Translating Across Cultures

Translating Across Cultures:
BAS 21st Annual International Conference

Edited by

Hortensia Pârlog and Luminiţa Frenţiu

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INTRODUCTION

In our modern globalized world**,** translation is essential for bridging communication gaps, for spreading scientific, technological and cultural information and for facilitating business worldwide, since international interactions continue to grow exponentially. The role of professional translators is increasing and accurate products of the translation process are sought on the international market. This explains the growing interest**,** on the one hand, in the translation profession, and**,** on the other**,** in the academic discipline that contributes to the training of well-qualified translators. A great number of books have been published in this field and papers have been delivered at conferences and symposia offering in depth theoretical and practical approaches to the complexities of the phenomenon.

The current volume is meant to contribute new perspectives to the domain. It includes a selection of the papers given in the translation section of the Timişoara *B.A.S./ British and American Studies* conference 2011. They focus on translation problems that may arise at various levels, from word to translation unit, when rendering an English literary, legal, or a hybrid text genre, into a second language —Romanian and Serbian— as well as on some of the methodological issues raised by this process.

Part one, *Translating in the Modern Context*, contains two papers. In *Mapping the Translation Process: The Cultural Challenge,* **Daniel Dejica** starts from some extensive and very useful studies on culture and translation which focus mainly on drawing the attention of translators on *why* or *what* cultural elements are important when mediating between languages or cultures. His paper, which is part of a wider theory-building research, is meant to contribute to the existing specialized literature in the field and to put forward a methodology for approaching cultural elements in translation, namely to show *how* or *when* these elements should be approached in the translation process. The first two parts of the paper present an overview of translation methods and processes, and of the way culture is perceived in translation. The third part introduces and discusses the suggested methodology**,** while the advantages of its application are presented in the concluding part.

In *Translations in the Global Age. A Case Study,* **Luminiţa Frenţiu** and **Codruţa Goşa** start from the assumption that the language of the 21st century allows plenty of scope for creativity and innovation, because in a globalized world, people want to inform, to surprise, but at the same time, to converge towards common referents. "The Global Age" is characterized by visible linguistic changes. Speakers create language to fit their purposes, in various, and sometimes surprising, ways. The appearance of new words highlights a significant change in the world, where new terminology needs discussing.

The language of globalization and its translation has often been analysed in terms of the processes of global capitalist economy and their social, economic, and political consequences. The two authors join in this endeavour by investigating the way in which translators deal with some features of the 21st century 'Newspeak' the proliferation of new words, long word sequences, idiomatic expressions, non-equivalence, neologisms, the language of subcultures. The corpus of the research contains translations made by MA students in Translation of the monologue *"I'm a Modern Man*" by George Carlin. The paper contains the analysis of the solutions found by these students when translating the lexical units most relevant for the globalization process.

Part two allots space to *Meaning Relations in Translations* and comprises four papers. It opens with the paper *Hand Collocations: An Exercise In Translation by* **Hortensia Pârlog**, which focuses on the use of the noun *hand* in collocations where it occurs in its primary sense, as well as in its metaphorical or metonymical senses (in other words, when it is a particular source domain or vehicle), and attempts to establish an equivalence between such English collocations and their Romanian counterparts. It discusses various translation problems: some of the *hand* collocations are translated literally, particularly if the term is used in its primary sense, but in many cases a word combination or collocation that is semantically correct and acceptable in one language may not be so in the other language. Consequently, various changes or shifts may take place in the translation of the items that form a *hand* collocation (class shifts or transposition, modulation, structure shifts, intra-system shifts, mixed shifts, explicitation) or the whole collocation is translated by one word only. A larger context than that of a collocation may often influence meaning and may reveal whether the collocation has either a literal or a figurative meaning or both a literal and a figurative meaning or several figurative meanings.

Adina Oana Nicolae focuses on *Translating Economic Metaphors: Cognitive Strategies at Work.* The translation of metaphors has never been trouble-free in any kind of discourse. So often have translations shied away from metaphorical texts, that re-visiting the issue of metaphor's translatability seems legitimate. The article submits a firm belief in the translatability of metaphors in the business and economics discourse and outlines a series of functional translation strategies.

As theoretical and practical inquiries into the art of translation have progressed, more accounts of translation strategies and techniques have emerged, ranging from the traditional word-for-word approach, to sets of elaborate, varied and verified frameworks, such as Newmark's (1985). What has significantly changed the perspective upon the translation of metaphor was, however, the cognitive metaphor theory, whose foundations were laid by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). Inquiring into both the conceptual and the linguistic paralellisms of metaphors across languages, Hiraga's (1991) and Kövecses's (2005) works on comparative culture paved the way for re-analyzing the translation of metaphor. The framework on which the present study relies was put forth by Mandelblit (1995), who emphasized the relevance of a potential conceptual shift across two languages.

Focusing on the discourse of business and economics, the author cites lexicographic evidence from two specialized English-Romanian dictionaries in order to establish cognitive-linguistic correlations between metaphors in these two languages. One correlation traces examples of the same conceptual metaphors and the same linguistic metaphors in the two languages, which easily lend themselves to being translated. Loss of specificity is shown to be frequently at work with pairs of the same conceptual metaphor, but different linguistic metaphors. Furthermore, the translation of various conceptual metaphors as different linguistic metaphors is also instantiated, and so are metaphorical gaps in either the target or the source language. All the cases in point are arguments for a renewed approach to translating cognitive metaphor, so that the nature of metaphor as both embodied and cultural should be acknowledged and capitalized on.

In *Kiran Desai's "Hullbaloo In The Guava Orchard": Translation And Cognitive Loss*, **Aba Carina Pârlog** analyses the manner in which one tackles cultural lexical items in translation. The translation into Romanian of lexical units or sentences referring to food, fruit and spices occurring in Desai's novel is discussed, as well as of terms denoting clothes, customs and religious aspects specific to India. To a great majority, the analysed words, expressions and sentences belong to Indian English and most of

them were simply transferred from the source language into the target language, the result being cognitive loss.

Desai makes use of English as a vehicular language and of Indian dialects as referential languages. Thus, the cultural stratum is conveyed by resorting to the referential languages whose words are borrowed from the source language (SL) by the target language (TL).

The cognitive loss registered in the Romanian translation of the words denoting food, fruit and spices is obvious at the perceptional level of taste and smell. The Romanian reader cannot identify with the character, because of his/her lack of experience concerning, for instance, Indian kinds of food like "naan", "paratha", "biryani", etc. The translator seems unable to solve this problem, as, through ignorance, she concentrates on characteristics of these types of food other than the relevant ones.

The group of items referring to clothes, customs and religion is another source of problems. The author believes that footnotes would clarify cultural dimensions, and would help the reader understand the specific situations in which particular clothes are worn in India, when certain customs are observed, or when religious aspects are of importance.

The conclusion reached by the author is that the translation of the novel is rather superficial, because its translator has failed to reconstruct in the TL the connotations present in the SL; the problem of (non-) equivalence is, as a result, rather artificially dealt with.

The section continues with **Cristina Chifane's** contribution, *Translating Young Adult Literature: Between Old And New Identities.*

Contemporary young adult literature features more complex plotting, motivation and character representation as well as more moral ambiguity than the pre-1960s literature for teenagers. No longer considered naïve readers, adolescents are now credited with the ability to decipher the linguistic code governing a world of interculturalism and perhaps to adapt to it better than an adult in an era of an unprecedented technological development. As a consequence, books describing what happens to teenagers in a highly computerized society may have a greater impact on the potential readers**,** whether in the source or the target languages.

The international marketing strategies and the demands of the publishing houses have led to a rapidly decreasing interval between the publishing of the original and its translation into other languages. Hence translators are more and more subdued to market requirements, having to face the challenge of finding the right answer to various translation problems as quickly as possible. This is the case of Cory Doctorow's novel for teenagers**,** *Little Brother* (2008), whose 2010 Romanian translation must have involved some interesting and challenging decisions.

Acknowledging the difficulties of translating young adult literature, this paper is an insight into the problems raised by the translation of a novel whose topicality is unquestionable. Whether dealing with cross-cultural references or with a high-tech vocabulary, the translator of such a text should be willing to face the past with an eye to the future.

Just like the author of the previous article, Chifane notices that foreignization seems to be preferred in the translation of both cultural references and of high-tech vocabulary; however, in the former case explanations are usually required, whereas in the latter they are not, as teenagers are much more familiar with this type of vocabulary. Words and phrases from the field of computers and electronic devices, cultural puns with technical implications or the teenagers' jargon become visible during the translation process.

Part three of the volume bears the title *Translating At Word (Verb) Level* and gathers three papers.

In their paper *Translating Serbian Regional Verbs into English: The Southern Dialect and its Phonaesthetic Properties***, Miloš Tasić and Dušan Stamenković** investigate the ways in which Serbian regional verbs, particularly those coming from the south of the country, are translated into English. Its primary goal was to investigate the differences in competence between regional groups of translators, who were given the task of translating the most frequent regional verbs of southern Serbia. Their secondary goal was to explore the connection between unusual sound clusters and the results of the translation process, as the phonaesthetic properties of different sounds seems to exert an influence on the way in which respondents to a test approached the verbs containing those sounds. The study was motivated by the fact that translators and especially interpreters hired on the occasion of foreign officials' visits to the south of Serbia proved to be incompetent at translating region-specific lexical items. Three groups of Serbian translators from different regions were given the task of translating a set of Serbian verbs into English and the results were compared and analysed. As expected, the group of translators from the south proved to be the most efficient in the task of translating regional verbs. Secondly, the qualitative analysis revealed that there were numerous instances in which phonaesthesia played an important role in interpretation and translation. However, the authors conclude that phonaesthetically driven responses can never really compensate for the lack of "regional competence."

The paper *Lexical Gaps In The Field Of Human Locomotion Verbs: The Case Of English And Romanian* by **Octavian Coste** focuses on the instances when there is no lexical item in the vocabulary of a language to identify a certain concept. The semantic field under scrutiny is the field of human locomotion on land, manner-of-motion verbs, which is part of the larger field of human locomotion verbs. The aim of the investigation is to find out what semantic features that lead to lexical gaps are encoded or lexicalised in one-word motion verbs. The author compares English and Romanian verbs, i.e. their translation from English, considered the source language**,** into Romanian**,** the target language.

The analysis of manner-of-motion verbs starts by offering the semantic features of the three main types of motor patterns**,** characteristic of both languages and identified by the verbs: *walk/ a merge pe jos, run/ a fugi,* and *jump/ a sări.* Then the main manner categories ('obstructed motion', 'speed of motion', 'no aim in motion', etc), which apply to all or some of the motor patterns are given. The analysis focuses next on each motor pattern in detail. In each case all the possible manner categories are listed together with the verbs which express them; the lexical gaps are insisted upon. The discussion of every category is followed by several examples of English and Romanian sentences which mainly illustrate instances of lexical gaps and the differences between the two languages.

The main conclusion of the analysis is that Romanian encodes the manner category mainly in the modifier(s) of a general verb, while English encodes them in the manner-of-motion verb itself. Thus, Romanian displays many more lexical gaps than English.

The section closes with **Mihaela Cozma's** paper *A Translational Approach to Tense and Modality in the EU Legislative Texts.*

Each genre seems to have a language of its own, which is basically of a formulaic nature. In order to achieve the objective of generic integrity, any translator must internalize the norms and conventions of the genre in which s/he is working by using specific analytical tools. The translator can exploit this generic knowledge, with a view to producing appropriate target texts in specific professional contexts. Starting from this assumption, the paper approaches the European Union legislation as a genre, and analyzes a set of EU legislative texts originally written in English in comparison with their Romanian translated counterparts. The focus of this analysis is represented by the norms concerning the tenses in which the verbs of the EU documents are used, as well as the modalities that they express**;** these features are interpreted not only from a grammatical perspective, but also from a discoursal one. In this way, the author brings evidence in favour of the fact that even the norms that regard

lower levels of generic construction make an important contribution to the achievement of the overall communicative purpose of a genre, and, consequently, should be given serious attention by the translator. The ultimate aim of this analysis is to point out difficulties that translators working in the EU field might encounter, and, thus, to help them make appropriate translation decisions in each case[1].

[1] The introduction is based on the abstracts of the articles made available to the editors by their authors themselves.

PART I

TRANSLATING IN THE MODERN CONTEXT

MAPPING THE TRANSLATION PROCESS: THE CULTURAL CHALLENGE

DANIEL DEJICA

1. Introduction

The increased need for cooperation in such areas as industry, transportations, communications, and entertainment, the global enlargement and proliferation of international institutions, the increased necessity for communication of citizens due to EU enlargement are only some of the factors which account for the importance of translation today. Translation Studies, as a discipline, could not remain unresponsive to such developments and, in turn, must be able to respond to these challenges, both in theory and in practice. Within the discipline, the cultural approach to translation has witnessed an ever-growing interest.

There are extensive studies on culture and translation, but to my knowledge, the integration of cultural elements in the translation process has not been considered methodologically yet. In other words, existing studies focus mainly on drawing the attention of translators on *why* or *what* cultural elements are important when mediating between languages or cultures. The aim of this paper is to contribute to these studies and to show *how* or *when* cultural elements should be approached in the translation process, i.e. *how* to create source- or target-language oriented texts from a cultural perspective, *how* to approach cultural elements overtly or covertly, or *how* to foreignize or domesticate them consensually, consistently**,** and transparently.

The first part of my paper is an overview of the evolution of translation in time**,** as perceived by various disciplines developed by influential translation schools or scholars. Regardless of the selected method, any translation implies a process, or a multitude of steps to be performed while translating. The second part introduces the concept of culture and its constituents, and highlights those constituents which are usually approached for translation purposes. *How* or *when* these constituents or elements should be approached in the translation process are questions which are answered in the third part of the paper. The section suggests a

methodology which is discussed and exemplified**;** it is based on a three-phase translation method, i.e. reception, transfer and reproduction, and on a theory of text perspectives**,** which analyses cultural elements from three different points of view: atomistic, hol-atomistic and holistic. The conclusion presents a series of advantages which derive from the application of this methodology in both theory and practice.

2. Translation Methods and Translation Processes: An Overview

Translation has been approached differently across disciplines by various translation schools or translation scholars or theoreticians.

Starting with Jerome (395) and continuing with Luther (1530) and Nida (1964), translation has been a constant subject of debate**,** because of the classical literal vs. free translation dualism, this dichotomy being under discussion even today (Barbe, 1996). This dual approach usually applies to Bible translation and is best characterized by Jerome's position**:** "I render not word for word but sense for sense" (1997**,** 25). It also applies to literary study (Schleiermacher, 1992; Benjamin, 1923), where the concept of fidelity is always a major point of discussion when approaching texts freely (free translation) or literally (literal or faithful translation).

The last three decades of the last century witnessed diversified approaches to translation. In literary history, focus was cast on the status and functions of translation (Even-Zohar 1978; Toury 1995). Verbal and nonverbal communication issues between representatives of different cultures have been a subject of research in intercultural studies (Gudykunst and Kim 1992; Clyne 1994). General, applied and contrastive linguistics have focused on the notion of equivalence in translation (Nida 1964; Catford 1965; Koller 1979; Wilss 1982). Catford's definition of translation, "the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)" (Catford 1965**,** 20), has become one of the most frequently quoted definitions in translation studies.

More recently and almost at the same time, three main directions in translation studies emerged. A functional translation school developed (Reiss & Vermeer 1984; Nord 1988; Snell-Hornby 1988; Vermeer 2000), which placed the *skopos* of a translation in the centre of attention, skopos being "a technical term for the aim or purpose of a translation" (Vermeer 2000**,** 221). Then translation studies took a "cultural turn" (Bassnett and Lefevere 1991, 1995). It is now generally accepted that culturally oriented translation approaches within translation studies can be categorized mainly

in two areas: post-colonial translation studies (Bassnett and Trivedi 1999) and gender-oriented translation studies (Simon 1996). Last but not least, focus was cast on translation-oriented text analyses (Nord 1991; Hatim and Mason 1997). The functional translation model presented by Nord (1997) incorporates elements of text analysis and examines text organization at or above text level.

Regardless of the preferred translation method or of the way translation is approached in theory or practice, all translation implies a process or series of steps and decisions to be taken. In very broad terms, the translation process is "what happens linguistically and cognitively as the translator works on the translation" (Hatim and Munday 2004**,** 346). A more detailed definition of the term is given by Delisle (1999, 191) in his *Terminologie de la Traduction*; according to him, the translation process can be defined as "the cognitive activity where 'translators' establish interlingual 'equivalences' between 'texts' or text segments". In a note, he adds that "during this complex operation, the translator proceeds in a more or less conscious and methodological fashion to interpret and analyze the features of the 'source text', to apply 'translation procedures', to explore the resources available in the 'target text', to select the appropriate options for re-expressing the ideas expressed in the source text, and to verify the equivalence chosen."

The last decades have witnessed an ever-growing interest in the translation process. Representative scholars who have channelled most of their research in this direction include Nida (1964), Lörscher (1991), Kussmaul (1995), Beeby *et al*. (2000), Schäffner & Adab (2000) – to name just a few. Questions and debates on the degree of interpretation on the part of the translator in the translation process (Nida, 1964; Hervey, Higgins, and Haywood, 1995), or on what is maintained or what is lost through the translation process (Gile, 2004) are common in translation studies.

Much research has also been dedicated to the steps which are taken, or as Venuti (1995) puts it, "rationalized", in the translation process. Just like there are different views on the methods used in translation, there are also different ways in which translation is approached as a process.

Some translation scholars see the translation process as a series of two steps, which bear similar terminology and focus mainly on text analysis and text production. For instance, Bell (1994) sees the two steps of the translation process he proposes as a conjunction of text analysis and text synthesis. Reiss (2004) also sees the translation process, or as she names it, the "translating process" (2004**,** 162-171) as consisting of a phase of analysis and of a phase of "reverbalization".

For Nida and Taber (1969), the translation process consists of three stages: analysis, transfer, and restructuring. In the analysis stage, the translator analyses the SL message into its simplest and structurally clearest forms or "kernels"; in the next stage the translator transfers the message at this kernel level, and**,** eventually, the translator restructures the message in the TL to the level which is most appropriate for the audience addressed. Gerzymisch-Arbogast (2005) adapts Nida's model and applies it to multidimensional translation. In a similar way, Gerzymisch-Arbogast's translation process (2005) consists of three overlapping phases: reception, transfer, and reproduction.

In *After Babel,* Steiner (1994**,** 296-302) proposes a four-part process of translation. In addition to the three stages presented before, Steiner suggests an additional step, a step of "initiative trust," in which the translator "gambles" with the text, trusting that the text will yield something.

Venuti (1995, 308) mentions a complex translation proposed by Blanchot, which implies a multitude of steps**,** from the selection of foreign texts to the implementation of translation strategies to the editing, reviewing, and reading of translations. A similar complex model is proposed by Hervey, Higgins, and Haywood (1995)**,** where editing, for instance, is seen as "the last stage of the translation process, consisting in checking over the draft of a written TT with a view to correcting errors and polishing up stylistic details" (1995, 221).

3. Translation and Culture. Culture and Translation

The need for cooperation in such areas as industry, transportations, communications, entertainment; the ever-growing increase in international trade; the enlargement and proliferation of international institutions; the need to keep up with the latest advances in all branches of science and technology; the growing curiosity about other people's countries and cultures; the demand of people in the developing countries for the right to immigration; and the increased necessity for communication of citizens due to EU enlargement are just some of the reasons for which in these last decades translation studies (TS) has developed as a discipline in itself, and for which within the discipline, the cultural approach to TS has witnessed an ever-growing interest.

Especially in the last three decades, the concept of "culture" has constituted the main subject of many translation books and scientific articles (e.g., Tannen 1985; Triandis 1994; Hatim 1997; Katan 2004), and phrases like "raising cultural awareness", "translating across cultures" or

"cultural proficiency" have become common in translating and interpreting.

From these perspectives, translators are seen as cultural mediators who facilitate "communication, understanding and action between persons or groups who differ with respect to language and culture" (Taft 1981, 53), and who should possess the following competences in both cultures: *knowledge about society* (history, folklore, traditions, customs; values, prohibitions; the natural environment and its importance; neighbouring people, important people of the society, etc.); *communication skills* (written, spoken, non-verbal); *technical skills* (those required by the mediator's status, e.g., computer literacy, appropriate dress, etc.); *social skills* (knowledge of rules that govern social relations in society and emotional competence, e.g., the appropriate level of self-control). Similar views are shared by Hatim and Mason (1997, 128), who use the term *mediation*, suggesting that "the notion of mediation is a useful way of looking at translators", by Vermeer (1987), who describes translators as "bi-cultural", Mary Snell-Hornby (1992), for whom the translator is a "cross-cultural specialist", or Hewson and Martin (1991), who talk of the "Translation Operator as a Cultural Operator".

To become or act as a cultural mediator one must first know what "culture" really is. A closer look to cultural studies would immediately reveal that defining culture is not easy; in fact, the well-known phrase "resistance is futile" from the Star Trek Series can be easily used to paraphrase the attempts made to define it. "Defining culture is futile" may not come as a shock to anyone if one were to consider the following facts: (1) "culture" is probably one of the most "defined" concepts of all times: it is well-known that as early as 1952, the American anthropologists Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn had compiled a list of 164 different definitions of the concept; (2) as mentioned in the 10 volume *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* (Asher 1994**,** 2001), "despite a century of efforts to define culture adequately, there was in the early 1990s no agreement among anthropologists regarding its nature"; (3) in a recent study, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997, 21) admit that "in twenty years we have seldom encountered two or more groups of individuals with identical suggestions regarding the concept of culture".

For the aim of this paper, I will use a broad definition of the concept, as previously used by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2000) or by Sapir (1994, 35) to introduce the topic: "Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society". This is in

fact one of the most quoted definitions of culture formulated almost 150 years ago by Edward B. Tylor (1976**,** 1).

Of greater interest, especially for translation purposes, is identifying the elements which make up a culture and which are approached in texts for translation purposes. An answer comes from Taft (1981**,** 73), who sees cultural elements as constituents of society: history, folklore, traditions, customs; values, prohibitions; the natural environment and its importance; neighbouring people, important people of the society, etc. Another answer comes from Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) whose interpretation of culture resides in a model comprising three concentric rings or "layers of culture" (1997, 21-22): *the outer layer*: artefacts and products; *the middle layer*: norms and values; *the core*: basic assumptions. Examples of artefacts and products include the organization of institutions, such as the legal system and bureaucracy. Norms relate to social rules of conduct while values are aspirations which may never actually be achieved. The core, in Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner model, is the heart of culture and the most inaccessible. It contains basic assumptions about life, which have been handed down unconsciously from generation to generation. In a similar way, Hofstede (1991**,** 7) uses the metaphor "skins of an onion" to refer to different levels of culture. Hofstede's levels of culture include *symbols* (semiotic signs recognized as belonging to a particular group, such as words, gestures, pictures, objects, dresses, etc.), *heroes* (a particular cultural belief in a superhero, e.g., an outsider who single-handedly defeats evil in society, i.e., Rambo, Superman, Dirty Harry, etc.), *rituals* ("ice-breaking" ritual or introductory chat in professional communication, weather-routines in England, etc.), and *values* (the core of culture which is invisible, as opposed to *symbols, heroes*, and *rituals* which are visible). For Brake et al. (1995, 34-39), the cultural elements are divided into two classes: first, there are laws, customs, rituals, gestures, ways of dressing, food and drink and methods of greeting, and saying goodbye, which, as they say, are only the tip of the iceberg. The second class includes "the most powerful elements of culture", namely "value orientations", such as technical (language – music, art, food and drink, dress, architecture, institutions, visible behaviour), formal (appropriacy – rituals, customs, ways/styles of discourse, dress, etc.) and informal (orientations – action, communication, environment, time, space, power, individualism, competitiveness, structure, thinking).

4. The Cultural Challenge in the Translation Process

Even if there are extensive studies on culture and translation, as far as I know, the integration of cultural elements in the translation process has not been considered methodologically yet. In other words, focus was mainly cast on drawing the attention of translators on *why* or *what* cultural elements are important when mediating between languages or cultures; I intend to contribute to these very useful existing studies and to put forward a methodological approach to cultural elements in the translation process, namely to show *how* or *when* these elements should be approached in the process, i.e. *how* to create source- or target-language oriented texts from a cultural perspective, *how* to approach cultural elements overtly or covertly, or *how* to foreignize or domesticate them consensually, consistently and transparently.

In line with my views on translation detailed in previous papers, translation is seen here as an activity in which the translator transfers into a target text, with a specific purpose in mind, the writer's intention expressed in a source text (Dejica, 2009). I use "transfer" with a double connotation: that found in Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997) and Hatim and Munday (2004), to imply that I see translation as process, and that found in Nida and Taber (1969) and Gerzymisch-Arbogast (2005) to refer to the second phase of the translation process, i.e., that of transfer, where the "material" analysed in the reception phase is transferred into the mind of the translator and compared for translation purposes. *Reception* (synonymous to text analysis and understanding), *transfer* (which aims at clarifying the intention of the writer, establishing the translation purpose and identifying corresponding cultural constituents in the target language) and *reproduction* (the actual production of the target text) are the three phases of translation on which the following suggested methodology for approaching cultural elements and relations is based.

In addition, for the methodological approach to cultural elements suggested here, I use a theory of text perspectives (Gerzymisch-Arbogast 2006) to look at information from three different perspectives: *atomistic* (the analysis of individual cultural elements of the text), *hol-atomistic* (the analysis of different relations between cultural elements at text level) and *holistic* (the analysis of relations that can be established between cultural elements above text level). In Figure 1, these perspectives are represented as follows: the atomistic perspective is represented by the dotted circles around the individual cultural constituents of the text (Xs and Ys); the hol-atomistic perspective is represented by the lines which link these constituents at text level; the holistic perspective is represented by the

lines between the cultural constituents at text level and other cultural elements from other texts:

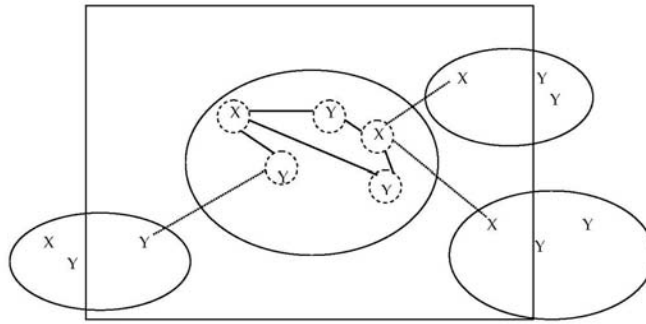

Fig. 1 Representation of cultural relations from various perspectives

Mapping the translation process from a cultural perspective is thus a multi-phase process which combines identification of cultural elements and relational analyses, and which consists of a series of phases and steps. To exemplify and discuss the process**,** I shall use the text below, a sample of a pragmatic text selected from an extended financial report:

Quarterly Financial Report for Manufacturing, Mining, and Trade Corporations: 2000

Purpose of Report

The main purpose of the QFR is to provide timely, accurate data on business financial conditions for use by Government and private-sector organizations and individuals. Among its users, the Commerce Department regularly employs QFR data as an important component in determining corporate profits for GDP and National Income estimates; the Federal Reserve Board uses the QFR to assess industrial debt structure, liquidity, and profitability; the Treasury Department estimates corporate tax liability through use of QFR data; the Council of Economic Advisers and Congressional Committees utilize key indicators derived from QFR data as they design economic policies and draft legislation; the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) utilizes the series as a basic reference point in analyzing the financial performance of American industries; and banking institutions and financial analysts draw upon the series in making investment evaluations. (Quarterly Financial Report for Manufacturing, Mining, and Trade Corporations: Quarter 4: 2000, p. IX, US Department of

Commerce - US Census Bureau, http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/qfr-mm.html)

- *Phase 1. Reception.* The first translation phase, synonymous to text understanding and a prerequisite for felicitous translation, implies the following sequence of steps:

Step 1. Identification of cultural elements in the source text. As shown before, cultural elements may vary from heroes, music, art, food and drink, dress, architecture, institutions, to ways of addressing, etc., and may belong to various cultures, such as popular, technical, scientific, etc. It is implied here that the translator is already familiar with the source language and culture and with the constituents which may count as cultural elements in the source text. In a given text, such cultural elements may take the form of phrases, proper names, terms, acronyms, neologisms, idioms, etc.

In the Financial Report, the cultural elements which can be identified include a series of institutions / organizations / bodies that are specific to the American state / economic / political systems, like *the Commerce Department, the Federal Reserve Board, the Treasury Department, the Council of Economic Advisers, Congressional Committees* and *the Federal Trade Commission.*

Step 2. Hol-atomistic analysis of cultural elements. Once all the existing cultural elements have been identified, the translator establishes almost instantly cognitive relations between them, in other words creates what I call the *cultural holon* of the text. *Holon*, a Greek word, is used here with the meaning of 'system within a system'; in other words, it is the cultural image of the text set up from the sum of all cultural elements which exist within the text. An example of a cultural holon resulting from a hol-atomistic analysis at text level may include the super-hero, his/her car, his/her super gadgets, types of powers, planet/environment s/he may come from, etc.

In the selected text for analysis and exemplification, the cultural holon at text level is a state (political) holon and includes all the cultural elements listed in Step 1. This cultural holon is represented in Figure 2:

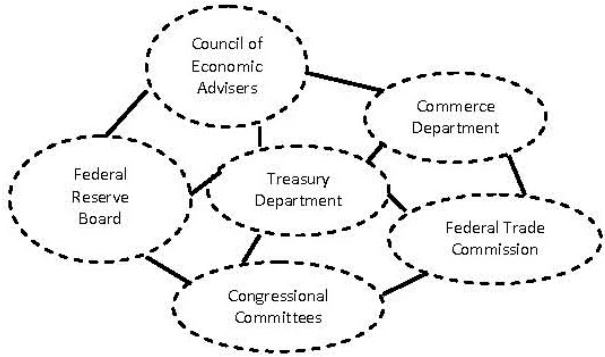

Fig 2 Cultural holon

Step 3. Holistic analysis of cultural elements. The holistic analysis completes previous analyses and focuses on establishing cultural relations between cultural elements or cultural holons identified at text level and other possible cultural elements or cultural holons above the text level, in other source language texts. Such cultural relations, which are not explicit in the source text, offer a holistic image of the text and are needed for facilitating text understanding; for instance, why the cloak of the super-hero protects him/her from bullets, why his/her car never breaks down, etc.

In the Report, such holistic relations may be established between any of the cultural elements identified in Step 1, and any other elements or information from other texts the translator might need to access in order to understand such source text elements. For instance, to understand what *the Federal Reserve Board* (a term specific only to the American banking culture) stands for, the translator must first access information on the Federal Reserve, i.e., the central banking system of the United States, also known as the Fed, and then obtain additional information on the board itself, i.e., that it is the governing body of the Fed, also known as the Board of Governors, that oversees Federal Reserve Banks, establishes monetary policy and monitors the economic health of the United States. Such additional information can be found in dictionaries, encyclopaedias, specialized economics books, etc.

Figure 3 presents the visual representation of the cultural elements and relations the translator deals with at and above text levels during the reception phase of the translation process in the analysed text:

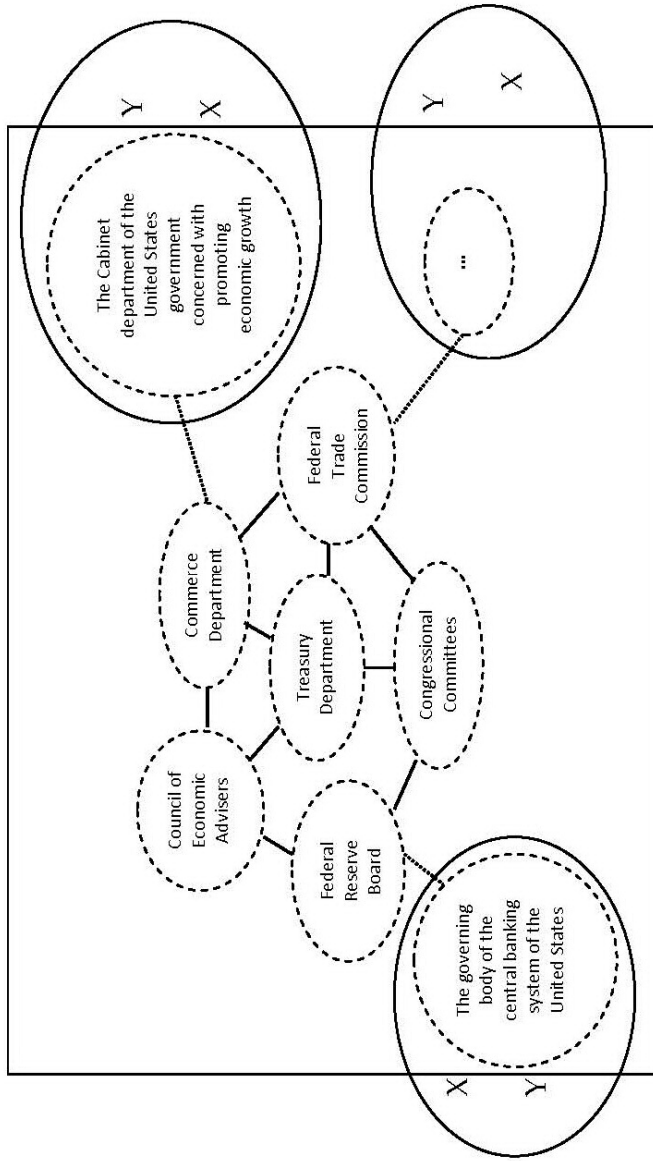

Fig 3 Representation of cultural elements and relations

As one can see, each cultural element identified in the atomistic phase is circled by a dotted line. The state (political) holon**,** identified during the hol-atomistic analysis**,** is represented by the linked group in the middle of the image. The additional information the translator must access in order to understand the text during the holistic analysis is represented by the dotted lines**,** which link specific cultural elements in the text with other elements from other texts. The three perspectives are bordered by a rectangular form. This means that the quest of the translator, especially during the holistic analysis**,** should be limited to accessing essential information from additional texts; otherwise s/he might enter limitless cultural territories and extend the analysis more than needed for understanding the text to be translated, and thus become unproductive.

- *Phase 2. Transfer*. In the second translation phase, based on the previous analysis, the translator decides upon the cultural elements, relations or holons that will be used for creating the target text in Phase 3.

Step 4. *Decision taking*. This is a decisive step of the translation process and consists of a series of two steps, which identify the writer's intention and establish the translation purpose.

The writer's intention can usually be identified on the basis of the analyses performed in the reception stage. In the Report, the intention of the writer is to create a text for a specialized audience, which can be inferred from the extensive use of specialized terms and acronyms.

As far as the translation purpose is concerned, this is usually established with the client or mentioned in the brief before starting the translation, and can be any of the following: writing the text for a different, less specialized audience, creating an annotated version of the source text, creating a target-language oriented version of the source text, etc. However, on many occasions**,** the purpose is not specified or the client is simply not able to specify it. In this case, it is during this step that the translator, based on the cultural holon s/he identified in the source text (Fig. 1) and on the text type, decides whether the target text will be source- or target-language oriented.

Step 5. *Building the cultural representation of the target text by using translation strategies*. Once the writer's intention and the translation purpose have been established, the translator uses specific translation strategies and the cultural resources available in the target language to create a map of cultural relations and/or holons which will be used in the reproduction phase to create the target text. This step is finalized when the

translator comes up with an identical cultural representation in the target language. The advantages of mapping the cultural elements and holons are noticeable and best perceptible in this stage: (1) translators can have a clear cultural image of the text and apply the selected translation strategies transparently**,** and (2) especially in the case of large translation projects or team-translations, translators can apply strategies consistently.

In the case of the Report, several translation scenarios are possible, which would each require consistent application of different translation strategies: (a) borrowing or the use of loans to create a text for a specialized audience, e.g. a board of directors, possible partners, etc. (b) borrowing plus explanation to create an annotated text for the general public, e.g. one which could be used in a live talk show, etc.

- *Phase 3. Reproduction.* In the last phase of the translation process the target text is created.

Step 6. Translation

The translator translates the text now, using the cultural elements and the cultural holon s/he created in the transfer stage.

5. Conclusion

The approach suggested here has multiple advantages**.** For professional purposes, it can be used (1) to identify cultural elements which in many cases may constitute translation problems, (2) to create source- or target-oriented versions of the original text, all different, yet all "correct"**,** depending on the translation brief, (3) to facilitate application of translation strategies in a consistent and transparent way**.** For didactic purposes, it can be used in translation classes (1) to introduce the concept of culture, to raise the students' awareness of the importance of cultural elements, and to map the translation process from a cultural perspective, and (2) to introduce, exemplify and apply translation strategies for any language pairs.

However, the suggested approach presented in this paper is not sufficient as a key to felicitous translation. It should be used in conjunction with other analyses, e.g. semantic, lexico-grammatical, syntactic, generic, etc., recommended to be performed in the reception phase**,** from the three different perspectives: atomistic, hol-atomistic and holistic.

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