0	0	0	26

**Table 4.** Example of the musical analysis, step 3: Vowel use, Susanne, f2

Table 4 shows the vowels attached to note **f2** in the lines of Susanna, i.e. a soprano. (Interpretation of the data: column 2 shows the number of occurrences of the note **f2** sung on the sound /a:/ in the various translated versions, i.e. three in the Ney version, three in the Ney\_2 version, etc.). After having analysed every note appearing in the lines uttered by the various characters (meaning that a separate table was made for each and every note of every character), I highlighted (in bold) those sound-note combinations which could not be pronounced properly due to the pitch. Here, of course, the vocal range of the characters (singers) is important, as it determines whether a certain note is considered to be “high” for them or not. In this particular example the use of e /ɛ/, é /e:/, i /i/ and í /i:/ is problematic, as at the pitch of **f2** these vowels are difficult for a soprano to pronounce properly.

## 5. Results of Musical Analysis

The results of the musical analysis regarding rhythm, vowel and consonant use at word boundaries, as well as the use of *h* are listed in Table 5. (This is the summary of the dozens of tables similar to Table 1-4 of this paper, produced in the course of the analysis. The paper intends to explain the methodology—to ensure replicability—and give an overview of the final results, therefore the complete research material is not included herein.)

	Ney	Ney_2	Vidor	Dallos_1	Dallos_2	Köteles	Romhányi
rhythm	55	53	32	34	32	41	28
sound obstruction	14	11	17	19	19	18	10
sound <i>h</i>	24 (23)	35 (33)	39 (20)	25 (21)	32 (21)	34 (25)	26 (16)
<b>Total</b>	93 (92)	99 (97)	88 (69)	78 (74)	83 (72)	93 (84)	64 (54)
<b>Errors/ note</b>	13%	14%	12% (10%)	11% (10%)	12% (10%)	13% (12%)	9% (8%)

**Table 5.** Occurrence of certain singability problems

Regarding the use of *h*, two figures are indicated per translation. The reason is that the use of *h* at the beginning of words or musical phrases causes even greater difficulty than elsewhere, thus I wanted to show the proportion of both occurrences (the first figure showing *h* at the beginning of words, the second one in brackets showing *h* elsewhere in words).

In the fourth line the total number of these errors is listed (here again there are two separate figures for the two *h* scenarios). Finally, the proportion of these errors compared to the number of musical sounds is indicated as a percentage figure.

The use of vowels is not included in the table above, as only a small number of high pitch sounds are present in the analysed section. As for vowels, I preferred finding tendencies to exact figures. Unfortunately, although I conclude that the vowel use of the different versions shows a divergence from the desired result, there are no real tendencies to show. Although a conscious vowel use would be desirable for singers and audience alike, primarily at a high pitch, none of the texts reflect this. Thus, it can be assumed that the translators were not familiar with the connection between vowels and perception, or of vowels and singability.

Consequently, as far as singability is concerned, the Ney\_2 version is the most problematic, followed by the Ney, the Köteles, the Vidor, the Dallos\_2, the Dallos\_1 and the Romhányi texts. It is important to note that the Romhányi version is the most professional one, as the translator (Ágnes Romhányi) has some musical background, though she is not a trained opera singer, so it is not surprising that her version contains the least erroneous solutions.

The results suggest that it is extremely difficult for translators to meet the requirements of singability. Except for the adjustment of the number of syllables (which was strictly observed by almost every version, with the exception of the Ney, and the Ney\_2 texts), the translators were unable to concentrate on even such basic areas as the extensive and unjustified use of *h*, proper rhythm, or avoiding ‘jamming’ consonants/vowels. The musical analysis does show some improvement within the sequence of translations, but solely in terms of rhythm.

Based on the above, one can conclude that Hungarian opera translators are increasingly aware of the importance of rhythm, but do not know much about the importance

of the use of consonants/vowels, especially in connection with vocal technique, or that the proper selection of vowels can significantly increase levels of perception, especially at high pitches.

## 6. Closing Remarks

This study has investigated opera translation from a singability perspective, through analysing singing translations of Mozart and da Ponte's *The Marriage of Figaro*. Having examined the 150-year-long history of the translation of this opera, the study aimed to point out the major characteristics of the practice and development of this aspect of Hungarian opera translation.

The results clearly show that for the moment Hungarian opera translation lacks well-defined principles, criteria or a clear approach. The translators individually choose the aspects of translation to be followed, and usually only consider the most basic requirements (such as the number of syllables). Unfortunately, the majority of translators know little about vocal technique, and their translations are therefore frequently unsingable.

In my opinion it would be highly desirable to develop a methodology based on solid professional principles, as without it the translations will not satisfy the requirements of either the singers or the audience.

The results discussed herein rely on the analysis of only one scene of a single opera (*The Marriage of Figaro*). Further research is, in my view, highly desirable, encompassing both a larger corpus of operatic translations and other language combinations. Hopefully, this paper can serve as a useful starting point for further studies, raising awareness and contributing to the improvement of this somewhat neglected area of Translation Studies, and consequently to a richer and fuller appreciation of opera.

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### **Unpublished Translations of Mozart-da Ponte's *The Marriage of Figaro* Used in the Study**

- Ney = translated by Ferenc Ney, property of the National Széchényi Library, Hungary, ZBK 187/B.
- Ney\_2 = unknown translator, property of the National Széchényi Library, Hungary, accession number ZBK 187/B.
- Dallos\_1 = unknown translator; property of the Hungarian State Opera House, accession number 17-2/99.
- Dallos\_2 = unknown translator; property of the Hungarian State Opera House, accession number 17-2/99.
- Köteles = unknown translator; property of the Hungarian State Opera House, accession number 17-2/81.
- Romhányi = unpublished singing translation of Ágnes Romhányi; with the kind permission of the translator
- Vidor = the unpublished translation of Dezső Vidor; <http://www.tarjangz.eu/libretto/szovegek/figaro.doc>, and scores owned by the author of this paper

## **“BENIGN COLONIZATION:” DOMESTICATION AND ITS TWO FACES**

ZSUZSANNA CSIKAI

The surprising and unlikely metaphor, “benign colonization” (O’Toole qtd. in Jordan 1997: 120) was used to describe Brian Friel’s *Three Sisters* (1980), the first, and one of the most prominent, retranslations of Anton Chekhov’s works by Irish playwrights in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The phrase, “benign colonization,” is highly paradoxical, but contemplating what might be encoded in it provokes one into thinking about the complexity of any translation situation, especially those that have to do with colonization and its consequences. The intriguing ambivalence of the phrase prompts an exploration of translation seen as a site for exerting cultural or political dominance as well as a site for contesting that dominance.

That translation is conceived through the metaphor of colonization, and vice versa, colonization through the metaphor of translation, is, of course nothing new for enquiries within contemporary Translation Studies. The notion that “colonization and translation went hand in hand” (Bassnett 1999: 5) is widely recognized, and Eric Cheyfitz’s claim that “translation was the central act of European colonization and imperialism in America” (Cheyfitz 1991: 104) refers to the essential and effective role of translation in submitting, diminishing and even eroding, the colonized culture and language. The close historical relationship of colonization and translation is not the only reason why both translation in general and a specific translation activity or product can be contemplated in terms of the metaphor of colonization. Thinking of translation as colonization is also rather apt since translation involves appropriation: making the object of translation one’s own in terms of language and culture, changing it to suit the receiving culture’s needs and values, rendering the source’s content and form for the use and benefit of the translator’s culture. This is what happens in the case of both early twentieth-century Standard British English translations and Irish English renderings of Chekhov’s plays at the end of the century.

Combined with the word “colonization” “benign,” the second element of the metaphor, is also thought provoking, and is indicative of further essential features of translation in a colonial or post-colonial situation. How can colonization, which entails uninvited violence, oppression, and dispossession, be qualified with the adjective “benign”, that is, gentle and harmless?

In contemplating this question, the situatedness of the translator comes to the fore together with the translator’s agency as well as the ethics and ideology of translation. For the assessment and evaluation of the ideology of a specific translation activity and its product, the particular vantage point from which such observation is done is decisive. From the perspective of post-colonial Irish culture as the receiving culture, the “colonization” (thorough appropriation, or in other words, domestication) of foreign text may be considered benign, as such translation has the power to elevate the status of Irish Eng-

lish and thus it can contribute to the assertion of an independent Irish cultural identity while at the same time counteracting and lessening the influence of the former imperial power.<sup>1</sup> The act of “colonization” in translation gains its positive, assertive nature in the dynamics of power relations between colonized and colonizer, which is acted out in a contest between translation projects with the new translations attempting to displace the earlier ones in an ideological struggle. What is at stake in this struggle is to place Irish English, a dialect of English that originates in colonial history, on an equal footing with Standard British English, and to contribute to the creation of a more assertive identity for Irish culture.

Let us take a chronological approach and look at the early British English translations that the Irish English ones are in a dialogue with, and which, by implication, tend to be seen as not so benign appropriations within the wider system of English language translations of the Russian author, Chekhov.

The text for the very first British production of Chekhov in 1909, *The Seagull*, staged by Glasgow Repertory Theatre was translated by George Calderon, who “spent two years (1895-97) in Russia learning the language, immersing himself in the literature” (Senelick 1997: 131), and was eager to introduce Russian drama to the English public. The production met with moderate success on the part of the critics and audiences, and, as Senelick argues, what success it had was probably due to Calderon’s enlightening preliminary lecture on Chekhov’s method.

After the first production’s failed attempt at giving a taste of the Russian playwright, it was Constance Black Garnett, a most prolific translator of Russian literature, who successfully introduced Chekhov and numerous other nineteenth-century Russian authors to the English-speaking reading and theatre public in Britain. It was in Garnett’s translation that the very first Chekhov play was staged in London. The Stage Society’s 1911 production of *The Cherry Orchard* was initiated by the Anglo-Irish playwright, G. B. Shaw, “who professed himself to be a ‘fervent admirer’ of Chekhov’s plays, and as early as 1905 he wrote to the Russian-enthusiast Laurence Irving asking if he ‘had any of them translated for the Stage Society’” (Obraztsova 1993: 43).

Garnett learnt the language from Russian revolutionary exiles Felix Volkhovsky and Sergey Stepniak, and the latter also assisted her in some of her first translations. Garnett translated fervently, accomplishing the translation of over seventy volumes of Russian literature, including all of Dostoyevsky’s novels; hundreds of Chekhov’s stories and two volumes of his plays; all of Turgenev’s major works and nearly all of Tolstoy’s; and selected works by Herzen, Goncharov, and Ostrovsky, as well as Gogol’s plays and short stories. The formidable number alone of the volumes Garnett translated made her one of the most influential interpreters of nineteenth-century Russian authors. The fact that her translations advanced the canonization of modern Russian writers in Britain ensures that her achievement remains highly acclaimed. Garnett’s translations, however, also established the phenomenon called “British Chekhov,” a heavily Anglicized and thus strongly altered image of the Russian author, which draws criticism from scholars of Russian literature.

Although Garnett’s work was admired and appreciated by many of her contemporaries, for instance, Joseph Conrad and D. H. Lawrence (both ignorant of the Russian language, thus having no access to the original works), her translations were frowned upon by prominent Russian authors like Vladimir Nabokov and Joseph Brodsky. Brodsky

notably criticized Garnett for blurring the distinctive authorial voices of different Russian authors: “The reason English-speaking readers can barely tell the difference between Tolstoy and Dostoevsky is that they aren’t reading the prose of either one. They’re reading Constance Garnett” (qtd. in Remnick 2005: n. p.).

One of the critical points often made about Garnett’s translations is that they are so much rooted in their times and her class’s, the upper-middle class’s, linguistic style that Chekhov’s Russia becomes “Bloomsburyland.” Frank Beardow provides a lengthy list of debatable phrases found in Garnett’s 1923 translation of *Three Sisters*. He points to the “sprinkling of *my dears; (my) dear boy; fellow; my good man; splendid fellows; old chap; good sort; queer* and additionally the use of *gay* to mean *happy*. Moreover, the text has examples of dated British school slang: *Don’t blubber! Honour Bright!* and examples of British social etiquette and class: *mamma; pray do!*” (2005: 92).

On the whole, Garnett’s practice of smoothing over language, adding a veneer of respectability, forced Chekhov’s texts into the mold of Victorian prudishness. As Korney Chukovsky observed of Garnett’s Dostoevsky translations:

In reading the original [of *Notes from Underground*], who does not feel the convulsions, the nervous trembling of Dostoevsky’s style? It is expressed in convulsions of syntax, in a frenzied and somehow piercing diction where malicious irony is mixed with sorrow and despair. But with Constance Garnett it becomes a safe blandscript: not a volcano, but a smooth lawn mowed in the English manner—which is to say a complete distortion of the original. (qtd. in Remnick 2005: n.p.)

Chukovsky’s verdict expressed in figurative language reflects the general view that Garnett’s translations set the trend for Anglicizing Russian authors to a great extent. Other commentators complain that her translations in effect imposed the British class system on Chekhov’s world, which resulted in a thorough alteration of the originals’ social and political contexts.<sup>2</sup> All the above features of Garnett’s translations of Chekhov, no matter how crucial they were in introducing the Russian author to Britain, necessitated a wave of re-translations in English, among them into Irish English.

Later British English translations of Chekhov were concerned with the potential production of the plays, and they were often particularly commissioned to be produced as stage versions. As a rule, they tended to be somewhat freer, and produced by translators rather knowledgeable as regards Russian culture and, indeed, language. To mention only the most prominent ones: David Magarshack, a Latvian-born translator of Russian authors, Ronald Hingley a Russian scholar, and Michael Frayn, himself a playwright, all had a good command of Russian. Still, their translations have also been criticized for being too politely British in tone. Richard Peace examines some of the most highly acclaimed translations of *The Seagull* and shows how, even in the ones made by the above listed, more contemporary, translators, there seems to be a tendency to “smooth out language” and neutralize it in pursuit of English “good style” (Peace 1993: 222).

In a broad sense, the translation strategy applied by the above notable translators of modern Russian literature can be described as domestication, and this is how contemporary and later critics perceived them often castigating the arising image of Chekhov as too genteel and British, without a trace of the original culture of the source texts. Garnett, in particular, may be seen as the translator who significantly contributed to establishing

Chekhov's image in Britain as a proper English gentleman, non-political, melancholic and romantic.<sup>3</sup> Such a general image prevailed even despite the fact that Garnett's translations do preserve on the surface quite a lot of the original culture: "name-day" and "samovar" are just a few examples of the Russian realia that are transposed without alteration or explanation into the English text, similarly to all the typical Russian ways of addressing one other: for instance, patronyms ("My dear Ivan Romanitch," "Fera-pont Spiridonitch") and diminutives ("Olya," "Irinushka," etc.) are abundant in Garnett's translation of *Three Sisters*. The juxtaposition, or even incongruity, of Russian characters using genteel upper-middle class English and Bloomsburyisms while addressing each other using Russian names and referring to Russian realia can be seen as effecting a certain, albeit slight, measure of foreignization as the audience is exposed to some elements of the other, for them alien source culture.

All in all, although Garnett's Standard British English translations of Russian authors, including Chekhov, entered the canon of translated works as heavily Anglicized ones, they are not extreme cases but seem to fall somewhere between two, supposedly antithetical, modes of translation. One approach to translation across cultures is the domesticating practice, which is, according to Lawrence Venuti's interpretation of Schleiermacher, "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to receiving cultural values, bringing the author back home." Another, rather different attitude is embodied in the foreignizing practice, which entails an "ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad" (Venuti 2008: 15).

Criticizing Garnett too harshly for the translation choices she made in the first decades of the twentieth century (using educated upper middle class English now appearing to be genteel, prudish and stale, and infusing the translated text with Bloomsburyisms, etc.) from the vantage point of contemporary translation criticism would amount to ignoring the fact that Maria Tymoczko calls our attention to: "Translators' choices also establish a place of enunciation and a context of affiliation for the translator and the translation" (2010: 8). And the reverse is also true: the translator's situatedness impacts on the translator's choices as well. Garnett's specific situation, or position of enunciation and context of affiliation, was that of an upper middle class, educated Englishwomen, whose essential aim as a translator was to introduce the Russian authors she enthusiastically discovered for herself to the English reading public and persuade them that the Russians were worthy of their attention and even admiration. That agenda and her upbringing in late-Victorian society defined her translation strategy to a great extent, and resulted in her attempt at moving the author closer to the reader, that is, to Anglicize the source to make it acceptable in the receiving culture while transferring just enough foreignness to give a taste of the exotic so as to arouse the interest of her target audience. Her translations, therefore, come close to typical domestication as famously described by Lawrence Venuti:

The aim of translation is to bring back a cultural other as the same, the recognizable, even the familiar; and this aim always risks a wholesale domestication of the foreign text, often in highly self-conscious projects, where translation serves an appropriation of foreign cultures for domestic agendas, cultural, economic, political. (Venuti 1995: 18)

Venuti here considers the translation into English, mostly in Anglo-American cultures, of cultural texts of politically less powerful nations, drawing attention to the ethnocentric, imperialist tendency and cultural consequences of such translation. Recognizing the power inherent in translation to shape images and self-images of cultures, Venuti severely criticizes the strategy of domestication, whose essential aim is to create fluent translated texts that erase the cultural difference of the original. Venuti warns of the consequences of extreme domestication in translation claiming that British and American publishing

has reaped the financial benefits of successfully imposing Anglo-American cultural values on a vast foreign readership, while producing cultures in the United Kingdom and the United States that are aggressively monolingual, unreceptive to the foreign, accustomed to fluent translations that invisibly inscribe foreign texts with English-language values and provide readers with the narcissistic experience of recognizing their own culture in a cultural other. (Venuti 2008: 33)

Venuti's idea that such domesticating translation traditions in fact support cultural imperialism, and hinder tolerance, is generally recognized as apt and relevant in our globalized world, where English as a *lingua franca* facilitates the dominance of Anglo-American values. To counteract such cultural and ideological dominance and the erasure of cultural diversity, Venuti, similarly to other translation theorists, calls for the application and appreciation of new modes and ethics of translation, which have the potential to achieve cultural decolonization and maintain cultural diversity. In opposition to domestication, Venuti demands “an ethic of difference,” which is achieved by approaching translation with “the ethic of foreignization.” Foreignization, it is argued, can offer the target audience an exposure to the Other, to difference, as it signals the foreignness of the source in order to allow difference to enter the translated text and thus the recipient culture. In that foreignization can challenge an imperialistic, assimilating view of other cultures. In Venuti's words, such translations embody and promote the aforementioned “ethic of difference” (1998: 82).

The strategy of foreignization, however, is not the only means to stage resistance to cultural imperialism. In certain specific situations the strategy antithetical to it, domestication serves the same end just as effectively. This is the case when Irish author-translators render Chekhov into English, since the decision to produce Irish English Chekhov versions is a translation act that is designed precisely to counteract imperialistic values and attitudes within the British-Irish context.

The best examples for such intensively domesticating English language reworkings of Chekhov are the “translations”<sup>5</sup> of *Three Sisters* (1981) and *Uncle Vanya* (1998), by the prominent Irish playwright Brian Friel, who is originally from Northern Ireland, a contested territory bearing the mark of Ireland's colonial past. His use of translation to contribute to cultural decolonization makes Friel an engaged translator whose translation activity could be described as serving “an appropriation of foreign cultures for domestic agendas” (Venuti 1995: 18). The agenda, clear and explicit,<sup>6</sup> is, however, not the one that Venuti opposes, that is, the imposition of the values of imperialist powers with the help of domesticating English language translations: Friel's aim in appropriating Russian texts is precisely to counteract and resist imperialistic cultural dominance, or its remnants,

through an attempt to help the assertion of a former colonized culture's identity. He believed that the cultural project of the Field Day Theatre Company, of which his translation of the play, *Three Sisters*, is a crucial part, has the potential to shape the political landscape of Northern Ireland through a kind of cultural decolonization.<sup>7</sup> That is why commentators like Fintan O'Toole can hail the Irish author-translator's appropriation of Chekhov as benign colonization.

Friel's appropriation of the Russian originals is a wholesale one: his *Three Sisters* and *Uncle Vanya* are Irished, or Hibernicized, on all levels. First of all, the plays are rendered in a marked Irish English dialect. Throughout the plays a distinctly Irish turn of phrase prevails: in *Three Sisters* Natasha fears she is "making an eejit"<sup>8</sup> of herself before the guests at Irina's birthday party (which is a name-day party in the original) and exclaims: "God but that's a wild big crowd" (1992: 37), and later, she complains to Andrey: "not that your sister heeds the likes of me" (43). Expressions familiar to Irish ears like "out in the bog!" (76) "you put the heart across me!" (120) "What sort of a square buck's that?" (61), "Did you hear tell, Miss,...?" abound in the play.

Along with the Hiberno-English syntax and Irish idioms that most conspicuously Hibernicize, or Irish, the plays, allusions to themes of Irish history, and to the social and cultural milieu of the present of the production of the plays also strengthen the domestication process. Certain speeches in *Three Sisters* are adjusted so that they have specifically Irish resonances: Friel's audience in Ireland, "the land of saints and scholars," hear Andrey complain that their provincial town "has not produced one person of any distinction – not one saint, not one scholar, not one artist" (1992: 111). *Uncle Vanya* shares this feature, the translator changes lines so that they resonate with the audience's reality. Almost all such alterations convey a prevailing disillusionment, which an Irish audience would certainly recognize as allusions to the still crisis-ridden reality, and especially Northern Irish reality, of contemporary Ireland. For instance, some elements of the play Friel renders in more politically charged terms than the original text would facilitate. An interesting instance is when the Russian text's merely marginal mention of an unused, uncultivated patch of land (*pustosh*) is rendered by Friel as "that old squabble about the common ground," and even a "discussion document" (1998: 20) is mentioned, which might as well be interpreted as an allusion to the Northern Irish crisis. Some other lines expanded by Friel also comment on the futility of politics and political rhetoric in Ireland. Uncle Vanya says: "For fifty long years we have been expressing opinions and reading pamphlets and debating and arguing. [We thought that] the very essence of life could be found in a pamphlet or in a cause or in a political belief. [...]. The essence of life isn't there" (Friel 1998: 19).

What is an even more ideologically loaded rendering of the original is Friel's change of the last lines of *Uncle Vanya*. In the Russian play, Sonya promises "rest" attainable in Heaven: "*Мы отдохнем! (...) Мы отдохнем! Мы услышим ангелов, мы увидим все небо в алмазах, мы увидим, как все зло земное, все наши страдания потонут,*" which, in a close translation means, "We will rest! (...) We will rest! We'll hear the angels, we'll see the diamond sky, we'll see as every earthly evil and all our suffering will sink/disappear..." (Chekhov 1899: n.p.; my translation). In Friel, however, Sonya promises "peace" to Uncle Vanya: "Endure. And peace will come to us" (86), Sonya pleads repeatedly. This, in the context of the relatively recent break-down of the 1994 ceasefire during the Northern Irish peace process, and the recent acceptance of the Good Friday

Agreement, surely conjured up for Irish audiences their most immediate and burning issues, as pointed out by Fusco.

Friel’s domesticating English language translations (along with some other Irish playwrights’ rewritings of the Russian author<sup>9</sup>) cannot be easily placed into the categories characteristic of post-colonial translation situations where domestication is seen as tool of empire, and foreignization as the means to stage resistance to imperialism. It is crucial to note that in the case of the Irish English translations of Chekhov’s plays, the power dynamics is not played out in translation between the languages and cultures of the source and target text, but between the two translating cultures, the former colonizer, Britain, and the colonized, Ireland. There is a third party, or space, Russian literature, which is contested by these two sides in the post-colonial power struggle. This peculiar setup stems from the language shift in Ireland, which generated a rather unique situation: the colonized nation abandoned their native language, and switched to the language of the colonizer as their first language, albeit they created their own “version” of it, a fact that adds another layer of ideology to any endeavor that has to do with language use in Ireland. This is especially the case when an emphatically Irish English dialect is used for the translation of literary classics.

Friel’s interest in questions of translation stems not from translation practice but theory of language. He is not a professional translator, and he has no knowledge of the Russian language; however, as a playwright intrigued by language and communication, especially in the colonial context of Ireland and its history, he delved into the study of language and translation reading George Steiner’s *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (1975) while he was writing the play *Translations* (1980) just before he embarked on the translation of Chekhov’s *Three Sisters*. The play *Translations*—through focusing on the grave implications of the English Ordnance Survey’s grand project to translate all Irish place names into English, thus putting Ireland on the map of imperial Britain in every sense of the phrase—poignantly demonstrates how translation served as a means of cultural subjugation and indeed went hand in hand with colonization.

After the highly charged reception of *Translations*, which proved rather controversial politically as a play commenting on Ireland’s colonial history and especially the enforced language shift from Irish to English symbolized in the play by the quasi-military action of surveying and translating the country of Ireland into English, Friel turned to a seemingly less politicized topic for a play, the apparently neutral endeavor of translating a modern Russian classic for the Field Day Theatre Company. However, as Christopher Murray observes, “language can never be a neutral force or medium in Ireland,” because “the language question, historically bound up in the suppression of Irish (i.e. Gaelic), and the consequent insecurity in Standard English by a colonized people, is invariably politicized, even in post-colonial Ireland” (Murray 2006: 97). Creating distinctly Irish English versions of European classics is a way of dispelling the Joycean anxiety regarding the insecurity of the Irish speaking English, in that Friel’s writing in Irish English idiom is somewhat akin to Joyce’s using Dublin English in order to turn English from an “imperial humiliation” to “a native weapon” (Heaney 1978: 40 qtd. in Tymoczko 1999: 34). The Irish versions achieve this by displacing the existing Standard English versions in order to regain control over the canonical representation of Chekhov for the Irish.

As for the role of translation in Irish culture in general, it has been widely noted that due to the radical language shift from Gaelic Irish to English in the mid-nineteenth cen-

ture, translation has been a crucial activity, both in the colonial phase and post-colonial Ireland. As Robert Welch puts it, “Irish culture, for two hundred years, has (...) been in the business of translating itself to itself and to the outside world” (Welch 1993: xi). Ireland is a translating nation, and as Michael Cronin notes, translation functioned as “part of nation building” (Cronin 1996: 139). This is most obvious in the fervent translation activity of the Celtic revival: during a period of intense translation of Irish legend, folklore and mythology into English, the aim of the leaders of the Celtic Revival was to make the Irish cultural past accessible and enhance its status so that it can help construct an independent cultural identity. In this sense, Friel’s translation activity of rendering Chekhov into a distinct Irish English idiom is very much part of a similar endeavor to construct a culturally assertive nation, since, even if colonization is long over, Friel feels there is still a remnant of the colonial past that needs to be encountered. To explain his intention to Hibernicize existing translations of Chekhov, Friel says in an interview in 1980:

I think that the versions of *Three Sisters* that we see and read in this country always seem to be redolent of either Edwardian England or the Bloomsbury set. Somehow the rhythms of these versions do not match with the rhythms of our own speech patterns, and I think that they ought to, in some way. Even the most recent English translations again carry, of necessity, very strong English cadences and rhythms. This is something about which I feel strongly—in some way we are constantly overshadowed by the sound of the English language, as well as by the printed word. Maybe this does not inhibit us, but it forms us and shapes us in a way that is neither healthy nor valuable for us. (Murray 1999: 84)

Constructing an independent and assertive Irish culture is in itself a resistant act, as it can only be accomplished through an opposition to the former colonizer. The choices Friel makes attest to this: choosing modern European classics to translate into Irish English is ideologically loaded: it proves that the Irish dialect of English is a legitimate vehicle for rendering the most valuable literary works of European culture, which has traditionally been mediated through Standard British English, in translations like Garnett’s. As Robert Welch reminds us, “Being a colony of England, Ireland experienced Europe through an English transmission” (Welch 1993: 1). This intermediary role of Britain, keenly felt and contested by various Irish authors, is what is challenged by the new Irish English translations of Chekhov.

Another translatorial choice that indicates emphatically the resistant nature of Friel’s translations is that in the case of *Three Sisters* he did not commission as a basis for his translation a “literal,” close translation done by a professional translator, but used five existing British-English translations to work from—or against. This strategy shows that through the creation of an Irish Chekhov Friel’s aim is to displace Standard English translations that served as the canonical representation of Chekhov for the British, and consequently for the Irish as well.

Given his cultural background as a Northern Irish writer, Friel is inevitably preoccupied with issues pertaining to the language question both in his dramatic work and other publications. Regarding the legacy of English rule and its linguistic consequences, once he said:

There will be no solution (to the Irish problem) until the British leave this island, but even when they have gone, the residue of their presence will still be with us. This is an area that we still have to resolve, and that brings us back to the question of language for this is one of the big inheritances which we have received from the British. [...] We must continually look at ourselves, recognise and identify ourselves. We must make English identifiably our own language. (Friel 1999: 87)

“Making English identifiably our own language” is not only one of the important concerns of the play *Translations*, this agenda is also manifest in Friel’s own translation philosophy and practice with regard to the creation of the version of *Three Sisters* and *Uncle Vanya*. In *Translations*, a central Irish character, referring to the new Anglicized place names says “We must learn those new names.... We must learn where we live. We must learn to make them our own. We must make them our new home” (Friel 1980: 444). The same idea that the Irish need to make English identifiably their own language is manifest in Friel’s *Three Sisters* and *Uncle Vanya*, as these appropriations of foreign literature in a way assert the status of Irish English as a literary language, and in turn help complete the process of “home-making” in the English language. Therefore, Friel’s domesticating translations amount to resolute acts of resistance to hegemonic powers.

Accordingly, Friel’s version of *Three Sisters* and *Uncle Vanya* reclaim Chekhov from the Anglicized traditions reappropriating his work for the Irish literary canon by Hibernicizing the Russian plays. This resistant retranslation activity was seen to serve as a means of establishing aesthetic independence in Irish theater. Friel meant his Hiberno-English *Three Sisters* and *Uncle Vanya* to play an organic role in furthering the “decolonisation process of the imagination” which, in Friel’s opinion, was “very important if a new Irish personality is to emerge” (qtd. in Richtarik 1994: 121).

When an early twentieth-century British, upper-middle class translator opts for the strategy of domestication in her translation endeavor and as a result the source text is essentially molded to the tastes and expectations of the receiving culture, the assessment from today’s ideologically sensitive and conscious perspective is that domestication is at work to serve the integration of the foreign into the receiving culture. In a way, such translations colonize, or appropriate, the source text without exposing the receiving culture to too much difference. Despite the success of Garnett’s translation project to first introduce Russian literature to British audiences, her domesticating approach may be seen as in line with British and American translation tradition, which, as Venuti warns, embodies ethnocentric and imperialist values. In general, domesticated, fluent translations do not expose the receiving culture to difference as they do not allow monolingual British culture with a history and awareness of hegemonic dominance to have an insight into the realities and values of a different culture.

In contrast, when a playwright of a former colonized nation, Ireland, applies the very same, domesticating and thus ethnocentric translation strategy, and thoroughly appropriates the source (even infusing it with allusions to the political and cultural reality of the receiving culture), what critics rightly note is that even if the cultural difference of the Russian source is not made explicit here either, the same strategy is used as a tool to resist the remnants of imperialist, cultural dominance of Britain in Ireland, which dominance is signaled by the fact that European writers like Chekhov tended to have no Irish English voice in Ireland until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century as British English served as

a vehicle for rendering literary value. Therefore, the ethics involved in the Irish English Chekhov translations is that of resistance (the ethics of foreignization in Venuti's theory), but resistance achieved through domestication, which reveals the potential complexity of certain translation situations that are beyond the conventional binaries of theory.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> This paper focuses on the agenda behind certain translation activities and strategies (British and Irish English domestication of Chekhov), and their potential impact on the receiving culture. On the general reception and critical assessment of various English language translations of Chekhov from the perspective of how successfully they represent the Russian original, see for instance P. Miles. (ed.) 1993. *Chekhov on the British Stage*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP., or L. Senelick. 1997. *The Chekhov Theatre. A Century of the Plays in Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP. As for the success (and perhaps benefit) of rendering Chekhov and his world in Irish English, it can be argued that seemingly paradoxically, "Irishing," Hibernicizing the plays results in a successful restoration of some of the original Russian plays' features and concerns, for instance the themes of provinciality and marginality, as well as the underlying humor and politics of Chekhov's plays mostly lost in Garnett's and other earlier translations. See also West, Michael. "Authentic Fictions." *Irish Theatre Magazine* Vol. 4 No.16 (Autumn 2003). 15-22.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Gottlieb, Vera. "The Dwindling Scale": The Politics of British Chekhov. In: Miles 147-55. and Ryapolova, Valentina. "English Translations of Chekhov's Plays: A Russian View." In: Miles 227-36.

<sup>3</sup> Of course the formation of the image of Chekhov as an English gentleman cannot be attributed to Garnett alone. The early productions of his plays on the British stage had a significant role in establishing an Anglicized image and in effect canonizing the Russian author this way in Britain. See Tracy, R. "Komisarjevsky's 1926 'Three Sisters.'" In: Miles 65-77. and Bartoshevich, A. "The 'inevitability' of Chekhov: Anglo-Russian theatrical contacts in the 1910s." In: Miles 20-27.

<sup>4</sup> The source for Garnett's Chekhov translations: <http://www.eldritchpress.org/ac/sisters.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of discussing these highly irregular rewritings as "translations," I use Gideon Toury's broad definition of translation: "a translation will be any target language text which is presented or regarded as such within the target system itself, on whatever grounds" (1982: 27), since Friel's *Three Sisters* and *Uncle Vanya* are not translation proper in the sense that Friel did not speak Russian, so he used several earlier translations for his own rewriting of the plays, which, however, are labelled and mostly theorized by critics in Ireland as a translation.

<sup>6</sup> Friel himself repeatedly talks about the reasons behind his aim to replace British English Chekhov texts with Irish English ones asserting in an interview that "the versions of *Three Sisters* that we see and read in this country always seem to be redolent of either Edwardian England or the Bloomsbury set. Somehow the rhythms of these versions do not match with the rhythms of our own speech patterns, and I think that they ought to, in some way. Even the most recent English translations again carry, of necessity, very strong English cadences and rhythms. This is something about which I feel strongly—in some way we are constantly overshadowed by the sound of the English language, as well as by the printed word. Maybe this does not inhibit us, but it forms us and shapes us in a way that is neither healthy nor valuable for us." (Friel 1999: 84)

<sup>7</sup> Marylin Richtarik discusses such questions in detail in her book, *Acting between the Lines. The Field Day Theatre Company and Irish Cultural Politics 1980-1984*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1994.

<sup>8</sup> Compare: "У вас такое большое общество, я смущена ужасно..." (close translation: there is such a huge party here, I'm awfully embarrassed). In Garnett: "I feel awfully embarrassed."

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Kilroy's adaptation of *The Seagull* (1980) is a thorough cultural appropriation of Chekhov, while Frank McGuinness's *Three Sisters* and *Uncle Vanya* are both mediated or second hand transla-

tions, where the source texts are Hibernicized to varying degrees but not as emphatically as Friel’s plays.

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# **THE FINAL FRONTIER OF INTERPRETING: EFFECTS OF THE DUAL-LANGUAGE POLICY ON COMMUNICATION IN INTERNATIONAL HUMAN SPACEFLIGHT**

**MELINDA DABIS**

## **1. Introduction**

Interpreters support the daily business of countless fields in numerous countries, albeit usually invisibly. It should, therefore, come as no surprise that they have been playing a role in one of humankind's most monumental endeavors, namely human spaceflight. There are interpreters involved in supporting the crew of the International Space Station (ISS) and the ground personnel on a daily basis. They facilitate communication between the English-speaking experts of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the United States and those of the Russian space agency Roscosmos State Corporation for Space Activities (Roscosmos).

Interpreters' involvement is the "by-product" of space language policies throughout the various phases of human spaceflight. To understand this, we need to examine the language policies throughout the missions carried out in cooperation between the US and the USSR. Following the historical overview and a general description of interpretation activities, I shall concentrate on the most distant kind of remote interpretation, which enables communication between ground control and the spacecraft or space station.

## **2. The Origin of the Space Language Protocol: the ASTP**

The Cold War brought along the Space Race between the US and the USSR, which was mainly fueled by the fears on both sides that the other superpower would be the first to send humans to space. President Kennedy made the significance of supremacy clear when addressing the Congress in 1961.

Finally, if we are to win the battle that is now going on around the world between freedom and tyranny, the dramatic achievements in space which occurred in recent weeks should have made clear to us all, as did the Sputnik in 1957, the impact of this adventure on the minds of men everywhere, who are attempting to make a determination of which road they should take. ... I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth. No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish. (Dalleck 1997: 72)

As a result of rapid scientific progress, strong political will and extensive funding, the US spacecraft Apollo 11 landed on the Moon before the end of the decade, on 20 July 1969. In the early 1970s, however, political tensions started to ease off. The relationship

between the two superpowers began to consolidate as the Nixon administration pushed forward the policy of *détente*. The ground at NASA was well prepared, the first unofficial contacts between US and Soviet scientists date back to as early as 1962. Hugh L. Dryden, NASA's Deputy Administrator at that time, had close professional ties with Anatoly Blagonravov of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, and even managed to sign a bilateral agreement on scientific cooperation (Ross-Nazzal 2010: 30). After his death, however, the relationship grew colder and collaboration plans were abandoned until 1969, when NASA's new Administrator Thomas O. Paine attempted to rekindle the spirit of cooperation in 1969. Due to the favorable political atmosphere, space policy was an important element in the Nixon administration's *détente* efforts. With the relative openness of Mstislav V. Keidyshev, president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, the negotiations could reach higher political levels. The following years saw the two countries conduct informal communication, technical meetings and visits, during which both sides accused each other of a lack of openness and determination.

Finally, in 1972 the "Agreement Concerning Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes" was signed, paving the way for the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project (ASTP). This "diplomatic event which symbolically terminated the Space Race was a high-risk mission on low Earth orbit" (Battaglia 2012: 576). It envisaged a space rendezvous and visit, requiring docking the two vehicles, an Apollo-type spacecraft of the US and a Soyuz-type capsule of the USSR. The American and Soviet crew members would also visit each other's spaceship and carry out some joint scientific experiments, as well. The endeavor meant a daring vision for the two nations and immense coordination work for astronauts, technicians, engineers and other experts. Safe docking required careful planning and adjustments to both spacecrafts, including the docking systems, interfaces and even checking the composition of air supply. As *The Saturday Evening Post* from 1975 puts it,

[t]he July flight is the culmination of almost five years of cooperative effort. In the United States and the Soviet Union, several thousand persons have been engaged in mission planning and hardware fabrication. About a hundred from each nation's astronauts, cosmonauts, scientists, technicians and interpreters have shuttled back and forth across the ocean, coordinating the project on a face-to-face basis. (Haggerty 1975: 7)

All these meetings, consultations and design could not have taken place without the contribution of interpreters who, naturally, played a key role in the whole process. However, their services could not be used in space, where astronauts and cosmonauts needed to communicate directly and without delay. The solution on the language problem reflects the spirit of this project, where in spite of the widely celebrated cooperation, information sharing was carefully balanced on both sides; great efforts were taken that no one should and can get the upper hand. The decision was made that "cosmonauts' study of the English language and astronauts' study of Russian as well as study of American and Soviet space terminology" (ASTP Press Kit 1975) were required to ensure seamless communication. This decision became the basis of the current space language policy, though later it was also influenced by financial and geopolitical factors. Soviet commentators interpreted this bilingual environment as a further evidence of the positive attitude of the two nations and peoples:

To overcome the language barrier is another peculiarity. We should comment with pleasure that no interpreters were necessary during the talks between our first crew and the first crew of the United States of America. The crew have found mutual language and were talking without interpreters (ASTP (USSR) MISSION MC2/2, Time: 04:47 CDT, 09:47 GMT, 7/15/75).

In diplomacy this seems to be a good solution between the two powers. On the other hand, it increased the astronauts' workload immensely. Apart from knowing their own spacecraft, they had to be familiar with the partner's spacecraft as much as possible (as much as the other side was willing to reveal) and the docking procedure. Additionally, they were required to acquire fluency in a foreign language within a short period of time. One of the astronauts, Deke Slayton said, "When I added up the hours later, I found I spent more time studying Russian than doing any other kind of training for Apollo-Soyuz" (Slayton 1994: 292), and even with the intensive training he could barely speak Russian and often needed linguistic help.

The actual process of conversation was a complicated maneuver, the ASTP language protocol required the astronauts to speak in their own native tongue, regardless of the nationality of the listener. However, the members of the crews, Thomas P. Stafford (commander), Vance D. Brand (command module pilot), Donald K. Slayton (docking module pilot), Alexey Leonov (commander) and Valeri Kubasov (flight engineer) soon found out that the reverse worked better. When conversing in a foreign language, they were slower and more straightforward, and for the listener it was easier to understand the communication in his own mother tongue. Therefore the new language protocol was "conversing in the language of the listener." Additionally, this again sent off a good message about the cooperation of the two superpowers.

This happy development did not, however, apply to the hundreds of others working on the project. American ground personnel could not understand Russian, and Russians could not speak English; yet constant communication was essential between the two teams. Finally, the solution was to involve interpreters, placing them in the hub of the events. The ASTP document says:

The language barrier was decided to be overcome through interpreters on duty in MCC. For communication between Mission Control Centers, standard terminology will be used. Interpreters will use the same standard terms and phrases. Verbal reports will be transmitted in the receiving side language. Both American and Soviet interpreters will hear the reports in English and Russian. (ASTP Press Kit, 1975)

Interpreters' service was required on both sides, and they were to use technical terminology, which meant that interpreters needed to learn more or less everything an astronaut had to know. Unfortunately, I could not find any information on the interpreters' training or their working environment so far, and this is subject of further research. I assume that at this phase consecutive interpreting was used for ground communication, involving technical meetings and astronaut trainings; and simultaneous interpretation was required during space-ground communication.

The ASTP was a unique mission, first and last of its kind. For the Apollo type spacecraft this was the final flight, as the preparations and changes for the next phase, the Space Shuttle program, began immediately after the crew's arrival (Redmond 2004).

### 3. Interim Period and the Shuttle–Mir Program

Arrival ceremonies were still in progress when the Space Shuttle Payload Integration and Development Office was created at NASA to open a new era of returning spacecrafts (Ezell 1978: 351). During the ASTP the Soviets consistently avoided any discussion of the future, at the same time critical voices grew louder in the US questioning the “costly space circus” (Ezell 1978: 353). As a result, the two countries worked on separate projects in the following decade.

Eventually the time came for the second phase of US-Russian space cooperation with the Shuttle–Mir Program between 1993 and 1998. Due to political changes and financial constraints, space missions lost priority in both countries' agenda. In order to keep the systems in operation, the two agencies entered into an agreement of mutual support in certain areas. The US had the Space Shuttle operating, but they could not construct their own space station yet. Russia's space station, Mir, was still in orbit, but due to mounting financial difficulties they needed the American partners to keep the station inhabited. The basic idea was that the American Shuttle spaceship would take astronauts and cosmonauts to the Russian Mir space station. NASA needed time and experience until they could build their own orbiting station, which was to be called Space Station Freedom; whereas Russia needed funds to keep Mir in orbit. It is important to note, however, that the drive for cooperation was a budgetary issue rather than the will to bring the two countries closer.

The relatively brief Shuttle–Mir Program was very different from the ASTP in several respects. The astronauts of the US were practically guests on the Russian-built Mir space station and this determined the language protocol: all operations were conducted in Russian. American astronauts were expected to be fluent in Russian, and Houston needed interpretation of all communication. Cooperation was burdened with various political, managerial and technical complications; there were safety and trust problems on both sides. The language issue was a minor, but still serious problem for Americans.

Interpreters were present at all stages of the missions that involved communication with Russian partners or participants. US astronaut Norman Thagard mentions an incident during training in Russia when interpreting hampered communication, instead of facilitating it.

The classes were all in Russian. Bonnie had an interpreter, which was a continuing source of annoyance to me, because I could always hear this interpreter interpreting in the class. I thought that was not a good way to learn, anyway. You're never going to learn a language if you're using an interpreter, and Bonnie struggled mightily virtually throughout the thing all because of no Russian language before she went over there. I think that we corrected that somewhat, because I know Shannon, actually, as I mentioned, started Russian language training before I did, and she and John Blaha were the second and third folks over there. (Wright 1996)

This episode suggests that interpreters accompanied at least some of the astronauts through the entire training process. It is not known whether it was the same interpreter, delegated to only one or a group of astronauts or to certain subject matters, or there was a certain routine for several interpreters to support the training.

Some astronauts complained about the language barrier, others about the need for interpretation; one of them reported that sometimes he had to listen to the same piece of information twice. John E. Blaha said he “listened to all of the Russian discussions with the ground” and then “listened to the Americans when they got on the radio telling me in English what I already had heard in Russian 5 hours earlier” and sometimes “their English version wasn’t exactly right” (Wright 1996). The conclusion of this phase was that communication in spaceflight cannot depend on interpreters. The time delay and the possibility of loss of information may not only be annoying, as it was for Blaha; but could cause disruption and risks. It was decided that adequate language training is critical not only for the efficiency and safety of mission operations, but also for successful communication among crew members and between the crew and the ground.

#### **4. The Present: The International Space Station (ISS)**

The International Space Station, or ISS Program, represents the third, current phase of international human spaceflight. Its fundamental document, the Space Station Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) was signed by the USA, Canada, the Russian Federation, Japan and the member countries of the European Space Agency in 1998. In this program NASA is defined as the designated manager of the ISS, therefore English was set as official language within the Program. Nevertheless, Russian involvement was critical, and Americans soon became dependent on their Russian counterpart. The bilateral Memorandum of Understanding between the US and Russia includes a somewhat hazy remark on the use of languages other than English: “Other languages may be used when appropriate, consistent with safety requirements and the concept of an integrated crew.” Without explicitly mentioning it, this passage *de facto* allows the use of Russian language on the ISS.

Following years of exciting scientific development, technical and political negotiations, many successful and two tragic missions, in 2011 NASA discontinued flying the Space Shuttle after more than two decades of operation for the vehicles reached the end of their lifetime. This was a crucial decision, and had direct repercussions on language policies. Following the last flight of the American Space Shuttle, the ISS can now be reached only by the Russian spacecraft Soyuz that takes the astronauts from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan to the International Space Station. The ISS is under NASA control, but the Soyuz is a Russian mission. The control board of the vehicle is Russian; during launch and re-entry the Russian Mission Control Center is in charge. This means that space language policy has returned to the English-Russian bilingual state; crew members are required to have working knowledge of both languages. This means that, again, ground personnel face linguistic challenges: they need the constant presence of interpreters.

## 5. Interpreters' Involvement

Unfortunately, neither NASA, nor Roscosmos has answered any of my repeated emails to the date of the article submission; therefore in my analysis I rely on information from articles, interviews, photos and profiles publicly available on the internet, listed at the end of the paper.

Based on the interpreters' profile found on LinkedIn, the majority of NASA interpreters are either of Russian origins, Russian and English bilinguals or have received a formal training in Russia. They usually have a bachelor degree in languages, one of them even a PhD; the majority of them received training in conference interpreting at Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (formerly Monterey Institute of International Studies). Most of them have interpreting and translating experience in various fields, typically in industry, technology and law, and some have worked for international organizations.

NASA interpreters go through a long and intense training (Lin 2006: 10-11). After completing an academic training in simultaneous interpreting and entering NASA's realm, they start a no less difficult training phase, during which they acquire detailed knowledge of spaceflight and learn the technical vocabulary. Their first tasks typically include translating documents or working along with editors; then the assignments become increasingly difficult. It takes an average of two years for a person to become a fully trained interpreter at NASA.

Interpreting services might be needed practically any time of the day and any day of the week. A group of about 40 interpreters and translators support operations at NASA. Meetings and training sessions with Russian partners do not always take place during the working hours of the US team due to the 9-hour difference of their time zones. Additionally, communication with ISS runs on its own schedule, because crew members' daily activities follow a GMT-based schedule (NASA International Space Station Timelines). Therefore interpreters work in shifts: there are regular day- and night-time shifts to provide linguistic support. To prevent the risk of burnout and ensure proficiency in various areas, interpreters do not focus on a single subject, nor do they work with one single team, but rotate and are involved in different projects (Lin 2006). This also helps interpreters keep abreast of ongoing developments concerning the various departments involved and acquire up-to-date knowledge of different issues. Additionally, this arrangement ensures continuity of service provision as each interpreter may be replaced by his/her colleagues in case of need.

Interpreters participate in a wide array of assignments. They provide linguistic support not only during technical meetings *vis-à-vis* or via teleconferences between American and Russian experts, but also present at meetings involving managerial, financial or even political topics in connection with spaceflight. There are interpreters who travel to the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan to accompany astronauts for launch and to welcome returning ISS crews. This means interpreters need to know and understand numerous aspects of spaceflight, of NASA and other cooperating space agencies.

The highest level of interpreter position within NASA is the MCC certification, which allows interpreters to work at the Mission Control Center, interpreting live conversations between the ISS crew and ground control, and communication during extra vehicular activities (EVA). During space to ground operation, communication is interpreted from

Russian into English for the MCC in Houston, and from English into Russian for the MCC in Moscow. Most of the interactions involve various issues, regular checks, reports and instructions which are more or less regular communication understood by non-native ground personnel at NASA and Roscosmos without difficulty, so interpreting services are not needed at all. However, unexpected events that require interpreters to step in may happen.

Such an unforeseen incident of a critical nature occurred in April 1997, when the unmanned cargo spacecraft Progress M-34 collided with the Mir space station during docking, damaging the station's Spektr module and a solar panel. At that time most communication onboard of Mir and with the ground was conducted in Russian. As NASA Operations Lead Keith Zimmerman's recollections of the situation in NASA History show, the interpreter assisting the American team played a small, yet essential role in the unfolding events that could have easily ended in tragedy.

I happened to be—it was just a regular communications pass coming up, so, like always, I went down into the main room to sit on our console, which is next to the flight director's console, and by pure coincidence, I happened to take an interpreter with me that day. I don't even remember why. I was probably going to ask somebody a question after the communications pass.

Of course, we plug in, expecting a normal day, average docking, and the communications start right away, and right away the crew starts talking real fast. My Russian's okay, but I could only catch a few words he was going so fast, but I caught the words "Progress" and "Spektr," and then the interpreter got a really funny look on his face and says, "I think they hit something," but it was just the very curious way he said it, I was thinking they hit their hand or something like that, somebody hit the wrong box or who knows.

So I asked him to explain. He goes, "Well, the Progress hit the Spektr module," but at that point, then, trying to listen more closely to what's going on, and I could hear the alarms in the background, and I look at the display and see the pressure's starting to drop. At that point everyone kind of realized, "Ah-oh, we've got a really serious problem here," and things got pretty tense at that point. I mean, they were quite hectic. (Zimmerman 1998).

From time to time, unexpected events, in which no protocol applies and sound quality is distorted, consequently the message is difficult to comprehend for non-native speakers do occur. Interpreters, therefore, are indispensable participants in communication at NASA, ensuring that information from the Russian partner is available instantly.

## 6. Earth-Space Remote Interpreting

The role of language and the involvement of interpreters and translators in human space-flight are a wide area of research in progress. For the purpose of this paper, I will concentrate only on the small yet critical part of interpreting activities described in the previous paragraphs, and examine it from the perspective of interpreting theory. The reason behind this limitation is manifold: firstly, ISS-related operations are considerably well-documented by NASA and publicly accessible online in the form of video footages, photos, websites and blogs. Therefore it is easier to verify the presence of interpreters and investigate their

job, even if my attempts at interviewing interpreters were unsuccessful. Secondly, of all the interpreters' tasks at NASA, this type of interpretation seems to be the most challenging from various aspects, as will be argued in this section. As already mentioned, the highest amount of responsibility falls upon the shoulders of interpreters working at the Mission Control Center, as they interpret communication between the Soyuz or the ISS crew members and the Russian MCC. Since participants in these exchanges speak from different locations, interpretation activities may be described as remote.

Niska (qtd. in Mouzourakis 2006: 46) points out that the definitions of remote interpreting tend to vary. Moser-Mercer defines "it as any form of simultaneous interpreting where the interpreter works away from the meeting room either through a video-conferencing set-up or through a cabled arrangement close to the meeting facilities, either in the same building or at a neighboring location" (2003). In her definition from one and a half decade ago the interpreters' physical proximity to the speaker and the audience is still an essential factor, even though the use of the technical equipment is not so much influenced by distance. Even though dating from not much later, Mouzourakis' understanding of the term appears more comprehensive, defining remote interpreting simply as a situation "in which interpreters are no longer present in the meeting room, but work from a screen and earphones without direct view of the meeting room or the speaker" (2006). NASA's interpreters translate the words of interlocutors speaking either from a different continent, from ground control near Moscow, or orbiting the Earth on the ISS or approaching the space station with high velocity. The interpreters' audience is the NASA team sitting in the room with them, as the interpreter's workstation is located next to the capcom, the Capsule Communicator (Lin 2006). Therefore the prerequisites of remote interpreting are met.

According to Mouzourakis, there is "universal agreement" among interpreters providing remote interpretation about the need to "have a view of the speaker" (2006: 51). It is unclear, however, whether NASA interpreters have access to visual inputs. It is safe to assume that being present in the MCC, they have all the visuals available there. Judging from the video of EVA-23 on 16 July 2013, astronauts have a camera fastened to their suit transmitting what they are looking at, and there are also fixed cameras transmitting images of the environment outside the ISS. However, none of these are useful from the interpreter's traditional point of view in the sense that the speaker's face cannot be seen. On the other hand, the cameras attached to the helmets show the astronaut's perspective which may be more useful than a view of his or her face. Unlike conventional interpretation events, when the speaker has the main role and their facial expressions may provide critical meta-communication information, during EVAs communication focuses on what astronauts see and what is happening. It is therefore crucial that interpreters see with their clients' eyes. As for launches, a camera provides a view of the astronauts seated (more precisely, lying in sitting position) in the capsule, but since interpreting and proper conditions for interpreting are not among the priorities, these images may not be ideal. Astronauts wear their spacesuits, including helmets, and they are shown from the side, which means that their face and mouth are barely visible. Furthermore, image quality is often poor and sometimes interference occurs due to connection problems.

Although this arrangement may not seem ideal for interpreters, Mouzourakis's approach to visual input suggests the contrary. He states that human vision is not a passive, camera-like nonselective recording, but "it searches for those essential features which allow it to answer specific questions and deal with urgent problems, especially when

survival is at stake” (2003). Human vision is active and highly selective. In this respect NASA interpreters’ visual input may be precisely what they need to carry out their task. Speakers’ face and body may convey less relevant information than more comprehensive images showing the launch or the first-person-view input provided by astronauts’ cameras during an EVA. Moreover, as a result of recent technological advances, Mouzourakis updated his views on the role of visuals, and points out the similarity between remote interpreting and presence in virtual environment (2016). The use of virtual environment is increasingly important for many professions, for instance, in the training of pilots, astronauts and surgeons; therefore the ability to cope with non-presence is essential. Studies have shown that a person’s physical and psychological comfort depends on their sense of being present, on the “perceptual illusion of non-mediation” (Lombard 1997). As remote interpreting may be considered a job carried out in virtual environment, it may greatly benefit from studies carried out on virtual environment within the field of cognitive psychology.

Aside from visual aids, remote interpreters largely depend on sound quality. Based on publicly available footages of launch, docking and other activities, sound quality of interpreters’ input does not seem ideal. Human voice is slightly distorted in transmission, and interpreters occasionally report “inaudible” or “inaudible speaking” as in the case, for instance, during the docking operations of the Soyuz TMA-01M (TMA-01M: Digital Soyuz uploaded to space station).

MCC interpreter-mediated communication can be divided into two macrocategories: communication during activities carried out in line with a strict predefined protocol, such as launch or re-entry of the Soyuz, on the one hand; and communication during EVAs, when no or less strictly defined protocols apply, on the other.

Launch or re-entry operations are carefully planned events, with checks and feedbacks of engines, conditions and steps reported in a particular order at a predefined time, as illustrated in the below table of terminology for launches (Davis 2013), compiled by Elena Kozhukov, interpreter at NASA.

Cyrillic phrase	English transliteration	English literal translation	English explanation	Time to launch (m:s)
Ключ на старт	Klyuch na start	Key to launch	Launch key inserted (yes, it’s a real key)	6:15
Протяжка 1	Pratyazhka ahdin	Tape feed 1	Ground measurement system is activated by RUN 1 command	5:00
Продувка	Pradoovka	Purge	Combustion chambers of side and central engine pods purged with nitrogen	3:15
Наддув	Nadduv	Repressurization	Booster propellant tank pressurization initiated	2:30
Протяжка 2	Protyazhka dva	Tape feed 2	Onboard measurement system is activated by RUN 2 command	2:30

Cyrillic phrase	English transliteration	English literal translation	English explanation	Time to launch (m:s)
Дренаж	Drenazh	Drain/Vent	Vehicle oxidizer and fuel drain and safety valves closed, ground oxidizer and nitrogen filling terminated	2:15
Пуск	Poosk	Start	Auto-sequence initiated	1:00
Земля-борт	Zemlya-Bort	Ground-Vehicle	Vehicle to internal power, separation of third stage umbilical tower from booster	1:00
Зажигание	Zazhiganiye	Ignition	Launch command issued for ignition, central and side pod engines turned on	0:20
Предварительная	Pridvaritel'naya	Preliminary	Second stage umbilical tower separates	0:15
Промежуточная	Promezhutochnaya	Intermediate	Engine turbopumps at flight speed	0:10
Главная	Glavnaya	Main	First stage engines at maximum thrust	0:05
Подъем	Pod'yom	Liftoff	Fueling tower separation	0:00

As the table shows, terminology of launch operations is very precise and timed; therefore, if everything goes well, interpreters do not need to intervene at all. In the video of the liftoff of the Soyuz TMA-01M, carrying astronauts Aleksandr Kaleri, Oleg Skripochka and Scott Kelly to orbit on 7 October 2010, the two female voices recorded in the background belong to the two interpreters on duty during the launch. The first interpreter translates communication coming from Baikonur ground control, reporting the starting process (umbilical tower moving away, booster ignition, etc.); the second interpreter conveys the crew's words to MCC about flight conditions and the astronauts' overall state (systems nominal, feeling fine, vibration, G force, etc.). If no problems occur, these communications are highly formalized. Yet, as the video of the launch of the Soyuz TMA-20 shows, despite the highly codified type of communication requirement, the astronauts sometimes engage in bantering and small talk—in this particular case on the advantages of being left-handed, which is invariably conveyed by the interpreters (Soyuz TMA-20 launches to the ISS).

Communication instances during EVAs are less formalized. Astronauts receive detailed, step-by-step instructions from ground control, where technicians receive the images recorded by cameras attached to the astronauts' spacesuits. At the same time, the MCC team in Moscow follows the conversation and the events, thanks to interpreters translating into Russian. In his blog on human and commercial spaceflight, Jason Davies

recalls an incident in an interview with veteran Russian interpreter Elena Kozhukhov. In July 2013 Luca Parmitano, Italian astronaut of the European Space Agency, took an EVA to carry out some works in preparation for the arrival of a laboratory module, when his helmet started to fill up with water around the back of his head. After a short but alarmed exchange during which no cause was identified, Houston's Mission Control Center decided to terminate the activity, even though the astronauts were in no immediate danger, and ordered Parmitano and the accompanying NASA astronaut Chris Cassidy back to the space station. They safely reached the airlock and finished preparations later. The spacewalk was led by NASA, and the conversation in English was too fast to follow for the Russian counterpart, therefore the Moscow Mission Control Center depended on the interpreter to understand what was happening. "The Russians were listening to our interpretation and asking questions," said Kozhukhov. "At one point, Parmitano stopped responding, unable to hear transmissions as the water pooled around his ears." Kozhukhov recalls the Russians anxiously asking, 'What's the status? Is he okay?'" (Davies 2013). This particular conversation involved interlocutors speaking from different locations, with speakers (ISS and NASA MCC), interpreter (NASA MCC) and listeners (Moscow MCC) at different locations. The situation is similar to phone interpretation, yet due to the aforementioned visuals I would argue that it is still remote interpreting.

Although such events are rare, it clearly illustrates why interpreters are vital elements in the daily life of the ISS. In case of emergency or unexpected events, the astronauts' lives depend on help coming from ground control. Stakes may be high, while sound quality may be poor. Interpreters work under constant pressure when conveying every detail accurately.

## 7. The Future of Interpreting in Spaceflight

Interpreters' involvement in any type of endeavor is generally controversial. On the one hand, they play a critical role in facilitating communication between speakers of different languages. On the other hand, they are barriers, filters and unwanted outsider participants of discussions and conversations. Interpreting in spaceflight is no exception. Astronauts have reported cases when interpreting caused miscommunication. Shuttle–Mir astronaut Michael Foale even argued that the "reliance on translators, who are not necessarily trained in the technical aspects of space operations, can cause important content to be missed or misunderstood on the first read-down" (Ansdell 2012: 4). It seems, therefore, that interpreters, however well prepared and trained, are not perceived as the best solution to overcome the language barrier. Moreover, the constant need for interpreting services generates heavy costs for both space agencies (Ansdell 2012: 4). However, the current policy of the English-Russian dual-language obligation within the space program does not leave much scope for alternatives. Various other space agencies sending crew to the ISS report that the admission criterion concerning language requirements is not necessarily a goal everyone is willing or able to meet.

Astronauts from the European Space Agency and prospective astronauts from other space agencies, who are neither English nor Russian native speakers, need to learn both languages, in addition to the already heavy load of learning requirements. NASA's International Relations Specialist Neal Newman observed that "Japanese have also indicated that the requirement of speaking both English and Russian has notably limited their

available workforce” (Ansdell 2012: 4). Moreover, astronauts are merely the tip of the iceberg, ground personnel in MCC, engineers and trainers need to communicate over the language barrier, too.

A new space language policy has been called for, but no real progress has been made. Ansdell argues that a single operational language protocol is necessary to ensure “operational efficiency and safety of international human spaceflight missions” (2012: 6). Not surprisingly, she also suggests that this *lingua franca* should be English, observing, however, that it may take many years for some countries to adhere to new rules. It is a complex issue, influenced, among others, by geopolitical, financial and other factors. Nevertheless, interpreting currently remains an essential part of human spaceflight missions; space agencies, astronauts and experts are unlikely to be able to work safely and efficiently without interpreters. Furthermore, NASA relaxed the dual-language requirement; therefore, interpreting services are very likely to continue to be needed in the future.

Examining the history of human spaceflight and the language policies, it seems that international spaceflight has been and is closely intertwined with interpreting and translation. Despite its limited dimension, therefore, spaceflight interpreting and its peculiar features are worth investigating. There are a number of issues never even touched upon in interviews with NASA interpreters. What are the challenges of this kind of remote interpreting? Job-related stress levels may very well be among the highest within the profession. How does stress affect interpreters’ work and lives? What intercultural knowledge is necessary to ensure smooth communication? Do interpreters at Roscosmos experience the same working conditions as their counterpart at NASA? Additionally, more specific, technical questions arise. For instance, how do sound quality and the availability or the lack of visuals influence interpreters’ work during MCC interpretations? What kind of equipment do they use? Who do they interpret for and how do they listen to the interpretation? Interviews, memoirs, videos, and material uploaded on NASA’s Oral History records provide some clue, but research on remote interpreting, and the role of interpreting and bilingualism in human spaceflight in general, is far from complete.

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# A MODEL OF DISCOURSE SEGMENTATION FOR TRANSLATED CORPORA IN RHETORICAL STRUCTURE THEORY

ÉVA VIOLA

## 1. Introduction

Discourse segmentation and the delimitation of elementary discourse units (EDU) are often debated issues in Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST), as there is a lack of consensus about this elementary step of Rhetorical Structure Analysis. The segmentation of translated texts shows even more delicacies: while comparing source and target texts, we encounter inevitable structural differences between languages, which may have an impact on the rhetorical structure. Therefore, it is critical to define the precise rules for the segmentation and harmonization of comparable parallel texts.

The present paper is a preliminary pilot study that aims to add specifications to the notion of the elementary unit, the minimal piece of text that still has a rhetorical function. A brief overview of the theoretical background around EDUs is followed by the presentation of empirical research, where English texts and their translated Hungarian counterparts are segmented and compared. The current research identifies the segments first as clauses, then sentences, and compares the implications of the different ways of segmentation. Our aim is to find the most convenient way of segmentation for the purpose of translation analysis. While the act of translation will inevitably lead to non-correspondences between the segments of the ST and the TT, we are focusing on the precise application of Károly's method to ensure comparability of corpora, as well as the identification of the translation strategies resulting in shifts between the two languages. The outcome of the analysis might show the consequences of the translator's choices in the rhetorical structures of texts.

We base our analysis on the existing literature, on studies carried out by different authors who have used RST for analyzing multilingual corpora and performed segmentation of texts to enable comparable analysis. Rhetorical Structure Analysis is conducted on a text-type that previously has not been investigated in the ENG>HUN language pair. The model presented in this study could offer a useful tool in translation practice and training.

## 2. Rhetorical Structure Theory in Translation Studies

Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST) describes textual organization through the relationships among the discursive or rhetorical elements, and is well applicable for analyzing translated texts (see e.g. da Cunha and Iruskieta 2010, Iruskieta et al. 2014, Károly 2014, 2015, Mann and Thompson 1986, 1988, Taboada and Mann 2006a, b). The theory was first published in 1986 (Mann and Thompson), extended in 1988, and then further developed by Taboada and Mann. Originally created, the theory was intended to help

automatic text summarization and “provide a bird’s eye view of a text, pinpointing the most important parts, and helping to make explicit some of the implicit relations present” (Taboada and Mann 2006: 448). However, making explicit the inherent relationships between the separate parts of texts may also supply information about the functional equivalence of texts in translation.

## 2.1. A Brief Introduction to Basic Concepts in RST

In the following paragraphs, a brief definition of the main concepts is provided. The basic notions, as they were conceived by Mann and Thompson (1986), are spans, relational propositions, and rhetorical structure trees.

**Relational propositions** (RP) are inherent relations existing between two parts of texts, which constitute the rhetorical structure of a text, showing its cognitive framework. There are thirty-two relationships identified by Mann and Thompson (1988), the labels are capitalized, for example, MOTIVATION, BACKGROUND, CONTRAST. These labels try to express the character of the relationship which connects the two parts of the discourse.

The parts of the discourse, which are connected by RPs, are identified as **spans**. These consist of **nuclei** and **satellites**. The nucleus is the central part of the span, and satellites complete the information contained in the nucleus. Spans are very often called units in the literature. The highest level of units is usually the entire text itself in relation with the title. Then subsections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses can stand in the role of units, depending on the level of hierarchy within the text structure. The minimal unit, called **Elementary Discourse Unit**, (to be discussed in more detail in section 2.2) is a notion introduced by Carlson and Marcu, researchers in machine translation (Carlson et al. 2003).

**Rhetorical structure trees** are models representing the hierarchical organization of a piece of discourse. In the RS Tree, the relational propositions are visualized as they constitute the rhetorical structure of the text. In the rhetorical structure tree, nuclei are signaled by vertical lines, while satellites are connected to them by arrows.

## 2.2. In Search of the Minimal Unit

Mann and Thompson write that rhetorical structure analysis investigates relationships between parts of text, potentially composed of many clauses which do not have to be adjacent ones. At the same time, we must note that where there is “a relation between parts of a text, the arguments [...] are not the literal text portions being related, but [...] conceptual entities [...] derived from the text portions (Mann and Thompson 1986: 59). The authors cited discuss relationships between text units in larger texts and argue that the clauses are not necessarily the basic units of texts. Even if some of the relationships between parts of texts can also be found between clauses, Mann and Thompson claim that since their interest concerns what makes texts work, there is no reason to restrict their attention to clauses. Mann and Thompson do believe that clauses are the basic units of texts; however, in the case of longer texts, the units can be more extensive.

The questions that arose during later research, apart from the inclusion of larger corpora, generated further research on EDUs. In 2003, Carlson et al. built a discourse-tagged corpus, and published their findings and experience with text segmentation. They found it difficult to segment purely on a syntactical basis, as “the boundary between discourse

and syntax can be very blurry” (Carlson et al. 2003: 3). The aim was to capture rhetorical information, independent from syntactic form, but this led to some compromises. The authors finally opted for “the clause as the elementary unit of discourse, using lexical and syntactic clues to help determine boundaries” (Carlson et al. 2003: 4).

Taboada and Mann (2006a) dedicate a subsection to the question of “what counts as a unit of analysis” (2006a: 429). They state that “the usual division rule is that each independent clause, along with its dependencies of any sort, constitutes a unit” (Taboada and Mann 2006a: 429). In another study, Taboada and Gómez-González consider that “texts are [...] made up of parts that stand in rhetorical relations to each other. The parts are typically clauses or sentences and the relations are those that capture the perceived coherence of most texts” (2012: 19). In another article discussing the problem of RST-based segmentation Iruskieta et al. opt for describing “problems arising during the processes of segmentation, and rhetorical annotation” (Iruskieta et al. 2013: 1). They decided that “annotation should take place at the inter-sentential level. In subsequent works, the same corpus is annotated at the intra-sentential level” (Iruskieta et al. 2013: 3). In other words, they considered sentences with a finite verb without syntactic subordination to be elementary units. The authors complemented the rules of segmenting texts by including sentences with, for example, a “to infinitive” or a gerund. Fragments in parentheses also form a unit in themselves. The annotation (for corpus linguistic purposes) was performed by two annotators, and the agreement between them was considered elevated; nevertheless, the segmentation into sentences still contained differences. They were mainly due to different granularity applied by the two annotators.

The analysis of bi- and multilingual translated corpora gave rise to new questions and provided new information concerning the delimitation of EDUs. A language independent theory, like Rhetorical Structure Theory, is applicable for the description of the rhetorical structure of texts in different languages. For example, rhetorical segmentation of an English-Spanish-Basque multilingual corpus of translated parallel texts was analyzed by Mikel Iruskieta and his colleagues. They examined medical abstracts written in English and their translated counterparts in Spanish and Basque. One of the most important contributions to the field is their attempt to delimitate the EDU and propose a segmentation method for the Basque language, as well as to set the principles of the comparison of rhetorical structures across different languages. They also have shown that “a different translation strategy affects the rhetorical structure of the text” (da Cunha and Iruskieta 2010: 582).

They consider the clause as the elementary discourse unit but have proposed detailed principles for the delimitation of clauses. In their study, they focus on the determination of the limits of the EDU in an abstract way, then they segmented the texts only focusing on syntactic clues (2010: 566). The latter process followed two main principles: “EDUs must include a finite verb (that is, they have to constitute a sentence or a clause) and must show, strictly speaking, a rhetorical relation” (2010: 567). Following the segmentation, performed by two annotators on twenty abstracts of the corpus, the units of the Spanish and Basque abstracts had to be homogenized in order to minimize the noise that could arise from a different segmentation. The homogenization was completed manually, as there was no automatic tool to compare rhetorical trees in different languages (2010: 571). The researchers labeled the segments and marked the rhetorical relations between them. Unfortunately, they did not describe the method of labeling the units in the different languages, therefore, the discrepancies in segmentation between the languages due to translation strategies could not be compared systematically.

In the quantitative analysis, the authors concentrate on the evaluation and recall to contrast the EDU segmentation of both annotators. The qualitative analysis includes observing specific cases in which annotators differed. The authors observe that “when homogenizing EDUs, some aspects contradicted the established guidelines of segmentation. This is due to the fact that translation strategies also affect segmentation” (2010: 574).

Based on the research presented here, we will see that segmentation can be different in the two languages, and this is most often due to linguistic differences, changes in the rhetorical devices, and, finally translator’s choices. These alterations between the segmentation of two texts—a ST and a TT—are the shifts that will be presented and discussed in the Results and Analysis section of the present paper.

Since linguistic discrepancies may result in the lack of correspondence between EDUs across languages, the researcher needs to annotate the units in order to facilitate the comparison of the piece of discourse in the languages under study. Károly (2014, 2015) developed a method for annotating sentences and clauses: she assigned numbers (1, 2, 3...etc.) to sentences, and letters in alphabetical order (a, b, c... etc.) when the sentence contained more than one clause (Károly 2014: 203). She analyzed news texts translated from Hungarian into English and investigated relational proposition models. Through her approach, she identified shifts in the relational propositions which modify the rhetorical structure of the target text (2014: 228).

As for the present paper, the research concentrated on the examination of segmentation methods, namely the advantages and disadvantages of segmentation into sentences on the one hand, and clauses on the other. Differences (shifts) were expected to emerge during segmentation into clauses and not sentences; however, these never occurred on higher levels of the rhetorical structure trees. In other words, even if there were shifts in the segmentation of texts as well as in the relational propositions linking the segmented units, these did not affect the overall meaning of the text: functional equivalence was not altered.

### **3. Method and Corpora**

The investigated source texts are short persuasive writings intended to teach the Bible to teenagers: Christian religious texts, explaining Bible verses to young people. It is an online edition of *Word 4U2Day* (2015, April 24-30), edited on a daily basis by the United Christian Broadcasting corporation. The texts are written by Bob Gass, a protestant pastor, and translated into Hungarian by UCB Hungary. Some of the translators are permanently employed, others are voluntary translators, but all texts are revised by an editor. The texts in English are short, count fifteen sentences/thirty clauses on average, their general structure contains 1) a Bible verse; 2) title; 3) the text explaining or developing the idea contained in the Bible verse; and 4) a short section entitled „And now?“, where practical suggestions are provided in order to enhance the ideas explained before. In general, the texts explain the Bible in a lively way, in a youthful style, communicating enthusiasm, persuasion. For this pilot study, five English source texts and their Hungarian target texts were analyzed. For a deeper analysis, a quantitative approach proved insufficient. Consequently, the study is posited in a qualitative paradigm.

The analysis of the above-mentioned texts was carried out in two phases: first, EDUs were identified as sentences, then labeled, eventually relational propositions were identified and rhetorical structure trees were drawn on the basis of the English texts as well as of their Hungarian counterparts. The principles of segmentation followed those of Iruskieta et al., to be discussed in detail in the next section (for the English texts). The segmented English texts with the relational propositions identified and their Hungarian counterparts were then compared, and the shifts were discerned. In phase two, the same texts were re-segmented into clauses or clause length units, followed by the relational proposition identification and RS Tree building as in phase one.

In order to characterize the texts discussed, it is interesting to have a glimpse at the relational propositions which connect the units. The following types of relational propositions were identified in the corpus: BACKGROUND, CONTRAST, ENABLEMENT, JUSTIFICATION, SOLUTIONHOOD, MOTIVATION, PREPARATION, CIRCUMSTANCE, CONDITION, ELABORATION, EXPLANATION, PURPOSE, RESTATEMENT, SEQUENCE. These relational propositions were present in both the English and the Hungarian texts. However, there was a difference in the frequency of appearance of the relational propositions. The most frequent relational proposition was MOTIVATION in the English texts, while JUSTIFICATION and BACKGROUND were found the most common in the Hungarian texts.

## 4. Results and Analysis

### 4.1. Segmentation into Sentences

This stage of the segmentation was based on the division of the text on a syntactical – typographical principle. Prior to embarking on a research project, the validity of segmentation of a text based on RST should be considered. In the current research, the method of research was judged to be applicable, because 1) sentences are constituent units of the text; 2) they have a clear functional integrity; 3) and they fulfill not only syntactical but also semantic and rhetorical function. A difficulty we have encountered during the analysis is also mentioned by Carlson et al. when they explain that “separating rhetorical from syntactic analysis is not always easy” (2003: 4). Resolving the questions of where syntax ends and where rhetoric starts demanded some compromises.

Harmonization of the labeled English and Hungarian sentences was interesting from the point of view that the translator sometimes chose to omit a sentence, or to connect two sentences in translation. These changes in the number of sentences are displayed in Table 1.

Text	N of sentences in ST	N of sentences in TT	Shifts
Text 1	18	18	0
Text 2	12	13	+1
Text 3	21	23	+2
Text 4	13	12	-1
Text 5	12	11	-1

Table 1. Changes in the number of sentences

While Text 1 does not include any shifts in the number of units, the other four show interesting cases of shifts. Text 2 shows a case when the sentence in the ST counts for one, while the same sentence in TT is split into two sentences.

**Example 1.** (from Text 2)

(10) Abraham discovered this to be true: ‘By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going’ (Hebrews 11:8 NIV).

(10) Ábrahám megtapasztalta, hogy ez így igaz.

(10+) „Hit által engedelmeskedett Ábrahám, amikor elhívatott, hogy induljon el arra a helyre, amelyet örökségül fog kapni. És elindult, nem tudva, hova megy. (Zsidók 11:8)”

The introductory phrase (*Abraham discovered this to be true:*) is anaphoric, which is demonstrated by the use of a colon and of the demonstrative pronoun “this.” In the Hungarian text, sentence (10) ends with a full stop, the sentence is the JUSTIFICATION of the previous one from the rhetorical point of view. The Bible verse is added in sentence (10+) (the + marks here that there is a change in the text in comparison with the English ST). The functional equivalence in the Hungarian text is still kept, but the rhythm of the text is altered, whereby the shorter sentences give a more dynamic impression. (Please note that Bible verses, as they are cited, count for only one discourse unit, the research does not include the segmentation of Bible verses, as they represent a unique type of translation.)

In contrast, Text 4 included a merge of 2 sentences in the Hungarian TT, as it is shown in the example below.

**Example 2.** (from Text 4)

(8) But unlike a school teacher, He won’t demand that you pay attention.

(8) Nem követeli tőled, hogy figyelj oda rá, mint ahogy egy iskolai tanár szokta mondani,

(9) If you want to be a disciple (or a ‘learner’) of Jesus, you need to show up every day for class, not just every once in a while.

(9x) *de* ha Jézus tanítványa („diákja”) akarsz lenni, akkor minden nap el kell jönnöd az órákra, nem elég, ha csak hébe-hóba betoppansz.

Sentences (8) and (9) are connected by the relation CONTRAST. The mark (9x) in the Hungarian text indicates that here a sentence will be “missing” from the RS tree, and this also means that a strong CONTRAST relation will be lost. However, the contrastive function is well preserved inside the sentence, it is even explicitly expressed by the added conjunction *de* (but). The relation CONTRAST has a strong rhetorical function; therefore, it is of primary importance to make it visible in the RS Tree. The relation will not be omitted if segmentation is carried out on the basis of clauses.

In the following example, the connection of two sentences in translation, again, means the omission of an important relational proposition from the rhetorical structure. Here, in Example 3., the relational proposition connecting sentence (8) to sentence (9) in the English text (Text 5) is CONSEQUENCE, while the Hungarian text connects the two sentences by the conjunction *és* (and), thus creating a sentence (8). The relational proposition is conserved within the sentence, between the two clauses in Hungarian; however,

this relational proposition will not be visible in the hierarchy of the text. We must consider it to be a loss, if segmentation is sentence-based.

**Example 3.** (Text 5)

(8) It meant that when the time finally came, they were ready.

(9) He could say to them, 'you will do the same works I have done, and even greater' (John 14:12 NLT).

(8) Ezért, amikor végül elérkezett az ideje, készen álltak,

(9x) és ezt mondhatta nekik: „...aki hisz énbenem, azokat a cselekedeteket, amelyeket én teszek, szintén megteszi, sőt ezeknél nagyobbakat is tesz” (János 14:12).

Due to constraints of space, we will not be able to show complete rhetorical structure trees in this paper. In spite of the presence of several shifts between the rhetorical structure of the ST and the TT, RS Trees of the investigated texts do not show differences that could alter their overall structure. The alterations shown in the examples demonstrated above do not affect the higher levels of the discourse structure, hence do not cause radical changes in the rhetorical structure. The functional equivalence of the TTs has also been maintained.

As the examined texts count for longer texts, the number of the relational propositions is easier to handle if segmentation is sentence-based, and this is a great advantage of this discourse segmentation method. It seems also possible to compare the overall cognitive framework of the texts, which could be one of the factors contributing to the analysis of functional equivalence. Nevertheless, translation strategies could not be studied in a detailed way using segmentation into sentences. For this reason, segmentation into clauses seems to be a more effective method.

#### 4.2. Segmentation into Clauses

Segmenting texts into clauses or clause-like units is widely used in rhetorical analysis, as it provides more detailed information about text structure than segmentation into sentences. The clauses are delimited based on syntactical and, at the same time, semantic principles, they and their position inside the sentence have an important role in the semantic structure of the sentence. Therefore, clauses as units have an impact on the rhetorical structure. At the same time, taking clauses and clause-like units as elementary discourse units, we encounter a major difficulty: in the case of translated corpora, the boundaries of the investigated clauses do not always correspond, due to structural (systemic) differences between languages. Therefore, while labeling the corpora, maintaining the comparability of corpora is a task of utmost importance. Labeling was performed according to the method described by Károly (2014): sentences were numbered and the clauses matched with letters in alphabetical order (see the examples below). This method proved to facilitate a systematical and accurate matching of the clauses.

In the present corpus, we proceeded in the delimitation of clauses according to the main principles of Carlson et al. (2003), who stated that every EDU should have either a finite verb, or a complete infinitive, or a gerund. These rules were also followed and complemented by Iruskieta et al. (2014). They complemented, for example, the case of parentheticals: the clauses in parenthesis were taken for a clause in itself (or more clauses, depending on the presence of a verb, an infinitive or a gerund). In contrast, in the case of reported speech, Carlson et al. did not treat the main sentence as a separate EDU, as they

believe that “reported and quoted speech do not stand in rhetorical relation to the reporting units that introduce them, and thus should not constitute separate EDUs” (Iruskieta et al. 2014: 9). Therefore, in the current research, we handled the main sentence of reported speech as one segment together with the quoted sentence.

Truncated EDUs, such as inserted units or interjections were also found in the corpora: the texts were written for teenagers, and contain numerous elements which characterize young adult discourse, such as “Well, ...”, “Right!”, “Absolutely!”, and so on.

In the analyzed parallel translated texts, we found 36 differences in the segmentation of the texts into clauses. The cause for shifts has been classified as follows:

**1. Language Structure (LS):** structural differences between languages (which are obligatory and, for this reason, are not disputable:

**Example 4.** (Text 4)

(11) It means trusting ...

(11a) Azt is jelenti,

(11b) hogy bizol benne, ...

In Example 4, ‘trusting’ is translated by a separate clause *hogy bizol benne* ‘that you trust him’, so in clause-based segmentation there is a shift in TT. The relational proposition in this case is SEQUENCE. This type of shifts is inevitable because of language system differences, but it does not influence the rhetorical structure of the text.

**2. Translation strategy (TS):** ten of the shifts were due to the translator’s choice of TS, where the text was reorganized in such a way that the clauses were not parallel.

**3. Rhetorical structure (RS):** In the case of ten shifts, we can observe changes in the rhetorical structure.

The shifts in segmentation in the present corpus are summarized in Table 2. It contains the number of clauses in the five English texts, as well as in the Hungarian counterparts. Shifts are displayed in separate columns, according to their type, as described above.

Text	N of clauses in ENG	N of clauses in HUN	Shifts due to LS	Shifts due to TS	Shifts due to RS
Text 1	39	41	2	4	2
Text 2	25	34	7	0	2
Text 3	37	53	1	3	4
Text 4	28	33	3	1	1
Text 5	28	30	3	2	1
Summary	157	191	16	10	10

**Table 2.** Clause-based segmentation: summary of the shifts

Example 5 is a typical one for shifts due to TS. The English sentence is composed of one clause, containing 1 finite verb. The Hungarian version is split up into two clauses, 3a and 3b, due to the translator’s choice to make the originally elliptical English sentence — *szunnyadt* — (slept) lexically explicit “after weeks in the dark, suffocating underground”. Relational proposition here is BACKGROUND.

**Example 5.** (Text 1)

(3) A mud-covered and unnoticed seed becomes a giant, fruit-bearing plant after weeks in the dark, suffocating underground.

(3a) Egy sárba mélyedve észrevétlen megbúvó magocska hatalmas gyümölcsöző fává lesz,

(3b) miután hosszú hetekig szunnyadt a levegőtlen sötétségben.

The addition of new elements into the target text, intended to explain something, is the case in Example 6., where clause (8a) is entirely missing from the English ST. The Hungarian TT contains it, but while in the English text, clause (8b) is related to clause (7) by the relation BACKGROUND (nucleus (8b), satellite (7)), in Hungarian, clause (7) is related to (8a)-(8b) by the relation BACKGROUND, (8a) is related to (8b) by the relation CONTRAST ((8b) is motivated by (8a)).

**Example 6.** (Text 3)

(8a) –

(8b) She approached a judge,

(8c) and she decided she wasn't going to give up pleading with him

(8d) until he gave in

(8e) and said: '...'

(8a) **Az ügye egy gonosz bíró elé került,**

(8b) ezért az asszony elment a bíróhoz,

(8c) és addig zörgetett nála, és addig kérlelte,

(8d) amíg az végül beadta a derekát

(8e) és így szólt: '...'

Why did the translator add clause (8a) into the text? The main idea of the extract is to highlight the goodness of God in contrast to the behavior of the evil judge. Hence, the emphasis is on the sharp contrast between God and the judge, and the TT here contains an extra item of emphasis. However, the conjunction *ezért* (therefore) (also added to the TT) is somehow confusing at this place. The idea of contrast (the relational proposition between the two segments (8a) and (8b) is CONTRAST), is not properly expressed by this conjunction: *de* (but) would be more appropriate here.

Segments added to the text in order to give more emphasis to the main idea of the text were identified in 10 other cases in the corpus. Such are examples 6 and 7, where the translator chose to reformulate, to repeat a clause in the TT. In both examples, the relational proposition is RESTATEMENT, and it is used to give the text a more persuasive character.

**Example 7.** (Text 4)

(10a) True discipleship is a 360-degree thing.

(10b) –

(10a) A valódi tanítványság teljes körű,

(10b) **mindenre kiterjed.**

The addition of clause (10b) *mindenre kiterjed* 'involves everything' had apparently no other reason than reinforcing and explaining thoroughly the character of discipleship and has a pure rhetorical function.

**Example 8.** (Text 5)

(11a) It means trusting

(11b) –

(11c) that the Teacher knows what he is talking about.

(11a) Azt is jelenti, hogy bízol benne,

(11b) **elhiszed,**

(11c) hogy a tanárod tudja, mit beszél.

The example above shows the same case, (11b) *elhiszed* (you believe in it) is added to the TT for rhetorical reasons. It uses the verb *hinni* (to believe), which is of crucial importance from the point of view of the whole text, consequently, the choice of this verb seems to be a conscientious decision.

Following the cases of explicitation and addition, the three cases where the rhetorical structure of the text was influenced by the omission are to be analyzed. In Example 8., the two modifications occur on a lower level of the text hierarchy, but this induces a stylistic alteration. It is the case of interjections and particles, very typical stylistic devices of the youngish text repertoire. By the omission of the interjection and the particle, which have a strong rhetorical function of the text, the part of text loses the expression of enthusiasm, surprise (MOTIVATION between (10a) and (10b)), and the interactive character of the text (RESTATEMENT between (10b) and (10b)) which is intended to emphasize the important ideas of the text. Instead, the Hungarian rendition receives a more didactical tone, being related to the previous clause by VOLITIONAL RESULT.

#### Example 9. (Text 3)

(10a) Ace,	(10a) –
(10b) what a great attitude to prayer,	(10b) Ilyennek kéne lennie az imádsághoz való hozzáállásunknak!
(10c) right?	(10c) –

#### Example 10. (Text 1)

(16a) He's working through you	(16a) Ő most is dolgozik benned,
(16b) as we speak,	(16b) amíg ezt az elmélkedést olvasod.
(16c) you know...	(16c) –

In Example 9., the omission concerns a verb phrase, “*you know*”, which ought to give a more personal and interactive character to the text. The clause is omitted in the Hungarian text, the relational proposition RESTATEMENT (linking (16b) to (16c)) is missing from the TT rhetorical structure.

## 5. Conclusion

The paper discussed the issue of segmentation in Rhetorical Structure Analysis. At the source of the theory, Mann and Thompson determined the clauses or clause-like units as the elementary units of the discourse, but did not exclude sentences as possible elementary units in case of the analysis of longer texts. During the analysis of translation strategies and techniques, we segmented the texts of the corpus into sentences and then into clauses, and we compared the usability of the two ways of segmentation. If the text is segmented into sentences, the rhetorical structure built up of relational propositions shows the rhetorical (cognitive) structure of the text without too much detail. The granularity of the analysis is appropriate to compare the functional equivalence of the ST and the TT.

The Rhetorical Structure Analysis of a bilingual corpus performed on a clause-based segmentation allows to observe the shifts occurred in the rhetorical structure of the text during the process of translation. The model compares the segments of the texts, checks the differences between the segments in the ST and the TT, and identifies the shifts. The determination of the relational propositions in the hierarchy of the text offers

the researcher the possibility to view what is “inside the text,” in other words, to make the cognitive framework visible. We believe that the method is convenient for the comparison of STs and TTs from the point of view of text coherence, text tone and certain elements of style as well (didactic tone, language of young adults and so on).

To conclude, when EDUs are clauses or clause-like units, the research method shows the various modifications due to shifts in the rhetorical structure. We found that the various differences between the segmentation of the ST and TT were due either to language system differences (which are obligatory and therefore are outside the scope of the present translation research), or they are due to the use of certain translation strategies. The cases where the rhetorical structure was affected by shifts are illustrated in the above sections. However, the shifts we saw did not influence the functional equivalence of the texts, even if stylistic modifications were noted. These seemed to be trying to moderate the charismatic way of expression of the ST, found maybe too personal or lacking in seriousness for Hungarian pastors/evangelizers.

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# THE MODIFICATION OF TRANSLATION UNIVERSALS IN REVISED TEXTS

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## 1. Introduction

One of the core research areas in Translation Studies seeks to determine the general linguistic features of translated texts. Several researchers find this quest for translation universals too ambitious, and thus caution against it (Chesterman 2004), and warn about formulating trivialities (Toury 2004). However, empirical studies have found evidence for the presence of certain characteristic linguistic features in translated texts (Laviosa 1998; 2009), which are more common in translation than in original writing, regardless of the systemic features of the language pair in question and the direction of translation. These linguistic features include simplification, the avoidance of repetitions, explicitation, transfer of textual characteristics of the source language i.e. interference, the unusual distribution of lexical items, conventionality, normalization, the lack of target language specific unique items and “levelling out” (Baker 1995; Laviosa 1998; 2009).

Analyses of translation universals, however, often fail to take into account that the corpora on which the research is based usually consist of revised translations, which not only exhibit traits of the translators’ strategy and their transfer operations, but also those of the revisers. This raises the question how revisers modify the translators’ operations—if they modify them at all—in the target text. It is also unclear whether the features are deemed to be the result of translation i.e. the linguistic patterns characteristic of translated texts are in fact universal features unique to translated texts only, or whether they should be examined in a broader domain of communication—including the revision of translated texts.

While analysing translation universals, I started to speculate that revisional modifications that are inexplicable, controversial or often deemed unnecessary might actually be linked to the general linguistic features described above. Research in Translation Studies (e.g. Levý 1965, Tirkkonen-Condit 2004, Chesterman 2010) suggests that the so called translation universals—often considered as the distinguishing features of translated texts—primarily characterize “mediocre” translations, which are not necessarily erroneous or incorrect texts, yet seem to lack the qualities of authentic writings; thus they may be considered “quasi-correct” (Klaudy 1988). Revisers working with translations and seeking to correct texts by applying global strategies at macro-level (Horváth 2009; Robin 2016) while bearing in mind the norms of the target language (Mossop 2007) might also modify translation “anomalies” that translators might be unaware of. After all, these “anomalies” are not actual grammatical or spelling mistakes but linguistic features characteristic of the so-called “third code” (Frawley 1984). Thus, it is worth taking a closer look at the actual work of revisers to see whether they influence the dominance of universals, as some of the phenomena attributed to the translation process may in fact belong to editing procedures, equally a part of both translation and revision.

## 2. Translation Universals Revisited

In order to be able to examine the effects of revisional modifications on the so-called translation universals, I first found it necessary to revisit the work that has been done within the descriptive paradigm in Translation Studies, regarding the general linguistic features of translations. As several researchers point out, the discussion about typical translational features has been problematic: the definition of translation universals is far from being established within the field (see Toury 2004; Chesterman 2004, 2010; Pym 2008; Malmkjær 2008), it is not clear whether we should be talking about *absolute* or *statistical* universals, which also allow exceptions (Chesterman 1993). Yet another theoretical problem is the question of the exact conceptual level where the potential translation universals should be defined: translational laws (Toury 1995), linguistic textual features (Baker 1995; Pym 2008) or universal transfer operations (Klaudy 2002); these concepts cannot be considered synonyms under the broad umbrella term of translation universals. We should rather assume a hierarchical, cause and effect relationship between them.

While comparing Toury's (1995) translational laws with the universals suggested by Baker (1995), Pym (2008) points out further conceptual and terminological overlaps and contradictions, stating that all translation universals basically say the same, or outright contradict each other. When suggesting a hierarchy of translation phenomena, Pym concludes that simplification might be the comprehensive category for all universals (2008: 321), but the results of the research so far done into universals indicate that the "fundamental universal" may in fact be the operational combination of explicitation and implicitation. In line with Klaudy's (1998, 2002) observations that the lexical and grammatical transfer operations involving explicitation and implicitation result in simplification and redundancy in the target text, we can safely say that failing to perform implicitation due to interference may also produce a target text more explicit than texts originally written in the target language (pseudo-explicitation), and the omission of explicitation operations can lead to the underrepresentation of "unique" target language elements.

In an attempt to clarify the theoretical problems and contradictions, I will try to summarize the theoretical conclusions drawn so far from the description of translation features, as well as the results of the research into linguistic phenomena and laws that characterize translations in general, then I will synthesize and graphically represent the lessons learned in a theoretical model. The model I will use to interpret the circumstances of the formation of translation universals does not actually contain a lot of genuinely "new" ideas. All the major points necessary for highlighting the links between the general characteristics of translated texts and for clarifying the interrelationship of the seemingly contradictory phenomena have already been discussed in the theories and the conclusions drawn from previous research in the field. I will simply aim to connect and graphically represent the conclusions.

### 2.1. Toury's (1995) Translational Laws and Gravitation

The so-called "third code" is produced as a result of the combined impact of the source text and the target language norms, however, it differs from both in its features (Frawley 1984). Halverson (2003) attempts to explain translation universals through the general characteristics of human cognitive processes, and—in line with Frawley's (1984) theory—

views translation as a process between two opposing gravitational forces. The pull of the two forces can result in excessive adherence to the norms, i.e. target language pull, or the unusual distribution of certain target language elements attributed to interference, i.e. source language pull. However, the force of the gravitational pull may be considerably influenced by other factors, like the context of the translation event (Halverson 2003: 221).

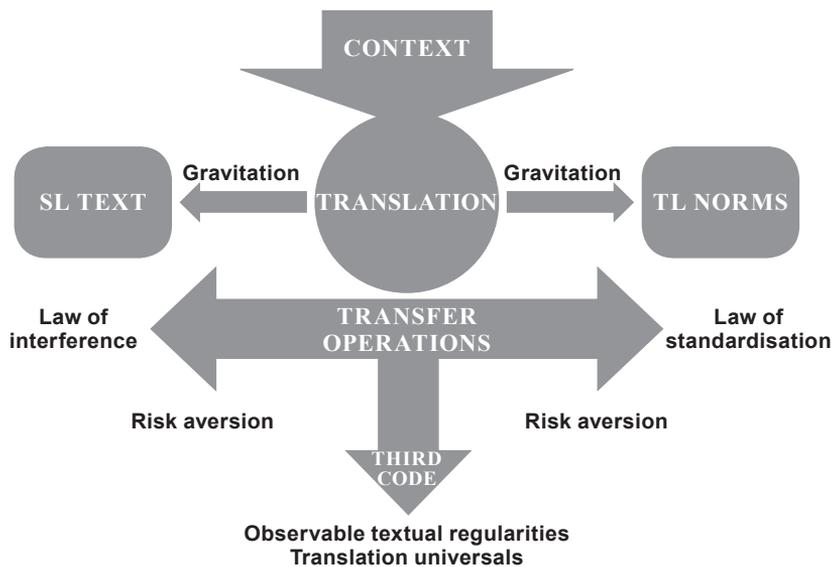
The two forces pointing towards opposing gravitational fields are in accordance with Toury's (1995) theory about the laws of translation: the laws of growing standardization and interference. In fact, Halverson (2003: 218) draws a parallel between the two lines of thinking. The law of growing standardization stipulates that the idiosyncratic features of the source text are frequently modified during translation in favor of the general expressive devices common in the target language (Toury 1995: 268), in line with the gravitational pull. And according to the law of interference, translators adapt the features characteristic of the source text's structure to the target text (Toury 1995: 75). The interference may be either negative or positive: the transfer is negative if the translated text deviates from the established practice governed by the set of target language rules. The interference can be considered positive if frequent elements of the target language are more likely to occur in the translation due to the features of the source text. The latter corresponds to the source language gravitational pull—as defined by Halverson (2003)—that is behind the creation of the translated text, while negative interference means an extreme manifestation of the law, and it results in an incorrect text that does not conform to the system of the target language. Nonetheless, interference may be strategically offset by translators, according to Toury (1995: 273), depending on their professional experience and knowledge.

Toury (1995: 271–278) points out that in the context of translation, the actual occurrence of the probabilistic laws formulated by him is further influenced by socio-cultural, extralinguistic factors. Among other things, Toury claims that the more peripheral translations are in the target language culture, the more the translated texts endeavor to conform to the general, established practice of the system of the target language, i.e. the law of standardization does not exert its influence on the translation process and thus on the produced text in all cases or with the same intensity. The translation context includes several further linguistic and extralinguistic factors that influence the process: these include the competence of the translator (Toury 1995; Klaudy 1996; Englund Dimitrova 2005; Makkos and Robin 2014); individual translation tendencies (Saldanha 2008); whether the text is overt or covert translation (House 1997); political beliefs (Bánhegyi 2011); the direction of translation (House 2004; Baumgarten 2007). Pym states that since we are talking about probabilistic translation laws depending on several contextual factors, it is perfectly natural to observe conflicting tendencies at the level of textual features and the linguistic variables of the translational text (Pym 2008: 24)—together they influence and are responsible for the make-up of the resulting translated text.

## 2.2. A New Theoretical Model for the Origin of Translation Universals

The gravitational pull described above, exerted depending on the translation context, and the corresponding probabilistic laws of translation, each pointing in the other direction, are in fact the constraints that are inherent in translation (Baker 1995) and that produce the translational text with its varying linguistic features. Abiding the laws, translators

perform lexical and grammatical transfer operations (Klaudy 2003) in order to adapt the meaning of the source text to the target language. Among transfer operations, lexical specification, division, addition, compensation and grammatical specification, division, elevation and addition entail explicitation, while grammatical and lexical generalization, contraction, lowering and omission entail implicitation. Transposition and replacement can be linked to both supercategories of the operations, i.e. to both implicitation and explicitation (Klaudy 1998, 2002). The operations that entail explicitation and implicitation may result in simplification, redundancy and disambiguation in the translated text (Klaudy 2002; Pápai 2004). They are furthermore responsible for the creation of the universal textual features of translations, the concrete linguistic phenomena that can be measured by scientific research tools. *Figure 1.* below attempts to illustrate the circumstances of the formation of translation universals, based on the relationship between the previously discussed gravitational forces.



**Figure 1.** The model for the inception of translation universals

The execution of optional transfer operations entailing explicitation and implicitation is governed by norms (Weissbrod 1992: 155), i.e. their use is influenced by all the factors that have an impact on the laws guiding them. Pym (2008) assumes a universal motivation behind the whole process of translation that manifests itself in translators' risk-aversion: translators perform operations that eliminate the risks jeopardizing successful communication. These operations, however, can cause text-level "shifts" (i.e. divergencies from the source text: S-universals) and "drifts" (i.e. differences between translations and authentic texts: T-universals) in the translated text (Chesterman, 2010), not only through their excessive use, but also when translators fail to implement them, thereby creating the so-called "third code".

As the general characteristics of translation are usually mentioned when differentiating between original and translated texts, translators need to be aware of them so that

they can offset such characteristics by employing translators' strategies when needed (Chesterman 2010). Although the operations entailing explicitation and implicitation can be linked to the risk-aversion of translators, they can pose covert risks as well. Of course, the degree of risk depends on the type and intended purpose of the texts: excessive redundancy in a literary text is perhaps a great error, while the concretization of a political document based on personal interpretation may also have severe repercussions. Thus, we need to call the attention of prospective and practicing translators to these risks, and in fact, we need to point them out to active revisers, as they can modify the linguistic variety as well as the redundancy and unnecessary disambiguation, optimizing the explicitness and coherence of the translated text. The translators' "disease" (Levý 1965) has to be cured, the "losses" (Blum-Kulka 1986) need to be offset, and in the translation process this task—in addition to making the obligatory corrections—falls to the reviser who works on the text.

### 3. Objectives, Questions and Hypotheses

The aim of the present study was to determine what happens to translation universals during revision, whether revisers modify the—presumably—general linguistic characteristics typical to all translations while revising a text, and if so, to what extent. My research focuses on revisional modifications, which will be analyzed to determine whether they modify the linguistic features mentioned among translation universals. I will not seek to ascertain whether translation universals manifest themselves in the texts of the corpus used. As a starting point, I take it as evident that the translation phenomena discussed in the literature are, to some extent, in fact relevant to the analyzed translated texts. Based on the transfer operations identified during the contrastive text analysis, it is possible to speculate on the presence and dominance of translation universals in the corpus; these, however, will need to be explored in another empirical study.

In view of the above, my research was primarily concerned with whether revisers modify the typical linguistic characteristics of translations, the so-called translation universals, while revising a text. Translation universals might be considered deviations from target language norms, since they distinguish translated texts from authentic writings (Baker 1995; Laviosa 1998). On the other hand, revision can be described in terms of conformance to these norms (Mossop 2007). Thus, we might hypothesize that revisers—besides checking for equivalence, spelling and grammar mistakes—make modifications in the texts to bring them closer to the target language norms, thereby reducing the dominance of the linguistic phenomena classified as translation universals.

### 4. Research Methodology

The empirical research was based on quantitative and qualitative methods. It thus combines the advantages of objective, quantifiable research approaches with focused, in-depth methods, ensuring validity and reliability. Computer-aided analysis was performed on the entire revisional, parallel corpus. Shifts at text-level were sought to be identified in the whole corpus. In order to draw general conclusions, the revisional operations causing these text-level phenomena—as revealed by computer-aided analysis—were also needed to be examined.

#### 4.1. The Revisional Corpus

The revisional, parallel corpus contained ten English novels, their Hungarian draft translations and their revised versions. The size of each subcorpus is close to one million words: the English source texts contain 1 094 083 tokens, the draft versions 862 420 and the revised translations 870 765. All the analyzed novels belong to contemporary fiction. This genre is characterized by few constraints: its use of language is not bound by professional terminology, set phrases and canonical forms typical of specialized texts, nor by peculiarities associated with high literature. This makes contemporary fiction ideal for analyzing general trends. According to Künzli (2006), in the case of specialized translations, revisers usually get stuck at the word level, and disregard text-level problems, a claim substantiated by Horváth's (2009) research. As translation universals include text-level phenomena, I needed texts where these are likely to occur.

The texts included in the corpus were selected at random from the Hungarian translations of contemporary novels available in the market. The date of publication, however, the genre and the popularity of the Hungarian edition were taken into account, because I wanted to analyze books that had been well received by the readers and that reflect modern language use. All of the examined Hungarian editions were published in the past twenty years. The translators and revisers of the texts work as professional freelancers. The chosen original novels and their Hungarian editions are the work of ten different authors and ten different pairs of translators and revisers, in order to ensure representativity in the revisional corpus.

#### 4.2. Quantitative Methods

The texts of the ten original novels, draft translations and revised versions were provided by the publishers in digital format, which made it possible to subject them to automatic, computer-aided analyses. Since I did not use annotations in the texts, doing lexicogrammatical analysis was not feasible, but I was still able to carry out certain statistical calculations, following the earlier study done by Laviosa (1998). The computer-aided analysis was aimed at finding out whether there are any statistically measurable differences between draft translations and revised texts, which could point to the modifications of translation universals. The following computerized analyses were performed on the full texts of all the novels and their different versions in the entire revisional corpus: comparing the length of the texts, determining the number of sentences and the average sentence lengths, calculating the standardized type/token ratios and lexical densities, comparing the lexical profile of the texts, and determining the standard deviation of the data.

The above mentioned computer analyses were carried out using Wordsmith Tools 6.0<sup>1</sup>. Significance and standard deviation were calculated by SPSS 14.0, a statistical analysis program. Each version of all ten novels—the English original, the Hungarian draft translation and the revised translation—was stored and analyzed separately, which enabled the comparison of the individual novels and their different versions to make comparisons within each subcorpus.

### 4.3. Qualitative Methods

During the contrastive, qualitative analysis, I examined twenty sentences from each version of the ten separate novels. The twenty sentences were selected from the beginning of each original novel. First, I performed contrastive text analysis on the draft translations and the original source texts to identify the translator's grammatical and lexical transfer operations, based on Klaudy's (2003) typology. The transfer operations include lexical specification, generalization, division, contraction, addition, omission, compensation, transposition, replacement, as well as grammatical specification, generalization, division, contraction, elevation, lowering, addition and omission.

Second, on the basis of Klaudy's (2002) observation that all transfer operations seem to be connected to either explicitation or implicitation, as well as following Klaudy's (1998) and Englund Dimitrova's (2005) earlier typology for explicitation—obligatory, optional, pragmatic, translation-specific; norm-based and strategic—I set up my own categories for the identified implicitating and explicating transfer operations, also suitable for the categorization of revisional modifications (Robin 2014), then grouped them accordingly into three different categories:

**Rule-based:** obligatory; motivated by the morphologic, syntactic and semantic rules of the target language, without them the target text would be incorrect, inadequate and unacceptable.

**Norm-based:** optional; motivated by norms and stylistic preferences, without them the text would not conform to customary target language use and remain “quasi-correct” (Klaudy 1988).

**Strategy-based:** optional operations; motivated by general communicative principles and text building strategies, promoting the processability and readability of the text for readers.

Explicitation is regarded here as a general translational operation, making something more explicit, concrete or emphasized in the target language than it was in the source text, because the added information can be deduced from the given situational context—with implicitation as its operational counterpart. Among transfer operations, lexical specification, division, addition, compensation and grammatical specification, division, elevation, addition entail explicitation, while grammatical and lexical generalization, contraction, lowering and omission entail implicitation. Transposition and replacement is linked to both supercategories of the operations, both implicitation and explicitation (Klaudy 1998; 2002). Examples of how these categories work are presented below in *Table 1*.

Shift	Type	Example
Explicitation	Rule-based	Grammatical addition: E→H; Ø → object suffix
	Norm-based	Grammatical elevation: E→H; infinitive → clause
	Strategy-based	Grammatical division: E→H; sentence → two sentences
Implicitation	Rule-based	Grammatical contraction: E→H; prep. → inflected noun
	Norm-based	Grammatical omission: E→H; personal pronoun → Ø
	Strategy-based	Lexical omission: E→H; redundant information → Ø

**Table 1.** Explicating and implicating transfer operations from English to Hungarian

As a third step, I compared the draft translations to the revised versions to see how revisers modified the translators' operations, and examined whether they performed any explicating or implicating modifications independent from the translators' transfer operations, as well as sorting these modifications into the relevant categories of the above discussed typology. Fourth, I analyzed how the categories of the different operations performed by the translators and revisers were distributed. Finally, I collated the data and interpreted them to determine any general trends, also comparing them with the results of the computer-based analyses to see how the result interact.

## 5. Results and Discussion

In order to examine the full extent to which revision influences the make-up of translated texts—both on a macro- and micro-level—I employed quantitative, computerized methods, as well as contrastive text analyses. The research results are reported in the following subsections, first the data provided by computer-based analysis, then the outcomes of the qualitative examination. The analyses were carried out separately on every text version of the examined ten novels so as to be able to make comparisons within each subcorpus. The detailed data are presented in tables.

### 5.1. Computer-Based Analysis

As a first step, I examined the number of words in each subcorpus—in the source, draft and revised text versions—, as “lengthening” is often mentioned as a generally observable feature of translation (Chesterman 2010) and a frequent sign of explicitation and thus redundancy (Klaudy 1998). The results are demonstrated by *Table 2.* below.

	Source	Draft	Revised
1.	129888	101690	100794
2.	119665	93188	99893
3.	131529	111736	111570
4.	84649	64235	63771
5.	84930	64461	64782
6.	134316	107407	105437
7.	126456	106413	106953
8.	90121	67567	72316
9.	101963	72064	71678
10.	90566	73659	73571
All	1094083	862420	870765

**Table 2.** The number of words in the revisional corpus

The data indicate an overall reduction in the number of words as a result of translation from English to Hungarian, which seems to contradict the generally held observation

of “lengthening” through translation. The reduction is due to the systemic differences between the two languages: English is an analytic language, using a great amount of function words, whereas Hungarian, an agglutinating language, generally employs synthetic structures. Therefore, even if the translators performed explicitation, they did not insert so many additional words into their texts that they would result in a growth in the volume of the translations.

There is no purely linguistic reason, however, for the reduction in the number of words as a result of revision, as both the draft and the revised versions were composed in Hungarian; the fact that there are generally fewer words in the revised versions (in 6 out of 10 cases) seems to indicate an observable endeavor on the part of the revisers to reduce lexical and grammatical redundancy in the translated texts. This tendency may be interpreted as an effort to reduce the effects of overused explicitation and the omission of implicitation (pseudo-explicitation) that result in a more redundant translation than its source equivalent or authentic texts originally written in the target language. Even where the number of words is higher in the revised than in the translated versions, the growth is very small (less than 1%). The only exceptions are Text 2 and 8, where the difference is higher (7%)—here we must assume an undue amount of implicitation or lack of explicitation on the part of the translators. The Mann-Whitney test, however, did not reveal significant differences between the draft translations and their revised versions regarding their length<sup>2</sup>.

As a next step, I measured the type/token ratios in each subcorpus using Wordsmith Tools 6.0 to see how revision affects the vocabulary of the translated texts. The ratio is calculated from the number of word types in the text divided by the overall number of tokens. Laviosa (1998) found that translations generally tend to have a lower type/token ratio than authentic target language writings, indicating lexical simplification as a result of the translation process. *Table 3* demonstrates the standardized results of the computerized analysis. According to the computerized calculations, the overall type/token ratio of the source texts (42.05) is much lower than that of the translated draft versions (58.93), and the same can be said of the individual texts as well. The difference is, again, due to the systemic differences between the two languages; the frequency of functional words in English yield lower type/token ratios than in Hungarian. However, not all translations show the same degree of increase; some translators seem to enrich the vocabulary even more so than mere systemic differences justify, others fail to do so, and then it is up to the reviser to optimize.

	Source	Draft	Revised
1.	43.99	60.96	61.67
2.	38.87	55.96	57.07
3.	43.89	58.11	58.16
4.	38.86	57.17	57.19
5.	43.73	59.58	59.61
6.	42.84	59.12	60.04
7.	43.21	60.66	60.35
8.	43.87	58.90	61.38

	Source	Draft	Revised
9.	40.97	59.07	59.29
10.	42.21	59.16	59.15
All	42.05	58.93	59.41

**Table 3.** Standardized type/token ratios in the revisional corpus

Thus, the analysis has found an even higher overall type/token ratio in revised texts (59.41). Although the data do not indicate significant differences between the draft and revised Hungarian versions—as shown by the significance test<sup>3</sup>—, the results seem to demonstrate a general revisional tendency for enriching the vocabulary of translated texts, as well as for reducing the dominance of lexical simplification generally regarded as a universal of translation. In nearly all of the revised versions, the type/token ratios turned out to be higher than in the drafts, with only two exceptions (Text 7 and 10), and even there the reduction is minor. In the two cases, however, where we witnessed a major growth in the number of words (Text 2 and 8), we can also point out considerably higher type/token ratios—which means that revisers did not increase the grammatical and lexical redundancy of the texts by adding more words, but rather aimed to enrich their vocabulary.

The following step of the analysis focused on the examination of the number of sentences and average sentence length. Laviosa (1998) previously found that sentences in translated texts tend to be longer than in target language authentic writings. Thus, I was interested to see whether revisers shorten the sentences in the translations they worked on. The data from the sentence analysis is shown in *Table 4.*, where we can see a considerable difference between the overall average sentence lengths in the original source texts (10.55) and in the draft translations (8.41); sentences turned out to be shorter in all of the Hungarian texts, without any exceptions, obviously partly due to the already mentioned systemic differences of the two languages involved.

	Source	Draft	Revised
1.	8.20	6.61	6.46
2.	11.44	8.89	9.25
3.	9.92	8.32	8.23
4.	10.75	8.24	8.18
5.	11.05	8.70	8.70
6.	13.46	10.76	10.35
7.	12.24	9.51	9.28
8.	14.75	7.93	9.10
9.	11.34	7.81	7.75
10.	9.88	8.01	7.89
All	10.55	8.41	8.40

**Table 4.** Average sentence length in the revisional corpus

The revised corpus, however, contained even shorter sentences than the translations (8.40)—even though the overall difference between the two subcorpora is very small—, nearly all of the revised versions contained longer sentences than the drafts, with the above mentioned two exceptions, where the revisers found it necessary to enrich the vocabulary. The results therefore seem to show a general strategical tendency to reduce the translational feature identified by Laviosa (1998). We must point out, however, that the differences between the Hungarian text versions did not prove to be significant in the case of average sentence length either, as shown by the significance test.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the analysis has also revealed more sentences in the draft translations than in the source texts, which in this case cannot be attributed anymore to merely language-specific reasons. Translators strategically aim to enhance readability by dividing complex sentences, thus employing explicitation, and revisers seem to do the same; the number of sentences in the revised versions exceeds that of the translations and original source texts.

The examination of lexical density was the next step in the computerized analysis. Lexical density, which is—similarly to the type/token ratio—an indicator of the richness of vocabulary and information load, is calculated from the ratio of lexical, content words to function words. Laviosa (1998) found that translations tend to have lower lexical density than authentic writings, therefore I wished to see if there is an observable growth in lexical density due to the effects of revision. As we can see from the data of *Table 5.*, there is a considerable increase in lexical density as a result of translation, without exception—again mainly due to language-specific reasons. However, it is clear again that not all translations show the same degree of increase.

	Source	Draft	Revised
1.	48	58	59
2.	47	59	60
3.	51	59	57
4.	44	50	51
5.	48	54	55
6.	51	55	56
7.	49	58	57
8.	49	54	53
9.	45	56	58
10.	54	57	56
All	48	56	57

**Table 5.** Lexical density in the revisional corpus

The results show that the greatest increase in lexical density can be detected in the case of Text 2, whereas Text 10 shows the smallest divergence from its source equivalent. This phenomenon might be the result of the different text-building strategies employed by translators, and even the different lexical densities of the source-texts themselves; if

the lexical density of the original source text is relatively low, translators may raise it more significantly in order to normalize the value.

We find a further increase in the overall lexical density of the revised versions, however slight it may be; even the significance test showed the difference to be insignificant.<sup>5</sup> The revised versions, however, generally demonstrate higher lexical density than the drafts (in 6 out of 10 cases). In the cases of Text 7 and 10, we have observed lower type/token ratios as well in the revised versions; their values are amongst the highest in the corpus, there was no need for the revisers to raise them even higher, as they aim for optimality. Although lexical density is lower in the revised version of Text 8 than in its draft, the type/token ratio was much higher; the reviser seems to have enriched the vocabulary even regarding function words. Thus, we may again conclude that revised texts tend to have richer vocabulary than draft translations, their information load is generally higher, once again pointing to the revisional trend of reducing lexical simplification and grammatical redundancy.

In order to find out whether translations are indeed more similar to each other, i.e. more “levelling out” than their source texts—another universal mentioned by Baker (1995)—, and how this is affected by revision, I determined the standard deviation values within the three subcorpus from the data of the type/token ratio, average sentence length and lexical density analyses of each of the three text versions of the ten novels. The standardized results are shown in *Table 6*.

	Source	Draft	Revised
Type/token ratio	1.99	1.58	1.50
Average sentence length	1.27	1.11	1.07
Lexical Density	2.9	2.8	2.7

**Table 6.** Standard deviation in the revisional corpus

Baker (1995) found that translated texts seem to resemble each other more strongly than target language authentic texts, and mentions “levelling out” amongst her proposed universals. The data of the computerized analysis reveal that standard deviation values steadily decrease in the process of translation and even as a result of revision. It seems that instead of reducing the “levelling out” feature, revisers strengthen its dominance, making revised texts even more similar to each other.

As the final step of the computerized analysis, I set up the lexical frequency profiles (Xiao 2010) of the three subcorpus of the examined text versions with the purpose of examining the effects of revision on the core lexical patterns of translations as opposed to authentic texts, as identified by Laviosa (1998): higher repletion rate of high frequency words, greater ratio of high and low frequency words, and fewer lemmas in the list heads. All of these values are considered as a manifestation of the universal feature of lexical simplification in translation.

Full revisional corpus	Source	Draft	Revised
Number of tokens	1094083	862420	870765
High frequency words (types)	122	85	85
High frequency words (tokens)	601636	317539	316652
Cumulative proportion	54.99	36.81	36.36
Repetition rate	4931.44	3735.75	3725.31
High/low frequency words	1.2217	0.5827	0.5714

**Table 7.** Lexical frequency profiles in the full revisional corpus

*Table 7.* shows the results of the examination, and we can see how all the values decreased as a result of translation from English to Hungarian, due to systemic differences. Revisers on the other hand reduced the dominance of simplification in the translated texts: after revision the ratio of frequent words to all words, the cumulative proportion, as well as the repetition rate of high and low frequency words decrease, resulting in richer vocabulary. However, the translation universal of avoiding repetitions (Toury 1995; Baker 1995) is strengthened, not weakened in revised texts, as the analysis shows an even lower repetition rate of high frequency words than in translations.

## 5.2. Contrastive Text Analysis

The second part of the empirical research used contrastive text analysis to be able to look under the surface and find out what kind of transfer operations and modifications translators and revisers employ while working on their texts, which micro-level interventions and modifications might contribute to the above observed, statistically measurable macro-level differences between the translated and revised text versions.

First, I identified the grammatical and lexical transfer operations in twenty sentences from each of the draft and revised versions of the ten novels, compared to the source language originals, based on Klaudy's (2003) typology. The results of the analysis revealed—as demonstrated in *Table 8.*—that translators all in all perform a higher number of operations (1991) on the texts than revisers do (322)—thus, we may conclude that the translated text is more the creation of the translator than the reviser, which is an obvious but often contested fact in the work relationship of translators and revisers. Most of the transfer operations of the translators were grammatical (1482), almost three times more than lexical ones (509); it proves that the transfer between two languages entails a lot more grammatical than lexical shifts. Although revisers also use more grammatical modifications (195) than lexical ones (127), the difference between the two types is considerably smaller in the revised versions; translators have performed the necessary language transfer, revisers may concentrate on the lexical make-up of the translation, on enriching the vocabulary.

	Translators			Revisers		
	Operations	Grammatical	Lexical	Operations	Grammatical	Lexical
1.	222	177	45	45	30	15
2.	184	146	38	74	47	27
3.	198	149	49	12	6	6
4.	216	164	52	16	12	4
5.	122	109	13	18	13	5
6.	194	151	43	46	19	27
7.	179	151	28	24	18	6
8.	210	152	57	53	31	22
9.	208	163	45	25	11	14
10.	158	120	38	9	8	1
All	1991	1482	509	322	195	127

**Table 8.** Grammatical and lexical operations performed in translation and in revision

While translators primarily employed grammatical operations, the ratio of grammatical and lexical modifications carried out by revisers varied according to the translators' operations and the redundancy of the translation. Omission was the most frequently implemented change by revisers in both lexical and grammatical modifications. This is hardly unexpected, as translators seem to make a considerable amount of optional additions when transferring. Specification, generalization and addition were also frequently employed by the revisers. These modifications may increase the text's type/token ratio and lexical density, enriching vocabulary and raising informativeness, and decrease its grammatical and lexical redundancy. Another operation facilitating processability apart from splitting sentences is grammatical transposition, which, however, does not yield statistically measurable results during computer analysis, as it does not cause modifications in the number of words or in the syntactic structure of the text, only influences word order. Furthermore, it is worth noticing that revisers performed the highest number of modifications where the computer-based analysis found a major growth in the number of words and the type/token ratios of revised versions.

After the identification of transfer operations and revisional modifications, I categorized them as either explicating or implicating interventions. Among the transfer operations, lexical specification, division, addition, compensation and grammatical specification, division, elevation, addition entail explicitation, while grammatical and lexical generalization, contraction, lowering and omission entail implicitation. Transposition and replacement is linked to both supercategories of the operations, implicitation and explicitation (Klaudy 1998, 2002). As we can see at the bottom line of *Table 9*., translators employ more explicating than implicating operations, and the same might generally be said about the individual translations, confirming Blum-Kulka's (1986) hypothesis.

	Translators			Revisers		
	Operations	Explicitation	Implication	Operations	Explicitation	Implication
1.	222	127	95	45	25	20
2.	184	89	95	74	49	25
3.	198	102	96	12	3	9
4.	216	127	89	16	6	10
5.	122	68	54	18	10	8
6.	194	116	78	46	24	22
7.	179	96	83	24	11	13
8.	210	134	76	53	32	21
9.	208	109	99	25	11	14
10.	158	99	59	9	5	4
All	1991	1067	924	322	176	146

**Table 9.** Explicitation and implication in the draft translations and the revised versions

Revisers seem to favor explicitation as well, and thus the explicitness of the resulting text versions generally increased both in translation and in revision. However, there is no significant difference between the two types of revisional modifications, i.e. explicitation and implication.<sup>6</sup> Revisers tend to use more grammatical implications than explicitations reducing grammatical redundancy. As far as lexical operations are concerned, revisers prefer explicitation, in particular specification, not so much addition, enriching the vocabulary and at the same time aiming to curb redundancy. When looking at the individual novels, we find that explicitation seems to outnumber implication in general, with only a few exceptions. Interestingly, we find the highest number of explicating modifications where the translator employed a relatively high number of implicating transfer operations and a comparatively low number of explicitations (Text 2); the reviser obviously tried to compensate for the “loss”, aiming to optimize the make-up of the text.

The next step of the contrastive text analysis involved the categorisation of the identified explicating and implicating shifts as rule-based, norm-based or strategy-based operations. The findings are shown in *Tables 10.* and *11.*, respectively. In the texts produced by translators, the majority of grammatical operations were rule-based or norm-based, dictated by language-specific reasons, while most lexical transfers were editorial, optional strategy-based operations, being the most numerous of the three categories—even as language-specific operations altogether dominate the translation process. Revisers prefer strategy-based operations in both operational categories, explicitation and implication as well; when translators do their job well, there is no need for extensive “correction,” revisers can concentrate on “improving” the quality, using editing strategies.

	Translators			Revisers		
	Rule-based	Norm-based	Strategy-based	Rule-based	Norm-based	Strategy-based
1.	50	22	55	0	1	24
2.	36	17	36	3	2	44
3.	43	9	50	1	0	2
4.	32	23	72	0	2	4
5.	26	20	22	2	0	8
6.	34	27	55	1	0	23
7.	39	15	42	1	0	10
8.	28	12	94	0	1	31
9.	35	40	33	0	2	9
10.	39	21	40	2	0	3
All	361	206	500	10	8	158

**Table 10.** Types of explicitation in the draft translations and the revised versions

When comparing explicating and implicating operations, we find that language-specific, rule-based and norm-based implicating operations outnumber explicating ones in translated texts; therefore, it seems that—on the basis of the above discussed findings as well—the transfer from English to Hungarian mainly requires grammatical implicating; Hungarian is an agglutinating language with a preference for synthetic structures. As regards to optional, strategy-based editorial transfer operations, explicitation (500) clearly dominates over implicating (228) in the translation process, once again clearly supporting Blum-Kulka's (1986) explicitation hypothesis and Klaudy's (2002) asymmetry hypothesis about the general tendency of translators to prefer explicitation over implicating when given the option. There is, however, much smaller difference in the number of strategy-based modifications of revisers, as explicitation (158) and implicating (134) quite closely approximate each other. When looking at the individual revised texts, we even find that in some of the cases (Texts 6, 8 and 9) implicating strategy-based operations outnumber explicating ones. The reason behind this phenomenon may very well be the optimizing tendency of revisers.

	Translators			Revisers		
	Rule-based	Norm-based	Strategy-based	Rule-based	Norm-based	Strategy-based
1.	49	49	17	0	0	20
2.	43	20	32	0	1	24
3.	44	26	26	0	0	9
4.	27	32	32	1	1	8
5.	30	14	10	0	0	8

	Translators			Revisers		
	Rule-based	Norm-based	Strategy-based	Rule-based	Norm-based	Strategy-based
6.	38	20	20	0	2	20
7.	40	22	21	1	1	11
8.	39	10	27	0	2	19
9.	54	23	32	0	0	14
10.	34	3	21	3	0	1
All	358	219	228	5	6	134

**Table 11.** Types of implicitation in the draft translations and the revised versions

Revisers use editorial operations with the purpose of optimizing the lexical and grammatical redundancy, creating a balanced text and enriching the vocabulary. These operations do not only serve to modify the transfer operations of translators, but aim to further work on the readability, comprehensibility and even the dramatic effect of the text—revisers employ their own explicating and implicating modifications as well in order to achieve the best possible effect. Examples of the most frequently used explicating and implicating operations are shown below:

(1)	DRAFT	“It was growing colder when I left the woods.”
	REVISED	“Miatán elhagytam az erdő, egyre hidegebbre fordult az idő.”
		Egyre hidegebb lett, amikor elhagytam az erdőt.
		growing cold. become. when leave. the wood.
		COM PAST. PAST. ACC
		3SG ISG
		after leave. the wood. growing cold. turn. the weather
		PAST.ISG ACC COM.ABL PAST. 3SG

In the above example, the translator followed the structure and wording of the original source-text, but the reviser changed the order of the clauses in the sentence with grammatical transposition—using explicitation—to enhance processability, emphasizing the logical and temporal order of the described events. Furthermore, they employed richer vocabulary to express and give more color to the meaning of the text. In the second example, the reviser again used more explicit wording, i.e. lexical specification in order to further emphasize the message of the original source text.

(2)	DRAFT	“That was Maddy’s fault, of course.”
	REVISED	“Ami természetesen Maddy hibája volt”
		which naturally Maddy fault.POS be.PAST.3SG
		“Ami természetesen Maddy büne volt.”
		which naturally Maddy sin.POS be.PAST.3SG

In the next example, the translator tried to shorten the text by using a nominal phrase (grammatical replacement), at the same time employing a great number of lexical and

grammatical omissions. The reviser, however, aimed to counteract the translator's strategy and thus compensate for the unusually high number of implicating operations and the resulting loss. They inserted the missing information and further explicitated the translated text, breaking up the sentence into two, using grammatical division and using richer vocabulary through lexical addition and specification.

DRAFT	(3)	<i>“Westfalin</i>	<i>defeated [...]</i>	<i>but</i>	<i>it</i>	<i>was</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>grim victory.”</i>
		<i>“Vesztfália... ádáz</i>		<i>csatában</i>	<i>legyőzte [...]</i> ”			
		<i>Vesztfália</i>	<i>grim</i>	<i>battle.ABL</i>	<i>overcome.</i>			<i>PAST.3SG</i>
REVISED		<i>“Vesztfálin</i>	<i>győzelmet</i>	<i>aratott [...]</i>	<i>Vészterhes</i>	<i>volt</i>	<i>azonban a</i>	<i>győzelem.”</i>
		<i>Vesztfálin</i>	<i>victory.ACC</i>	<i>gain.</i>	<i>devastating</i>	<i>be.</i>	<i>however the</i>	<i>victory</i>
				<i>PAST.3SG</i>		<i>PAST.</i>		<i>3SG</i>

Apart from enhancing readability, enriching the vocabulary and making up for missing, left out information with explicitation, revisers often lessen the grammatical and lexical redundancy of the translated text by modifying the translators' transfer operations, employing implicating strategy-based, editorial modifications, as shown in the fourth example:

DRAFT	(4)	<i>“[...] as</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>blade</i>	<i>of</i>	<i>grass.”</i>
		<i>“[...] mintha</i>	<i>csak</i>	<i>egy</i>	<i>fűszál</i>	<i>lett volna.”</i>
		<i>as if</i>	<i>only</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>blade of grass</i>	<i>be.PAST.CON.3SG</i>
REVISED		<i>“[...] mint</i>	<i>egy</i>	<i>fűszál.”</i>		
		<i>as</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>blade of grass</i>		

The translator raised the nominal phrase of the source text to clause level (grammatical elevation) using a verb phrase, the reviser, however, counteracted the operation and employed a nominal phrase instead (grammatical lowering), bringing the revised version closer to the original version, creating a more concise, less redundant text. In a similar way, revisers may delete conjunctions from the translation when deemed unnecessary, if the meaning can be deduced from the context, as shown below. The faithful translator followed the wording of the source-text, but the reviser deleted the conjunction from the sentence employing grammatical omission.

DRAFT	(5)	<i>“But</i>	<i>they</i>	<i>were</i>	<i>ready</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>us.”</i>
		<i>“De</i>	<i>már</i>	<i>vártak</i>	<i>bennünket.”</i>		
		<i>but</i>	<i>already</i>	<i>wait.PAST.3PL</i>	<i>us</i>		
REVISED		<i>“Ø</i>	<i>Már</i>	<i>vártak</i>	<i>bennünket.”</i>		
			<i>already</i>	<i>wait.PAST.3PL</i>	<i>us</i>		

The final example illustrates how revisers may melt sentences together (grammatical contraction) in order to reduce the lexical and grammatical redundancy in translated texts, using implicating modifications. The translator again followed the original structure, the reviser, however, condensed the meaning into one sentence, as well as employing richer vocabulary through specification.

DRAFT	(6)	<i>“Noone asked her how she did it. Noone watched her.”</i>
	<i>“Senki sem firtatta, hogy tette. Senki sem figyelte.”</i>	
	<i>noone not ask. how do. noone not watch.</i>	
	<i>PAST.3SG PAST.ISG PAST.3SG</i>	
REVISED	<i>“Senki sem firtatta, hogy miben mesterkedik.”</i>	
	<i>noone not ask. that what.ABL be.3SG up to</i>	
	<i>PAST.3SG</i>	

All of the above examples show how revisers may alter the transfer operations employed by translators or use explicitation and implicitation independently (Robin 2014) in order to edit the information content of texts, reduce grammatical, lexical redundancy and enrich vocabulary, optimizing textual features—all with the purpose of living up to the expectation of future readers.

## 6. Conclusions

The aim of my empirical research was to find out whether revisers perform operations during their work that have the potential to modify the presumed—so far identified—translation universals. The quantitative and qualitative analyses suggest that revisers frequently carry out operations in the text in addition to correcting translation, grammatical and spelling mistakes. These additional operations reduce the dominance of the phenomena generally referred to as translation universals by modifying the implicating and explicating operations of translators, as well as employing explicitation and implicitation themselves where translators have fallen short—in order to optimize the grammatical and lexical make-up of the translated text.

Computer-aided analysis has shown that revision does produce differences between draft translations and revised texts, albeit the contrast has not proved statistically significant in any of the examined language variables.<sup>7</sup> We could perhaps suppose that if significant differences were to be identified, we would be talking about retranslation instead of revision. As a consequence of the revisers' work, however, the length of the texts and the average length of sentences are generally shortened, while the number of sentences grows. The type/token ratio and the lexical density typically increases during revision; revised texts thus have a richer vocabulary than translated draft versions. Also, the ratio of frequent words to all words, and the repetition rate of high and low frequency words decreases. General revision tendencies therefore seem to weaken the dominance of the translation universals suggested by Baker (1995) and Laviosa (1998).

It was also demonstrated that the revised versions, as regards to their statistical features, resembled each other even more than translated texts. The data shows leveling out, which supports Baker's (1995) earlier hypothesis about this universal phenomenon in translations and confirms it in revision also; revised texts are even more similar to each other in their textual characteristics than translations. The translation universal of avoiding repetitions (Baker 1995, Chesterman 2010) is further strengthened too, not weakened in revised texts. Moreover, revisers, just like translators, split sentences to facilitate understanding (Laviosa 1998). We may suppose, therefore, that some of the language phenomena previously considered universal to translations only are in fact

editing strategies, as editing a text's grammatical redundancy and information content is an integral part of both translation and revision (Mossop 2007). The data gained from the present research need to be further examined using a comparable corpus of authentic texts to see if revisers approximate their texts to target-language norms—or we are actually facing revisional, editorial universals.

Computer-based analysis	Contrastive text analysis	Type of operation
Reduced volume	Grammatical and lexical omissions	Implication
Higher type/token ratio	Grammatical and lexical omissions, additions, specifications	Implication, explicitation
Higher number of sentences	Grammatical divisions	Explicitation
Higher lexical density	Grammatical omissions, lowerings, lexical additions	Implication, explicitation
Lower lexical frequency	Omissions, generalizations, specifications	Implication, explicitation

**Table 12.** The relationship between text level linguistic features and revisional operations

The contrastive analysis of the selected sentences revealed which micro-level operations might contribute to the macro-level differences between the translated and revised text versions. On the basis of the research data, *Table 12.* above aims to summarize the relationship between the text-level linguistic features, as identified by the computerized analysis, and the modifications of the revisers. The analysis of the translators' and revisers' operations confirmed the conclusions of the computer-aided analysis. Besides checking for equivalence and performing obligatory corrections in grammar and spelling, revisers first and foremost employ grammatical and lexical interventions guided by editing strategies to reduce linguistic redundancy and enrich vocabulary, curbing the dominance of certain translational features, such as simplification and redundancy.

The differences between the data for translated and revised texts from computer-aided and contrastive analyses may vary from text to text. Certain variables might produce outliers, or they can even deviate from general revision trends depending on the peculiarities of the source text, the quality of translation and individual revision tendencies. Revisers differentiate according to the vocabulary and linguistic redundancy of the given text. They might even go against general revisional trends, and increase redundancy where necessary, limit the avoidance of repetition, decrease the richness and variety of the vocabulary used, and thus the information load as well. This way, they move these variables closer to the "norms" characteristic of the target language and the style of the given text. The differences are manifested in the texts' changes of explicitness, and it can be stated that the stylistic characteristics and individual drafting features typical of original texts become more pronounced as a result of revision.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> WordSmith 6.0. WordSmith Tools.

<http://www.lexically.net/wordsmith/version6/>. Accessed: May 18, 2018.

<sup>2</sup>  $U(18)=0.94$   $Z=-.076$   $p=0.940$

<sup>3</sup>  $t(18)=-.759$   $p=.458$

<sup>4</sup>  $t(18)=-.092$   $p=.927$

<sup>5</sup>  $t(18)=-.162$   $p=.873$

<sup>6</sup>  $t(18)=.583$   $p=.567$

<sup>7</sup> The results of the significance tests did not show any significant differences between the subcorpora (\* $p < .05$ ).

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# A RUN-THROUGH OF THE HISTORY OF TRANSLATION STUDIES IN HUNGARY

ANIKÓ SOHÁR

## 1. Introduction: Translation as an Autonomous Field of Study

Since Hungarian is a linguistically isolated language in Central Europe, translation has always played a very important, albeit often unseen role in our culture. Many a time, it was the best Hungarian writers, poets, and scholars who rendered important foreign works into their mother tongue. These translations are greatly appreciated and often passionately debated by the intelligentsia in black and white. Consequently, there are a number of writings which deal with specific translation problems, their individual solutions, idiosyncrasies of translations of a certain language pair, or theoretical issues (the first being formulated by Cardinal Péter Pázmány, the person our university takes its name after), and other translation-related issues, mainly from either the religious/ecclesiastical or the literary point of view—as is the case in many other cultures. Domestic literature or the oeuvre of an author have included translated works as well, particularly when the works at issue belonged to the national and/or international canon. Quite a few monographs and scholarly papers discuss translations from diverse angles, but only a handful mentions—let alone focusses on—history, how the thinking about translation has developed throughout the ages, and those usually examine exclusively literary translators' musings and products. None of them tackles the history of Translation Studies in Hungary, even though it is fairly short.

It is hardly surprising that Translation Studies as an independent discipline did not exist in Hungary before the collapse of the Socialist regime, and the ensuing political transformation in 1989-1990. Professional organisations (such as the Literary Translators' Section of the Hungarian Writers' Union, or the now 150-year-old Hungarian Office for Translation and Attestation Ltd.), translator and interpreter training (e.g., a postgraduate programme at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, since 1973, as well as translator training programmes specialising in a specific discipline at other higher education institutions after 1974), and particularly literary translation criticism were extant, but those whose field of study extended to scholarly translation analysis were few and far between. In addition, they came from different disciplines (e.g., applied linguistics, comparative literature, cultural anthropology) and claimed that translation was—solely, or sometimes more modestly just mainly—their territory. Literary scholars and linguists talked about translation from their own perspectives, using their own terminology, creating their own new research projects without ever acknowledging one another, very often not even aware of the work going on in the other field—thus reinventing the wheel repeatedly.

Some people still seem to be stuck at this phase, although the collapse of the previous political system, and the subsequent opening to the West, not to mention the various 'catching up' aid programmes offered by the World Bank and other international organi-

sations,<sup>1</sup> offered a wonderful opportunity to establish Translation Studies as an autonomous discipline, independent of both (applied) linguistics and (comparative) literature.

Actually, already in the Kádár era, particularly in the eighties, some tentative steps were taken in Comparative Literature towards a less aesthetic and more scientific investigation of the translation phenomena. For instance, the monograph on literary translation by Ede Szabó writes about translator competences and their teachability as early as in 1968, when only verse translation was considered literary translation by many literati who believed that anybody—that is to say, any member of the intelligentsia—could translate prose. The journal *Helikon Observer of World Literature*, to mention another example, had a double issue in 1986 on translation, which mixed personal translating experiences (Dedecius, Palm), portrait of a literary translator (Gauger), questions of terminology (Hinske, Hohnhold) with studies of various theoretical and practical aspects of translation (Gadamer, Jenkins, Lederer, Lilova, Osers, Paepcke and others), and a review of the Translation Studies journal, *Babel*—mostly in translation.

However, in an overwhelming majority of the cases, for example *A műfordítás ma* [Literary Translation Today] edited by Bart and Rákos (1981), Literary Studies still studied the individual literary translator, or singular literary translation (of a canonised work).

At the same time, applied linguistics initiated the study of non-literary translation, for instance, Bendik and Szabari discussed various aspects of interpreting, Bart and Klaudy published a collection of translated translation theories, including Catford, Jakobson, Mounin, Neubert, Nida and many Russians, entitled *Fordításelméleti szöveggyűjtemény* [An Anthology of Translation Theory Essays].

## 2. A Fight for Disciplinary Independence

Still, it was the nineties that brought along the official introduction of this relatively new branch of knowledge: conferences, workshops, lectures of leading scholars of the field (Peter Newmark, Eugene Nida, Fritz Paepcke, Gideon Toury, José Lambert, to mention but a few), study programmes, publications materialised, hesitantly in the beginning, more boldly later. Then the Hungarian Academy of Sciences even had a Translation Research Committee for a while!

The first two international conferences on translation entitled *Transfere necesse est...* reveal how quickly Translation Studies gained followers in the country and elsewhere. The first one was organised by the Teacher Training College of Szombathely in 1992 to celebrate the 80th birthday of György Radó, a prominent figure in translation affairs,<sup>2</sup> had roughly 30 participants, including Ewald Osers, Anthony Pym, Gideon Toury, and approximately a dozen Hungarians (see Kohn et al. 1993). The second one was a real world congress of the discipline, held in Budapest in 1996, with more than 350 participants from 40 countries, and, more importantly, a lot of big names of Translation Studies were present: Andrew Chesterman, Cay Dollerup, Daniel Gile, Geoffrey Kingscott, Don Kiraly, Ingrid Kurz, José Lambert, Peter Newmark, Eugene Nida, Mary Snell-Hornby, Sonja Tirkkonen-Condit, and others. The participants were welcomed by the then President of the Hungarian Republic, Árpád Göncz, a famous literary translator himself, and, in the proceedings, 17 out of the 82 selected papers were written by Hungarians (see Klaudy and Kohn, 1997).<sup>3</sup> Afterwards, as they seemed fruitful, translation conferences begun to multiply.

Before the latter conference, with the explicit intention to make Hungarian Translation Studies visible both nationally and internationally, a volume entitled *Translation Studies in Hungary* was published, which presented (most of) the Hungarian scholars working at that time in the field of the recently introduced discipline. It had four sections: general, linguistic and literary aspects, plus interpreting; the authors were translators, interpreters, linguists and philologist according to their CVs, clearly displaying that no separate Translation Studies existed then.

The ever-increasing number of graduate and postgraduate courses and programmes in translation, including literary translation training programmes, at more and more universities and colleges was another sign of the growing interest in translation. At that time this meant five or six-year-long university graduate and three or four-year-long college graduate programmes, and most universities offered translation courses for third or fourth or fifth-year students. These programmes consisted of translation theory, history, criticism and, predominantly, practice, and were sometimes taught by people who had never translated a line in their lives.

The first and so far only Translation Studies journal aptly named *Fordítástudomány* [Translation Studies] came out in 1999, whose opening announcement by Klaudy contrasted the literary and the linguistic approaches to translation as follows

linguists are interested in	literary scholars are interested in
any text, including artistic/literary ones	artistic/literary texts only
masses of translators and interpreters	excellent literary translators
general, typical solutions	individual, unusual solutions
both translation products and process	only translation products
descriptive approach	prescriptive approach
non-evaluative approach	evaluative approach

She claimed, preposterously, that linguists had also been interested in the *process* of translation, that is, the actions, functions, operations and transformations carried out in the translator's brain during translating, unlike literary scholars, who had only showed interest in the translation *product*; that literary scholars were prescriptive, unlike linguists—completely disregarding that Descriptive Translation Studies as such was introduced by the so-called Manipulation School, also known as the Leuven – Tel Aviv axis, that is, by literary scholars, mostly comparatists. The journal, from its very conception, seems partial to linguistics, and a little disinclined to promote other approaches.

Since 1999, the Translator and Interpreter Training Centre, later Department of Eötvös Loránd University, the very first university in Hungary that offered professional translator training, has organised a two-day—partly scholarly (PhD), partly professional—conference and alumni rendezvous.

### 3. Towards Augmented Visibility

Now, in the 21st century, hand in hand with globalisation and multiculturalism, publications, discussions, workshops, professional, student and scholarly conferences, university and professional courses, MA and other postgraduate programmes about/in translation

abound. Translation has become so widespread and pervasive (just think of *journalator*, the term coined by Luc van Doorslaer for “an interventionist newsroom worker who makes abundant use of translation when transferring and reformulating or recreating informative journalistic texts” 2012:1046) that it has lost its invisibility, at least in part.

A new development evidencing that not just translation, but also its study is getting better acknowledged is—besides those few academics who supervise PhD students interested in translation under their own steam at disinterested universities—the appearance of a doctoral programme in translation and interpreting at Eötvös Loránd University, but there is a fly in the ointment: the Doctoral School of Linguistics offers this programme, thus openly declaring that Translation Studies is a constituent element of linguistics. To be fair, it has to be admitted that a few PhD students have non-linguistic translation research projects (such as the study of translated children’s literature which was supervised by the late Andrea Papp). Furthermore, a Doctoral School of Literary Studies at another university intends to set up a literature and culture-oriented doctoral programme in Translation Studies before long.

There are many other good omens to encourage translation scholars: regular meetings of translator trainers at the Technical University of Budapest, a new thematic yearbook entitled *Iránytű* [Compass] which might develop into a periodical at the University of Pécs, MA programmes in translation and interpreting at seven universities as well as innumerable postgraduate courses elsewhere, an increasing number of young scholars interested in this subject, research groups, regular scholarly lectures and visiting professors from all over the world (Şebnem Susam-Saraeva, Andrew Chesterman, Michael Cronin, Lance Hewson, Don Kiraly, Anthony Pym and Peter Sherwood among others), strong Hungarian presence in the PETRA-E Network,<sup>4</sup> and a lot of national and international, partly (any HUSSE<sup>5</sup> or MANYE<sup>6</sup>) or wholly Translation Studies conferences, such as *Transfer and Translation* in 2000 (ICLA Hungarian Section, Peter Newmark’s last visit to Hungary), *Getting Translated* in 2016, or *Translation research – translator training* in 2018 (both at Pázmány), to name but a few.

However, there is still no MA in Translation Studies, nor is a module, track or specialisation in Translation Studies within the MA in translation and interpreting programmes is offered—as yet.

#### 4. The Present Standing of the Discipline

Today the state of affairs is practically the same as it was in the nineties: Hungarian Translation Studies is still divided, linguists and literary scholars interested in translational phenomena go their separate ways, as the parallel formation of two Translation Studies sections—one by the Hungarian Society of Applied Linguists and Language Teachers, the other by the Hungarian Society of Literary Studies—clearly demonstrated last year. 2018 also brought along a book entitled *Latest Trends in Hungarian Translation Studies* in which only one paper (out of ten) had a cultural approach<sup>7</sup>.

This volume intends to break this long-standing tradition and follow the example of the 1996 collection with one significant difference: here the papers are not divided according to the author’s discipline, but based on their main concern, that is why the book has two parts: one dealing with translator and interpreter training and related issues, the

other tackling translation research projects, so the dividing line is applied and pure (or basic) research, not the approach. I most sincerely hope that this is the future of Translation Studies in Hungary and, for that matter, elsewhere as well: not competition, or, Heaven forbid, hostility, but cooperation between scholars and disciplines.

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> “Catching up with the European Higher Education” Foundation, PHARE, Socrates, Erasmus etc.
- <sup>2</sup> (1912–1994) writer, literary translator, literary scholar. He received the Golden Pin of the Association Translators and Interpreters of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1985 and the FIT-Nathorst International Literary Translator Award in 1987 for editing the FIT journal, *Babel* from 1977 to 1988.
- <sup>3</sup> NB. Compare the subtitle with that of the other Translation Studies book of the period (Translation Studies vs Studies in Translation and Interpreting): the name of the discipline at that time was not yet settled and generally received.
- <sup>4</sup> PETRA-E is a network for the education and training of literary translators. <https://petra-education.eu/>
- <sup>5</sup> HUSSE: Hungarian Society for the Study of English, biannual conferences in each odd year, at least one translation section.
- <sup>6</sup> MANYE: Society of Applied Linguists and Language Teachers, biannual conferences in each odd year, two translation sections.
- <sup>7</sup> The Prestige of Interpreters in Hungary by Éva Pataky.

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## ABSTRACTS

### **BOZSIK, Gyöngyvér: Singability in Opera Translation: Seven Translations into Hungarian of Mozart-da Ponte's *The Marriage of Figaro***

When opera and translation appear within the same discourse a really exciting journey begins, as this special field of audiovisual translation requires great expertise and experience both in translation and classical music, more precisely in singing. The reason behind is the intertwined nature, that is the unity of music and text.

The paper investigates the less widely studied field of opera translation, introducing the close and complex relationship of music and text by analysing seven Hungarian translations of Mozart-Da Ponte's *The Marriage of Figaro*. The focal aim of the study is to point out such challenging factors of opera translation that might remain hidden for translators lacking expertise in singing.

This field of translation – requiring the inventiveness of a literary translator, the exactitude of a legal translator and also significant practice in singing – although often invisibly, but significantly influences the experience of the ‘foreign’ audience, i.e. whether they can really enjoy and interpret a given opera in the same way as the source language audience. For this reason, doing research on this topic has real practical importance, and it also clearly demonstrates the extremely complex work translators are facing with.

**Keywords:** audiovisual translation, opera, singing translations

### **CSIKAI, Zsuzsanna: “Benign Colonization:” Domestication and its Two Faces**

The objective of the study “Benign Colonization”: Domestication and its Two Faces is to explore how an essentially similar translation activity—the domesticating translation of Anton Chekhov's dramatic works into Standard British English the domesticating retranslations of the same author's works into Irish English—can come to be seen as representing two very different ideological agendas when looked at from the perspective of postcolonial Translation Studies, whose scope includes the exploration of power inherent in translation as a cultural practice. In this context, one translation activity may seem to be the epitome of cultural imperialism while the other is recognized as staging resistance to hegemonic dominance. All this despite the fact that both groups of translations opt for domestication as an overall strategy, thus both appropriate, that is, “colonize” the Russian source texts. The examination of such translations reveals that the complexity of the specific situations in which translations in colonial as well as post-colonial times are produced challenges the often binary categories of translation theory.

**Keywords:** literary translation, domestication, resistance, post-colonial context

### **DABIS, Melinda: The Final Frontier of Interpreting: Effects of the Dual-Language Policy on Communication in International Human Spaceflight**

International human spaceflight is a highly complex operation, technologically, politically, but also linguistically, as astronauts and space agencies of different nationalities work together in extreme situations. A brief historical overview of the three phases of human space operations, the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project, the Shuttle–Mir Program and the International Space Station (ISS) provides an explanation for the language protocol of international spaceflight missions, which were influenced by geopolitical and practical factors. The paper examines interpreters' roles in the various missions, and analyzes the features of interpreting in the Mission Control Center as a type of remote interpreting.

**Keywords:** international human spaceflight, space language protocol, interpreting, remote interpreting, virtual environment, International Space Station, ISS, NASA, Roscosmos

### **KÓBOR, Márta: Practical and Theoretical Lessons on and from Website Translation**

Based on the author's own corpus of website translations, this article will focus on the following questions: Does the translation of websites require special treatment and practices compared to standard translation services? If so, do translators of websites need special training? And can we draw any theoretical conclusions from that?

Concrete examples will be shown to illustrate that despite all differences in the level of service potentially required by customers, ranging from traditional translation to multilingual localization, the main challenge is to provide “visible” translations that rank highly in search engines. This means that translators of websites need an approach that considers search engine optimization (SEO) from the beginning, as well as specific skills and practices that can be learned or improved:

- Translators must be aware of the alternative terminological needs of the intended users as well as the most popular search engines in the target context. They need a range of special techniques to find the most effective target keywords to be used and alternated in their translations.
- In addition to terminological variations, linguistic optimization often includes the use of a special style. Cultural adaptations may also prove to be necessary.
- Website translators also need specific technical skills to cope with different file formats, markup languages, CMSs, etc. In many cases, creativity is an absolute must.

The second part of the presentation will include recommendations on how to provide (future) translators with these special skills and practices some of which (e.g. less importance given to terminological consistency) may seem to contrast with current trends in translator training.

Lastly, we will conclude on some important “lessons” of the practical challenges of website translation for general theory of translation and terminology.

**Keywords:** translation, website, web pages, search engine, SEO, keyword, variation, terminology

### **LESZNYÁK, Márta and Mária BAKTI: First-Year Translation/Interpreting Students' Views on Sub-Competences Needed for Language Mediation**

Competence is a well-researched topic within Translation Studies, be it translation or interpreter competence. However, most of the research efforts focus on theoretical models and their validation. Relatively few studies deal with how the 'agents' themselves, that is practising and would-be translators and interpreters think of translation/interpreter competence and its constituents. For the purposes of this study, we adopt a compound/integrated view of translation/interpreter competence, and we refer to it as language mediation competence throughout the paper. The aim of the research was to shed light on students' conception of language mediation competence. Another objective of the study was to collect information on how students perceive translator/interpreter training in relation to specific sub-competences. This paper reports the results of a questionnaire survey in which participants rated the importance of specific constituents of language mediation competence. Questionnaire construction was based on the PACTE model, our sample consisted of 99 translation trainees from the University of Szeged and the University of Pécs.

Our results indicate that students consider *bilingual competence* the most important competence in the work of professional translators, and knowledge about translation the least important. There are also some within-group differences, which provide us valuable information on the strengths and weaknesses and the particular needs of certain groups in training. Students surveyed think that in translator and interpreter training, language B competence and problem solving skills are focused on most, while Language A and C competence and specialized language competences are seen as somewhat neglected. Overall, our results show that translation students have a strongly language-competence-based view of translation competence.

**Keywords:** translation competence; translation students' views on translation competence; translation sub-competences

### **MAKKOS, Anikó: Mother Tongue in Translation Training**

If we look at the content of translator training programs, we can see that the focus is on the development of foreign language skills. But when we prepare the students to translate from the foreign language into the mother tongue we have to build on their mother tongue skills. In this process we might realise that we need to improve these skills if we want good quality translations. The problem is that there is no real empirical knowledge about the mother tongue writing competences of the students entering translation training institutions or more generally any kind of higher educational institutions.

The present article introduces a recent empirical study in which original Hungarian texts were compared with translated Hungarian texts the source texts of which were English. The two corpora were comparable as all the texts were written in Hungarian. These texts (one set original and one set translated) had been produced by 110 university students studying translation at ELTE, Budapest. The texts (altogether 220) were analyzed by using the results of a pilot study which had revealed numerous text production problems (e.g. vocabulary, connectivity, syntax or punctuation) of translator trainees.

The article emphasizes that clear connections can be identified between writing and translation skills, and there are some areas where similar shortcomings can be detected in both text types although they are of different significance. The results clearly show that it is not realistic and not efficient to separate foreign language education from mother tongue education in the case of translation training, because the mother tongue is the basis for all types of mediation activities. The knowledge derived from the study should be built into the everyday practices of translator training but could also be used in higher education more generally.

**Keywords:** translator training, target text approach, mother tongue text production skills

### **PYM, Anthony: Merkel Responds to Reem: What We Should Be Training Mediators for**

In the age of social media, dissent or protest rarely elicits response from official power, which instead seeks to occupy alternative media spaces with its own messages. In one-on-one face-to-face communication, however, some response can still be provoked, and political change may yet ensue. One such encounter, between German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the fourteen-year-old asylum-seeker Reem Sahwil, illustrates some of the communication frames and modes of engagement that can inform such non-mediated communication. The question is then whether all those features are necessarily lost in mediated communication, through an interpreter or translator, or can those features perhaps be enhanced by training our interpreters and translators to use their skills as spokespersons?

**Keywords:** crosscultural communication, face-to-face communication, discourse footing, specificity of translation

### **ROBIN, Edina: The Modification of Translation Universals in Revised Texts**

The quest for possible translation universals has enjoyed considerable interest in descriptive Translation Studies (Laviosa 2009); however almost all research aiming to reveal phenomena specific for translated texts disregard the fact that their corpora include revised translations. These texts, therefore, carry not only the transfer operations of their translators, but the modifications of the revisers, as well. The question arises whether revision affects translated texts in a way that would modify their universal features, and if so, to what extent. Some of the studies dealing with the question of translation universals (e.g. Levý 1965; Tirkkonen-Condit 2004; Chesterman 2010) mention that these linguistic features tend to characterize translations of mediocre quality. It seems logical that revisers, who aim to improve the quality of translated texts, modify these ‘anomalies,’ as well. The research presented here focuses on the explicating and implicating operations present in both translation and revision (Robin 2014). The study includes the computer-based examination (type/token, average word count per sentence, lexical density) of a revisional parallel corpus, which contains the full texts of ten English novels, their draft

translations and revised versions, as well as the contrastive analyses of text samples for the identification of transfer operations and revisional modifications. The results show that revisers – apart from the correction of mistakes – not only perform explicitation and implicitation independently, but also modify the explicating and implicating transfer operations of translators, creating less redundant texts with less simplified, richer vocabulary, aiming for optimality, but even more equalizing than the drafts. It seems that at least some of the phenomena attributed to the translation process may in fact belong to editing procedures inherent in both translation and revision (Mossop 2007).

**Keywords:** translation universals, revision, editing, explicitation, implicitation

### **VIOLA, Éva: A Model of Discourse Segmentation for Translated Corpora in Rhetorical Structure Theory**

This study focuses on the debated issue of segmentation within Rhetorical Structure Analysis. In Rhetorical Structure Analysis, the first step is the segmentation of a piece of discourse into so called Elementary Discourse Units (EDU). Based on Rhetorical Structure Theory, some researchers divide texts into clauses, or clause-length units (e.g. Carlson and Marcu, Iruskieta, Károly, Mann and Thompson et al.), while several studies compare sentences (e.g. Polanyi, Taboada and Mann et al.) and still others take sentence intonation into account. However, there is still no consensus regarding the extent of these minimal units.

Further difficulties arise if we compare the rhetorical structure of parallel translated texts in English and in Hungarian, because of the systemic differences between the two languages. Clauses and sentences do not necessarily keep their borders in the TT, so the rhetorical structure of the two texts (ST and TT) shows differences. It is, however, important to note that overall functional equivalence of the ST is achieved even if shifts in the rhetorical structure are present, but the shifts cause differences on the lower levels of the discourse structure.

The present descriptive, exploratory study compares the segmentation of 10 argumentative texts in English and their Hungarian translations. The analysis is divided into two phases: in phase one, EDUs are identified as sentences. Then relational propositions are identified and RS Trees are drawn from the English texts as well as from their Hungarian counterparts. Shifts are examined and categorized depending on the translation strategies which brought them about. In phase two, the same texts are re-segmented into clauses or clause-length units, followed by the relational proposition identification and RS Tree building as in phase one.

This examination has reinforced that the Rhetorical Structure Analysis based on clause-based segmentation provides a useful model for translation analysis.

**Keywords:** Rhetorical Structure Theory, segmentation, EDU, translated bilingual corpora

**ZIMÁNYI, Krisztina, Luz María MUÑOZ DE COTE and John O'SHEA:  
University Lecturers' Translation Needs in Central Mexico**

This study provides insight into the attitudes of lecturers at a Mexican university toward the demands made upon today's non-anglophone academics to publish in the most widely-read—and therefore English-language—journals. Based on the analysis of responses to a survey distributed among lecturers, it demonstrates that there is a significant gap in knowledge with respect to how and by whom academic texts are successfully translated for publication or classroom use. It also reveals a certain confusion as to how this is actually achieved, pinpointing the need for a process of quality assurance, translator training with special reference to terminology management. The results are highly suggestive in terms of the attitudes and needs regarding the linguistic context of the academic community that is at the focus of the inquiry and the concept of translation in itself. This provides a strong platform for the creation of proposals to improve upon the current situation, perhaps beyond the particular context presented here.

**Keywords:** translation needs, university lecturers, Central Mexico



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