

PSYCHOLINGUISTIC APPROACH FOR A THEATRE TRANSLATION

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Abstract

The Translator's Invisibility was published, translation studies have debated the distinction between the domesticating and foreignizing approaches to translation. The political repercussions of this opposition have already been extensively discussed (Robinson, Bassnett and Trivedi, Tymoczko, among others), so I will not address them in this article. Instead, I want to demonstrate that translating for the theater may necessitate a greater degree of domestication due to the nature of the medium. I demonstrate that the translator must take into account both the spoken and aural nature of the dialogue. The aural nature of a theater text also suggests that it is permanent and cannot be changed. The provided linguistic input cannot be reexamined because of these characteristics. Using data from psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology, I show that some foreignizing strategies that are effective for translating written texts may not be as effective for translating stage translations. To illustrate my point, I use a single case study: the ongoing Italian translation of *Convincing Ground* (Mence), a drama. My objective is to demonstrate how a foreignizing strategy can fail to convey the characterization of the fictional world's characters and the relationships they have with one another that are shaped and negotiated through language, as well as impede or completely prevent the audience's lexical decision response within the allotted time for utterance.

Keywords: psycholinguistic, theatre, translation, theatre translation

INTRODUCTION

This article does not focus on the political implications of the debate between domestication and foreignization, which should be viewed as two extremes of a continuum rather than a true dichotomy. Instead, the researchers hope to demonstrate that when translating for the stage, a greater degree of domestication—at least on the lexical and syntactic levels—may be required.

Scholars have paid a lot of attention to the spoken nature of theatrical discourse and the requirement that the translation be "speakable" or "performable" on stage (for example, Espasa; Morgan; Nikolarea Bassnett-McGuire) (Mertania & Amelia, 2020). However, other people have pointed out that translations of texts that are meant to be spoken or performed can take advantage of the human voice and body's expressive potential (Pavis, Serpieri,

and others, among others) (Nababan & Nurmaily, 2021). However, no academic has yet investigated the reader or listener's psycholinguistic and cognitive effects of the translation process (Oktavia & Suprayogi, 2021). I use some of the information from the extensive body of research in stage while working with colleagues from different fields. I want to show how, in stage translation, some foreignizing techniques that work well for page translation can completely hinder audience comprehension. I will pay close attention to methods of foreignization, such as preserving some culturally specific language and the original foreign syntax of the play in the translation. I am aware that not every translator and practitioner is familiar with psycholinguistics. I hope that this article will make some of the research in the field accessible to theatre translators, insofar as it may be relevant for a better stage translation and increased translator awareness (Aminatun et al., 2021). I'll be focusing on spoken language features like prosody and segmentation and how they affect a listener's ability to recognize words in this section (Samanik, 2019). I show in section 1.2 how the length of time it takes for a listener or reader to comprehend a message is influenced by its complexity. In the second section of this article, I look at how some of these findings might affect the theater translator. In section 3, I examine the audience's "affective environment" (Johnston, 18) by examining the emotional effects of specific lexical items on the audience members (Suprayogi et al., 2021). The theory presented in the first three sections is brought together at the end of the article, and in section four, I come to my conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Prosody, segmentation, and word recognition

A layperson is likely to respond that spoken language is simpler to process when asked whether they prefer reading or listening (Sari & Oktaviani, 2021). Contrary to popular belief, decoding written language is simpler than decoding spoken speech, which is surprising to most people (Cacciari) (Oktaviani et al., 2020). To support my argument for domestication in theatre translation, some information on language processing time is required.

The organ responsible for this function differs between the processing of spoken and written language (Simamora & Oktaviani, 2020), which is one of the main differences (Sinaga & Oktaviani, 2020). The eye is a parallel device, which means it can process much more information at once (Muliyah et al., 2020), such as information related to three to four words (Aminatun &

Oktaviani, 2019), whereas the ear is a serial device, which processes information spread over time (Foss and Hakes) (Aminatun et al., 2019). In order to demonstrate how lexical frequency, ambiguity, and structural complexity affect language processing time (Journal & Kiranamita, 2021), I will make use of experiments on both spoken and written language processing in this article.

According to (Pranoto & Afrilita, 2019) " People write about 150 words per minute in casual conversation, on average" (while they read between 200 and 400 words per minute. According to Gibson and Levin, cited in Foss and Hakes 327, this is the standard reading speed for a newspaper. A conference paper, for instance, has between 2,500 and 3,000 words and can be read, heard, and decoded in about 20 minutes (Mandasari & Wahyudin, 2019). The data collected by Cacciari and Dbrowska indicate that the audience will process linguistic information at a rate of between 125 and 150 words per minute. For the same audience, reading the same material would take anywhere from 12.5 to 6.25 minutes (Agustina et al., 2021), or two thirds and one third of the time (Purwaningsih & Gulö, 2021). Therefore, written input is processed more quickly than spoken input (Afrianto et al., 2021), even though the ability to read and write is taught while spoken language is acquired (Afrianto & Restika, 2018). Additionally, the following factors can make spoken language processing more challenging: First, "the levels of noise in the environment where we frequently speak and hear others speak" (Journal et al., 2021). That is especially true in a public venue like a theater (Qodriani & Wijana, 2021). During a performance, it may be difficult for other audience members to hear what is being said if you speak or whisper (Qodriani & Wijana, 2020). Instead, when a reader reads a text, he or she typically automatically ignores other stimuli and focuses on the information's referential value (Candra & Qodriani, 2019). Another important distinction is the capacity to revisit the linguistic input (Pradana & Suprayogi, 2021). As opposed to reading, where one can go back and re-read a sentence if necessary, listening "must instead elaborate the spoken discourse at the pace set by the speaker" (Choirunnisa & Sari, 2021). Segmenting spoken discourse into the sound units it consists of is more challenging than isolating individual words or sentences in written language (Kardiansyah & Salam, 2020). "Segmentation is a byproduct of word recognition and is almost nonexistent in spoken language that is fluent"(Kardiansyah, 2021).

2. Complexity of the message: Written vs Spoken

In a Vitevitch and Luce (1998) study on the perception of spoken words, participants were asked to repeat either a word or a nonword (a series of consonants and vowels). The reaction times for the

words and nonwords for each probability and density condition are shown in Figure 2 in milliseconds.

Studies by Just and Carpenter and Rayner and Duffy on eye fixation times during reading show how the complexity of the message affects the processing time of the message itself (Kardiansyah, 2019). The effects of word frequency, verb complexity, and lexical ambiguity on written language processing time were examined by Rayner and Duffy. I will only consider word frequency and lexical ambiguity for the sake of my study. Both research groups' experiments make a distinction between fixation and gaze, with gazes being "[c]onsecutive fixations on the same word" (Just and Carpenter 329). As a result of the word's rarity and thematic importance, both experiments demonstrate that "longer fixations are attributed to longer processing time" (Just and Carpenter 330). Rayner and Duffy measured the durations of fixation and gaze on a target word and on what they called the "disambiguating region" in their experiment (i.e. the word preceding the target word, and the one following). The test supported the hypothesis that "subjects spent significantly longer on both the first fixation on the infrequent word," which is what happened. The mean gaze duration was also longer on the word that followed the target word when it appeared infrequently. When two meanings for the ambiguous item were fairly equally likely, subjects spent more time looking at the ambiguous word, according to Rayner and Duffy's second experiment on equibiased and non-equibiased ambiguous words.

Sub-subchapters

1. Implications for the translator

Written text translators can rely on the readers to keep up with their own rate of information intake. For instance, readers can take their time with a word that is lexically ambiguous as well as the words that come before and after it. Rayner and Duffy estimate that this operation will take between 1,423 and 1,923 milliseconds to complete, excluding the time required to read any footnotes or glossary entries. However, readers won't be subjected to additional inputs during the disambiguation and/or interpretation process, whereas listeners will.

Another thing to consider is that, in many theatrical productions, the audience isn't the primary target of the utterance; in other words, the communication system is different from that of naturally occurring conversation (and from that of the novel as well) (Kardiansyah

& Qodriani, 2018). The audience cannot interfere with the communication between the characters because it is "embedded" within that between the characters (Short) (Oktaviani & Mandasari, 2020), and as a result, they cannot stop the speaker and ask them to clarify what they mean. The listener will understand listening in order to process the linguistic information at a challenging point. This is what happens when a reader focuses on a specific word on the written page, spends time on the disambiguating region (the words that come before and after the difficult word), rereads the information provided (i.e., gazes on the disambiguating region), or takes the time necessary to understand the intricate foreign syntax. Only after the linguistic information has been processed will the reader continue. The listener does not have the same opportunity because the actors will continue speaking while the listener is still trying to process the linguistic input because actors typically speak at a natural speed (unless otherwise required for a specific dramatic effect). As a result, the listener won't be able to process either the challenging input or the incoming input that follows. This supports Cacciari's claim that time constraints play a significant role in the comprehension process.

1. The "Affective Environment" of the spectator

"Translation, and especially translation for the theatre, is a process that in this way engineers two-way movement - a traffic between the narratives, concepts, and structures of life embodied in foreign texts, and the affective and cognitive environment of the spectator," says theatre translator and practitioner David Johnston (Johnston 18, my emphasis). I've addressed the spectator's cognitive environment up to this point; let's move on to the affective environment. I consider myself to be a spectacle and performance translator in my work as a theatre translator. Therefore, it is crucial to consider how the translated text will affect the audience right away. To put it another way, "what counts is not the degree of distance from an ontological original but the effect that the reconfigured text (as performance) has on the receiving culture and its networks of transmission and reception," the translator should not "weaken the force the text has in performance" (Marinetti 311, my emphasis). The focus on reception has led to new research paradigms with spectators at their core, including "a reconceptualization of the role played by spectators as well as a rethinking of more general notions of reception" (Marinetti 311, original emphasis).

An utterance's "performative force" (Worthen 2003 9–13, cited in Marinetti 311) can be gauged in part by how it affects the audience. Impact (or effect) is a concept that is actually based on psychological and physiological principles. Steven Pinker, a cognitive psychologist, sheds light on how we use language to negotiate relationships as well as to impose unfavorable feelings on those with whom we are speaking (Pinker "Stuff of Thought" lecture). Language, in the words of Allan and Burridge, "is both a shield and a weapon." When someone intentionally uses dysphemisms to be offensive or abusive, it is used as a weapon rather than as a shield to avoid offending others (as with euphemisms) . Swear words in fictional dialogue can be a good indication of the author's characterization of the characters in the play as well as the emotions the author wants the audience to experience (Mandasari & Aminatun, 2019). In a play, the characters' conversations serve two purposes: one in the made-up world of the performance, and one in the actual world (Yulianti & Sulistyawati, 2021). Dramatic dialogue in the fictional world creates the world and shapes the relationships between the characters (Puspita & Amelia, 2020). It is the playwright's message to the audience in the real world (Heaverly & EWK, 2020). Since swear words are frequently culture-specific, my analysis will concentrate on the translation of taboo words, which falls under a contentious category in translation studies (Fitri & Qodriani, 2016). Some academics who support a foreignization strategy (most notably Venuti) might advise leaving items that are culturally specific in the target text untranslated (Fithratullah, 2021).

METHOD

In this study, researchers applied qualitative method. It focuses on comprehension, description and narrative analysis (Oktaviani & Mandasari, 2019). Descriptive research only seeks to describe situations or events; it does not attempt to discover or explain relationships, test hypotheses, or make predictions (Oktaviani, 2021). According to (Mandasari, 2020) qualitative research is a process of making the world In several extent, qualitative analysis considers real phenomena in society as found in several studies Furthermore, this research method is adaptable and provides for multiple perspectives on the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Fluency, according to Venuti, "[assumes] a theory of language as communication that, in practice, manifests itself as a stress on immediate intelligibility. But as we've seen, this can be crucial to translating a play. The audience's processing speed may be impacted by the audience's different communication models, as was already mentioned. In my opinion, a theatre translator who is aware of this mental processing is more likely to produce an accurate translation that will work on stage. The query is still open: What is the desired outcome for the translator? A higher level of domestication may be required in theater if the translator wants to allow the audience to process the spoken message during performance time without compromising the performative force of the utterance for the audience's benefit.

CONCLUSION

As I've hopefully shown, the psycholinguistic research on spoken language processing and the psychophysiological studies on the impact of words related to particular semantic areas both support this higher level of domestication. As theatre translators and practitioners have explored, not only is the spoken mode of delivery essential, but also the aural aspects of its reception. Theater translators are aware that their translated playtext will be a part of "a structural system [which] exists only when received and reconstructed by a spectator from the production. However, despite its significance in the construction of meaning, this reconstruction carried out by the spectator through the affective, cognitive, and psycholinguistic processes involved in the decoding of the spoken message has frequently been disregarded in translation studies.

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