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Translation and Interpreting Studies

The Translator: Literary or Performance Artist?

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The Translator: Literary or Performance Artist?

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Abstract

This paper proposes that in order to understand the nature of literary translation as an art form, we need to complement existing approaches drawing on literary, linguistic and sociological theories with insights derived from performance theory. I examine four theoretical approaches – derived from stylometry, literary stylistics, cognitive stylistics and sociology – that have been employed to explain style in literary translation and argue that they fail to fully account for the translator’s artistry because they are limited by a conceptualization of creative writing as an individual, monologic, process. I suggest that there are aspects of the translator’s artistic practice that are better understood as a form of performance and, in particular, according to Schechner’s (1985) understanding of performance as *restored behavior*. I demonstrate how the basic tenets of performance theory find echo in two translators’ accounts of their practice (Margaret Jull Costa and Peter Bush), focusing on four points of contact: the unresolved dialectal tension between self and other, the deliberate, rehearsed nature of decisions, the need for distance between original and performance/translation, and the role of the audience. Performance theory is thus proposed as

a useful explanatory framework to complement linguistic, literary and sociological discussions of translation as an art form.

Keywords: literary translation, style, performance, restored behavior, Margaret Jull Costa, Peter Bush.

1. Introduction

Leech and Short point out that the goal of literary stylistics is to gain some insight into the writer's art: "we should scarcely find the style of Henry James worth studying unless we assumed it could tell us something about James as a literary artist" ([1981] 2007, 11).

Accordingly, if we study the style of a translator, it is, presumably, because we are interested in them as literary artists (Saldanha 2014, 100; 2011b, 237). However, despite cumulative evidence of stylistic traits that can be attributed to translators, as opposed to authors, we have yet to see a convincing account of the translator's artistry. Here, I argue that this reflects the lack of a sufficiently sophisticated theoretical model to account for translators' stylistic preferences. I examine existing theories employed in studies of translator style, in order to explain why they have fail to go beyond the reproduction of style as a characteristic of the source text and socio-cultural constraints to promote an understanding of translators as artists on their own right. I then go on to suggest that there are aspects of the translator's artistic practice that are better understood as a form of performance and, in particular, according to Schechner's (1985) understanding of performance as *restored behavior*. Connections between Schechner's theory and translators' accounts of their practice are proposed as waymarkers for the development of a theory of literary translation as a form of performance art.

2. Style as Fingerprints

In a seminal paper that essentially launched the study of translator style, Baker describes it “a kind of thumb-print that is expressed in a range of linguistic – as well as non-linguistic – features”, and it includes, apart from open interventions, the translator’s choice of what to translate (when the choice is available to the translator), their consistent use of specific strategies, and especially their characteristic use of language, their “individual profile of linguistic habits, compared to other translators” (2000, 245). For Baker, then, style has multiple layers and involves extra-linguistic elements, the choice of what to translate, as well as linguistic elements: consistent strategies and linguistic habits. Baker is primarily concerned with the latter, which she describes as “subtle, unobtrusive linguistic habits which are largely beyond the conscious control of the writer and which we, as receivers, register mostly subliminally” (246). Style in this sense is basically a sociolinguistic category, similar to idiolect but mainly used in relation to writing. The assumption underlying this understanding of style is that in any piece of writing we can find traces of linguistic habits that are beyond the writer’s control. These linguistic features are the ones used in stylometry – i.e. “the measurable patterns which may be unique to an author” (Holmes 1994, 87) –, particularly for the purpose of attributing authorship. Baker’s study made use of general statistical measures, such as average sentence length and type/token ratio, which had been used in the context of stylometry, in order to find distinctive traits in the work of two translators, Peter Bush and Peter Clark. The differences between the two corpora were very pronounced, but the exploratory nature of the study did not allow for definitive conclusions, leaving open the possibility that results were due to source-text and language characteristics.

Other studies have employed similar statistical measures to differentiate between translators’ styles (Mikhailov and Villikka 2001; Walder 2013; Huang and Chu 2014) as well as between interpreters’ styles (Kajzer-Wietrzny, 2013), although results have often

been inconclusive or failed to find a distinctive stylistic profile. Stylometry has also developed more elaborate techniques to identify the likely author of a text with a relatively high success rate and, in a few cases, the same techniques have been employed to attribute translatorship. Burrows (2002), for example, compared several translations of Juvenal's *Tenth Satire* with original work by some of the translators, many of whom were also famous poets (among them John Dryden and Samuel Johnson), using an authorship attribution technique known as *Delta*, which works on the basis of high frequency words. He concludes that, although the translators' texts are "decidedly more like each other than is usual in literary composition" (2002, 687), some translators still "betray their identity" (689). As an explanation for the most ambiguous cases, Burrows suggests that some translators may be so sensitive to their task that their own stylistic signatures completely disappear behind the image of the foreign author whose work they are representing. Rybicki (2012) used a similar technique to compare different corpora of translations and originals and found that translated texts clustered automatically by author rather than translator; the translator could only be identified when works by the same author were compared. Rybicki concluded that *Delta* might not necessarily be adequate for differentiating between individual translators' style because it relies on word usage and therefore has a "content-conscious side" (2012, 246).

Techniques such as *Delta* have not been designed to work with translations and therefore 'content' – or, more precisely, subject matter – is very likely to have an impact on the results. In addition, they have been designed to look at linguistic habits at the lower syntactical level, where choice is less likely to be deliberate. However, translators often deliberate on aspects of language that other writers pay less attention to. I will illustrate this point with one example, also discussed in Saldanha (2011a), with regard to the omission of the optional connective *that* in English translations by Peter Bush. Olohan and Baker (2000) showed that

the optional *that* after reporting verbs SAY and TELL is more frequent in translated than in non-translated English narrative and assumed it to be evidence of a sub-conscious processes of explicitation. The frequent omission of the connective is also marked in Bush's translations, as compared to the work of other translators (Saldanha 2011a). However, in this case, it is the result of a conscious effort to produce an idiomatic translation. During an interview, Bush explains that the use or omission of *that* in his translations is "a very conscious thing" something he particularly pays attention to when editing his translations, because the compulsory nature of the Spanish equivalent means that there is a risk of having too many "that's" in English (2004, personal communication). This example suggests that the nature of translation as an interlinguistic process means that the decisions a translator makes are inherently different to those made by someone authoring a text, something which stylometric tools, and the theoretical assumptions on which they are based, do not take into account.¹ Research in neuroscience suggests that spontaneous and deliberate creative insights are qualitatively different; they constitute two different processing modes and each applies a distinctive neural circuit (Dietrich 2004). A suitable methodological and explanatory framework for translator style needs to take into account that translation requires a more deliberate use of language than authoring.

3. Translator style from the perspective of literary stylistics

Most stylistic studies of translation replicate methodological and explanatory frameworks derived from literary stylistics, often accompanied by corpus analysis techniques. Methods vary widely: parallel corpora consisting of two translations of the same text by different translators (Winters 2007, 2009; Wang and Li 2012); several translations of the same text by one translator (Guangjun and Tingting 2016); different works by the same author translated by one translator (Magalhães and Novodvorski 2012); different works by the same author

translated by more than one translator (Pekannen 2007; Aldawsari, in preparation) and translated and non-translated work by the same writer (Walder 2013; Cockerill 2006). A larger corpus of work by other translators is sometimes used as a relative norm of comparison (Saldanha 2011a; Magalhães and Novodvorski 2012; Aldawsari, in preparation) although this is not always the case.

In terms of linguistic features, studies have shown, for example, that different translators have a distinctive preference for using certain modal particles in German (Winters 2009), emotional particles in Chinese (Wang and Li 2012), specific verbs (Wang and Li 2012) and words from specific semantic fields (Magalhães and Novodvorski 2012). In terms of translation strategies, studies report that the frequency of normalization, contraction, expansion, word order (Pekannen 2007), and explicitation (Saldanha 2008) can vary considerably and consistently from translator to translator. Translators' choices have been shown to result in the creation of new theme contrasts and changed patterns of cohesion (Magalhães, de Castro and Montenegro 2013) as well as different narratological structures (Morini 2014).

Literary stylistic studies of translation have focused mainly on testing different methodological approaches, trying to find the most reliable method to differentiate between the style of the translator and that of the author. This is not surprising considering the difficulty presented by the fact that most translators aim to replicate the source text style and minimize any traces of their presence. Researchers carefully detail the effect that translators' stylistic choices have at the textual level, focusing on their communicative function and explaining, for example, how the use of emotional particles affects the level of register (Wang and Li 2012) or the use of modal particles affects point of view and characterization (Winters 2007, 2009). However, with some exceptions (Malmkjær; 2003, 2004; Morini,

2014; Munday 2008), scholars rarely go beyond the textual level in their search for explanation.

Malmkjær's (2003, 2004) understanding of style in translation is different from that of Baker (see Saldanha 2014). Baker sees it as a personal attribute and the result of both deliberate and subconscious choices, and therefore looks for explanations in the translator's personal history; Malmkjær sees style as a textual attribute and looks for explanations in the context of translation, in circumstances the translator has no control over. As a result, in Malmkjær's studies, although the choices are attributed to the translators, the motivation is external: the translation style reflects not creativity but sociocultural constraints.

Munday (2008), like Baker, is more concerned with style as a personal attribute. He explores "the relationship of the style of the translation to the environments of the target texts" to determine "the impact of external factors on the translators' decision-making?" (7). Munday finds, for example, traces of Rabassa's idiolect that he connects to the translator's life circumstances: "personal elements of playful language, which we might term borrowed lexical primings from his daughter Clara" (149). In Harriet de Onís' translations, important shifts of evaluation on the ideological plane "reveal the ideological base that underpins Onís' lexical primings", who "had a clear idea of the translator's responsibilities in the ideological environment in which she worked in the Cold War period" (93).

Taken collectively, the studies mentioned above have been instrumental in making translation stylistics a key area of research in the contemporary translation studies literature; in particular, they have demonstrated the need to study the style of translations in their own right. However, attempts to flesh out the link between stylistic features and the literary artist are still rather sketchy. A plausible explanation for this is that the models used, stylometry

and literary stylistics, were developed in the context of authorship studies and work under the assumption that there is a single motivating subject beyond the text. Stylist and narratological models still work on the basis of dialogues between writers and readers, and work that explicitly takes into account the dialogic nature of translations is scarce (Schiavi 1996; Hermans 1996; O’Sullivan 2003; Bossseaux 2007). In untranslated texts, it may be possible to establish a direct link between the stylistic make-up of the text and the authoring process; the few stylistic features that can be confidently attributed to a translator, however, do not allow for such a detailed picture of translatorship. What is more, it is not always easy to determine which choices are personal and which are dictated by socio-cultural constraints.

4. Translator style from the perspective of cognitive stylistics and sociology

Apart from stylometry and literary stylistics, two other theoretical frameworks have been employed in order to explain style in translation: one derived from cognitive stylistics (Boase Beier, 2006), and the other using the sociological concept of *habitus* (Yannakopoulou, 2014). Boase-Beier, like Malmkjær, focuses not on the style of the translator but on “the style of the source text as perceived by the translator and how it is conveyed or changed or to what extent it is or can be preserved in translation” (2006, 5). Boase-Beier adopts a cognitive stylistic approach according to which a “translator assumes that the stylistic features in the source text reflect the inferred author’s choices” (50). When trying to reconstruct the style of a text, “the translator is attempting to reconstruct states of mind and thought processes” (54). The mind style that the translator infers from the text, together with factors such as the function of the translation, will become the set of “constraints” (54) that a researcher needs to account for in order to explain the stylistic choices made by the translator.

As argued in Saldanha (2014), while Boase-Beier places the responsibility for the style of the translated text firmly in the translator's hands, this is still a result of the process of re-creation of the meaning and style of the source text. Boase-Beier claims that "even in the case of apparently free translators (. . .) the style of the translation is *defined* by its relation to the source text" (2006, 66, my emphasis). While the impact of source text style in the target text is undeniable, I believe there is room for a cognitive theory that accounts for the translation process in a less unidirectional manner; going beyond what Boase-Beier describes as "constraints" and focusing on the translators' states of mind and thought processes as they interact with others', such as the author's.

Yannakopoulou (2014) resorts to the Bourdiesan concept of *habitus* to explain translator's stylistic patterns. She reminds us that "Bourdieu has shown habitus to be the motivation behind aesthetic *choices*" (2014, 169, emphasis in original) and argues that habitus therefore

"constitutes a theoretical tool with which to address both the manner in which translators as agents perceive and appropriate reality while *interpreting* their STs, and how they generate classifiable practices as they write their TTs in the form of their translation *choices*" (168, emphasis in original).

The example employed by Yannakopoulou is that of Yorgos Himonas's translations of Hamlet. Himonas decided to replace a style he considered to be "outdated and pompous and too elaborate for modern audiences" with his own "pithy, succinct, laconic" (174) style, and superimposed on Hamlet's voice his own ideological views on art and life in general. While Yannakopoulou's is the first fully-fledged account of a translator's style as reflecting an individual habitus, Simeoni (1998) had already proposed employing habitus to account for the fact that "translators' styles differ consistently from one another (and from the authors',

whose voices they report)” (1). Interestingly, however, Yannakopoulou’s study does not portray the type of subservience that Simeoni claims is typical in translators’ work. Simeoni’s view is that

“a translator's style and performance tend to be new more on account of their novel combination of competing norms (...), than as a result of genuine ‘creation’. And even that is the exception. Norms have the upper hand. Translators adhere to them more often than not.” (1998, 7)

Without wanting to deny that habitus plays an important role in translator’s decisions, my argument here is that in translation there is also space for ‘genuine creation’, at least inasmuch as there is space for any ‘genuine creation’ in any other art form. Translators’ stylistic choices respond to the translator’s artistic motivation. If we want to be able to attribute personal responsibility for stylistic choices in translation, a framework that assumes style is purely reflective (of habitus, an interpretation of authorial intention, linguistic habits) is not powerful enough. We need an understanding of style that is constructive, in the sense of having its own motivating principle – which can be political, social or purely aesthetic – and should capture a space for resistance to norms and alternative representations.

Concepts such as habitus, inferred author’s intention, or automatic linguistic habits, can all contribute to explain some of the translator’s choices, but they are unable to account for the artistry of translation. Habitus does not deny the possibility of autonomy but it does not concern itself with such aspects of a creative enterprise either. Literary and cognitive stylistics work under the assumption that creativity can be attributed to a single source. Even when it is widely acknowledged, following Barthes, that “writing is the destruction of every

voice”, that “once a fact is recounted... the voice loses its origin” (1989, 49), the precise organization of “the multiple writings, proceedings from several cultures” (54) is attributed to one author who is responsible for, if not the source of meaning, the creative principle that brings it together. Sociological approaches have encouraged us to consider the materiality of the book beyond the text and account more fully for the book publishing process, considering authorship and translatorship as a set of networked activities (Jansen and Wegener 2013); however, no one has fully considered yet how the explicitly dialogical nature of translation affects the nature of translation as an art. I argue here that performance theory provides useful conceptual tools for understanding translation as an intersubjective art. Performance arts, as in theatre and music, are also dialogic in nature, mediating between an audience and a ‘model’ of some sort; and in discussions of performance, like in translation, “[t]he focus of debate ... centers upon how much and in what ways the script or score of folkloric tradition determines performance as against how much flexibility, interpretive choice, or creative opportunity rests with the performer” (Bauman 1989, 263).

5. Translation, Performativity, Performance

Ever since Austin (1962) first distinguished between language used to *state* things and *do* things, there is a long tradition of understanding language as performative which has been applied to the study of translation in the work of, among others, Robinson (2003) and Berman (2014). Performativity works closely with another essential characteristic of language, citationality: utterances carry with them the echoes of previous usages as well as of their current context (Bakhtin 1986). As pointed out by Derrida (1988), if utterances manage to ‘do’ things it is because they are citational: they iterate and repeat previous utterances, conforming to a model and thus becoming recognisable. Language’s citational quality creates

“a break ... in the subject’s intended meaning” and this break, brought about by the introduction of the citation in a new context, opens the space for something new (Berman 2014, 289).

The theory of performativity which originated in responses and challenges to Austin’s theory of language, is at the basis of contemporary discussions of the agency of translators, including this one. However, I want to go beyond the argument that literary translation is performative and claim that, as a specific art form, its explicitly dialogic nature brings it closer to other arts whose nature involves mediation between a pre-existing – for the lack of a better word – ‘model’ (such as a script), that is usually complete in its own right, and a new audience. The break between utterance and citation and its effect on intentionality, as described by Derrida (1988), moves the concept of linguistic performativity close to that of performance as an artistic practice, which is where I want to place translation. This break exists in all instances of language use but materializes with particular clarity in translation and other performance arts, where the model ceases to function as such the moment a sufficiently different audience comes into a play, and the work needs to take a different material form in order to speak to such an audience. A new work of art needs to be produced through an intersubjective creative process between two or more artistic intentions. This is the inaugural potential of translation, its capacity to create some new, something more or, in Bauman’s words: the emergent as opposed to the ready-made aspects of performance (1989, 263).

Before I go on to map performance and translation theories, it is important to introduce a note of caution: the possible avenues opened by taking performance as a point of departure for theorizing translation are potentially far reaching, but their wide ranging scope makes them also potentially risky. Both concepts, translation and performance, are in Gallie’s

terms (1964) “essentially contested”. This means that there are not only rival uses of the concepts which are “logically possible and humanly ‘likely’” (1965, 187-188) but they are also continuously re-formulated in an atmosphere of sophisticated disagreement as a result of dialogue and a commitment to attain full understanding of the concepts in question. As Carlson (2004) notes, the concept of performance has been mapped in at least three ways: 1) as the display of skills, 2) as keeping up the standard and 3) as patterned or restored behavior. In what follows, I discuss these mappings and argue that the latter, performance as restored behavior, proposed by Schechner (1985), is the one that best describes the artistic practice of translation.

Performance as a display of skills requires “the physical presence of trained or skilled human beings whose demonstration of their skill is performance” (ibid. 3). While translation requires the existence of specialized skills, these are not ‘displayed’ in a traditional sense, neither physically or publicly. This is actually a key difference between translation and performance art, the performance itself is not part of the spectacle, the audience only sees the product without observing the performance while it happens.

Performance as keeping up the standard places the “emphasis (...) on the general success of the activity in light of some standard of achievement which may not itself be precisely articulated” (Carlson 2004, 4). This understanding of performance, often applied in prescriptive contexts (talking about a child at a school) and to non-human actors (a car’s performance), also seems to lack relevance for translation. However, there is one important aspect of this mapping that does chime with translation and that is the “consciousness of doubleness”, according to which “the actual execution of an action is placed in mental comparison with a potential, an ideal, or a remembered original model of that action” (5). As discussed above, translators are aware that their text will be compared to a standard, and that

standard is neither potential, ideal or remembered, but a real model existing side by side with the translation. In theatre, or rituals, however, the ‘original’ behavior which serves “as a kind of grounding for the restoration” is often “distant or corrupted by myth or memory” (47).

In understanding of performance as restored behavior the key is precisely the consciousness of doubleness: restored behavior is consciously separated from the performers who ‘do’ these behaviors, as in theatre and other role-playing, trances, shamanism, rituals. The distance between self and behavior is analogous to that between an actor and the role this actor plays on stage (Carlson 2004, 3). “Because the behavior is separate from those who are behaving the behavior can be restored, transmitted, manipulated, transformed” (Schechner 1985, 36). This analogy captures, I believe, the relationship between the translator and the source text which, like actors, they restore, transmit, manipulate and transform, conscious that they are not the author and conscious of the distance between themselves and the author. Their artistry lies in the mediation of that distance, on the conscious embodiment of doubleness. Language is performative, texts are performative, but not all writing makes an art of its performance.

In the last section of this paper, I aim to illustrate the potential offered by the application of performance theory to account for the translators’ creativity and reveal the artistic principles behind a translator’s work. In previous research (Saldanha 2011a, 2011b, 2011c) I have revealed distinctive stylistic patterns in translations by Margaret Jull Costa and Peter Bush. Jull Costa, for example, often introduces emphatic italics to signal marked information focus in a way that is typical of English literary texts (Saldanha 2011c) and not common in the source languages she translates from (Spanish and Portuguese). The italics work by association with the prosodic patterns of spoken language and thus convey an informal and involved tone of voice. Interestingly, although this is a regular feature in Jull Costa’s

translations, it is used only for certain voices and not others. Emphatic italics are common in translations of works such as *The Mandarin*, by Queiroz, or Sá-Carneiro, where a narrator speaking in the first person describes disturbing personal experiences in a highly emotional tone. They are also common, in dialogues, for example in translations of Valenzuela and Valle-Inclán. However, when Jull Costa translates more detached, third person narratives, as in translations of Sánchez Ferlosio and Saramago, the italics are left out. Jull Costa's choices thus demonstrates a creative strategy that is used to perform some voices and not others.

A characteristic of Peter Bush's translations, on the other hand, is the frequent use of source culture words used either self-referentially or to refer to culture-specific items (Saldanha 2011b). The effect is a more disruptive performance, occasionally reminding the audience of the existence of a foreign language and culture behind scenes, something Jull Costa avoids, because she does not want readers "to come across things which may distract them from their reading experience" (2004, personal communication). While Jull Costa sees it as her job to bridge the cultural or linguistic gap, Bush is more willing to let his readers make the effort themselves. Bush argues that readers tend to be 'patronized' (2004, personal communication). This is consistent with a general disposition to confront readers with the heteroglossia of translated literature, which is part of Bush's understanding of his role as cultural mediator (see, for example, Bush 1999).

These examples of systemic choices in Bush and Jull Costa's work shows how stylistic choices can be explained by how the translators interact with inferred readers expectations, making decisions that affect the interpersonal nature of the translated text, in particular, how the voices positions themselves in relation to anticipated readers' responses. This is why their choices can be explained in terms of a performance of the source text designed for a particular audience. In the next section, I use the translators' own accounts of their tasks to

map links with performance theory along four points of contact: 1) the unresolved dialectal tension between self and other, 2) the deliberate, rehearsed nature of decisions, 3) the need for distance between original and performance/translation, and 4) the role of the audience.

6. In the translators' words

Describing translation in terms of performance offers the possibility of shifting reductive perceptions of translation as linguistic transfer to more powerful understandings of translations as creative products with a “valued status independent to some degree of the source” (Cheetham 2016, 252). Another advantage of the language of performance is that it echoes translators' own intuitive ways of describing their work. In fact, it was reading through writings and interviews with the two translators whose work has been the focus of my research for some time, Peter Bush and Margaret Jull Costa, that I first came to observe how translators frequently resort to that analogy to argue for the need to recognize translation as a creative practice (Bush and New Spanish Books, 2012) or to justify the fact that their voice can be heard in the texts (Jull Costa and Matthews, 2013).

In this section, I focus on writings and interviews with Jull Costa and Bush because I have studied their work in particular detail and can therefore claim with sufficient confidence that the four points elaborated on here form a coherent and consistent pattern in their discussions of their work. Comparisons with performance arts, however, are not exclusive to those two translators; they are a recurrent feature of the discourse of literary translators. Edith Grossman describes translation as a “kind of interpretive performance, bearing the same relationship to the original text as the actor's work does to the script” (2010, pos. 167). Likewise, Daniel Hahn, in an article entitled ‘Theatre masks’ (2014), compares translators to actors playing a part, arguing that we can have two different but equally good translations just

as two actors can give us two very great Hamlets. Allen and Bernofsky argue that “translation inevitably involves guises and masks that can make this truth difficult to perceive; translators, like actors, appear to us under a persona, speaking to us with words that are and are not their own” (2013, pos. 287).

The analogy with performing arts is so common that it is surprising it has not been the subject of more serious scholarly attention. Exceptions are Cheetham (2016), Benschalom (2010), and Wechsler (1988). Cheetham compares the advantages of performance as opposed to transfer as conceptual metaphor to talk about translations, and the implications in terms of the different status given to the source text in each conceptual mapping. Benschalom (2010) argues that acting can offer a theoretical model with which to describe translation by “declaring what attribute of translation should be paralleled to what attribute of acting” (2010, 51). The title of Wechsler’s (1988) book, *Performing without a Stage*, also plays with the analogy between translation and theatre. However, the analogy is not developed theoretically; Wechsler’s aim is didactic, namely to help readers understand “what translation is all about” (1988, 12) Unlike Benschalom and Wechsler, my aim is not to offer a model for good practice or introduce translation to non-experts, but developing our understanding of translation as an art form. This paper arguably supplements Cheetham’s (2016) conceptual mapping on the basis of performance as a metaphor, by mapping points of contact between performance theory and translators’ accounts of their practice.

The first point of contact between translation and performance is the dialectal tension between self and other. According to Schechner, from the personal point of view of the performer, restored behavior involves behaving as if one is someone else or even oneself in other states of feeling or being (1985, 52). This does not mean that the performer stops being themselves or becomes other: “multiple selves coexist in an unresolved dialectal tension” (6).

Jull Costa describes this tension as the need to “submit to another mind, another way of thinking and speaking, before moving on and making it their own in a new language” (1999, 21). In an interview, she contrasts this behavior to that of an author: “When you do your own writing you’re starting with yourself, when you translate you’re starting with someone else, and in a way you have to reach them at some point where it’s them and you” (2004, personal communication). In an interview with Carol Maier, Bush (1997, online) describes this encounter as “a discovery of the self” in a “two-way process” as the translator digs deeper into the text and sets off “tremors within oneself that come through this touch with someone else”. “[T]he kind of self that’s revealed in the process of translation”, he sums up, “is and isn’t me”.

The second point of contact is the rehearsed and deliberate nature of performance and translation. In Section 2 above, I argue that translation differs from authoring because it requires an extra level of reflexivity, whereas authoring allows for a higher degree of spontaneity. Bush, discussing the use of optional connectives and pronouns in an interview, concludes: “That’s what translation is about, making conscious decisions” (2004, personal communication). Jull Costa also elaborates on this point when considering the differences between writing and translating:

“It seems to me that the latter [writing an original text] begins as a largely unconscious process and becomes progressively more conscious, whereas translation starts as a more conscious activity – translating someone else’s words into equivalent words in another language – which, if the translation is to have a life of its own, must then become unconscious, with the translator allowing the text being translated to become part of his/her own unconscious mind” (1997, 23).

Carlson suggests that the difference between ‘doing’ and ‘performing’ lies in an attitude: “we may do actions unthinkingly, but when we think about them, this brings in a consciousness that gives them the quality of performance” (2004, 4). I do not want to suggest here that authoring is done ‘unthinkingly’ or without deliberate decisions. However, authoring may not involve the same level of self-reflection required when two languages are competing for attention and both need to be controlled to avoid the danger of either interference or standardization. The process of deliberation takes place in continuous ‘rehearsals’. Restored behavior is always repeated behavior, both in the sense that it conforms to an ‘iterable model’ (Derrida 1988, 18) and in that it progresses by trial and error:

“the rehearsal is a way of selecting from the possible actions those to be performed, of simplifying these, making them as clear as possible in regard both to the matrix from which they have been taken and the audience with which they are meant to communicate” (Schechner 2003, 207).

In translation, this ‘rehearsal’ becomes the endless drafting and re-drafting that translators often discuss: “I start with a fairly literal draft that becomes, in second and third drafts, much more honed and careful (...) and then I read, re-read and re-edit” writes Jull Costa (1999) in an article devoted to the translations of Saramago. In an interview, Bush suggests that “the art of translation is in the editing, the re-writing and the re-drafting” (2004, personal communication).

In performance, the aim of rehearsals is for the behavior, “when expressed by performers ... [to] seem spontaneous, authentic, unrehearsed” (Schechner 1985, 52). This is also what translators strive for:

“A good actor has to speak the words as naturally as if it had just occurred to him to say them. Likewise a good translator must bring the same convincing spontaneity and life to a text” (Jull Costa 1999, 210).

“the translation should have a spontaneous, fresh feel to it, even though it is the product of many drafts, lots of research... or the original was written six hundred years ago” (Bush and New Spanish Books, 2012).

Again, here it is important to note that editing and drafting processes are common to all creative writing; however, in translation, the editing has a special function, that of creating the illusion of transparency that makes translations read as if they were not translations. This links the second to the third point of contact, the need for distance. As discussed above, the key element of ‘restored behavior’ is the extra layer of consciousness that results from the separation of performer and behavior and allows for comparison. Bush and Jull Costa often describe the pleasure and intimacy of close reading, however, they also insist on the importance of not remaining too close to the text and argue that distance is crucial for the translation to acquire what they call, using exactly the same words, “a life of its own” (Bush 2002, 53; Jull Costa 1997, 22). “To be bound too closely to the original may result in a *dead* translation (Jull Costa, 1999, 208, my emphasis).

This distance is what allows translation and performance to act as metacommentary:

“The distance between the character and the performer allows a commentary to be inserted; for Brecht this was most often a political commentary, but it could be – as it is for postmodern dancers and performance artists – an aesthetic or personal commentary” (Schechner 1985, 9).

Likewise, translators can use that space either to make a political statement, as in the case of feminist translators making the feminine visible in language, or Venuti's minoritizing strategies. In other cases, it can be a place to release the translators' own sense of language aesthetics and autobiographical stream:

Readings are performed from within a subjective consciousness ... words evoke memories and emotions, words and language from an autobiographical repertoire that is unique. (...) if a translator is going to accept the challenge of translating a Cervantes, Tolstoy and or Borges, then he or she has to let the writing boldly take off and style requires the lid to be taken of the subjective stream." (Bush, 2004)

The final point of contact to be discussed is the role of the audience. Translation exists because of the need to cater for a new audience and therefore, like performance, it is "always ... for someone, some audience that recognizes and validates it as performance even when, as is occasionally the case, that audience is the self" (Carlson 2004, 5). Again, this is an element that is shared with other types of creative writing but that takes on a different, more prominent function in translation. It is their privileged knowledge of the new audience as well as their mastery of literary and linguistic skills that empowers translators, and their artistry resides in finding voices that speak for the author/narrators/characters, to the new readers.

According to Bauman, performance in verbal art (also known as oral literature) consists in "the assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative competence" (1974, 293). Bauman was concerned with a way of speaking, rather than writing, but the translator also assumes responsibility towards an audience and, as demonstrated above, it is often assumed expectations from the audience that guide the

translators' stylistic choices, in search of a voice that will be sufficiently convincing or challenging, according to the translator's artistic motivation.

7. Conclusion

In summary, then, we have seen that attempts to understand and explain translator style tend to rely on linguistics and literary models that project onto the translation assumptions that are not entirely aligned with the reality of literary translation. The model derived from stylometry is sensitive to subject matter, where the translator has little control, and assumes a degree of spontaneity in the writing that is not in keeping with what translators report as their usual practice. Literary and cognitive stylistics models assume a monologic creative subject and are unprepared to deal with the complex composite agency in translation. Sociological accounts explain the role of *habitus* but not that of bolder, innovative approaches to translation.

In any study of the translators' stylistic choices there should be a space for automatic linguistic habits, socio-cultural and linguistic constraints, reconstruction of authorial mind-style, but also for genuine creation, subjective choices, personal aesthetics and ideological principles. Coordinating all these factors there is an artistic motivating principle, which can be found by exploring how stylistic choices relate to the four dimensions discussed above. The theoretical model that emerges from this discussion points towards the drafting process as a place where translators negotiate the dialectal tension between self and author, progressively establishing the necessary distance and, in the process, leaving a metacommentary. Some may choose to subvert sexist language, others, like Jull Costa, prioritize a smooth reading experience, reproducing the familiar rhythms of English and encouraging readers to forget the foreign 'model'; yet others, like Bush, may attempt to tease out a new curiosity in their readers by leaving their lack of knowledge exposed. Their

decisions will be guided by an artistic vision, of language, literature, culture and readers; the text will be molded by their own sense of aesthetics and, when ideology is at stake, this will also be revealed because, like style, ideology is never neutral.

In short, then, I propose to see translators as both literary and performance artists. As is the case with authors and other writers, language is their artistic material and stylistics the skills they employ, but unlike authors, the focus is not on the composition but the performance of a text for a different audience. Composition and performance should not be taken as a dichotomy; however. We have seen that there are elements of performance that are shared with authoring, such as the drafting and the acknowledgement of an audience, but that take on different functions according to whether there is an initial model or not. Translators behave *as if* they were the writer, but on a different stage, in another language, for another audience. This does not mean that their art is secondary or less creative; any more than the actor or musician is less creative than the writer or composer. It is of a different nature.

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ⁱ I here apply the distinction proposed by Walder 2013 to use writing/writer as hypernyms encompassing both translation/translator and authoring/author. The terms authoring and author will be used to refer to the process of writing what is generally known as 'originals', works in one or more languages that have no previous source texts in other language(s).