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# **Style and Voice: Lost in Translation?**

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Although translation studies play an important role within the academic cursus of undergraduate degrees in French universities, and are a core element of the competitive civil service examinations (the *CAPES* and the *Agrégation*) which are required to teach in the French education system, little attention is paid to translating style *per se*. Translation modules which are usually compulsory at undergraduate level are, perhaps understandably, concerned with teaching language skills: checking that the text has been understood, that grammatical structures are fully mastered and that students have an extensive knowledge of lexical items. Investigating the stylistic features of a text, before translating it, often takes a backseat, is consigned to an optional module and considered to be of secondary importance, if it is considered at all.

This lack of interest in translating the style of a text mirrors a lack of critical interest and theory in translating style in general. There are of course notable exceptions to this such as Munday (2008), Boase-Beier (2006), Parks (1998) and May (1994), but generally within translation studies, style has remained neglected. Even when theorists, such as Nida and Taber (1969, 12), focus on the receptor and the impact of the message, it is meaning that comes first and style that comes second:

Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style.

This separation of style and meaning leads to style being considered as ornamentation, something which can therefore be discarded, or even

something which is untranslatable. Writing on the lack of translation of Zúñi oral narratives, Tedlock (1971, 121) suggests that “the neglect of translation is doubtless related to a belief that style, or at least the better part of it, is simply untranslatable”, and he comments that those translations which do exist “have suffered somewhat from neglect of the ‘linguistic’ features of style” (1971, 125).

The concept of style is, of course, a tricky one to define. It has been associated with an individual writer, with a genre or even with a specific historical period. For Leech and Short (1981, 10) style “refers to the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose, and so on”, which is an extremely broad definition. However, it will not be my concern here to investigate definitions of style; for the purpose of this chapter, I will be following Leech and Short’s premise that “style is a property of all texts” (1981, 18) and focussing on the translation of the style of individual writers.

According to Munday (2008, 6), “in translation studies, issues of style are related to the voice of the narrative and of the author/translator”. Like the term *style*, the notion of *voice* is a complex one. In their *Rhetorical Grammar*, Kolln and Gray (2010, 122) define the writer’s voice as “the identity you create through choosing words and arranging them on a page”. In stylistics and literary criticism, the term voice is often associated with narrative voice, referring to the “one who speaks” (Wales 2001, 406), whether that be the narrator(s) or character(s). As a result, the terms “voice” and “narrative point of view” are often conflated, with “point of view” being taken as seeing events through someone else’s eyes, or “the psychological perspective through which a story is told” (Simpson 1993, 5). Although important distinctions have been made between the two (Uspensky 1973; Fowler 1977; Genette 1980; Chatman 1990; Lanser 1981; Booth 1961), I will be using the terms loosely in the pages that follow, focussing on how voice and narrative point of view are created through language and constructed by the reader. In doing so, I will seek to demonstrate that stylistics has much to offer the translator, but equally that stylisticians can benefit from examining translations. The first part of this chapter will investigate various narrative voices and demonstrate how the French translations, by not reproducing the style of the original, create a different voice to that of the source text (ST). In my second part, I will look at the French translations of a specific kind of voice, the mind style of a character (see definition below), before considering the textual voice as part of a communicative act that necessitates the translator’s being aware

not just of the linguistic features of a text but also of their target readership and the sociocultural context. This will lead me finally to suggest a possible model to represent the process of translation.

## **Using the linguistic toolkit to analyse voice**

In their early days, both stylistics and translation studies were heavily influenced by research in linguistics. Pioneers in translations studies, such as Catford (1965) belong to what Venuti (1998, 21) calls “linguistics-oriented” translation. For Catford (1965, 30), translation is all about replacing textual material in the source language (SL) with equivalent textual material in the target language (TL). For its part, stylistics has always put “its emphasis, first and foremost, on the language of the text” (Simpson 1993, 3), with early work influenced by structuralism (Culler 1975; Riffaterre 1970) or by the close-reading of texts (Wimsatt and Beardsley 1954). While both disciplines have extended their field of research far beyond linguistics today, a close study of lexicogrammatical features can and does play an important role in analysing style and, as we shall see, in the first example which follows, neglect of these features results in a translated text with a very different “voice”.

### ***Minimalising the minimalist style and modifying the voice***

Although the American short-story writer, Raymond Carver, rejected the label of minimalism (Gentry & Stull 1990, 44), he has long been identified as “the chief practitioner of what’s been called ‘American minimalism’” (Gorra 1984, 155) with his “outstanding role in the canonization of literary minimalism” being identified as a “very unique phenomenon of critical history” (Bocsor 2015, 21). Critics have been swift to identify his pared-down terse style and “disjunctive style marked by its avoidance of grammatical subordination” (Kaufmann 1991, 93) as characteristically minimalist<sup>1</sup>. Such a style does not tell the reader what to think; it is linked to what Carver calls “the theory of omission” (Gentry & Stull 1990, 182). The reduction of sentences to all but the bare minimum,

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<sup>1</sup> Critics have identified Carver’s editor, Gordon Lish, as being responsible for many of the radical reductions in Carver’s prose.

and the refusal to interpret events through the narrative voice, means that the reader has to infer and supply what is not there. The following extract illustrates this style:

My husband eats with a good appetite. But I don't think he's really hungry. He chews, arms on the table, and stares at something across the room. He looks at me and looks away. He wipes his mouth on the napkin. He shrugs, and goes on eating.  
"What are you staring at me for?" he says. "What is it?" he says and lays down his fork.  
"Was I staring?" I say, and shake my head. The telephone rings.  
"Don't answer it," he says.  
"It might be your mother," I say.  
"Watch and see," he says.  
I pick up the receiver and listen. My husband stops eating.  
(Carver 1993, 69)

In this opening passage to the short story "So Much Water So Close To Home" the chronological sequence of events is achieved simply through the juxtaposition of finite verbs in the simple present tense; there are no temporal adjuncts and no grammatical cohesive ties to guide the reader. The order of some of the sentences could easily be switched, without any real impact on the overall meaning as such:

He chews, arms on the table, and stares at something across the room. He wipes his mouth on the napkin. He looks at me and looks away. He shrugs, and goes on eating

Or

He chews, arms on the table, and stares at something across the room. He looks at me and looks away. He shrugs, and goes on eating. He wipes his mouth on the napkin.

It is for the reader to infer the order of events, and for the reader to decide whether "He looks at me and looks away" refers to a unique or iterative event. However, the French text has not taken these stylistic features into consideration.

Mon mari mange de bon appétit. Mais je ne pense pas qu'il ait vraiment faim. Il mâche, les bras sur la table, fixant un point au milieu de la chambre. De temps en temps, il me regarde, puis il détourne les yeux. Il s'essuie la bouche avec une serviette, hausse les épaules et se remet à manger.

Pourquoi me dévisages-tu comme ça ? me demande-t-il. Hein ? Qu'est-ce qu'il y a ?  
 Et il reposa sa fourchette. Moi, je réponds en secouant la tête :  
 – Moi, je te dévisageais ?  
 A ce moment, voilà le téléphone qui sonne.  
 Ne réponds pas, m'ordonne mon mari.  
 Ça pourrait être ta mère.  
 On verra bien.  
 Je décroche et j'écoute. Mon mari cesse de manger.  
 (Rolin 1996, 87)

In the translation, there are fewer finite verbs, *stares* and *shake* become participles: *fixant* and *secouant*, thus changing the original rhythms of the text; the introduction of *de temps en temps* (*from time to time*) removes any ambiguity regarding the aspect of the simple present; and the temporal adjunct *puis* (*then*) is introduced, making the chronological sequence explicit. The disjunctive “He wipes his mouth on the napkin. He shrugs, and goes on eating” has been modified into a single sentence; as a result, the text flows more easily in the translation. Further chronological marking is given in the translation of *the telephone rings* which is rendered as *à ce moment, voilà le téléphone qui sonne*. One event is linked to another by the use of the temporal adjunct, and the introduction of *voilà* foregrounds the presence of the first-person narrator, focussing on her viewpoint. The neutral tone of Carver’s text is thus modified.

Carver’s use of superordinate terms, such as *say* or *look*, also makes demands on the reader of his short stories, as the writer rarely informs the reader how exactly something was said or what exactly the character saw. Once again, the reader has to supply what is not there. The rhythmic repetition of the verb *say* punctuates the dialogue between his characters, although there is often no need to repeat the reporting verb since it is clear from the cotext who is speaking. This repetition of *say*, which does not lead to any real exchange, reflects both the characters’ inability to communicate meaningfully (Pillière 1999), and the fact that they are “dissociated from themselves, alienated from everybody and everything” (Neset 1995, 27). In the French translation above, *say* has been translated by hyponyms such as *demander*, *répondre*, *ordonner*, (all of which imply interaction between speaker and addressee) or simply omitted altogether, thus modifying the style significantly. Finally, Carver’s minimalist style is also expressed through the omnipresent use of *and*, a “general purpose” linking word, capable of expressing a number of different semantic relations according to the context (Leech & Svartvik 2002, 193). Once

again, Carver leaves the reader free to interpret; once again, the French translators of the short stories have decided to interpret for the reader:

The door opened behind him and a man and woman came out. Ralph stepped out of the way **and** they got into a car parked at the curb. (Carver 1993, 57)

*La porte s'ouvrit dans son dos et un couple sortit du bar. Ralph s'écarta **pour** les laisser passer et ils se dirigèrent vers une auto garée le long du trottoir.* (Lasquin 1996, 70)

He grabbed her awkwardly, **and** she said. (Carver 1993, 15)

*Il la saisit maladroitement à mi-corps **tandis qu'**elle protestait.* (Rolin 1996, 10)

He studied her, **and** she looked away. (Carver 1993, 18)

***Plus** il la dévisageait, **plus** elle fuyait.* (Rolin 1996, 14)

In the first of the above three examples, *and* has been interpreted by the translator as indicating purpose; in the second example, *and* is translated by a subordinating conjunction indicating simultaneity; and in the third example, the two clauses coordinated by *and* have been transformed into a comparative correlative. For Kaufmann (1991, 99) the paratactic sentence structure that is so typical of Carver's style, "is not a stylistic quirk but is rather integral to the construction of the story: the inability to subordinate, to organise material in anything other than chronological order, gets folded back into a larger inability to conceptualize and articulate". It is a fundamental part of the narratorial voice and the failure, in this instance, to render the style in the French translation, the fact that the translators force one particular interpretation upon the reader, results in the authorial voice being lost in translation.

Both Camus and Hemingway suffered similar fates in their early translations, although the translators had perhaps a different aim in mind. Kaplansky (2004, 189) suggests that Gilbert's translation of *L'Etranger*, with its "elegant and poetic English prose" may have been motivated by a desire to "acclimatize the work to readers of English", a case of domestication (Venuti 1995). The "distinctly British flavour" (Kaplansky 2004, 189) is well-illustrated by the following extract, with its use of *old boy*:

« Je savais bien que tu connaissais la vie ». Je ne me suis pas aperçu d'abord qu'il me tutoyait. (Camus 1957, 54)

*'I could tell you was a brainy sort, old boy, and you know what's what'. At first I hardly noticed that 'old boy'.* (Gilbert 1954, 41)



In his article, Kaplansky demonstrates that Gilbert explains and interprets for the reader, creating a totally different “feel” to the narratorial voice and turning Meursault into a “more approachable protagonist” (Kaplansky 2004, 196).

Dutourd’s translation of Hemingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea* is also very different in tone:

He was asleep in a short time and he dreamed of Africa when he was a boy and the long, golden beaches and the white beaches, so white they hurt your eyes, and the high capes and the great brown mountains. He lived along that coast now every night and in his dreams he heard the surf roar and saw the native boats come riding through it. He smelled the tar and oakum of the deck as he slept and he smelled the smell of Africa that the land breeze brought at morning. (Hemingway 1952, 15)

*Bientôt endormi, il rêva de l'Afrique de sa jeunesse, des longues plages dorées, des plages éclatantes, si éclatantes qu'elles font mal aux yeux, des caps altiers, des grandes montagnes brunes. Toutes ses nuits, il les passait sur cette côte africaine ; le mugissement des vagues emplissait ses rêves, et il voyait les pirogues des nègres courir sur les brisants. L'odeur de goudron et d'étaupe que l'on sent sur les ponts de bateaux parfumait son sommeil. A l'aurore, c'est l'odeur même de l'Afrique que la brise de terre lui apportait.* (Dutourd 2002, 43)

In the ST, the rhythm of Hemingway’s prose is created in part through the omnipresent syndetic parataxis. In the French translation, this rhythm is broken with the introduction of non-finite clauses or the introduction of semi-colons. Dutourd has also modified the narratorial voice by using a more recondite term, *pirogues*, for *native boats*, and *altier* for the everyday adjective *high*. Hemingway’s repetition of *smelled*, *smell* has been studiously avoided, and the more positively connotative *parfumait* has replaced the superordinate term *smelled*. Finally, while the old man is the subject of the verbs in the English text (he hears the surf roar; he smells the smell), he is the recipient of the sensations in the translation (*le mugissement des vagues emplissait ses rêves*: the roar of the surf fills his dreams; *c'est l'odeur même de l'Afrique que la brise de terre lui apportait*: the land breeze brings him the smell of Africa) and the third person pronoun *on* is introduced, resulting in a shift in perspective and voice.

All the translations studied so far have presented changes in narratorial voice, suggesting that, for one reason or another, the translators have not sought to reproduce the style of the original.

***Maximalising the mind, keeping the character's voice***

For my next examples, I want to turn to a different kind of textual voice, that of a character, and more specifically, the kind of voice that is more commonly known as “mind style”. Fowler (1977, 103) defines the concept of “mind style” as “any distinctive linguistic representation of an individual mental self”. By linking linguistic choices to cognitive processes, cognitive stylisticians have developed the notion of mind style to focus on portrayals of a “particular cognitive state” (Boase-Beier 2004, 281). For example, Semino (2011) has analysed the use of deixis and fictional minds that work “in a striking and peculiar way” and Bockting (1995) has analysed characters’ speech patterns as reflections of mental disorder. Translating a mind style poses specific challenges for the translator. As Boase-Beier (2004, 280) remarks, “the style will be paramount if we want to both preserve the same possible range of interpretations of the cognitive state expressed in the text as were implicated by the original and to keep the same potential range of poetic effects as the original”.

The first example of mind style and its translation that I wish to examine is that of the first-person narrator, Christopher Boone, in Haddon’s *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, translated into French by Demange. Christopher has been identified as having Asperger Syndrome, although Haddon himself has stated that he was not seeking to portray a medically “correct” representation, but to make a “believable human being” (Guardian Online, 2004). One of the traits of Asperger’s is a difficulty in communicating and forging social relationships.

Commenting on the unusual presentation of speech in the novel, Semino (2014, 293) draws attention to the fact that the reporting clauses precede the speech itself, instead of being placed afterwards or in the middle. Moreover, each reporting verb is preceded by *and* with the verb *say* being the most commonly used reporting verb, thus creating “a rather mechanical, stilted tone to Christopher’s reporting of conversations. This is consistent with the idea that people with autistic-spectrum disorders have difficulties with communication and with the social relationships that are expressed through them” (Semino 2014, 294). This stylistic feature is illustrated by the passage below:

Then he said, “What’s your name?”  
And I said, “Christopher Boone.”  
And he said, “Where do you live?”

And I said, "36 Randolph Street" and I started feeling better because I like policemen and it was an easy question, and I wondered whether I should tell him that Father killed Wellington and whether he would arrest Father. And he said, "What are you doing here?" And I said, "I needed to sit down and be quiet and think." And he said, "OK, let's keep it simple. What are you doing at the railway station?" And I said, "I'm going to see Mother." And he said, "Mother?" And I said, "Yes, Mother." And he said, "When's your train?" And I said, "I don't know. She lives in London. I don't know when there's a train to London."  
(Haddon 2003, 184–5)

*Puis il a dit : « Comment tu t'appelles ? »*  
*J'ai dit : « Christopher Boone. »*  
*Il a dit : « Tu peux me donner ton adresse ? »*  
*J'ai dit : « 36, Randolph Street », et j'ai commencé à me sentir mieux, parce que j'aime bien les policiers et que c'était une question facile. Je me suis demandé s'il fallait lui dire que Père avait tué Wellington et s'il allait arrêter Père.*  
*Il a dit : « Qu'est-ce que tu fais là ? »*  
*J'ai dit : « Il fallait que je reste assis au calme, pour réfléchir. »*  
*Il a dit : « Bien, procédons dans l'ordre. Qu'est-ce que tu fais à la gare ? »*  
*J'ai dit : « Je vais voir Mère. »*  
*Il a dit : « Mère ? »*  
*J'ai dit : « Oui, Mère. »*  
*Il a dit : « À quelle heure est ton train ? »*  
*J'ai dit : « Je ne sais pas. Elle habite Londres. Je ne sais pas à quelle heure il y a un train pour Londres. »*  
*Il a dit : « Donc, tu ne vis pas chez ta mère ? »*  
*J'ai dit : « Non. Mais je vais habiter chez elle. »*  
(Demange 2004, 243)

Unlike Carver's translators, Demange has not fallen into the trap of varying the reporting verb, or of changing the word order, so although the initial *and* is omitted, the overall effect is close to that rendered by the English text.

Christopher's inability to integrate information into a meaningful whole, the fact that he tends to postmodify nouns instead of premodifying them, is less easily rendered in French. There are times when the translation imitates the original with a postmodifying relative clause:

I went and got my waterproof which is orange. (Haddon 2003, 108)  
*Alors je suis allé chercher mon imperméable qui est orange.* (Demange 2004, 149)

However, on other occasions, the translator is constrained by the French language. The postmodification of nouns is an unmarked structure in French, although even the repetitive use of a relative clause is not always followed:

Siobhan has long blond hair and wears glasses which are made of green plastic. (Haddon 2003, 5)  
*Siobhan a de longs cheveux blonds et porte des lunettes en plastique vert.* (Demange 2004, 20)

Then closest to the ground was a huge cloud which was coloured grey because it was a rain cloud. (Haddon 2003, 86)  
*Puis, plus près du sol, il y avait un énorme nuage de couleur grise, parce que c'était un nuage de pluie.* (Demange 2004, 120)

Mother was sunbathing on a towel which had red and purple stripes. (Haddon 2003, 96)  
*Elle prenait un bain de soleil sur une serviette-éponge avec des rayures rouges et violettes.* (Demange 2004, 136)

Christopher's inability to process information and create a grammatically cohesive narrative is also reflected in his repetition of noun phrases, (in this instance *dog* and *fork*) where one might expect a pronoun to be used :

There was a garden fork sticking out of the dog. The points of the fork must have gone all the way through the dog and into the ground because the fork had not fallen over. I decided that the dog was probably killed with the fork because I could not see any other wounds in the dog and I do not think you would stick a garden fork into a dog after it had died. (Haddon 2003, 1)

*Il avait une fourche plantée dans le ventre. Les dents avaient dû le traverser de part en part et s'enfoncer dans le sol, parce qu'elle n'était pas tombée. Je me suis dit que le chien avait sans doute été tué avec la fourche, parce que je ne voyais pas d'autres blessures. Et je ne pense pas que quelqu'un irait planter une fourche dans un chien qui serait mort.* (Demange 2004, 13)

In the French text, Demange has omitted *fork* as a post-nominal modifier and simply mentioned the noun phrase "points" (*les dents*); on another occasion she has substituted the pronoun (*the fork had not fallen over: elle n'était pas tombée*). The repetition of *dog* suffers a similar fate. The translation first refers to the dog in this passage using the pronoun *il* followed by *le* (*les dents avaient dû le traverser*) and then finally omits the noun: *je ne voyais pas d'autres blessures*. As a result, the French text is

more grammatically cohesive: a network of referential ties is created through the use of pronouns and ellipsis modifying to some extent the effect on the reader. In the English text, the repetition of noun phrases suggests that Christopher is unable to synthesise information or to distinguish between old and new information, even if the high number of repetitions creates lexical cohesion. In her analysis of translations of Virginia Woolf, Bosseaux (2007, 164) notes that both Yourcenar and Wajsbrot also use fewer repetitions than the original text in English, so it is possible that Demange is following a French literary tradition which tends to shun repetition in close proximity.

Another distinctive mind style is to be found in Donoghue's *Room*, where the narrator, five-year-old Jack, has never lived outside the room where he is held captive with his mother. One of the characteristics of this style is Jack's personification of the objects in the room:

I jump onto Rocker to look at Watch, he says 07:14. I can skateboard on Rocker without holding on to her, then I whee back onto Duvet and I'm snowboarding instead. (Donoghue 2010, 5)

The names of the objects, preceded by the zero article and written with an initial capital letter, function as proper nouns, suggesting Jack has a personal relationship with objects. This is stylistically reinforced in English by the use of personal pronouns *he* or *she* to refer to the objects. In French, where nouns automatically have a masculine or feminine gender, using *il* or *elle* would not be stylistically marked or deviant. Buhl has therefore opted to introduce an honorific, *Mademoiselle*, *Madame* or *Monsieur*, according to the gender of the noun:

Je saute sur Monsieur Rocking-Chair pour regarder Madame l'Heure qui dit 7h14. J'arrive à faire basculer Monsieur Rocking-Chair vers l'avant comme un skate-board sans me tenir et *youpi!* je me catapulte sur Madame Couette pour faire du surf des neiges. (Buhl 2011, 15)

Donoghue creates a number of intentional spelling and grammatical mistakes to suggest that Jack's mind style is that of someone with limited education or someone very young. Irregular verbs are conjugated as regular verbs (*cutted*, *forgetted*, *growed*), a common logical misstep in children's verbal language, or a different morphological form is found (*brung* for *brought*). Although the error is not systematically reproduced in the translation (*forgotted* is rendered by the correctly conjugated *j'ai*

*oublié*), the misconjugation is sometimes achieved through choosing a past participle instead of an adjective: *I'll be grewed up* (Donoghue 2010, 14) becomes *je serai grandi* (Buhl 2011, 28) and not *je serai grand*. On other occasions, a similar effect is created using different means. The verb *cut* would normally be translated in French by *couper*, but a verb terminating in *-er* in French is not irregular. Buhl has therefore chosen to create a semantic error, rather than an inflectional error, and opted for the verb *découper* which is closer to the idea of to *cut up* or to *cut out* and which would not normally be used for cutting the umbilical cord (which is the context in which it is used here). Other evidence of a child's mind style is to be found in Jack's incorrect selection of the adjectival comparative form or his use of double comparatives to intensify his meaning:

I go even fasterer like Superman flying. (Donoghue 2010, 18-19)

This is rendered through a different grammatical means: a (mis)use of two intensifiers in French:

*Je vais encore de plus tant plus vite comme Superman en train de voler.*  
(Buhl 2011, 29)

Jack also creates new conversions, forming verbs from the exclamation *whee* or the adjective *hot*; again this is a common characteristic of children's language. Buhl sometimes manages to create the same effect in the same place in the text and uses a similar linguistic device: *to hot the air* becomes *chaudir l'air* based on the analogy with *(re)froidir*. But these conversions can also pose a problem for the translator. English can convert from one word class to another far more easily than French because there are fewer distinctive inflectional endings. When Jack creates an adjective *grippy* from the verb *to grip* and then adds the comparative inflectional ending *-er*, Buhl displaces the compensation (Harvey 1995) by inventing the verb *renlever*:

For Phys Ed we leave our socks off because bare feet are grippier.  
(Donoghue 2010, 18)  
*Pour l'activité sportive, on renlève nos chaussettes parce que les pieds nus s'accrochent mieux par terre.* (Buhl 2011, 29)

The translation of the mind style of Stevens, the butler and first-person narrator, in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*, reveals a similar sensitivity to the style of the ST on the part of the translator,

Mayoux. Stevens has long been recognised as a repressed character (Finney 2006; Beedham 2009) and as “emotionally illiterate” (Toolan 1998, 54). Ishiguro himself has acknowledged that the language he uses in his novels “tends to be the sort that actually suppresses meaning and tries to hide away meaning” (Schaffer 1998, 7). The consistent linguistic patterns used by Ishiguro create a stilted tone, or what Wood (1998, 176) refers to as his “stuffy language”. In Pillière (2004), I draw attention to some of the features that contribute to this stiltedness: notably the use of the pronoun *one*, the use of the passive voice, and the use of Latinate expressions. All three features pose a problem for the translator because of the constraints of the French language. The pronoun *one*, is frequently found in “‘im-personal’ educated speech and writing” (Wales 1996, 81) and, when it is used as a variant of *I*, as is often the case with Stevens, it marks a distance and even offers a way of avoiding or masking personal responsibility. This is particularly striking when he refers to Lord Darlington’s dismissal of two Jewish maids, an event which Miss Kenton, the housekeeper, disagreed with, but which Stevens did not call into question.

Naturally one disapproved of the dismissals. One would have thought that quite self-evident. (Ishiguro 1990, 162)

The choice of the third person distances Stevens from the event, but at the same time, by not using *I*, he also refuses to acknowledge Miss Kenton as an addressee, and to enter a speaker-addressee relationship. A similar stilted use of *one* is used in the following extract:

It is just that one never knows when one might be obliged to give out that one is from Darlington Hall, and it is important that one be attired at such times in a manner worthy of one’s position. (Ishiguro 1990, 11)

In both instances, Mayoux has opted for the French indefinite pronoun *on*:

Naturellement, on désapprouvait les renvois. On aurait supposé que cela allait de soi (Mayoux 1990, 169)

C’est que, voyez-vous, on ne sait jamais quand on risque de devoir révéler qu’on est de Darlington hall, et il est important en de telles circonstances, d’être vêtu d’une façon seyant à sa position. (Mayoux 1990, 20)

The French pronoun *on* has a different scope of reference: it is easily used for the first-person plural, but can also have generic use. More importantly, there is a marked difference in register, and while Stevens's use of *one* sets him apart from the other characters in the novel, *on* is used by a wide range of characters (Pillière 2006). Moreover, Stevens's predilection for the passive voice is also rendered by *on*:

"Principally," I continued, "it has been felt that Father should no longer be asked to wait at table, whether or not guests are present. ... Furthermore, it has been decided that father should not carry laden trays of any sort." (Ishiguro 1990, 68)

« *On a estimé qu'on ne devrait plus demander à Père de servir à table ... De surcroît, on a décidé que Père ne devrait plus porter de plateaux chargés* ». (Mayoux 1990, 78)

In this specific context, the French pronoun *on* is ambiguous: it could represent the first-person and mean that Stevens had reached the decision; it could represent the third person singular and refer to Lord Darlington; or it could be the first-person plural, signalling that Stevens fully supports Lord Darlington's decision. It allows Stevens to avoid naming the person responsible, as does the passive voice in English, but the formal stilted register of the passive is lost. Moreover, the passive voice is used extensively by Stevens but is often rendered in French by the pronoun *on* thus diminishing the formal register of Steven's mind style. Finally, there are Stevens' Latinate expressions:

I happened to depart the room. (Ishiguro 1990, 96)

On the few occasions I had a spare moment to ascend to that little attic room. (Ishiguro 1990, 100)

This is evidenced by the fact. (Ishiguro 1990, 142)

Culpeper (2015, 49), among others, points out that words of Germanic origin in the English language are "the stuff of everyday conversations, containing frequent, informal, private, simple and affective items, while Latinate vocabulary tends towards the opposite, the language of formal writing". However, translated into French, which is a Romance language, this lexicon is no longer formal:



*A un moment où je me trouvai **quitter** la pièce.* (Mayoux 1990, 108)

*Les rares fois où j'eus un moment de libre pour **monter** jusqu'à la petite mansarde.* (Mayoux 1990, 112)

*Et **la preuve** en est.* (Mayoux 1990, 150)

*Quitter, monter and la preuve* are everyday words in French.

The examples of translating style that we have investigated here underline the fact that although the translator chooses how they translate a passage, they are also constrained by the target language. The use of the passive in English, the pronoun *one*, and the words of Latin origin cannot always be easily rendered in French. However, Mayoux compensates for this by having Stevens address people, including his father with the formal *vous*, by having Stevens recount his narrative in the first-person with the *passé simple* tense and by using the French past subjunctive (Pillière 2006):

Despite my having completed my packing. (Ishiguro 1990, 23)  
*Bien que mes bagages eussent été faits.* (Mayoux 1990, 31)

It is not as though I had expected an apology from her. (Ishiguro 1990, 183)  
*Ce n'est pas que je me fusse attendu à ce qu'elle fit preuve de contrition.* (Mayoux 1990, 192)

Choice, as we have just seen, may be constrained by the limits of the target language but also by the constraints of publication. A translation for a commercial publisher may have to meet stringent deadlines, leaving the translator little time for rewriting or polishing a text. Another constraint is the image that the translator and/or publisher may have of their readership. As Lefevere (1992, 5) rightly says: "different types of reader will require different types of translation". The lack of attention to Carver's style may have been motivated by a belief that the potential reader of the short stories should not be called upon to make an effort in processing the information, and that the "gaps" should be filled in to ease the reading experience. Similarly, the literary translations of Hemingway and Camus may have been motivated by a desire to acquaint the reader with authors they did not know. Such constraints are not linguistic but are created by the sociocultural context and the image that the translator has of the target

readership. It is those two aspects that I wish now to examine, and how they relate to the textual voice.

## Targeting the Reader and the Context

Specialized discourse (Gotti 2005) is often considered to be of lesser interest when it comes to translating style. Boase-Beier (2006, 26) distinguishes between translating a literary and a non-literary text, but although the accent appears to be more firmly placed on translating “content” when it comes to translating non-literary texts, each discourse has its own style, and that style may well be different in the target culture. In other words, the expectations of the target reader will be different. Tourism texts in French and English illustrate this point quite clearly. While we may all have cringed at lexicogrammatical errors in tourism brochures, the difference in style between the next two examples shows that translators need to go beyond linguistic correctness if they are to “sell” the destination to the target reader. The extracts are both taken from websites promoting areas of natural beauty and regional/national parks. The first vaunts the merits of visiting Snowdonia; the second the Auvergne volcanoes regional park in France. The style, however is fundamentally different:

### Nature and Wildlife

We have a lot to talk about. For starters there's the Snowdonia National Park, at 840 square miles one of the biggest in Britain. It also gives you a big high – Snowdon, at 3,560ft/1085m, is the highest summit in Wales and England. If you're more of a sand-between-your-toes kind of person there's coastline too – hundreds of miles of it along Cardigan Bay (part of the Snowdonia National Park) and the Llŷn Peninsula, designated an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'. So we don't just serve up rocky mountains. You'll also find green hills, rushing rivers and valleys clothed in ancient oakwoods, and a coastline of sublime estuaries and secluded bays, dizzy headlands and big beaches. The wildlife seems to like it. We're a sanctuary for countless plants and animals – from the crags of Cwm Idwal, home of the exquisite Snowdon lily, all the way to Bardsey Island off Snowdonia's 'Land's End' and its teeming colonies of Manx shearwater. So pack your binoculars. Bring your camera. To get you going here are some snapshots from our wildlife album.

[https://visitsnowdonia.info/nature\\_and\\_wildlife](https://visitsnowdonia.info/nature_and_wildlife)

Située au cœur du massif du Sancy, cette magnifique vallée glaciaire offre une flore et une faune protégée typique des Alpes et des paysages à vous couper le souffle.

Le paysage de cette réserve naturelle est constitué par la juxtaposition d'une mosaïque de milieux naturels diversifiés qui hébergent une flore et une faune exceptionnelles. Le bas de la vallée est occupé par des prairies pâturées et de fauche, les versants par différents types de hêtraies. Au-dessus de 1 400 mètres, une frange à bouleaux et sorbiers sert de transition avec l'étage subalpin où sont présents les pelouses, les landes, les tourbières de pente ainsi que les milieux rocheux. Dans les ravines où s'accumule la matière organique, on peut observer des habitats très luxuriants et colorés constitués de grandes herbes appelées mégaphorbiaies.

<http://www.parcdesvolcans.fr/Reserves-naturelles/Reserve-naturelle-nationale-de-la-Vallee-de-Chaudefour>

Both texts focus on the flora and fauna of the area in question, but the “voice” of each is very different. In the English text, a speaker-addressee relationship is established from the very first line: *We have a lot to talk about*. The first-person plural immediately addresses the reader and exploits the potential ambiguity of its reference: is it exclusive and referring to the Welsh Tourist Board, or inclusive and suggesting that the reader is included? The verb *talk about* is similarly ambiguous since it can imply an exchange: you can talk about something with someone; or it can imply a monologue: you can talk about something by yourself. Had the text read *we have a lot to tell you about Wales*, the speaker would immediately have been placed in a position of authority. Instead, the text seeks throughout to appeal to the reader, exploiting Jakobson's conative function through the use of the second person pronoun and imperatives. The register is colloquial, with contracted forms and idiomatic expressions being used. As Dann (1996, 2) points out, the language of tourism draws the reader into the discourse by using a voice that seeks to “persuade, lure, woo, and seduce millions of human beings”.

The text in French, on the other hand, is more informative; it does not shy away from specialised vocabulary (*mégaphorbiaies*) and on the only occasion that the reader is directly addressed it is the *vous* form that is used, which can have a plural reference but in the singular indicates a formal register. There are no imperatives, no colloquial expressions, and the “voice” in this extract sounds far more distant.

Another stylistic difference between the two concerns the use of hyperbole and superlatives. Although the French text uses two evaluative expressions *à vous couper le souffle* (breathtaking) and *très luxuriants* (lush), its general tone is more subdued and scientific than its English

counterpart which uses adjectives such as *teeming*, *dizzy*, *countless*, *sublime*, *exquisite*.

Any translation of a tourism text needs to take these differences in genre into account. Even the content itself may pose a problem. Dann (1996, 175) shows that different cultures use different trigger words to seduce the potential tourist and Sumberg (2004, 338) underlines that French tourism texts will tend to insist on history and culture, while British texts talk about shopping. The following text on Boulogne-sur-Mer and its translation into English, taken from the *Guide du Boulonnais*, illustrates what happens when a translator is “unwilling to leave the safe haven of a ‘straight translation’” (Smith and Klein-Braley 1995, 175).

Riche d'un passé deux fois millénaire qui lui vaut le titre de Ville d'art et d'histoire, Boulogne-sur-Mer surprend par sa diversité : La haute ville fortifiée avec son Beffroi inscrit au Patrimoine Mondial de l'Humanité par l'UNESCO, ses remparts et son château-musée du XIII<sup>ème</sup> siècle, sa basilique Notre Dame, la basse ville commerçante, en partie piétonne, dominée par l'église Saint-Nicolas (qui vibre aux sons du marché très coloré les mercredi et samedi matin), le Centre National de la Mer Nausicaá, à proximité de la plage.

Boulogne-sur-Mer est aussi fortement imprégnée de la mer. Aménagé au cœur de la ville, le port de pêche (premier de France) participe à l'animation de la cité.

*Steeped in two thousand years of History, earning it the title of City of Art and History, Boulogne-sur-Mer will surprise you in its diversity:*

*The fortified high town with its belfry listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site, its 13<sup>th</sup> century castle-museum and ramparts, Notre-Dame Basilica and its Romanesque crypt, the commercial lower town, partly pedestrianised, watched over by Saint-Nicolas Church (which boasts a very colourful market every Wednesday and Saturday morning) and Nausicaá National Sea Centre right by the beach, Boulogne-sur-Mer is also awashed with marine influences. Laid out right in the city centre, the fishing port (the busiest in France) plays a key role in the life of the city.*

Leaving aside the translator's choice of certain infelicitous terms and their faithful reproduction of the French syntax, which renders the passage heavy and unidiomatic, the English translation fails to engage with the reader; it is overly informative and overstates the town's cultural history. There is little evidence of the text attempting to “woo” its reader.

A translation of a tourism text that does not pay heed to the significant difference in style in the TT culture and the expectations of the target readership, and does not adjust its discourse accordingly is unlikely to succeed in “selling” the destination.

## Conclusion

In answer to our original question: what can stylistics contribute to the translation of a textual voice, a number of factors have emerged. Munday (2008, 19) states that “it is only by studying the language of the text that the style of the author or translator might really be identified and hence the voice(s) present in the discourse be determined”. Stylistics offers a helpful toolkit for such a systematic close reading; it provides the necessary frameworks and checklists of linguistic features that can help a reader (and thereby a translator) understand what a writer is doing. For Boase-Beier (2006, 60) the “stylistic features of a text can act as clues to what the writer of the source text meant” (even if the intention of the writer is always a reconstruction, and never totally known). Taking the style of a text into account in translation studies involves “paying attention to what is unique to the text and its choices, being aware of patterns in the text, and paying close attention to the essential nature and function of the text” (Boase-Beier 2006, 1). Those translators who have not heeded the stylistic features of the ST have modified the voice.

Translation also has much to offer the stylistician. A stylistic analysis often involves reformulating the text, rephrasing it to understand how an effect has been created, and translation is itself a form of rewriting. By comparing a translation to the original, the reader may become aware of minor details that would have passed unnoticed simply by reading the ST. The translations of Carver’s short stories, for example, highlight through their additions just how minimalist Carver’s style is. To rephrase Boase-Beier’s statement “the stylistic features of a translated text can act as clues as to what the writer of the source text meant”.

What has also emerged from this brief study is that the translator, while free to choose which stylistic elements to convey or not, is also constrained or interpellated both by the language of the source text and by that of the target text. As Nord posits (1991, 94), “the translator is committed bilaterally to the source and the target situations and is responsible to both the ST sender (or the initiator, if he is the one who takes the sender’s part) and the TT recipient”. The translator is thus a mediator (Hatim & Mason 2013, 223), at the centre of the communicative process, a Janus-like figure looking simultaneously in two directions (Joly 2016). This relationship between translator, ST, TT, author and reader can be represented as in Figure 1, which is, in part, inspired by Lecercle’s ALTER model (1999). In the middle is the translator, a pivotal point

between two triangles, each of which represents the communicative situation of reader/writer/context. In the centre of each triangle are the modalities of communication which, following Joly and O’Kelly (1989), refer both to verbal and non-verbal forms of language. Joly and O’Kelly are more concerned with spoken language when they talk of gesture and prosody as non-verbal modalities, but as research in multimodal stylistics has pointed out, the material aspects of the text play an important role in how we construct meaning, and I would therefore include the material text under the heading of modalities of communication. Whatever the translator perceives or interprets of the ST context or of the ST writer’s aims, is filtered through the modalities of communication and, similarly, how the translator perceives the TT reader or the TT context is filtered through the modalities of communication. Style, as expressed in the modalities of communication, is thus at the heart of the interpretative process. The term context is necessarily vague; Bassnett and Lefevere (1990, 11) underline “there is always a context in which the translation takes place, always a history from which a text emerges and into which a text is transposed”. It refers then to all the extra-textual factors and circumstances and the sociocultural conditions within which a text is produced.

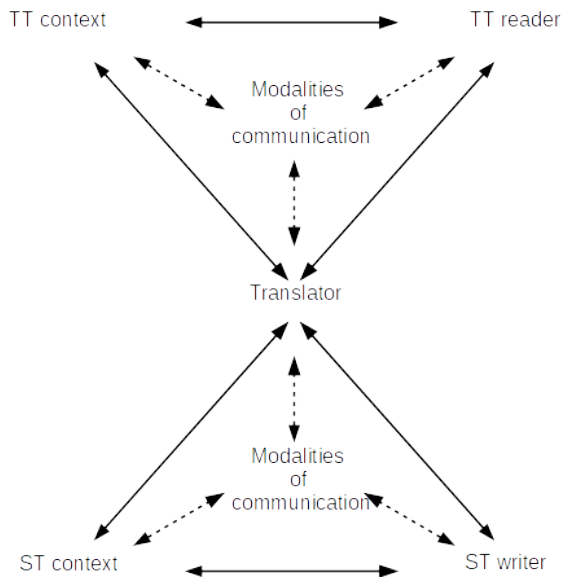


Figure 1: The translator as reader/writer

In the lower triangle, the translator is a reader, constrained by the ST context and the ST writer, both filtered through the modalities of communication, yet at the same time s/he is active in his/her mental representation of both ST context and ST writer, and free to accept or reject the image that they both project of the reader. This double movement is represented by the two-way arrows. In the upper triangle, the translator becomes the writer constrained (or interpellated) by the TT context and the potential TT reader, and yet free to construct an image of the TT context and TT reader. Once again there is a double movement. The diagram underlines that the writer of the ST is also constrained by context and reader. Socioeconomic considerations impact the ST as much as they do the TT and censorship may also influence either or both.

Placed in the centre, the translator is ever present in the text. The TT reader constructs an image of the ST and ST writer through the mediation of the translator. The TT reader does not have direct access to the ST writer; there is always the “discursive presence” (Hermans 1996, 27) of the translator and it is only “the ideology of translation, the illusion of transparency and coincidence, the illusion of the one voice, that blinds us to the presence of [the translator’s] voice”. When we compare translations and the stylistic features of the ST, we become aware of that other voice (Bosseaux 2007). Finally, the various constraints on the translator remind us that when investigating how style is rendered in the TT there are many factors that will influence the final product. Translators may be constrained by editors, publishers or any of the factors and circumstances within which the translation is produced. As a result, in a translation there is not one voice but many.

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