Article:

The role of archival and manuscript research in the investigation of translator decision-making

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Abstract

This paper discusses the application of research methodologies from history and literary studies to the analysis of the translation process. Specifically, this concerns the use of literary archive and manuscript material to investigate the various stages in the construction of the translation product. Such material has been drastically underexploited in translation studies to date. The paper describes the type of material available for researchers and how this has been used. This is followed by a case study involving the detailed textual analysis of a translator's drafts and revisions. The paper considers the value of such research methods in investigating the translation process and how they might complement and interact with other methodologies.

Key words: descriptive translation studies; draft translations; literary manuscripts; publishers archives; research methodology; translator papers; translation process; translation product

1.   Introduction

This paper discusses a process-oriented methodology based on primary sources that have very often been overlooked in translation studies: the analysis of literary translator papers, manuscripts and archives which give potentially unrivalled insights into translator decision-making. This type of analysis brings into play research methodologies from history and literary studies. The original purpose of the material is distinct from its role as an object of translational study, bearing out what Overbeck (1993, 63) says in relation to literary manuscripts: "[literary] scholars value such records for their primary or secondary relationship to study of the literary text, while the owner may view them simply as a record of business transacted." Historians consider that such primary sources "are essentially 'results' or 'traces' or 'relics' or 'tracks' of historical activity" (Grigg 1991, 231). In translation studies, they reveal some of the normally hidden traces of translatorial activity and are a real-time record of some of the translator's decision-making processes.

Archive material facilitates the reconstruction of translational norms and provides a bridge between what, for Toury (1995, 65), are the two major sources for their study:

1. **Textual sources**: the published TTs themselves, as well as catalogues of TTs for preliminary norms. These he describes as "primary products of norm-regulated behavior".

2. **Extratextual sources**: notably "statements made by translators, editors, publishers, and other persons involved in or connected with the activity". These are "by-products of the existence and activity of norms" and are "partial and biased, and should therefore be treated with every possible circumspection" (Toury 1995, 65).

In my opinion, Toury's outright dismissal of extratextual sources is unjustified. It may be true that there is a strong element of self-justification in some pronouncements (see, for instance, the book-length contributions from Levine 1991 and di Giovanni 2003) and it is clear that

some paratexts that accompany a translation, such as translator prefaces, may attempt to control the reception of the TT (Dimitriu 2003). However, in most cases there is surely no "deliberate desire to mislead and deceive" (Toury 1995, 66) and, even if there were, we should certainly not ignore what the translators say. The window these pronouncements provide into the working practice of the translator may be unobtainable through other means.

However, my contention is that just as valuable in this regard are draft manuscripts and papers, not considered by Toury. These are unpublished primary textual sources, preceding and building to the TT itself. They are interim products which offer crucial and more direct access to the creative process that is literary translation and provide written evidence of the translator's decision-making. The present paper will focus precisely on the possibilities provided by the textual analysis of literary drafts, evaluating previous work in this area and, through a case study, illustrating the wealth of detail they may offer. It should be stressed that this is not a typical form of analysis in translation process research, with its tendency to focus more on experimental methodologies, often accompanied by quantitative statistical analysis. Equally crucially, the analysis of drafts brings into play a new and strong interdisciplinary element in its meshing with analysis from a literary studies tradition. Hansen (2010) calls this "the liberal arts paradigm". It is so closely involved in the study and interpretation of texts that, without it, "in empirical research into translation or translation processes it is impossible to achieve reasonable results" (Hansen 2010, 203).

2.   Archive, manuscripts and personal papers
It is important to distinguish between these three terms, differentiated by the Society of American Archivists as follows (Pearce-Moss 2005, online). An archive comprises "[m]aterials created or received by a person, family, or organization, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs […]; permanent records". A manuscript is: "1. A handwritten

document. – 2. An unpublished document. – 3. An author's draft of a book, article, or other work submitted for publication." Personal papers are: "Documents created, acquired, or received by an individual in the course of his or her affairs and preserved in their original order (if such order exists)." For literary translation studies purposes, the most fruitful archives are generally state censorship files or the business records of a publisher. These will typically include details of the commissioning and production of individual books and series, contracts, costs, sales figures, and so on. Of particular interest is the correspondence between editors and individual translators which may contain comments and queries on the titles as well as details of the working conditions. For instance, the Allen & Unwin archive in the Archive of British Publishing and Printing at Reading, UK, provides a comprehensive picture of the relations between publisher and translators over many years. To give just one example, Bernard Miall, translator and reader, worked for them from 1914 until his death in 1953. His letters, every two or three days for much of that period, graphically recount his struggle to make a living (Munday, forthcoming).

Draft manuscripts, as defined above, are often rare in publishers' archives as they tended to be discarded once a book had been published. None of Miall's seem to survive, while in the Penguin Classics archive in Bristol the notable exception is Stanley Handford's 1971 retranslation of Tacitus's Agricola and Germania, only retained because of a legal case brought by the estate of the original translator, Harold Mattingly (see Munday 2012, Chapter 4). Such manuscripts are more likely to be found amongst author or translator papers, an indication perhaps of the higher value that these actors attach to them as records of a creative process. These contain drafts marked up by the authors and/or their translators and editors as well as correspondence answering specific queries (see Munday 2012, Chapter 4). Nonetheless, considerable investigative work is needed to uncover their whereabouts, a fact acknowledged by the growth of online resources such as GLAM (http://glam-

archives.org.uk/) and the Archives Hub (http://archiveshub.ac.uk/). These papers may contain:

- Correspondence between the translator and the author, editor and agent, organized into files according to correspondent.

- Query sheets which the translator has sent to the author or editor, or queries sent by a reader to the translator.

- Notebooks, in which the translator may have recorded progress, problems and even snippets of translation.

- Draft manuscripts at different stages of the process, often with handwritten corrections.

- Ephemera or miscellaneous material, such as CVs, publicity for the titles, postcards, etc.

Together, these shed considerable light on the working practices and personal life of an individual translator.

3.   Archives, manuscripts and papers in translation studies research

Access to archives enables a detailed picture to be constructed of the role of translation in concrete socio-historical contexts. To give just two recent examples, the papers in Rundle and Sturge (2010) examine translation policy and censorship in mid-twentieth century Europe while Billiani (2007) uncovers the contribution of Einaudi publishers to poetry translation and the construction of a post-Second World War identity in Italy. The analysis of correspondence has allowed investigation of the relationship between Ezra Pound and Paul Blackburn and their translation strategies (Venuti 1995/2008) and an appreciation of the

influence of figures such as Edward Garnett, husband of famous translator Constance, in the reception of Russian literature (Smith 2011). However, unless the translator is a well-known author or self-translator, drafts are less often available. Even when they are, relatively little work from within translation studies has sought to track translator decisions in those drafts. What has been done reveals some of the methodological considerations that arise. Pijuan Vallverdú (2007) analyses a section of the revised typescript drafts of Manuel de Pedrolo's Catalan translation of William Faulkner's Light in August (1932), published in Barcelona by Edicions 62 as *Llum d'Agost* (1969). The features that are noted in the analysis are classified very broadly as: spelling, syntax, lexis, punctuation, "unnecessary corrections" and "incorrect corrections" (Pijuan Vallverdú 2007, 64), but few examples are given. More detail is provided by translator Peter Bush (2006, 27), who presents "the writing process of a translation" by describing the evolution of a paragraph from the opening of his own translation of Spanish novelist Juan Goytisolo's Carajicomedia (Seix Barral 2000).[1] The study examines what Bush calls his "first draft" and "sixth draft". Between these two, the basic structure remains consistent despite modifications, which amount to the translation of names, the replacement of synonyms and some reworking of syntax. Bush's account of his motivations adds to our understanding of the reasons behind certain changes. For example, he indicates that the shift from pounding the carpet to pounding the parquet was a deliberate move to intensify the alliteration while later decisions between the sixth and eighth drafts concerned strategic matters such as how to deal with heteroglossia (French and Latin expressions in the Spanish ST). However, his analysis leaves crucial unanswered questions including the cognitive processes which preceded the typing of the first draft and the order in which changes were made in the intervening and absent drafts.

In an attempt to answer such questions, Jones (2006) combines open-ended interviews with five poetry translators about their background and translation strategies with a think-

aloud protocol (TAP) study of himself translating a Serbo-Croat poem through four drafts. The findings of the think-aloud protocol are classified into 'sequences' (strategic and problem-solving moves), 'foci' (the type of problem featuring in each sequence, the most frequent of which were lexis, image, rhythm, and rhyme) and 'drafts' (a quantitative analysis of the predominant characteristics of each draft). In the latter, Jones (2006, 70) sees a statistically significant shift from lexis foci in Draft 1 to rhythm, rhyme and poetic form in Draft 2 to a more holistic revision in Drafts 3 and 4. We shall return to this below.

Obviously, the study of drafts is objectively more solid if it is carried out by a third party. Filippakopoulou (2008) analyses the drafts and comments of a translation partnership: Ros Schwartz and Lulu Norman's translation of Aziz Chouaki's novel *L'Ètoile d'Alger* (Editions Balland, 2002).[2] She also discusses the translators' self-reflective article on this collaboration (Schwartz and Norman 2006) and argues for the complementarity of the two sources: the drafts give "voyeuristic" access to the normally concealed agency of the translator, to the revisions, corrections and prescriptive quest for linguistic accuracy; the retrospective protocol, in which Schwartz and Norman seem more confident, "speaks about the emotive experience that arguably is the enterprise of translation" (Filippakopoulou 2008 34).

Filippakopoulou importantly notes methodological problems associated with the analysis of drafts. These are "messy documents […] loose sheets of paper, designed to serve a short-term purpose" (2008, 28), typed pages covered with handwritten corrections, suggestions, queries and musings. Although she does include three copied pages of notes for illustration, she does not go much further in the analysis of the patterns than to note general categories of shift (e.g. "changes in word order; changes in verb perspective; punctuation replacing conjunctions; translation shifts and adaptations…") and to claim that the form of the notes in the drafts "resist […] standard philological/literary analysis" (2008: 28). We shall

begin to tackle this in more depth in the case study through meticulous analysis of a small section of text through multiple drafts in order to reconstruct the translator's actions at different points and to posit the decision-making processes underlying these. What we are thus proposing is the bringing together of product analysis with a study and deduction of process. In some ways this follows the interdisciplinary methodology proposed by Alves et al. (2010) with its combination of corpus-based and process-based approaches.

4.   Case study – drafts of Belloss *retranslation of Perec's Les choses*[3]

David Bellos, now Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the University of Princeton, is the prominent translator of the French experimental writer Georges Perec (1936-1982) and the Albanian novelist Ismail Kadare (b. 1936). After his successful translation of Perec's masterpiece *Life: A user's manual*[4] (see the analysis in Munday 2012, Chapter 4), which brought Perec to greater international attention, Bellos revised Helen Lane's earlier translation of Perec's Les choses: une histoire des années soixante (1965). The Bellos papers at the University of East Anglia contain Bellos's notebooks and other material, including draft manuscripts, related to these translations. In the case of Les choses, a notebook itself contains the draft of his revision of the first half of the book.[5] This starts in the form of amendments to a printed copy of Lane's text, but after just two pages Bellos seems to have decided that so much revision was needed that it was preferable to write out a totally new version by hand.[6]

The small sample of the papers consulted for this study comprises:

(1) Lane's published TT (Perec 1967), cut out and pasted by Bellos onto the left-hand side of sheets of squared paper.

(2) Draft 1: Bellos's first draft of handwritten revisions to the opening two printed pages of Lane's translation. These revisions are in pen and pencil. It can be presumed that these were done at different times since those in pencil, which we shall call Draft 2, are much more substantial and often involve a complete rewriting of Draft 1.

(3) Draft 3: Bellos's later draft of the first half of the text, together with further revisions. This draft was written in pen on a new sheet of paper (see Appendix 1).

(4) the published Bellos TT (Perec 1990).

What we are most concerned with are revisions made at different stages. These indicate an evaluation by the translator that causes him to make a change to the text and, in the case of multiple revisions, suggest what Angelone (2010, 18) calls 'uncertainty' related to a particular 'problem nexus'.[7] The drafts make this uncertainty observable in the form of multiple written amendments. Analysis of the very first paragraph of the book shows the huge amount of micro-data that may be generated by just a small section of text:

Perec ST (Perec 1965: 9)

L'œil, d'abord, glisserait sur la moquette grise d'un long corridor, haut et étroit. Les murs seraient des placards de bois clair, dont les ferrures de cuivre luiraient. Trois gravures, représentant l'une Thunderbird, vainqueur à Epsom, l'autre un navire à aubes, le Ville-de-Montereau, la troisième une locomotive de Stephenson, mèneraient à une tenture de cuir, retenue par de gros anneaux de bois noir veiné, et qu'un simple geste suffirait à faire glisser. La moquette, alors, laisserait place à un parquet presque jaune, que trois tapis aux couleurs éteintes recouvriraient partiellement.

Bellos Draft 1 (showing his revisions to Lane's published TT)[8]

The eye, at first, would ~~s~~glide over the gre~~a~~y rug of a long corridor, high and narrow. The walls would be ~~cabinets, whose copper fittings would gleam~~ wooden fitted cupboards, light and gleaming with copper fittings. Three engravings – one representing Thunderbird, the winner at Epsom, another a paddle~~wheel~~ steamer, the "Ville-de-Montereau," the third a Stephenson locomotive – would lead to a leather curtain, hanging from large rings of ~~black-veined~~ grainy black wood, that a ~~simple~~ mere gesture would suffice to slide back. Then, ~~T~~the rug~~, then,~~ would give way to an almost yellow parquet floor, which three soft-hued rugs ~~in soft colors~~ would partially cover.

The ST is not especially complicated and Lane's translation was more or less literal. Notable only are her confusion of moquette (which should be fitted carpet rather than rug), the omission of an equivalent for de bois clair ('of light wood') and the translation of retenue par de gros anneaux ('held by large rings') as hanging from large rings. Bellos's first draft makes ten changes in a paragraph of 90 TT words. These are generally minor, involving replacements on the lexical level (glide over > slide over; US gray > UK grey; cabinets > fitted cupboards; paddle wheel steamer > paddle steamer; a simple gesture > a mere gesture) word order and syntactic structure (black-veined wood > grainy black wood; in soft colors > soft-hued; The rug, then,... > Then the rug...) and the rectification of Lane's omission, which leads to a rewording of the clause (cabinets, whose copper fittings would gleam > wooden fitted cupboards, light and gleaming with copper fittings).

More substantial revisions, which perhaps more keenly reveal the decision-making processes, can be seen in the amendments in Draft 2, written in pencil beside and below the first draft. It would seem that these were added later since three whole sections of the

paragraph, covering most of the first three sentences, are re-written in full and provide the basis for the subsequent drafts.

Bellos Draft 2

Your eye, first of all, would slide over the grey carpet in ~~a the~~ a high, narrow, long corridor. The walls would be made of fitted cupboards of light-coloured wood with gleaming brass fittings. Three prints, one depicting Thunderbird, the Epsom winner, another a paddle steamer, the VdM and the third a Stephenson loco, would lead to a leather curtain, hanging from large rings of black-veined grainy black wood, which would slide back at the merest movement of ~~the~~ an arm. Then the carpet would give way to an almost yellow woodblock floor, which three faded carpets would partly cover.

Comparison of Draft 2 with Draft 1 shows that the changes are related to lexis, syntactic restructuring and, a new element, cohesive devices:

Lexis: first > first of all; rug > carpet (twice); Three engravings > Three prints; representing > depicting; parquet floor > woodblock floor; soft-hued rugs > faded rugs; partially > partly. Of these, the translation carpet is a correction (see above). The others are near-synonyms or slight adjustments to meaning.

Syntactic restructuring: long corridor, high and narrow > high, narrow, long corridor; the winner at Epsom > the Epsom winner; the walls would be wooden fitted cupboards, light and gleaming with copper fittings > the walls would be made of fitted cupboards of light-coloured wood with gleaming brass fittings; that a mere gesture would suffice to slide back > which would slide back at the merest movement of an arm. The examples are frequent, showing that restructuring plays an important role in decision-making at the second draft stage. That these

occur after the initial revision suggests that the decision to opt for major restructuring is the result of the translator's dissatisfaction with low-level lexical modification.

Cohesive devices: The eye > Your eye; a > the > a (high... corridor); the third > and the third. It is interesting that the translator should focus on the detail of deixis, which may be quite crucial to the depiction of the narrative point of view (see Mason and Serban 2003). All three examples of cohesive devices indicate a move away from literal translation towards a more conventional English, especially the change from The eye to the more specific Your eye. This is a typical translation of the French definite article used with a part of the body, but it necessarily defines the narrative perspective. The concentration on higher-level considerations is supported by an extratextual source: Bellos (2001) has written about the particular problem of translating verbs in Perec's prose, and the importance, in these lines of Les choses, of the French conditional (*glisserait... seraient... mèneraient...* and so on) to create a dream-like sequence that needs to be retained in the translation.

Draft 3 is also handwritten, as can be seen in Appendix 1. A classification of the revisions compared to Draft 2 is given in Appendix 2 and again shows a predominance of syntactic restructuring.

This is also the case with the further handwritten amendments made to Draft 3 (see Appendix 1): syntactic restructuring is dominant, followed by cohesive devices, but with only one additional lexical revision: the Epsom winner > the Derby winner. What is very noticeable is that many of these amendments to the text concern the very same points that had been revised at earlier stages. These recurrent doubts are what I term "critical points" for the translator. They are similar to the concept of "rich points" (PACTE 2011, 37) but are identified on the basis of translator behaviour rather than selected a priori as a test item. Thus, a critical point is one where each translation draft revisits and further explores the same problem. For example, the translation of the French conditional suffirait shows an oscillation in modality

(would slide > could slide > would slide). Similarly, Bellos's attempts to personalize the first sentence by making the subject of the action the pronoun you rather than your eye (What you would see first of all would be...) is rejected in favour of the choice from Draft 2 (Your eye, first of all, would glide over...). The order of epithets is a particular preoccupation of the translator, with constant revision around the corridor, cupboards and fittings. Here, the concern seems to be with achieving a 'natural' order and rhythm in the English.

The amended Draft 3 was itself revised at one final point prior to publication (Perec 1990): a paddle-steamer called The City of Montereau becomes a paddle-steamer named Ville-de-Montereau. Called and named are synonymous, but the retention of the French name for the ship may have come from a decision to retain foreign elements where possible, which would be comparable to the late decision on how to deal with names in Bush (2006), above.

Some may find such analysis sterile and repetitive, but it is only by examining in such detail that we can move on from impressionistic comments and truly begin to understand the processes involved at each stage. Failure to do so, or the cherry-picking selection of a more "interesting" extract, betrays a lack of investigative rigour. It is beyond doubt illuminating to see the types of revisions made at each stage in the process, even in a small sample of one paragraph. Bellos's Draft 1 revision of Lane's literal translation centres on the lexical level and syntactic reordering at the phrase level; Draft 2, where Bellos completely rewrites the text, shifts the focus to syntactic and structural change and introduces a new element in cohesive devices, which is repeated in Draft 3. One clear feature is that lexical revision decreases during the revision process, particularly between Drafts 2 and 3. Overall, revision reduces dramatically as the final published version is approached, although the major change at that final stage is in fact quite a strategic one since it involves the choice between borrowing and literal translation of a proper name, a culture-specific element. In part this seems to chime with the findings from Jones (2006) TAP study into drafts of his own

translation of a poem, where lexical problems gave way to form and structure and then a

holistic evaluation (see above). It is a finding worthy of further investigation.

5.   Questions of research methodology

As useful as descriptive translation studies are for the identification of trends of translation

shifts and translational norms in published texts, their scope is inevitably limited if they do

not seek to combine analysis of the translated product with an investigation of the translation

process. For literary translation, the existence of author and/or translator papers, manuscripts

and drafts offers just such an insight into decision-making. The advantages are manifold:

analysis of drafts by a third-party analyst reduces subjectivity compared to those descriptions

of the process by the translators themselves; multiple drafts give concrete information on

decision-making at different stages in the translation process; the existence of other material,

such as query lists, reader reports and, most particularly, correspondence, may provide clear

evidence about the negotiation and location of power in the publishing world.In this paper I

have concentrated mainly on the possibilities offered by the detailed textual study of drafts. It

should be stressed that these preliminary findings will only really be interpretable in the

context of other similar studies which will enable comparisons to be made across translators

and projects. Close analysis of Bellos's papers as a whole shows that he seems to be much

more systematic and organized than many other translators. But then those translators whose

papers are available in libraries are those who have carefully retained the material over a

number of years. By contrast, many of Helen Lane's papers were eaten by mice in her house

in rural France. The actual organization of the papers by the library archivists also imposes

some order on the collection that may not have been previously contemplated. Importantly,

though, the findings from such studies should complement and be complemented by other,

more experimental, research methods into translation processes in order to achieve

triangulation (Alves 2003). These should include the study of translator correspondence, interviews and think-aloud protocols, corpus-based studies of texts and translator choices, and perhaps also key-stroke logging and eye-tracking studies.

The drafts should be seen as real-time and real-world evidence of translation revisions and doubts, sometimes with a rationale for decision-making. They constitute visible traces of the translatorial act. They are also tangible objects that create a direct link to the creation of some of the great works of literature. Their physical form is crucial to their interpretation, since handwriting needs to be deciphered, the type of paper and ink may be significant, and so on (Prescott 2008). Touching the paper and seeing the ink used by the translators also puts the scholar into the closest contact with great translators. It is a physical sensation. For me, the archive allows the researcher literally to feel and smell the presence of literary creation.

Developments in modern communication will mean that this is bound to change. Derrida (1996) already saw this with the advent of e-mail. Hard copies of electronic communication (fax and e-mail) are now present in some existing repositories, such as the Andrew Hurley papers at the Harry Ransom Center, Austin, Texas. It is quite conceivable that future collections of author and translator "papers" will predominantly, or even completely, comprise digital communications and will be widely available online. Unless translators are made aware of their importance, there is the risk that multiple early drafts may no longer be retained, since the default save facility automatically overwrites the previous version of the document. However, the upside is that more documents are likely to be made available, including detailed e-mail correspondence, and they will be electronically searchable. This will hugely increase the potential for investigation and will doubtless benefit from interdisciplinary co-operation using analytical tools from corpus linguistics, for example. In addition, translator statements and discussion have even now shifted to blogs (e.g. http://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/translated-fiction/) and online forums

such as KudoZ™ (http://www.proz.com/kudoz/) where translation problems and solutions are discussed in their thousands. In this way, more and more traces of the translatorial act and decision-making will become available in the public domain and will provide rich material for analysis.

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Appendix 1

Photocopy of Bellos's handwritten Draft 3, with amendments.

[ADD IMAGE 1, FROM PDF HERE]

Appendix 2

Classification of initial revisions at Draft 3 stage

<u>Lexis</u>: slide over> glide over; grey carpet > gray, fitted carpet; fitted cupboards >
cupboards; hanging > hung; at the merest movement of an arm > at the merest touch

<u>Syntactic restructuring</u>: Your eye, first of all, would slide over... > What you would see first of
all would be... ; high, narrow, long corridor > narrow, high-ceilinged and long corridor;
Thunderbird, the Epsom winner > the Epsom winner Thunderbird; fitted cupboards of light-
coloured wood with gleaming brass fittings > cupboards, wooden, light in colour, with
gleaming brass fittings; which three .. rugs... would partly cover > partly covered by three...
rugs.

<u>Cohesive devices</u>: of a... corridor > in a ... corridor; the walls > its walls; would be made of
> would be; Ø > respectively; Then, the carpet would... > There, the carpet would...

<u>Modality</u>: would slide > could slide.

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[1] Published as A Cock-Eyed Comedy (Serpent's Tail, 2002).

[2] It appeared in English as The Star of Algiers (Serpent's Tail, 2006).

[3] I am grateful to: the University of East Anglia Special Collections for their assistance in this case study; to David Bellos for an interview in Princeton in November 2010 and for granting permission to quote from his papers for the purpose of this article.

[4] Published by David R. Goldine in 1987.

[5] David Bellos papers, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK. Box LIT/TA/DB/3, notebook dated 'Sept – 10.12.1988'

[6] Since confirmed by Bellos himself (personal communication).

[7] "Uncertainty is defined here as a cognitive state of indecision that may be marked by a distinct class of behaviors occurring during the translation process" (Angelone 2010: 18).

[8] These examples are transcriptions of the hand-written versions made by Bellos.