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### Iconicity in translation: Two passages from a novel by Tobias Hill

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# Iconicity in translation

## Two passages from a novel by Tobias Hill

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This article reports on a workshop in which translators explored how particular iconic features present in a literary text might be translated into another language. In advance of the workshop the participants translated two short passages from Tobias Hill's novel *The Hidden* into (mostly) their own native language; their translations preserved the text's iconic features as fully as possible. The article starts with a brief introduction highlighting the iconic features in the passage. It focuses on those parts of the two passages that turned out to be not only most interesting from an iconic point of view but also the most challenging to translate since their iconic features could not always be transferred into the target language in a straightforward way. The languages involved were Dutch, German, Japanese, Polish (2 versions), Serbian, and Swedish. Apart from discussing the translations and the translation difficulties, a further aim was to find out whether we can distinguish any general or language-specific strategies in translating iconic features involving sound, (morpho)syntax or the lexicon.

### 1. Introduction

As part of the ninth iconicity conference in Tokyo, we decided to execute a long treasured wish among members of the Iconicity Project,<sup>1</sup> which was to hold a translation workshop where participants would not only discuss ways of transferring semantic-pragmatic content of a literary text from the source language into the target language, but where considerable attention would also be paid to preserving the iconic features perceived to be present in the text.<sup>2</sup> It is well-known

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1. For a description of this project, which has been running since 1997, see <[www.iconicity.ch](http://www.iconicity.ch)>

2. A very interesting study on the problems and dilemmas connected with the recognition and preservation of iconicity in the translation of literary texts is provided by Tabakowska (2003), which in fact served as inspiration for this workshop.

that choices made by an author on the level of sound, (morpho)syntax, and style or register (often also involving particular lexical choices) add to the overall meaning of a literary text or to the overall effect that it has on the reader/listener (cf. e.g. Fónagy 1999, 2001 on the iconic use of sounds; Bernhart 1999 on rhythm; Nänny 2005 on rhyme; Nänny 1997; Müller 1999, 2001 and Fischer 2014 on syntax, and more generally on iconic features in literature, Anderson 1998; and Nänny & Fischer 2006).

With this in mind, we invited a number of scholars/translators to translate a set text from English. The languages concerned were, in alphabetical order, Dutch, German, Japanese, Polish, Serbian, and Swedish. It was decided to restrict the number of languages involved since the workshop lasted only one day, and we wanted to devote attention to what we all perceived to be important and fairly transparent iconic features before discussing the various solutions possible within each target language. All contributors translated the text into their mother tongue, with the exception of one translator, Mutsuko Tsuboi, who is Japanese and translated into Serbian (with some help from a native speaker), and one organizer, Imogen Cohen, whose native language is English but who is also a near-native speaker of Dutch.<sup>3</sup> The presence of the latter was quite important because she could help answer questions on some subtle characteristics of or idiosyncrasies in the English text.

## 2. Tobias Hill, *The Hidden*: The excerpts and their iconic features

Tobias Hill is an award-winning poet, essayist and novelist. His most recent novel, *The Hidden* (2009), brings together themes and motifs from earlier novels – that of ‘buried secrets and a connection with the past’ – and is written with the iconic touch of a poet. In an interview with his publishers, Faber and Faber, Hill revealed:

I come to the novel from poetry. When I began publishing prose, the term ‘poetic novel’ was still less an accolade than a cuss; but I think the mood has changed. There is more consciousness now of the precision and muscularity a good poet can bring to the crafting of a novel.

(<http://www.faber.co.uk/content/tobias-hill-on-the-hidden>)

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3. We would like to use this opportunity to thank all contributors for their translations and especially for the enthusiasm they brought with them to the workshop; in alphabetical order: Esther Hool (University of Utrecht, German), Christina Ljungberg (University of Zurich, Swedish), Joanna Radwanska-Williams (Macao Polytechnic Institute, Polish), Elżbieta Tabakowska (University of Cracow, Polish), Kayoko Takeda (Rikkyo University Tokyo, Japanese), Mutsuko Tsuboi (Rikkyo University Tokyo, Serbian). Olga Fischer was responsible for Dutch.

We chose Tobias Hill, therefore, because he puts, as it were, poetry into his novels and because he has received acclaim as both a poet and a novelist. As such his narrative fiction is full of richly iconic passages but it is still easier to translate than poetry. We chose this novel in particular because we had the pleasure of welcoming him to the University of Amsterdam in 2011, when he gave a lecture on creative writing with special reference to *The Hidden*. During his stay in Amsterdam we had the opportunity to talk to him about the stylistic choices he made in this novel, and in particular about the stylistic choices made in the passages we chose for this workshop. The two passages are discussed in more detail below.

## 2.1 The first passage (p. 110)

For ease of reference, we have presented the passage with each sentence starting a new line. In the novel the sentences run together as one paragraph.

1	<i>And there was Sparta, the source of his waking joy. A broad road – a boulevard – lined with orange trees, crowded with people late for work, with booths selling Chiclets, chocolates, matches, watches, paperbacks. An avenue of bulbous palms, ivy growing up their flanks like military winter coats.</i>
5	<i>A square bordered by colonnades. A pack of schoolgirls eating chips. A custom pickup cruising past with speakers pumped up to the max. A flatbed full of yelping dogs. A pair of jeeps packed with cadets.</i>
10	<i>A rigid geometry of streets. Umbrellas hung from barred windows. The sun going in, the sky ironclad. A shop selling onions and eggs, comics, chestnuts, shotgun shells and fourteen brands of cigarettes.</i>
15	<i>A plane tree, spreading down, its tentacular arms harbouring four tables, three old men, two children, one backgammon board.</i>

Figure 1. Passage 1

As far as SOUNDS were concerned the first thing we noticed was the high frequency of the liquids /l/ and /r/ (and to some extent nasals) in this passage, especially in ll. 2, 4–5 and again in 15–16, evoking a sense of continuation both in length and width. This effect is strengthened by the use of mostly long vowels and diphthongs as in *broad, road, lined, trees, bordered, colonnades*. (Although /l/s also occur in *chiclets, chocolates* in (3), they are not ‘languid’ as we will discuss below.)

The ALLITERATION on /b/ in *broad* and *boulevard* (2), and later in *booths, bulbous, bordered* (3–5) also contributes to the effect of widening because the repeat of

the /b/ makes the *broad road* even broader through the echoing effect of repetition. This is further strengthened by the EYE-RHyme of *broad* and *road*, again enlarging the phrase as a whole. This in turn is accentuated by the use of the long word *boulevard* (with three syllables and a long last vowel), with another repeat of /b/.

Very much in contrast with the soft liquid sounds of the lines just discussed is line 3, which depicts the clutter of articles sold along the boulevard. A strong sense of crowding is suggested not only by the ASYNDETON (the list of objects connected by commas without any conjunctions), but also by the affricates and voiceless consonant clusters ('cluttered' sounds) found in *Chiclets, chocolates, matches, watches*. This is reinforced by the fact that the /l/ sounds in *Chiclets* and *chocolates* lose their liquid quality because they are both found in unstressed syllables and realized as voiceless lateral releases of the plosive /k/.

The most obvious thing about the vowels in the words *Chiclets, chocolates, matches, watches* is that they are all short. Less obvious, perhaps, is the fact that the voiceless phonetic environment in which they occur make them even shorter. This is called 'pre-fortis clipping'. These short vowels are in turn contrasted with the longer vowels of the words referring to objects or concepts connected with the 'road', as in *broad, lined, trees, crowded, palms, ivy, growing, bordered, colonnades*, and with the more frequent use of voiced (nasal) stops and voiced fricatives in the same set of words: *broad, lin[e]d, trees, crowded, palms, ivy, growing, border[e]d, colonnad[e]s*. This voicing again contrasts with the voiceless consonants found in *chiclets, choc[o]lat[e]s, matches, watches, paperbacks*. Overall, there is a marked change in rhythm as compared to the previous sentence.

The list continues in l. 5 and beyond, but now separated by full stops. The sentences thus created all lack a finite verb, increasing the sense of crowdedness. In fact, there is only one finite verb in the entire passage, namely the copula *was* in the opening sentence *And there was Sparta....* Apart from that, the entire passage is made up of sentence fragments, giving a sense of impression upon impression. This is further emphasized by the repetition of the same sentence structure all through (5–10), all beginning with the indefinite article *A*.

The frequency of voiceless stops now increases (6–9): the heavy use of /p, t, k/ and clipped vowels in *pack, schoolgirls eating chips, custom pickup cruising past, speakers pump[e]d up to the max, pair of jeeps pack[e]d with cadets* breaks up the flow of the passage with the many stops also conveying a feeling of unrest. This effect is accentuated by the alliteration on /p/, and to some extent by the alliteration on /k/. Very interesting in this passage is the RHYTHM, a truly regular iambic meter in (6–9) suddenly interrupted by a trochaic foot, *packed with*, following the iambic, *of jeeps* – with the two consecutive stresses emphasizing the heavily loaded *jeeps* –, and next followed by a number of spondaic feet and extra unstressed syllables in (10). In this way the passage turns from one of relative ease (with still

active *-ing* forms) to a climax, from ‘movement’ to a halt, to a fixed *rigid geometry* (note the repetition of the affricate /dʒ/ and /i/), which is expressed not only in the change of rhythm but also in active *-ing* forms changing into completive past participles (*packed, hung*), or even no verb at all (*rigid geometry of streets*). The active participles start up again from (12) onwards, *The sun going in...*

Rigidity is also expressed in the choice of words – their sense as well as their sounds – such as *barred* (given extra emphasis by the alliterative *umbrellas*) and *ironclad*, and in words with an aggressive or military association, such as *yelping dogs, jeeps, cadets, barred, ironclad, shotgun shells*. Note also the precise use of numerals (a kind of military precision) such as *fourteen brands, four tables, three old men, two children, one backgammon board*. Similarly threatening or negative senses are also conveyed by *tentacular arms* and *harbouring* in (15).

## 2.2 The second passage (p. 290–291)

1	<p>... and then the howling began.  <i>It was an alien cry, neither canine nor lupine.</i>  <i>It was unlike any sound he had ever heard an animal make.</i>  <i>His skin crawled.</i></p>
5	<p><i>The pheal rose and fell like a siren, eerie and silver and unearthly.</i>  <i>It seemed to come from everywhere, from all around and overhead, as if the moon itself was screaming.</i>  <i>Time leapt.</i>  <i>He struggled to his feet, the others exclaiming and scrambling around him.</i></p>
10	<p><i>Jason was running back towards them, a fresh cigarette rolling away into cinders.</i>  <i>Max was turning this way and that, his face raised urgently to the light.</i>  <i>And then,</i>              – <i>The dog! The dog!</i>  <i>He looked down at Sylvia.</i></p>
15	<p><i>Her hackles were up, her lips rolled back, her teeth bared to the black-flecked gums.</i>  <i>She looked like a different animal, larger and wilder, lycanthropic, the moon transforming her.</i>  <i>She was making no sound at all, not only no answering cry but nothing, as if she meant to give no warning to the thing howling off in the dark.</i></p>
20	<p><i>The whole of her – eyes and ears and trunk – was magnetised, fixed on the North Pole of the eastern hills.</i>  <i>Someone put his gun in his hands.</i>  <i>He found himself loading it.</i>  <i>Beside him Max was doing the same, breaching weapon after weapon, dropping a shell,</i></p>
25	<p><i>fumbling for more.</i>  <i>Then they were running, all of them, in a straggling line.</i></p>

Figure 2. Passage 2

SOUNDS play less clearly a role in this passage, but some repetitions are noteworthy. We see the /ai/ sound repeated in the words *cry*, *neither*, *canine*, *lupine*, *unlike* (2–3) to echo the howling that is compared to a *siren* (5). Sequences of high front vowels such as /i/, /i:/ and probably also /ε/ in (1–7) suggest the squealing ‘siren’ itself: *howling*, *it* (2x), *any*, *ever*, *his skin*, *pheal*, *fell*, *eerie*, *silver*, *it seemed*, *everywhere*, *overhead*, *itself*, *screaming* and somewhat less clearly in *alien*, *unearthly*, *if*, *its*.

Of greater interest is the use of SYNTAX and LEXIS. The lines preceding *Time leapt* are descriptive and static. No action takes place (note particularly the frequency of negative elements: *neither*, *nor*, *unlike*), with the exception of the *pheal* (referring to the cry of a jackal), which penetrates everything. The subjects in the main clauses are all inanimate or non-concrete (*howling*, *it* (3x), *skin*, *pheal*) emphasizing the lack of action. In addition, the repetition of *It was* serves to slow down the narrative. Time is also lengthened by the repetition of the conjunction *and* in *eerie and silver and unearthly* (5).

The scene is further dehumanized (emphasizing its *eeri(e)*ness and *unearthl(i)*ness) by the use of Latin words, which convey distance (the *Verfremdungs* effect): *canine*, *lupine*, *pheal* (and later in the second static passage: *lycanthropic* (16)). The use of the word *silver* is interesting in this respect, not only because of its sound (see above), but also because of the colour itself, suggesting a certain ‘coolness’. At the same time it prepares us for the appearance of the *moon*, and the later *transformation* of the dog in (17).

The passage then changes suddenly, with a jump, from static to chaotic activity with the clause *Time leapt* (note the extreme shortness of the sentence, and of the word *leapt*) as if Time has stood still and now needs to accelerate. Activity is indicated by the sudden change to animate subjects in (9–11): *He*, *the others*, *Jason*, *Max*. Note also that each sentence has a different subject suggesting a lack of coherence. This chaotic situation is rendered lexically by words suggesting disorder and haste from (9) onwards, such as *struggled*, *scrambling*, *running*, *rolling*, *turning* (and again at the end of the passage after another static moment: *dropping*, *fumbling*, *running*, *straggling*). The repetition of the progressive form *-ing* stresses these words even further and indicates at the same time the absence of coordinated and purposeful activity, since the present participle is not a plot-advancing verbal form. Chaos implying loss of control is also clear from the impressive amount of directional phrases that are without direction, such as *from everywhere*, *from all around and overhead* (6), *around him* (9), *running back towards*, *rolling away into* (10), and *turning this way and that* (11).

The description of the dog (15–20) provides the second static passage, this time emphasized not by a piercing sound, but by the complete absence of all activity: *no sound at all*, *not only no answering cry but nothing*, *give no warning* (17–18), *magnetized*, *fixed* (19). Note that there are no action verbs in the main clauses of

this passage; the only verbs used here are forms of *to BE* followed by a present or past participle; participles also occur in a large number of non-finite clauses. By similar means as before, the dog, Sylvia, is made to look bigger, and hence scarier, by the longer comparative forms *larger and wilder* (connected by *and*), and in the phrase *the whole of her – eyes and ears and trunk*, with another instance of POLYSYNDETON.

The last passage, from (21) onwards, conveys some new sense of goal-oriented direction but it is intuitive, not conscious. The men in the scene behave like automatons, not knowing what they are doing: *Someone put his gun in his hand, He found himself loading it, Max was doing the same, ... they were running, all of them*, as if they only realized after the fact that they had indeed loaded their guns, and breached them, and run and that they had all done the same. Quite telling is the fact that the verb *put* and the *-ing* forms *breaching, dropping* and *fumbling* have no clear or identifiable subject.

### 3. The attempts at iconic translations

#### 3.1 The first passage

We will not be able to discuss all the above iconic features fully for lack of space, so we have selected a couple of the more interesting and challenging ones. These will be discussed in detail, allowing us to compare and contrast the translation strategies of the translators involved.

The first challenge was to preserve the sense of flow and continuation present in the description of the ‘broad road’ in passage 1, conveyed by alliteration, liquids and nasals, voiced consonants and long vowels. Most translations did quite well there: they managed to reproduce this effect, even if it meant sometimes looking for alternative lexical items with more suitable sounds.

For instance in Dutch, the long vowels, the effect of the eye-rhyme and the alliterative /b/ could be kept in line 2 by using *een brede allee, een boulevard* rather than the more usual *brede weg* /bre:də vɛχ/, where *weg* with its short vowel and voiceless final consonant would have been too short, and where there would have been nothing to suggest the similarity of the words *broad* and *road*. By using *allee*, however, with word final /e:/, the assonance on /e:/ could replace the English eye-rhyme connecting the two lexical items *broad* and *road*. But the eye rhyme was not lost entirely in the Dutch translation: the two <ee>s in *allee* are echoed partially in the lexical word *brede* (interrupted by the <d>) and echoed fully in the grammatical word *een*, which occurs twice in line 2, both immediately before and after *brede allee*.

In the Dutch translation it was not hard to mimic the frequent use of liquids, nasals and long vowels in the original. This is because in most cases suitable synonyms could be found. Examples are *lined* (l. 2) translated by *geflankeerd* ‘flanked’, and *orange tree* (l. 2) translated as *sinaasbomen* rather than the more usual *sinaasappelbomen*. The latter has mostly short vowels (the <aa> is short here) and is crammed with too many syllables. Another example is the translation of *crowded* (l. 2) by the past participle *overspoeld* ‘overflowed’, avoiding the common, but less suitable, past participle prefix *ge-* (/χə/) and delivering instead both liquids and long vowels (in bold).

The two other Germanic languages (German and Swedish) represented at the workshop were in some respects attracted to the translation strategies adopted in Dutch. The German translator rendered *a broad road* as *eine breite Allee* rather than as the more literal *eine breite Strasse*: *Allee* was felt to be more appropriate with its long vowel, liquid consonant and open syllable. Unlike Dutch *allee*, however, German *Allee* does not enjoy full assonance with the preceding word *breite*, nor the compensatory eye-rhyme.

The phonetics of German, however, allowed the translator to adopt a different strategy to Dutch with respect to past participles. Whereas the Dutch translator strove to avoid common past participle prefixes (i.e. those beginning with *ge-*, pronounced in Dutch as a ‘hard’ voiceless fricatives /χ/), the German translator embraced them. Thus *lined with orange trees, crowded with people late for work* was translated into German as *gesäumt mit Orangenbäumen, dicht gedrängt mit Menschen*. This strategy works here because in German the past participle *ge-* is pronounced with a voiced plosive /g/. This sound differs in terms of only one distinctive feature (i.e. place of articulation) from the /b/ of *boulevard*. In this way the translator was able to come close to replicating the way /b/ was repeated (echoed) in the source text. The German translator felt that this echoing effect was enhanced by the parallel syntax in *gesäumt mit Orangenbäumen ... gedrängt mit Menschen*. These factors taken together were enough to make the translator reject *voll mit Menschen* as an alternative for *dicht gedrängt mit Menschen*, even though the former phrase contains more nasals/liquids.

The Swedish translator similarly rendered *broad road* as *en bred allé*. For her *en bred allé, en boulevard* was preferable to the alternative, and more straightforward *en bred väg* /e:n bre:d vae:g/, which ends in a plosive/closed syllable. In contrast *allé*, with its open syllable, opens up the sentence iconically, evoking the mental image of the boulevard, which is then named in the next phrase.

It is interesting that the choice of an open syllable here, taken independently by all the Germanic translators, superficially deviates from the iconicity of source text: the word *road* does not, after all, contain an open syllable but ends, like *väg*, on a plosive. However, such was the overall effect of the passage, with its open

vowels, nasal and liquids, eye-rhyme and alliteration on /b/ that all the Germanic translators felt that *allé/ Allee/ allee* captured these elements of the text better.

As far as the past participles were concerned, the strategy adopted in Swedish was, on the face of it, similar to that adopted in Dutch. Thus the Swedish translator chose to translate *crowded* as *myllrande* ('milling') avoiding the past participle and replacing it with the more suitable *-ing* form, with its nasal consonant. It should be noted, however, that the Swedish avoidance of past participles was not motivated by exactly the same considerations as the Dutch, for past participles in Swedish do not begin with a hard prefix (or with any kind of prefix for that matter). The translator chose the *-ing* form mainly to emphasize the ongoing movement, to alliterate with (i.e. echo) *människor* ('people') and because *myllrande* contained more nasal/liquids than the rather static *fylld med* 'filled with' with its two stops.

The remaining three languages – Serbian, Polish and Japanese – were more diverse in their 'lines of attack' – not surprisingly, given their increasing distance from English. Starting with one of the Slavic languages, Serbian, *A broad road – a boulevard* was translated as *Jedan širok put – jedan bulevar*. The absence of both eye-rhyme and (near) assonance in the phrase *širok put* ('wide road') was amply compensated for by the repetition of *jedan* (lit. 'one'). In Serbian a determiner is not required here so the insertion of *jedan* is marked and its repetition prominent. This helps to iconically recreate the sense of expanse through the echoing effect.

As far as the use of voiced consonants, liquids and nasals are concerned, the translator from Serbian made no conscious attempt to choose these although the passage contains them anyway (e.g. *lined with orange trees* was translated as *sa drvoredima pomorandži* ('with alleys of oranges/ orange trees'), where the liquids and nasals in *pomorandži* come close to the sounds in the English word.

There were two translators working independently of each other from Polish (our other Slavic language) and they both used the same strategy to compensate for the alliteration, eye-rhyme and near assonance in the phrase *A broad road – a boulevard*. Instead of relying on the repetition of an optional determiner (as in Serbian) both translators used word-medial consonance on the prominent liquid /l/: *Szeroka ulica – bulwar* ('Wide street – boulevard'). One of the translators exploited the repetition of the voiced fricative sound represented by <rz> as in *dwa rzędy drzew* ('two rows trees[GEN]' translating *lined with*) in order to invoke the repetition of voiced sounds in the original.

Our last (but by no means least important) language was Japanese. As the only non- Indo-European contribution, we were very curious to find out how the translator would approach the text. She translated *A broad road – a boulevard* as

		<i>burubado</i>
<i>Hiroi</i>	<i>hiroi</i>	<i>oodori</i>
Wide	wide	big-street (boulevard – written in RUBI, an annotative gloss)

Here the repetition of the lexical word *hiro* (lit ‘wide’) was used to recreate the eye-rhyme and alliteration in the source text. In some ways this strategy was similar to that used by the Serbian translator, who opted for a repetition of the function word *jedan* ‘one’ to the same effect (see above). Radically different from anything we have seen so far, however, was the Japanese translator’s use of *rubi*, an annotative gloss usually placed above a (difficult) word written in Chinese characters to show how the word should be pronounced. Here, however, *rubi* was inserted not to indicate the pronunciation of Chinese characters but to recreate the English word *boulevard* by providing its approximate pronunciation in Japanese.

We now turn to line 3 of the original (see Figure 1), where the mood changes from spacious to cramped. In other words, this is the point at which we temporarily leave a prose style dominated by voiced consonants, long vowels, liquids and nasals depicting the flow of the *broad road*, and encounter a phrase depicting a tight cluster of objects ‘iconicized’ phonetically by short vowels, voiceless plosives and consonant clusters, and ‘iconicized’ grammatically by the lack of conjunctions (i.e. asyndeton): [*with booths selling*] *Chiclets, chocolates, matches, watches, paperbacks*.

It was interesting to see how the various translators went about recreating the iconic language describing this clutter of objects sold in the booths, where it was essential to preserve the snappy syllables with their short vowels, hard consonants and hard consonant clusters. The translators offered various solutions, and some felt it unnecessary to preserve the exact semantic value of each object, as long as their translations denoted things that could generally be bought in market stalls in a southern European city like Sparta.

This time, we will present the languages in reverse order. So starting with Japanese, the translator *did* translate the clutter of objects literally, as can be seen in the following gloss:

*uocchi*

*Roten-niwa, gamu-no chikkuretto-ni chokoreto, macchi-ni tokei*  
 At-booths, chewing-gum Chiclets and chocolate, matches and watches (watch  
 in *rubi*),  
*soshite, pepabakku-no hon.*  
 and paperback books.

Despite this literalism, or perhaps because of it (see below), the iconicity comes across well in Japanese. On the face of it, this is surprising given that Japanese does not permit consonant clusters within syllable boundaries (except for C+/j/ as in *Tokyo* and *Kyoto*). But it does have voiceless fricatives and voiceless geminate consonants, the latter being twice as long as single voiceless consonants. Furthermore, in the same way that voiceless consonants have a shortening effect on adjacent

vowels in English, geminate consonants have a shortening effect on adjacent vowels in Japanese (cf. Tsujimura 2007). And that is what we see in this phrase: a total of five geminate consonants crammed into four words (*chikkuretto* (チックレット), *macchi* (マッチ), *uocchi* (ウオッチ), *pepabakku* (ペーパーバック)) – significantly more geminate consonant per phrase than in the rest of passage 1. The transcription given above is in *romaji* (romanized Japanese) but in the ‘real’ Japanese orthographic version the geminate consonants were represented not by two adjacent consonants but by *sokuons* (symbols indicating that the following consonant is double, shown in bold above). The fact that there were five geminate consonants means that the *sokuon* was repeated five times, which in turn reinforced the piling on of goods. The successful use of loan words used here (*Chikkuretto* ‘Chiclets’, *chokoreto* ‘chocolates’, *macchi* ‘matches’, *uocchi* ‘watches’, and *pepabakku* ‘paperbacks’ are all loan words) shows how ‘direct translation’ (a term taken from Vinay and Darbelnet 1958) can be used effectively to reproduce iconicity.

Whilst Japanese went a long way to reproduce the phonetic iconicity, the grammatical iconicity seems, on the face of it, to have been lost. This is because the asyndeton (the cramming of lexical words together without conjunctions) was replaced by polysyndeton: the conjunction *ni* was used twice – once to separate *chikkuretto* from *chokoreto*, and again to separate *macchi* from *tokei* (*uocchi*). However, three extra words were added to this passage (‘chewing gum’, ‘books’ and a *rubi* transliteration of ‘watches’ (*uocchi*)) by way of an explanatory gloss, and the addition of these extra words goes some way to fill the space created by two extra conjunctions. In other words, although asyndeton is an option in Japanese, the translator felt that pairing up ‘Chiclets’ and ‘chocolates’, and ‘watches’ and ‘matches’, helped to reproduce the rhythm of the original here, given the addition of extra lexical items/*rubi* glosses.

The Polish translators diverged from each other in their approaches to the translation of this line. While both preserved the grammatical iconicity of the phrase by keeping the asyndeton, each chose to translate the wares on sale in the booths with different lexical items and different morphological/case endings:

*ze stoiskami gdzie sprzedawano miętówki*[DIM], *czokoladki*[DIM], *zegarki*,  
with booths where were-being-sold mint-candy, chocolates, watches,  
*książki, zapalki*.  
books, matches. (Translator 1)

*kiosków z Mentosami, z batonikami, z zapalkami*,  
booths with Mentos[INSTR] with candy-bars[DIM,INSTR] with matches[INSTR]  
*z zegarkami, z tanimi książkami*.  
with watches[INSTR] with cheap books[INSTR]. (Translator 2)

Whereas the first Polish translator used the plural (diminutive)<sup>4</sup> suffix *-ki* to recreate the hard consonants in the source text, the second chose to render the passage in the instrumental case, adding the instrumental suffix *-ami*. One could argue that in doing so, translator 2 has introduced nasals into a part of a text from which they should have been excluded. After all, in the source text, nasals and liquids ‘iconicized’ the *broad road*, and not the clutter of objects in the booths. However, the addition of the instrumental suffix *-ami* is only part of the picture. By using the instrumental the translator avoids the extra clause *gdzie sprzedawano* used by translator 1, which slows the speed down. In addition, she adds the preposition *z*, which is repeated throughout; these serve to create a sense of crowding.

Moving on to Serbian, we note that this translator too preserved the grammatical iconicity (i.e. the asyndeton) of the original:

*sa tezgama koje prodaju bombone, čokolade, šibice, satove, knjige.*  
with booths which sell candies, chocolates, matches, watches, books.

She shortened *paperbacks* to ‘books’, *knjige*, for the sake of the rhythm; paperbacks in full would be *knjige u mekom povezu*. At the same time, the repetition of the feminine plural *-e* ending also helped to preserve a fast rhythm. In order to make sure that the list of objects was familiar to Serbian readers, *Chiclets* was translated as *bombone* (‘candy’).

Now we return to the Germanic languages with which we started this subsection. Beginning this time with Swedish, the phrase under discussion was translated as:

*allt möjligt, från Chiclets, choklad, drycker, böcker, klockor*  
all-that-is possible, from Chiclets, chocolate, drinks, books, clocks

Since Swedish has no productive diminutive suffixes,<sup>5</sup> it could not resort to the strategy adopted by the Polish translators. Instead, the Swedish translator expressed the great amount of clutter for sale in the booths by adding *allt möjligt, från Chiclets* (‘all that is possible from ... to’/‘all sorts of things from ... to’). In order to keep the rhythm, *Chiclets* – which is used as a brand name in Swedish – was kept in

4. Diminutives in Polish are complex; some nouns with a diminutive suffix have been lexicalized so that they may look like diminutives in form, but semantically they are not. This is true for *zapałki* ‘matches’, *książki* ‘books’, and *zegarki* ‘watches’. Only *miętówki* ‘mint-candy’, *czekoladki* ‘chocolates’, and *batoniki* ‘candy-bars’ (translator 2) are true diminutives.

5. In Swedish, diminutives are mostly used with children’s names, and when used with common nouns, they have the effect of ‘sweetening’ them. Some form of emotion is also involved when diminutives are used in Slavic or in German and Dutch, but this lightens the mood rather than making it ‘sweet’. In the latter languages, it therefore feels like an appropriate device for the ‘cosy’ list of objects gathered together here in the booths.

order to rhythmically and phonetically echo *choklad* ('chocolate'). By shortening 'paperbacks' to *böcker*, ('books'), the rhythm was preserved as was the word-medial repetition of the English consonants in *matches/watches* by using plosive /k/ in *böcker* and *klockor*. All this added to the sense of multiplicity. One problem Swedish encountered with this approach (i.e. with the shortening of words) was that *tändstickor* ('matches'), when shortened to *stickor* (which is preferable from a rhythmic point of view) is ambiguous. To keep the rhythm, therefore, the translator suggested replacing *stickor* by *drycker* ('drinks'). This replicates the rhythm, the /k/ plosive, and off end-rhyme <-er> (/ər/) in *böcker*; and comes close to replicating the <-or> in *klockor*.

For the German translator, too, the staccato rhythm and sound symbolism were of great importance. The translator was struck by the repetition of voiceless affricates in the original, by the voiceless consonant clusters and by the succession of trochees. In addition she noticed a clear/dark vowel alternation in *Chiclets* and *chocolates*, which, she argues, was reminiscent of childhood nursery rhymes. For her, the discordant collection of objects were united by the concordant effects of rhythm and sound repetition, making the scene seem both connected and disconnected at the same time. As she says, "The protagonist steps out of the hotel and sees many things. He perceives these things as impressions that are at the same time connected and disconnected to each other; they seem to be like flashes to him." For the German translator, therefore, the sounds of the words were as least as important as the semantic value of those words. And her translation kept those sounds. *Chiclets* and *chocolates* were translated as *Snickers* and *Crackers*, preserving the voiceless consonants, the voiceless consonant clusters, and the clear/dark vowel alternation; *matches* and *watches* were translated as *Tabak* ('tobacco') and *Wecker* ('alarm clock'), and the *paperbacks* became *Klatschblätter* ('gossip sheets' i.e. tabloids) rather than *Taschenbücher* ('pocketbooks'), which sounded too tame. *Blätter* also created a nice assonance with *Wecker*. Even though the translator deviated from the exact semantic values of the words, she endeavoured to stay within the same semantic field (e.g. by substituting tobacco for matches). In addition, asyndeton – i.e. the grammatical iconicity – was preserved.

Although Dutch is more closely related to German and Swedish than to Polish, the Dutch translator recreated the iconicity of this passage using a strategy similar to that employed by the Polish translators, i.e. by making use of diminutives. A difference is that the Dutch diminutives, unlike some Polish ones, are not lexicalized:

*vol kraampjes* [DIM] *die leuren met chocolaatjes*[DIM], *klokjes*[DIM],  
 full [of] booths that peddle [with] chocolates, watches,  
*vuurstokjes*[DIM], *pepermunt*, *paperbacks*.  
 matches, peppermint, paperbacks.

The use of diminutives in Dutch is not necessarily restricted to small objects; they can easily be used to list objects for sale in great number. The big advantage of using the diminutives *-(p)je*, *-(t)je* or *-(k)je* is that this extra syllable speeds up the rhythm and shortens the stem-vowel. The rhythm and the identity of *matches*, *watches* ('vuurstokjes', 'klokjes') was in this way preserved.<sup>6</sup> *Chiclets* was less easy to translate, for reasons to do with both the semantics and the rhythm of the word. It was therefore replaced by the semantically close *pepermunt* which, when moved to just before *paperbacks* (a loanword in Dutch), creates both a repetition of rhythm and sound: the first two syllables of *paperback* and *pepermunt* are pronounced identically as /pe:pər/.

Translating the even iambic rhythm of lines 6–8 and the sudden trochaic and spondaic jumps in lines 9 and 10, proved a hard nut to crack. Most translators did not succeed or did not try because the iconicity here is less striking. Lexical choices often proved difficult here too because words such as *flatbed* and *custom pickup* were too specific or technical and hence difficult to match, while *pack*, *pumped up* and *cruising past* carried strong sexual connotations which were hard to capture because one would not want to make them explicit.

The Dutch translator nicely managed line 6, preserving both the rhythm and the connotation of sexual hunting, using the word *meute* (usually associated with hounds) for *pack* and *meiden* rather than the more usual and 'purer' word (*school*) *meisjes*. Also lines 8 and 9 created few problems in capturing the rhythm and the trochaic foot (both *jeeps* and *prop-* are stressed). The effect of staccato sounds was also partially preserved by the use of alliteration in *meute meiden*, and the preservation of sharp plosives /t/, /p/, /k/ in lines 6 and 9, matching the English ones. Similarly some of the nasals and liquids were preserved in line 8:

*Een meute meiden met patat ...*  
 A pack [of] girls with chips.  
*Een laadbak vol gejank van honden. Een tweetal jeeps propvol cadetten*  
 An open-lorry full howling of dogs. A two-some jeeps brimful cadets

Swedish also managed to preserve sounds and rhythm in:

*En grupp skolflickor ätande chips.*  
 A group schoolgirls eating chips  
*En flakbil full med gläfsande hundar. Ett par jeepar fullpackade med kadetter.*  
 A flat-car full with yelping dogs. A pair jeeps full-packed with cadets

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6. Even though *vuurstokjes* 'fire-sticks' as a translation of *matches* is somewhat odd (since it normally refers to little firework sticks), the more usual *lucifers* simply did not fit the sounds and the rhythm.

Here the trochaic foot, as in the Dutch translation, is preserved by adding the stressed morpheme *full* to *packade*. The flavour of sexual hunting in the line about schoolgirls, however, was lost in the use of the word *grupp* ‘group’ (this was also the case in the first Polish translation, which used *grupka*[DIM], but not in the second one, which used *stadko* ‘flock/bevy’, preserving both the appropriate sounds and the connotation).

The German translator was especially concerned to keep the plosive sounds to convey the aggressive atmosphere,<sup>7</sup> thereby sacrificing the meter:

*Ein Pritschenwagen voller kläffender Köter. Ein Jeep-Paar proppenvol mit Kadetten*  
A flatbed-truck full yapping curs. A jeep-pair brimful with cadets

The other translators on the whole managed to preserve the harsh plosive and/or fricative sounds, or they drew attention to the intensity of the lines by using alliteration and the repetition of syllables/word-stems as can clearly be seen in the second Polish translation (given in bold):

*Przejeżdżający obok **przerobiony** z limuzyny **pickup** z **głośnikami**[INSTR]*  
Cruising by converted from limousine pickup with speakers  
*Podkręconymi*[INSTR] *na **pełny** regulator. Platforma **pełna skomlących psów***  
Turned-up on full regulator. Platform full of-whining dogs

Some struggled with the connotations but could convey some of the flavour by using slang words, as was done, for instance, in the Serbian translation, using *friziran* (‘tweaked’) for *custom* and *daska* (lit. ‘plank’, i.e. ‘the limit’) for *max*.

### 3.2 The second passage

This time we will concentrate more on syntax and lexis. However, one final remark on sounds is appropriate, i.e. the sounds associated with the *siren*, because most translators responded to it. We noted above that the squealing of the /sairən/ was echoed in five occurrences of /ai/ and in the onomatopoeic /i:/, /i/, /ε/ sounds (at least twenty-one times) in the English original. In the Slavic and Germanic languages, this could be handled effectively using the high /i(:)/ and clear close /e:/ sounds present in their words for *siren*: *syrena/sirena/siren(e)/Sirene*, thus reflecting both the onomatopoeic imitation of the squealing itself augmented with associative sound symbolism. These high sounds are further enhanced when accompanied by a nasal *n* or a palatalized consonant (see note 8).

7. For this reason she also translated ‘pack of schoolgirls’ by *Schulmädchenpack*, which is analogous to the negative *Räuberpack* ‘band of robbers’.

To start off with Serbian, the /i(:)/ and /e(:)/ are repeated frequently in lines 2, 3, and 5:

*Bio je to nepoznat krik, ni pseći ni vučji.*  
 Was it unknown scream, neither dog-like nor wolf-like  
*Bio je drukčiji od bilo kog zvuka koji je on do tada čuo od životinje.*  
 Was[it] different from any sound which has he until then heard from an-animal.  
*Vrisak se digao i spustio kao sirena, jeziv i srebrn i nezemaljski.*  
 Shriek rose and fell like a-siren, eerie and silvery and unearthly

And similar sounds can be found in the second Polish translation in lines 2–5:<sup>8</sup>

*ni to psi ni wilczy ... przez zwierzę, jaki kiedykolwiek słyisał. ... Dźwięk*  
 neither dog-like nor wolf-like ... by animal that anytime he-heard ... Sound  
*wznosił się i opadał jak syrena, niesamowity i srebrzysty i nieziemski*  
 rose and fell like siren, eerie and silver and unearthly

In the Dutch translation, the high sounds could be repeated without much difficulty in lines 3 to 7, again both preceding and following the word for *siren*:

*Het leek op geen geluid dat hij ooit een dier had horen maken. Zijn huid kromp*  
 It looked like no sound that he ever an animal had hear(d) make. His skin shrank  
*in een. De schreeuw gilde gelijk een sirene, griezelig en zilver en onaards.*  
 inwards. The cry yelled like a siren, eery and silver and unearthly.  
*Het scheen...*  
 It seemed...

In German, (and to a lesser extent in Swedish) the /i(:)/ sounds echoing German *Sirene* were condensed and prominent in line 5 immediately following the *siren*:

German: *wie eine Sirene, irrsinnig und silbrig und nicht irdisch*  
 Swedish: *som en siren, kusligt och silvrigt och spöklikt*  
 like a siren, eerie and silvery and not earthly/spooky

The German translator remarked that she replaced the more usual translation of *eerie*, i.e. *unheimlich* by *irrsinnig* ('insane') and she used *nicht irdisch* rather than *unirdisch* (with a negative prefix as used in English) in order to emphasize the

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8. The first translator uses more or less the same words in the second part of line 5: *jak syrena alarmowa, niesamowity, nieziemski, srebrzysty* ('like an alarm siren, eerie, unearthly, silvery'), but fewer associative high vowels in the lines before that. The second translator writes: phonetically *zwierzę, ...kolwiek, dźwięk, się, niesamowity*, and *nieziemski* are all cases where a palatal consonant (given in bold here) – indicated in the spelling by <i> – is followed by an [ɛ] sound; all these palatal consonants are 'high and front' in nature, thus repeating and emphasizing the sound made by the siren.

appropriate sound context /i:/ for the *siren*, adding that, as a contrast, she used dark vowels in the first part of this line (*Das Jaulen wurde lauter und leiser* for *The pheal rose and fell*) to indicate the whining increase and decrease of the rising and falling siren.

In Japanese, the ‘eery’ sounds were more difficult to catch via associative sound symbolism because the word for *siren* did not contain any high vowels. The translation also required a number of mutations: the phrase ‘rose and fell’ was rendered as *yokuyo* (‘inflection’), which is a noun; the literal translation of ‘silver’, *gin*, does not convey the chilliness of the original, which was felt to be crucial here, so it was left out; the order of the words for *eery* and *chilly* was reversed because *hiebieshita usukimiwarukute* (‘chilly and came into ears easily’), sounded more natural while ‘unearthly’, could only be explained by a full sentence: *konoyonomono-towa omoenakatta*:

*Sairen-no-yona yokuyo-de hiebieshite usukimiwaruku,*  
 [it was] siren-like inflection-and chilly-and eerie,  
*konoyonomono-towa omoenakatta.*  
 and-[it]-being-on-the-earth was-unthinkable

As for lexis, all participants noted the dehumanization or alienation intimated by the use of the Latinate words, *alien*, *canine*, *lupine*, and especially the very rare *pheal* (meaning ‘the cry a jackal makes when hunting’) in the first five lines. It proved a challenge to translate this sense of unease because most languages – especially a non-European language like Japanese – cannot use Latin words to the extent that English can for the purpose of expressing distance and lack of intimacy or comfort. It was interesting to see, however, that quite often similar solutions were found to convey the idea of *Verfremdung*.

The most surprising way out of this conundrum was offered by the Japanese translation, reverting as it did to a visual solution. The translator used the insertion of *Kanji* (Chinese characters) rather than *hiragana* or *katakana* (Japanese syllabic scripts) to make the text more formal and scary; she used, for instance, 犬 for *canine*, rather than いぬ or イヌ. This could be seen as somewhat similar to the use of Latin in English:

The Germanic languages compensated with archaic, formal words or with lexically and phonetically longer words, and/or more elaborate syntax, all of which cause a slowing down of the flow of the passage. In Dutch, for instance, the regular word for *begin* (the Dutch cognate *beginnen*) was replaced by the formal *aanvangen*, and *alien* was translated by the longer and stranger *buitenaards* (‘outside-earth[ADJ]’) instead of the more usual *vreemd* (‘strange’). The words *neither ... nor* were translated with the old-fashioned single correlative *noch*. In the syntax, the predicate *Het was* (‘It was’) was repeated by means of an added extra predicate: *het*

*kwam* ('it came'), thus creating a slower pace and more formality in the two consecutive clauses (as in fact the English text does in line 3, where *It was* is repeated). In addition, the indefinite article was left out before the nouns *hond* 'dog' and *wolf*; this not only sounds archaic but it also makes the phrase more scary by invoking not only single creatures but all of 'dog-' and 'wolf-kind' (which is indeed what the use of adjectives rather than count nouns convey in English):

*en toen ving            het huilen aan. Het was een buitenaardse    schreeuw,*  
and then commenced the howling [on]. It    was an extra-terrestrial cry  
*het kwam van   hond noch wolf*  
it came from dog    nor    wolf

Swedish compensated by inverting the regular word order after *då* 'then', and by repeating the morpheme *-likt* ('associated with'). In Swedish, however, the foreignness of *canine* and *lupine* had to be expressed by articulating its uniqueness; this is why *egedomligt* was added to reinforce *främmande vrål*:

*och då    började ylandet. Det var ett egendomligt främmande vrål,*  
and then started howling. It was a peculiar    alien        roar,  
*varken hundlikt eller varglikt.*  
neither dog-like nor wolf-like

The German translator added an archaic dative *-e* ending to *weder von einem Hunde noch von einem Wolfe* ('neither from a dog nor from a wolf') and used a longer word and a less usual collocation in rendering 'an alien cry' as *fremdartiges Schreien* rather than *fremder Schrei*. Similarly in line 3, she used the more formal *vernommen* rather than *gehört*, which would have been the more common translation of *heard*.

The second Polish translator compensated with long words, such as *niesamowity* and *srebrzysty*, with phonemically unusual words, e.g. *skowyt*, and some poetic phrases like *ni to... ni...*, *i... i*, i.e. the repetition of the conjunctions *ni* and *i*:

*... i wtedy    zaczął się ten skowyt. To był jakiś obcy odgłos, ni to    psi        ni*  
and then began    this howl. It was some alien sound, neither dog-like nor  
*wilczy ... niesamowity i    srebrzysty i    nieziemski*  
wolf-like    eerie                    and silver        and unearthly

The Serbian translator used a very similar strategy. She also compensated for the Latin words with phrases retaining a poetic function, e.g. by repeating *Bio je* 'it was', and, as in Polish, with the correlatives *ni...ni...* and *i...i...* In addition she used inanimate subjects with reflexive verbs as in *Koža mu se naježila* 'Skin [on]him by-itself crawled' and *Vrisak se digao i spustio* '[the]shriek by-itself rose and fell'.

Turning now to the syntax. All translators kept the inanimate subjects of the first eight lines, even though that was not easy in the phrase *His skin crawled*. But creative solutions were found to match the English phrase, cf. Polish: *Przeszły go ciarki* ('Pierced him creeps[SUBJ]') and *Przejął go zimny dreszcz* ('Gripped him cold shiver[SUBJ]'), German: *Ein Grauen ergriff ihn* ('A horror gripped him'); note, by the way, the very effective /gr/ sounds here, easily associated, as the translator writes, with "tremor and goosebumps". All these translations chose a construction where the verb *crawl* morphed into a nominal subject with *his* being involved more directly because it is given the role of experiencer or direct object. Swedish kept the verb but also used a construction where a prepositional object took the place of *his*: *Det kröp under huden på honom* ('it crept under the skin on him'). This is rather similar to Serbian, which however preserved 'skin' as subject: *Koža mu se naježila* ('skin him[DAT] by-itself crawled'); Japanese: 背筋がぞっとした / *Sesuji-ga zotto-shita* ('[his] spine got chills'), and Dutch: *Zijn huid kromp ineen* ('His skin shrank inwards') were the only translations that kept the original inanimate subject without explicitly involving the human experiencer.

*Time leapt*, was the pivot that provided the sudden change to the next passage, marking the difference between the static nature of the first part and the frantic activity taking place in the next. To be effective, the sentence and the words in it had to be short, and the sounds sudden and compact, almost all of which is present in *Time leapt*. No one really succeeded here. Swedish: *Tiden sprang iväg* ('The time sprang away') is too long (and the sounds not abrupt enough) because it has to use a definite article as well as a particle to complete the verb. The same applies to Dutch (with a prefix rather than a particle): *De tijd versprong*, and to German: *Die Zeit sprang*, even though a particle can be left out there. In Serbian and Polish, there were similar problems as can be seen from *Vreme je proletelo* ('Time had-flown by') and *Czas wykonał skok* ('Time made leap')/ *Susem skoczył czas* ('With-[a]leap leapt time[SUBJ]') respectively, even though in these languages there is no article to worry about. In Japanese, it was translated as 時が駆け抜けた *toki-ga kakenukata* ('Time rushed/ran/dashed through') to emphasize the speed even though it is unusual to combine the verb *kakenukata* with a non-human subject.

The chaotic disorder expressed by the "directional phrases without direction" in ll. 9–11 was not difficult to convey in terms of lexis or grammar. The opposite was true for the haste and purposeless activity suggested by the repetition of the progressive *-ing* form and the frequentatives in *struggle* and *scramble* (reinforced by a high frequency of liquids /l/, /r/ in the passage). In many languages of the workshop, finite past tenses had to be used since present participles were not available for this English structure. This made the activity look more precise and intentional. An example from Dutch will suffice here:

*Hij krabbelde op, de anderen schreeuwden en strompelden wezenloos om*  
 He struggled up, the others shouted and stumbled senseless round  
*hem heen*  
 him onwards

Polish and Serbian, however, were able to use imperfectives here, e.g. in Polish *podnosił* rather than perfective *podniósł*, to convey an impression of incompleteness:

Polish: *Z trudem podnosił się na nogi, inni krzyczeli i szamotali się*  
 With difficulty he-rose on legs, others shouted and scrambled  
*wokół niego*  
 around him

Serbian: *Sa mukom je stao na noge, ostali su uzvikivali i*  
 With difficulty [he]stood on [his]feet, [the]rest are exclaiming and  
*jurili oko njega*  
 scrambling around him

Frequentatives were expressively used only in Dutch in *krabbelde* and *strompelden*, while the translator added an extra word *wezenloos* to render the sense of purposelessness.<sup>9</sup>

There is no space to go into the details of the last part of passage 2. All translators managed to keep the large number of negatives in ll. 18–19, with Polish and Serbian even adding an extra, sixth one in *nie dawać żadnego ostrzeżenia* ‘not give no warning’ and *Nije davala ni glasa* ‘not making no sound’, respectively, thus emphasizing the *non-activity* (*magnetized, fixed*) of the dog. Similar challenges occurred here – as we already noted above and in Section 2.2 – in connection with syntax, again involving present participles (*breaching, dropping, running*) frequentatives (*fumbling, straggling*), and passive subjects (*Someone put a gun in his hands, He found himself loading it*) indicating frantic but non-directed activities. Translators managed in one way or another to take the direction out of the finite verb if their grammar forced it upon them (only Polish could use the verbal suffix *-jąc* to render the multiple *-ing* forms in *loading, dropping, searching*); for instance, by using an extra subordinate clause, as was done in Japanese and Polish, for *He found himself loading it*:

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9. The other translators found no ways to indicate a sense of hesitation or purposelessness by means of frequentative suffixes, or by other means such as reduplication (cf. Fischer 2011: 67). Imperfectives *can* be used in Polish and Serbian as frequentatives but only in certain contexts.

Japanese: *Soshite ki-ga tsukuto tama-wo kometeita*  
 And when [he]noticed, bullets [he]was-loading  
 Polish: *zorientował się, że go ładuje.*  
 [he]realized that it[ACC][he]loads

#### 4. Brief concluding remarks

Hofstadter (2001: 526) describes communication as ‘taking an intricate dance that can be danced in one and only one medium, and then, despite the intimacy of the marriage of that dance to that medium, making a radically new dance that is intimately married to a radically different medium, and in just the same way as the first dance was to its medium.’ Translation is a form of communication, and we have seen here in detail how translation is like a dance, involving creative twists and turns, involving more than a ‘mapping from one purely hydrated chain of symbols to another’; as Hofstadter writes: there is a need for ‘adding water’ at each stage of the process (*ibid.*: 528).

It is interesting to observe that most translators had few problems on the purely lexical and phonological levels. Sound symbolism, both the more direct, onomatopoeic as well as the associative kind, was closely observed and many efforts were made to choose those words that most closely reflected sounds considered to contribute to the overall sense or atmosphere of the text. When the lexical items themselves were not in any way thematic or crucial to the logic of the narrative, completely different words were frequently selected to obey the sense conveyed by the sounds.

To preserve the meter or rhythm of the text proved more difficult. The reasons for this may be that first of all we are probably less conscious of this aspect in a prose text, and second, that an attempt to stick to it results not only in a change of a few words but in a change of overall phrasing. This might then lead to a translation that is considered too free. The loss of rhythm, in other words, will more likely be considered a small loss or sacrifice compared to the bigger losses suffered at the lexico-grammatical level.

We note a similar caution when it comes to grammar. Clearly, grammatical constructions differ from language to language, especially languages belonging to different linguistic branches or language families. And grammar, being more fixed and conventional than the lexicon, allows the translator less room for manoeuvre, especially when it comes to word order and the use of particular morphosyntactic categories (as in our case the use of *-ing* forms). Here again, then, it would be too much of an alteration to sacrifice the lexical content of a text in order to highlight

certain grammatical features, even when those features add meaning to a text. A stratagem that we observed as a solution in our text was to add a word here and there in order to replace the connotations suggested by the grammar.

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