From World to World. An Armamentarium for the study of poetic discourse in translation
Koster, C.

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Is there any point in trying to define the borderline between translation and interpretation? It seems fair to say that there is not one specific way to characterize the relationship between these two concepts. Any such characterization would depend on the point of view from which they are related: translation is as often used to define interpretation as interpretation is used to define translation. The hermeneutic and semiosic nature of translation has never led to a paralyzing controversy about the relationship between the concepts, as the relationship between the concepts of equivalence and translation has done in linguistic circles. That there is a relationship has hardly ever been questioned, but the nature of the relationship has not been the subject of intensive discussion. The format of any such characterization also depends on the disciplinary point of view: within semiotics, hermeneutics and translation studies different aspects of the relationship are emphasized, because of the different perspectives of each of these research areas.

From the point of view of philosophical hermeneutics, Gadamer for instance argues that the situation (vis-à-vis the text) of the translator and the interpreter is fundamentally the same:


Palmer (1969: 12-13), by a series of translational operations, traces back both concepts to the same etymological source: the Greek verb ‘hermēneuein’. In his view, translation

is a special form of the basic interpretative process of “bringing to understanding” (ibid.: 27).
From a semiotic viewpoint, Greimas and Courtés describe interpretation as a stage in the process of translation:

It is in its role as semiotic activity that translation may be broken down into a doing interpretative of the *ab quo* text and a doing productive of the *ad quem* text (1982: 352).

Johansen (1989) considers translation as one of two procedures (the other being contextualization) by which readers try to solve interpretative difficulties that confront them in reading a text:

Typically, an interpretation will consist of a selection of elements from the text, and their combination into structures of signification embedded in the discourse of the interpreter. In other words, an interpretation is a translation of the text or parts of the text into the critical idiom of the scholar (1989: 240-241).

Johansen explicitly bases himself on C.S. Peirce’s concept of the interpretant, and therefore does not limit himself to translation between natural languages. Peirce adheres to what is probably the broadest possible conceptualization of translation when, by defining the interpretant of a sign as a translation of that sign into another sign, he equals translation to semiosis. Elaborating on Peircean semiotics, Gorlée develops a theory of the translation process which distinguishes ‘a double incidence of interpretation’ (1994: 68), one hermeneutic, and the other reproductive. The first is linked to the general idea of translation as semiosis (‘any translational process in the semiotic sense’ [ibid.: 69]), the second to what is called, after Jakobson, ‘translation proper’ or

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20 Greimas and Courtés 1979: 398: ‘C’est en tant qu’activité sémiotique que la traduction peut être décomposée en un faire interprétatif du texte ab quo, d’une part, et un faire producteur du texte ad quem, de l’autre’.

21 In Johansen’s phrasing: ‘he [Peirce] defines an interpretant of a sign as a translation of one sign into another “equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign” (CP 2.228; cf. also 5.594)’ (240). Johansen’s references are to Peirce 1931-1966.
the actual transfer of the text from source language into target language (ibid.: 68).

Within these different frameworks one often starts from a specific conception of (sign) interpretation and then assigns translation its place within that framework, without elaborating too much on the phenomenon of translation itself. The terminology employed within these semiotic and hermeneutic frameworks suggests that they are mainly occupied with the translation process. ‘Situation’, ‘procedure’, ‘stage’ - all these concepts are pertinent to (certain aspects of) the process of translation, rather than to its result, the translation product.

Within the framework of descriptive translation studies there is a stronger tendency to relate the process of translation to the product, because the point of departure is constituted by actual, existing translations, whereas the interpretative aspect of translation is often merely taken for granted. Without much theoretical elaboration Holmes, for instance, posits that ‘all translation is an act of critical interpretation’ (1969a [1988]: 24). The same goes for Frank’s statement that


The consequences of these positions become of course elements in a systematic framework, but the theoretical foundation of the frame-

22 Cf. on this point my criticism of poststructuralist approaches to translation (Koster 1994). The notable exception in the cases discussed here is Gorlée 1994, who does enter into a discussion with contemporary translation scholars.

23 An exception may be Gadamer, who shows himself sensitive to the consequences of his theory for the reception of the translation product, and by extension, one might argue, the descriptive study of translation products, when he states that the dialogical experience of being may be illustrated by ‘das Übersetzen und das Lesen von Übersetzungen’ (1967: 99, my italics). His main argument, however, concerns the experience of the translator, rather than the recipient of translation.
works often has the form of a basic postulate.\(^{24}\)

One might argue that it is impossible for such an assumption to transcend the status of a postulate. One might also argue, and I will, that this is not a problem as long as one does not wish to get to know anything about the process itself. Some would prefer to call it a working hypothesis instead, but the problem with that concept is that its very use implies the possibility, if not the desirability, or even necessity, of testing. It is hard to see how assumptions about the process of translation could be checked by a study of the product, if the framework of that study, its descriptive apparatus, is based on these assumptions, which it necessarily is. A case in point is Holmes’ ‘two-map two-plane text-rank translation model’ (Holmes 1976 [1988]).

According to Holmes the development of an adequate model of the translation process should have priority over the development of relevant methods for the description of translation products. Holmes’ appeal to the concept of adequacy here indicates his adherence to a correspondence theory of truth, yet, the planes and phases he distinguishes in his model become parameters in his method for the description of the product. The aim of description is to

\(^{24}\) Obviously this very brief survey of different disciplinary viewpoints does not claim to be exhaustive, it merely serves as illustration. I am aware of other hermeneutic approaches (mainly in the tradition of Gadamer) to translation studies, such as Stolze (1992) or Paepcke (1986), which do have descriptive potentiality, but whose main focus is on the role of Verstehen in the process of translation. Because the purpose of this book is methodological-descriptive, I do not consider myself in dialogue with these approaches. The same holds for the discussion of translation within the framework of classical or romantic hermeneutics.

For a comprehensive survey of semiotic approaches to translation see Gorlée 1994: 16-26. For an elaborate discussion of the theoretical and methodological implications of Gideon Toury’s cultural-semiotic perspective on translation and translation studies, and Armin Paul Frank’s historical-hermeneutic perspective see Chapter 4.
determine the features of the translator’s two maps and to discover his three systems of rules, those of derivation, projection, and, above all, correspondence - in other words, the translator’s poetics (ibid.: 87).

This aim is not concordant with questions concerning the model’s adequacy, at least not in a correspondence-theoretical sense: in an instance of description, one does not set out to answer the question whether the notion of, for instance, correspondence rule is adequate, one assumes that it is and sets out to answer the question what kind of correspondence rules are pertinent in the texts under survey.

In the same vein, Holmes has been criticized about his positing the necessary occurrence of the structural plane of translation. According to Toury:

the claim that [...] serial operations are also accompanied, let alone governed by some “map” of the text as a whole [...] is no more than one possibility. As such, it should of course be borne in mind, for those cases that it would be found to apply, but its existence cannot be taken as a basic assumption for descriptive studies as a scholarly activity (Toury 1990: 5-6; 1995: 87).

To a certain extent this criticism may be justified, but on the other hand, the anticipation of its possible occurrence is necessary as ‘a basic assumption for descriptive studies’. Van Leuven-Zwart has incorporated the notions of structural and serial translating in (additions to) her descriptive method (cf. Van Leuven-Zwart 1992: 85-86), and she shows that the logical order of assumptions does not go from serial to structural, but the other way round. Her procedure is to start from the assumption that there has been a structural plane of consideration, until the opposite has shown to be the case: one does not set out to positively describe considerations on the serial plane, this is done negatively, only after establishing the absence of any indication that a translator has translated structurally. Yet, again, the absence of any such indication, does not serve to invalidate the adequacy of the model (which, admittedly, is something Toury does not deny).
Chapter 2: Translation and/as Interpretation

From the point of view of the *study* of translated literature it is much more useful to assume between translation and interpretation a kind of family resemblance in the Wittgensteinian sense. However, in order to be able to assume a relationship of family resemblance both phenomena must be able to appear under the same name. This is the case in Holmes’ fan of meta-literary forms. He clarifies the relationship between translation and interpretation by pointing to their common metatextual status (Holmes 1969 and 1969a [1988]). He classifies translated literature (his example is translated verse, the ‘metapoem’) as one specific form in a range of different forms of meta-literature, that ‘deal with linguistic formulations made by others’ (1969a [1988]: 23). In doing so, he relates translation to several distinct forms the result of interpretative processes can take, while relating interpretation to other forms of literary ‘comment’.

It is this very resemblance that seems to be the major cause of the problems arising when one wishes to draw a line between translation and interpretation. One has to accept that there simply are two perspectives. From the point of view of translation, interpretation may be said to constitute a stage in its process, whereas from the point of view of interpretation, translation can be considered one of its possible manifestations.

Since my perspective on translation is retrospective, my theoretical reflection will be on translation as a specific form of interpretation. I will therefore not be concerned with the question as to whether a translation constitutes an interpretation, but with the question as to what kind of interpretation a translation represents and what descriptive procedure is adequate to deal with it as such.

**Critical interpretation**
Holmes follows William Frost (1955) in stating that ‘the metapoem [*sic*] interprets [...] not by analysis, but by enactment’ (Holmes 1969

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25 Cf. also Popović 1976 and Van Gorp 1978; from a slightly different angle, but in much the same way, Lefevere (1985, 1992) uses the term ‘rewrite’ to designate this notion.

26 This mechanism may be called, if one wishes, the ‘interpretation postulate’.
yet he maintains that the activity of the translator ('metapoet') is unique in that it combines 'the critical and the poetic' (ibid.). But if the critic interprets only by analysis, and the translation ('metapoem') does not, how can it be that 'all translation is an act of critical interpretation'? In what way is it critical?

From a different angle Eco uses the same term when he distinguishes between the concepts of semiosic (or semantic) and semiotic (or critical) interpretation:

Semantic interpretation is the result of the process by which an addressee, facing a Linear Text Manifestation, fills it up with a given meaning. (...) Critical interpretation is, on the contrary, a metalinguistic activity - a semiotic approach - which aims at describing and explaining for which formal reasons a given text produces a given response (and in this sense it can also assume the form of an aesthetic analysis) (Eco 1991: 54).

Unsurprisingly, there are some striking similarities in the way both authors deal with their concepts. Holmes as well as Eco consider the meta-status (linguistic and/or literary) as characteristic of the critical interpretation. Furthermore, the one possible form which interpretation can take that Eco mentions, 'aesthetic analysis', may be considered to cover the same domain as Holmes' 'critical essay in the same language' and 'critical essay in another language' (cf. Holmes 1969a [1988]: 23-24). The difference is that Eco does not mention translation, but this is merely because linguistic boundaries are not a topic in his discourse. In Holmes' argument, however, linguistic boundaries are not pertinent to the difference between 'translation' and 'critical essay', because these boundaries are crossed in the space between

Van den Broeck (1986) follows the same line of argument when he discusses translation in terms of speech act theory, and defines as the felicity conditions for the speech act of translation the representation of the original 'in an appropriately demonstrative way, i.e. by enacting its interpretation according to circumstances, no matter what particular form the enactment takes, if only it be appropriate to its purpose' (105-6, italics mine).

Elsewhere he says: 'A translation is an actualized and manifested interpretation' (Eco 1981 [1979]).
Chapter 2: Translation and/as Interpretation

'critical essay in the same language' and 'critical essay in another language'. A problem more important and relevant concerns the transition from 'critical essay in another language' to 'translation' (either in prose or in verse), and, as Holmes points out, this problem is mainly a matter of formal difference.

At this point, the hybrid, double status of translation already renders its study problematic. The classification of meta-literary forms in Holmes' fan is based on the idea of a translation being a representation of another text as well as a text in its own right. And it is the very feature of 'enactment', of 'demonstration', that makes a translation a representation of another text and a text in its own right at the same time. As a consequence, the problem with Eco's definition as far as translation is concerned is that, due to the second aspect of its double status, a translation cannot be said to *explicitly describe and explain* for what formal reasons it has turned out the way it has. But one surely would be justified in saying that these reasons have been there, and that, in one way or another, traces of them are present in the text. To my mind, Holmes' and Eco's concepts of critical interpretation are entirely homologous, and one is justified in assuming that a translation constitutes a semiotic interpretation (in a specific format), or, if one should wish to put it more cautiously, is based on a semiotic interpretation, and that, from a descriptive point of view, one can construe from a translation a semiotic interpretation that may be attributed to a translator (either as an empirical or idealized entity). This specific form of interpretation I will from now on call the 'translational interpretation'.

I will consider the implicitness of the translational interpretation mainly as a methodological problem. What we have to deal with theoretically is the way in which the translational interpretation may be made visible and explicit, and with the concepts that will constitute the framework of its description; that is, with the way the differences between the source and target text may be turned into a heuristic instrument, with the way we may consider the translator as a presence in those differences and with the way in which we may describe the differences in terms of a strategy of recontextualization that can be attributed to the translator.

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The role of the translator

The translational interpretation is not a purely semantic construct, its description is not restricted to the level of structural meaning, but, since it can be considered the specific view of an addressee in a specific discursive format, it must be located at the level of pragmatic meaning as well. When we want to make it visible, then, we have to look at the role of that addressee: the translator.

Assuming that interpretation is a dialectical process taking place between discourse and reader, we may ask ourselves in what way translator and translation relate to these poles. It goes without saying, that a translator is some kind of reader, but once she has ceased being only a reader, and has become a producer of a text as well, has she suddenly disappeared, or has she left any traces of her readership? This leads us to a paradox that pervades the methodology of the kind of translation research addressed in this study: when the focus is on the translational product, the role of source text addressee cannot be separated from that of target text sender. We can only deal with the addressee-part of the translator inasmuch as it is manifested by way of her role as target text sender. But is she, and if so, in what way does the translator manifest herself, once the target text is available to us?

A short recapitulation of our considerations from the first chapter shows that the translator is twice involved in the duplication of positions and roles caused by the double status of the translation. Not only does the translator, from a retrospective point of view, take up two positions at the same time, we have also seen that the translator shares the position of target text sender with the author of the original. We have to assume, then, that, in one way or another, both are present in the target text. Can they be distinguished from each other, and if so, how? The question as to the presence of the translator in the text is analogous to the question as to the presence of the author in the text. Within semiotic and hermeneutic approaches to literary studies, the relation of the category of 'author' to the concepts of text and reader has been object of ample discussion. One of the issues in this debate is the relative autonomy of the product with respect to its producer, and, directly linked with this, the problems concerning the way in which a sender is represented in a message.
The autonomy of the text is grounded in the specificity of the communicative situation of written discourse. It is the very textuality, the fact that the discourse becomes fixed through the medium of writing, that renders the surplus of meaning that makes interpretation a productive, rather than a reproductive effort. Relative to the face-to-face situation characteristic of spoken discourse a certain 'distanciation' (cf. Ricoeur 1976 and 1981) of the communicative participants\(^{29}\) manifests itself in written texts. Distanciation is fundamental, since it

is not the product of methodology and hence something superfluous and parasitical; rather it is constitutive of the phenomenon of the text as writing. At the same time, it is the condition of interpretation (Ricoeur 1981: 139-140).

The distance occurring between message and sender entails a disconnection of the writer's intention and the text's verbal meaning - object of interpretation is not the world of the author, but the 'world' of the text (cf. 1981: 139). The result of this disconnection, 'intentional exteriorization', is tantamount to the semantic and pragmatic autonomy of the text. On the level of the relation between message and addressee, distanciation amounts to the universalization of the audience of an instance of discourse and opens up the possibility of a plurality of readers and interpretations.

A distinction has to be made, then, between the sender as producer of the text and the sender as he appears in the text and has to be constructed by the addressee. In the same vein we may distinguish between the addressee that is implicitly present in the text and real readers that actualize (certain portions of) the text's meaning potential. These distinctions may be conceptualized in a more general way as

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\(^{29}\) Ricoeur actually deals with distanciation in terms of the relationship between the message and all the other factors involved in linguistic communication as they are represented in Jakobson's scheme. For the purpose of our present argument we need only be concerned with the categories of sender and addressee, but in the next chapter we will deal extensively with the consequences of the occurrence of distanciation for the factor of context.
the ones between intratextual and extratextual conceptions of the categories of sender and addressee. Umberto Eco has clarified these distinctions by positing the chiasmatic relationship between empirical author and model reader on the one hand and empirical reader and model author on the other (Eco 1981 [1979]; 1989; 1991; 1992 and 1993).

Since Eco’s point of departure is the assertion that a reader’s cooperation is an activity stimulated by the text, we may take the text as pivot of this chiasmatic relationship. The empirical author, travelling a generative route towards this point, foresees a possible reader, the model reader,

supposedly able to deal interpretatively with the expressions in the same way as the author deals generatively with them,

that is, by assigning ‘given contents’ to the expressions used on the grounds of a certain ‘ensemble of codes’ (cf. 1981 [1979]: 7). In that sense,

a text is a product the interpretation of which has to be part of its own generative mechanism (1989: 72, my translation).

But as Eco acknowledges, the reader’s codes (or encyclopaedic competence) are (is) not necessarily the same as the codes or the competence the author relied upon, and in that sense the interpretative route can never mirror the generative one - interpretation is not just making a return trip to an original position. Interpretation, just as translation, is never a matter of reproducing meaning, it always is a matter of producing meaning. The empirical reader, in her turn, in the process of reading, constructs a model author, a conjecture about the author as a textual strategy. As any hermeneutic process, this process is thor-

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The translational history of the academic prose of Umberto Eco may be considered a showpiece for the case of ‘unlimited semiosis’. Originals grow out of translations as easily as translations grow out of originals. In a sense he has created his own Eco-system of ‘reine Sprache’. Trying to establish correspondences between passages can prove to be a tiring process.
Chapter 2: Translation and/as Interpretation

oughly circular, since the reader has to make a conjecture about the conjectures the author made about her.

Critical interpretation is

the discovery of a strategy intended to produce a model reader, conceived as the ideal counterpart of a model author (which appears only as a textual strategy) (1992: 66)\(^31\).

The intratextual category of author is textually manifest as a specific style, as an actantial role and as an illocutionary signal or perlocutionary operator (cf. 1981 [1979]: 10; 1989: 81\(^32\)), and analysis is directed towards these aspects. Eco constantly stresses that cooperation takes place between ‘discursive strategies’ (1989: 84), between intratextual categories. In this context the concept of strategy is connected with the principle of coherence: to interpret is to try to find a level of coherence in a text\(^33\). To find a coherent stylistic pattern, for instance, is to find a textual strategy. Coherence in this case is a relative concept: a text is not necessarily coherent in one specific way. The use of a concept of strategy as an interpretative category perfectly chimes with our retrospective point of view.

How does the translator fit into this vocabulary? Is it possible to distinguish a concept of the translator as an intratextual category? Eco implicitly associates the translator with the model reader (1981: 35)\(^34\),

\(^{31}\) Cf. also Easthope 1983 on the author as a product or effect of the text.
\(^{32}\) The English ‘original’ has ‘actantial roles’ in plural, whereas the Dutch translation of the Italian has ‘actantiël rol’ in singular.
\(^{33}\) This is a much-debated issue, of course. There is a point where it is hard to decide whether non-coherence is a failure of the text or the reader, if it is to be considered a failure at all, and not, instead, as another possible textual strategy. I will assume that the principle of coherence is always at work in the attitude of the reader, but that it can be frustrated in specific instances, and that the reader can thematize that frustration. I think that this principle can be associated with the Gadamerian concept of ‘Vorgriff der Vollkommenheit’, and Ricoeur’s assumption that a text ‘is always about something’.
\(^{34}\) As does Diaz-Diocratez, albeit from a prospective point of view; she transforms the concept into a normative one, when she describes it in terms of
or perhaps we should say the reverse, that he associates the model reader of the target text with the translator. Obviously, it is possible to infer from a target text in its capacity as independent text, a text in its own right, a textual strategy in terms of a model reader, but is that strategy to be solely attributed to the translator?

On the extratextual level there is no problem in distinguishing between translator and author as empirical subjects with their distinct psychological, social and cultural circumstances, but on the intratextual level we have to posit that a text has one sender, or at least: one deictic centre. From the single, independent text perspective the sender has to be considered an amalgamation between translator and author. With respect to the way in which the sender is represented in the text, then, the status of the translator as target text sender differs from that of the author. It seems hardly possible to distinguish an intratextual category translator from the translator as a sociological or psychological category, in the same way as is the case with the author and the persona of a text, in terms of an alter ego, for instance. It runs counter to intuition, for instance, to associate a translator with a first person persona in a text (although that might be a matter of convention). On the other hand, translation undoubtedly interferes in the make-up of a textual strategy: the model reader of the target text is never the same as the model reader of the source text. In what way, then, does the presence of the translator manifest itself? My suggestion is that the translator is only latently present in the target text, and that, as an abstracted category, it is manifestly present in the differences between target and source texts. The translator, then, is not immediately visible as a textual strategy in the target text in itself: one may assume its presence, one may even hypothesize it, but one will only be able to get access to it, to describe it after comparing the texts: the intratextual category ‘translator’, then, has to be made mani-

certain conditions a translator should fulfil (1985: 16).

35 Which, admittedly, may shift, or may be fragmented or split. But the initial assumption is that a reader focuses on one centre, until that assumption is frustrated. Cf. also note 33.

36 In doing so, one actually already would have shifted one’s attention to the translation in its status of a derivative text.
fest by way of comparative description, by way of the establishment and description of correspondences and shifts. Noting the paradoxical meaning the term intratextual translator gets here, one may well wonder whether the term is still appropriate, if it is not the text itself, but the space between the texts that is inhabited by the translator. The most appropriate term would be ‘intertextual’ translator, if it weren’t already an overloaded term. Let us for now stick to the term ‘textual’ translator.

The textual presence of the translator, in this sense, is not a textual property in itself (a style, an actantial role, etcetera), but an effect of the decision to compare, a result of comparative analysis, and, as we will see, the result is wholly dependent on the descriptive framework, on the method used to note these differences and correspondences. The aim of any comparative method is somehow related to the effort of making visible the textual presence of the translator. Visibility, in this sense, is not a textual property in itself, but an effect of the decision to compare.

In taking this position I differ slightly from Schiavi (1996) and Hermans (1996, 1996a) who do posit the possible presence of the translator as an independent entity. This disagreement may be traced back to a difference in position vis-à-vis the hybrid status of the translation. Schiavi does acknowledge that

A reader of a translation will receive a sort of split message coming from two different addressers, both original although in two different senses: one originating from the author which is elaborated and mediated by the translator, and one (the language of the translation itself) originating directly from the translator (14).

Yet, she maintains that this addressee (the ‘owner’ of the translation of a narrative text)

37 The concept I have in mind, therefore is not linked to a specific translation strategy, as for instance the strategy of ‘fluency’ is to invisibility (cf. Venuti 1995).
cannot come up only [my italics, CK] in analyses of shifts, or in comparisons between originals and translations (16),

but must in some way be present in itself.

Hermans also stresses the textual presence of the translator but relates its explicitness to the possibility of a paratextual presence of the translator:

The claim, then, is that translated narrative discourse always contains a ‘second’ voice, to which I will refer as the Translator’s voice, as an index of the Translator’s discursive presence. The voice may be more or less overtly present. It may remain entirely hidden behind that of the Narrator, rendering it impossible to detect in the translated text. It is most directly and forcefully present when it breaks through the surface of the text speaking for itself, in its own name, for example in a paratextual Translator’s Note employing an autoreferential first person identifying the speaking subject. And then there are shades and degrees in between. (1996: 27)

The relevant question here concerns the assessment of the paratextual presence of the translator. Does it relate to the co-text or to the context? Paratextual presence may range from the inconspicuous mention of the translator’s name in an edition, to the adding of footnotes or the publishing of bilingual editions. All these manifestations may be considered an invitation to emphasize the position of the translator as sender, but still the invitation may be declined, depending on whether one wishes to look at the translation as an independent text or as a derivative text. Since there are degrees of paratextual explicitness, one may assume there is a fluid line between intratextual and paratextual presence. At some point declining the invitation may become irrelevant or unnecessary.

Both Schiavi and Hermans seem to distinguish between the paratextual and the intratextual (‘discursive’) presence of a translator. Their concept of paratextual translator, however, seems more akin to what I call the extratextual translator. Perhaps it is useful to distinguish between three dimensions instead of two.
Chapter 2: Translation and/as Interpretation

Intra-, para-, and extratextual dimensions

The paratextual dimension of the translator’s presence occupies the middle ground between the intratextual and extratextual dimensions, and the possibility of its occurrence shows that the tie between the intra- and extratextual dimension can never be totally severed. The nature of the relationship between these two, nevertheless, remains one of the problem areas of descriptive translation studies, no matter what kind of framework you adopt. Within Holmes’ framework the problem occurs in terms of the relationship between the implicit and explicit poetics of a translator (Holmes 1976 [1988]: 87), in the Touryryan programme as the relationship between the textual and extratextual sources for a reconstruction of translational norms (Toury 1995: 65), and in the Göttingen terminology as the relationship between internal and external translation history (Frank 1990: 9).

The reason for the problematic relationship is that statements about the ‘textual’ translator and extratextual translator originate from different kinds of research enterprise. As we have seen above, the intratextual category of translator is always the result of a comparative procedure, and must be regarded as a construct of the theory underlying that procedure. The extratextual translator is an entirely different kind of construct, needing a different kind of methodology. Statements about this category are the result of other kinds of procedures, having as their object different kinds of texts and documents. The obvious question is in what way these constructs can be related to each other, if at all.

If one takes the case of an individual translator and establishes, on the grounds of a comparison of (a corpus of) source and target texts, a certain view on the texts or on the way they should be rendered, in short a translator’s implicit poetics, and if one studies the normative pronouncements made by that same translator, uttered perhaps in forewords, footnotes, reviews, essays and the like and establishes the translator’s explicit poetics and if one found those two would not be in agreement with each other (which, as history tells us, happens all the time), how would the difference between the two have to be assessed? As a signal that you can’t take the translator at her word? As a sign that the comparative procedure is not adequate? Or as a strong argument in favour of the case that the attempt to relate them at all is
futile?

These questions can hardly be answered. I do believe it is an important problem, one that probably constitutes a major challenge for the discipline in its present state, but it falls beyond the scope of this book, which is limited to finding ways of describing the intratextual category of translator with a specific purpose in mind.

Nevertheless, if one wishes to acknowledge the pragmatic dimension of translation (and if there is any point in taking a target-oriented position, this is it) one has to account for the cultural context of the translation and the translator, and this aspect is more closely connected to the empirical translator than to the intratextual translator. It is obvious that the cultural context of the translator is involved in determining the translator’s views and actions. And when it comes to putting the translational interpretation into a broader cultural frame, it has to be taken into account. This may be the point where the intratextual and extratextual dimensions converge.

Even though the aim of this book is to develop an armamentarium for the description of the intratextual category of translator, it still may be useful to look a little closer at that point where both dimensions may meet, if only to justify certain steps preceding the actual procedure that would otherwise remain veiled.

Comparison can only take place after one has identified a text as a translation and found a corresponding source text. This may seem a truism, but the history of translation shows us that neither of the entities involved necessarily has an unproblematically fixed identity. In our day and age it may not seem a problem to identify a text pair as translation and original, but this has not always been the case; the same holds for the translator.

As far as the translation is concerned, one has to account for the way it became publicly known as a translation, for the self-declaration of the translation. One may ask whether it was identified as such in the publication or not, and under what label: does it say ‘translation’ on the cover of a book, or is the work of an author just presented in a language other than what is known to be his own and has it only a note added running ‘translated by’? Even the label itself may not be fixed and stable. This may be illustrated by the case of Robert Lowell’s Imitations. The title may be regarded as an attempt
Chapter 2: Translation and/as Interpretation

by Lowell to be careful not to use the label ‘translation’, perhaps to justify that his ‘licenses have been many’ (Lowell 1961: xii)\(^{38}\). Yet, in his ‘Introduction’ he presents the term ‘imitation’ as an alternative phrasing of ‘poetic translation’ and compares his own endeavour with different types of translation (metric, prose etc.). This ambivalent position has led to a variety of reactions to the book, and even to a minor controversy concerning the value of Lowell’s collection. The reception of the book shows the profound influence of the acceptance of such a label on the way Lowell’s metatexts are dealt with. On one extreme there is the critic who accuses Lowell of

*translating* (my italics, CK) key lines so incorrectly that a poem is made to say the very opposite of what is meant (Chadwick 1974: 90).

At the other end of the scale is the critic who, while still comparing the texts to what Lowell called ‘my originals’, notes that

*Imitations* nevertheless has to be read as a set of original texts. (...) Critics who have catechized these texts in terms of infidelity to originals have succeeded only in unearthing criteria that are irrelevant. It is by the efficacy of the verse that the poems of *Imitations* stand or fall (Hobsbaum 1988: 123)\(^{39}\).

An important factor in this discussion is the ambivalent way in which

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\(^{38}\) On the title of the book, Lowell had been advised by T.S. Eliot not to use the term translation: ‘I think that the right title for this is *Imitations* and I don’t agree with Allen [Tate] if he thinks that *Versions* would be better. I think also that a subtitle is a mistake: your translations are indeed imitations, and if you use the word translation in the subtitle it will attract all those meticulous little critics who delight in finding what seem to them mistranslations. You will remember all the fuss about Ezra Pound’s *Propertius*. Keep the word translation out of it.’ (Letter from Eliot to Lowell, dated June 1, 1961; quoted in Hamilton 1982: 289.)

\(^{39}\) Yet another stand against Lowell’s metatexts was taken by a woman present when Lowell read some of the poems of *Imitations* in New York in 1961. She spoke up to complain that she had paid to hear new poems and insisted upon her money being refunded (cf. Axelrod 1978: 137).
the poems are attributed to its originator. On the cover the work is attributed to Lowell, in the book itself the poems are attributed to the original authors. A more telling illustration of the status of the target text sender as an amalgamation between original author and translator seems hardly possible. Another one of those ambivalent labels, which is akin to 'translated by' but takes the opposite perspective, is 'after'. This label is far more commonly used for metatexts published alongside original texts by poet-translators. An interesting illustration of the relationship between this particular kind of metatext and translations can be found by comparing the following two texts. The text in the left column was published in a collection called *Wat blijft komt nooit terug (eigen en andermans gedichten)* by the Dutch poet Jan Eijkelboom, and was followed by the note 'naar [after] W.B. Yeats'. The text in the right column was published in *Geef nooit het hele hart*, an anthology of W.B. Yeats poems presented as translations by the Dutch poets A. Roland Holst en Jan Eijkelboom; this particular translation is attributed to the latter:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Het wiel</th>
<th>Het wiel</th>
</tr>
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The status of these texts differs according to their context, and any comparison between either of these two texts and their corresponding source texts has to take that context into account. Any translational interpretation following from an analysis of shifts would have to be related, not only to a particular view on Yeats or to the theme of the relationship between human transience and longing for death, but also to Eijkelboom's own poetry, and its possible kinship with Yeats's
Chapter 2: Translation and/as Interpretation

theme.

In two ways the cases of Eijkelboom and Lowell fall into a certain contextual pattern that may be characteristic of poetic discourse in translation (at least within their own cultures): both are poet-translators, and both cases concern the publication of poetry in anthologies. The latter pattern can be linked to questions concerning the way in which the target text is published: in a magazine, or in a book? And if published in a book, what kind of book: a separate volume or an anthology? And if published in an anthology, what kind of anthology? An anthology of poetry from a single poet, or from a certain national literature, or an anthology of poetry translated by a single translator? The answers to these questions may provide contextual clues that afterwards can be linked to the translational interpretation.

The phenomenon of the poet-translator occurs in almost every modern western literature, and forms a special case, which goes to show that questions concerning the identity of the extratextual translator have their own complications. When a poem is translated by a poet, the translational interpretation that is established during comparison, may very well be elucidated, as has been hinted at above, by relating it to the context of that poet’s original work.

In the particular case of a poet-translator, there is no problem in linking the translator to a well identifiable subject, but this is not always so. A translator may be anonymous, as was frequently the case in the Middle Ages, or translation may have been a collective enterprise, which often happens in the case of Bible translations. In the event of contextualising an anonymous translation greater weight tends to fall on the study of the edition(s) in which it was published, to find out whether there is any other entity assuming the role of target text sender, and on the question what the relation is of that sender to the translator. When studying biblical poetic discourse in translation, the question whether the translation was produced by an individ-

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40 A provisional typology of translation anthologies can be found in Koster 1995, in which, apart from these three, two more types are distinguished: thematic anthologies and anthologies of poetry from a certain genre.

41 Among original prose authors, for instance, the phenomenon doesn’t seem to occur as frequently.
ual or a collective is particularly relevant. More often than not bible translations are made within an institutional context that imposes specific ideological or theological restrictions on the translators. A translation of biblical poetry made by an individual may point to, in the case of poet-translators for instance (in the system of Dutch literature individual poets translating biblical poetry frequently occur), to a certain thematic kinship, or to the translator's ideological or theological views being in conflict with those of religious authorities.

The case of bible translation may also be taken as an example of the third possibly unstable entity involved in the comparison: the source text. Establishment of the original is not always as straightforward as it may seem, and sometimes even impossible. Particularly in the case of older, classical texts, including the Bible, it may be a problem which source text to use in a comparative enterprise. An instructive example is constituted by Friedrich Hölderlin’s Sophocles-translation, for which Nickau distinguished between three concepts of the original: ‘das, was Hölderlin vorlag; das, was Hölderlin übersetzt hat; das, was Sophokles geschrieben hat’ (1987: 86). These distinctions are not unproblematically applicable to descriptive studies, but they help to show the need for an awareness of the possibility of different editions and variants of a ‘single’ source text.

The impossibility of establishing a source text corresponding to a text which has been labelled ‘translation’ is Toury’s stock illustration for the inclusiveness of the target-oriented approach to translation studies: the pseudotranslation. Even when it is impossible to relate a translation to an existing source, it may still tell us something about the way the phenomenon of translation functions in the culture in which it occurs (cf. Toury 1984 and 1995: 40-52). The possibility of a comparison obviously is precluded in this case: when it is impossible to establish a source, there can be no comparative description.

All these examples go to show that when it comes to comparing a

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42 This is not to say that the translators necessarily keep to these restrictions. Bible translation is one of those instances in which there may occur a tension between the (extratextual) norms prescribed by the relevant authorities and the (intratextual) norms actually used by the translators (cf. for instance De Vries 1995).
target text with its corresponding source text, the status of neither these texts nor of the translator is self-evident. There are certain aspects to their status that have to be identified and justified before the actual comparison takes place. Before the comparison takes place information has to be gathered concerning the cultural and historical context of the translation and the extratextual category of translator. Once the translational interpretation has been established these data may help to elucidate its position in the broader cultural framework of which it may be considered part.

In relation to the armamentarium this information is akin in status to 'preliminary data' (cf. Lambert & Van Gorp 1985: 52), which means that it will not constitute one of its integrated elements. The range of the armamentarium will be confined to the intratextual category of translator. No attempt will be made to formalize the questions leading to the preliminary data beyond the scope of the simple who, where and when. Since simple questions do not necessarily lead to simple answers, these questions are sufficiently able to function as a starting point. For our purposes they may be dealt with in an ad hoc manner.