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**APPLICATIONS OF  
RELEVANCE THEORY TO  
THE DESCRIPTION OF GALICIAN AND  
SPANISH  
AND TO TRANSLATION**

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requirements of the University of Greenwich  
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### **Declaration**

This submission, as a whole or in part, is not substantially the same as any that I have previously made or am currently making, whether in published or unpublished form, for a degree, diploma or similar qualification at any other university or similar institution.

Until the outcome of the current application to the University is known, the work submitted will not be submitted for any such qualification at another University or similar institution.

# Applications of Relevance Theory to the Description of Galician and Spanish and to Translation

## OUTLINE

### PART I: Preliminary

- Introduction: Applications of Relevance Theory to the Description of Galician and Spanish and to Translation

### PART II: Applications of Relevance Theory to the Description of Galician and Spanish

- “The Semantics of Prepositional Direct Objects in Galician”  
Rosales Sequeiros, X. (2000) “The Semantics of Prepositional Direct Objects in Galician”. *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* LXXVII: 491-501.
- “Presuppositional Effects in English and Galician”  
Rosales Sequeiros, X. (1997) “Presuppositional Effects in English and Galician”. *Galician Review* 1: 13-26.
- “Interpretive Use of Language in Galician: the Case of *Disque* and *Seica*”  
Rosales Sequeiros, X. (1998) “Interpretive Use of Language in Galician: the Case of *Disque* and *Seica*”. *Galician Review* 2: 1-13.
- “Non-declarative Sentences in Spanish: the Case of the Infinitive”  
Rosales Sequeiros, X. (2002) “Non-declarative Sentences in Spanish: the Case of the Infinitive”. In J. Gutiérrez Rexach (ed.) *From Words to Discourse: Trends in Spanish Semantics and Pragmatics*. pp. 95-118. Cambridge: Elsevier (CRISPI Series).

### PART III: Applications of Relevance Theory to Translation

- “Translation Discrepancies in Galician: *Hamlet*”  
Rosales Sequeiros, X. (1997) “Translation Discrepancies in Galician: *Hamlet*”. *Donaire* 8: 62-67.
- “Types and Degrees of Interpretive Resemblance in Translation”  
Rosales Sequeiros, X. (2001) “Types and Degrees of Interpretive Resemblance in Translation”. *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses* 14:197-211.
- “Interlingual Pragmatic Enrichment in Translation”  
Rosales Sequeiros, X. (2002) “Interlingual Pragmatic Enrichment in Translation”. *Journal of Pragmatics* 34(8): 1069-1089.
- “Interlingual Impoverishment in Translation”  
Rosales Sequeiros, X. (1998) “Interlingual Impoverishment in Translation”. *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* LXXV: 145-157.
- “Degrees of Acceptability in Literary Translation”  
Rosales Sequeiros, X. (1998) “Degrees of Acceptability in Literary Translation”. *Babel* 98(1): 1-14.

## **Abstract**

The published work submitted herewith involves the application of Relevance theory (as a theory of verbal communication) to the description of Galician and Spanish, and to translation. The phenomena studied within these areas are examined from the point of view of language use. This allows us to see them together as instantiations of language and thus as being theoretically and fundamentally of a kind. As a result, they are also subject to the same principles of communication. The theoretical approach used and applied throughout is that of Relevance theory. This approach allows for an explanatory theory of verbal communication, which encompasses the two areas under study and thus provides a unitary theoretical framework to account for the phenomena examined. The various aspects of language description and translation explored here are therefore seen as instances of verbal communication to be studied precisely under a single general theory (and not as instances of different fields that should be examined by different theories).

This submission is structured in three parts. The first part involves an introduction to the publications submitted, which includes a brief literature review. This review provides an overview of the most important approaches to communication, including the code mode, the Gricean approach and the approach adopted here, namely, Relevance theory. This introductory part also includes a discussion of the overall coherence of the publications submitted, together with their impact and contributions in the wider context of the field of study.

The second part of this submission deals with applications of Relevance theory to the description of Galician and Spanish in a range of areas, including prepositional direct objects,

presuppositional effects, interpretive use of language, and non-declarative sentences. In all these cases, current approaches are reviewed and critiqued, and alternative accounts are provided as applications of the theoretical framework provided by Relevance theory.

The third and final part of this submission deals with applications of Relevance theory to translation in a number of areas, including interlingual interpretive use of language, interlingual enrichment, interlingual impoverishment, and degrees of acceptability in translation. One of the main themes in common between all these areas is the notion of discrepancy between original and target texts in translation. It is shown that many of these translation discrepancies arise from the gap found in verbal communication between what is encoded and what is communicated. Some of the most important types of gap that exist in verbal communication are examined in detail and their impact on translation explored throughout.

## **PART I:**

### **Preliminary**

Introduction: Applications of Relevance Theory to  
the Description of Galician and Spanish  
and to Translation

## 1. Introduction

The research publications submitted herewith involve applications of Relevance theory (as a theory of verbal communication) to the description of Galician and Spanish, and to translation. The purpose of this introduction is to set out the case for the submission as a whole, including its coherence, contribution, and overall context. All the work submitted is single-authored and has been published in internationally refereed research journals and books (including JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS, BULLETIN OF HISPANIC STUDIES, BABEL, and GALICIAN REVIEW, amongst others), and, additionally, has been presented at competitive, refereed, international conferences. Each of the publications submitted has been through a refereeing process involving the approval of at least two independent scholars who have underscored the originality and impact of the work involved. In addition, the *prima facie* case for the submission has been approved by two independent external assessors (Dr. Victoria Escandell-Vidal, an internationally recognised expert in the field, currently teaching in Spain at the UNED University, and Dr. Jill Hill, Head of Modern Languages at the University of Buckingham). The main languages involved in the research submitted here are Galician and Spanish, though data from other languages (such as English, German and Italian) are also included.

The unifying force behind the research submitted is three-fold: (a) the areas of research explored in both the language description and translation sections are seen as instantiations of language use; (b) they are both, consequently, seen as falling under the common remit of verbal communication; and (c) both of them are therefore studied together under a single unified theoretical model (i.e. Relevance theory, which is one of the main contemporary theories in semantics and pragmatics covering the study of verbal communication). The

diversifying factor lies in the range of areas of theoretical application covered. In this respect, one of the main contributions of this thesis lies in the application of Relevance theory to a diverse, yet theoretically coherent, set of communicative phenomena (within language description and translation). These applications, in turn, provide further evidence for the validity of the theory used, particularly through its application to a wider set of linguistic data and languages.

The first section of the research focuses on applications of Relevance theory to the description of Galician and Spanish in the following areas: (a) prepositional direct objects, (b) presuppositional effects, (c) interpretive use of language, and (d) non-declarative sentences. In these areas the main contribution and originality of the research submitted lies in a number of new applications of Relevance theory. Firstly, the phenomenon of prepositional direct objects is examined from a semantic perspective in Galician and an application of current theoretical notions based on verb type is proposed. Secondly, an application of Relevance theory concepts is made to provide evidence for the cross-linguistic equivalence of stress and word order between English and Galician at pragmatic level. Thirdly, a new analysis is given of a set of hitherto neglected Galician adverbs by applying the relevance-theoretic notion of interpretive use. Finally, an application and analysis of current relevance-theoretic accounts of non-declarative sentences is provided and some proposals are developed which attempt to contribute to the description of imperative uses of the infinitive in Spanish (including references to Galician, German and English).

The second section of the research submitted focuses on applications of Relevance theory to translation in a number of areas, including (a) translation discrepancies, (b) types and degrees of interpretive resemblance, (c) interlingual enrichment, (d) interlingual impoverishment, and

(e) degrees of acceptability in translation. In these areas the main contribution and originality of the research submitted also involves a number of new applications of Relevance theory. Firstly, various types of discrepancy in translation are identified and accounted for by analysing, from a Relevance theory point of view, the role of explicit and implicit content in communication at utterance level. Secondly, this issue is explored further by looking at discrepancies at the level of individual concepts and by analysing the various possible sources of discrepancy arising at this level. Thirdly, the various strategies adopted by different languages and translators in conveying a given content are investigated in the light of human communication. In particular, the relevance-theoretic concepts of enrichment and impoverishment are applied to translation in order to explain those differences (thus extending the application of existing relevance-theoretic notions to interlingual situations). Finally, a range of criteria used in judgements of acceptability in translation is investigated and critiqued, and an alternative approach based on applications of Relevance theory as single general principle is discussed.

The methods used in the research submitted include (a) analysis of linguistic data collected from a number of languages, (b) discussion of introspective linguistic data, (c) analysis of original and translation texts, (d) search for material evidence of applicability of theoretical distinctions, (e) critical discussion of theoretical frameworks in the light of available evidence, and (f) application of theoretical distinctions to explain data analysed. All the data and approaches discussed involve current theoretical paradigms in the field of semantics and pragmatics developed particularly from the late 1980s, through the 1990s, and up to the present day, including, especially, applications of the theoretical framework provided by Relevance theory. All the work submitted is hereby complemented by the required

introduction which sets out the case for the above research in more detail, especially in relation to its contribution to the field of study and its overall coherence.

This introduction is structured as follows. Firstly, a brief literature review is provided, followed by a presentation of the theoretical framework used throughout the research submitted, i.e. Relevance theory (which is seen as the most up-to-date theoretical approach to verbal communication). The aim of this section is to provide a more specific context for the research involved in this submission and to lay the foundations for exploring its impact within the field of study. Secondly, there is a discussion of the coherence and contribution made by the work submitted both as a whole and as individual units. The aim of this section is to show, and focus on, the overall cohesive links between the publications submitted and the contributions they make in each of the sections presented. Finally, some conclusions are provided on the basis of the previous discussion, including references to further research and publications.

To conclude this introductory section, a clarification note may be helpful. The terms *he* and *she* are often used to refer to the speaker and hearer respectively in order to aid the discussion. No contextual implications are intended in this decision. The term *speaker* is also used to cover both speakers and writers, and the term *hearer* is used to cover both hearers and readers. Finally, the term *sentence* is used to refer to abstract linguistic units (i.e. without contextualisation) and the term *utterance* is used to refer to sentences in use (i.e. with contextualisation).

## **2. Approaches to Verbal Communication: A Brief Literature Review**

The research included in the publications submitted herewith involves the use of language in intralinguistic and interlinguistic communication (i.e. covering language description and translation respectively). These two areas of study are seen as instances of verbal communication and thus are subject to the same principles of communication that govern all utterance interpretation.

From this point of view, the specific relationship between describing language use and communication seems generally uncontroversial. For we ordinarily use language to communicate, thereby making the connection between the two an everyday occurrence. As Grundy (1995:177) states, “language would not be what it is if it were not used to communicate with.” By contrast, the relationship between translation and communication does not generally seem to be so uncontroversial. Some (see e.g. Newmark 1981, 1988; or Steiner 1975) have seen translation not primarily as an act of communication, but as an art. From this point of view, Steiner has argued, “what we are dealing with [in translation] is not a science, but an exact art” (Steiner 1975:295). However, in more recent times this view of translation has been superseded by ideas which both place the practice of translation firmly within verbal communication and make it more amenable to scientific study. Thus, Hatim and Mason (1997:vii) state, “we look at all kinds of translating as essentially acts of communication in the same sense as that which applies to other kinds of verbal interaction.” Gutt (2000:23) also argues along the same lines: “translation is indeed best handled as a matter of communication.” This line of enquiry, which sees translation as an instance of verbal communication, is the position adopted in the research submitted here.

One of the advantages of seeing both the description of language use and translation as instances of verbal communication is that only one overall approach to linguistic communication is needed in order for us to study the two areas. This will, in turn, provide one of the other main cohesive links between the publications submitted, i.e. the use of Relevance theory as a unified theory, covering both language use description and translation. To arrive at this unified point, however, the theory of verbal communication has experienced important shifts in the last 50 years, which are reviewed briefly in what follows.

Prior to the 1960s, it was widely believed that communication was a matter of encoding and decoding information, both in the intra- and interlinguistic cases. This approach to communication was known as the code model (see e.g. Shannon and Weaver 1949; Lyons 1977:36; Sperber & Wilson 1995:4). The code model was adopted throughout history from the time of Greek philosopher Aristotle (see e.g. Aristotle 1963), through to the 17<sup>th</sup> century by French linguists Arnauld and Lancelot in their seminal French grammar *Grammaire de Port-Royal* (1963), and finally into modern times by Swiss linguist Saussure (1974) in his structuralist approach to linguistics. However, a number of important problems were found with this code model of communication (particularly since the publication of *Syntactic Structures* by Chomsky in 1957), which eventually led to its demise. At the centre of these problems was the realisation that the code model was descriptively inadequate to account for verbal communication, and that it failed to notice both the gap between language and thought in communication as well as the role played by inference in bridging this communicative gap.

This led researchers, since the 1960s, to pay closer attention to the role of inference in verbal communication, which has resulted in a revolution in the study of linguistic communication. The main proponent of these changes was Grice (see e.g. his reprinted works in Grice 1989),

who developed a new approach to verbal communication based on inference, resulting in an improvement on the code model. He showed that communication is not a straightforward event of encoding and decoding messages. Instead, he argued that in utterance interpretation there is a gap between what is encoded and what is communicated, and that this gap cannot be filled by more encoding, but rather by inference and making certain assumptions about the standards of communication adhered to by communicators. He proposed an overall cooperative principle and a number of maxims, which he claimed participants normally follow in verbal communication and which help them in retrieving the meaning conveyed in communicative exchanges (for a fuller introduction to his approach, see e.g. Grice *ibid.*; Levinson 1983, chapter 3). Many of Grice's ideas are still adopted today, to the extent that his followers are referred to as neo-Griceans and have carried out work in a range of areas, including reference assignment (Huang 1991, 2000); implicatures (Levinson 1983, 1987, 2000); scalar implicatures (Horn 1984); and temporal relations (Lascarides and Asher 1991, 1993).

Although Grice's ideas revolutionised the study of verbal communication, by giving inference a greater role in the communicative process, a number of problems were found with his approach (see e.g. Sperber and Wilson 1995; Blakemore 1987, 1992). Some of the main problems had to do with the Gricean approach being too vague in its definitions, lacking universality, and being too unconstrained. It became clear that some new system was needed to solve these problems and to take some of the fundamental ideas of Grice forward into a new phase. This challenge was taken up by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995), who developed one of the concepts proposed by Grice, namely, the notion of relevance, into a new theory of verbal communication. This new approach has become known as Relevance theory. It claims to offer greater explanatory power in accounting for verbal communication and has the added

advantage that it is equally applicable to both language description and translation. An overview of this approach is provided in what follows.

### **3. An Alternative Account of Communication: Relevance Theory**

The new approach provided by Relevance theory (see Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1998, 2002; and Wilson and Sperber 1988a, 1988b, 1992, 1993, 1994) attempts to solve the problems encountered by the Gricean account of communication. In this respect, this new theory claims to be explicit in its definitions, universal in its application, and univocal in its search for the intended interpretation.

The approach to verbal communication offered by Relevance theory provides the main theoretical coherence to the set of publications included in this submission. It is the overall and unified theoretical framework applied throughout the research submitted both in the language description and translation sections. Thus, it plays a key role in the contributions made here both to the description of Galician and Spanish, and to translation.

The aim in what follows is to contextualise these contributions by providing a brief discussion of some basic relevance-theoretic concepts. More specific topics related to the various individual publications submitted are referred to subsequently as the need arises (particularly in the publications themselves). So, what are the main tenets of this framework?

### 3.1. Relevance Theory: A Brief Overview

Relevance theory is a cognitive theory of communication in that it sees utterance interpretation as being psychologically real. In this respect, it follows the ideas of Fodor (1993, 1998a,b) who argues that the mind has, broadly, two distinct types of processing mechanisms: modular systems and a central system. The former are input mechanisms (e.g. vision, language, taste, etc.) that supply the central system with different types of information about the external world. In contrast, the central system integrates the various types of input information to make sense of the world as a whole.

From a Relevance theory point of view, every time the language module is put to use as a result of an ostensive act of verbal communication (e.g. an utterance), an expectation of optimal relevance is automatically created. This is a universal expectation, regardless of cultural differences. In relevance-theoretic terms, this expectation is expressed in the communicative principle of relevance, which states:

*Communicative Principle of relevance*

Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance (Sperber & Wilson 1995:158).

This definition means that whenever we communicate we are giving the hearer some guarantees that what we are communicating is of some value to her and that therefore it is worth her while to process it. This is the motivation she has in deciding to continue with the interpretation of the utterance.

The specific expectation created by an act of ostensive communication is one of *optimal relevance*, which is the driving force behind utterance interpretation. This expectation primes both speakers and hearers to anticipate that the utterance produced is, in the circumstances, the most likely one to communicate the thoughts intended by the speaker. This gives them a benchmark against which to produce and interpret the utterance (i.e. it helps the speaker decide how to construct it and the hearer how to establish its content). Thus, optimal relevance is the standard expected by hearers from speakers in communication and is defined as follows (Sperber & Wilson 1995:270):

#### *Optimal Relevance*

An utterance (as an ostensive stimulus), on a given interpretation, is optimally relevant if and only if:

- (a) The ostensive stimulus is relevant enough for it to be worth the addressee's effort to process it.
- (b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences.

At the core of this definition are the two notions of effort and effect (i.e. cost and reward) in utterance interpretation, which allows us to make two generalisations. On the one hand, the definition claims that any utterance interpretation process must aim at not wasting the hearer's effort (i.e. the communicative stimulus must be sufficiently easy to process). On the other hand, it must provide the hearer with adequate contextual effects (i.e. it must be sufficiently rewarding in its benefits). In general, given that in utterance interpretation we use both the input (utterance) and the context (contextual assumptions) in order to derive interpretations, the double objective involved in meeting effort and effect criteria can be

achieved by helping the hearer in two ways: (a) by using utterances easily processed and contextual information easily accessible (thus lowering the processing cost) and (b) by giving rise to cognitive benefits (i.e. improving the hearer's representation of the world and thus increase the stimulus' effects).

Most of the emphasis within Relevance theory has been put on the effect side of processing, as this involves both the content side of the interpretation and its effects on an individual's representation of the world. This has made it possible to establish that the cognitive benefit of an utterance can be of three main types: (a) strengthening an existing assumption about the world; (b) contradicting and eliminating an existing assumption; or (c) producing new contextual implications. However, in order to achieve any of these cognitive benefits, we need to combine the input with contextual assumptions. In general, a context (i.e. a set of contextual assumptions) which, in combination with the input information, gives rise to a large number of effects will be, other things being equal, preferred over another one with fewer effects. Equally, an utterance with low processing costs, other things being equal, will be preferred over another with higher processing costs. These considerations guide both the speaker and the hearer in verbal communication processes and play an important part in the body of research submitted here.

Before the derivation of cognitive benefits takes place though, we must first establish the semantic content of the sentence used (i.e. the output of the language module), as this is a necessary step in identifying the contextual effects intended. In verbal communication, the output of the language module involves semantic representations (of sentences). These representations are not normally fully determinate or truth-conditionally evaluable (i.e. they are incomplete and thus do not tell us something sufficiently determinate about the world for

us to evaluate whether a given statement is true in the world or not). They can only become fully determinate by being developed into full propositional forms. As Gutt (2000:26) notes:

verbal communication involves two distinct kinds of mental representations: semantic representations that are the output of the language module of the mind, and thoughts with propositional forms that are derived from semantic representations by further processing.

As will be seen below, the first publication of this submission deals with representations at the semantic level, before any pragmatic processing takes place. In this respect, this publication discusses the type of representation which, in Fodorian terms, results from the processing of the language module. This semantic representation is then processed further to become a fully developed propositional form (i.e. a full thought), which is one of the key topics discussed in a number of other publications in this submission.

The development of semantic representations into full propositional forms involves three main sub-tasks (see Sperber & Wilson 1995:185; Blakemore 1992; Carston 2000): (a) disambiguation, (b) reference assignment and (c) enrichment (for a more detailed discussion of these concepts, please see the individual publications below). These tasks involve an inferential process which takes as input (a) the semantic representation itself and (b) contextual assumptions accessible to the hearer. The inferential combination between the two is governed by pragmatic principles and results in the propositional form communicated by a given utterance. This inferential process bridges the gap between the two levels of representation (semantic and conceptual) and has a number of communicative consequences

for the description of language use and translation, which are explored in several of the publications submitted below.

The ideas presented thus far constitute some of the central tenets of Relevance theory. However, since Sperber and Wilson's proposal was first published in 1986, a large amount of research has been carried out in developing the theory further (see e.g. Yus 1998). This research has covered a wide range of areas, including reference assignment (Matsui 2000), semantics (Blakemore 1987), discourse connectives (Blass 1989), and translation (Gutt 1991/2000), amongst others. Equally, there have also been reviews and critical evaluations of the theory, including a multiple review in the journal *The Behavioral and Brain Sciences* (10.4, 1987) and single reviews by Levinson (1989), Mey and Talbot (1988) and Seuren (1987), amongst others. In this respect, many of the criticisms made against the theory seem to have been misunderstandings of the framework (cf. Sperber & Wilson 1995:255). Nonetheless, one of the main and persistent objections levied against Relevance theory has been the difficulty in falsifying it (see e.g. Cohen-Foster 2000:3). However, rather than being a criticism, this seems to show the robustness of the framework in that it appears to fare well against potential counterarguments and in applications to new fields. A more productive way of looking at this objection is to continue to test the theory against new data and areas of study, which is one of the epiphenomena of the work submitted here (as well as one of its resulting cohesive links). In this respect, the applications of the theory carried out in the publications submitted contribute both to the testing of the soundness of the theory and to the extension of its applicability to new areas of study and to new languages (an aspect which is discussed further in the publications below).

In what follows, two aspects of this submission are examined in turn. Firstly, the overall coherence of the body of work submitted is discussed, focussing on the main cohesive links between the publications presented. Secondly, the specific contributions made within each section and publication are examined in detail.

#### **4. Overall Coherence: Relevance Theory as a Unified Approach to the Description of Galician and Spanish, and to Translation**

The main overall coherence of the set of publications submitted here lies in the application of Relevance theory, as a single unified theory, both to the description of Galician and Spanish, and to translation. This central cohesive theme can be broken down into a number of more specific common links, which are discussed in turn in what follows.

Firstly, the two main areas of research, i.e. intra- and interlinguistic uses of language, are seen as instances of verbal communication. As mentioned earlier, in the case of intralinguistic use of language this seems to be uncontroversial, as language is widely believed to be ordinarily used to communicate (see e.g. Grundy 1995). In the case of interlinguistic uses of language (i.e. translation), the situation didn't use to be as clear-cut in the past, but current research increasingly acknowledges the importance of studying translation as an instance of verbal communication (see e.g. Hatim & Mason 1997; Gutt 1991, 2000). In this respect, Hatim and Mason (1997:1) state: "translating is looked upon as *as an act of communication which attempts to relay, across cultural and linguistic boundaries, another act of communication.*" Gutt (2000:198) makes the same point more generally: "issues of translation are [...] at heart issues of communication." The research submitted here provides further evidence for this

position and shows that it is possible to study inter- and intralinguistic uses of language as applications of the same theory of verbal communication. In doing so, it also provides one of the main cohesive links between the publications included in the two main parts of this submission.

The second cohesive link relates to the way in which descriptions of language use and translation can be studied as manifestations of the same underlying theoretical concepts. In particular, if these two areas of research fall under the same area of study, then it should be possible to have one single theory covering both fields. This is precisely what Relevance theory offers as a unified theory of verbal communication. More specifically, it allows us to study both intra- and interlinguistic instances of verbal communication as manifestations of the same underlying concepts. In this respect, Blakemore (1992:39) argues, “[t]he search for relevance is something that constraints all communication, verbal and non-verbal.” So, from this point of view, instances of language use, as cases of verbal communication, will be governed by the principle of relevance and will be described accordingly. This is equally applicable to translation. As Gutt (2000:198) argues, “the principles, rules and guidelines of translation are applications of the principle of relevance.” He goes on to argue that “given the general framework of relevance theory, no special, additional concepts or theoretical tools are needed to accommodate translation” (ibid.:237). This means that the same concepts already available within Relevance theory, as a theory of verbal communication, are indistinctly applicable to intra- and interlinguistic phenomena. This interchangeability in the application of theoretical concepts is shown in the publications submitted in both sections below, such as for example in the indistinct use of relevance-theoretic notions of explicit and implicit content, enrichment, and interpretive use of language, amongst others.

The third main cohesive link between the publications submitted involves the application of Relevance theory concepts in a progressive fashion. That is to say, the publications in each section deal with the application of theoretical notions from the more basic communicative level of analysis to the more general, following the incremental processing line involved in the derivation of utterance interpretation. Thus, the publications submitted in both sections deal first with the impact of communication at individual concept level (word level), then at propositional level (sentence level), and finally at implicature level (implicit level). This progressive application reflects the ordered stages involved in utterance interpretation and the unified, relevance-theoretic, approach adopted within both language description and translation. The possibility of applying the same progressive, staged, analysis in both areas also provides further evidence for the interchangeability of Relevance theory across different areas of study more generally. It also helps us make our application of Relevance theory to the description of Galician and Spanish more systematic in both monolingual and translation contexts.

A fourth cohesive link between the publications submitted involves their role in providing further evidence and testing scenarios for Relevance theory across diverse areas of study and languages. In this respect, the research submitted provides further overall confirmation for the robustness and soundness of the theory particularly as a result of applying it to a wider set of data in monolingual and translation areas, as well as to new languages. This involves individual concepts of the theory as well as its role as a unified approach to all verbal communication. The range and diversity of areas covered also provides greater opportunities to attempt to falsify the claims made by the theory (which seems especially important given the difficulties some researchers have found in falsifying it, and the resulting criticisms this has caused).

Finally, another key cohesive link between the publications submitted is the languages studied. In this respect, the focus of application lies mainly in Galician and Spanish (though reference to other languages such as English, German and Italian is also made when appropriate). As a result, this set of publications contributes to, and expands, the study and description of both languages by applying Relevance theory to a number of areas in both intra- and interlinguistic contexts, such as the interpretation of individual concepts, the conveyance of stylistic effects at sentential level, and the impact of contextual information on the explicitly and implicitly communicated content, amongst others. As this application is mirrored in both sections, it creates a cohesive parallelism between the two areas of study both cross-linguistically and thematically, and underlies the importance of using a unified approach to study them.

So far we have discussed the main cohesive links between the publications submitted. In the next section, the contributions made by the various publications are examined in more detail.

## **5. Contribution: Applications of Relevance Theory to the Description of Galician and Spanish, and to Translation**

The main contribution of the set of publications submitted here lies in the application of Relevance theory to the description of Galician and Spanish, and to translation. As far as the first part is concerned, the main overall contribution lies in the application of Relevance theory to a number of areas involving intralinguistic uses of language, thus expanding and improving current descriptions of Galician and Spanish. The areas of application include

semantic representations, propositional form and presuppositional effects, interpretive use of language, and non-declarative sentences. In each area, the main contribution involves providing critical appraisals of current analyses of the data concerned and applying Relevance theory as an alternative approach to the description of the linguistic phenomena in question.

As far as the second part is concerned (i.e. translation), the main contribution lies in the application of Relevance theory to a range of areas involving interlinguistic communication (particularly in Galician and Spanish) with a view to expanding and improving our knowledge of the impact of communicative processes on translation phenomena. The areas of application include interlingual communicative discrepancies, interlingual enrichment, interlingual impoverishment, and degrees of acceptability in translation. In each area, the main contribution involves an analysis of the impact of communicative processes on translation and the application of Relevance theory to account for the resulting effects on translation processes and output.

In what follows, these general contributions are discussed in greater detail particularly in relation to each section and the publications submitted thereof. First, let us start with the language description section.

### **5.1. Contribution to the Description of Galician and Spanish: Applications of Relevance Theory**

The main contribution in this section involves expanding and improving the description of Galician and Spanish as a result of applying Relevance theory to a range of linguistic

phenomena in the two languages. These applications involve a number of main stages in utterance interpretation, which deal with some of the key ordered steps required to arrive at an optimal utterance interpretation (following a progressive line of semantic and pragmatic development). Each publication makes a number of specific contributions, which are discussed in more detail in what follows.

The main contribution of the first publication involves the application of several linguistic concepts to the description of Galician, particularly in relation to the analysis of prepositional direct objects and their impact on the semantic representation of sentences. This publication makes a number of specific contributions. Firstly, it surveys and critiques current analyses of this type of direct object (see e.g. Álvarez et al 1986; Costa Casas et al 1988; and Monteagudo 1992), all of which treat the semantic meaning of prepositional and non-prepositional direct objects indistinctly. Secondly, it examines a wider range of data than previously considered in the analysis of prepositional direct objects, which enables us to provide a more descriptively adequate account of the phenomenon. Thirdly, it develops and proposes an alternative approach by applying existing theoretical concepts, including a differentiated semantic account of both prepositional and non-prepositional direct objects. In doing so, it corroborates current relevance-theoretic predictions involving cognitive processing effort and effects. Fourthly, it examines the resulting contrasts between Galician and other languages (such as Spanish and English) in relation to the types of linguistic semantic meaning that can be conveyed arising from the use of prepositional direct objects. Finally, it attempts to establish the semantic limits of the type of verb that allows, in principle, the use of prepositional direct objects. This overall line of research is continued in the second publication of this section, which examines aspects of the next processing stage involved in utterance interpretation, namely, the development of propositional forms.

In this respect, the next publication makes a number of further contributions, particularly as a result of applying Relevance theory to the cross-linguistic functional equivalence of word order and stress in Galician and English respectively. More specifically, it examines the presuppositional effects these communicative phenomena give rise to in the development of the propositional form (i.e. the fully explicit thought taken to have been communicated by the utterance of given sentence). In doing this, it makes several specific contributions. Firstly, it explores the cross-linguistic relationship between stress and word order in English and Galician respectively. Secondly, it provides further evidence for the functional equivalence at pragmatic level between these two cross-linguistic communicative strategies. Thirdly, it applies the theoretical framework provided by Relevance theory to account for this phenomenon, particularly one based on the notion of relative cross-linguistic processing cost. Finally, it provides the basis for further cross-linguistic comparisons and theoretical applications between English and Galician at pragmatic level.

The contributions discussed so far (involving semantic representations and presuppositional effects) are complemented in the next publication of this section, which deals with the next stage in utterance interpretation, i.e. attitudes towards the propositional content communicated. More specifically, this publication deals with the application of the relevance-theoretic notion of language use to a set of Galician adverbs (please see individual publication for more details on these adverbs). In this discussion a number of contributions are made to current descriptions of Galician. Firstly, it is shown that traditional grammatical analyses of these adverbs do not capture their true semantic meaning. Secondly, arguments are put forward in favour of a new account based on the application of the relevance-theoretic notion of interpretive use of language, which seems to capture their meaning more accurately.

Thirdly, Relevance-based criteria are provided for distinguishing the group of adverbs studied from other types of adverb as well as for establishing their internal semantic differences. In doing this, linguistic evidence is also provided for the differences predicted by Relevance theory between some of the different types of interpretive use available. Finally, this publication explores new lines of enquiry into the prediction and analysis of more subtypes of language use through further application of relevance-theoretic concepts, particularly in relation to possible subtypes of adverbs that could enable us to express more specific types of interpretive resemblances.

The last publication of this section continues to explore the borderline between semantics and pragmatics (which is where the successive processing steps examined in the previous publications were located). In this case, the research involves semantic and pragmatic aspects of non-declarative sentences. In particular, its main contribution lies in the application of Relevance theory to the imperative use of the infinitive in Spanish (including examples from other languages). In doing this, it makes a number of specific contributions. Firstly, it discusses a survey of accounts of non-declarative sentences in general and the imperative use of the infinitive in particular. Secondly, it provides an application and critique of current relevance-theoretic analysis of imperative uses of the infinitive (Sperber and Wilson 1995, 1988). Thirdly, it provides a wide range of data of the imperative use of the infinitive particularly from Spanish (but also from other languages), which seems to show that this is an extended phenomenon. Finally, it explores the differences between ordinary imperative uses and imperative uses of the infinitive. This includes possible lines of enquiry to find solutions to the problems faced by current analyses, particularly by involving the notion of explicature.

This publication completes the discussion of the main contributions made by the research submitted within the language description section. In what follows, the discussion is turned to the contributions made by the publications submitted in the translation section.

## **5.2. Contribution to Translation: Applications of Relevance Theory**

The main contribution here lies in the application of Relevance theory to the study of discrepancies and acceptability judgements in translation (particularly, but not exclusively, in relation to Spanish and Galician). In what follows, this overall contribution is discussed in more detail and then the specific contributions made by each of the publications in this section are discussed in turn.

The contributions made in this section are a result of seeing translation as an instance of communication and therefore as being subject to the same communication principles as other types of language use. This provides one of the main links with the discussion thus far in that translation is not seen as being fundamentally different from other forms of verbal communication and thus follows from the same relevance-theoretic principles adopted in the rest of this submission. The only particularity is that translation involves cross-linguistic communication, i.e. the use of at least two languages. Apart from this difference, the concepts discussed in this section have fundamentally the same theoretical status within the framework used as those considered in the previous section. This fundamental connection also provides further evidence for the importance of a theory of communication which is robust enough to capture the various existing forms of verbal communication (both intra- and interlinguistic). The framework developed within Relevance theory provides such an approach, as seen thus far.

Within translation, the main proponent of the application of Relevance theory to translation issues has been Gutt (1991/2000). The contributions made by the research submitted here add to Gutt's work, but result from looking at different aspects within the field of translation. In this respect, one of the main contributions of the publications submitted involves the application of Relevance theory to account for discrepancies between original and target texts in translation (in particular those discrepancies which result from gaps between encoded and communicated information in verbal communication). In doing this, this research provides evidence for the existence of different types of communicative gap and of resulting textual discrepancies between original and target texts. Moreover, it is shown that the gap between what is encoded and what is communicated is crucial to understanding how discrepancies arise in the process of translation and in explaining the resulting textual differences. Similarly, it is claimed that these discrepancies may help us explain how we make judgements about the degrees of acceptability in translation.

The contributions made here are possible, because the translator is viewed as an interpreter (i.e. hearer/reader of the original text), who at the same time is a communicator (i.e. speaker/writer of the target text), and thus is subject to the principles governing utterance interpretation. Thus, one basic assumption here is that if we are to understand the process of translation, we must first look at how the translator interprets the original text, since this is going to determine the way he translates the original text into the target text. In other words, we can only understand his translation decisions if we understand the (semantic and pragmatic) interpretive processes he undergoes in order to construct his interpretation of the original text.

As in the previous section, the publications are presented and discussed not necessarily in chronological order of publication, but rather in an order which best fits their conceptual progression. Thus, the publications which present more basic notions (e.g. discrepancies at word/conceptual and propositional level) are discussed first and those which deal with more general, evaluative, concepts are discussed subsequently (e.g. acceptability). This order also mirrors both the overall processing progression involved in utterance interpretation (e.g. from the processes activated in the recovery of individual conceptual content and propositional forms to considerations of acceptability of interpretations) as well as the stages followed in the study of pragmatic interpretation within the theoretical approach used (i.e. Relevance theory).

So, at what stage in the process of utterance interpretation does the translator find the first gap between encoded and communicated content? The answer to this question is explored in the first publication of this section, which deals with the discrepancies arising from the gap between individual words and the associated concepts communicated in utterance interpretation. In this respect, the main contribution of this publication is to apply Relevance theory to interpretation processes at individual word/concept level, including the resulting consequences for translation. In doing so, this publication makes a number of specific contributions. Firstly, it identifies (through the application of Relevance theory) different types of discrepancy between original and target texts as consequences of pragmatic interpretation. This contrasts with past research in this area (see e.g. Baker 1992; Munday 2001), where no attempt was made at investigating the type of pragmatic process involved (thus leaving the crucial pragmatic processes undergone by the translator unexplored, focussing instead on surface equivalences between original and target texts). Secondly, this publication provides an account, based on applications of Relevance theory, of translation discrepancies that arise specifically

from pragmatic interpretation at the individual word and concept level. Thirdly, it provides evidence for the dual pragmatic role that translators play in the translation process, as hearers and communicators, and the consequences this may have for discrepancies between original and target texts. In doing this, it contributes to translators' awareness of the types of process that may affect their decisions in the translation process. Finally, it provides criteria based on Relevance Theory for articulating judgements of acceptability in translation, as well as for establishing the basis for a systematic study of discrepancies between original and target texts.

The discrepancies arising from the differences between what is encoded and what is communicated at word/concept level, are explored further in the second publication of this section, where a wider set of data is examined. This publication makes a number of further contributions in this area. Firstly, it applies relevance-theoretic notions discussed in the previous publication to wider contexts and examines the effects of a third type of interpretive resemblance (i.e. echoic use) on translation discrepancies. This line of enquiry contrasts with past research in the area (see e.g. Baker 1992; Hatim and Mason 1997), which has looked at related phenomena, but only in the form of quotations or borrowings (i.e. without considering the pragmatic and cognitive processes undergone by the translator both as addressee and communicator, an issue which the current publication attempts to investigate). Secondly, this publication develops the application of current relevance-theoretic concepts further in this area and provides evidence for the existence of another type of interpretive resemblance, namely, concept widening, which seems to be the opposite of concept narrowing (please see individual publications for a discussion of these notions). Finally, it explores how the application of Relevance theory and, in particular, the notion of degrees in interpretive resemblance between original and target texts may affect judgements of acceptability.

So far only discrepancies at the word/concept level have been considered. The next publication in this section takes the discussion forward by examining discrepancies at the next level of utterance interpretation, i.e. the propositional level. In particular, its main contribution lies in the application of the relevance-theoretic notion of pragmatic enrichment to the development of full propositions in translation and its consequences for interlinguistic textual discrepancies. In doing this, this publication makes a number of specific contributions. Firstly, it applies the relevance-theoretic concept of pragmatic enrichment to translation in order to explore textual discrepancies arising from the use of implicit contextual information. This contrasts with past research in the area, where there has been no discussion of this type of underlying pragmatic process. Instead, the focus in the past has been on making texts more “idiomatic” through expansion processes (see Baker 1992; Hatim and Mason 1997; Munday 2001), without accounting for the type of developmental, cognitive, processes undergone by translators and their attendant interpretive consequences. Secondly, it develops the concept of interlingual pragmatic enrichment as a specific application of general relevance-theoretic enrichment processes to translation. In doing this, it explores the various possible types of interlingual enrichment that may exist in translation practice and predicts the existence of the opposite process in translation, namely, interlingual impoverishment (which is explored in the following publication of this submission). Thirdly, it provides a range of data with exemplifications of various subtypes of interlingual enrichment, as further applications of Relevance theory. Finally, it explores the boundary between interlingual enrichment, which is licensed from a pragmatic point of view, and other types of enrichment that go beyond a completion of the propositional form intended by the original author.

Given the existence of interlingual enrichment in translation, it is not surprising also to find the opposite process, i.e. interlingual impoverishment, which is precisely the topic discussed

in the next publication of this section. In this case, the main contribution lies in applying Relevance theory to account for the impoverishment of texts in translation and the resulting stylistic changes caused (including the consequences of these processes for translation acceptability). In doing this, this publication makes a number of specific contributions. Firstly, it applies Relevance theory to account for various types of discrepancy which result from the mismatch in degrees of cross-linguistic explicitness (thus causing translation impoverishment). Secondly, it argues that the application of Relevance theory allows us to establish two subtypes of pragmatic impoverishment in translation: one due to interlingual grammatical differences and the other to contextual differences. This contrasts with past research in the area (see e.g. Santoyo 1989), where translation impoverishment has only been investigated to denounce glaring omissions in the target text of whole passages from the original text. This type of translation phenomenon falls outside the type of pragmatic impoverishment studied here, which involves communication of the same propositional import, but using different stylistic strategies. Thirdly, it explores the pragmatic and stylistic consequences of lowering the level of explicitness cross-linguistically by applying the theoretical framework provided by Relevance theory. Finally, it provides an account of the consequences of pragmatic impoverishment for judgements of acceptability in translation based on relevance-theoretic notions.

The last point mentioned, i.e. judgements of acceptability in translation, is studied in more detail in the last publication of this section. In particular, its main contribution lies in the application of Relevance theory to explain acceptability judgements in translation. In doing so, this publication makes a number of specific contributions. Firstly, it provides a review and a critique of current accounts of acceptability judgements in translation. Secondly, it applies the relevance-theoretic notion (and types) of interpretive resemblance to translation acceptability. Thirdly, it examines the applications and differences between direct and indirect translation in relation to

acceptability judgements in translation. Finally, it explores the application of the principle of relevance as an overall alternative criterion in the evaluation of acceptability judgements in translation.

## **6. Conclusion**

The main contribution of the publications included in this submission lies in the application of Relevance theory to the description of Galician and Spanish, and to translation. The common ground between these areas follows from two main interlinked assumptions. On the one hand, the intra- and interlinguistic uses of language involved here are seen as instances of verbal communication. On the other, they are both, consequently, seen as being studied under a single, overall, and unified theory of verbal communication. In this submission, the unified approach adopted throughout is Relevance theory, which seems to offer the greatest explanatory power, whilst at the same time covering both areas of study. This approach shows that intra- and interlinguistic uses of language can indeed be accounted for by the same explanatory theory and that, as a result, there is no need to resort to two separate theories to explain the communicative phenomena involved in the two areas.

The approach adopted here is inferential in nature and provides an alternative overall account to earlier approaches, such as the code model and the Gricean framework, which faced various problems and, ultimately, proved to be inadequate as theories of verbal communication. Relevance theory, on the other hand, seems to provide an approach which not only appears to resolve earlier problems, but it also allows us to explain a wide range of intra- and interlinguistic communicative phenomena under a unified framework.

The theoretical coherence invested on the submitted publications is further evidenced by the involvement of similar communicative and interpretive processes in both monolingual and translation data. In this respect, the publications submitted in the two areas deal indistinctly with the application of common theoretical notions such as, for example, the relationship between words and concepts, the retrieval of the proposition expressed, and interpretive use of language, all of which are applications of the theoretical machinery of Relevance theory. Further cohesive links between the publications submitted result from the focus on Galician and Spanish as the main languages of study and description; from the progressive application of Relevance theory within the various processing stages of utterance interpretation; and from the testing of the theory that results thereof.

The main contributions of this submission involve a number of applications of Relevance theory to the description of Galician and Spanish, and to translation. Thus, in the language description section, traditional analyses of prepositional direct objects in Galician have been critiqued and alternative accounts have been developed through the application of current theoretical notions. Equally, the pragmatic equivalence between stress placement and word order has been analysed in relation to English and Galician. Additionally, traditional semantic analyses of a set of Galician adverbs have been argued against and an alternative account has been developed, which proposes a new type of adverb in Galician based on the application of the relevance-theoretic notion of interpretive use of language. Finally, the account of non-declarative sentences provided by Relevance theory is applied to imperative uses of the infinitive in Spanish, giving rise to some critical appraisals for further development.

In the translation section, the publications submitted also make a number of specific contributions by applying Relevance theory to translation phenomena. In particular, the impact of communicative gaps (arising from the difference between what is encoded and what is communicated) has been examined in detail and a number of more specific contributions have been made. It is shown that the difference between encoding and communication can cause discrepancies in translation at various levels, particularly in relation to words/concepts and propositions. At the individual word/concept level, a number of processes found in verbal communication are examined, including concept loosening and narrowing as well as interpretive uses of language. Their consequences for translation are also explored in detail. At the propositional level, new applications of theoretical concepts are carried out to articulate the discrepancies caused by enrichment and impoverishment in translation. Finally, the consequences of overall discrepancies found between original and target texts are studied in relation to issues of acceptability judgements in translation. In this respect, there is an investigation into what are the crucial criteria that guide our judgements of acceptability. It is found that considerations of relevance play a central role into whether or not we find a given translation acceptable.

Further research in both areas of study will provide more opportunities to apply the theoretical framework used throughout to new phenomena and thus test its theoretical soundness and robustness further. In this respect, a number of areas of further research can be identified, such as exploring the use and impact of new types of prepositional direct object, investigating new interlinguistic equivalences at pragmatic level, and identifying new types of interpretive resemblance; and, in relation to translation, establishing new types of discrepancy between original and target texts resulting from differences between encoded and communicated content. Some of these (and other) areas have already been explored in new

research and publications (to appear), including the application of Relevance theory to the use of formulaic expressions in translation, anaphoric reference assignment in Galician, discourse markers, and the interpretation of reflexive anaphora in VP-ellipsis in second language acquisition. In this subsequent work, some reanalysis of current relevance-theoretic views has been required in order to account for the full range of data considered (e.g. in relation to discourse markers).

Finally, as far as the overall presentation is concerned, the publications included in this submission are presented in two parts: one involving publications related to language description and the other involving those related to translation. The publications have been ordered not in chronological order, but rather in an order that mirrors conceptual progression, utterance interpretation processes, and attendant theoretical stages within Relevance theory. As far as the layout is concerned, each publication has been photocopied directly from its published format onto A4 paper to provide a homogeneous presentation and to facilitate the binding of the whole submission.

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**PART II:**

**Applications of Relevance Theory to**

**the Description of**

**Galician and Spanish**

“The Semantics of Prepositional Direct Objects in  
Galician”

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# The Semantics of Prepositional Direct Objects in Galician

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In Galician some transitive verbs can take their direct object either with the preposition *en* 'in/on' or without it. These verbs tend to indicate some kind of action and include an implicit reference to the endpoint of the event described. However, in their treatment of this phenomenon most grammars of Galician simply mention the possibility of prepositional direct objects, without *explaining* the effects brought about by the introduction of the preposition in a sentence or *determining* the specific type of action verb that licenses the use of the preposition.

In this article, an attempt is made to resolve these issues and to look more closely into the semantics of the phenomenon. It is argued that, contrary to what is suggested in most grammars, the inclusion of the preposition does bring about a semantic change to the interpretation of the sentence in which it is used and is not just a mere syntactic permutation, as is generally suggested. It is shown that the preposition causes important changes to the meaning of the verb phrase, including, crucially, a change in the *verb type*. This analysis is corroborated by further evidence relating to the use of this type of structure in contrasting contexts. The licensing conditions for the preposition are shown to arise from the verb and the direct object, both of which must be compatible in appropriate ways, as will be apparent below.

The article is organized as follows. Firstly, a brief presentation of verb types is provided. Secondly, a review is presented of existing accounts of the phenomenon under discussion. In particular, this includes a critique of the proposals put forward in their grammars by Álvarez *et al.*,<sup>1</sup> Costa Casas *et al.*,<sup>2</sup> and in passing the Conversational Grammar of the Instituto da Lingua Galega.<sup>3</sup> Thirdly, arguments are presented for an alternative semantic analysis of the prepositional direct object structures with *en*. Finally, some conclusions are drawn from the discussion.

## 2. A REVIEW OF EXISTING WORK

### 2.1. VERB TYPES ACCORDING TO SITUATION TYPES

Both Álvarez *et al.* and Costa Casas *et al.* claim that the verb plays a crucial role in determining whether or not the preposition *en* can introduce direct objects (see

below). Both allude to verbs of process and duration as the determining factors in the grammatical use of the preposition with direct objects. Their discussion therefore brings into play the notion of verb type, which will be briefly introduced here.

Verbs have been traditionally classified according to the type of situation they describe and the temporal constraints they impose on sentence structure. Although the classification to be used here has come under some criticism,<sup>4</sup> four types of verb have generally been proposed to account for both the type of situation denoted and the range of temporal structures allowed by the various verb types.<sup>5</sup> The four situation and verb types are as follows:

- (1) a) STATES:  
       Xoán está na casa  
       *Xoán is at home*
- b) PROCESSES:  
       Xoán traballou moito onte  
       *Xoán worked a lot yesterday*
- c) ACCOMPLISHMENTS:  
       Xoán comeu unha mazán  
       *Xoán ate an apple*
- d) ACHIEVEMENTS:  
       Xoán recoñeceu a Pedro  
       *Xoán recognized Peter*

States describe situations which do not change in time, so, for example, the gerund is not normally allowed in conjunction with this type of verb (e.g. one cannot say: John is being at home). Processes, on the other hand, do take place in time and encode change, so they *can* be used in conjunction with the gerund (e.g. one can say: John was working a lot). Accomplishments are situations which have an outcome (i.e. some kind of result), but which require time to be accomplished (e.g. one can say: John ate an apple in two minutes, where two minutes is the duration of the event; or: John was eating an apple). Achievements, on the other hand, are situations which, whilst having an outcome, do not take place over time (e.g. one cannot say either: John was recognizing Peter; or: John recognized Peter in two minutes, meaning the duration of the event took two minutes).<sup>6</sup> Let us now turn to the Galician cases.

## 2.2. ÁLVAREZ ET AL.'S PROPOSALS

### 2.2.1. PREPOSITIONAL DIRECT OBJECTS

Understandably for a grammar of its characteristics, Álvarez *et al.* do not go into much detail about the phenomenon under discussion in this article. They claim that *en* can be used 'after verbs which express an action in progress' in order to introduce direct objects.<sup>7</sup> Their characterization centres on the notion of action as opposed to that of state. This account could therefore be summarized as follows:

- (2) *Álvarez et al.'s Account*
- a) Verbs Must Indicate Action
- b) Action Must Be in Progress

It would thus be expected that verbs which carry a feature [+ process/achievement/ accomplishment] would allow this type of structure, as all these three verb types share the idea of action as part of their meaning.<sup>8</sup> Let us see whether this is the case. Consider the following pairs of examples:<sup>9</sup>

- (3) a) *María comeu queixo toda a tarde* [+ process]<sup>10</sup>  
*María ate cheese all afternoon*  
 b) *María comeu no queixo toda a tarde*  
*María ate cheese all afternoon*
- (4) a) *Maruxa sachou patacas* [+ process]  
*Maruxa dug out potatoes*  
 b) *Maruxa sachou nas patacas*  
*Maruxa dug out the potatoes*
- (5) a) *Xoán coseu a roupa a semana pasada* [+ accomplishment]  
*Xoán sewed the clothes last week*  
 b) *Xoán coseu na roupa a semana pasada*  
*Xoán sewed the clothes last week*
- (6) a) *Uxía leu o libro onte pola tarde* [+ accomplishment]  
*Uxía read the book yesterday afternoon*  
 b) *Uxía leu no libro onte pola tarde*  
*Uxía read the book yesterday afternoon*

In all these examples there are action verbs (*comer*, *sachar*, *coser* and *ler*), which allow the insertion of the preposition, as predicted by Álvarez *et al.*'s hypothesis. Moreover, the construction with the preposition is favoured by some authors as being more Galician. The following is stated in the Conversational Grammar of Galician referred to earlier: 'the constructions [with the preposition] [...] are more Galician, we therefore recommend their preferential use.'<sup>11</sup> Compare now the above examples to the following ones in which the underlined preposition *en* is not allowed:

- (7) a) *Xavier posuiu un coche* [+ state]  
*Xavier owned a car*  
 b) \* *Xavier posuiu en coche*  
*Xavier owned a car*
- (8) a) *María amaba o seu coche* [+ state]  
*María loved her car*  
 b) \* *María amaba en o seu coche*  
*María loved her car*

In these two cases there are verbs of state. As predicted by Álvarez *et al.*'s characterization, the sentences are not acceptable when used with the preposition. They are ungrammatical.

Interestingly, their account, in introducing the element of action *in progress*, would also explain another fact, provided that we take *in progress* to mean *durative*. In particular, it would explain why the use of some verbs of action, in conjunction with the preposition, results in ungrammaticality, as shown below:

- (9) a) Ana entendeu a presentación alemana [+ achievement]  
*Ana understood the German presentation*  
 b) \* Ana entendeu *na* presentación alemana  
*Ana understood the German presentation*
- (10) a) Xosé encontrou a casa [+ achievement]  
*Xosé found the house*  
 b) \* Xosé encontrou *na* casa  
*Xosé found the house*

In both of these cases the sentences include verbs of action (as opposed to verbs of state), but they are of the achievement type. Achievement verbs, as seen earlier, do not include temporal duration as one of their features. Therefore, they cannot license the use of the preposition, because the preposition requires a durative action in order to be licensed. Consequently, the sentences are ruled out.

From the discussion so far, it can be concluded that Álvarez *et al.*'s characterization of this phenomenon is partly syntactic, in that they claim that the phenomenon affects transitive verbs, but also partly semantic, in that it involves durative action verbs. From the point of view of a Vendlerian approach,<sup>12</sup> it can be concluded that only verbs which describe processes or accomplishments license the use of the preposition. This means that there is some common ground between the descriptive and theoretical approaches (Álvarez *et al.*'s and Vendler's respectively). However, does the account proposed by Álvarez *et al.* explain this construction fully? The answer to this question is explored in the next section.

### 2.1.2. PROBLEMS WITH ÁLVAREZ ET AL.'S ACCOUNT

Álvarez *et al.*'s account does in fact raise two problems. The first relates to the fact that they do not say whether the addition of the preposition makes any difference to the semantic and/or pragmatic interpretation of the sentences in which the preposition is found. Is it just a syntactic alternative? For example, are (4a) and (4b) synonymous? Or, does it give rise to extra effects in the interpretation? For example, are (4a) and (4b) not synonymous? Clearly, any account of this phenomenon, particularly one that includes semantic criteria, must explain what contribution the preposition makes to the interpretation of the sentence. Otherwise, it is not a proper semantic account.

The second problem mentioned above is that some verbs which involve an action in progress of the type Álvarez *et al.* have in mind do not allow the use of the preposition. Consider the following examples:

- (11) \* Xoán describiu *no* cadro [+ process]  
*Xoán described the painting*
- (12) \* Martín comentou *na* película [+ process]  
*Martín commented on the film*
- (13) \*? Xulio cantou *na* canción [+ process]  
*Xulio sung the song*
- (14) \*? Xoana bailou *na* salsa [+ process]  
*Xoana danced the salsa*

In these examples we have action verbs (*describir, comentar, cantar, bailar*), but the resulting sentences are clearly ungrammatical. Judging by these results, to claim that we can use the preposition *en* with verbs denoting action in progress (i.e. durative verbs: processes or accomplishments) is not enough to explain the grammatical use and semantic interpretation of this type of construction.

So, are there any other criteria proposed by traditional grammars which could account for these findings? Costa Casas *et al.* do in fact give some further ideas regarding the use of this construction. Their claims are considered next.

## 2.2. COSTA CASAS ET AL.'S PROPOSALS

Costa Casas *et al.* discuss this construction very briefly, but they introduce what may ultimately be an important distinction, as will be shown below. They claim that the preposition *en* 'can introduce direct objects which indicate an endpoint, when accompanying verbs in which their lexeme expresses durative action'.<sup>13</sup> Their main contribution is, in effect, separating and specifying the semantic conditions that apply to the verb and the direct object, which together license the use of the preposition. Thus, if by 'direct object' they are taken to mean 'verb phrase' (as direct objects by themselves cannot have an endpoint), their claims are that a) the verb phrase must indicate an endpoint, and b) the verb must indicate durative action. This is summarized below:

- (15) *Costa Casas et al.'s Account*  
 a) Verb Phrase indicates Endpoint  
 b) Verb indicates Durative Action

So, their account makes a subtle distinction in allocating semantic conditions separately to the verb and direct object/verb phrase, which, as stated above, is an innovation on the claims made by Álvarez *et al.* These separate conditions can work independently of each other in ruling out unlicensed sentences.

Thus, the endpoint criterion would rule out state verb sentences, because in normal circumstances these sentences do not include an end to the situation described. So, for example, although the state verb sentences in (7) and (8) are durative—thus fulfilling the second criterion in (15b)—, they do not encode an endpoint—thus flouting the first criterion and becoming ungrammatical.<sup>14</sup>

The duration criterion would rule out achievement verb sentences, because these sentences do not include duration as part of their semantic meaning. So, for example, although the achievement verb sentences in (9) and (10) have an endpoint—thus fulfilling the first criterion above—, they do not allow durative elements—thus flouting the second criterion and becoming ungrammatical.

In short, although the claims made by Costa Casas *et al.* in relation to the direct object conditions are badly expressed in that direct objects by themselves cannot indicate an endpoint, i.e. they can only do it in conjunction with the verb operating on them, they do provide a clue as to how to characterize the licensing of the preposition in this type of construction.

Notwithstanding this, the problems that were faced by Álvarez *et al.* are also applicable to the account proposed by Costa Casas *et al.* In particular, they do not explain a) the contribution made by the preposition to the interpretation of the sentence and b) the ungrammaticality of sentences including certain process verbs

as seen above. So, in the light of these problems and the various criteria examined so far, what new proposal can be developed that would account for the use of prepositional direct objects and at the same time resolve the problems raised in the previous discussion?

### 3. A NEW PROPOSAL FOR PREPOSITIONAL DIRECT OBJECTS

So far two features seem to be crucial to the grammatical use of direct object prepositions: a) an action verb of a certain type; and b) a durative situation. What type of action verb is required and the precise role played by the direct object are still open questions given the evidence seen thus far. Let us start by considering the verb type.

It seems incontrovertible that the verb which licenses the use of the preposition is an action verb. Moreover, it seems that achievement verbs are ruled out alongside state verbs. This leaves process verbs and accomplishment verbs as the only candidates for licensing the use of the preposition. In fact, the use of the preposition seems to interact in complex ways with these two types of verbs. Let us look at this interaction in some more detail.

First of all, verbs can change the type of situation they describe depending on whether they have a direct object or not. One of the implications of this, from a syntactic point of view, is that these verbs can behave transitively or intransitively. Compare the following:

- |         |                             |                    |                |
|---------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| (16) a) | María comeu                 | [+ process]        | [- transitive] |
|         | <i>María ate</i>            |                    |                |
| b)      | María comeu o queixo        | [+ accomplishment] | [+ transitive] |
|         | <i>María ate the cheese</i> |                    |                |

In the first example the verb *comer* describes a process, as it involves an action but there is no explicit endpoint.<sup>15</sup> By contrast, in the second example *comer* is no longer behaving like a process verb, but rather it has changed into an accomplishment verb, as now there is an endpoint (i.e. a result/an outcome: the eaten cheese). This means that the same verb can describe different situation types depending on the particular syntactic and semantic structure in which it is integrated. Compare these results to the following example:

- (17) María comeu no queixo  
*María ate cheese*

In this example the verb should behave like an accomplishment, because the *definite* direct object is present and should thus indicate that there is an endpoint. However, what is striking in this case is that now there is no linguistically manifest endpoint (i.e. the cheese has not been finished). The use of the preposition has changed the verb back to a *process* verb, and as a result has cancelled the otherwise available endpoint. This creates a paradoxical situation from a semantic point of view, as on the one hand we seem to have an accomplishment situation, but on the other the preposition has reverted the situation back to a process one. The resulting semantic interpretation is one in which María has been eating a specific cheese (resulting from the use of the definite article), but without the

verb phrase actually signalling that there was an endpoint (other than the past tense, which is not part of the event structure of the verb). Thus, in the semantic interpretation of this type of sentence, there is no outcome or result, which is normally associated with an accomplishment. So the preposition creates a hybrid sentence, having the structure of an accomplishment whilst at the same time having the meaning of a process. This contrasts with another process structure:

- (18) *María comeu queixo*  
*María ate cheese*

In this case, where there is a bare noun as direct object, without a definite or indefinite article, the interpretation is not that of an accomplishment, but rather that of a process. The difference between this structure and the one with the preposition is that the former sentence is not about a specific cheese. It is instead about *any* cheese. By contrast, the structure with the preposition encodes an interpretation in which the cheese is a specific one, but the process has not finished.

All these various structures enable Galician to have a range of subtle linguistic nuances. In particular there are five degrees of linguistic explicitness regarding the action of the verb in relation to the direct object, where in English or Spanish there are four:

(19) *Galician*

- |                                 |                 |                  |                                 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| a) <i>María comeu</i>           | [+ process]     | [+ non-specific] | [+ indeterminate] <sup>16</sup> |
| b) <i>María comeu queixo</i>    | [+ process]     | [- non-specific] | [+ indeterminate]               |
| c) <i>María comeu no queixo</i> | [+ process]     | [- non-specific] | [- indeterminate]               |
| d) <i>María comeu un queixo</i> | [+ accomplish.] | [- non-specific] | [+ indeterminate]               |
| e) <i>María comeu o queixo</i>  | [+ accomplish.] | [- non-specific] | [- indeterminate]               |

(20) *Spanish*

- |                                |                 |                  |                                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| a) <i>María comió</i>          | [+ process]     | [+ non-specific] | [+ indeterminate]               |
| b) <i>María comió queso</i>    | [+ process]     | [- non-specific] | [+ indeterminate]               |
| c) <i>María comió un queso</i> | [+ accomplish.] | [- non-specific] | [+ indeterminate]               |
| d) <i>María comió el queso</i> | [+ accomplish.] | [- non-specific] | [- indeterminate] <sup>17</sup> |

(21) *English*

- |                                |                 |                  |                                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| a) <i>María ate</i>            | [+ process]     | [+ non-specific] | [+ indeterminate]               |
| b) <i>María ate cheese</i>     | [+ process]     | [- non-specific] | [+ indeterminate]               |
| c) <i>María ate a cheese</i>   | [+ accomplish.] | [- non-specific] | [+ indeterminate]               |
| d) <i>María ate the cheese</i> | [+ accomplish.] | [- non-specific] | [- indeterminate] <sup>18</sup> |

The contrasts explored above seem to show that the role of prepositional direct objects in Galician is that of allowing further semantic interpretations. In particular, they allow the encoding of complex semantic meanings combining alteration of verb type and situation, with the maintenance of referential specificity. This seems to provide an answer to the first problem encountered by previous approaches to the phenomenon, which were unable to provide an account of the contribution of the preposition to the semantic interpretation of sentences in which they appear. How about the second problem mentioned above, regarding the apparent impossibility of using the preposition with some action verbs? Is there a solution to that problem within this new proposal?

The verbs that did not allow the preposition (*describir, comentar, cantar, bailar*) seem to be functioning as accomplishment verbs in the examples under discussion, (11) through to (14), as there was an outcome (e.g. the song and the salsa having being sung and danced respectively) and they were durative actions (e.g. the singing and the dancing took some time). So, something internal to those actions causes the ungrammaticality. In fact, what seems to be different between these four examples and all the others is that they do not involve *physical* manipulation of an object. In other words, it seems necessary for the direct object to be a physical object (e.g. a cheese, a book, clothes, etc.) on which the process can be carried out. It is this semantic feature in the direct object combined with an accomplishment verb that together license the structure. Moreover, the verb itself also has to be compatible with the physical feature of the direct object, involving some kind of physical manipulation of an object, as will be shown below. This new account can be summarized as follows:

(22) *New Proposal*

- a) Verb Functioning as Accomplishment Verb
- b) Verb with [+ physical] feature
- c) Direct Object with [+ physical] feature
- d) Verb Switching to Process Type

This would explain why examples (11) to (14) are ungrammatical, despite the fact that they are accomplishment verbs in a process type structure. The reason for their ungrammaticality is that all of them fail some of the criteria mentioned above. For example, sentence (11) involves a verb which does not involve physical manipulation of an object. Similarly, sentence (14) involves a physical action but the direct object is not a physical object. The same reasoning applies to the other two examples.

So far the discussion has concentrated on direct evidence from sentences incorporating the various types of verb described above. However, is there any further independent evidence for the alternative analysis proposed in this article?

## 5. FURTHER EVIDENCE

One piece of evidence that seems to corroborate the new analysis proposed in the previous section (i.e. that there is a semantic difference between the prepositional and the non-prepositional constructions as well as verb type restrictions) is the interaction of *temporal* complements with verb types. Of all the action verb types, only process verbs allow the use of bare durative temporal complements. Consider the following examples, where bare durative temporal complements are contrasted with non-bare ones:

(23) PROCESSES:

- a) Xoán traballou catro horas onte  
*Xoán worked four hours yesterday*
- b) Xoán traballou *durante catro horas* onte  
*Xoán worked for four hours yesterday*

## (24) ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- a) \* Xoán comeu unha mazán *catro horas* onte  
*Xoán ate an apple four hours yesterday*  
 b) Xoán comeu unha mazán *durante catro horas* onte  
*Xoán ate an apple for four hours yesterday*

## (25) ACHIEVEMENTS:

- a) \* Xoán recoñeceu a Pedro *catro horas* onte  
*Xoán recognized Peter four hours yesterday*  
 b) Xoán recoñeceu a Pedro *durante catro horas* onte  
*Xoán recognized Peter for four hours yesterday*

In example (23) the bare durative complement is acceptable with a process verb. In the other two examples, however, the complement is not acceptable as they do not include a process verb. These results are not surprising as processes are unconstrained by results or outcomes, in a similar way to the unconstrained nature of bare temporal complements, whereas accomplishments and achievements *are* constrained by results and outcomes, also in a parallel way to the prepositional temporal complements. This suggests that *bare* durative temporal complements (e.g. *catro horas*) *should* be allowed with accomplishment verbs, when they are used in conjunction with prepositional direct objects. In this case, the verbs would be switched to process type verbs by the use of the preposition, which would in turn make it possible to use bare temporal complements. This, in fact, seems to be the case, as shown below:

- (26) a) Xoán comeu *na* mazán *catro horas*  
 b) \*Xoán comeu a mazán *catro horas*  
 (27) a) María pintou *na* parede *catro horas*  
 b) \* María pintou a parede *catro horas*  
 (28) a) Xoán coseu *na* roupa *catro horas*  
 b) \* Xoán coseu a roupa *catro horas*

This piece of evidence seems to suggest that some sort of verb type change does in fact occur with prepositional direct objects (from accomplishment to process type) and that, as long as the direct object and verb involve a physical object and action respectively, the resulting structure is licensed.

Another piece of evidence supporting the analysis proposed above is that verbs which do not involve physical activity seem to rule out prepositional direct objects, even when the latter have the [+ physical] feature. Consider the following examples:

- (29) a) Uxía concebiu o libro  
*Uxía conceived the book*  
 b) \* Uxía concebiu *no* libro  
*Uxía conceived the book*  
 (30) a) Suso visualizou o edificio  
*Suso visualized the building*  
 b) \* Suso visualizou *no* edificio  
*Suso visualized the building*

- (31) a) Xepe comprendeu o problema  
*Xepe understood the problem*  
 b) \* Xepe comprendeu *no* problema  
*Xepe understood the problem*

All these examples involve non-physical verbs: *concebir*, *visualizar* and *comprender*, and the resulting constructions are not grammatical. Furthermore, although the first two structures include physical direct objects: *o libro* and *o edificio*, the resulting sentences are still ungrammatical, precisely because the verbs fail to meet the criteria requiring physical action. This corroborates further the fact that both the verb and the direct object need to be compatible with the [+ physical] feature. It also explains the strong intuition associated with prepositional direct objects that these constructions describe actions which involve sustained physical exertion and/or unrelenting activity in the action performed. This is precisely one of the hallmarks associated with the interpretation of this type of construction.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In this article an attempt has been made to analyse current hypotheses regarding prepositional direct objects in Galician. It has been claimed that although current ideas regarding this phenomenon have gone some way towards characterizing some of the factors involved, they face problems on a number of counts. In particular, current approaches do not explain the difference in semantic interpretation between non-prepositional and prepositional direct objects. Similarly, they do not explain why some action verbs do not license the use of the preposition.

The proposal presented in this article has attempted to go some way towards addressing these issues. It has been proposed that prepositional direct objects play an important role in altering the semantic interpretation of sentences. They switch the semantic interpretation from an accomplishment reading to a process reading. Moreover, they do so without altering the specific reference to an object in the world. As has been seen, this reflects a contrast between Galician on the one hand and Spanish and English on the other.

It has also been proposed that prepositional direct objects are licensed by verbs that display a complex behaviour. These verbs can in principle function as process verbs and, therefore, behave intransitively, without a direct object. In addition, they can be accomplishment verbs and, therefore, behave transitively, with a direct object. The crucial point here is that prepositional direct objects with *en* allow accomplishment verbs to be switched to process verbs and thus effect important aspectual changes in the semantic interpretation of the sentence. If the verbs are not intrinsically, or functioning as, accomplishment verbs, then the switching cannot be carried out and the preposition is not licensed. Equally, both the verb and the direct object must include a physical dimension in their semantic meaning for the prepositional construction to be allowed.

Finally, there are other prepositions apart from *en* which can also introduce direct objects in Galician, for example, *con*. However, it is likely that these prepositions affect different aspects of the semantic interpretation of the sentences in which they occur. This would be another line of investigation which would require further research.<sup>19</sup>

## NOTES

1 Rosario Álvarez, Xosé Luis Regueira & Henrique Monteagudo, *Gramática Galega* (Vigo: Galaxia, 1986).

2 Xoán Xosé Costa Casas, María dos Anxos González Refoxo, César Carlos Morán Fraga & Xoán Carlos Rábade Castiñeira, *Nova Gramática para a aprendizaxe da lingua* (A Coruña: Vía Lactea, 1988).

3 Henrique Monteagudo (Coordinator), *Galego Coloquial* (A Coruña: Editorial La Voz de Galicia, 1992).

4 See, for example, V. Zegarac, 'Pragmatics and Verbal Aspect', in *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics 2*, ed. J. Harris (London: University College London, 1990), 113–43.

5 See Z. Vendler, *Linguistics in Philosophy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell U.P., 1967), and Zegarac, 'Pragmatics and Verbal Aspect', 115.

6 'Outcome/result' in this context means that the action described by the verb produces some change and consequence, e.g. in: John recognized Peter, John found out who was the person he was looking at.

7 Álvarez *et al.*, *Gramática Galega*, 501; my translation.

8 For a discussion of these features, see Zegarac, 'Pragmatics and Verbal Aspect', 115 ff.

9 Adapted from Álvarez *et al.*, *Gramática Galega*.

10 It is important to note here that because of the use of the noun *without* article, the verbs in this and in example (4a) become process verbs, rather than accomplishment verbs. There is further discussion on this point below.

11 Monteagudo, *Galego Coloquial*, 87; my translation.

12 Vendler, *Linguistics in Philosophy*. The Vendlerian approach attempts to *explain* the properties and behaviour of different types of verb, as seen earlier. Thus, it provides a more theoretical framework to account for the Galician structures under discussion and is ultimately the framework behind Álvarez *et al.*'s description.

13 Costa Casas *et al.*, *Nova Gramática para a aprendizaxe da lingua*, 262; my translation.

14 This may seem a controversial statement to make, since there *seems* to be an endpoint encoded by the past tense in the examples at issue. However, it must be noted that saying that something was the case in the past does not mean that it is no longer the case in the present. This latter assumption is derived *pragmatically* and thus is not part of the *semantic* meaning of the sentence. In any case, what is of interest here is the *lexical* meaning of the verb, not the tense of the sentence, which is independent of the former. Thus, if no endpoint is *lexically* encoded by the verb, Costa Casas *et al.*'s criterion is not invalidated.

15 Of course, it is clear that at some point María must have stopped eating, but that is an inference made on the basis of our knowledge of the world, not our linguistic knowledge.

16 These features are merely used to explicate the differences in interpretation between the various sentences. No theoretical value is *necessarily* bestowed upon these specific ones.

17 It is worthwhile noting at this point that Spanish pronominal examples such as *María se comió el queso* are not equivalent to the Galician examples discussed here. The Spanish pronominal cases are associated with the semantic/thematic role of being beneficiary of an action, whereas the Galician examples are associated with aspectuality and verb types. A closer Spanish equivalent version might use a different verbal tense, e.g. 'comía' (for the missing 'en'). However, interestingly in this case the discursive role of the two sentences would be affected, as the imperfect in Spanish would function as a context (i.e. 'María comía el queso, cuando ...'), whereas in Galician the prepositional structure would not normally be interpreted as such.

18 It is also important to note here that although in English some phrasal verb constructions would be possible (e.g. *María ate up the cheese*), these do not equate to the meaning of the Galician constructions. In particular, the English expressions refer, for example, to the degree of completion of the action (e.g. in: *María ate up the cheese*, what is being said is that María ate, not some, but *all* the cheese). This is different from what is being conveyed in the Galician example, which relates to the verb type being communicated, whether it is a process or an accomplishment, but not the *degree* of completion.

19 This article is based on a paper delivered to the Association of Hispanists of Great Britain and Ireland Conference at the University of Hull, 28–31 March 1999. I am grateful to the participants and to an anonymous reviewer for their comments.

## “Presuppositional Effects in English and Galician”

Rosales Sequeiros, X. (1997) “Presuppositional Effects in English and Galician”.

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# Presuppositional effects in English and Galician<sup>1</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION

In this article I want to compare how English and Galician exploit different (para-linguistic and linguistic) strategies to obtain the same stylistic effects at propositional level. These effects have also been called presuppositional effects. A presuppositional effect can be broadly defined as the effect which results from the ordering of assumptions, motivated by the linguistic form of an utterance, which function as background in the interpretation of that utterance (Sperber & Wilson 1995). More specifically, the effects I will be examining here are those which arise from the interaction of pragmatics with the analytic implications of utterances, i.e. entailments (Levinson 1983: 174).

Although expressions in English and Galician often have identical semantic content, English uses stress quite freely to convey subtle differences in interpretation, whereas Galician uses word order with the same effects. This is a known phenomenon for languages with varying degrees of morphological elaboration (see, for example, D'Introno *et al.* 1988). Here, I want to provide arguments, within an explanatory framework, for this contrast between the two languages.

I will argue that there is a functional equivalence between the interaction of pragmatics with each of the two strategies mentioned and that this shows that English and Galician resort to different communicative strategies to achieve the same pragmatic effects. Although this, I hasten to add, does not mean that there are no other strategies available to them to achieve these or similar results. The pragmatic effects in question are what Wilson & Sperber (1979) have described as 'the organization of truth-conditions', or in more logical terms and as mentioned earlier, of the analytic implications of a given utterance. In cognitive terms, English and Galician can achieve this because there is a cost associated with each of the strategies, and that cost is different for each strategy cross-linguistically.

This specialisation can be understood within a cognitive framework that acknowledges the existence of cognitive effort in the interpretation process, and that spells out precisely how the effects arise. The framework I will be using is that of Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson 1995). In

what follows I will present the evidence and will continue by putting forward an explanation based on the notions this approach provides.

### CROSS-LINGUISTIC EVIDENCE

Both English and Galician have, by default, unmarked final stress (Quirk & Greenbaum 1973: 406; Costa Casas *et al.* 1988: 60) and similar basic word order, namely, Subject Verb Object (SVO) (Ouhalla 1994: 209; Costa Casas *et al.* 1988: 269; Álvarez *et al.* 1986: 515ff.), as examples (1) and (2) show:

- (1) John bought the CAR<sup>2</sup>  
 (2) Xoan mercou                      o COCHE  
     *John bought-3<sup>rd</sup>pers.sing.<sup>3</sup> the CAR*

The propositional form (i.e. the semantic or truth-conditional content) associated with (1) and (2) is identical. Both examples have the same truth-conditions: they would be true only if John bought the (designated) car. Pragmatically they are also identical: for example, both can be construed as an answer to the same question: namely, *What did John buy?* This point will be expanded below.

However, English and Galician differ in the way they achieve presuppositional effects. These effects are the result of stylistic variations in the way the propositional content of the utterances is expressed. In English, presuppositional effects may be achieved by means of stress-shifting, whereas in Galician the same effects can be obtained by changing the word order. This is shown in the following two examples (3) and (4):

- (3) JOHN bought the car  
 (4) O coche mercouno XOAN  
     *The car bought-it JOHN*

The propositional form of the utterances (3) and (4) is the same, and is also identical to that of the utterances (1) and (2). They would be true under the same conditions, namely, in a world in which John bought the designated car. However, their pragmatic effects are slightly different from those of (1) and (2). For example, (3) and (4) would be appropriate answers to the question: *Who bought the car?*

To be sure, examples (3) and (4) differ from each other in the way these effects are achieved. The only difference that the English example (3) has introduced in relation to (1) is stress-shift from final to initial position. In the case of (4), the difference is syntactic: the subject moves from initial to final position and the object splits into two parts: a clitic part which re-

mains obligatorily attached to the verb in object position (i.e. *no*) and an optional nominal object which is fronted (i.e. *O coche*).<sup>4</sup>

The contrasting effects of the stress and word order strategies in English and Galician are clearly exposed if we try to switch them across languages. The results are clearly different, as shown in (5) and (6):

- (5) The car bought it JOHN  
(6) XOAN mercou o coche  
    *JOHN bought the car*

Sentence (5) is not acceptable because English does not allow subject movement in the way Galician does, and, furthermore, (6) does not achieve the same interpretation as (4), because in Galician intonational pattern change is disruptive. Or, as I will argue below, it is very costly in cognitive terms (more so than word-order shift). (6) would be best understood as attitudinal: for example, echoing a previous utterance to express surprise, etc., in clear contrast to what is intended in (4), where no such attitude need be communicated.

Thus, the effects of stress change are markedly different in the two languages: in English it can give rise to either presuppositional effects or attitudinal effects (e.g. contrast), or both; whereas in Galician it gives rise to attitudinal effects only. Hence, to obtain the same presuppositional effects we need to use different strategies cross-linguistically: stress in English, word order in Galician.

But, crucially, how can we capture this difference in cognitive terms and provide an explanatory account of presuppositional effects across the two languages? I will devote the rest of this article to answering this question.

## PRESUPPOSITIONAL EFFECTS IN ENGLISH AND GALICIAN

What I want to argue here is that English and Galician have different cognitive costs associated with stress and syntax. Hence, given a basic word order and stress pattern, in English it is more costly to alter the word order than the stress pattern; in Galician the situation is reversed. This makes it possible to neutralise the cross-linguistic differences at pragmatic level (i.e. the level at which contextual assumptions are taken into account) by interchanging the strategies across the languages. In which case the results achieved will be the same (as (3) and (4) show).

The equivalence between stress and word order cross-linguistically is a well-known phenomenon which contrasts languages with a low and a high degree of morphological elaboration (see, for example, D'Introno *et al.* 1988; Firbas 1966). D'Introno *et al.* (1988: 186) state this clearly in the case of English and Spanish:

El orden de las palabras es un recurso que usan las lenguas como el español, lenguas con una morfología muy elaborada, para marcar el tema y el rema. Otras lenguas usan otros recursos, de tipo fonológico. En inglés, el tema y el rema se identifican más bien por medio de recursos fonológicos: el rema tiene una entonación más alta y, a menudo, un volumen más alto que el tema. Este recurso se usa también en español, aunque de manera menos usual que el orden de palabras, sobre todo para marcar un rema contrastante, es decir, un rema que además de ser información nueva contradice una información aceptada o presupuesta por el interlocutor.

This can also be shown for Galician by comparing examples (1) and (2) to (3) and (4) in more detail. As we saw earlier, in (1) and (2) there is no pragmatic difference between English and Galician. In those utterances the stress and syntactic pattern is standard cross-linguistically: unmarked final stress and SVO syntactic order. Both utterances give rise to the same interpretation. We can thus say that, in these standard conditions, English and Galician behave similarly across linguistic levels (except for the phonological level).

This equivalent pragmatic behaviour can be shown by appealing to the properties commonly associated with the linguistic contrasts variously called given–new information, theme–rheme, focus–presupposition, topic–comment, etc. Contrasts which I will define here by simply saying that they capture a strong intuitive tendency to draw a distinction between information which sets the scene (information generally taken to be already available to the hearer) and information which tells us something about it (information generally taken to be new to him or her). (For further discussion of this see, for example, Chafe 1976; Firbas 1966; Halliday 1967; and Reinhart 1981.) The properties in question are spelt out in what follows (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 202ff.; see also Halliday 1967).

Firstly, old information tends to come first and new information second, which is what we saw happen in the standard examples (1) and (2). In example (3) this changed, giving rise to different presuppositional effects (see below). Secondly, stress helps focus the attention of the hearer on a constituent of the utterance: it acts as a ‘pointing’ device and indicates that the constituent is to be entertained as foreground information. Moreover, given the structured nature of language, placing stress on the smallest *focally stressed constituent* (i.e. the smallest phrase in which the focused word is located) may be used to draw attention to any of the more inclusive constituents of the utterance. These constituents may consequently become the *focus*. In this respect, examples (1) and (2) have (broadly speaking) equivalent constituent structure, as shown in (7):

- (7) a.  $[_S [_{Np} \text{John}] [_{vp} [_v \text{bought}] [_{Np} \text{the car}]]]]^s$   
 b.  $[_S [_{Np} \text{Xoan}] [_{vp} [_v \text{mercou}] [_{Np} \text{o coche}]]]]$

This not only shows their syntactic similarity but also lays the right structural conditions for their identical focal scales, as we will see below.

Thirdly, the focus of a declarative utterance is widely thought to provide an answer to a question. Furthermore, this question is taken to be implicit in the context. Not only this, but given the *constituent* structure of utterances (see, for example, Ouhalla 1994), all inclusive constituents could be potentially highlighted too. These inclusive constituents are the analytic implications of the utterance. Each of these analytic implications can function as background to the immediately narrower inclusive constituent or as foreground to the immediately wider inclusive constituent. Thus, on an interpretation which takes the hearer to the full propositional form (i.e. to the complete thought expressed by the utterance), the only analytic implication that should be exclusively foregrounded should coincide precisely with the propositional form in the examples from both languages. And this can be shown to be the case by finding a question which will take the propositional form as an answer. Such a question could be: *What did John buy?* The focal scale will be equivalent in both of them (reflecting their semantic identity), as shown in (8) and (9), corresponding to (1) and (2) respectively:

- (8) a. Something is the case  
       *What is the case?*  
       b. John did something  
       *What did John do?*  
       c. John bought something  
       *What did John buy?*  
       d. John bought the car<sup>6</sup>
- (9) a. Algo ocorreu<sup>7</sup>  
       ¿*Que ocorreu?*  
       b. Xoan fixo algo  
       ¿*Que fixo Xoan?*  
       c. Xoan mercou algo  
       ¿*Que mercou Xoan?*  
       d. Xoan mercou o coche

Following Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory, whose Principle of Relevance states that 'every utterance (or other act of ostensive communication) creates an expectation of [optimal] relevance' (Wilson & Sperber 1993: 286), and where an utterance achieves optimal relevance if and only if: [a] 'it achieves enough contextual effects to be worth the hearer's attention'; and [b] 'it puts the hearer to no gratuitous processing effort in achieving those effects' (Wilson & Sperber 1993: 286), a background analytic implication achieves relevance 'by giving access to a context in which fur-

ther implications will have contextual effects' and a foreground analytic implication 'by yielding contextual effects in its own right' (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 209). Hence, in (8) and (9) the analytic implications (a-c) are backgrounded and the propositional form (d) is the only implication which is exclusively foregrounded.

The fourth property commonly associated with the linguistic contrasts mentioned above is the hierarchical nature of the focal structure (cf. Firbas 1966). That is, the potential foci are ordered according to their degree of salience. The smallest focally stressed constituent is the most prominent in a series of inclusively less prominent foci. The nested and gradient structure, as shown in (8) and (9), can be obtained by substituting the smallest highlighted constituent by a (semantic) variable. The process is then repeated with the next smallest inclusive constituent, which becomes highlighted as a result of the variable substitution. Thus, the respective gradient focal scales for (8d) and (9d) would be (10) and (11) respectively:

(10) THE CAR  
BOUGHT [SOMETHING]  
JOHN [DID SOMETHING]

(11) O COCHE  
MERCOU [ALGO]  
XOAN [FIXO ALGO]

From the last few points made, we can infer that the information distribution in (1) and (2) is similar. That is to say, on the assumption that hearers found it optimally relevant to derive all the analytic implications up to, and including, the propositional form, examples (1) and (2) would give rise to equivalent focal scales and focal gradation, and thus would presuppose similar pragmatic conditions.

However, in (3) and (4) the similarities across linguistic levels are fewer than in the cases just discussed. Phonologically and syntactically (3) and (4) are different from each other. In particular, the syntactic structure of (3) remains the same as that of (1), whereas (4)'s becomes (12):

(12) [<sub>S</sub> [<sub>Np</sub> *O coche*<sub>1</sub>] [<sub>S</sub> [<sub>Np</sub> *t*<sub>2</sub>] [<sub>Vp</sub> [<sub>Vp</sub> [<sub>V</sub> *mercou*] [<sub>Np</sub> *no*<sub>1</sub>] ] ] [<sub>Np</sub> *Xoan*<sub>2</sub>] ] ] ]

where, as we saw earlier, the nominal object has moved to the front of the utterance and adjoins the S node, a pronominal clitic has taken its place attached to the verb and the noun has moved to the end of the utterance adjoining the VP node.

The only level where they clearly achieve equivalence is pragmatic; that is, they are relevant in the same context. This is illustrated by the fact that (3) and (4) could be construed as answers to the same question: *Who bought*

*the car?* Moreover, this question is part of a focal scale which is identical in both cases, as shown in (13) and (14) respectively:

- (13) a. Someone bought the car  
*Who bought the car?*  
b. John bought the car [Propositional Form]  
'JOHN bought the car' [Surface Structure]
- (14) a. Alguén mercou o coche  
*¿Quen mercou o coche?*  
b. Xoan mercou o coche [Propositional Form]  
'O coche mercouno XOAN' [Surface Structure]

In this case the focal scales are shorter than, and different from, those of (8) and (9). This is due to the pragmatic effect of stress shift (in English) and syntactic movement (in Galician). The strategies are different but the result is the same. The effect of the changes is a rearranging of the analytic implications to the extent that most of them have disappeared from the focal scale. In fact, the analytic implications available as a result of the alterations differ from those derived in (8) and (9). Note that these pragmatic effects have not altered the propositional form of the utterances as attested by (8d) and (9d), on the one hand, and (13b) and (14b), on the other. In other words, despite the focal scale alteration (caused by stress shift and syntactic movement), the semantic or truth-conditional content remains the same across all four examples.

Knowledge assumed to be shared by the speaker and the hearer in (1) and (2) varies slightly from that in (3) and (4). In the former cases, no information is necessarily shared by the speaker and the hearer (as regards the propositional content expressed), whereas in the latter cases all the implications analytically derivable from the utterances (but not actually deduced) are taken to be so strongly manifest to the hearer as to not require derivation. In relevance-theoretic terms, the derivation of those analytic implications will not yield enough cognitive effects to offset the effort expended in their processing, as they are assumed to be already present in the working memory of the hearer. And any effects that might be produced should, by that time, have been derived. Hence, the speaker should have envisaged the following scenario in the hearer's mind (both in the English and Galician cases), as shown in (15) and (16):

- (15) a. Something is the case  
*What is the case?*  
b. Someone did something  
*What did someone do?*

- c. Someone bought something  
*What did someone buy?*

*Implications Not Deduced*

---

*Implications Deduced*

- d. Someone bought the car  
*Who bought the car?*  
 e. John bought the car

- (16) a. Algo ocorreu  
       ¿*Que ocorreu?*  
 b. Alguén fixo algo  
       ¿*Que fixo alguén?*  
 c. Alguén mercou algo  
       ¿*Que mercou alguén?*

*Implications Not Deduced*

---

*Implications Deduced*

- d. Alguén mercou o coche  
       ¿*Quen mercou o coche?*  
 e. Xoan mercou o coche

The consequences of these focal structures are important for communication in both languages. Firstly, no constituent other than the subject can be internally focalised, i.e. there cannot be other more inclusive foci which may be considered to be optimally relevant in the context of (3) or (4). Secondly, no questions other than the one in (15/16d) are relevant enough. Thirdly, there is no gradient focal structure, as the only possible focus is 'John/Xoan'. The results of these predictions will provide evidence for the claim that there is a pragmatic equivalence between (3) and (4) or, in other words, between stress and word order in English and Galician, and that this is due to the processing cost associated with these strategies in each language.

We can test these predictions by attempting to elicit implications which are assumed not to have been deduced. This can be done by asking 'focal' questions which in the context of (1) and (2) *are* relevant but *not* in the context of (3) and (4), and observe whether the utterance would constitute an answer with the intended import (a similar strategy is also used by Blakemore 1988). The questions are drawn from (15) and (16) as shown in (17) and (18):

- (17) a. *What is the case?*  
       ? JOHN bought the car

- b. *What did someone do?*  
?? JOHN bought the car
- c. *What did someone buy?*  
?? JOHN bought the car
- (18) a. *¿Que ocorreu?*  
? O coche mercouno XOAN
- b. *¿Que fixo alguén?*  
?? O coche mercouno XOAN
- c. *¿Que mercou alguén?*  
?? O coche mercouno XOAN

It is clear that in cases (17/18a), the answers emphasise *John/Xoan*, i.e. they invite us to dig into our encyclopaedic knowledge about John/Xoan. In the English example, this *then* leads to subsequent unstressed information, namely, that he *bought the car*. In the Galician example, the unstressed information precedes the focus, i.e. the old information comes first. In both answers the old information is presupposed to be highly accessible. The situation implicit in these pairs ((17a) and (18a)) is in contrast to what was intended in our original examples (3) and (4). There, the fact that somebody had bought the car was already implicit common knowledge (which isn't manifestly assumed in the questions under (17a) and (18a)), and therefore the interpretation was different, for example, a correction (it was not *Peter* but *John* who bought the car). In (17/18a) the situation seems to be somewhat illogical as the questions don't presuppose any knowledge about the situation whereas the answers do (i.e. they presuppose (15/16d)).

Examples (17/18b-c) are distinctly odd, as the questions (*What...?/¿Que...?*) point the hearer in one direction (events in (17/18b), and entities in (17/18c)), but the answers point in manifestly different directions.<sup>8</sup> There is a subtle mismatch in the assumptions made about the cognitive environments assumed to be shared by the speaker and the hearer. This is clearly shown by the focal gradation discrepancy. In (17/18c), for instance, the question makes it obvious that an optimally relevant answer should contain a focus which highlights a constituent capable of instantiating the variable *What/Que*. However, the answer provided does not live up to the expectation because its smallest focally stressed constituent would only be optimally relevant as an answer to a question containing a variable such as *Who/Quen*, in clear contrast with the information which would be compatible with the implicit question. Furthermore, given the syntactic structure of the utterances (see above) the only optimally relevant constituent available within them (i.e. *bought the car/mercouno*) has an ineffectual degree of activation because of its low and distant location in the right and

left hand side of the two syntactic structures respectively (see (7a) and (12)).

If we compare the above results to a similar test for (1) and (2), where the combination of stress and syntactic form does not necessarily give rise to assumptions about the speaker and hearer sharing any of the information conveyed by the utterance, we can see that, in clear contrast to (3) and (4), we can have alternative internal foci, alternative focal questions and a gradient focal structure, all perfectly compatible with the propositional form, as shown by the following pairs in (19) and (20):

- (19) a. *What is the case?*  
John bought the CAR
- b. *What did John do?*  
John bought the CAR
- c. *What did John buy?*  
John bought the CAR
- (20) a. *¿Que ocorreu?*  
Xoan mercou o COCHE
- b. *¿Que fixo Xoan?*  
Xoan mercou o COCHE
- c. *¿Que mercou Xoan?*  
Xoan mercou o COCHE

The questions in (19/20), unlike those in (17/18), show that there can be other internal foci, namely, the whole sentence in (19/20a), the Verb Phrase in (19/20b) and the Noun Phrase *the CAR/o COCHE* in (19/20c). Similarly, there can be a larger range of focal questions. This is shown by the fact that all the questions introduced in (19/20) are appropriately answered by (1) and (2), again in clear contrast to (17/18). Finally, the focal gradation is similarly shown by (8) and (9), as opposed to (13) and (14). In the former cases the gradient foci are ordered as in (10) and (11), whereas in the latter cases the only possible focus is *John/Xoan*.

Interestingly, each of the possible foci in (8) and (9) are isolated by the questions in the contexts of (19) and (20) without the focus being shifted from final position. This corroborates the fact that all the analytically implied foci specified in (10) and (11) can be deduced in the processing of (8) and (9), in clear contrast to (13) and (14), where most of the analytic implications aren't deduced. In other words, most of the analytic implications that can be logically derived from (13) and (14) are not relevant enough to be actually deduced. They are assumed to be already manifest in the context of the utterances and their derivation would involve unjustifiable effort, i.e. they would not trigger enough contextual effects for the processing cost incurred in inferring them. This contrasts with (8) and (9)

where all their analytic implications can, in principle, be relevant, and therefore be deduced.

## CONCLUSION

In the previous discussion I have shown that (3) and (4) are relevant in the same way at a pragmatic level. That is, they highlight the same analytic implications. An immediate consequence of this is that stress-shift and word order must be responsible for their similarity, as nothing else has changed.<sup>9</sup> In fact, the changes undergone by (3) and (4) in relation to (1) and (2) must be stylistic, given that their propositional content is identical. As Quirk and Greenbaum (1973: 406) put it, 'judicious ordering and placing of emphasis may be important for the proper understanding of the message and its implications'.

Since the stress and syntactic changes are not representational elements of communication (i.e. they do not carry conceptual content), they must trigger natural cognitive processes. That is, they must affect the way we understand the propositional form expressed by the utterances. This is in line with a more general hypothesis about an explanatory theory of style made by Sperber & Wilson (1995). They argue that the key to accounting for the differences between two utterances with the same truth-conditions but different linguistic form lies 'in their contextual effects and in the processing effort they require' (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 202). And the conclusion I draw from this is that, all else being equal, when these equivalent stylistic effects are achieved across languages by means of different strategies, the procedures they trigger must incur the same relative cognitive cost.

In relevance-theoretic terms this makes sense, as processing effort resulting from cognitive processes has a privileged place in the theory. An optimally relevant interpretation will be one which is derived without unjustifiable processing effort. This means that any phenomenon that helped reduce processing costs would give rise to a cognitive advantage, and this seems to be the case with stress and word order in English and Galician respectively. Sperber & Wilson themselves (1995: 204) argue that 'for a speaker aiming at optimal relevance, efficient exploitation of...[the] temporal sequencing is crucial'. Moreover, 'stress placement, like *other stylistic features* [e.g. word-order], should be looked at in terms of processing effort' (my emphasis). Stress (and I would add other sub-propositional stylistic devices, such as the sequentiality inherent in word order) is viewed here as 'a purely natural device for pinpointing some noteworthy aspect of an utterance' (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 212). In English, stress is a cognitively inexpensive way of altering the salience of analytic implications; whereas in Galician it is much more disruptive and the same cognitive role is played by word order. As Sperber & Wilson (1995: 213) put it 'greater

disruption implies greater processing effort and, other things being equal, lowered acceptability'. Hence, we would expect that the resulting contextual effects of an utterance which had undergone permissible alterations of word order in English, and stress in Galician, should parallel the *disruption* described above in terms of analytic implications.

To conclude I will say that these differences between languages do not, in principle, limit the expression of the same richness of thought. What they do do is reflect the various natural strategies available to communicate thought (our private language) by means of natural language (our public language).

## NOTES

1. An earlier version of this article was delivered to the III Postgraduate Hispanists' Conference at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, 5–6 January 1995, and I am grateful to the participants for their comments. I would particularly like to thank Deirdre Wilson and John Rutherford. Of course, the responsibility for its shortcomings is entirely mine.
2. Throughout this paper capitalised words indicate stress, except in examples (10) and (11). Stress here is viewed as the highlighting of a grammatical constituent by means of both volume and pitch (see Bolinger 1980; and Chafe 1976 for further distinctions), functioning as a device for focusing our attention on relevant information.
3. To make matters simpler I will exclude from subsequent translations verbal endings indicating person (*pers.*) and number (*sing.*), as all examples used here are in third person singular.
4. Note that (as pointed out to me by Benigno Fernández Salgado) a possible, and more restrictively used, equivalence of (4) in English would be the passive *The car was bought by John*. The use of this structure complements, in some contexts, the intonational strategy.
5. Note that I am using a very simple constituent structure:  $S \rightarrow NP VP$ ;  $VP \rightarrow V NP$ .
6. Note that I am assuming that the definite article does not have any effect on the analytic implications. Its effects are of a different kind, not discussed here.
7. I take it that *Something is the case* and *Something happened* serve the same purpose here, as they both represent the fact that something is manifest to the hearer. I have chosen the second alternative in Galician for reasons to do with translation.
8. Note that the answers in (17/18b–c) could be made appropriate if they were broken up into two intonational and processing units as opposed to just one as intended here. This alternative scenario would allow each intonational and processing unit to instantiate one of the two semantic variables present in the questions. The two units would thus provide appropriate indications and enough information to instantiate all the semantic variables. This is, however, a topic that calls for further research into the tripartite relationship between intonation, pragmatics and cognition.

9. Except for the introduction of the clitic in Galician, which is otherwise compatible with the fronting and backgrounding of the nominal direct object. Pragmatically, the introduction of this clitic emphasises the existence of a topicalised object in the situation, precisely the object that is being talked about (see Givón 1987: 177).

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“Interpretive Use of Language in Galician:  
the Case of *Disque* and *Seica*”

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## Interpretive use of language in Galician: the case of *disque* and *seica*<sup>1</sup>

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Galician grammars<sup>2</sup> in general make two points regarding the lexical items *disque*, 'apparently, it is said that', and *seica*, 'apparently, it seems that'.<sup>3</sup> They state that (a) these items are adverbs, and (b) semantically, they express doubt. This article is concerned mainly with the second of these claims. In particular, arguments are presented against the classification of *disque* and *seica* as adverbs of doubt; it is argued that this classification does not capture their semantic meaning. A number of counter-examples are considered in this respect, including etymological issues, substitution tests, and the semantic intuitions of native speakers. An alternative approach based on their cognitive function is then proposed, and it is argued that the meaning of *disque* and *seica* is best analysed from a cognitive point of view. From this stand point, they can be characterised as special to interpretive use of language: that is, they are used to echo another person's thought or utterance and in the process to distance oneself from the proposition expressed. In this respect, *disque* and *seica* allow us, as communicators, to carry out two tasks simultaneously. They enable us not only to express propositional content, but also to indicate explicitly our own attitude towards that content. Hence, in using these adverbs a speaker is carrying out a double communicative act: an informative one and an attitudinal one. In what follows, the traditional analysis proposed by existing grammars is first introduced and, subsequently, some counter-arguments are discussed in some detail. An alternative account is then presented, based on the notions made available within the theoretical framework of Relevance Theory.<sup>4</sup>

The traditional analysis of *disque* and *seica*, as stated earlier, regards these lexical items as adverbs of doubt. Álvarez et al. claim that '*seica* and *disque* indicate that the speaker is not certain about the truth of the utterance produced, but that he accepts it as likely'.<sup>5</sup> The same claims are made by Costas Casas et al.,<sup>6</sup> who also classify these two words as adverbs of doubt, together with other adverbs such as *talvez*, 'perhaps', and *quizais*, 'perhaps'. Let us see an example of each:<sup>7</sup>

- (1) *Disque* lle roubaron o coche ó Venancio.  
'Apparently, Venancio's car has been stolen.'
- (2) O fillo do Carlos *seica* quere marchar para A Coruña a traballar.  
'Carlos's son *apparently* wants to go to A Coruña to work.'

The meaning of these sentences, following the traditional analysis, could be paraphrased as follows (where the equivalent paraphrase of the adverbs in question is italicised):

- (1') *É probable que* lle roubaran o coche ó Venancio.  
'It is probable that Venancio's car has been stolen.'
- (2') *Non sei se é certo que* o fillo do Carlos quere marchar para A Coruña a traballar.  
'I don't know if it is true that Carlos's son wants to go to A Coruña to work.'

In (1') what is stated is that the situation described is probable, whereas in (2') it is stated that there is no certainty about that situation; this uncertainty, according to the traditional analysis, is the semantic core of the two adverbs in question. They would consequently fall alongside other adverbs, such as *quizais*, *talvez* or *acaso*, 'maybe'.<sup>8</sup> Thus, again according to the traditional analysis, a semantic parallelism could be established between the examples (1) and (3), on the one hand, and (2) and (4), on the other:

- (3) *Talvez* lle roubaron o coche ó Venancio.  
'Perhaps Venancio's car has been stolen.'
- (4) O fillo do Carlos *quizais* quere marchar para A Coruña a traballar.  
'Perhaps Carlos's son perhaps wants to go to A Coruña to work.'

In these new versions *talvez* and *quizais* are used instead of the original adverbs, which by hypothesis should preserve the original meaning, leaving aside for the moment any possible stylistic differences. In fact, this purported equivalence raises the first problem of the traditional analysis. The first counter-argument, meanwhile, is precisely the joint classification of adverbs such as *disque*, *seica*, *quizais*, *talvez*, or *acaso*. If all these adverbs were of the same type, one would expect that, stylistic matters aside, there should be a certain synonymity between them; this should, for instance, allow us to interchange them. Thus, for example, one would expect that if in (5) the adverb *quizais* is substituted for *talvez*, the result, in (6), should not substantially alter the semantic interpretation nor should it give rise to changes in our intuitions of its grammaticality:

- (5) *Quizais* chova mañá.  
'It may rain tomorrow.'
- (6) *Talvez* chova mañá.  
'It may rain tomorrow.'

Indeed, the substitution effected in this example does not substantially change either the meaning of the sentence or intuitions of its grammaticality: even the subjunctive mood is maintained. This is exactly what would be expected if the traditional classification was correct.

There is, however, a subtle but important difference in the case of the adverbs in which we are interested here. For example, there is a difference between (1) and (3). In (3) the doubt is expressed explicitly by the adverb *talvez*, which is part of its *semantic* content. In (1), by contrast, the element of doubt found in the interpretation, if it exists at all, is not part of the semantic content, but is rather the result of the *pragmatic* interpretation of the utterance. To illustrate this, let us take the following example (where the question mark indicates that there are reservations about the utterance's contextual appropriateness, and the asterisk that the utterance is clearly contextually inappropriate):

- (7) A: ¿Que pasou?  
'What's happened?'  
B1: Disque houbo un accidente.  
'Apparently there has been an accident.'  
B2: ?\* Talvez/acaso/quizais houbo un accidente.  
'Perhaps/maybe/perhaps there has been an accident.'

It seems clear that in this example, in contrast with what happened in examples (5) and (6) (where the substitution did not alter the semantic content of the utterance), the answer B1 does not have the same semantic content as the answer B2. In B2, the speaker is questioning the veracity of the fact described (*perhaps, maybe*), which falls short of A's expectations, hence the lack of contextual appropriateness. However, in B1 the speaker is interpretively *attributing* the content of the utterance (*apparently*), and thus explicitly distancing himself from the proposition expressed. In other words, he is able to answer A's question and avoid committing himself to what is being said, all of which is contextually felicitous. This attribution is, of course, what can subsequently give rise to a pragmatic interpretation in which there is uncertainty about the truth of the content of the utterance. But the uncertainty is not an inherent (i.e. semantic) part of its meaning: the doubt, if it is conveyed, is the result of identifying the strength of commitment that one is prepared to give to the truth of the proposition expressed. This is a pragmatic process which is part of the interpretation of all utterances and consists in establishing the degree of guarantee that the speaker offers about the truth of the content expressed in the utterance. As Blakemore argues: 'identifying the strength of this guarantee is part of the [utterance] interpretation process'.<sup>9</sup> Thus, in the case of *disque* and *seica* considerations of doubt may, when required, follow from the general processes of pragmatic interpretation, which are

applied to all utterances. However, this also means that, contrary to what traditional analysts claim, there will be instances in which there is no doubt about the situation described. An example of this, in which the adverb *seica* is present, can be found when two interlocutors are witnessing the same situation and one, A, describes what they are seeing to the other, B:

- (8) (B is witnessing the work of the paramedics in an accident. At that point A arrives and addresses B:)  
A: *Seica houbo un accidente.*  
'It looks like that there has been an accident.'

In this situation, it is obvious to both A and B that there has been an accident. In other words, A cannot be doubting the existence of the state of affairs described. In particular, *seica* could not be substituted by *quizais* without changing the meaning of the sentence and thus without its becoming contextually odd. Examples of this type contradict the claims made within the traditional analysis. The adverb *seica* in this case could not be classified as an adverb of doubt. The propositional attitudes that A communicates (so as to establish an interpersonal relationship) arise from the attribution, as will be discussed later.

The attributive nature of this type of adverb can be seen more clearly if we go back to example (7). The answer B1, which could not be substituted by answer B2 (indicating doubt), *can* be substituted by answer B3 (indicating attribution), as shown in (9):

- (9) A: *¿Que pasou?*  
'What happened?'  
B3: *Dinme que houbo un accidente.*  
'I am told that there has been an accident.'

This substitution is, of course, not surprising, since the etymology of the adverb *disque* originates in the verb *dicir*, 'to say' (precisely a verb which indicates attribution of utterances or even, indirectly, thoughts), plus the conjunction *que*, 'that'.<sup>10</sup>

Thus far it has been argued that *disque* and *seica* cannot be semantically equated with adverbs of doubt; in this section, their attributive nature is explored in more detail. It is argued that this is precisely what distinguishes them from the other adverbs of the group mentioned above. The *Diccionario Xerais da Lingua* illustrates the point clearly:

- (10) **disque** (dicir + que). adv. Dise que; din que; coméntase; óese; seica.<sup>11</sup>  
'disque (to say + that). adv. It is said that; people say that; it is commented that; it is heard that; apparently.'

This entry provides several synonymous expressions which, style aside, can be used instead of *disque*; for example:

- (11) A: ¿Que pasou?  
'What happened?'  
B4: Din que houbo un accidente.  
'They are saying that there has been an accident.'  
B5: *Dise que* houbo un accidente.  
'It is being said that there has been an accident.'  
B6: *Coméntase que* houbo un accidente.  
'It is being commented that there has been an accident.'  
B7: *Óese que* houbo un accidente.  
'It is being heard that there has been an accident.'  
B8: *Seica* houbo un accidente.  
'Apparently there has been an accident.'

All these expressions, amongst others, have a basic meaning of attribution, in contrast with the other adverbs discussed above. The adverbial (as opposed to verbal) nature of *disque* allows it to be integrated and used flexibly within the syntactic structure of the sentence (e.g. at the beginning, in the middle or at the end), which would not be possible with most of the other expressions in (10) unless they were used parenthetically. Thus, consider the following example:

- (12) O mariñeiro *disque* viu unha serea mais eu coido que mente.<sup>12</sup>  
'The sailor has apparently seen a mermaid, but I think that he is lying.'

In this example, *disque* cannot be substituted by another adverb indicating doubt without substantially changing the meaning of the utterance; this is in fact a typical case in which *disque* is used to attribute utterances. The speaker here attributes an utterance to someone (unknown) regarding the sailor (that he has seen a mermaid). In other words, the semantic function of *disque* is not that of communicating doubt, as is clearly shown in the contrast with the following example:

- (12') O mariñeiro *talvez/quizais/acaso* viu unha serea mais eu coido que mente.  
'Perhaps/maybe the sailor has seen a mermaid, but I think that he is lying.'

In (12) the contribution of *disque* is that of attributing, whereas in (12') the adverbial contribution is that of indicating doubt about the veracity of the proposition expressed. The two examples could be paraphrased respectively as follows:

- (12'') a. The sailor has said that he has seen a mermaid, but I think that he is lying.  
b. It may be true that the sailor has seen a mermaid, but I think that he is lying.

Note also that *disque* and *seica* are never used with the subjunctive, which is often used to indicate doubt. This contrasts with the fact that genuine adverbs of doubt do take the subjunctive, as shown in the following examples:

- (12''') a. \* O mariñeiro *disque* *vise* unha serea mais eu coido que mente.  
'The sailor has *apparently* seen (subj.) a mermaid, but I think that he is lying.'  
b. O mariñeiro *talvez/quizais/acaso* *vise* unha serea mais eu coido que mente.  
'*Perhaps/maybe* the sailor has seen (subj.) a mermaid, but I think that he is lying.'

The same can be said of *seica*. Consider the following example:

- (13) ... un relatorio presentado no Congreso Internacional de Socioloxía da Cidade de México que *seica* non foi publicado.<sup>13</sup>  
'... a paper delivered to the International Conference on Sociology in Mexico City which was *apparently* not published.'

Here we cannot substitute for *seica* genuine adverbs of doubt without altering the meaning:

- (13') ... un relatorio presentado no Congreso Internacional de Socioloxía da Cidade de México que *talvez/quizais/acaso* non foi publicado.  
'...a paper delivered to the International Conference on Sociology in Mexico City which *perhaps/maybe* was not published.'

What is being communicated in (13) is not primarily doubt, but rather that the proposition expressed by the utterance is attributed to a person (not mentioned). This in itself may raise doubts, but it is already part of the pragmatic, not semantic, interpretation of the utterance. Note, however, that as in the case of *disque*, *seica* can also be substituted by other attributive expressions:

- (14) ... un relatorio presentado no Congreso Internacional de Socioloxía da Cidade de México que *se di/din/se comenta que* non foi publicado.  
'...a paper delivered to the International Conference on Sociology in Mexico City which *it is said/people say/it is commented* was not published.'

In this sense, the definition provided by the *Diccionario Xerais da Lingua* is less accurate as far as *seica* is concerned:

- (15) *seica* (sei + ca). adv. Expresa dúbida: acaso, tal vez, *disque* (*¿seica che sabe o pastel?; ¡Seica estás tolo!*).<sup>14</sup>  
'*seica* (I know + that). adv. It expresses doubt: maybe, perhaps, it seems that (You seem to like the cake?; You are crazy!).'

The definition provided here relies on the notion of doubt, which contrasts with the facts seen so far. In certain contexts, those in which we can express uncertainty with adverbs of doubt, we could not express the same with adverbs such as *seica*. Compare the following examples:

- (16) *Talvez* xa chegaron.  
'Perhaps they have already arrived.'  
(17) *Seica* xa chegaron.  
'Apparently they have already arrived.'

Clearly in the first example the speaker communicates doubt about their arrival. By contrast, in the second example the speaker does not communicate so much doubt as certainty about the same fact. This again indicates that semantically we are faced with two differentiated types of adverbs: on the one hand, the adverbs of doubt proper, such as *talvez*, *quizais*, etc.; on the other, the adverbs of attribution, such as *disque*, *seica*, etc. What role, then, from a theoretical point of view, do these attributive adverbs play in communication?

Within Relevance Theory there are two types of use of language: one is the descriptive use, the other the interpretive use. Sperber and Wilson state that 'Any representation [...] can represent some state of affairs in virtue of its propositional form being true of that state of affairs; in this case we will say that the representation is a *description*, or that it is used *descriptively*. Or it can represent some other representation which also has a propositional form – a thought, for instance – in virtue of a resemblance between the two propositional forms; in this case we will say that the first representation is an *interpretation* of the second one, or that it is used *interpretively*'.<sup>15</sup> To illustrate this contrast, two participants are waiting for Xepe at the railway station, in order to take a train which is about to leave:

- (18) Maruxa: ¿Que dixo Xepe?  
'What did Xepe say?'  
Anxo: Non imos atopar ningún asento libre.  
'We are not going to find any empty seats.'

Anxo's utterance can be interpreted in two different ways. On the one hand, we can interpret it as a paraphrase of what Xepe had said; in this case, the utterance is being used *interpretively* with the intention of resembling what Xepe had said or thought. On the other hand, we can interpret it as a genuine answer on the part of Anxo, in which case Anxo would be *describing* a situation in the world.

The interpretive use is based on the resemblance which exists between two propositional forms (where propositional forms are those representations which (a) can enter into logical relations, e.g. implications, and (b) can be true or false of a state of affairs by virtue of their full semantic content).<sup>16</sup> In this case a resemblance is established between the propositional forms of what Xepe had said and what Anxo says. The degree of resemblance inferred will be as high as required in order to derive an optimally relevant interpretation.<sup>17</sup> For example, any of the following utterances produced by Xepe would be compatible with Anxo's paraphrase:

(19) Xepe:

- a. Non imos atopar ningún asento libre.  
'We are not going to find any empty seats.'
- b. Quedan poucos asentos libres.  
'There are few empty seats left.'
- c. O tren vai cheo.  
'The train is full.'
- d. Hoxe é venres.  
'Today is Friday.'

In (19a) the resemblance between the paraphrase and the original is full from the point of view of the linguistic form (that is, excluding accent, tone of voice, etc.). In (19b) the resemblance is nearly, but not quite, full. In this case we have to infer that if there are few empty seats left, there will be fewer chances of finding one. In (19c) and (19d) the resemblances are still more opaque: in (19c) we have to assume that if the train is full, the seats will be taken quickly, and that as a result it will not be easy to find empty seats; in (19d) we have to know that on Fridays more people use trains and that, as a consequence, they are fuller, which means in turn that there are yet fewer chances of finding empty seats. In the last three cases the paraphrase is an implicature of the original utterance (where an implicature is an intended logical conclusion derived from a number of contextual premises).<sup>18</sup>

These examples show a decrease in the degree of resemblance with Anxo's paraphrase. Each one of the successive original utterances requires access to more contextual information and more inferences in order to establish the intended degree of resemblance. This means that there is a gradient of cognitive effort, where (19a) requires less cognitive effort

and (19d) requires more. From the point of view of Relevance Theory, the less cognitive effort required to derive adequate cognitive effects, the more relevant the utterance will be. Thus in the minimal context we have in (18), we can hypothesise that Maruxa will infer a fairly high degree of resemblance between the paraphrase and the original, so as to allow her to reduce the cognitive cost involved in processing the utterance.

In the light of what has been said so far, the existence of interpretive/attributive adverbs is not surprising in a system in which there are two different types of language use. Languages often specify certain words or expressions for carrying out certain tasks. The thesis proposed in this essay is that interpretive adverbs constitute a group of linguistic expressions which are specific to the interpretive use of language. These adverbs facilitate the unravelling of ambiguity between descriptive and interpretive uses of language in favour of the latter. By doing this, they allow us to save cognitive effort in deciding whether a given utterance is being used descriptively or interpretively. It is important to note that this distinction between descriptive and interpretive uses is an inherent feature of language used in communication. Therefore if the intended use is not encoded linguistically, we will always have to resolve the indeterminacy pragmatically. In the case of interpretive adverbs this is avoided, since they specify the type of use involved.

The interpretive nature of this type of adverb was captured by Álvarez et al., who comment: '[This type of adverb] is used a lot to express judgments which one has heard from others, but whose degree of certainty one is unable or unwilling to ascertain'.<sup>19</sup> Compare examples (1) and (20):

- (1) *Disque* lle roubaron o coche ó Venancio.  
'Apparently, Venancio's car has been stolen.'  
(20) Roubaronlle o coche ó Venancio.  
'Venancio's car has been stolen.'

In this minimal context, the difference between the two is precisely between interpretive use (1) and descriptive use (20). This, of course, does not mean that the second example is not ambiguous: in a context, say, in which the speaker is relating the content of a report, example (20) will not be interpreted as a description to which the speaker is committing himself. Rather, it will be processed as an utterance attributed to the author of the report. The function of the adverb *disque* in (1) is thus to remove ambiguity, so as to avoid any doubts regarding the speaker's intentions.

The same can be seen to occur with example (2):

- (2) O fillo do Carlos *seica* quere marchar para A Coruña a traballar.  
'Carlos's son *apparently* wants to go to A Coruña to work.'

- (21) O fillo do Carlos quere marchar para A Coruña a traballar.  
'Carlos's son wants to go to A Coruña to work.'

The situation here is the same as in the previous one. Example (21) could be interpreted, in an appropriate context, either descriptively or interpretively. However, in example (2) the interpretation is resolved in favour of interpretive use due to the use of *seica*.

These last two examples show the role played by both *disque* and *seica* in the disambiguation of descriptive/interpretive use of language in utterance interpretation. In this sense Galician is different from other languages (e.g. Spanish, or even English) in that it has lexical items (in this case, adverbs) evolved and specialised for interpretive use. In other languages (e.g. Occitan, personal communication of Pierre Bec), adverbs equivalent to the Galician ones examined here have changed linguistically, evolving from being specific to interpretive use to indicating doubt. This shift could also happen in Galician with *disque* and *seica* in the future. But that would be another evolutionary step.

Thus far *disque* and *seica* have been classified together as interpretive adverbs, while it was argued that interpretive use of language is based on a resemblance between two representations, each with a propositional form. These representations can be either utterances or thoughts, since both utterances and thoughts can have propositional forms. The propositional forms are what enable us to establish the degree of interpretive resemblance between the two representations. The distinction between utterances and thoughts is, the present essay suggests, precisely what underlies the difference between *disque* and *seica*. A cursory look at their etymology reflects this distinction too: *disque* has its origins in the verb *dicir*, 'to say', whereas *seica* comes from the verb *saber*, 'to know'. This provides us with a clue to the nature of their linguistic meaning: i.e. they are not only interpretive, but also specialised in the *type* of interpretive use they encode. Thus, *disque* is specialised in interpretive use between utterances and thoughts, and *seica* exclusively between thoughts. Consider once more example (8) to illustrate the distinction:

- (8) (B is witnessing the work of the paramedics in an accident. At that point A arrives and addresses B)  
A: Seica houbo un accidente.  
'It looks like that there has been an accident.'

In this example there is no reason to assume that what A is saying is a report of an utterance produced by someone else, since the interlocutors are strangers meeting for the first time with no manifest knowledge of other speakers' having commented on the situation described. Even if A's statement was originally based on a report by someone else, by using

*seica* A is clearly drawing attention to his knowledge, not to someone else's utterance. This is in keeping with the context, in which both interlocutors are witnessing the event as it unfolds.

It is important to note that the interpersonal effects which arise from the use of the utterance can be explained by reference to knowledge: it is obvious to both A and B that an accident has occurred; saying so will not have adequate contextual effects, since any effects will by then have been derived from the mental representation of the event. One way in which the utterance can have effects, however, is by showing that the mental representation of the event entertained by both A and B is identical, and that they both share a similar cognitive environment (i.e. set of contextual assumptions). This creates a degree of intimacy between the interlocutors in the situation and helps any subsequent communication between the two.

If we substitute *disque* for *seica* in (8), the effects are subtly different:

- (8') (B is witnessing the work of the paramedics in an accident. At that point A arrives and addresses B):  
A: *Disque* houbo un accidente.  
'Apparently there has been an accident.'

In this case A is drawing attention not so much to his knowledge but rather to what someone else has told him. Here the resemblance is not between the thought he communicates and that of someone else, but rather between the thought communicated by his utterance and the utterance of someone else. In this case the source of the attribution, on the basis of the linguistic form of the utterance, is less direct than in the previous case: in (8) the resemblance was with a representation internal to A, with one of his thoughts; whereas in (8') the resemblance is with a representation external to him, with someone else's utterance. This also explains why *disque* is not as contextually appropriate in the situation described as *seica*, since there is no shared knowledge between A and B about potential speakers of the original utterance.

Let us consider another example, this time one which originally included *disque*:

- (12) O mariñeiro *disque* viu unha serea mais eu coido que mente.  
'The sailor has apparently seen a mermaid, but I think that he is lying.'

In this example the utterance is presented as a report of what the sailor had said; for example:

- (22) O Mariñeiro: Vin unha serea  
'The sailor: I have seen a mermaid.'

The degree of resemblance between the speaker's utterance and the original one (the sailor's) will be as high as is optimally relevant, but no higher. In the current example, since the speaker is talking about lies, one would assume that the degree of resemblance is fairly high, as otherwise the speaker might be taken to be misleading the audience. Let us replace *disque* with *seica*:

- (23) O mariñeiro *seica* viu unha serea mais eu coido que mente.  
'The sailor has apparently seen a mermaid, but I think that he is lying.'

In this case the resemblance is not so much with the sailor's utterance, but with the *knowledge* of what the sailor has said. This knowledge may be the result of someone else's having told the speaker of (23) about the incident, or of the speaker's having himself inferred from the evidence provided by the sailor, etc. What is crucial here is that although the speaker is using the utterance interpretively (i.e. not descriptively), he is establishing a relationship of resemblance with a thought, not an utterance. Hence, he is drawing attention to the processes involved in thinking (inferences, concepts), not in uttering (words).

In this article it has been argued that the traditional classification of the adverbs *disque* and *seica* as adverbs of doubt does not explain their semantic function in language. It has been shown using various tests that their meaning is not one of doubt but of interpretive attribution. The connotations of doubt that some authors seem to perceive are derivative, not primary. These traces of doubt arise from the lack of manifest speaker commitment towards the proposition expressed and the distancing factor involved in the attribution process. Hearers will understandably be reluctant to put too much faith in the proposition expressed and may consequently entertain some doubt over the situation described. The process by which this reasoning is carried out is pragmatic, and thus the degree of commitment derived will be variable.

The semantic specialisation in interpretive use of these adverbs is explained adopting the theoretical framework provided by Relevance Theory. In this theoretical approach there is a distinction between descriptive and interpretive uses of language: the first is concerned with those uses in which the utterances describe a state of affairs in the world, whilst the second is concerned with those utterances which interpret either another utterance already produced at another time or a thought attributed to another person. Interpretive adverbs encode the interpretive use of the utterances in which they are inserted, thus facilitating the interpretation process by reducing the cognitive effort required in processing those utterances.

It has also been argued that the difference between *disque* and *seica* lies in their further specialisation in the type of interpretive use encoded. In

the former case, the interpretive resemblance sought by the speaker is between his own utterance and someone else's utterance (or his own at a different time). In the latter case, the resemblance is between the speaker's thought and someone else's thought (which could conceivably be one of the speaker's own at a different time).

## NOTES

- 1 This article is based on papers originally delivered to the *5th International Conference of Galician Studies*, Trier (Germany), October 8–11, 1997, and the *XVI Congreso Nacional de la Asociación Española de Lingüística Aplicada*, University of La Rioja, Logroño (Spain), April 22–25, 1998.
- 2 See for example R. Álvarez, X.L. Regueira, and H. Monteagudo, *Gramática Galega* (Vigo: Galaxia, 1986); X.X. Costa Casas, M.A. González Refoxo, C.C. Morán Fraga and X.C. Rábade Castiñeira, *Gramática para a Aprendizaxe da Lingua* (A Coruña: Vía Lactea, 1988).
- 3 For their meaning, see *Diccionario Xerais da Lingua* (Vigo: Xerais), and X. Feixó Cid, *Diccionario Galego-Castelán/Castelán-Galego* (Vigo: Ir Indo).
- 4 See D. Sperber and D. Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, second edition (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995). For an introductory text to this framework, see D. Blakemore, *Understanding Utterances* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992).
- 5 Álvarez et al., *Gramática Galega*, p.466; translation mine.
- 6 Costas Casas et al., *Gramática para a Aprendizaxe*, p.251.
- 7 Examples taken from Álvarez et al., *Gramática Galega*, p.466.
- 8 Cf. Álvarez et al. *Gramática Galega*, p.466; Costas Casas et al., *Gramática para a Aprendizaxe*, p.251.
- 9 Blakemore, *Understanding Utterances*, p.102. See also Sperber & Wilson, *Relevance*, pp.75ff.
- 10 See Feixó Cid, *Diccionario Xerais da Lingua*, p.334.
- 11 Feixó Cid, *Diccionario Xerais da Lingua*, p.334.
- 12 Taken from *O Correo Galego*, 6.8.97.
- 13 Example provided by Henrique Monteagudo.
- 14 Feixó Cid, *Diccionario Xerais da Lingua*, p.824.
- 15 Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, pp.228–29.
- 16 See Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, p.72.
- 17 See Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, pp. 224–31.
- 18 See Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, pp.273–78.
- 19 Álvarez et al., *Gramática Galega*, p.446; translation mine.

# “Non-declarative Sentences in Spanish: the Case of the Infinitive”

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## 5

## NON-DECLARATIVE SENTENCES IN SPANISH: THE CASE OF THE INFINITIVE

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

This article is concerned with the imperative use of the infinitive in Spanish. In particular, an analysis is presented of its semantics and pragmatics, and an account is provided which brings together these two aspects of the infinitive and its imperative use.

Wilson and Sperber (1988) provide a survey of semantic accounts of non-declarative sentences and argue that the infinitive and the imperative differ semantically. According to them, the latter encodes that the state of affairs described is both *potential* and *desirable*, whilst the former encodes that the state of affairs is only *possible*. They also argue that this does not preclude the use of the infinitive as an imperative when assumptions about achievability (i.e. potentiality) and desirability are available in the context. However, their analysis does not take account of a number of issues: (a) what is the theoretical status of the imperative interpretation of the infinitive?, (b) what pragmatic processes, if any, are involved in this type of imperative use?, and (c) why is the imperative use of the infinitive possible in Spanish (and other languages, both Romance (e.g. French) and non-Romance (e.g. German)) and not in languages such as English?

It will be argued that whilst the semantics of the infinitive may be restricted to *possibility*, in an imperative use its contribution is to the *explicatures* of the utterance, and not to the *implicatures*. This means that its contribution is to the *explicit* content of the utterance and not to the implicit content, contrary to what Wilson and Sperber seem to suggest. Hence, any pragmatic

processing involved will contribute to the explicit rather than the implicit part of the interpretation, which provides an answer to the second question posed above. Equally, this also seems to suggest an answer to the third question raised earlier, namely, that the contribution of the imperative use to the explicit content of the utterance and the repeated use of the infinitive as imperative in Spanish (and other Romance and non-Romance languages) has made it possible for this use to be more accessible and become semi-lexicalised. In English the same (politeness and referential) effects are achieved by other means and, as a result, the infinitive is not normally used as an imperative.

The article is organised as follows. Firstly, a brief survey is provided of the role of illocutionary force and mood in the interpretation of non-declarative sentences. Secondly, there follows a discussion of Sperber and Wilson's model, which is applied to Spanish data (involving both the imperative and the imperatival infinitive), as well as (briefly) to data from other languages. Thirdly, some problems are discussed in relation to Sperber and Wilson's analysis, and then an alternative account is developed. Finally, some conclusions are provided, which suggest a number of areas for further research.

## 2. MOOD AND ILLOCUTIONARY FORCE IN UTTERANCE INTERPRETATION

Speech-act accounts of non-declarative (as well as declarative) sentences have relied on illocutionary force to explain differences between different types of sentence. Illocutionary force has been seen as a semantic category, where the meaning of a sentence was associated with its general potential for illocutionary force. In particular, the semantic meaning of a sentence would be the range of illocutionary forces it could be used to perform. So, for example, non-declarative interrogative sentences have been seen as performing directive speech acts, which involve the speaker making a request for information. Non-declarative imperative sentences were also seen as performing a directive speech act, but this time involving a request for *action*, not information. From this perspective, the role of pragmatic interpretation was to identify the actual speech act performed from the range of possible ones (i.e. the ones allowed by the specific sentence type). Hence, for instance, an imperative may be used to perform a request for action, which covers a number of possibilities including a request interpreted as a plea, entreatment, order, etc. Pragmatic considerations would help us determine which one of these possible, more specific, requests for action would have been performed in any particular instance.

One of the main problems with a speech-act based account of non-declarative sentences are cases in which sentence meaning and illocutionary force potential do not correspond. Thus, for example, many uses of imperatives do not involve a request for action, as predicted by its illocutionary-based semantics. Cases in point are, for example, good wishes, advice, threats, and permission, amongst others. Let us consider good wishes and advice as an illustration of this point:

- (1) Good Wishes:  
 (John bidding Mary farewell at the airport)  
 John: Have a safe flight back.
- (2) Advice:  
 Mary: Is there a petrol station around here?  
 John: Yes. Take the third turn on the left and continue 200 meters.

In both these cases, speech act theory would predict that some action was being requested from the hearer. Thus, for example, in (1) John would be predicted to be requesting Mary to perform the action described, namely, making sure she has a safe flight. However, John is clearly not doing any such thing. In particular, he is not intending to communicate, for example, that Mary must carry out checks to make sure that the aircraft is in flying condition. This action is beyond Mary's control and, probably, ability. John is merely expressing a good wish towards Mary's safe arrival at her destination and, thus, no action needs to be performed to understand successfully the force of the sentence. In (2) Mary is not intending to get John to perform the actions she is describing. She is merely indicating what he could do to get to a petrol station. John may or may not choose to follow her advice. His understanding of the sentence does not depend on his performing the actions described.

In these types of case, the imperative cannot be said to change its meaning in any special way, which might prevent it from fulfilling its predicted illocutionary potential. In the light of the above examples, it is difficult to see how illocutionary force, as understood by speech-act theorists, could be a semantic property, rather a pragmatic one, since the precise force with which a sentence is uttered is dependent on pragmatic interpretation (see below for further discussion on this point). In this respect, illocutionary force is a property of utterances (pragmatics), rather than sentences (semantics).

However, if illocutionary force is not what distinguishes the meaning of different types of non-declarative (as well as declarative) sentences, then something else must be responsible. Many theorists have resorted to the notion of *mood* to explain these differences.

### 3. MOOD-BASED ANALYSIS OF IMPERATIVE FORCE

Mood has been defined as referring to the *semantic* and *logical* properties that make one sentence type (e.g. imperatives) different from another (e.g. interrogatives). To make a mood-based account work, we need to know (a) how these moods are characterised (i.e. their semantics) and (b) how they relate to force (i.e. their pragmatics).

Using mood, as opposed to force, as the main distinguishing feature for (non-)declarative sentences involves establishing the range of speech acts a given mood is conventionally used to perform. As Hare (1970, quoted in Wilson and Sperber 1988:79) states: "When we say that 'The

cat is on the mat' is a typical indicative (when we mention its mood, that is), we identify the type of speech act which it is *standardly used to perform*. Thus mood signs ... classify sentences according to the speech acts to which they are assigned by the conventions which give meanings to those signs". (My italics)

The standard speech acts a given mood is used to perform must be identified by pragmatics. As far as the imperative mood is concerned, it is generally accepted that it is *standardly used to perform* directive speech acts, which involve an attempt to get the hearer to perform the action described by the proposition expressed. This is, in effect, a parallel characterisation to that of illocutionary force and as such is subject to the same counterexamples. The only difference between the two characterisations is that illocutionary force is seen as a more pragmatically oriented notion (i.e. it emphasises the impact of the sentence on the hearer, its force), whereas mood is seen as a more semantically oriented one (i.e. it emphasises the semantic and logical content of the various sentence types, their mood). However, in a mood-based approach, pragmatics plays a crucial role in determining which speech acts a given mood is used to perform.

As was briefly illustrated above, there are many uses of the imperative which do not involve getting the hearer to perform any kind of action, thereby providing evidence against a mood-based analysis of the imperative. Let us consider some counterexamples to this type of analysis:

(3) Threats:

(John and Mary are fighting)

John: Yeah, go on. Punch me.

(4) Permission:

Mary: Can I use your computer?

John: Go ahead. Use it for as long as you need to.

In these cases the imperative is being used to convey threats and permission. However, in neither of them is there an attempt to get the hearer to perform the action described by the proposition expressed. In the case of threats, the use of the imperative is not an attempt to get the hearer to perform the action described by the proposition expressed, rather it is an attempt to stop her doing it. In the case of permissions, the speaker is merely showing his approval towards the action described, but not his intention to get the hearer to carry out the action. In addition to threats and permissions, the earlier cases of good wishes and advice are also counterexamples to the mood-based analysis. In the case of good wishes, the speaker is merely expressing his goodwill towards the hearer. The action described is largely out of the hearer's control, so she could not be taken to understand the sentence as an attempt to get her to perform the action in question. In the case of advice, the speaker is giving the hearer helpful directions, but in no way can he be seen as trying to get her to perform the action described by the proposition expressed.

Some scholars have discussed this type of example, putting forward alternative analyses. However, none of them provides an account which covers the full range of cases. Schmerling

(1982), for example, argues for an account based on the imperative communicating that the speaker is trying to bring about the state of affairs described by the proposition expressed, as opposed to getting the hearer to do it. This analysis could be said to account for good wishes, in that the speaker could be seen as *wanting* to bring about the good wish; but not for advice, threats, or permission cases, where the speaker does not necessarily want to bring about the state of affairs described. McGinn (1977) departs from speech-act analyses and proposes an alternative using the notion of truth conditions. He argues in favour of the imperatives having not truth conditions as such, but rather fulfillment conditions, which are satisfied when the state of affairs described by the imperative is materialised. The fulfillment of this state of affairs can be achieved by linking mood with desire, which also provides the connection between mood and force. That is to say, the *speaker* of the imperative (which is the carrier of mood) would be seen as conveying a desire (which is the carrier of force) regarding the realisation of the state of affairs, thereby contributing to the connection between the semantic and pragmatic stages of interpretation. However, this analysis would only account for cases such as good wishes, where a desire may be seen to be involved. In the other cases (threats, advice, and permission), no desire on the part of the *speaker* is necessarily present.

The real breakthrough in accounting for the range of imperatival uses comes when force is taken out of the equation altogether. Huntley (1984) followed this line of analysis when he proposed that the difference between declaratives and imperatives (and other non-declaratives) lies in whether they make indexical reference to the actual world (declaratives) or to some other possible world (imperatives). In this respect, he argues (*ibid.*:122), "[imperatives, and other non-declaratives] can represent a situation as being merely envisaged as a possibility with no commitment as to whether it obtains, in past, present or future, in this world". However, two problems arise in relation to this proposal. Firstly, it is not clear what the link is between envisaging a state of affairs as a mere possibility, and wishing, advising, threatening, permitting, etc., to bring about that state of affairs. In other words, it is not clear what the relationship is between the semantics and pragmatics of non-declaratives from this point of view. However, Huntley did make an important connection, for the purposes of this article, between imperatives and infinitives. He argued that both involve the notion of possibility in their semantics, with the difference that infinitives do not necessarily represent the state of affairs they describe as either achievable or desirable (which imperatives may do). This allows for the possibility of infinitives being interpreted without imperative force, though it does not preclude it altogether. This latter option is the one explored in this article.

The second problem with Huntley's analysis is that it predicts that imperatives can be used without imperative force (i.e. by encoding only possibility). However, this seems to be incorrect, as imperatives must somehow be linked to imperative force as part of their meaning (however this force may ultimately be characterised). Otherwise, this would entail that imperatives and infinitives would be *semantically* equivalent, which seems to be counterintuitive.

In order to solve these problems, Sperber and Wilson (1988:84) argue that imperatives are necessarily linked to notions of desirability and achievability, whereas the infinitive is only

linked to the notion of possibility. Thus, they distinguish semantically between imperatives and infinitives, thereby retaining their potential for different pragmatic forces, whilst at the same time allowing for the possibility of similarities in their interpretation. Moreover, as will be shown below, they do this by dispensing with the notion of semantic mood altogether.

#### 4. SPERBER AND WILSON'S APPROACH

Traditionally, the imperative is seen as a mood in its own right. However, Sperber and Wilson argue that they "see no reason to assume that semantic moods exist" (1988:99). They argue further that the characteristic linguistic features associated with declarative and non-declarative sentences only encode an abstract property of the intended interpretation: "the direction in which the relevance of the utterance is to be sought" (ibid:101). In the case of infinitives the direction is one of envisaging possibilities. In the case of imperatives the direction is one of entertaining states of affairs as potential (achievable) and desirable. To exemplify this, consider the following examples in Spanish, Galician, and English:

- (5) a. *Me encantaría vivir en el campo.* (Spanish)  
 me would-love to-live in the countryside.  
 "I would love to live in the countryside."  
 b. *Quero falar con ela.* (Galician)  
 I-want to-speak with her.  
 "I want to speak to her."  
 c. To be in England in April! (English)

In these three sentences there are three infinitives: *vivir*, *falar*, and *to be*, respectively. In each case, the claim is that the speaker is only committing himself to the possibility of the events described. He is envisaging the events as possible and commenting on them at the same time. The semantic meaning of (5a), for example, could be paraphrased as follows:

- (5') a. *Me encantaría tener la posibilidad de vivir en el campo.*  
 me would-like to-have the possibility of to-live in the countryside.  
 "I would love to have the possibility of living in the countryside."

However, in the case of imperatives the speaker is encoding more than this. Consider the following Spanish examples (where SUBJ denotes subjunctive):

- (6) Order:  
 - *¿Qué quieres que haga?*  
 what you-want that I-do-SUBJ  
 "What do you want me to do?"  
 - *Abre la puerta.*  
 you-open-IMP the door  
 "Open the door."
- (7) Permission:  
 - *¿Puedo abrir la puerta?*  
 can-I to-open the door  
 "Can I open the door?"  
 - *Ábrela.*  
 you-open-IMP-it  
 "Open it."

In both examples the speaker is encoding that the events are potential (achievable) and desirable. The difference between the two is that whilst in (6) the state of affairs is desirable from the point of view of the *speaker*, in (7) it is desirable from the point of view of the *hearer*. Determining from whose point of view the event is desirable is one of the semantic indeterminacies in the interpretation of imperatives that must be resolved pragmatically. Following Sperber and Wilson, the meaning of example (6), for instance, could be paraphrased as follows:

- (6') a. It is feasible for you to open the door.  
 b. It is quite desirable, from my point of view, that you open the door.

In fact, Sperber and Wilson's analysis involves three pragmatic indeterminacies regarding the interpretation of imperatives. Firstly, one must determine *how potential* the state of affairs described is. This may have a bearing on how some utterances are interpreted. For example, it may help us distinguish between requests and challenges:

- (8) Request:  
 (At home)  
*Ana to Pablo: Hazme un café.*  
 Ana to Pablo: Make-IMP-me a coffee.  
 "Ana to Pablo: Make me a coffee."
- (9) Challenge:  
 (At home)  
*Ana to Pablo (who's manifestly incapable of making exotic drinks): Hazme un cocktail.*  
 Ana to Pablo (who's manifestly incapable of making exotic drinks): Make-IMP-me a cocktail.

"Ana to Pablo (who's manifestly incapable of making exotic drinks): Make me a cocktail."

In (8), the imperative can be interpreted as being a request, as the state of affairs described is easily achievable. However, in (9) the state of affairs is manifestly less achievable, because of (the shared knowledge regarding) Pablo's incompetence at making exotic drinks. Thus, the imperative in this case can be interpreted as a challenge more readily than (8).

Secondly, one must determine *how desirable* the state of affairs is. The degree of desirability may also have a bearing on how we interpret some utterances. For example, it may help us distinguish between pleas and requests:

(10) Request:

(Pablo is going to the shop)

Ana to Pablo: *Tráeme tabaco.*

Ana to Pablo: Bring-IMP-me tobacco

"Ana to Pablo: Bring me tobacco."

(11) Plea:

(Pablo is going to the shop)

Ana, who is suffering from withdrawal symptoms, to Pablo: *Tráeme tabaco.*

Ana, who is suffering from withdrawal symptoms, to Pablo: Bring-IMP-me tobacco.

"Ana, who is suffering from withdrawal symptoms, to Pablo: Bring me tobacco."

In (10), in the absence of other contextual assumptions, the imperative is used to make an ordinary request. In particular, there is no reason to believe that a specially high degree of desirability is involved, which means that Pablo is unlikely to give the utterance an interpretation beyond that of a request. However, in (11), where there are relevant manifest assumptions available, the imperative is used with extra force. In particular, due to these available assumptions, Pablo will establish a high degree of desirability as part of the interpretation of the utterance, which will lead him to interpret it as a plea.

The third indeterminacy to be resolved pragmatically is the one already mentioned above, namely, the answer to the question *from whose point of view is the state of affairs desirable*: speaker, hearer, or someone else. As shown above in (6) and (7), the resolution of this indeterminacy may lead us, for example, to interpret utterances as orders or permissions, or in other cases as favors or advice. This resolution is dependent on whether the state of affairs is desirable from the *speaker's* point of view (orders, favors), or the *hearer's* (permissions, advice). Hence, to sum up, three elements play a part in Sperber and Wilson's analysis of imperatives: degree of achievability, degree of desirability, and point of view of desirability. Using these parameters, we can account for examples (1)-(4) discussed earlier.

Example (1) was a good wish because it involved desirability from the point of view of the speaker (with benefits to the hearer), and lack of achievability (as neither the speaker nor the

hearer can bring about the state of affairs). Examples (2)-(4) involved desirability from the point of view of the hearer. In particular, example (2) was a piece of advice because the information was desirable from the hearer's point of view in order to fulfil her goal, and was easily achievable. Example (3) was a threat because, although it was potentially achievable, it was not desirable, particularly from the hearer's point of view, since carrying out the state of affairs described would bring negative consequences to her (which would consequently make it *not* desirable from her point of view). Finally, example (4) was a permission because the state of affairs was desirable from the hearer's point of view, and its potentiality depended on the speaker's acquiescence (which in this case is given). Let us now turn to the imperative use of the infinitive.

## 5. IMPERATIVE USE OF INFINITIVE

It is a well known fact that in Spanish (as well as in many Romance and non-Romance languages, see below) the infinitive can be used as an imperative (see e.g. Butt and Benjamin 1988:277ff). Consider the following examples:

- (12) a. In a hospital:  
*No fumar.*  
 not to-smoke  
 "Do not smoke."  
 b. In a recipe book:  
*Trocear las patatas.*  
 to-cut the potatoes  
 "Cut the potatoes."  
 c. In an instructions Booklet:  
*Enchufar la impresora.*  
 to-plug the printer  
 "Plug the printer."  
 d. In a cashpoint:  
*Introducir la tarjeta.*  
 to-introduce the card  
 "Introduce the card."

It seems clear that in none of these examples the infinitive is used simply as a possibility. For instance, in (12a) the hospital personnel do not just want visitors or patients to consider the utterance as communicating the mere possibility of not smoking. In fact, that interpretation would be useless as far as they are concerned, since what they really want is to avoid health risks

to their patients. In other words, they want people positively *not* to smoke. Moreover, if any visitor to the hospital was found smoking, it seems clear that, on the basis of the sign, they would be entitled to require the person to stop smoking or leave the building. This suggests, therefore, that what is being communicated is much more than just a mere possibility. In other words, there are issues of achievability, desirability, and point of view involved in this type of case. In particular, the state of affairs described is easily achievable and highly desirable (from the point of view of the patients and public at large). The same is the case for the other examples, whose force is also that of an imperative. In (12b), the recipe book is not just envisaging the action described as a possibility, but rather if the reader wants to follow the particular recipe, then they must carry out the action described to bring about the overall goal successfully. In (12c) and (12d), the situation is similar. In (12c), the booklet is describing an action which must be followed, if the reader wants to use the printer successfully. In (12d), the cashpoint machine is describing an action which must be followed in order to carry out a transaction. In all these cases, the state of affairs described is achievable and, in the right circumstances, highly desirable from the addressee's point of view. In more general terms, example (12a) can be interpreted as an order, given the social assumptions about the power which hospitals authorities have within their premises. On the other hand, examples (12b-d) can be interpreted as instructions, given their goal-oriented context.

In all the above examples, the infinitives could be replaced by imperatives *without* a change in their interpretation (as far as their directive import is concerned), as shown below:

- (12') a. In a hospital:  
*No fumen.*  
 not you-smoke-IMP  
 "Do not smoke."
- b. In a recipe book:  
*Troceen las patatas.*  
 you-cut-IMP the potatoes  
 "Cut the potatoes."
- c. In an instructions booklet:  
*Enchufen la impresora.*  
 you-plug-IMP the printer  
 "Plug the printer."
- d. In a cashpoint:  
*Introduzcan la tarjeta.*  
 you-introduce-IMP the card  
 "Introduce the card."

For instance, imperatival example (12'a) carries the same pragmatic force as the infinitival (12a). Both involve a request not to smoke. Similarly, imperatival example (12'b) carries the

force of an instruction, as does infinitival example (12b). Both instruct the addressee to follow the action described in order to complete the recipe successfully. The same type of explanation applies to the other examples, where the imperative and infinitival versions share the same pragmatic force.

Hence, these paraphrases seem to show that the infinitival versions do, in fact, convey the same direction of relevance sought as the imperatives (in the type of contexts considered). From Sperber and Wilson's point of view, they convey potentiality (i.e. they are achievable state of affairs) and desirability (i.e. they are desired outcomes either from the point of view of the addresser, e.g. at the hospital, on behalf of patients; or from the point of view of the addressee, e.g. in the case of the recipe book). In their framework, Sperber and Wilson allow for the possibility of imperatives and infinitives having equivalent pragmatic interpretations: "The semantic analysis of imperatives must make reference to these notions [i.e. potentiality and desirability]; the semantic analysis of infinitival clauses does not. This is not to say that infinitival clauses can never be used with imperatival force. When can they be so used? When it is clear in the context that the state of affairs "envisaged as a possibility" is both achievable and desirable." (Wilson and Sperber, 1988: 84)

If the account provided so far is correct and the infinitival constructions convey the *same* import as the imperative (as far as the direction of relevance sought is concerned), then the question arises as to whether this equivalence is semantic or pragmatic. In other words, are infinitives semantically ambiguous between possibility, on the one hand, and potentiality and desirability, on the other? Or, do they, semantically, only encode possibility and then become pragmatically interpreted as imperatives? At a first glance, the first option would seem to be counterintuitive, as the infinitive is not normally seen as encoding imperative mood in traditional grammars. From Sperber and Wilson's point of view, the solution would be closer to the second option, i.e. that infinitives encode possibility, and imperatives potentiality and desirability, so that at a linguistic semantic level they are different. However, as stated above, from their point of view, infinitives could be interpreted as carrying imperative force at a pragmatic level, provided assumptions of potentiality and desirability were available in the context (Sperber and Wilson *ibid.*). This means that infinitives and imperatives could have equivalent *pragmatic* force.

This second analysis would appear to be confirmed when we consider the type of context in which the imperatival infinitive is found. As seen in the above examples in (12), imperatival infinitives are used in contexts in which instructional assumptions are common (e.g. hospitals, recipe books, instructions manuals, etc.). Given their accessibility in these contexts, it would seem natural that assumptions about potentiality and desirability could be used in the interpretation process, with the resulting imperatival upgrade. This would seem to be corroborated by the fact that in other types of context the imperatival interpretation does not seem to be equally available. Thus, consider the following examples where the infinitive is used, but no imperatival interpretation is available (please note that, for ease of presentation, in these and the remaining non-English examples only idiomatic translations are provided, with extra

information given when required):

- (13) a. On a travel brochure:  
*¡Ver la isla desde el avión! Esa es una experiencia única.*  
 "To see the island from the plane! That is a unique experience."
- b. At the beginning of a novel:  
*Reflexionar, charlar, observar. Eso era lo que hacíamos diariamente.*  
 "Reflect, talk, observe. That was what we did daily."
- c. In questions:  
*¿Marchar ahora? No me parece una buena idea.*  
 "Go now? It doesn't seem to me a good idea."
- d. Intensifier in Repetitions:  
*Comer comimos. Pero la comida era mala.*  
 "Eat we did. But the food was bad."
- e. In descriptions:  
 - *¿Qué hicisteis?*  
 "What did you do?"  
 - *Primero, ducharnos. Después, llamar por teléfono a Juan. Luego, vernos con él.*  
 "First, we showered. Then, we telephoned Juan. Then, we met him."

In all these cases only the narrow infinitival interpretation is available. For example, in (13a) no indication is conveyed about the need for the addresser or addressee to carry out the action described, only the possibility is being envisaged (which may subsequently lead to desiring its actualisation). Similarly, in (13b) no desire is necessarily communicated for the writer or reader to reflect, talk or observe, rather those states of affairs are merely being described (in the past). The same goes for examples (13c-d). Furthermore, general unavailability of imperatival interpretation is not only due to the type of situational context. In certain common grammatical structures, the imperatival interpretation is not available either, e.g.:

- (14) a. Embedded Clauses:  
*Quiero ir al cine.*  
 "I want to go to the cinema."
- b. Exclamative Sentences:  
*¡Visitar Islandia! Me encantaría.*  
 "To visit Iceland! I would love it."

In (14a), the embedded infinitive cannot be interpreted imperatively. It can only be entertained as a possibility. This seems to be the result of the fact that the infinitive is embedded into a higher-level explicature verb (*quiero*), which determines the type of attitude by which it is governed. In this case, the attitude is of wants, and therefore the infinitive cannot be subjected to

standard imperatival force. The unavailability of imperatival force is further evidenced by the fact that it would be ungrammatical to construct a sentence with this higher-level explicature type of verb in the imperative, as shown below (where \* denotes ungrammaticality, and "formal" polite verbal ending):

- (14'a) \* *Quiera ir al cine.*  
 "Want-IMP(formal) to go to the cinema"

This suggests that not only is imperatival force unavailable in relation to the embedded verb, but also imperative mood is incompatible with the type of higher-level explicature verb used. This seems to suggest further that, in this type of construction with *querer*-type verbs, imperatival force is excluded from the *whole* utterance, not just the embedded verb. Equally, in (14b) the infinitive within the exclamative sentence does not make an imperatival interpretation available. As in the previous case, the state of affairs described can only be envisaged as a possibility. This seems to be for the same type of reason. The exclamative mood under which the infinitive falls determines the attitude which directs the interpretation of the infinitive. This attitude is not one of imperatival force, but rather one of exclamative degree. Therefore, the infinitive cannot give rise to an imperatival interpretation in this type of context. Unlike in the previous example, the attitude in this case was not encoded explicitly by a verb, but rather it was communicated implicitly by the use of exclamative force.

In the light of the preceding discussion, it can be concluded that imperatival interpretations of the infinitive can be blocked either pragmatically (by inaccessibility of appropriate contextual assumptions) or grammatically (by insertion in certain grammatical structures). So far we have considered imperatival infinitives in Spanish. However, are they also available in other languages?

### 5.1. Imperatival Uses of the Infinitive in Other Languages

As was suggested above, the imperatival use of the infinitive is indeed not limited to Spanish. Other Romance and non-Romance languages allow it. Here some Galician and German examples will be discussed to illustrate this phenomenon further. In Galician the infinitive is used imperatively as widely as in Spanish (see Álvarez et al., 1986: 387). Let us consider some examples (where INF denotes infinitive):

- (15) a. Phone Speaking Instructions:  
*Falar a modo.*  
 "Speak (INF) slowly."

- b. At Doctor's Practice:  
*Non Fumar.*  
"Do not Smoke. (INF)"
- c. Shopping Message:  
*Traer Ovos do Supermercado.*  
"Bring (INF) Eggs from the Supermarket"
- d. Notice in Park:  
*Manter Limpo.*  
"Keep (INF) Tidy."

As in Spanish, the interpretation of all these infinitival sentences carries imperative force, i.e. not just the force of mere possibility. For instance, (15a) *instructs* people to speak slowly. In particular, it does not just ask them to consider the mere possibility of doing so. Equally in (15b), the sign is at the very least requesting people not to smoke, if not ordering them to do so. It is certainly not just asking people merely to entertain the possibility of not smoking. The same type of explanation applies to the other examples. Moreover, as in Spanish, these sentences could be reproduced using the imperative without changing their directive import. Thus, consider the following imperatival versions:

- (15') a. Phone Speaking Instructions:  
*Falen a modo.*  
"Speak (IMP) slowly."
- b. At Doctor's Practice:  
*Non Fumen.*  
"Do not Smoke. (IMP)"
  - c. Shopping Message:  
*Traian Ovos do Supermercado.*  
"Bring (IMP) Eggs from the Supermarket."
  - d. Notice in Park:  
*Manteñan Limpo (o Parque)*  
"Keep (IMP) Tidy."

The directive import of these imperative sentences is equivalent to the ones above. Both the imperative and infinitive sentences involve not just possibility, but rather achievability and desirability. Both involve interpretations of (non-)actions being instructed, requested, reminded, etc., which are typical of imperatival interpretations. The same is the case for German, where the infinitive is one of the various ways in which imperative force can be expressed (see Drosdowski et al., 1984:293). To illustrate, consider the following infinitival examples:

- (16) a. On a Grass Lawn:  
*Nicht auf den Rasen Treten.*  
 "Do not Step (INF) on Grass."  
 b. Pedestrian Traffic Lights:  
*Rot - Stehen / Grün - Gehen*  
 "Red - Stay (INF) / Green - Go (INF)"  
 c. On a Door Bell:  
*Hier Klingeln*  
 "Ring (INF) here"  
 d. On Film Instructions:  
*Kameraanleitung Beachten.*  
 "Follow (INF) Camera Instructions."

In these examples the infinitive has been used, and again the intended interpretation goes beyond entertaining the mere possibility of the state of affairs being described. Some kind of imperatival interpretation is intended in each of them. For example, in (16a) the sign does not just ask pedestrians not to step onto the grass, rather it *requires* them not to do so (or a reprimand might follow). Equally, in (16b) pedestrians are not just invited to envisage the scenarios presented to them by the sign. Rather they are again required to follow the state of affairs described. The same type of imperatival interpretation is available in relation to the other examples. As in Spanish and Galician, the German infinitival sentences can be reproduced using the imperative without affecting the directive import of their pragmatic interpretation. Thus, consider the following imperatival versions of the above examples:

- (16') a. On a Grass Lawn:  
*Treten Sie Nicht auf den Rasen.*  
 "Do not Step (IMP) on Grass."  
 b. Pedestrian Traffic Lights:  
*Stehen Sie bei Rot / Gehen Sie bei Grün.*  
 "Stay (IMP) on Red / Go (IMP) on Green."  
 c. On a Door Bell:  
*Klingeln Sie Hier.*  
 "Ring (IMP) here."  
 d. On Film Instructions:  
*Beachten Sie die Kameraanleitung.*  
 "Follow (IMP) the Camera Instructions."

As in earlier cases, these imperatival versions convey the same import as the original infinitival examples. For instance, imperatival example (16'a) conveys the same directive import as infinitival example (16a), where in both cases pedestrians are required to stay outside the lawn.

From Sperber and Wilson's point of view, the difference between the two is that, as far as the imperative case is concerned, the addressee is directed to an interpretation involving a state of affairs which is both achievable and desirable from the addresser's point of view. Thus, the use of the imperative here counts as a *requirement*, in that the sign is in a park under the control of the park authorities, who are empowered to set and enforce the rules. On the other hand, in the infinitive case, the addressee is only directed towards envisaging the state of affairs as a possibility. This is then interpreted further, in the light of available contextual assumptions about park regulations, resulting in a pragmatic upgrade of the possibility interpretation into an imperatival one. The same type of explanation obtains in the case of the other examples.

Although no further languages will be discussed here, suffice it to say that the imperatival use of the infinitive is fairly widespread within European languages. Just to illustrate this point, consider the following examples in a number of languages taken from the instructions attached to an Afgachrome photographic Film:

- (17) a. French:  
*Faire développer immédiatement le film exposé.*  
 "Develop (INF) immediately the exposed film."  
 b. Dutch:  
*Belichtingsmeter op ISO 1000/21 instellen.*  
 "Set (INF) your exposure meter to ISO 100/21."  
 c. Italian:  
*Osservare le istruzioni allegate all'apparecchio.*  
 "Follow (INF) the instructions provided with your camera."

In each of these examples an infinitive has been used: *faire*, *instellen*, and *osservare*, respectively. As in earlier cases, the interpretation of each of these infinitives goes beyond merely entertaining the possibility of the state of affairs described and involves some kind of imperatival interpretation, where assumptions about achievability and desirability are present. Although the line of explanation developed by Sperber and Wilson seems to account for the differences and similarities encountered here between imperatives and imperatival infinitives. As will be seen below, there seem to be some problems with their account.

## 5.2. Problems with Sperber and Wilson's Account

So far we have observed that Sperber and Wilson's claims are that assumptions of potentiality and desirability constitute the basis for an imperatival interpretation of the infinitive. However, as anticipated above, there are indeed a number of problems with their account. The first is one that Sperber and Wilson leveled at Huntley themselves regarding possibility (Wilson and Sperber 1988:84). Namely, often imperatives are associated with some kind of (non-)action, and

the gap between potentiality/desirability and action is often too wide to bridge pragmatically and, as a consequence, to explain the resulting directive interpretation. So, for example, simply to say that it is desirable not to smoke in a hospital is not necessarily going to persuade people not to do it, which is the intended (non-)action the hospital authorities wish to bring about. Thus, there must be more than just potentiality and desirability for the desired (non-)action to be brought about. In the case of the hospital, for example, the addressee must recover further assumptions about the desirability of not smoking, so as to encourage the adherence to the rules:

- (18) a. If you smoke, the hospital will throw you out.  
 b. If you smoke, patients will suffer the negative effects of smoking.  
 c. If you smoke, you behave antisocially, etc.

In (18) there are some of the assumptions that might be available to the addressee. All of them lead to negative consequences, which might in turn persuade him not to smoke. It is these negative consequences that will make adherence to the rules desirable, and may ultimately carry the force of a warning. This type of example suggests that imperatival directive force requires more pragmatic interpretation for its derivation than seems envisaged by Sperber and Wilson, and may also play an important role in establishing degrees of desirability in the interpretation.

Another problem with Sperber and Wilson's account relates to the universality of their claims. Thus, if it is the case that infinitive imperatival interpretations are dependant on the availability of contextual assumptions about potentiality and desirability, then why is it that English infinitives cannot be used imperatively even when those assumptions are available in the context? Consider the following English versions of the examples in (12):

- (19) a. *In a hospital*: Not to smoke.  
 b. *In a recipe book*: To cut up the potatoes.  
 c. *In an instructions booklet*: To plug in the printer.  
 d. *In a cashpoint*: To introduce the card.

These English infinitival versions are not pragmatically acceptable and, as they stand, also ungrammatical. Therefore, the imperatival interpretations cannot be available. However, contextual assumptions about the potentiality and desirability of the state of affairs described in the English scenarios should be as easily available in the various contexts considered as they are in the Spanish cases. After all, instructions are as easily found in *English* hospitals, recipe books, and instructions manuals as they are in Spanish ones. This means that, from a contextual point of view, there should not be any differences between the English and Spanish cases (i.e. regarding accessibility of assumptions about potentiality and desirability, and hence interpretation of infinitives with imperatival force). This means further that at some level there must be differences between the two languages which must ultimately stem from *linguistic* factors, rather than purely contextual ones. If this is correct, Sperber and Wilson's predictions would not be

borne out.

The question now becomes whether English and Spanish (and other similarly behaved languages) are different at semantic or pragmatic level. Let us consider the first of these two possibilities: that Spanish infinitives are different at semantic level from their English counterparts. This possibility would mean that Spanish infinitives are ambiguous between infinitival meaning and imperatival meaning. As stated above, this possibility does not seem to be an optimal solution, since it creates a number of problems. Firstly, it flouts the Occam-razor principle in that it multiplies meanings unnecessarily. Secondly, as a direct consequence of ambiguity, semantic processing would be doubled, as every time an infinitive was used, an addressee would have to disambiguate its meaning. Thirdly, it would make the infinitive equivalent to the imperative at the semantic level, which seems counterintuitive (since their morphology and their meaning are different).

If we agree that it is unlikely that in Spanish (and other languages) the infinitive encodes imperative force semantically, then the difference must be pragmatic. Furthermore, if the difference is pragmatic, then crucially it cannot just be availability of contextual assumptions, since they are equally available in both English and Spanish contexts. For us to be able to interpret the Spanish infinitives imperatively, there must be further directions specified pragmatically, in addition to semantic ones, which enable us to find the relevance sought and intended. Moreover, the result must contribute to the explicit meaning of the utterance (as will be seen below). But so far, within the relevance-theoretic paradigm, this has not been allowed for. Encoding is only supposed to impinge on either the linguistic semantic level *or* pragmatic level, but not both. However, to accommodate the examples in Spanish (and other Romance and non-Romance languages), it has to be conceded that infinitives, in addition to encoding possibility semantically, must also encode pragmatic constraints regarding the type of contextual assumptions that are required in order to arrive at the intended interpretation.

## 6. A REVISED APPROACH

From a theoretical point of view, the possibility of encoding pragmatic constraints (in addition to semantic ones) is not surprising, as the retrieval of appropriate contextual assumptions may require more than just pragmatic principles. The sheer number of potential assumptions available to an addressee makes utterance interpretation even more dependent on any possible linguistic instructions which may help select the appropriate assumptions. This aids pragmatic principles in the process of deriving the intended interpretation. The encoding of instructions to select appropriate assumptions is a common phenomenon in linguistic communication, such as in the case of conjunctions (see e.g. Blakemore 1992, chs. 7-8).

From a relevance-theoretic point of view, conjunctions are normally analysed as encoding instructions regarding the direction in which relevance is to be sought, e.g.:

- (20) *Juan no fue al cine ya que llovía.*  
 "Juan didn't go to the cinema because it rained."

In the interpretation of this utterance the conjunction *ya que* ("because") encodes instructions to the addressee to retrieve one crucial contextual assumption which is necessary to understand the utterance, i.e.:

- (21) *Si llovía, Juan no fue al cine.*  
 "If it rained, Juan didn't go to the cinema."

The interpretation of (20) depends on us being able to retrieve the causal connection between the two events described as shown in (21), where if the premise (*llovía*) holds, then the consequent (*no fue al cine*) follows. The conjunction *ya que* allows us to retrieve this causal assumption, by encoding *instructions* to that effect, and thus enable us successfully to interpret the utterance.

In a similar way the infinitive in Spanish encodes instructions about the type of assumptions which the addressee must look for in order to arrive at the intended interpretation. The difference between conjunctions and infinitives is that in the former case linguistic meaning only impinges on the pragmatic processing stage, whereas in the latter it impinges on both the semantic and pragmatic processing stages. This presents us with a new type of linguistic meaning not explicitly argued for so far in the literature. That is, linguistic expressions which encode both semantic and pragmatic meaning. Semantically, the infinitives encode possibility, pragmatically they can constrain further the types of contextual assumption sought.

The next question is whether this meaning contributes to the explicatures or the implicatures of the utterance. One might expect that if the constraints are pragmatic they do not make a truth-conditional contribution. One accepted test of explicit content contribution (see e.g. Kempson, 1977) is the use of conditionals. Let us take the hospital example as in (12a). Which of the following two situations do we regard as capturing what is being said in the example?:

- (22) a. If people are required not to smoke, then the hospital will evict anybody who smokes.  
 b. If people are suggested not to smoke, then the hospital will evict anybody who smokes.

If we regard (22b) as representing the situation envisaged by our example (12a), then the imperative force will not necessarily be part of the explicit content of the utterance. If, on the other hand, we regard (22a) as representing the situation envisaged, then the imperative force will be part of the explicit content of the utterance. It seems clear that the situation that best represents (12a) is (22a) and not (22b). If this is correct, then the imperative content of the interpretation of the utterance must contribute to the *explicatures*, rather than the *implicatures*. This would explain why in the interpretation we take the addresser (i.e. the hospital) to be conveying the force of an imperative not just as an implication, but rather as the explication of

their message, i.e.:

(23) The hospital requires people not to smoke.

However, this interpretation is available in Spanish but not in English, which means that the recovery of the explicature has not been purely inferential. The Spanish infinitive must direct addressees, in the appropriate contexts, to look for potential and desirable assumptions which then become part of the (higher-level) explicatures of the utterance. This procedural content is not part of the meaning of the English infinitive, which does not allow imperatival interpretations in the same contexts. This means further that words can encode more than one type of meaning and thus, when considered cross-linguistically, the differences between the same grammatical categories may be due to pragmatic, not semantic factors. However, one question remains to be answered: why should an infinitive develop an imperatival use?

## 7. COMMUNICATIVE ADVANTAGES IN THE USE OF IMPERATIVAL INFINITIVES

The imperatival use of the infinitive offers a number of advantages to the communicator. Firstly, it allows him to leave reference to addressees implicit (cf. *ponga usted*, explicit, vs. *poner PRO*, implicit). In Spanish, standard imperatives require the speaker to choose either the formal or the informal ending (e.g. *coma*, formal vs. *come*, informal). The infinitive allows referential neutrality and detachment, which is particularly suitable in the institutional settings in which it is found. There is referential neutrality because no individual is being referred to overtly. The subject in this case would be a big, un-indexed, PRO, rather than a small *pro*. There is detachment because the imperative force is derived pragmatically, not semantically, and suggests less personal involvement in the desirability of the state of affairs encoded. This is also suitable in an institutional context where assumptions about shared knowledge between the interlocutors (e.g. hospital-patients, manufacturer-user, bank-client) are generally weaker than in more personal contexts (e.g. between friends, parents-children, teacher-pupil, etc.), and thus it becomes more difficult to determine the origin and degree of desirability experienced in the situation. In other words, we rely on our general knowledge of those situations in order to derive the appropriate level of desirability.

The second advantage associated with the imperatival use of the infinitive is that it is less direct than the imperatives proper. That is to say, it leaves assumptions about desirability implicit for the addressee to access and use in the interpretation process. This, paradoxically, increases the mutual understanding between addresser and addressee, as there is an increase in the knowledge that has to be shared between the two interlocutors for the imperatival interpretation to go through. That is, there is a greater implicit appeal to, and increased

accessibility of, appropriate contextual assumptions, particularly those which relate to rules governing the types of social environment envisaged here (e.g. rules in hospitals, unspoken agreements between friends, etc.).

There is a third advantage with the use of the infinitives as imperatives, whose significance varies across languages, namely, processing cost. The imperative infinitive involves less processing cost than the imperative in a number of ways. Firstly, the infinitive is generally not used in conjugated form, unlike the imperative which *is* in most languages, including Spanish. This adds processing costs to the semantic decoding of the sentence, as the addressee must decode the type of subject being used (e.g. formal vs. informal, singular vs. plural). In the case of the infinitive, a general empty category PRO is readily supplied without having to decode any politeness or number features. Secondly, the infinitive is more amenable to having objects left out in the predicate. Take, for instance, the following example in Spanish:

- (24) At a Park:
- a. *Mantener Limpio.*  
"Keep (INF) Tidy."
  - b. *Mantengan Limpio el Parque.*  
"Keep (IMP) the Park Tidy."

In Spanish, the infinitival version in (24a) is amenable to having the direct object (*el parque*) omitted and to recover it from the context. However, the imperative version is less amenable to the same omission process and needs the direct object to be explicit. This means that imperatives again require further processing costs in the semantic decoding stage of the interpretation, as predicate objects must be explicit and, therefore, decoded. In the infinitival version, this is not necessary, as it is supplied as a readily available contextual assumption.

A third advantage of the imperative infinitives in terms of processing cost is more language specific. In German, unlike Spanish and Galician, the syntax of some verbs is more complex when they are conjugated than when they are not. This is particularly so in the case of *trennbar* verbs (i.e. splittable verbs). In this type of verb, verb meaning (and in turn sentence meaning) can only be fixed, when the split part of the verb at the end of the sentence is processed in conjunction with the verb root which appears towards the beginning of the sentence. To illustrate, let us consider an example:

- (25) On the Front Door of a House:
- a. *Keine Reklame Einwerfen.*  
"Do not Leave (INF) any Publicity."
  - b. *Werfen Sie Keine Reklame Ein.*  
"Do not Leave (IMP) any Publicity."

Example (25a) uses the infinitive and the verb appears un-split at the end of the sentence (*einwerfen*). However, in example (25b) the imperative form of the verb is used and, therefore, the verb must be conjugated. As a result, the splittable verb *einwerfen* must have its prefix *ein-* moved to the end of the sentence with the root remaining at the beginning. This syntactic complication adds further processing costs to the imperative sentence in relation to the infinitival one. Moreover, this is corroborated by the fact that in German children learn to communicate imperative (and non-imperative) force by using the infinitive, which is easier to acquire and use (native informant).

All these arguments in favor of lower processing costs for the infinitive (as opposed to the imperative) predict that preference of the imperative infinitive over the imperative is particularly sensitive to considerations of relative processing cost. That is to say, its use is expected in situations in which low processing costs are crucial to communicative success. Indeed, this seems to be the case. Imperative uses of the infinitive are found in contexts where low processing costs are critical, for example: at pedestrian traffic lights, where simple messages for quick reactions and decisions are highly desirable and at times life saving; product instructions, where space is of the essence and often a large amount of information has to be packed in a very small space (e.g. photographic films, printer cartridges, etc.); at points of service, where a quick, easily readable message is required (e.g. cashpoint machines, telephone booths, etc.); reading instructional material, where simple, clear, direct, instructions allow faster and easier processing (e.g. recipes, manuals, etc.). The possibility of packing equivalent amount of information by providing short, easily readable messages is an obvious advantage, particularly in societies in which speed and efficiency are of paramount importance to information processing.

The various advantages and pressures described here may ultimately contribute to the conventionalisation of the imperative use of the infinitive. Moreover, this may be one of the routes available in some languages for associating pragmatic imperative force with the infinitive and making it more accessible during utterance interpretation. The fact that some of these advantages and the resulting pressures are not applicable to other languages may explain, to some extent, why they do not allow the imperatival use of the infinitive. For example, in English there is no distinction between formal and informal verbal endings, nor is the presence of imperative subjects normally required or even allowed. Similarly, the English imperative, unlike the Spanish one, is more amenable to having predicate objects omitted, which further reduces the need for an imperatival infinitive use. In general, all these factors would seem to count against the availability of this infinitival use in languages like English, since the imperative itself exhibits all (or most of) the advantages discussed in this section.

## 8. CONCLUSION

In this article it has been argued that Spanish infinitives can be used with imperative force in addition to their more common infinitival use. The imperative use sets them apart from English infinitives, in that the latter do not give rise to imperative interpretations, even when the contexts are the same as in the Spanish examples. It has also been shown that imperative interpretation of Spanish infinitives is only possible when they are used in contexts which make instructional assumptions, and their attendant notions of potentiality and desirability, very accessible (e.g. at cashpoints, in manuals, hospitals, etc.). This suggests that the imperative import is not semantic in nature, but rather pragmatic. It suggests further that the meaning of the infinitive in Spanish is complex, including semantic meaning proper and pragmatic constraints. The latter arise from the inclusion of assumptions of potentiality and desirability in context, which the infinitive procedurally encodes. The inclusion of these assumptions in the explicit content of the utterance means that this side of the infinitive's meaning contributes to the explicatures of the utterance.

From a cross-linguistic point of view, the difference between the Spanish and the English infinitive is that in the Spanish case there are procedural instructions encoded for the addressee to seek assumptions of potentiality and desirability in the context, whereas in the English case such procedures are not part of the meaning of the infinitive. This means that, in English, without the linguistic help needed to direct addressees towards specific assumptions in the context, those addressees face a gap between possibility, on the one hand, and potentiality, desirability, and imperative force, on the other, which is too wide to bridge, and which will ultimately make the imperative interpretation in the English case not available to him.

From a theoretical point of view, Spanish infinitives (as well as infinitives in other Romance and non-Romance languages) unveil a new two-dimensional category of linguistic meaning. From a semantic point of view, they encode *conceptual* and truth-conditional meaning. From a pragmatic point of view, they encode *procedural* and truth-conditional meaning. The procedural pragmatic stage may or may not be acted upon depending on whether it does in fact contribute to relevance. Thus, Spanish infinitives encode two types of meaning, one that impinges on the semantic representation of the sentence (semantic dimension), and another that impinges on the pragmatic interpretation of the utterance (pragmatic dimension). Both ultimately play a part in the explicatures of the utterance.

One interesting area for further research is to establish how common and wide the Spanish and English behaviors are respectively. As seen above, many European languages seem to allow the imperative use of the infinitive. English, in this respect, seems to stand out in its behavior. However, it would be surprising if English were to be unique in this respect. One possibility may be that this phenomenon is found more regularly in non-European languages. The answer to this question though would require further research, which is outside the scope of this article.

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**PART III:**

**Applications of Relevance Theory to**

**Translation**

## “Translation Discrepancies in Galician: *Hamlet*”

Rosales Sequeiros, X. (1997) “Translation Discrepancies in Galician: *Hamlet*”.

*Donaire* 8: 62-67.

# TRANSLATION DISCREPANCIES IN GALICIAN: *HAMLET*

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## 1. Introduction

Pragmatic interpretation affects how we understand a text, to the extent that often what a reader takes to have been communicated differs from what is linguistically encoded in the original text. In translation, this can have important consequences, since the translator produces a target text on the basis of, not just the linguistic content, but also his interpretation of the original.

The discrepancies that arise as a result of this mismatch between what is linguistically encoded and what is pragmatically communicated are seen in the Galician version of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. To some extent, they reflect the two roles played by the translator in the process of translation, namely, that of interpreter and that of communicator.

I will be analysing examples of pragmatic processes that give rise to discrepancies between the original and the target texts. In particular, I will analyse two types of interpretive use of language, namely, loose use and instances of narrowed down meaning.

When discrepancies are of a pragmatic nature, there is a shift in the style of the two texts, e.g. from literal to figurative use of language, from implicitness to explicitness, etc., though not necessarily in what is communicated. In literary translation, these stylistic changes can elicit varying degrees of acceptability in readers, depending on the relevance sought for, and expected from, the translation. These issues will be considered in relation to examples taken from the first scene of the Galician *Hamlet*.

## 2. Interpretive use

Wilson & Sperber (1995:228-29) argue that there are two different uses of language: descriptive use and interpretive use. They state that:

Any representation... can represent some state of affairs in virtue of its propositional form being true of that state of affairs; in this case we will say that the representation is a *description*; or that it is used *descriptively*. [...] It can represent some other representation which also has a propositional form — a thought, for instance — in virtue of a resemblance between the two propositional forms; in this case we will say that the first representation is an *interpretation* of the second one, or that it is used *interpretively*."

Let's consider an intralinguistic exchange to exemplify this distinction, where the two participants

are waiting at the Station for Martin to turn up to catch a train which is about to leave:

(1) *Mary*: What did Martin say?

*Peter*: We're not going to find any empty seats.

Peter's answer can be interpreted in two ways. It can be seen as a report on what Martin had said, in which case the utterance is used *interpretively* to resemble what Martin had uttered or thought. It can also be seen as a genuine answer on Peter's side, in which case he is *describing* a state of affairs in the world.

The interpretive use of language is based on the resemblance between the two propositional representations. However, there is another even more basic interpretive use. That is, all utterances are interpretive expressions of the thoughts of the speakers (ibid.: 230), and what mediates between them is pragmatic processing. This is a first-order interpretive use (between an utterance and a thought), whilst the one discussed in relation to (1) is a second-order interpretive use (between two propositional representations formed at different times). In this paper I will be concentrating on the pragmatic effects on translation of the first-order interpretive use, namely, interpretive resemblances between utterances and thoughts and, more specifically, between words and concepts.

There are two such types of interpretive resemblance: loose use (e.g. metaphor) and narrowed-down uses of language (e.g. prototypicality effects). I will be dealing with these in relation to *Hamlet* in its Galician version.

## 3. Loose use of language

I will start with loose uses of language, by first considering an intralinguistic example (taken from Lakoff and Johnson 1980):

(2) Argument is war.

This utterance doesn't communicate that arguing involves machine guns, bullets, cannons, shells, launchers or missiles, or even injuries or deaths. In other words, the utterance doesn't communicate everything that is encoded by the word "war". Instead, it communicates an *impression* comprising a series of weak implicatures reflecting the resemblances between the encoded concept and the intended concept. Thus, (2) can be said to communicate:

- (3)
- Argument involves two opponents.
  - Argument involves attacking your opponent's positions.
  - Arguments can be violent.
  - In arguments, one loses or wins ground.
  - Argument requires planning and using strategies...

This means that what is encoded is not necessarily communicated. To arrive to the latter from the former, we need to undergo an inferential process in order to derive what we take the addresser to have communicated by what he had encoded. And all this on the basis of the interpretive resemblances between the two.

From a translation point of view, this mismatch between what is encoded and what is communicated can give rise to discrepancies between the source and the target texts. This may be due to the fact that certain cultures may not explore the same resemblances between what is encoded and what is communicated, or to the translator deciding on a change of style from a less-than-literal to a more literal use of language in the target text. Let's consider these two cases in turn (where back-translations from Galician to English are in brackets).

(4) FRANCISCO

For this relief much thanks. 'Tis bitter cold,  
And *I am sick at heart*.

FRANCISCO

Moitas gracias polo relevo. Vai unha friaxe de morte que *me traspasa a alma*.

(Much thanks for the relief. It is cold as death, it is piercing my soul.)

(*Hamlet*, pp. 20-21)

The segment in question is printed in italics. Here, there is a change in the metaphor used to describe how cold Francisco is. In other words, the resemblance sought between what is encoded and what is communicated differs in the translated Galician in relation to the English original. Some possible implicatures communicated in each case might be the following:

(5) *I am sick at heart*.

- The cold reaches some of the deepest parts of my body.
- The cold is so intense that makes me ill.
- The cold doesn't allow me to feel...

(6) *Me traspasa a alma*.

- A friaxe chega ata as partes non corporais do meu ser.  
(The cold gets to the non-bodily parts of my being.)
- A friaxe é tan intensa que vai mais alá da miña alma.

(The cold is so intense that it goes beyond my soul.)

- A friaxe vulnera e dana a miña alma...

(The cold violates and damages my soul.)

The translator has interpreted the original metaphor as communicating an array of weak implicatures which would be best conveyed in Galician by the metaphor in (6). The choice of metaphor has been influenced by the specific set of implicatures taken as intended by him. If this set of weak implicatures matches that of the metaphor used in the target text, the translator would have been justified from a communicative point of view. However, though undeniably the two metaphors involved here share implicatures, the impressions invoked by the two texts are slightly different. Both of them communicate the intensity of the cold and discomfort felt by Francisco and, in this respect, they resemble each other. However, the allusions to a corporal part and a non-corporal part of the body, together with the verbs used, send the readers of both texts in somewhat diverging directions. To be sure, there is a discrepancy in the interpretation derived by the English and Galician readers. Although, the basic style remains the same, namely, a less-than-literal use of language, the readers in either case are experiencing two slightly different impressions.

The translator has chosen a metaphor which resembled the original in key aspects, i.e. one which allowed for the inference on the degree of intensity of the cold felt by Francisco. This degree of resemblance may be sufficient in this context, although, of course, that will depend on the expectations of the particular readership of the translation. For a critic, this degree of resemblance may not be as acceptable as for a lay person.

Let's now consider the second type of discrepancy regarding loose use, namely, a change from less-than-literal to literal use of language, as shown in the following example:

(7a) FRANCISCO

You come *most carefully* upon your hour.

FRANCISCO

Chegas *puntualmente* á túa hora.

(You arrive punctually at your time. (Ibid.))

In this case, the segment in the original printed in italics amounts to a less-than-literal use of language, since what is being communicated is not that Francisco's interlocutor, Barnardo, is coming in a careful manner. What is meant in the original is precisely what the target text spells out, namely, that Barnardo is punctual. Perhaps what was intended with the original loose use was to convey an additional poetic effect, so as to make the audience feel that Francisco was no simple guard. He was,

## HAMLET

O that this too too sullied flesh would melt,  
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew; 130  
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed  
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter. O God! God!  
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
Fie on't, ah, fie, 'tis an unweeded garden  
That grows to seed. Things rank and gross in nature  
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!  
But two months dead, nay, not so much, not two!  
So excellent a king, that was to this 140  
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother  
That he might not betem the winds of heaven  
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth,  
Must I remember? Why, she would hang on him  
As if increase of appetite had grown  
By what it fed on. And yet within a month —  
Let me not think on't. Frailty, thy name is woman.  
A little month, or e'er those shoes were old  
With which she followed my poor father's body  
Like Niobe, all tears, why she, even she —  
O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason 150  
Would have mourned longer — married with my uncle,  
My father's brother, but no more like my father  
Than I to Hercules. Within a month,  
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
Had left the flushing in her gallèd eyes,  
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post

## HAMLET

Oxalá esta en exceso contaminada carne se fundise,\*  
disolvese e convertese en orballo.  
Oxalá a lei do Eterno  
non prohibise o suicidio. ¡Ouh Deus, Deus!  
¡Que fatigosos, caducos, insulsos e vans  
me parecen os asuntos deste mundo!  
Maldito sexa, é un xardín de herbas daniñas  
que medra vizoso. Está invadido  
de cousas inmundas e ruíns. ¡Ó que chegamos!  
Só leva dous meses morto, non, nin sequera dous.  
Un rei tan excelente que, ó lado deste,  
era como Hiperión ó lado dun sátiro; tan agarimoso con miña nai  
que nin ós ventos do ceo permitía  
que lle rozasen con rudeza o rostro. ¡Ceos e terra!  
¿teño que lembralo? Abrazábao  
como se o desexo medrase  
co que o alimentaba. E nun mes...  
Non quero pensalo. Fraxilidade, es muller.  
Nun mes escaso, incluso antes de gasta-los zapatos  
cos que seguía o corpo de meu pobre pai,  
como Niobe, desfeita en bágoas, ouh, ela, ela ...  
ouh Deus, unha besta carente de raciocinio  
choraría máis tempo... casa co meu tío,  
o irmán de meu pai, tan semellante a meu pai  
como eu a Hércules. Nun mes,  
antes de que o sal desas pérfidas bágoas  
lle proese os irritados ollos,  
casou. ¡Ouh perversa ansiedade, correr

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, translated into Galician by Miguel Pérez Romero (translation revised by Antonio R. de Toro),  
Vigo: Servicio Central de Publicacións da Xunta de Galicia e Editorial Galaxia, 1993, pp. 46-47

after all, a *King's* guard. Such a poetic use would help emphasise his association with the high class of his master, the King. It is interesting to note that the Galician translation could have preserved the original loose use and its attendant poetic effect:

## (7b) FRANCISCO

*Chegas moi coidadosamente á túa hora.*

Obviously, the stylistic shift in the Galician version in (7) may not be totally acceptable. Such a shift belies the vagueness of the original. It also reduces the role of the reader in deriving the interpretation, since, faced with a literal use of language, a reader has less uncertainty about deriving the intended thought and consequently requires less cognitive effort. For a reader, a literal use of language can be (although it need not be) less engaging.

Another example of stylistic change from less-than-literal to literal use of language is the following:

## (8) HORATIO

In what particular thought to work I know not.

## HORACIO

Non sei que pensar disto.

(I don't know what to think about this.)

(ibid.: 28-29)

The original uses the metaphor of work to express the activity of thinking, whereas the Galician translation is rendered with a literal verb, namely, "pensar". Again, although the core implicatures are captured in the Galician, other implicatures associated with the original concept WORK are lost, such as, work being a strenuous, physical activity; being an activity carried out during a number of hours; being done to achieve some end result, etc. Some of these implicatures are not necessarily communicated by the Galician version, thereby losing some of the potential content communicated by the original.

Of course, the opposite case to what we have just seen is also possible. There are instances in which a literal use of language is loosened into a more metaphorical use. This is the case with the following example:

## (9) HORATIO

Most like. It [the ghost] *harrows* me with fear and wonder.

## HORACIO

Talmente. O terror e o espanto me *traspasan*.

(Exactly. The terror and the fright are piercing me.)

(ibid.: 24-25)

In this example, I want to concentrate on the segment printed in italics. In Shakespeare's time, the use of the

verb "to harrow" here may have been intended in a metaphorical sense, its basic meaning being "to apply an agricultural implement over the land". What seems to be clear from today's use is that the verb "to harrow" in (9) is no longer used metaphorically, as it has, in modern times, lexicalised the other meaning, namely, "to distress, to vex" (see e.g. Collins Concise Dictionary). So, at least for a modern reader, the use of "harrows" in (9) does not amount to a loose use of language. However, the Galician translation does constitute a less-than-literal use of language. The verb "traspasar" literally means "to go through from one place to another". As this literal meaning would render (9) absurd, the verb "traspasan" is obviously interpreted as a metaphor by modern readers. Hence, the interpretations of the two texts will differ accordingly. In particular, the Galician text will be, for a modern reader, vaguer as a result of its wide range of weak implicatures. It crucially does not communicate the proposition expressed, whereas the English text does. The two texts resemble each other in that both communicate the acuteness of the feeling of fear.

As we have seen throughout this discussion, loose use of language achieves relevance by allowing us to communicate a number of implicatures using just one utterance, without the need to spell out each of the implicatures communicated, which would be both much more expensive cognitively and stylistically infelicitous. This, however, means that the precise set of implicatures intended will have to be derived inferentially by the reader. And this is the result of a pragmatic process whose outcome may vary depending on the context the translator, as reader, brings to bear on the interpretation. A degree of discrepancy between the set of implicatures intended by the author and those retrieved by the reader may invariably arise. If this mismatch is then encoded in the target language, the communicative discrepancy will have been perpetuated as far as the L2 readers are concerned.

#### 4. Narrowing down of concepts

So far, we have covered the first of the first-order interpretive use types mentioned earlier. I will now turn to the second one, namely, the narrowing down of concepts. This narrowing down results from the prototypicality effects associated with concepts. Let's consider first an intralingual example of this type of interpretive use:

- (10) *Mary*: I'm worried about how lonely Susan is.  
*Ann*: She needs to meet a bachelor.

In this exchange the concept communicated by the word "bachelor" is not its simple meaning of "unmarried man". This interpretation would allow in unsuitable bachelors, e.g. (taken from Wilson 1994):

- (11) a. Susan needs to meet the Pope.  
 b. Susan needs to meet Edward Heath.

Both the Pope and Edward Heath are strictly speaking bachelors, and yet they do not match the bachelor type intended by the speaker. Hence, the communicated import of Ann's statement in (10) is not just any bachelor. She, obviously, has in mind a specific prototype of bachelor, e.g.:

- (12) SUITABLE BACHELOR PROTOTYPE:  
 youngish  
 emotionally uncommitted  
 free to marry  
 eligible to marry  
 childless

This suitable prototypical picture of the type of bachelor Ann had in mind can be contrasted with the following alternative bachelor prototype:

- (13) UNSUITABLE BACHELOR PROTOTYPE:  
 oldish  
 solitary  
 fussy  
 uninterested in commitment

Often when we mention a concept, we are making manifest a large amount of information stored in the concept's mental address. All this information is made manifest too weakly for all of it to have been intended. We, therefore, need to narrow down this array of information to a manageable size to allow us to infer those implicatures which are truly relevant in the context at hand. The pragmatic process of narrowing down conceptual content does just that. It is an efficient way of communicating the appropriate prototype we have in mind without having to spell it out.

This mismatch between the concept encoded and the concept communicated as a result of pragmatic narrowing down also produces discrepancies in translation. In this case the translator chooses to render, in the target text, the narrowed down concept rather than the original encoded concept. A case in point is the following passage:

- (14) MARCELLUS  
 Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task  
 Does not divide Sunday *from the week*.

MARCELO  
 ... por qué esa leva de calafates, que no duro labor  
 non diferencian o domingo *do resto da semana*.  
 (why such a levy of ship-carpenters, who in  
 their hard work  
 don't distinguish Sunday from the rest of the  
 week.) (ibid.: 28-29)

Since biblical times (at least) the week has seven days. However, that doesn't mean that societies don't sub-group days together for their own purposes. Thus, we have for instance the working week and the weekend. We make these distinctions because it is relevant for us to do so. In the passage in (10), the original text makes a reference to "week" which is obviously not intended to comprise the seven days of the week. That is, it is not intended in its literal meaning. Otherwise it would give rise to a contradiction:

- (15) The task does not divide *Sunday* from Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and *Sunday*.

Clearly, what Shakespeare meant by writing "week" in (14) was *the working week* or, as was rendered by the translator in Galician in this context, *the rest of the week*. The translator interpreted the meaning of the original encoded concept by narrowing it down during pragmatic processing to a concept which could be reasonably ascribed to the author. The choice was made between at least two prototypes of the concept WEEK:

- (16) SUITABLE WEEK PROTOTYPE:  
 people work during the week  
 they have less entertainment  
 the working week has five or, for some, six days  
 the working week excludes Sundays  
 the week is more stressful  
 people have less free time...
- (17) UNSUITABLE WEEK PROTOTYPE:  
 a week has seven days  
 the days of the week are: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.  
 a week is a division of the month  
 52 weeks make up a year...

Of these two prototypes, the one Shakespeare had in mind must have been along the lines of (16), which is precisely the one referred to in the Galician translation.

Another example of narrowing down of concepts can be found in the next passage:

- (18) HORATIO  
 Such was the very armour he had on  
 When he the ambitious *Norway* combated.

HORACIO

Tal era a armadura que levaba  
 cando ó *noruego* cobizoso combateu.  
 (Such was the armour which he had on  
 when the ambitious Norwegian combated.)  
 (ibid.: 26-27)

Here the original refers to Norway, whereas the translation mentions *noruego / Norwegian*. Clearly, the intended interpretation doesn't span all the information that the reader may have about Norway, for example, none of the following would be normally intended in this context:

- (19) UNSUITABLE NORWAY PROTOTYPE:  
 it is a mountainous country  
 there are many fjords  
 it is a beautiful place  
 it is a long strip of land in Scandinavia  
 it is wider in the south than in the north  
 its neighbour to the east is Sweden...

None of these assumptions are relevant in the context of (18). However, the following alternative prototype would be more appropriate:

- (20) SUITABLE NORWAY PROTOTYPE:  
 its inhabitants are the Norwegians  
 the Norwegians are descendants of the Vikings  
 the Vikings set off from there to conquer other countries  
 it was the origin of numerous violent invasions...

It seems clear that the author didn't intend to communicate the natural beauty of Norway described in prototype (19), but rather he was referring to its inhabitants, more precisely, its conquering and powerful army as mentioned in prototype (20). This is what the translator interpreted and encoded in the Galician text. Note that the Galician text is also subject to a narrowing down process, whereby "o noruego" is interpreted not as any type of Norwegian but, more specifically, as the *warrior* Norwegian.

This is not the only synecdoche dealt with in this way even in the first scene. Consider the following text:

- (21) HORATIO  
 ... In which the majesty of *buried Denmark*  
 Did sometimes march?...

HORACIO

... coa que a maxestade *do rei danés enterrado*  
 desfilaba polo tempo?..  
 (with which the majesty of the buried Danish king  
 marched through time.) (ibid.)

Again in this case the original reference is to a country, i.e. Denmark. However, the intended reference interpretation is not to the country as such, but to its King, as the Galician translation spells out. Thus, the translator narrowed down the content of

the concept encoded and took the author to have communicated the more restricted concept, which is subsequently encoded in Galician. This is another example of stylistic shift from the vaguer original to the more precise translation. Obviously, the associations that the author may have wanted to communicate with the concept Denmark will have been lost in the Galician, such as, for example, identifying the whole country with its King and the powerful idea associated with it that the King is its unifying symbol and essence.

It is also important to note that even if in Shakespearean times, it was more common to name the country to refer to its king, some pragmatic processing would be required to derive that interpretation. If nothing else, because people at that time could also name the country to refer only to the country, rather than its king. One could argue that in those times this prototype associated with the concept COUNTRY (in relation to its king) was more accessible than at present time.

## 5. Conclusion

My main argument has been that many translation discrepancies can be explained by examining the pragmatic processes performed by a translator during the interpretation of the original text, and the subsequent encoding of that interpretation in the target language. Translators often choose to encode their derived pragmatic interpretation in detriment of what was encoded in the original.

Here I have concentrated on one of the two basic uses of language, namely, interpretive use. This use, as we have seen, clearly shows the potential mismatch between encoding and communication. I have attempted to explore the consequences of this mismatch by analysing instances of the two subtypes of first-order interpretive use, i.e. loose use and narrowing down of concepts.

These two subtypes of interpretive use allow us to understand and explain how translators arrive at their target version, and constitute the basis of our judgments as to whether the degree of interpretive resemblance established in a particular case is adequate and acceptable, given the relevance sought for, and expected from, the translation.

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“Types and Degrees of Interpretive Resemblance in  
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## Types and Degrees of Interpretive Resemblance in Translation

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### ABSTRACT

This article explores one of the types of interpretive resemblance found in translation, namely, resemblance between concepts. These are cases where the concept encoded involves a resemblance relation between its literal import and the meaning it communicates, i.e. cases in which words do not literally communicate the concepts they encode. It is argued that translations are often carried out not on the basis of the concept encoded in the original text but on the basis of the actual concept communicated. This constitutes one of the sources of discrepancy found between original and target texts. In these cases, the translation encodes not what was encoded originally but (the translator's interpretation of what) the source concept was intended to communicate. There are three ways in which what is communicated by a concept may depart from what it encodes: concept narrowing, concept loosening, and echoic uses of concepts. In addition to discussing these processes in relation to translation, arguments are put forward for the existence of a further resemblance possibility: concept **widening**.

### 1. Introduction

In this article it is argued that discrepancies in translation are often due to the effects of *interpretive resemblance* between what is encoded and what is communicated. Interpretive resemblance arises when two propositional representations share their analytic and contextual implications in a given context (Wilson & Sperber, 1988: 138). One of the main types of interpretive resemblance found in translation are resemblances between concepts,

in particular, between the concept *encoded* and the concept *communicated*. This variety of interpretive resemblance manifests itself when the concept encoded and the meaning communicated differ in their content, and when there is a relation between the two which helps determine, via pragmatic interpretation, the concept communicated<sup>1</sup>.

The gap between what is encoded and what is communicated has significant consequences for translation. Indeed, target texts are often carried out not on the basis of the concept encoded in the original text, but rather on the basis of the related concept it communicates. As Wilson (1993a, 7: 11) argues, "a word which linguistically encodes a certain concept doesn't necessarily *communicate* that concept". This constitutes one of the sources of discrepancy found between original and target texts. In these cases, the translator chooses to encode not what was encoded originally but (his interpretation of what) the source concept was intended to communicate.

The particular type of discrepancy that may arise in the process of translation depends on the various ways in which an encoded concept may be used to communicate a related, but different concept. It has been argued (Wilson, 1993a) that there are three ways in which what is communicated by a concept may depart from what it encodes: concept narrowing, concept loosening, and echoic uses of concepts. In what follows, each of these pragmatic processes is discussed first monolingually and then applied to translation. In addition, it is argued that there seems to be a further possibility of resemblance: concept *widening*, which appears to complement concept narrowing. Let us start by looking at concept narrowing.

## 2. Concept Narrowing

The pragmatic process of concept narrowing (Wilson, 1993: 7) consists in applying a concept which is true of a set of entities to a more restricted subset of those entities. Thus, the *use* of a concept picks out only those entities to which it is *relevant* to apply it. In other words, it narrows it down to a more confined number of identifiable entities, out of all the possible entities denoted by the concept. Let us illustrate this with an intralingual example: the term 'professional'. A 'professional' is someone who takes special training in the liberal arts or sciences. On the face of it, (music) teachers meet this criterion, since both their background is in a liberal art (e.g. music) and they require special training after university (e.g. in England, the PGCE: Postgraduate Certificate in Education). However, a (music) teacher is not the prototypical professional. Thus, on hearing utterance (1), the kinds of professions we envisage are, e.g. lawyers, doctors, accountants, etc.

(1) There are too many professionals in this country.

What is happening in the interpretation of this utterance is that the entities of which it is *relevant* to say "professional" do not include all the entities of which it is *true* to predicate it. As it is shown below the implications of concept narrowing for translation are important,

as translations may be produced not on the basis of the concept encoded, but rather the concept communicated.

This difference between the concept encoded and the concept communicated may also have consequences for the truth-conditions of an utterance, i.e. for its descriptive content, as opposed to, for instance, its attitudinal content (for background on the notion of truth-conditions, see Cann, 1993, ch.1). As Wilson (1993, 7: 4) points out, "there are some clear cases where this sort of narrowing affects the truth conditions of the utterance, and must therefore be dealt with at the level of the proposition expressed". Thus, example (2), uttered whilst looking out into the open countryside, may have various referents:

(2) I like it here.

The referent of 'here' may be *this spot, the countryside, this region, this country*, etc. The particular choice made in a given context will depend on what the hearer takes the speaker to have intended. Each of those referents affects the truth-conditions of the utterance and hence they must be included in the proposition expressed, which specifies the descriptive content of the utterance (see Gutt, 1991: 24-33; Blakemore, 1992, ch.5).

In translation, the narrowing down of concepts is one of the results of the processes involved in interpreting a text. As Baker states:

[a translator] must attempt to perceive the meanings of words and utterances *very precisely* in order to render them into another language. This forces us as translators to go *far beyond* what the average reader has to do in order to reach an adequate understanding of the text (Baker, 1992: 17, my italics).

Part of an adequate understanding of a text is deriving the intended propositional forms of the utterances it contains. To do this the translator often has to go beyond the linguistically encoded content of the text and draw information from the context to derive a fuller propositional form. The translation will *then* be carried out on the basis of this *complete* propositional form. This means that the translator has a choice between rendering, in the target language, just the linguistic content of the source text (i.e. the words encoded in the original language) or the proposition it expressed (i.e. the full thought it was intended to communicate).

One of the sources of discrepancy between source and target texts lies precisely in the decision by a translator to encode not the linguistic content of the source text, but the proposition it expresses. Concept narrowing is often responsible for the discrepancy that arises between the encoded utterance and its propositional form. The following translation from Spanish, taken from a short story (from Lawaetz, 1972: 180-1), shows this narrowing down process, where the example involves a hotel room which is being described:

(3) El agua salía hirviendo, y eso compensaba la falta de sol y de aire.

*The water from the tap was boiling hot, and this compensated for the lack of sunlight and fresh air.*

The word at issue in the Spanish original is *aire*, which literally means *air*. It seems clear that the author did not intend this word to be understood as communicating literally *air*. If he had intended that interpretation, the text could hardly be taken as a true description of a possible world, as it would entail that there was no air at all in the hotel room (and therefore no possibility of life). This is surely an unwanted implication. The author, therefore, must have intended to mean something else, such as a more specific type of air.

There are many types of air: polluted air, stuffy air, clean air, fresh air, etc. In this case, where the text is about a hotel, it seems reasonable to take the author to have had in mind a stuffy room and to have intended the interpretation *fresh air*, thus contributing a narrowed down concept to the proposition expressed. This is precisely what the translator rendered in English, i.e. the truth-conditional contribution of the concept *air* in this context, rather than just the concept it encodes literally. This is one of the discrepancies between the original and the target texts found in (3), which as we can see stems from translating not the literal linguistic content of the original text but what it was used to *communicate*.

Concept narrowing is, of course, not restricted to any particular type of translation and is a special case of the more general relevance-theoretic notion of enrichment<sup>2</sup>, which goes beyond the simple narrowing down of a literally encoded concept. The following technical example shows an original English text with its attendant Spanish translation (taken from a FUJICHROME Instructions Leaflet, in which I am assuming the English text is the original language, as it comes first and there is no Japanese version of the text):

(4) FUJICHROME 100 Film is a Daylight Type for use with light sources mentioned below.

*FUJICHROME 100 es una película equilibrada para fotografiar con luz diurna y debe usarse solamente con los siguientes tipos de luz.*

The concept at issue here is the Spanish *solamente*, which literally means *only*. This concept is not present in the English original. In fact, the translator of this text seems to have narrowed down the scope of the light sources intended, resulting in an enrichment of the original. This enrichment can be seen more clearly, if we look more closely at the English original.

The original text could be interpreted in any number of ways. For example, it could be construed as being qualified by "at least", "preferably", "mainly", "only", etc., as (5) shows:

- (5) a. FUJICHROME 100 Film is a Daylight Type for use *at least* with light sources mentioned below.  
 b. FUJICHROME 100 Film is a Daylight Type for use *preferably* with light sources mentioned below.  
 c. FUJICHROME 100 Film is a Daylight Type for use *mainly* with light sources mentioned below.

- d. FUJICHROME 100 Film is a Daylight Type for use *only* with light sources mentioned below.

This means that there are many ways in which the scope of the light sources referred to in the text could be narrowed down. It seems probable though that, in this context, the intended propositional form is that corresponding to (5d), namely, the one that restricts the light sources to just those which are, in the original leaflet, listed immediately after the current example. It is precisely this narrowed down scope that the translator conveys linguistically in Spanish. It is important to note that there is no grammatical reason why the translator could not have been faithful to the style of the original by leaving the scope implicit, whilst still intending to communicate the same propositional form. To illustrate this point further, consider the following amended version (where there is no linguistic mention of *solamente/only*):

- (6) FUJICHROME 100 Film is a Daylight Type for use with light sources mentioned below.

*FUJICHROME 100 es una película equilibrada para fotografiar con luz diurna y debe usarse con los siguientes tipos de luz.*

In this case, although there is no mention of *solamente*, we can still interpret it in the restrictive sense. This provides further evidence that in (4) the translator has decided to encode linguistically not just the original text, but the propositional form he derived from it. It is interesting to note that the German version of this text *has* been faithful to the style of the original, whilst also giving rise to the same restricted scope as in the Spanish:

- (7) FUJICHROME 100 Film is a Daylight Type for use with light sources mentioned below.

*Der FUJICHROME 100 ist ein Tageslichtfilm, der auf folgende Lichtquellen abgestimmt ist.*

In this German example there is no reference to the scope of the light sources: it is left for the reader to infer and include in the propositional form expressed by the utterance. These examples suggest that translators adopt different styles in communicating the same propositional form. As a result, the target texts may vary in linguistic terms, but not necessarily in communicative terms (i.e. in terms of the overall content conveyed). Let us now turn to the next type of interpretive resemblance relation, namely, loose uses of concepts.

### 3. Loose Uses of Concepts

Concept loosening, which covers metaphor, is another case where the communicated concept differs from the encoded concept. In this case, what is communicated shares *some*

of its implications with the original, but not all. For example, the following utterance does not communicate every implication derivable from the literally encoded concept:

(8) An idea not to be sniffed at.

(taken from *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, 2/2/1996)

It does not, for instance, communicate the following implication (although, had it been a literal use of *sniff*, it would):

(9) The idea must not be smelled.

Ideas cannot be *smelled*. The utterance *can*, however, be taken to communicate the following implications:

(10) a. The idea must not be derided.

b. The idea must not be made fun of.

c. The idea must be respected...

The use of *sniffed at* in (8) is less-than-literal or loose. Adopting a relevance-theoretic approach in the analysis of this type of pragmatic process, the use of *sniffed at* would be consistent with the communicative principle proposed within relevance theory (cf. Wilson and Sperber, 1993: 287), which stipulates that processing costs and contextual effects must be balanced. In the interpretation of (8), this balance is achieved because, if the implications derived in (10) were literally spelt out, it would involve greater processing costs for the hearer than is required in interpreting (8). Examples such as (8) are said to communicate an *impression*, i.e. a series of weak implicatures, which could not be straightforwardly paraphrased without loss of content. Moreover, expressing them linguistically would change the style of communication from a vague and weak type to a more precise and stronger type, which may not always be desirable (e.g. in titles such as (8))<sup>3</sup>. To see the overall effect of a stronger and more precise title, compare the original, loose, title in (8) to the following, more literal, title in (8'):

(8') An idea not to be ridiculed.

Although this new version communicates a determinate, specific, and literal proposition, it does not attract our attention as much as the original, looser, title in (8), which left it more open to us to pursue our own line of interpretation and thus was more appealing (as a title).

In the case of interlinguistic communication, the differences between what is encoded and what is communicated, as a result of loose use of concepts, is another source of discrepancies found in translation. For example, the following title of a short story in Spanish is not a literal use of language (taken from Lawaetz, 1972: 180):

- (11) La puerta condenada  
*The condemned door* (literal translation)

The term in question here is *condenada* (*condemned*). In Spanish, this term literally means to pass sentence on a person by a judge. However, what the author had in mind here was not any legal sentence passed on the door, instead he wanted to communicate *some* of the implications derivable from the literal concept *condemned*:

- (12) a. The door is to be avoided.  
b. The door has been left without use.  
c. The door is a symbol of evil.  
d. The door where horrible things have happened...

It would be much more costly, cognitively speaking, to encode every single one of these intended implications than to communicate a less-than-literal interpretation of the concept and weakly suggest all of them at the same time (by means of a single utterance). Considerations of relevance led the writer to use *condenada*. The translator, however, did not render the original literally in English. Instead, s/he derived the interpretation first and then, on the basis of what she took the author to have communicated, produced the following English version (Lawaetz, 1972: 181):

- (13) The disused door.

This version is one of the implications of the original. In Spanish when an entity is *condemned*, it can be interpreted as being left without use, following the parallelism of a prisoner who is deprived of normal life. However, this implication is not necessarily the only one communicated by the author in uttering the sentence in (11). The translator has offered an English text based on the concept *communicated*, not on the concept *encoded*, by the original. By doing this, s/he has altered the style. In particular, s/he has produced a literal use of language, as opposed to a less-than-literal one. In other words, his/her utterance is a literal interpretation of the thought he wanted to communicate. It does, therefore, explicate its own propositional form, unlike (11) which does not. As a result, there is also less involvement on the part of the reader in the process of interpretation, because s/he would not take as much responsibility in deriving the intended implications. In other words, there is not as much indication on the part of the translator, as there is on the part of the author, regarding the direction he foresees the interpretation to go. That is, the original author, in using a metaphor, invites readers to create their own impression of the story by the title; whereas the translator, in using a literal expression, at most can only hope to have encouraged readers to pose questions regarding the content encoded in the translated title (e.g. why is it in disuse, etc.). Moreover, the translation could be even entertained as having no implicatures at all (see Blakemore, 1992: 128), in clear contrast with the original text<sup>4</sup>.

Another discrepancy associated with loose uses of concepts in translation arises when the interpretive resemblance found in the target text is different from that found in the source text. The following extract from the same short story discussed above exemplifies this point:

- (14) De no estar allí la puerta condenada, el llanto no hubiera vencido las fuertes espaldas de la pared.  
*Had the door not been there, the wailing would never have overcome the strong bastion of the wall.* (ibid.: 186)

The expression in question here is *espaldas*, which literally means (*human*) *backs*:

- (15) Las fuertes espaldas de la pared.  
*The strong backs of the wall.* (Literal translation)

The Spanish original obviously involves a loose use of the concept *espalda* (*de la pared*). In particular, it does not communicate any of the following:

- (16) a. The back of the wall has a spinal cord.  
 b. The back of the wall is covered with skin.  
 c. The back of the wall is behind the chest...

What it *may* communicate in the current context, where the text refers to the walls of a hotel, are these other implications:

- (17) a. The backs of the wall isolate guests from one another.  
 b. The backs of the wall protect the guests.  
 c. The backs of the wall resemble two humans turning their backs on each other...

In contrast to the previous example, the target English text in this case has not become more literal than the source text. Instead the translator chose to be faithful to the original loose use of language (i.e. the communicative style), but changed the metaphor (i.e. the suggested impression). The interpretive resemblance in the target text provided by the translator is not between the back of a wall and the back of a human as in the original, but rather between the bastion of a (fortification) wall and the wall itself. Thus, the type of implication the reader is encouraged to derive will be, at least, slightly different in the original and target texts. In the Spanish text the implications are about the similarities between walls and people, in particular, their backs. In the English text the similarities are between fortifications and walls, in particular, the defensive and protective role which both play. Thus, as stated above, although some of these implications will be similar, and in some cases they may even overlap, other implications will certainly differ.

To sum up, loose uses of concepts can give rise to discrepancies between source and target texts. This is due to the fact that the concepts encoded (in these cases) do not match precisely the concepts they communicate. The gap between the two is the result of an interpretive process carried out in the search for relevance (Gutt, 1991, ch.2; Sperber & Wilson, 1986/1995).

#### 4. Echoic Uses of Concepts

A third type of discrepancy between what is encoded and what is communicated involves echoic use of language. When we use a concept echoically, we are not using it to describe some state of affairs in the world. Rather, we are attributing its use to someone else (or ourselves in the past). Hence, there is a potential gap between literal and attributed concepts, which may, as a consequence, give rise to discrepancies in communication (and, in turn, translation). To illustrate, let us look first at an intralingual example of echoic use:

(18) Peter: What did Mary say?

John: You've dropped your wallet.

John's answer can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, it can be used *descriptively*, in which case John is alerting Peter that he, at that moment in time, has dropped his wallet. In this case, John is simply describing some state of affairs before him. On the other hand, it can be used *echoically*, in which case John is reporting what Mary had said. In this case, John is not describing a state of affairs, or committing himself to the truth of what he has reported, but rather he is simply committing himself to the faithfulness of the report. His statement interpretively resembles what Mary had said to a relevant enough degree.

Let us consider now interlingual cases of echoic use, some of which often go unnoticed. As Hervey et al. say in relation to cultural transplantation of whole pieces of work:

Cultural transplantation[s]... , whose extreme forms are hardly to be recognised as translations at all [my italics], ... are more like adaptations - the wholesale transplanting of the entire setting of the ST, resulting in the text being completely reinvented in an indigenous target culture setting (Hervey et al., 1995: 23).

Although Hervey et al. refer here to complete pieces of work, the same general process is found at word and sentential level. These are the levels on which the discussion below is focused.

The following example is an instance of echoic use taken from the instructions of a hair conditioning product and its back-translation from Arabic (from Baker, 1992: 35), where back-translation is the translation of the target text back into the original language:

(19) *Original*

For maximum effect, cover the hair with a plastic cap or towel.

*Back-translation from Arabic*

For obtaining maximum effectiveness, the hair is covered by means of a "cap", that is a plastic hat which covers the hair, or by means of a towel.

The expression at issue here is the term *cap* and the way it has been rendered in Arabic shown in bold in the back-translation. The English term in the original is used descriptively, but in the Arabic version it is used echoically (i.e. what the English/writer call/s *cap*). This echoic use is spelt out by providing a definition of what is meant. Hence, the translator is using a term echoically and at the same time explaining the content of the attributed concept. Obviously, he realised that the readers would lack enough knowledge to interpret the concept, i.e. it would not give rise to cognitive effects, and decided to provide background information to achieve successful communication.

Let us consider another example. Take the following English text about a private motor museum and part of its German translation (quoted in Baker, 1992: 34):

- (20) The Patrick Collection has restaurant facilities to suit every taste - from the discerning gourmet, to the Cream Tea expert.

... vom anspruchsvollen Feinschmecker bis zum "Cream-Tea"-Experten.

*Back-translation from German*

... from demanding gourmets to "Cream-Tea"-experts.

The translator here has decided to keep the original *Cream-Tea*, which in German is, arguably, an echoic use given that it mentions the English expression. That is, the interpretation in this case would be: *what the English call Cream Tea*. This is done overtly by virtue not only of its being a foreign word in German, but also of its being presented in inverted commas. Note that the difference between this case and the previous one is that here no spelling out of the concept is provided. It is assumed that the German readers will have the relevant information accessible to interpret the expression. In other words, they are assumed to have enough knowledge about this English institution, so as to render any explanation of its meaning unnecessary.

This type of change from descriptive use to echoic use is not always the chosen path to translating a source text. The Italian version of text (20) chooses to respect the descriptive use of language of the original, as the following extract shows (quoted in Baker, 1992: 33):

- (21) ... di soddisfare tutti I gusti: da quelli del gastronomo esigente a quelli dell'esperto di pasticceria.

*Back-translation from Italian*

... to satisfy all tastes: from those of the demanding gastronomist to those of the expert in pastry.

The word in question here is *pasticceria*, which as the back-translation shows means *pastry*. This is not an echoic use of language as in the German example, but a descriptive one. Hence, the translator has been faithful to the original as far as the descriptive use is concerned. Of course, the result of this decision is that the Italian text communicates something different from what the original text intended. That is, a Cream Tea expert is not the same as a pastry expert. Content has thus been sacrificed. This may also reveal the attitudes of the respective translators about the original text, where the German translator opted for a foreignisation of the target text and the Italian for a domestication (for a critique of these terms see Robinson, 1997, part 3).

In some cases, a term used echoically in one language may be used descriptively in another. This happens, particularly, when the source text includes a term which is a loan word from the target language. A case in point is the following English text, taken from the information leaflet on *The Patrick Collection* already mentioned:

(22) You can even dine "alfresco" in the summer on our open air terrace.

The word in question here is *alfresco*. This is an Italian expression which means "in the open air". However, in the English text it is used echoically, as shown by the quotation marks. The Italian translation of this text would not include an echoic use of the word, since in this language it is used descriptively.

(23) D'estate potrete anche pranzare *alfresco* sulle nostre terrazze.

In Italian, the word *alfresco* is used colloquially (native informant), in clear contrast with its echoic use in English, where it is used in more educated contexts and it has connotations of sophistication (which are absent in the Italian original). In more standard Italian, the expression used would be *all'aperto*, i.e. *in the open* (native informant). However, in either case the Italian text would include a descriptive use of language, as opposed to the English text which resorts to an echoic use of language.

The descriptive strategy was also used by the German translator of the text, as the following German version shows:

(24) Im Sommer können Sie auch auf der Terrasse **im Freien** sitzen und essen.

*Back-translation from German*

In the summer you can sit and eat **in the open** on the terrace.

As we see, the style of the German text has changed from interpretive to descriptive use of language by using *in the open/im Freien*. This means, amongst other things, that the attitudes that could have been communicated by the echoic use (e.g. -Italian- sophistication, etc.) are lost in the target text. Let us now turn to the last type of interpretive resemblance relation to be considered.

### 5. Concept Widening

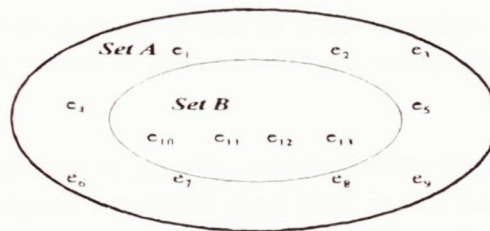
In addition to the three types of resemblance relation (between concepts) mentioned so far, there seems to be a further resemblance possibility: concept *widening*. This is the opposite case to concept narrowing and it may be possible to analyse it as a sub-case of loosening in that it applies to some objects that do not fall under the concept (see above).

Concept widening involves the communication of a concept whose meaning, in a particular context, is more general than that of the concept linguistically encoded. That is, what is communicated *includes* what is encoded. In translation, concept widening involves encoding a target concept whose set includes the set encoded by the source concept. It is first illustrated intralinguistically with an example, taken from the contemporary novel *Sophie's World*:

- (25) But when these basic needs have been satisfied -will there still be something that everybody needs? Philosophers think so. They believe that man cannot live by *bread* alone. (Gaarder, 1991; English Translation, 1995: 12, my emphasis).

The word in question here is *bread*. The concept it communicates in this context seems to go beyond what it encodes. It is not communicating that philosophers believe that man cannot live by eating bread only. The issue here is not *bread* in particular, but *food* or *basic needs* more generally. In each of these interpretations the content of the concept *bread* would be *included* in the concept communicated (*bread* is food which in turn is a basic need). In this case it would be misleading to take the author to have communicated just *bread*. The subset relation at hand is shown in the following diagram:

- (26)



- Set A* => Set of entities of which it is *relevant* to say that they are bread.  
*Set B* => Set of entities of which it is *true* to say that they are bread.

This analysis, in fact, seems to be corroborated by the text that follows the extract in (25) in the novel:

- (27) Of course everyone needs *food*. (ibid., my emphasis).

As (27) shows, what the author had in mind was not just bread, but food (or even basic needs), in which bread itself is included.

An interlinguistic example of concept widening can be seen in the following translation from Spanish (taken from a short story in Lawaetz, 1972: 196-7):

- (28) La mujer no había mentido.  
*The woman had deceived no one.*

The original Spanish text includes the word *mentido*, which literally means *lied*. However, the translation provided here contains *deceived*. There is no grammatical reason why the translator could not have rendered the original text literally, as the following version shows:

- (29) The woman had not lied.

The translator (as a reader) has arguably taken the author to have communicated not that the female character in the short story had *lied* but, more generally, that she had *deceived*. This interpretation is possible because lying is a sub-case of deceiving and hence there is an interpretive resemblance between the two concepts: they share some of their logical and contextual implications. It is also possible because in the story what is relevant is whether the woman is morally apt, and not so much what the moral flaw is. The widening of the concept encoded in (28) causes the discrepancy in the target version.

Another example of concept widening is the following translation of the instructions of a Hewlett-Packard print cartridge:

- (30) Have highest quality output every time with this HP print cartridge.  
*Consiga siempre la máxima calidad de impresión con este cartucho de impresión HP.*  
(Hewlett-Packard Co.)

The Spanish expression at hand here is *siempre*, which literally means *always*. The translator has interpreted the English expression *every time* in this context as meaning *always*, which in itself includes the meaning of *every time*. That is, he has widened the temporal scope of the source text in the target version (which could have included a more literal rendering of the English original in Spanish, i.e. *cada vez*, every time).

Thus, the widenings of concepts effected in these translations have resulted in discrepancies between source and target texts. The translator rendered the target texts on the basis not of the encoded but the communicated concepts, thereby giving rise to the differences between the two texts.

## 6. Conclusion

Interpretive resemblance between concepts underpins the gap that exists between what is encoded and what is communicated. Four possible types of interpretive resemblance have

been considered. They explain some of the discrepancies that arise in the process of translation between the source and target texts as a result of pragmatic processing.

All these four types of discrepancy between encoding and communication are reflected firstly in the (interpretive) mediation of the translator in rendering a source text in a target language, and secondly in the resulting discrepancies between these two texts. In general, these processes may give rise to a change in the style of the text from source to target language, e.g. from inference to encoding or from interpretive use to descriptive use of language.

These cross-linguistic textual changes may have implications for judgements of acceptability in translation (for the notion of translation acceptability from a pragmatic point of view, see e.g. Rosales Sequeiros, 1998b). Acceptability judgments will be affected because what is deemed to be acceptable in one context may not be so in another. For example, a widening such as the one carried out in the translation of (28) above may be acceptable in a commercial translation of the short story in question. However, it may not be so acceptable in other situations (e.g. as part of an exam). Ultimately, acceptability judgements will be dependent on the degree to which expectations raised in the audience by the translation are met during the interpretation of the resulting target text.

#### Notes

1. The research discussed here belongs within a more general program of establishing the types and degrees of interpretive resemblance found in translation and the role interpretive resemblance plays in (a) clarifying and explaining the varieties of discrepancy between source and target texts and (b) the degrees of acceptability involved in translation.

2. Enrichment is one of several pragmatic processes required to develop the bare semantic representation of an utterance into a full, truth-evaluable, propositional form (cf. Gutt, 1991: 24-25; Blakemore, 1992: 77ff.).

3. For a discussion of strong and weak communication see Sperber & Wilson 1995, and Blakemore 1992.

4. It is interesting to note here that some English dictionaries (e.g. Collins Concise Dictionary Plus) quote the meaning of *disused* as one of the senses of *condemned*. This shows to what extent lexicographers list meanings which are, in fact, interpretations of the literal sense of the concepts being defined. They often provide long lists of less-than-literal interpretations of (the original) concepts, which may in time become literal meanings in their own right.

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## “Interlingual Pragmatic Enrichment in Translation”

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## Interlingual pragmatic enrichment in translation

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### Abstract

This article discusses the notion of pragmatic enrichment in relation to translation. Enrichment is viewed as a pragmatic process whose function is to develop the vagueness found in many natural language utterances in order to arrive at fully determinate thoughts. The notion of enrichment, applied to translation, is defined here as *interlingual pragmatic enrichment*. This process involves, firstly, the development of a source text into its fully determinate conceptual representation by carrying out an enrichment and, secondly, the translation of this fully enriched thought into another language. The claim is made that interlingual enrichment is carried out on two grounds. First, it may be required for reasons to do with the input, e.g. grammatical incompatibilities. Second, it may be done for reasons to do with the context, e.g. cultural variation. These two types of enrichment correspond to the two information sources involved in the interpretation process and, furthermore, they shed light on the changes undergone by a text during translation. © 2002 Elsevier Science B.V. All rights reserved.

*Keywords:* Translation; Semantic representation; Proposition expressed; Interlingual enrichment; Relevance

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### 1. Introduction

This article discusses pragmatic enrichment in translation. In doing this, it places translation within the sphere of communication. As Gutt (1991: 22) has stated, “translation is indeed best handled as a matter of communication” (see also Gutt,

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2000: 202–8). In particular, translation is a form of *linguistic* communication and it is here that enrichment and translation meet.

When we use language we encode semantic representations which are partial representations of the thoughts we intend to communicate. These semantic representations (or logical forms) constitute the blueprint for the thoughts which addressees must recover to achieve successful communication.

As the word 'blueprint' suggests, semantic representations are not complete. This means that before addressees recover fully determinate thoughts, they must engage in a process of development of the logical form. The result of this development is the propositional form of the utterance which is sometimes described as the proposition expressed. As Wilson and Sperber (1993b: 6) comment:

"although the logical form of an utterance is recovered by decoding, its fully propositional form is obtained by inferential enrichment of the linguistically encoded logical form. It is the propositional form of an utterance, not its logical form, that determines the proposition expressed."

Enrichment, therefore, involves a process of completion of the logical form (i.e. the semantic representation encoded by the utterance) whose aim is to arrive at the proposition expressed, which may or may not be one of the set of thoughts explicitly communicated by the utterance. Following Wilson and Sperber in their presentation of this notion, the conditions under which enrichment is carried out can be stated as follows: "If the linguistically encoded information is too vague, or too incomplete, to yield an adequately relevant interpretation, it will be enriched using immediately accessible contextual assumptions, to the point where it is relevant enough" (*ibid.*, 1993a: 293).

This means that not all that is said is linguistically encoded. Standardly, there is a gap between what is linguistically encoded and what is said. This is a fact that has sometimes been overlooked in the study of linguistic communication, as Sperber and Wilson (1986: 180) themselves have pointed out, "the fact that logical forms must often be enriched is generally ignored". As it turns out, pragmatic enrichment will prove to be an important and powerful device that translators, as addressees and communicators, can use in the process of discourse interpretation and translation.

Furthermore, what is crucial to translation as regards enrichment is that languages differ in the strategies used to make meaning explicit. Thus, one language may be equipped to encode very subtle nuances by means of unequivocal linguistic devices, while a different language may commonly express the same or equivalent nuances by linguistic devices which encode very vague semantic constraints on the interpretation. This forces translators to resort to pragmatic enrichment of the logical form in order to derive the intended, fully determinate, propositional form (when there is one). Here is where translators themselves act as addressees of the original text, before they become communicators in their own right (cf. Gutt, 2000: 213–5). In cases like this, where an equivalent communicative effect has been achieved by two different communicative routes, there is a difference in *style* between the two texts (and perhaps more fundamentally between the two languages), as far as the conveyance of the same or equivalent meaning is concerned. In this respect, it could

be argued that the two underlying cultures “perceive” the world in slightly different ways, whilst at the same time enabling the linguistic communication of the same or equivalent content.

In what follows, the role played by enrichment in translation (in particular, literary translation) will be illustrated by looking at a range of linguistic phenomena which require or invite the application of enrichment at the level of the proposition expressed to achieve successful translation.

## 2. Pragmatic enrichment

In order to illustrate the process of enrichment, consider the following intralingual examples:

- (1) a. He handed her the scalpel. She made the incision.  
 b. John dropped the glass. It broke.  
 c. The car is too expensive.  
 d. I have had lunch.

Example (1a) is discussed by Carston (1993: 29). She argues that “the proposition is enriched along the lines of [(2a) below]”, where there is both a temporal and an instrumental enrichment. Wilson and Sperber (1993a: 281) follow this type of analysis by taking “the temporal and causal connotations of ... [(1b)] as inferentially determined aspects of what is said”, thus contributing, as shown in (2b), to the truth-conditions of the utterance (i.e. to what the hearer takes as having been said).

Wilson and Sperber (*ibid.*) discuss examples similar to (1c) and (1d), where comparative adjectives imply that there is an implicit comparison between the explicit entity mentioned in the utterance and a set of implicit entities assumed by the speaker. This set is inferred pragmatically and contributes to the truth-conditions of the utterance (that is, to what is said). The use of the present perfect implies that the event described is located within a period of time stretching back from the time of the utterance, and the particular period must be pragmatically selected. This period contributes to the truth-conditions of the utterance. Thus, the role of the addressee is to find, by pragmatic means, a unit narrow enough for the utterance to be worth his attention. This would be a case of strengthening of the logical form. In the case of (1c), if we assume a situation where the participants are considering the purchase of a car, the enrichment could go along the lines of (2c), which would be a case of completion. In the case of (1d) the most common enrichment would go along the lines of (2d):

- (2) a. HE HANDED HER THE SCALPEL. [*A SECOND OR TWO LATER*]  
 SHE MADE THE INCISION [*WITH THAT SCALPEL*].  
 b. JOHN DROPPED THE GLASS. [*SOME MILLISECONDS LATER*]  
 IT BROKE [*AS A RESULT OF JOHN DROPPING IT*].

- c. THE CAR IS TOO EXPENSIVE [*FOR ME TO BUY*].  
 d. I HAVE HAD LUNCH [*TODAY*].

Enrichment, therefore, involves [a] having knowledge of the logically ordered sets of intended elements or the conceptual constituents, as the case may be, [b] inferring the intended set or conceptual constituent, and finally [c] entering that information into the proposition expressed. The proposition expressed is what the addressee will take the addresser to have intended to say or, in the words of the philosopher Grice (e.g. 1975), *what is said*, as opposed to *what is implicated*. Together *what is said* and *what is implicated* then make up *what is meant*. The content entered into the proposition expressed as a result of enrichment is implicit in the context and it is sufficiently manifest to the addressee for it to be easily recovered. If it was not so, communication would fail to some extent at least.

The underlying hypothesis in the comparative and temporal examples is that our mental structure is such that we tend to organise information logically on the basis of our knowledge of the world (which includes social and cultural conventions). Our logical capabilities are largely innate, whilst our world knowledge is largely based on our experience, in which social and cultural conventions play a central role (since they help impose a structure on our perceptions). Indeed, these two factors are enshrined in pragmatic principles. As Sperber and Wilson (1995: 270) state, an addressee will expect that “the ostensive stimulus [used in a communicative event] is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator’s *abilities* [logical capabilities] and *preferences* [personal, social and cultural conventions]” (my italics). For example, a mental structure of social relationships could include the following logically ordered sets: partner, family, friends, acquaintances, neighbours, strangers; temporal units: now, this afternoon, today, yesterday, this week, last week, etc. We structure these sets on the basis of cultural information, reflected on the language, and the cognitive structures available to store it (which tend to be logical, as it is a cognitively efficient way of organising and accessing information). However, not everybody will have access to the same logically ordered sets and not all of those sets will be equally accessible to an individual every time. This is because, on the one hand, not everybody has the same knowledge of the world (including social and cultural conventions): e.g. a social or personality psychologist will have a larger range of logically ordered sets of possible social relationships between people than a non-expert. On the other hand, not all situations give equal access to all those sets: e.g. at a dinner party a physicist is unlikely to be thinking and interpreting utterances in terms of nanoseconds. However, those very small temporal sets will be in the foreground of his mind during an experiment on particle physics. In other words, the contextual effects of a particular set will vary depending on the situation at hand: a nanosecond frame of mind at a dinner party would be disconcerting, most of the actions will not be recognised or understood as dinner party actions; equally a second frame of mind at a particle physics experiment will be ineffectual, no interesting facts would ever be detected. The task of the addressee is to select the intended logical set on pragmatic grounds.

### 3. Context selection, relevance and pragmatic interpretation

As we have seen in examples (2), enrichment draws information from the context to go from semantic representations to fully developed propositions. Gutt (1991: 25) has stated this very clearly:

“verbal communication involves two distinct kinds of mental representations: semantic representations that are the output of the language module of the mind, and thoughts with propositional forms that are derived from semantic representations by further processing. The way in which audiences get from semantic representations to propositional forms crucially involves the use of *context*.”

Thus, to understand how linguistic communication is achieved we must understand how context interacts with language. Enrichment is one of the processes whose role is to bridge the two. This bridging is not always the same. Suppose, for instance, that example (1c) above is uttered in a context where a university is considering the purchase of a limousine for its Vice-chancellor. In this context the likely enrichment will be as in (3):

- (3) THE CAR IS TOO EXPENSIVE [*FOR THE UNIVERSITY TO BUY*].

The enrichment carried out in (3) is much more likely in the context just described than that in (2c). In other words, the contextual assumptions drawn upon in the process of enrichment will be the most accessible ones in that context, they will be the least costly to access cognitively. However, cognitive cost is not the only consideration used in the selection of an appropriate enrichment. Consider the enrichment of (1a) in (4):

- (4) HE HANDED HER THE SCALPEL. [*A SECOND OR TWO LATER*]  
SHE MADE THE INCISION [*HAVING REMINDED HERSELF OF*  
*THE SHOPPING LIST FOR DINNER*].

The fact that the surgeon had thought about what she had to buy for dinner is perfectly plausible but, in the situation described by (1a), the enrichment that would yield enough cognitive effects for no unjustifiable cognitive effort would be the one shown in (2a). This enrichment coincides with the smallest and most accessible context. As Wilson and Sperber (1993a: 288) argue, “all the hearer is entitled to impute as part of the intended interpretation is the minimal (i.e. smallest, most accessible) context and contextual effects that would be enough to make the utterance worth his attention”. One of the smallest, most accessible, contexts that would yield enough cognitive effects in the situation described by (1a) is that represented by the following question:

- (5) What did she made the incision with?

The answer to this question is precisely the enrichment made in (2a). By contrast, the kind of context that would make the enrichment in (4) yield cognitive effects would be:

- (6) What did she remind herself of before she made the incision?

The context represented in (6) is certainly not the smallest context in which to interpret (1a), nor is it the most accessible. This seems to reflect the role of schemas or scenarios in utterance interpretation, namely, to provide easily accessible information. Although the effects derived from context (6) could in principle be worth the addressee's attention, in the minimum context we are envisaging it is cognitively much more expensive to construct (6) than it is to construct (5). In other words, (5) would be the most accessible context and therefore an answer that instantiated its variable *what with* and produced adequate cognitive effects would be the best and most economical. The enrichment in (2a) provides such an answer, whereas the enrichment in (4) does not. In general, cognitive effort increases with the imagination and the psychological complexity required to construct the context, and cognitive effects increase with the number of expectations or hypotheses confirmed (Wilson and Sperber, 1993a).

Both cognitive effects and cognitive effort are the basis of the notion of *optimal relevance* proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1995). The definition of *optimal relevance* states:

- (7) *Presumption of optimal relevance (revised)*

- (a) The ostensive stimulus [e.g. an utterance] is relevant enough for it to be worth the addressee's effort to process it.
- (b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences.

(Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 270)

This definition is the basis of a more general principle of ostensive-inferential communication called *the second principle of relevance*:

- (8) *The second principle of relevance*

The [second] Principle of Relevance is the principle that every utterance (or other act of ostensive communication) creates an expectation of [optimal] relevance.

(Wilson & Sperber, 1993a: 286)

Wilson and Sperber (1993a: 287) note that for an utterance to be acceptable and comprehensible it does not actually have to be optimally relevant. Seeing how it could reasonably have been expected to be optimally relevant to the addressee will be enough. They express this condition in the following terms:

(9) *Criterion of consistency with the [second] principle of relevance*

An utterance, on a given interpretation, is consistent with the principle of relevance if and only if the speaker might reasonably have expected it to be optimally relevant to the hearer on that interpretation.

(ibid.:287)

Hence, within this theoretical paradigm, enrichment can be described as an inferential process whose input is, on the one hand, the utterance and, on the other, the context (in which the utterance is processed); and whose output is a completed semantic representation. The process of completion is constrained by considerations of relevance, which means that only enrichments which are consistent with the principle of (optimal) relevance are considered acceptable. This is what we saw happen above. In relevance-theoretic terms, (4) was the result of an unacceptable enrichment in the situation described, whereas (2a) was the result of an acceptable one.

Note here that this theoretical paradigm, involving the *second* principle of relevance, is intended to explain *spontaneous* linguistic communication, both in ordinary and literary texts. In this respect, Sperber and Wilson (1995: 75) state:

“the lengthy and highly self-conscious processes of textual interpretation that religious and literary scholars engage in are governed just as much by considerations of relevance as is spontaneous utterance interpretation ... Spontaneous inference plays a role even in scholarly interpretation”.

Here a distinction is made between the highly self-conscious interpretive processes involved in literary exegesis (i.e. non-spontaneous) and the largely unconscious processes involved in ordinary utterance interpretation (i.e. spontaneous). This article is concerned with the second case, i.e. ordinary, spontaneous, utterance interpretation.

Implicit in the above view, particularly as far as spontaneous interpretation is concerned, is that literary texts (or any other types of text) do not constitute in and by themselves a *natural class* (i.e. in a primary sense), and therefore are subject to the same pragmatic principles as any other text. Another issue, of course, is whether we classify some texts (e.g. literary ones) as belonging to a specific text type on the basis of our *world knowledge* (e.g. literary knowledge). This is a secondary, derived sense of text type (see Gutt, 2000: 211, for a parallel argument in relation to translations as a text type). Moreover, our capacity to group texts of a literary nature together (in a secondary, derived sense) does not mean that we use a different set of pragmatic principles to interpret them *spontaneously* (though we may use our contextual assumptions about any of these text types—i.e. in a secondary, derived sense—on the process of interpretation, particularly at the non-spontaneous, cognitive stage, see below). Furthermore, the examples analysed in this article are utterances (as opposed to whole texts) and can therefore be seen as being more closely bound to spontaneous pragmatic analysis. This type of analysis involves interpretation processes fully shared by ordinary and literary uses of language (see Sperber and

Wilson, 1991; Papafragou, 1995, for a discussion of pragmatic processes common to these two traditional uses).

An additional issue is whether a (literary) author has intentions that go beyond what is linguistically spontaneous, which may very well be the case in many (literary) instances. However, this would be part of the *non-spontaneous* stage of interpretation, which falls outside the scope of this article (although it would also be subject to considerations of relevance). In relevance-theoretic terms, the pragmatic interpretation with which we are specifically concerned here, as stated above, is the one corresponding to the *second* principle of relevance (the communicative principle), not the first principle of relevance (the cognitive principle) (see Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 260–78, 1998: 192). In other words, this article is restricted to the interpretation that authors can be taken to have *linguistically* and *spontaneously* communicated by means of the sentences they encode, and not any further non-spontaneous interpretation that may be additionally entertained (see Furlong, 1989, 1996, for a discussion of the notions of spontaneous interpretation and literary interpretation; and Pilkington, 1994, for further discussion of the latter).

Another important point to make here is that natural language utterances normally (though not exclusively) express propositions (i.e. thoughts), and propositions (in semantic terms) are generally considered to express truth-conditional content, which represents the core meaning of the utterance (i.e. what the utterance tells us about the real or a possible world). This is the case for any utterance, regardless of whether they are found in a literary or a non-literary context. The only exception, normally, are utterances which are loosely and metaphorically used (which would not normally communicate their propositional form and corresponding truth-conditions). Moreover, the derivation of the truth-conditional content of a given utterance, as determined by the proposition it expresses, is governed by considerations of relevance, as we saw in examples (1)–(4). This means further that the proposition expressed (by an utterance, i.e. its truth-conditions) is ultimately dependant on the contextual assumptions available and thus *may* change from context to context, or interpretation to interpretation (see Cann, 1992, chapter 1, for a discussion of the notion of truth-conditional content; and Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 183 ff, for the relationship between proposition expressed and truth-conditions).

Note also that the addressee of a given utterance will normally achieve some kind of interpretation on processing it (if the presumption of relevance as well as the communicative intention have been successful, cf. Gutt, 2000: 211). Whether the interpretation derived by the addressee at a given moment in time is the one fully intended by the original author (who, by virtue of producing the text, must have had some kind of communicative as well as informative intention) is an ancillary question. All the hearer has to do in spontaneous interpretation is go ahead and derive the first interpretation that is consistent with the principle of relevance on the basis of the utterance produced and the assumptions accessible to him. This interpretation may, of course, be inconclusive at times or change at different readings of the original text, in which case the text may be seen as having “more than one” interpretation. The addressee will nevertheless strive to arrive at the interpretation which he believes the original author had in mind, unless he chooses to suspend authorial

intention for some given reason. The theoretical paradigm provided by relevance theory covers both spontaneous interpretations and the process of arriving at the interpretation which the addressee takes the author to have intended. Moreover, this paradigm, as a direct result of the consistency criterion defined in (9), covers cases in which the author or speaker may deliberately obscure his utterances to hide some communicative intentions. In this respect, Sperber and Wilson (1998: 192) state, “the effect [of an utterance] should be [...] at least enough for it to have seemed to the speaker that it would seem to the hearer to justify the effort—[...] this qualification [...] plays a role only when the speaker *deliberately* or *accidentally* fails to provide the hearer with sufficiently relevant information.” (my italics). Thus, the criteria of consistency with the principle of relevance allows for cases other than those based purely on overt communication. Cases of covert or accidental communication, though, are not discussed in this article. So, how does the theoretical paradigm discussed in this section help us with the notion of interlingual enrichment?

#### 4. Interlingual enrichment

What transpires from the previous examples is that what we take to have been said, that is, the fully determinate thought communicated may be only partially encoded by linguistic means. Some meaning is linguistically explicit and some must be inferred. For translation this can have important consequences.

If two languages typically encode different degrees of explicitness for a particular propositional form (thought) (because, say, L2 is capable of greater explicitness than L1 in expressing it), the translator will have to enrich the original text before transfer can occur. The translator may also choose to enrich the original text on some other grounds. The logical possibilities between the two languages seem to allow four different cases as regards explicitness/implicitness:

- A Translation *more* explicit because of (enrichment):
  - i. Linguistic differences between two languages
  - ii. A choice of the translator on some other grounds
- B Translation *less* explicit because of (impoverishment):
  - i. Linguistic differences between two languages
  - ii. A choice of the translator on some other grounds

This article focusses on the A cases (for a discussion on the B cases, see Rosales Sequeiros, 1998). The type of pragmatic enrichment across languages found in the A cases will be called *interlingual enrichment*. Consequently, literary enrichment would become a subtype of interlingual enrichment.

In all cases of enrichment, the adoption of a particular degree of explicitness by either the original author or the translator may in itself be significant, as they may choose to be more or less explicit in order to elicit a given pragmatic effect from their audience (cf. “meaningful silence”, Mey, 1997). However, this is an aspect which falls outside the scope of this article.

So far we have seen intralingual enrichments, that is, enrichments which arise during the process of interpretation of an utterance and whose cognitive life ends there. In interlingual enrichment, on the other hand, the cognitive life of the proposition expressed by an utterance goes beyond the interpretation itself to be reexpressed in a different language. Thus, a definition of interlingual enrichment is proposed as in (10):

(10) *Interlingual enrichment:*

An utterance is a case of interlingual enrichment if its semantic representation is the intended enrichment of the semantic representation of an utterance from another language.

Hence, for interlingual enrichment to occur there must be [a] an enriched semantic representation derived from a given language and [b] an utterance from another language which encodes that enriched semantic representation. As will be seen below, interlingual enrichment carried out on linguistic grounds [type (Ai) above] is necessary when the target language can only express the thought communicated in the original language by means of a sentence which is made linguistically more explicit. Hence, the justification for this type of enrichment is purely grammatical, as it is the grammar of the target language that forces the translator to produce an enriched translation. By contrast, interlingual enrichment carried out on other grounds [type (Aii) above] is necessary when the contextual (e.g. cultural) assumptions required to interpret the original text successfully may not be easily accessible to the target audience and as a result the full propositional form recovered by the translator may not be communicable without the added contextual information. This subtype of interlingual enrichment would also be justified when the guarantees of communicative success, without the additional contextual information, are low. Overall, the justification for this type of enrichment is dependent on the reasonable judgment of the translator to foresee whether or not the target audience will be in a position to access and use the appropriate contextual and cultural assumptions in order to arrive at a relevant interpretation. The less guarantees he has in this respect, the more he will be justified in enriching the original text, and vice versa.

In what follows, various types of enrichment in literary translation are discussed. The examples examined will be translations between English and Spanish. They are generally discussed in isolation for reasons of space and presentation, with reference being made to their context whenever it is required. As will be seen below, in most (or all of the) genuine cases, the origin of the interlingual enrichment effected is observable from the isolated text provided. Only in some cases, not genuine for the most part, knowledge of the wider context is required to evaluate the enriched translations.

#### 4.1. *Temporal enrichment*

The first type of enrichment to be examined is temporal. As we saw earlier, this enrichment is carried out in order to select, from the logically ordered sets of possible times, the unit taken to have been intended: e.g. now, this afternoon, today, this

week, this month, this year, etc. It was suggested above that *logical* ordering of sets saves cognitive effort as it aids the search for the intended unit. To illustrate this process of selection and enrichment at work in literary translation, consider the following Spanish examples and their published English versions taken from a literary work (Lawaetz, 1972: 10 ff):

- (11) Te he querido mucho.  
*I've always been very fond of you.*
- (12) El café estaba vacío a aquella hora.  
*The café was empty at that time of the day.*
- (13) Aplastó una brizna de tabaco entre las yemas de los dedos y de nuevo habló, mirando hacia el mar.  
*He rubbed a scrap of tobacco between his fingertips and spoke again, still looking out to sea.*

As far as (11) is concerned, the use of the present perfect tense is equivalent in (Peninsular) Spanish and (British) English. The event described is located within a time period stretching back from the moment of utterance. This means that any unit of time that fits that condition could have been intended. But clearly in (11) the unit of time intended is not this afternoon nor today, nor this week. The natural interpretation is the unit of time of a lifetime, that is, *always*, which itself requires some narrowing down. This temporal reading is implicit in the Spanish text, but it has been made explicit in its English rendering. This is a case of interlingual temporal enrichment.

Similarly, in the English version of (12) we find that the time unit involved is explicitly specified as being a day. However, the Spanish original does not include any explicit reference to that unit, that is, it is left for the reader to infer [from *hora* (= *hour*)]. Thus, the translator has added the prepositional phrase *of the day* to the English version. It is quite likely that the decision to enrich the original was as a result of the fact that the lexical item *time* in English is quite vague and could refer to various units of time: e.g. at that time of the month, year, etc. By encoding the unit of time to which it belongs, the translator is reducing the risk of misunderstanding and compensating for the vagueness of the English term, albeit at the cognitive cost of processing the added prepositional phrase.

Example (13) is more subtle in its enrichment. The temporal difference between the original and the translation lies in the use of *still* in the English version. This temporal adverb implies that the event in question was already happening before the time of the utterance. This interpretation is possible because earlier in the text there had already been a reference to the character's looking out towards the sea, as shown in (14):

- (14) Miraba hacia más allá de la arena, hacia la bahía.  
*He was gazing beyond the sands and out over the bay.*

The Spanish text did not explicitly encode the connection between the two descriptions. The English text, on the other hand, includes the temporal enrichment overtly. Thus, here we have another change from inference to encoding across languages. This change helps the English reader make the connection more easily.

Interlingual temporal enrichment works in both directions. To illustrate, let us consider the following example from English into Spanish (taken from Santoyo, 1989: 43), where the discussion is about France and its war conflicts with England:

(15) *Temporal enrichment: English into Spanish*

Before that period she had to  
struggle for her very existence  
with the English, already  
possessed of her fairest  
provinces.

**Mucho** antes de esta época se  
veía ya precisada a sostener  
contra Inglaterra, dueña de sus  
mejores provincias, **continua y**  
**sangrienta** lucha, **tratándose**  
**nada menos que de defender**  
su existencia **política**.

(Walter Scott, Quentin Durward)

In this example there are several types of enrichment (some of which are *not* genuine interlingual enrichments as defined above), but let us concentrate here on the temporal one, which *is* a genuine instance of the type of enrichment under discussion. The difference in explicitness between the original and the translation as far as temporal information is concerned lies in the inclusion of *mucho* (i.e. much) in the Spanish version, which is absent in the English text. In the original, the length of time prior to the time in question is left for readers to infer by themselves. In the translation, on the other hand, it is made explicit. Why? One reason may be that some readers of this text might lack the encyclopaedic knowledge to derive the intended enrichment: that France had already fought against England a long time before the time of the narrative. By making it explicit, the translator is reducing the cognitive effort the reader might have to invest in the enrichment process and thus help the reader in the comprehension process. If this enrichment had not been carried out, those Spanish readers who lacked the appropriate historical knowledge might derive a slightly different interpretation from the English readers. Let us now turn to another case of enrichment, this time not of a temporal but of a thematic nature.

#### 4.2. Thematic enrichment

There are several types of thematic enrichment, all based on the thematic roles adopted by the constituents in question. By way of definition, Frawley (1992: 197) states that “thematic roles are semantic relations that connect entities to events”. They provide further information about the event described.

#### 4.2.1. Agent enrichment

One such role is that of the agent of the event described, that is, the entity that carries out the action. Consider the following text taken from Lawaetz (1972: 10–11):

- (16) A cada impulso sonaba un diminuto crujido  
*With every push it crackled a little*

If the context of this text was a situation in which two men were pushing a car whose battery had run down in order to jump-start it, then (16) would very likely be interpreted as in (17):

- (17) A cada impulso [de los dos hombres] sonaba un diminuto crujido [en el coche]  
*With every push [by the two men] [the car] crackled a little*

The enrichment shown in the first set of square brackets spells out the agents of the event: the two men. This has not been encoded linguistically in the original text. It has been derived by taking into account contextual assumptions about the situation, e.g.:

- (18) The two men are pushing the car  
 The car must be a bit old ...

The resulting propositional form is the enriched semantic representation which had been encoded linguistically. The enriched proposition is thus taken as one of the thoughts the original writer intended to express. However, the enrichment will be different if different contextual assumptions are brought to bear on the interpretation process. To illustrate, consider a situation where the back entrance of a house which leads onto the beach consists of a reed curtain against which the wind is crashing. In this situation, the enrichment will be as in (19):

- (19) A cada impulso [del viento] sonaba un diminuto crujido [en la cortina]  
*With every push [by the wind] [the reed curtain] crackled a little*

In fact, the translation published for the current example is as in (20):

- (20) *With every gust of wind it crackled a little.*

The version in (20) specifies the type of impulse it is (i.e. a gust) as well as the agent of the impulse (i.e. the wind), which in the original was left for the reader to infer. The translator has, therefore, gone further than the original text and has explicitly encoded what had been merely suggested. Arguably, this amounts to a change of style from the original to the translation, which in turn may cause some differences in what is communicated. Indeed, one of the possible consequences of linguistically encoding information which was only implicitly conveyed in the original text is that the new linguistic items may have implications of their own, which

now become guaranteed by the addresser (the translator) and sought by the addressee (the reader), as a direct result of them being encoded. This guarantee would not have been present in the interpretation of the original text. Moreover, this stylistic change may be unacceptable to some readers (particularly literary readers and scholars) as it involves an unnecessary departure from the original and a change in what may be regarded by them as a fundamental feature of the original text, i.e. its style. This is particularly so, since if the original author of the literary work had decided to encode the type of push and agent involved in (16), she could easily have done so. In Spanish there is an expression which literally matches the English *gust of wind*:

(21) *English*: Gust of wind → *Spanish*: Racha de viento

This is a commonly used expression which, no doubt, the author knew. If she had wanted to convey the same level of explicitness in the original she could have done so without any problem, as (22) shows:

(22) A cada racha de viento sonaba un diminuto crujido  
*With every gust of wind it crackled a little*

The fact is that she did not and, as a result, the degree of explicitness has been changed. This is another case of interlingual enrichment based on information which had not been linguistically encoded in the original but merely suggested, but which is linguistically encoded in the translation. The translator has interpreted and enriched the original text, and then carried out the translation on the basis of that enriched propositional form rather than the original text exclusively.

As stated above, readers for whom issues of full faithfulness are central to translation will judge this type of stylistic change unacceptable (particularly in the case of literary translation), as they will expect full equivalence between original and translation, including both content *and* form. In this case, readers would expect no enrichment to be carried out at all. In particular, they would be prepared to put into the interpretation process the extra effort required to access any contextual assumptions necessary in order to arrive at the intended interpretation. From a theoretical point of view, this difference in judgment will reflect the fact that faithfulness between two representations (e.g. an original text and its translation) is a matter of degree of resemblance, where at one end of the scale there is absolute resemblance (of form and content) and at the other no resemblance at all. These varying degrees of resemblance are covered by the notion of faithfulness, which is defined in terms of the extent to which two representations (e.g. an original and its translation) share analytic and synthetic implications (i.e. logical properties, see Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 226–37).

However, in the translations examined here, published and sanctioned academically, the translators clearly considered the enrichments shown to be perfectly acceptable. This reflects the fact that different translators have different expectations regarding the appropriate *degree* of faithfulness to choose. In the less faithful

versions discussed above, the translators seem to carry out enrichments so as to aid the interpretation process and to make the communicated thoughts more transparent. This suggests that interlingual enrichment is more acceptable to readers that are willing to trade some loss of faithfulness in the translation for ease of comprehension and interpretation. Moreover, the degree to which translations can be interlingually enriched can vary from *no* enrichment at all (in which case the translation would be equivalent to the semantic representation of the original), to *some* enrichment (in which case the translation would only be partially equivalent to the proposition expressed), to a *full* enrichment (in which case the translation would be equivalent to the full proposition expressed in the original text). Since different degrees of enrichment are acceptable to different readers, the translator should be sensitive to the type of audience targeted (if he wishes to fulfil readers' expectations). These various degrees of interlingual enrichment account for the different judgments elicited by different types of translation as far as the explicit/implicit dimension is concerned. This dimension, together with other factors, may play a part in our evaluation of translation, but pragmatically they are treated like any other contextual assumption. As Gutt (2000: 207) suggests:

The notion or notions of 'translation' favoured by a particular cultural group or sub-group, notions of 'genre' that might determine which notion of translation is considered appropriate for certain kinds of texts, conventions or ideas about what makes a text 'literary' and the like ... all enter into the relevance-theoretic account of translation as *contextual assumptions* held by translator and audience. (My italics.)

#### 4.2.2. Source enrichment

Another thematic enrichment is that of source, which conveys the point of origin of an event or entity. The implicit source, as well as any other implicit information, can be drawn from various places: [a] from the encyclopaedic entry of a concept (as we will see below), [b] from information carried over from the previous deductions [as we saw above in (13)], or [c] from the perceptual environment (Sperber and Wilson, 1986). Consider the following case of enrichment found in a situation where the main character has checked into a hotel and goes into the room (taken from Lawaetz, 1972: 180–1):

- (23) El agua salía hirviendo, y eso compensaba la falta de sol y de aire.  
*The water from the tap was boiling hot, and this compensated for the lack of sunlight and fresh air.*

The constituent at issue in (23) is the English prepositional phrase *from the tap* which is not mentioned in the original. This prepositional phrase denoting the source of the water has been added to the translation as a result of a process of enrichment. This information has been made accessible in the original text by means of the concept [HABITACIÓN] (= [ROOM]), which is mentioned just before the current excerpt ('le bastaba caminar unos metros para llegar a la *habitación*. El agua ...', *ibid.*). The stereotypical idea we have of a hotel room is that it might have a bath and that the bath will typically have taps and that through the taps there will

be hot and cold running water. It is from this stereotype that the translator is drawing the information about the source.

What is revealing is that presumably in the room there was also a basin with a tap. Given that in the original text there is no mention of the source, the tap from which the boiling water runs could be either the bath tap or the basin tap. The translator, however, does not specify which is the intended one. It is quite clear that if she had decided to specify that information she would be committing herself to an enrichment which could very well be unintended and therefore wrong. She is wise enough to say just that the water comes out of a tap. This is the limit of the enrichment process. If there is no firm communicative clue for a given enrichment, then the translator should not take the author to have intended it, and should therefore refrain from including it in the translation, or else do it at her own responsibility. If the translator had not enriched the target text, it may be possible that the English readers could derive a slightly different interpretation from the Spanish readers, as they may both use different stereotypical scenarios for the interpretation of the situation. This, in turn, may be due to cultural differences, where culture, in simple terms, is viewed here as a set of assumptions shared by a given community and which are widely expected to be easily accessible and retrievable by members across that community, creating a shared cognitive environment (see Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 38–46; Scollon and Scollon, 1995, chapter 7).

Example (23) also includes other enrichments apart from the one discussed: i.e. *sol* (literally *sun*) has been translated as *sunlight*, and *aire* (literally *air*) as *fresh air*. Both examples can be interpreted as loose uses of the concepts encoded by *sol* and *aire* in Spanish, as there is no expectation of there being no sun, or the room being in a vacuum. What is meant in the Spanish examples is precisely that there is, respectively, no sunlight or fresh air (coming into the room). The translator has decided on a more literal use of the Spanish concepts in English. Again there is, arguably, a change in the underlying style of the texts: more suggestive in Spanish and more explicit in English.

#### 4.2.3. Possessor enrichment

Another thematic enrichment is that of possessor. This enrichment involves building into the propositional form the possessor of an entity described in the utterance. To illustrate, let us consider example (24) [taken from Lawaetz (1972: 12–13)]:

- (24) Ruti sonrió con melancolía. Le puso una mano en el hombro.  
*Ruti smiled sadly and put his hand on the old's man shoulder.*

The English version includes the possessor of the shoulder, namely, the old man, and also the possessor of the hand, namely, Ruti. These two pieces of information are merely suggested in the Spanish original by the pronoun *le* (to him/her) and the first person verbal ending respectively. More generally, in Spanish the information about the possessor in conditions like those in (25) is typically left for the addressee to infer. The use of this type of pronoun such as *le*, generally called pronoun of

interest, indicates that there is some kind of connection between the referent of the pronoun and some other entity mentioned in the utterance, but it is for the addressee to decide, on pragmatic grounds, which kind of interest is intended. This interlingual enrichment from Spanish into English, where the English version becomes linguistically more explicit, is obligatory.

This example shows, as suggested above, that some interlingual enrichments are required on grammatical grounds. This is due to the way languages typically express some meanings. The consequence of not carrying out the enrichment in these conditions gives rise to misunderstanding, or at worst, inappropriateness or ungrammaticality. Thus, here the target language forces the translator to encode explicitly a meaning which was only implicit in the (semantic representation of the) original text. This is one of the most important grounds for interlingual enrichment, as it is required in order to produce a grammatical and acceptable text in the target language. By contrast, the other enrichments in this section were due to the addition of contextual assumptions. In this case, the translator did *not* need to add them (from a grammatical point of view), but he chose to do so in order to aid the comprehension process, which is one of the other main reasons for this type of contextual enrichment.

#### 4.3. *Enrichment based on discourse relations*

The next type to be discussed is enrichment based on discourse relations: that is, enrichment which makes explicit the connections between two clauses or utterances. The discourse relation considered here is that of consequence, as shown in example (25) taken from Lawaetz (1972: 14):

- (25) El calor pegajoso le humedecía la camisa, adhiriéndosela al cuerpo.  
*The sticky heat made his shirt damp, so that it clung to his body.*

In (25) the Spanish text has two clauses, namely:

- (26) a. El calor pegajoso le humedecía la camisa  
 b. adhiriéndosela al cuerpo

Between these two clauses there is a discourse relation relationship of consequence, that is, the second event described is a result of the first one. This connection is left implicit in the original but in the translation it is encoded linguistically by adding the connecting expression *so that*. The reasons for this extension might have to do with cognitive effort. The translator may have opted for an explicit rendering of the logical connection to decrease the amount of effort the readers would have to invest in inferring it. Inferred information is more likely to be misconstrued if there is a change in the contextual assumptions brought to bear on the interpretation; explicit information, on the other hand, overtly directs the addressee to the intended interpretation and commits the addresser to it.

#### 4.4. Enrichment based on implicatures

So far we have seen examples where the translations have been carried out on the basis not of the encoded semantic representation but of the enriched propositional form of the original text. They were cases in which what was said was not *all* linguistically encoded. The perceived difference between the original and the translation was the result of a change in degree of explicitness. The original author could be held responsible for misleading the translator if he had not intended the enrichments to be carried out.

The last example to be considered is a case in which the translation has gone beyond the propositional form intended. This is a case where the translator has included an implication of the original text in the target text, thereby translating not only what was said but also what was implied. The example in question is from English into Spanish, as shown in (27):

(27) *Example of inclusion of implication: English into Spanish*

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>Happily for the self-command of both Heyward and Munro, they knew not the meaning of the wild sounds they heard.</p> | <p>Afortunadamente para Munro y Heyward, no entendían el significado de los salvajes gritos que oían, <b><i>pues de lo contrario difícilmente hubieran podido dominar su renovado dolor</i></b></p> |
|---|---|

(Cooper, The Last Mohican)

In (27) the translator has added an implication of the first clause to the Spanish text. The implication is the clause in (28), which was not present in the original version.

- (28) *Pues de lo contrario difícilmente hubieran podido dominar su renovado dolor*  
*Since otherwise they would hardly have been able to control their renewed suffering*

This translation goes beyond a mere enrichment of the original. That is, we do not take the author of (27) to have committed himself to (28) as part of what was said, i.e. not part of the truth-conditions of the original. Rather, (28) is a possible implication of the original, and as such is not guaranteed to the same extent by the original text. The translator has interpreted the original by supplying a context, which may not necessarily be identical to the intended one, and then by inferring an implication and including it in the translation. The translator has increased the amount of information encoded by the text and has also narrowed down the interpretation of

the original to a specific reading. He is, therefore, at least partially responsible for that interpretation and not the author. As a result, there is some loss in the faithfulness of the translation, which in this case goes well beyond just merely making the proposition expressed fully linguistically explicit.

It is important to note here that in this type of example, unlike in the previous ones, there is no equivalence at propositional level, since the translator has encoded, in the translation, content which was not part of the proposition expressed in the original text. Instead, he has gone further and included content which was part *not* of the development of the semantic representation into the proposition expressed (i.e. *what is said*, in Gricean terms), *but* of the *implicatures/implications* of the original text (i.e. *what is implicated*). As a result, this may very well lead English and Spanish readers to derive substantially different interpretations. This type of case would fall *outside* the notion of interlingual enrichment as discussed in this article and it would involve a major change in both content (incorporating implications) and style (making the text more explicit than it would be warranted). These changes would be unacceptable to a greater number of readers than earlier ones, which only involved changes at propositional level, e.g. (20). These stronger unacceptability judgments match the greater theoretical distance between original and target texts. In this sense, this type of example shows the limits of acceptability in interlingual enrichment as defined in this article.

Furthermore, this type of example shows the distinction between degrees of explicitness (of the proposition expressed), on the one hand, and degrees of strength (in what was implicated), on the other. The case discussed here is an example of a *strong* implication. The cases discussed in earlier sections are examples of different degrees of explicitness in communicating the *proposition expressed*. This distinction further underpins the notion of interlingual enrichment, and in turn has consequences for acceptability judgments, as seen above.

## 5. Conclusion

In this article, it has been argued that pragmatic enrichment processes can have effects on translation. The translator, as a communicator, may translate not what was linguistically encoded in the original but rather what was propositionally communicated. This will give rise to discrepancies in style between original and target texts. The acceptability of these discrepancies will be dependent on the degree of translation faithfulness expected and judged to be relevant by the audience in the context in question.

It has been argued further that interlingual enrichment is carried out on two grounds. First, it may be required for reasons to do with the input, for example, grammatical incompatibilities [e.g. (24)]. Second, it may be done for reasons to do with the context, for example, cultural variation [e.g. (15)]. These two types of enrichment correspond to the two information sources involved in the interpretation process (input and contextual assumptions) and, furthermore, they shed light on the changes undergone by a text during translation.

The first type of enrichment is generally obligatory because the reasons that motivate it are grammatical. Thus, we would expect that translations involving this type of enrichment showed some consistency across the board, as translators will try to find the closest grammatical equivalent in the other language and show consistency across contexts. The second, on the other hand, is optional. It depends to a greater degree on the judgement of the translator: whether she thinks that the extra contextual assumptions will contribute to relevance or that their absence will hinder it. This judgement is subject to pragmatic considerations which, by their very nature, will tend to vary from situation to situation. This second type of enrichment is more controversial than the first one because it modifies the original to a greater extent and its motivation is more subjective (in the sense that enrichment in this type of case is not *required* from a grammatical point of view). In other words, it is only justified on the translator's reasonable assumption that, without the interlingual enrichment, the interpretation she has envisaged will not be successfully communicated. This is her own reasonable judgement, rather than a grammatical imperative, and thus it would be an interlingual enrichment of a more subjective nature. This type of enrichment will also be more likely to vary from context to context, and version to version (of a translation), as it will depend on the distance between the cultures involved, the knowledge that the target audience has of the original culture, or the cultural/linguistic conventions of the target audience at a particular point in time.

Enrichment cases that go *beyond* making linguistically explicit the propositional form communicated by the original text, and that include content which belongs within the implicatures or implications of an utterance [e.g. example (27)], fall *outside* the notion of interlingual enrichment as defined in this article. The resulting increased distance between original and translation gives rise to stronger unacceptability judgements, mirroring the theoretical difference between genuine and non-genuine cases of interlingual enrichment. In this respect, the notion of interlingual enrichment attempts to provide a criterion for explaining the limits of acceptability in cases where linguistic discrepancies are found in translation.

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## “Interlingual Impoverishment in Translation”

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# Interlingual Impoverishment in Translation<sup>1</sup>

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## 1 Introduction

In this article it is argued that stylistic variation,<sup>2</sup> and more specifically decisions regarding the degree of explicitness and implicitness, should be seen as responsible for many of the changes undergone by original texts in translation. In particular, the analysis will concentrate on the loss of explicitness across languages with specific reference to English and Spanish.

The claim made here is that, given a particular proposition (i.e. thought) expressed by an L1 (Language 1) utterance, the linguistic rendering in L2 (Language 2) may encode less than the L1 as a result of a process which will be called *interlingual impoverishment*. This process crucially involves a shift towards implicitness in L2, where (at least) part of the content which had been linguistically encoded by the L1 utterance is now recovered pragmatically by the L2 addressee through a process of enrichment.<sup>3</sup>

It is argued further that interlingual impoverishment may be caused by either grammatical considerations pertaining to how a certain propositional form<sup>4</sup> is expressed in L2, or contextual assumptions which

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1 This article is based on a paper delivered to the *5th International Pragmatics Conference* held at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Mexico City, 4–9 July 1996, and to the *Romance Linguistics Seminar* at the University of Oxford. I am grateful to the participants of both events for their comments.

2 See Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* (Oxford: Blackwell, [2nd ed.] 1995), 202ff.

3 *Ibid.*, 177–93; Ernst-August Gutt, *Translation and Relevance: Cognition and Context* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 21ff.; Robyn Carston, 'Implicature, Explicature and Truth-Conditional Semantics', in *Mental Representations*, ed. R. Kempson (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1988), 155–82; Robyn Carston, 'Conjunction, Explanation and Relevance', *Lingua*, XC (1993), 28–33.

4 A propositional form is a well-formed formula which undergoes logical operations (e.g. implications, etc.) and is capable of being true or false by virtue of its semantic

the translator considers to be sufficiently manifest to the addressee to be recoverable pragmatically. In both of these cases, L2 encodes less linguistic information than L1.

In the first case, for a particular propositional form, L2 may be less capable of explicitness than L1.<sup>5</sup> In the second case, for a particular propositional form, L2 is capable of the same degree of explicitness as L1, but the translator chooses an L2 rendering which is less explicit than L1.

One of the consequences of lowering the degree of explicitness is that the L2 utterance may have a greater range of possible interpretations compared to those of the L1 utterance. This may give rise to ambiguity or a greater degree of indeterminacy in the interpretation of the L2 text, a case which will be discussed below.

An analysis is provided which will account for the shift in explicitness from source to receptor text in relevance theory terms as found in Sperber and Wilson. From this theoretical point of view it is not surprising that such shifts occur, given that the translator, acting as a communicator, will make translation decisions in the light of the receptor language and audience. His decisions will be based on the two sources of information brought to bear on the interpretation process: the linguistic input and the contextual assumptions. It will be shown that this constitutes the basis for an explanation as to why receptor texts which have suffered a loss of linguistic content (relative to the source text) can still be regarded as successful translations.

Central to this analysis, therefore, is the following question: how is it possible that two languages L1 and L2, given the same propositional form (see note 4), may differ in their encoding of it? The differences between L1 and L2, in their treatment of a particular propositional form, may be a grammatical fact, and indeed this is often the case. However, this grammatical difference does not explain how they can still express the same propositional form.

The answer to the above question is that this is possible because of pragmatic processing. Two languages can express a given propositional form with varying degrees of possible linguistic encoding because the addressee can, if necessary, draw the appropriate inferences and enrich the semantic representation of the impoverished utterance in relevant ways.

One of the advantages of looking at this phenomenon from a pragmatic point of view is that this can account for the discrepancies that arise in

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completeness (see Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, 72; Carston, 'Implicature, Explicature and Truth-Conditional Semantics', 178, n. 2).

5 The other case is also possible: see Xosé Rosales Sequeiros, 'Interlingual Pragmatic Enrichment in Literary Translation', paper delivered to *The Linguistic Foundations of Translation* conference, University of Liverpool, 1995.

the process of translation between what is linguistically encoded in the original and target texts.

In what follows, several structures which exemplify this point are examined together with their effects on translation between English and Spanish.

## 2 Impoverishment due to Grammar

### 2.1 Possession

The analysis first focuses on the encoding of possession in predicates. Consider example (1):<sup>6</sup>

- (1) a. He put his hand in his pocket.  
 b. *Se metió la mano en el bolsillo.*<sup>7</sup>

In (1b) the possessive adjectives (i.e. *his*) are lost in the Spanish text. These adjectives indicate a direct relationship between the referent of *he* and the two entities *hand* and *pocket* in the original English text. Thus, there is, as far as these direct relationships are concerned, a loss of explicitness (i.e. an impoverishment) of the semantic content encoded by the Spanish text.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, in normal circumstances both (1a) and (1b) *communicate* the same proposition, i.e. roughly (2):

- (2) Proposition communicated by (1a) and (1b):  
 PETER PUT HIS HAND IN HIS POCKET

The capital letters indicate conceptual content as opposed to linguistic content. To aid the exposition, the assumption is made that the person referred to as *he* is Peter.

What is crucial in (1) is that in interpreting the Spanish text the addressee has to infer the possessive interpretation, whereas in the English text this is made more explicit by virtue of its being encoded linguistically. Two observations are pertinent to this. First, the

6 Taken from Michael Swan, *Basic English Usage* (Oxford: Oxford U. P., 1984), 19.

7 A directly equivalent Spanish version with the possessive adjective *su* in (1a) would be possible (according to Leonardo Gómez Torrego, *Valores gramaticales de 'se'* [Madrid: Arco Libros, 1992], 15), namely, *Metió su mano en su bolsillo*. But, as Gómez Torrego himself states, 'hay diferencias *semántico-pragmáticas* entre las construcciones de SE y las de posesivo' (*ibid.*). That is to say, we would only use this construction in contexts which gave rise to additional contextual effects. In particular, it would not normally be used simply to communicate the possessive relation which is being discussed here.

8 By decreasing the amount of information encoded linguistically, an addresser is, in effect, making it possible to derive a wider range of interpretations. This greater contextual compatibility is a derivative effect of linguistic impoverishment, not a linguistic gain.

contribution of the possessive link to the interpretation of (1), in both the English original and the Spanish translation, is truth-conditional.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, it cannot be a Gricean conventional *implicature*.<sup>10</sup> Second, it is true that English possessives themselves are indeterminate, thus requiring some inferential interpretation.<sup>11</sup> So, for example, the interpretation of the first possessive in (1a) is about parts of the body (and not about, say, personal belongings). However, this does not exclude the possibility of having varying degrees of *possible* explicitness in different languages to encode the semantic representations from which the same propositional form is derived. Thus, English, in this case, is more explicit than Spanish.

In the predicate of (1b) the most accessible context in which to interpret, and make sense of, the entities described is one in which they are directly related to the subject, i.e. Peter. Any other scenario would require an extension of this minimal context, which would in turn increase processing effort without its being offset by more contextual effects (as far as the possessive interpretation is concerned). Hence, interpretation (2) would be favoured by the principle of relevance<sup>12</sup> in the absence of more relevant interpretations. The principle of relevance directs us towards an interpretation which results in adequate cognitive effects for no unjustifiable effort. Our interpretation in (2) has enough contextual effects (the possessive links) for no unjustifiable effort (we do not need to expand the context to find the possessor).

In the Spanish text the third person pronoun *se*<sup>13</sup> could be seen as conventionally implicating (or even encoding) some kind of link between the direct object (*la mano/the hand*) and the subject Peter, on the one hand, and the place adjunct (*en el bolsillo/in the pocket*) and Peter, on the other, thereby resulting in an interpretation in which the hand and the pocket are both Peter's. But this is not necessarily so. This pronoun can, for instance, be omitted without the utterance becoming unacceptable or losing the possessive interpretation, as (3b) shows:

- (3) a. He put his hand in his pocket.  
 b. *Metió la mano en el bolsillo.*

The proposition communicated by (3b) in this minimal scenario is still (2),

9 See Diane Blakemore, *Understanding Utterances* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 83; Carston, 'Implicature, Explicature and Truth-Conditional Semantics', 172.

10 Cf. H. Paul Grice, *Studies in the Way of Words* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U. P., 1989), 361.

11 See Ruth Kempson, *Semantic Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1977), 125.

12 See Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, 132–42.

13 Also called *dativo simpatético posesivo*, see Gómez Torrego, *Valores gramaticales de 'se'*, 15.

which suggests that this pronoun is not necessary for the possessive link to be inferred.

Similarly, connections between this type of pronoun and the subject are not mandatory, as the next example shows.<sup>14</sup> In this case we are not concerned with the pronoun *se*, which here is part of the meaning of the verb,<sup>15</sup> but rather with the pronoun of interest *les/to them*:

- (4) Se les apagó la luz  
*The light (unexpectedly) went out*

In this case, *les/to them* is optionally translated as *unexpectedly* and, in particular, no connection has been made between the pronoun of interest *les/to them* and the subject *la luz/the light* (the only other entity available within the sentence with which to make a connection). This suggests that the possessive link is not obligatory. Only considerations on the basis of contextual knowledge will direct us to relevant links and resulting interpretations.

One of the consequences of the impoverishment suffered by (1b) in the translation process is that its range of *possible* interpretations is widened compared to that of (1a), provided the appropriate contextual assumptions are accessible in the situation. For instance, in (1b) the direct object *la mano/the hand* could be referring to a hand which had nothing to do with Peter. For example, imagine a scenario in which Peter was a murderer who mutilates his victims and who steals evidence of his crimes. The possessive connection here between the hand and Peter would not be present, and the equivalent English text would be the following:

- (5) He put the hand in his pocket.

This interpretation, where the hand is not Peter's but his victim's, is not compatible with sentence (1a), but it is with (1b).

## 2.2 Lost content

In example (1), the same content was expressed by both original and target texts. This, however, may not always be possible. Impoverishment may sometimes result in inevitable loss of content, particularly of the non-truth-conditional type.<sup>16</sup> A case in point involves the general type of pronoun and structure found in (1). The interpretation of these pronouns

14 Taken from Brian Steel, *Translation from Spanish* (Madrid: SGEL, 1979), 138.

15 That is, it is a pronominal verb (see Gómez Torrego, *Valores gramaticales de 'se'*; see also C. J. Pountain, 'Aspect and Voice: Questions about Passivisation in Spanish', *Journal of Hispanic Research*, I [1992-93], 167-81, for discussion on this type of sentence).

16 See Deirdre Wilson and Dan Sperber, 'Linguistic Form and Relevance', *Lingua* XC, (1993), Nos. 1-2, 1-25; Deirdre Wilson, 'Varieties of Non-Truth-Conditional Meaning', MS (1993); Blakemore, *Understanding Utterances*, 146-51.

tends to vary depending on the context and is quite elusive to translation, particularly because there often is an element of emotional nuance. Steel acknowledges this fact, 'translation of the emotional nuance is not always possible', and later goes on to add, 'when ... [translation] solutions are impossible, the nuance ... , for *practical purposes*, may be ignored'.<sup>17</sup> In such cases, loss of content is incurred.

This point is illustrated by the following series of examples (taken from Steel):

- (6) a. La chica se nos emborrachó  
*The girl went and got drunk (on us)*  
 b. La vieja se nos ofendió  
*The old lady got all offended*  
 c. Se me casó con otro  
*She went and married someone else*  
 d. Me lo suponía  
*I thought so/I expected that*  
 e. María se le asustó  
*Mary got scared*  
 f. Se lo tragó  
*He swallowed it (down)*  
 g. Se lo bebió  
*He drank it (up/down)*

The constituents to consider in (6) are the pronouns and their translations, namely, *nos=us* (6a,b), *me=me* (6c,d), *le=to him/her* (6e) and *se=himself/herself* (6f,g):

- (7) a. *nos=went and got ... (on us)*  
 b. *nos=all*  
 c. *me=went and*  
 d. *me = ∅*  
 e. *le = ∅*  
 f. *se = ∅*  
 g. *se = ∅*

As (7) shows, the translation of this type of pronoun is different in each case, despite the fact that its function is the same throughout, namely, an object of interest. On this, Stockwell *et al.* comment, 'the common feature of meaning in all these sentences is interest or concern—a loose sort of involvement which is much more expansive than the meaning of the English indirect object ... The linguistic and situational context of the sentence will determine the specific meaning'.<sup>18</sup>

17 Steel, *Translation from Spanish*, 135, 143.

18 R. P. Stockwell, J. D. Bowen and J. W. Martin, *The Grammatical Structures of*

In examples (6), it is precisely the (minimal) context of the sentences that affects our interpretation of the pronouns. However, in over half of the cases (6d–g) the pronoun is ignored, with a resulting loss of content. Thus, in example (6e) the content lost is emotional and in examples (6d,f,g) what is lost is some type of beneficiary role adopted by the person referred to by the pronoun. In none of these cases, however, does the pronoun seem to contribute to the propositional content expressed (i.e. to the truth-conditional meaning of the utterances),<sup>19</sup> as the following versions show:

- (6')a. La chica se emborrachó  
*The girl got drunk*  
b. La vieja se ofendió  
*The old lady got offended*  
c. Se casó con otro  
*She married someone else*  
d. Lo suponía  
*I thought so/I expected that*  
e. María se asustó  
*Mary got scared*  
f. Lo tragó  
*He swallowed it*  
g. Lo bebió  
*He drank it*

The contribution made by these pronouns seems to be non-truth-conditional.<sup>20</sup> In other words, the examples in (6) (with the pronouns) will be true descriptions of the world, if and only if their counterparts in (6') (without the pronouns) are true. Their contribution, thus, falls outside the propositional content of the utterances in (6).

This type of pronoun invites us to draw implicatures from the situations described (e.g. in [6a] that we were not very pleased with the behaviour of the girl, etc.). The fact that these pronouns do not contribute to the propositions expressed, but rather to the implicatures we derive,

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*English and Spanish* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1965), 193.

19 An important distinction is made by Sperber and Wilson between the proposition expressed by an utterance and its higher-level explicatures. Both are part of the explicit content communicated by an utterance, but they make different contributions to its overall interpretation. This point will not be elaborated on in this article for lack of space, but suffice it to say that the proposition expressed determines the *truth-conditional* content of an utterance while the higher-level explicatures contribute various types of *non-truth-conditional* content (for further discussion, see Wilson and Sperber, 'Linguistic Form and Relevance', 5–10; Wilson, *ms. cit.*, 3–4; Blakemore, *Understanding Utterances*, 65–119).

20 See Wilson and Sperber, 'Linguistic Form and Relevance', 19–23.

may be the reason why, despite the translation loss, the target texts in (6) are regarded as acceptable versions.

### 3 Impoverishment due to contextual assumptions

In this section, the second main type of impoverishment mentioned at the outset is discussed. This type is dependent on contextual assumptions rather than simply the grammar. Consider examples (8) through to (10):<sup>21</sup>

- (8) a. Bailamos **al son** del acordeón  
b. *We are dancing **to** the accordion*
- (9) a. La casa **que está más allá de** la iglesia  
b. *The house **beyond** the church*
- (10) a. A los muchachos **que viven allí** no les gustan los deportes  
b. *The boys **there** don't like sports*

All these utterances communicate, in both source language and target language, the same proposition in the appropriate context. The propositions are set out below, with the constituents which remain unencoded in the English version shown in bold:

- (8') WE ARE DANCING TO **THE SOUND OF THE ACCORDION**
- (9') THE HOUSE **THAT IS BEYOND THE CHURCH**
- (10') THE BOYS **WHO LIVE THERE DON'T LIKE SPORTS**

Notice that the English text, from a grammatical point of view, could have encoded the *full* linguistic content of the original text. The translator decides to impoverish the target text because the contextual assumptions in question are easily accessible on the basis of the situation described and, moreover, this type of expression is quite standard in English (reducing processing effort).

The impoverishment undergone by the English utterances, though, increases their range of possible interpretations beyond what would be compatible with the Spanish examples. Take, for example, (9b). In this case, the following interpretations would be compatible with its linguistic form (shown here in italics):

- (11) a. THE HOUSE **WHICH YOU CAN SEE BEYOND** THE CHURCH  
b. THE HOUSE **WHICH HAS BEEN BUILT BEYOND** THE CHURCH  
c. THE HOUSE **WHICH HAS BEEN DESTROYED BEYOND** THE CHURCH

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21 Adapted from Esteban Torre, *Teoría de la traducción literaria* (Madrid: Editorial Síntesis, 1994), 136.

All these interpretations could be derived by the addressee of (9b), if he chose to represent the reference of *house*, in conjunction with the preposition *beyond*, on the basis of different contextual assumptions. Hence interlingual impoverishment of this type can give rise to divergent representations. These divergent interpretations would not be compatible with the Spanish original, in which the referential expression is encoded linguistically.

In the previous cases, the context directed the addressee towards the same propositional form in both the original and target texts. This, however, may not always be the case in interlingual impoverishment. At times, what is communicated is not distributed in the same way in different languages. In some cases, what is part of the explicatures in one language may be part of the implicatures or implications in another language (or lost altogether).<sup>22</sup> Consider the following example taken from a Mercury Communications manual:

- (12) a. International Dialling codes are listed over the page, you can use these to dial direct  
 b. *Los prefijos internacionales aparecen listados en la página siguiente*

In this case, the last part of the English text is missing in the Spanish text:

- (13) you can use these to dial direct

This would seem to be an implicature of the first utterance. That is, if telephone codes are provided then we should be able to dial the numbers we want directly, rather than through an operator. This implication increases the relevance of the first utterance and, furthermore, it is reasonable to take the addresser to have made it intentionally manifest. These considerations together would qualify (13) as an implicature. In the English version this is encoded, whereas in the Spanish text it is implicated. It could be argued that the overall content taking explicatures and implicatures into account is the same, and what differs is the content distribution. This would be an extension of the notion of interlingual impoverishment as defined above, where the notion of interlingual impoverishment was defined in relation to the proposition expressed by the utterances in question, not their implicatures.

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<sup>22</sup> Implicatures are distinguished from implications in that they are implied assumptions whose relevance is both intentional and mutually manifest to addresser and addressee in the communicative situation, whilst implications are assumptions which are implied but not made *intentionally* manifest (see Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, 274–76).

A more subtle impoverishment (and perhaps an outright translation mistake) can be seen in the following translation of the Spanish adverb *además* (i.e. moreover):<sup>23</sup>

- (14) a. Vi y oí **además** cómo todos decidimos festejar la buena nueva financiando con el rubro de reservas una excepcional tarde de bizcochos.  
 b. *I saw and **also** heard how we all decided to celebrate the good news by paying out of the reserve fund for a special afternoon of biscuits.*

The dictionary equivalent of *además* is arguably (as in *OSD*) *moreover*, rather than *also*. This has consequences for our understanding of the English target text. The role of the connectors *also* and *moreover* is not the same.<sup>24</sup> *Also* indicates that the information it links is to be processed in parallel with other information already available. *Moreover*, in addition to this, indicates that the information it links provides further evidence for a conclusion drawn from the previous information, thereby strengthening it. The English addressee is deprived of this important clue.

This is not to say that (14b) cannot communicate that its two conjuncts provide stronger evidence for a conclusion, merely that it must be done in addition to the encoded message. In other words, it is not a guaranteed interpretation, it will depend on the contextual assumptions available and whether it is relevant in the situation. By contrast, if we use *moreover*, this interpretation is encouraged by its encoded procedural meaning,<sup>25</sup> as shown below (where [16] and [17] illustrate the inferential steps taken):

- (15) *I saw and, **moreover**, I heard how we all decided to celebrate the good news by paying out of the reserve fund for a special afternoon of biscuits.*  
 (16) If I saw something, then I have first hand evidence that it happened.

I saw how we all decided to celebrate the good news by paying out of the reserve fund for a special afternoon of biscuits

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 I have first hand evidence that we all decided to celebrate the good news by paying out of the reserve fund for a special afternoon of biscuits

23 Taken from *Spanish Parallel Text 1*, ed. J. Franco (London: Penguin, 1966), 32ff.

24 See Blakemore, *Understanding Utterances*, 134–46.

25 *Ibid.*, 140.

- (17) If I heard what I saw, then I have *very good* first hand evidence for it

I heard what I saw

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I have *very good* first hand evidence for the fact that we all decided to celebrate the good news by paying out of the reserve fund for a special afternoon of biscuits

So far we have considered L2 examples which, whilst encoding less linguistic content than their L1 counterparts, allowed the addressees to recover the unencoded content via pragmatic interpretation. In the final set of examples provided below, the translator has clearly gone too far in omitting information from the original text. This set of examples does not raise a linguistic theory problem. They are shown here to highlight the contrast between genuine cases of interlingual impoverishment and cases which clearly fall outside its scope. Thus, in the examples shown,<sup>26</sup> the bold type face indicates that the text is missing in the target language:

- (18)

*'Oh, if you please, sir, Samuel is down stairs, and he says may his father see you?'*

*'Surely', replied Mr. Pickwick.*

*'Thank you, sir' said Mary, tripping towards the door again.*

*'Sam has not been here long, has he?', inquired Mr. Pickwick.*

*'Oh, no, sir', replied Mary eagerly.*

*'He has only just come home. He is not going to ask you for any more leave, sir, he says',*

(Charles Dickens, *The Pickwick Papers*)

—Samuel está abajo, señor—le dijo María—, y pregunta si puede usted recibir a su padre.

<sup>26</sup> Adapted from J. C. Santoyo, *El delito de traducir* (León: Secretariado de Publicaciones, Univ. de León, 1989), 97, 101-02.

(21)

*... and gaining more definite conquests. So it has been since the days of Hecuba, and of Hector, Tamer of horses: inside the gates, the women with streaming hair and uplifted hands offering prayers, watching the world's combat from afar, filling their long, empty days with memories and fears ...*

*... y ganando batallas más definidas.*

(George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*)

As noted above, these last two examples are not cases of interlingual impoverishment. Clearly, the translator could not reasonably have been intending to communicate the content of the original interpretation with his target version. In the first example, only part of the first utterance was translated, the rest was ignored by the translator. There is no rational way of recovering the remainder of the English original text on the basis of the Spanish translation. In the second example again only the first utterance is translated. The reader cannot be expected to recover the rest of the original text by pragmatic interpretation alone. The translators here were not resorting to the pragmatic processes underlying interlingual impoverishment, but rather they were flouting a basic assumption of translation (particularly of literary translations), namely, that the target text purports to resemble the original text interpretively and often (as in the above examples) to a very high degree.

#### 4 Conclusion

It has been argued that interlingual impoverishment can explain some of the discrepancies found in translation. It is not surprising that such discrepancies arise, since pragmatic interpretation allows us to recover intended content which is not encoded but is nevertheless communicated. This process of pragmatic interpretation often overcomes the differences in encoding between the original and target texts. Thus, the difference between the two texts becomes one of style. The original text resorts to explicit means of communication (e.g. encoding), whereas the target text takes advantage of the implicit ones (e.g. enrichment).

In the first type of interlingual impoverishment considered, the grammar does not allow the encoding of certain components of the

propositional form and, as a result, they have to be derived pragmatically. In the second type, both L1 and L2 are capable of the same degree of explicitness but the translator, in the appropriate context, considers that certain assumptions are mutually manifest to such a degree that they can be recovered pragmatically rather than encoded linguistically.

Both types have been discussed in relation to the proposition expressed by a given utterance, because that is where the truth-conditional content of the texts lies. In some of these cases, however, part of the content lost was not recovered through the propositional form but rather through implicatures. These cases fall outside the notion of impoverishment as initially defined here. In fact, this distinction points to two different types of content lost: truth-conditional and non-truth-conditional. The loss of truth-conditional content which has not been, or cannot be, recovered, will inevitably detract from the acceptability of a translation. If, on the other hand, the content lost is non-truth-conditional, our judgments of translation acceptability can be more positive altogether.

The limits of impoverishment are the limits of rational pragmatic interpretation. We cannot expect content to be recovered when vital communicative clues or assumptions are missing. Some translations undergo a loss of encoded material not as the result of any interlingual impoverishment but wholly in response to the different strategies used by the translator. As such their acceptability will depend on the cultural or contextual expectations raised by the translations themselves.

## “Degrees of Acceptability in Literary Translation”

Rosales Sequeiros, X. (1998) “Degrees of Acceptability in Literary Translation”.

*Babel* 98(1): 1-14.

## Degrees of Acceptability in Literary Translation

Xosé Rosales Sequeiros

### 1. Introduction

Approaches to evaluating translations, be they literary or non-literary, have adopted a diversity of perspectives on the topic. In this article, following Gutt (1991), two of those approaches will be briefly discussed: the non-theoretical approaches and the equivalence approaches. An attempt will then be made to develop Gutt's ideas, which are based on a more communicative approach.

The non-theoretical approaches maintain that translation is an art, an intuitive endeavour and that as such is not amenable to scientific treatment. This is precisely what Steiner argues, "what we are dealing with is not a science, but an art" (1975:295). Similarly, Newmark (1988:19) argues:

"In fact translation theory is neither a theory nor a science, but the body of knowledge that we have and have still to have about the process of translating..."

Thus, within these approaches there is an inherent limitation to scientific enquiry, and the type and degree of explanation achievable.

A less restrictive attitude has been shown by the second type of approach, based on translation equivalence. This approach maintains that the quality of a translation increases as its equivalence to the original text deepens (for an introduction to the notion of equivalence, see Baker 1992).

However, this approach faces serious problems (cf. Gutt 1991, chapter 1). Let me briefly run through them. The first is one of over-specification. Equivalence judgments can only be made in relation to a specific text and situation; what may be an equivalent translation in one context may fail to be so in another context. Hence, we can only say that a translation is equivalent in relation to that particular context. This over-specificity removes all gener-

alising power of the system, which, as a result, also loses its predictive power. Generalisation and prediction should both be essential features of an explanatory account of translation.

The second problem relates to the value of equivalence. To make evaluative comparisons between alternative translations, it is necessary to know the ranking of the features to be compared. However, this ranking or hierarchical ordering of features is outside equivalence as such. That is, value judgement on features precedes equivalence comparisons. Therefore, what produces the evaluation is not the equivalence procedure itself but the value attached to the hierarchies used. This suggests that something other than equivalence is required to explain evaluation judgements. It also brings us to the third problem associated with equivalence approaches, namely, the criterion for the composition of these hierarchies.

The solutions proposed for the problem of hierarchy composition within equivalence approaches point to ideas such as purpose. That is, the importance and ranking of the features depend on the purpose of the translation. However, the problem here is that the purposes themselves are hierarchically ordered as well and their ordering has to be done prior to equivalence evaluation. So, what was to be a solution is, in reality, only another intermediate step: the ordering of those categories, such as purposes, has to be carried out according to some other value judgement. This, again, suggests that some criterion other than equivalence is required to explain the evaluation of translations.

## **2. Communication-based Approach**

Gutt argues that, to solve these problems, we need to shift our approach to translation in two ways. On the one hand, a shift in the domain of translation by concentrating not merely on products (translations) or processes (translating), but on the communicative competence that underlies translation. On the other, a shift from descriptive concerns, such as classification of equivalence features, to the understanding and explanation of the complexities involved in communication. The evaluation of translations would then be carried out on the basis of a theory that explains these communicative phenomena from a cognitive point of view.

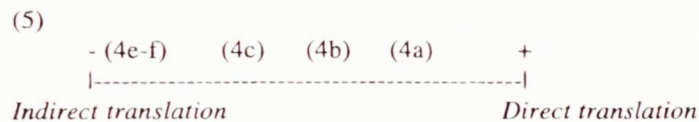
Gutt argues for the existence of several types of translation:



communicative clues present in the original are present in the translation. Crucially, (3c) does not capture a contextual assumption presumed to be activated and accessible in the context of (3a), namely, that someone had bought the designated palace. Notice that we could provide even weaker indirect translations of (3a), lessening their degree of interpretive resemblance with (3a):

- (4)
- a. John bought something.
  - b. John did something.
  - c. Something happened.
  - d. John has lots of money.
  - e. John likes to live like a king.
  - f. Some people are a bit over the top.

Translations (4a-c) are entailments of the original (sharing increasingly few of (3a)'s analytical implications) and those in (4d-g) are possible implicatures (sharing practically none of (3a)'s analytical implications). Of course, not all of these indirect translations will be adequate in all contexts. However, some of them can be quite appropriate in a variety of contexts. For example, if the translation is for a friend who doesn't understand the language, (4e) could be an acceptable translation in a conversational situation where the talk was about life styles. We could roughly locate these translations on our continuum line as follows:



Although often many different translations are possible for a given text, not all of them are appropriate in a given context. One of the main sources of problems of acceptability in translation lies in the expectations raised by the translation in the audience in question. In other words, the translation creates a presumption of resemblance in the audience, and the degree of interpretive resemblance will vary according to what is relevant in that context. It is the mismatches between the degrees of resemblance intended by the translator and those expected by the audience that give rise to low judgements of acceptability. These mismatches can, in turn, cause poor comprehension or outright breakdown of communication.

So, for instance, if the translator carries out a direct translation but the audience expects an indirect translation, the audience might have problems in

interpreting the target text. This may be for a number of reasons. It may be that contextual assumptions expected have not been provided or activated, or that there is not enough time to process the direct rendering (as in simultaneous translation). An example of the first of these two possibilities are quasi-idioms. Consider the following example in the context of a fight scene (taken from Baker 1992:74):

- (6) Feel the force of my fist, frozen fiend!  
*Dir werde ich einheizen, du Scheusal!*

Back-translation from German:  
I will make things hot for you, monster!

Notice that the (first clause of the) English expression is not an outright idiom since its interpretation is perfectly compatible with a literal reading. On the other hand, the German text, in this context, is without any doubt an idiom, i.e. an indirect translation. In this case, a direct translation into German would provide the communicative clues for deriving the intended interpretation, but will not do it as straightforwardly or lively as might be expected in the context, as shown below:

- (6') Fühle die Kraft meiner Faust, du Scheusal!

Hence, an indirect translation such as the one shown above will be, arguably, more appropriate in the context at hand. Notice here that one of the defining characteristics of idioms is that they do not have any semantic meaning as such and that they are acquired as one single unit (Gutt 1991:148-152). We learn to interpret them by memorising the types of contexts in which they are used. This means that whenever they are cognitively activated during interpretation, what we access is a flood of encyclopaedic information telling us directly how we should interpret it. This contrasts with a direct translation in that, in this case, we have to work out the interpretation ourselves from scratch. The interpretation of idioms is ready-made and stored in the encyclopaedic entry of the concepts used. As a result, a direct translation here will cost us more to process cognitively, and given the type of context in which the reader will find himself reading this text (for instance, at home after work), he will prefer to invest less rather than more processing effort in interpreting the text. This was foreseen by the translator and hence the idiomatic rendering.

Another example of this type of mismatch can be found when the audience lacks enough knowledge to interpret a given term. A direct transla-

tion would make it difficult for them to interpret the text as intended. Consider the following excerpt from a short story and its attendant direct translation, where the audience is very likely to fail to understand the meaning of *Lacroze*:

- (7) Emma pudo salir sin que la advirtieran; en la esquina se subió a un Lacroze ...  
(Franco 1966:20)  
*Emma was able to leave without anyone seeing her; at the corner she got on a Lacroze ...*

Although in this example we have a direct translation, it is not what some readers, at least, will expect. In particular, when reading a text, one of the basic expectations for successful communication is to be able to understand the text. This may not be achievable in (7) by an English reader. The reason is that they would probably lack a crucial contextual assumption envisaged by the author, namely, that a Lacroze is a streetcar. In the event, the translation provided in this case was not direct but rather indirect:

- (8) Emma pudo salir sin que la advirtieran; en la esquina se subió a un Lacroze ...  
*Emma was able to leave without anyone seeing her; at the corner she got on a Lacroze **streetcar** ...* (Franco 1966:20-1)

The translator included the said contextual assumption pertaining to Lacroze explicitly in the target text, although for the original audience this would have been an implicit contextual assumption.

This addition may not find the approval of all possible audiences. It is conceivable that this is unacceptable for audiences who have a firm belief in reading translations which render exactly what was written in the original and nothing more, and who expect, as readers, to do whatever background research is required to interpret the text. This, however, entails a substantial extra effort on the part of the reader, who is unlikely to be willing to put so much effort into the act of communication (particularly in the context of reading leisurely). A case which clearly reflects this is the following example of a translation of a Sanskrit poem into English. The approach adopted by the translator, O'Flaherty, was in her own words: "... a very literal, word for word translation, retaining the long, multiple compounds, and bracketing pairs of words to represent the puns and *doubles entendres* with which Sanskrit abounds" (quoted in Gutt 1991:181). Here only the English version is provided:

- (9) The moon, grasping with rays like fingers the hair-mass-darkness, kisses  
 the night    𑀓 night            𑀓 - faced with    𑀓 closed-  
                  𑀓 evening        𑀓 - mouth            𑀓 bud-made-  
 lotus eyes.

In explaining her intentions, the translator adds:

“I had reasoned that the people who were likely to read translations of Sanskrit poetry were not the same people who read the sort of novels that one bought in airports; they were people who were genuinely interested in a foreign culture and who were willing to make a major investment of their intellectual energy in this enterprise.” (O’Flaherty 1987:124)

But the results of her translation made her reconsider her position:

“I failed to realize two things: that anyone who was interested in fighting through that sort of translation would be likely to go ahead and *learn* the original language; and that people in airports were quite capable of doing that, too.” (ibid.)

So, quite clearly, direct translation is not always the most desirable type of translation to adopt, particularly when processing costs are taken into account.

Another possibility for mismatch is if the translator carries out an indirect translation but the audience expects a direct translation, the audience may as a result reject the target text as being tampered with, unauthentic. A case in point is pragmatic enrichment (Rosales Sequeiros 1995). From the point of view of some editors (e.g. Terry Hale, personal communication), examples such as the following parallel translations of short stories, which include additions to the original, would not be acceptable:

- (10) El agua salía hirviendo, y eso compensaba la falta de sol y de aire.  
*The water from the tap was boiling hot, and this compensated for the lack of sunlight and fresh air.* (Lawaetz, 1972:180-1)
- (11) El calor pegajoso le humedecía la camisa, adhiriéndosela al cuerpo.  
*The sticky heat made his shirt damp, so that it clung to his body.* (ibid.:14-5)

The offending constituents here are *from the tap* and *so that* respectively, which are not present in the original Spanish text, but have been added by the translator. The reported editorial judgement is interesting regarding these examples, because the intention of the original editor and translator of (10) and (11) was to produce literal translations or, in our terms, direct translations: “The English translations that are printed in [the] parallel text are literal

rather than literary..." (Franco 1966, on back cover)

This suggests that even amongst editors there is disagreement as to what is acceptable and, furthermore, there is some uncertainty as to what a literal or direct translation is. This uncertainty may be a reflection of the fact that the various types of translation (direct vs. indirect) are not theoretically distinct, but rather they are part of a continuum (see (2) above), where the difference is one of degree, not of kind.

In this section, it has been argued that, as far as literary translation is concerned, the degree of interpretive resemblance judged to be acceptable can vary from context to context. Moreover, the expectations raised by a translation in the audience play an important part as to whether the translation is successful or not. A mismatch between what the translation provides and what the audience expects may cause communication difficulties and, in consequence, low acceptability judgments. This raises the question as to whether *interpretive* resemblance is necessary at all for translation acceptability (in literary cases). The answer to this question is explored in the next section.

### 3. Interpretive Resemblance, Expectations and Acceptability

In the examples seen so far, a measure of interpretive resemblance seemed to be present between original and target texts. Furthermore, the degree of interpretive resemblance was shown to be quite variable, from complete resemblance to cursory resemblance (cf. e.g. (3) and (4)). Our acceptability judgements depended on the adequacy or relevance of the degree of resemblance to a particular context.

The expectations of interpretive resemblance are not necessarily the same for a lay person as for an editor or a scholar. In fact, there may well be readers who are not aware at all that they are reading a translation. In this case, they would not be concerned with issues of interpretive resemblance. Of course, from the point of view of the translator, they are not, consequently, experiencing the full intended import of the translation. In particular, they are missing the fact that the text purports to interpretively resemble the original.

Similarly, the expectations of a foreign language student reading a translation will be very different from those of a lay person. Hence, we often find that students' editions are full of footnotes explaining points of content

as well as language. There is no doubt that in these cases the student audience is prepared to invest the extra cognitive effort to gain a more complete understanding of the original. They, consequently, expect a complete interpretive resemblance between target text and original text. Obviously, the means to achieve this may vary. For example, we could have a very literal translation with the addition of footnotes explaining the context, or a less than literal translation with footnotes explaining both language and context. An illustration of this can be found in translations mentioned in this article. The Penguin parallel translations edited by Franco (1966), which are intended primarily for students of Spanish, contain eight pages of end-notes for a book of 196 pages. In contrast, the translation of Isabel Allende's *The House of the Spirits* (Black Swan, 1994 reissue), which is intended for the general public, contains no footnotes or end-notes in a book of 491 pages. This is indicative of the importance to the students, as opposed to the general public, of gaining as full an understanding of the original text via the translation as possible. In fact, a student edition which did not contain the extra information in the form of footnotes and the like would probably not meet the expectations of its readers and would be deemed to be less acceptable.

Hence, exploring the relevance of a translation for the intended audience and investigating the expectations it will raise in them as an act of ostensive communication will provide the necessary clues to make decisions regarding the degree of interpretive resemblance required.

Literary translation, however, does not always aim at a very high degree of interpretive resemblance. There are cases, particularly in poetry, where very little attention is paid to conveying the original content and more is paid to non-interpretive resemblance, that is, resemblance not of conceptual content but of physical features. A case in point is phonemic translation, as the following example shows (quoted in Hervey, Higgins and Haywood 1995:49):

- (12) Ille mi par esse deo videtur,  
ille, si fas est, superare divos,  
qui sedens adversus identidem te  
spectat et audit  
dulce redentem, misero quod omnis  
eripit sensus mihi; [...]

*Phonemic translation*

He'll hie me, par *is* he? the God divide her,  
 he'll hie, see fastest, superior deity,  
 quiz -sitting adverse identity- mate, in-  
     spect it and audit -  
 you'll care ridden then, misery holds omens,  
 air rip the senses from me; [...]

*Literal prose translation*

He seems to me to be equal to a god, he seems to me, if it is lawful, to surpass  
 the gods, who, sitting  
 opposite to you, keeps looking at you and hearing you  
 sweetly laugh; but this tears away all my senses,  
 wretch that I am.

What was relevant to the translator in this case were the sounds (i.e. physical properties) of the original and that was what he set out to reproduce in the target text, without any serious attempt to convey the meaning of the original. Thus, for some audiences even a literal translation is not acceptable enough. For these audiences interpretive resemblance is only a secondary concern, more important to them are non-interpretive resemblances. Hence, this again suggests that before embarking on a translation, and in order to achieve successful communication by means of it, the translator must consider the relevance of the translation to the audience and the expectations it will raise in them, and then establish what type of translation will match those expectations. In some cases, as the last example showed, no amount of *interpretive* resemblance is required. So, how faithful does a translation have to be?

#### 4. Faithfulness

In the light of what has been said so far, judgements pertaining to faithfulness will inevitably vary according to the relevance of the translation to, and expectations of, the audience. A translation will be judged to be faithful to the original if it resembles it in the relevant aspects. What the relevant aspects are in any given case will depend on what particular aspects are deemed to be consistent with pragmatic principles of communication. The proposal advocated in this article is that the pragmatic principle at work is the principle of relevance, which states that "every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance" (Sperber & Wilson

1995:266-7). Optimal relevance is achieved when an utterance gives rise to adequate cognitive effects for no unjustifiable effort and in a way that is compatible with the communicator's preferences and abilities (ibid.:270). In other words, what should be translated are those aspects of the original text which the translator reasonably expects both to give rise to an adequate number of positive cognitive effects and to do so for as little cognitive effort as possible for the reader.

The reader will be expecting a translation which is worth his effort and which is the most relevant one compatible with the translator's ability and preferences.

Faithfulness is subservient to relevance. A translation may be deemed to be less than faithful and still be relevant and acceptable. For instance, consider the following German poem (quoted in Gutt, 1991:107-8). Which one of the two alternative translations is more faithful?

- (13)                      Ein Wiesel  
                              sass auf einem Kiesel  
                              inmitten Bachgeriesel  
                              *Translation 1*  
                              (literal)  
                              A weasel  
                              sat on a pebble  
                              in the midst of a ripple of a brook  
                              *Translation 2*  
                              (non-literal)  
                              A weasel  
                              perched on an easel  
                              within a patch of teasel

Clearly, translation 2 is not faithful to the content of the original, but it is a relevant translation nevertheless. On the other hand, translation 1 is faithful to the content of the original and yet it may not always be relevant. This seems to suggest that the notion of faithfulness is of limited value when we look at cases such as these, unless it is looked at in conjunction with considerations of relevance.

## 5. Conclusion

In this article an attempt has been made to discuss issues pertaining to acceptability in literary translation. I have argued that whilst the basis for

literary translation is resemblance between original and target texts, which, for the most part, is of an interpretive type, judgements of acceptability depend on considerations of relevance concerning the translation itself.

Thus, the degree of interpretive resemblance may vary according to what is relevant in the context. In some contexts, complete interpretive resemblance may be required and the result will be a direct translation. This will be the case when preserving just the literal content of the original text is crucial to the success of the translation. In other contexts, less than complete interpretive resemblance may suffice and the result will be an indirect translation. This latter type will cover cases in which considerations other than literalness are crucial to the success of the translation.

In practice, most translations will be of the indirect type, and subject to a wide range of interpretive resemblance levels. It is the translator's knowledge of language and communication that will lead him to make the appropriate decisions regarding the degree of resemblance in each particular case. This means that faithfulness cannot be viewed in isolation from considerations of relevance. A translation will only be seen to be faithful (to the appropriate degree), if it interpretively resembles the original in the *relevant* aspects.

The account of translation acceptability sketched above is both general and explanatory in that it resorts to the pragmatic principles which govern our interpretations (and, ultimately, our judgements) of translations and also inform translators' decisions in the process of translating. This account provides the criteria for establishing what aspects of an original text ought to be rendered in a translation to maximise its chances of success in a given context.

### Notes

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### Abstract

This article argues that acceptability in literary translation depends on judgements of relevance regarding the degree of *(non-)interpretive resemblance* between the interpretations intended in the original and target texts. Interpretive resemblance is defined as the relationship between two propositions in terms of the logical and contextual assumptions shared by them. Faithfulness in translation reflects this degree of interpretive resemblance and, as a result, is susceptible to varying degrees. The claim is made that for a translation to be acceptable, its degree of (non-)interpretive resemblance must be such that the resulting translation ought to meet the expectations of relevance it raises in the audience.

### Résumé

Dans cet article nous voulons démontrer que l'acceptabilité dans la traduction littéraire dépend de ce qu'on juge être pertinent quant au degré de similarité (non-)interprétative entre les interprétations du texte original et du texte traduit. La similarité interprétative se définit comme le rapport entre deux propositions en termes de suppositions logiques et contextuelles qu'elles partagent. La fidélité dans la traduction reflète le degré de similarité interprétative et par conséquent elle y est sensible à différents degrés. Nous affirmons qu'une traduction est acceptable si le degré de similarité (non-)interprétative est tel que la traduction qui en résulte répond à l'attente de pertinence soulevée chez le public.

