TTR
Traduction, terminologie, rédaction

Translation and the Literary Text
La traduction et le texte littéraire

Augusto Ponzio

Volume 20, Number 2, 2e semestre 2007

TTR a 20 ans II
TTR Turns 20 II

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/018823ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7202/018823ar

See table of contents

Publisher(s)

Association canadienne de traductologie

ISSN

0835-8443 (print)
1708-2188 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this article

Ponzio, A. (2007). Translation and the Literary Text. *TTR*, *20*(2), 89–119. https://doi.org/10.7202/018823ar

Article abstract

In the present paper we shall focus on literary translation, on the question ofthe translation of “complex” or “secondary” texts, but with the intention of makinga contribution to the problem of translating non-literary, “simple,” “primary” textsas well. In other words, we shall examine the problem of text translation from asemiotic perspective. In fact, this study founds translation theory in sign theorydeveloping a semiotic-linguistic approach to the problem of translation in thedirection of so-called interpretation semiotics which also implies the semiotics ofsignificance. Translation concerns both simple and complex texts, which correspondrespectively to Mikhail Bakhtin’s primary and secondary texts. Simple texts concernnon literary discourse genres whilst complex texts the literary genres, where theformer are better understood in the light of the latter, and not vice versa. Thispaper also focuses on the concept of the literary text as a hypertext maintainingthat the hypertext is a methodics for translative practice. The relation between the*text* and *language* understood as a modeling device is also important for anadequate theory of translation and sheds light on the question of translatability.Another central issue in this study is the relation between translation andintertextuality.

Translation and the Literary Text

Augusto Ponzio

1. Premise

The question of translation may either concern "simple" texts or "complex" texts. In our view this distinction corresponds to that proposed by Mikhail Bakhtin (1952-53) between "primary genres" and "secondary genres": "simple texts" belong to primary genres, that is, to those discourse genres that are not part of literature; on the contrary, "complex texts" are those of literary genres. For that which concerns problems of text semiotics, including the problem of translation, texts from secondary and "complex" genres, as Bakhtin also calls them, shed light on primary or "simple" genres and not vice versa, just as the anatomy of human beings helps to understand that of monkeys, and not vice versa.

> A one-sided orientation toward primary genres inevitably leads to a vulgarization of the entire problem (behaviorist linguistics is an extreme example). The very interrelations between primary and secondary genres and the process of the historical formation of the latter shed light on the nature of the utterance (and above all on the complex problem of the interrelations among language, ideology, and world view). (Bakhtin, 1986 [1952-53], p. 62)

This study is focussed on literary translation, on the question of the translation of "complex" or "secondary" texts, but with a view to making a contribution to the problem of translating non-literary, "simple," "primary" texts as well. In other words, we shall examine the problem of text translation from a semiotic perspective.

A literary text is an hypertext. In the language of informatics the "hypertext" is writing with computers, writing which is organized in non-linear fashion. The hypertext offers a *system* or *methodics* for empowering a *non-linear writing-reading process* through computers. This implies the possibility of "pasting" pieces of a text into a "network" and shifting freely, "surfing" through the net, choosing a trajectory from the multiple alternatives a hypertext offers. A hypertext can be understood metonymically as a text that responds to this type of methodics or system. In what follows we shall consider the advantages of using the hypertext as a paradigm for a theory of interlinguistic translation.

2. Hypertext and Translation

The hypertext is a reading-text in a strong sense, in other words, it privileges the reader insofar as it allows him to choose from different reading trajectories. In this context reading does not develop in a linear sense, in a single sense, the "right sense." In the case of linear reading, the author forces the reader to move according to the order of exposition and as a function of authorial intention. Consequently, the reader is stopped from cultivating his own space and moving freely as a function of what reading provokes in him in terms of an uninterrupted flow of ideas, stimuli and associations. In hypertexts, dialogue between interpretant signs and interpreted signs—the place where meaning and sense are formed—concerns the text directly. The author is of secondary importance. But the issue at stake is to understand what the text says and not what the author intended it to say.

The author is not always aware of the interpretants he puts into his own discourse. He also provides interpretants *unintentionally*: interpretants which the reader identifies and which belong to interpreter discourse. However, their traces are present in the author's discourse. There are no fixed lines of demarcation between the intentional and the unintentional, between the fortuitous and what was preestablished by interpretants present in author discourse. Nor is there a definite line of demarcation between interpretants offered by the author and those offered by the interpreter.

While in the process of studying "anagrams," Saussure was seized by the fear that what he traced in the texts he was analyzing was nothing more than what he had read into them himself. Anagrams: something fortuitous or a rule effectively followed by the author? According to Starobinski, Saussure made the mistake of separating the "effect of chance" from "conscious procedure." Starobinski believed that both chance and consciousness should be put aside and that the anagram should be viewed as an aspect of the word process—which is neither purely fortuitous nor fully conscious (cf. Starobinski, 1971, p. 154).

Texts that break through the boundaries of their own time and flourish beyond contemporaneity, in the "great time," as understood by Bakhtin (see 1986 and 2003) develop new meanings and senses.

> We can say that neither Shakespeare himself nor his contemporaries knew that "great Shakespeare" whom we know now. (…) But do we then attribute to Shakespeare's works something that was not there, do we modernize and distort them? Modernization and distortion, of course, have existed and will continue to exist. But that is not the reason why Shakespeare has grown. He has grown because of that which actually has been and continues to be found in his works, but which neither he himself nor his contemporaries could consciously perceive and evaluate in the context of the culture of their epoch.
>
> Semantic phenomena can exist in concealed form, potentially, and be revealed only in semantic cultural contexts of subsequent epochs that are favorable for such disclosure. (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 4)

Text materiality is not only achieved with respect to the interpreter. Similarly to all communicative processes, the text emerges as semiotic materiality not only in the sense that it resists the interpreter, is autonomous from the latter, has its own signification that does not depend on the interpreter and may even escape him: the text has its own materiality, objectivity, independence, a capacity for resistance and self-signification *with respect to the author as well*. The language (including the language of literary genres) used by the author resists the author himself,

leads him by the hand and even says things that the author had not established he would say.

The text has its own irreducible autonomy with respect to the meaning attributed to it by the interpreter. And this is true both in the case of the interpreter who "reads" the text, the "reader," or the interpreter who "produces" it, the "author." The text tells of a sense that is *other* with respect to the sense conferred upon it by the interpreter-self. Therefore, the text is endowed with its own objectivity, materiality, capacity to resist with respect to interpreting, signifying consciousness. This is the alterity of the sign that determines and decides the limits of interpretation, whether "author" or "reader" interpretation. Contrary to Umberto Eco, the problem of the "limits of interpretation" (1990), in light of which he reconsiders the problem of the "open work" (1962) and the role of the reader, "*lector in fabula*" (1979), cannot be solved in terms of "habit" or social convention. The limits of interpretation are given by objectivity, materiality, autonomy of the text, in other words, by its alterity with respect to the interpretant-self, whether this be the "reader" or the "utterer," the person who produces the text, the author himself with all his authority. The problem of the limits of interpretation is closely connected with the problem of the sign's alterity and dialogism, and cannot be treated separately from the latter.

Translation necessarily consists in negotiation and contract which concern the relation between *translator* and *text* and not between *translator* and *author*. Negotiation and listening, negotiation and answering comprehension are inseparable here. Their dialogic nature is given by the alterity, autonomy, resistance, objectivity, in a word, *materiality* of the text to be translated.

The meaning of a sign cannot be circumscribed to a certain type of sign or sign system, such as a given historical-natural language. Meaning coincides with the interpretant trajectory, which knows no boundaries of a typological or systemic order. This is particularly obvious in the case of the hypertext, but this also concerns translative processes where the interpretants,

whether verbal or non-verbal, belong to another language, to another linguistic-cultural modelling system.

Furthermore, the hypertext escapes the deductive model according to which a given trajectory starts from certain premises and leads to a given conclusion. Deductive logic is replaced by *associative* logic, which is the logic of translation understood as reading-writing, it involves active participation and responsive understanding at the highest degree. Similarly to the hypertext, the relation between premises and conclusion is established through associations based on the translator's personal memory, on the drift of his remembering, on his interests, curiosity, experiences, ability to "distract," such that deferral from the interpreted sign to the interpretant sign is not decided by constriction, by deduction as in the indexical relation. Here, instead, the relation between interpreted and interpretant proceeds by hypothesis, it is based on reader initiative and inventiveness, and requires inferences mainly of the adductive type—which in certain cases are particularly risky.

The hypertext emerges as something towards which a translation should tend. Answering comprehension in reading-translation should take a text-reading hypertext as its model. But this type of reading is not yet very familiar to us. For centuries reading has implied following the author, never losing sight of him, watching where he comes from and where he is directed to the extent that any digressions, distractions or stops in his discourse even end up annoying the reader.

Some texts are written by the author to deviate the reader and leave him free to choose his own reading trajectories. According to Roland Barthes (1984), some authors have warned us that we are free to read their texts as we like best and that our choices are of no interest to them. With such reflections Barthes refers particularly to literary writing, which calls for a sort of re-writing process in order to be read.

In this case, hypertextuality is a consequence of the predominantly dialogical character of the literary text, of its inexorable intertextuality, its capacity to shift the signifier, which

opens signification in the direction of *significance*. But, to fully achieve their status as hypertexts through reading, these texts require education in reading which literary criticism impedes when it concentrates reader attention on what the author says and on the autobiographical, psychological, ideological, historico-social reasons for saying it.

Beyond contents and technical modalities in using hypertexts, we must underline the epistemological and methodological contribution that may come from the intermedial hypertext for our understanding of the text and, consequently, for an adequate approach to the text in translation processes.

The hypertext augments the associative and personal character of reading, it establishes a movement with the text according to various senses, it frees reading from a single type or system of signs, it accustoms us to a dialogic relation with the text. All this can influence our approach in reading-translation, reading capable of creating differentiated trajectories, reading with the eyes raised, reading as "writing-reading," as says Barthes.

Informatic hypertext practice has at last blocked the excessive interest that readers have shown in the author for centuries, it abolishes the privilege conferred upon the sources (in terms of people, historical context, etc.) of a text. Such excessive interest and privilege has generally been sanctioned and augmented by literary criticism—the only discipline in schools and universities which attempts to provide a method for the way we approach texts, contributions in this sense from such disciplines as textual linguistics or semiotics of text are recurrently missing.

What is important to underline in the hypertext is the text and the multiple trajectories according to which it may be read. Censorship in relation to non-linear, "disorderly," erratic readings, readings that drift and lose their bearings, may at last come to an end as a consequence of the way this text is produced, characterized as it is by hypertextuality and multimediality. With this type of censorship, respect for authority, the author's, according to which a text is usually read, also comes to an end. In

this case the reading-text predominates over the pre-scribed text. Also because the multimedial hypertext is not the word of an author, but the result of a multiplicity of different contributions, competencies and expressive means.

The multi-medial hypertext frees the text-reading as such, whatever the text's function. From this perspective, the multimedial hypertext achieves a *Copernican revolution in the sense that it shifts the centre from the author to the reader*, if not for the first time, certainly in the sense that it institutionalizes this shift, eliciting a reading-writing rather than reading-fruition process, the writing of reading (independently from recourse to the written sign, transcription). *This capacity that the multimedial hypertext renders visible is important to evidence for translation theory as the objective a reading-translation should work towards when understood in terms of answering comprehension, especially in the matter of the literary text*.

The hypertext is a *method* for the amplification of the capacity for *writing as a modelling procedure*. Writing as modelling characterizes *language* understood as a species-specific feature distinctive of mankind. Similarly to language thus described, the hypertext does not proceed in a linear sense. Instead, it organizes connections among parts that are distant from each other in the interpreted-interpretant network forming that text. Linearity is superceded by the network. In this sense the hypertext is less limiting, less binding than the traditional written text, or better, than *the traditional way of writing and reading*. The hypertext shows that to write and to read is not necessarily to write and to read in sequence, to channel thought into one line after another, and according to a privileged order as we have been taught since childhood.

The hypertext is not only a *method*. As anticipated, a *methodics* can be delineated starting from the hypertext, with important implications for translation practice and theory. Literary texts show a strong movement in the direction of the hypertext.

The dialectics revealed by the Russian formalists between the "fabula" and the "plot" reveals the literary text's vocation for the hypertext. And that in all this the translator is passive is by no means true: his expectations, inferences, "answering comprehension," his impatience are not only calculated, but determine the organization itself of the text, its style and syntax: *lector in fabula*, as Eco says. As much as it may be linear, a novel presents, suggests "multiple readings" in various degrees, depending on the level of monologism or polylogism characterizing that text.

The poetic text lends itself to multiple readings at the highest degree. The fact that the poetic text is difficult to translate is a symptom of what would seem to be its linearity, but this, however, is only apparent: a single signifier may lead into different interpretive trajectories. For this reason it is often difficult to find a corresponding signifier in another language with the same capacity for shifting. In French, Baudelaire's *L'Albatros* opens with the word "*Souvent*" which in Italian is translated as "sovente" or "spesso." The problem is that this translation inevitably loses an interpretive trajectory that signifies in the direction of "sotto vento"[1] (Prete, 1994), and it also loses the connection with "*souvenir*"[2] which are evoked by the French word.

"Decentralization" of the hypertext, the fact that it does not have a fixed centre, but is a system that can be infinitely decentred and recentred, has implications for the de-centralization of cognitive activities as their condition for orientations that are open and unprejudiced. Such an attitude is particularly necessary in the relation with a foreign language and in translation practice understood in terms of interlinguistic dialogue. The capacity for decentralization and recentralization becomes the formative condition of identity open to alterity, identity capable of interrogating automatisms and customary pragmatico-interpretative trajectories. From this perspective, the practice of the hypertext accustoms us to the sign's shifting

1 In English "leeward."

2 In English "remembering."

and, therefore, to the capacity for interrogation of the universe organized in given sign systems, those of the source language in the first place. This process makes it possible to receive and give hospitality in another language to a text in translation that was originally modelled in a completely different linguistic-cultural universe from the original.

3. Destination of the Translation and Language as Writing

Who is a translation meant for? This is the question asked by Walter Benjamin at the beginning of his essay entitled "The Translator's Task" (1997 [1923]). The naive reply is: "[F]or readers who do not understand the original" (p. 151 in *TTR*). The translation says the "same thing" (*ibid.*) as the original, but in a language they do not understand. This "same thing," it would seem, is what the original intends to "communicate" (*ibid.)*. Translation mediates, transmits, communicates.

The problem is whether or not the text is made specifically to communicate. A poetic work has very little to tell and to communicate. "Neither message nor statement is essential to it" (*ibid.*). Any translation which intends to communicate would mediate something inessential, it would transmit the inessential.

If a text is meant for a reader, it is meant for a reader in the original. The translator would then be at the service of a reader the text was not originally meant for. In this case the text would resist translation not because of any difficulties involved in being translated into a given language, but rather because it was not made to be translated, it was not meant for the speakers of that given language. However, the text is not even meant generally for speakers in the original; it is meant for a receiver who is not simply expected to understand the text ("Clean up the mess, do you understand me!", "Yes, I understand"), but to understand it responsively (*responsive understanding*).

The problem of translatability is the problem of the text's destination and therefore of the text's intention of being translated.

This intention is not the author's. In the case of literary texts the author has no authority. This is due to the artwork's independence from the author, to the "essential solitude of the work of art" (Maurice Blanchot, 1955*)*.

Such an intention is not present in the original either. The problem of the translatability of the text is generally the following: whether historical-natural languages consent to translation which is the problem of communication among the different historical-natural languages. The truth is that this problem is of no concern to a given historical-natural language. All it requires is that we say, and that we say in that language. Language *obliges us to say* (Roland Barthes: "language is fascist", see Barthes, 1978), *and to say in it*.

But there is also the problem of literary genres: do literary genres consent to translation? This is the question of the translatability of poetic genres. Thus we are reconducted to the relation between translation and communication: as anticipated, if the translation is expected to transmit what is communicated by the text, a poetic work has very little to communicate. By mediating communication, translation mediates something inessential, and if the translator in turn begins to compose poetry, what we obtain is "the inexact transmission of an inessential content" (Benjamin, 1997 [1923], p. 152).

The text's intention of being translated concerns neither the reader nor the author, nor a given historical-natural language, nor literary genres. As stated, it is a question of destination: to whom or to what is the text destined? Certainly it is addressed to whoever can read it, to whoever knows the same language. But with such a statement, are we not talking about authorial intention once again? And again about the limits imposed upon the author by historical-natural language and by genre?

Instead, destination of the text and, therefore, its intention of being translated concerns the text's relation to *language*. Here the term "language" is understood as a simulation device or modelling device, capable of producing an "infinite number of possible worlds" (Leibniz), as the "play of musement" (Peirce).

This is what Thomas A. Sebeok understands by *language* which he distinguishes from *speech*. Speech has a specifically communicative function, while language is firstly a *modelling device*. Language only assumes a communicative function subsequently, that is to say, when with the appearance of the primitive form of *homo sapiens sapiens* speech enabled the externalization of language. Moreover, this process leads to the quantitative amplification and qualitative transformation of the communicative capacities of nonverbal procedures which humans share with other animals. Language subtends human sign systems, including historical-natural languages, and distinguishes them in species-specific terms from other forms of animal communication. The latter use signs that are typologically homological with respect to human signs (signals, icons, indexes, symbols, names, as above all Sebeok has shown), but these signs are not fixed in a structure like language understood as a modelling device and, therefore, they cannot become languages.

Writing is inherent in language as a modelling device to the extent that the specific characteristic of writing consists in its investing the same elements with different meanings according to their chronotopic positioning. In other words, writing is inherent in language as a signifying device to the extent that it is characterized by *syntax*. The phonetic sign itself is writing. Language is already writing, even before the invention of writing understood as a system for the transcription of vocal semiosis, indeed even before language is connected to phonation and the formation of historical-natural languages. When, subsequently, writing returned as a secondary cover to fix vocalism, it used space to maintain the oral word through time investing this word with a spatial configuration (cf. Kristeva, 1992, p. 61).

Language as it is today has been influenced in its development by the use of phonetic material, but all the same it has not lost its character of writing antecedent to transcription. This is evident in the articulation of historico-natural languages, in the iconic character of the verbal sign itself (signification through positioning, extension, as in the lengthening of adjectives in the superlative or of verbs in the plural, etc.) discussed by Jakobson (1963), and in the capacity for innovation. Chomsky considers

creativity as a specific characteristic of verbal language. On the contrary, creativity is a derivative in verbal language, while instead it is proper to language understood as writing, as a human modelling device.

Benjamin (1963, pp. 159-235) also seems to insist on the connection between language and writing as understood above when, focusing on "allegory," he evidences its "character of writing," when he reflects upon hieroglyphic writing, on the ideogram, and on the relation between thought and "original writing," on language as writing that is not reduced to serving communication, on the letter that withdraws from the conventional combination of writing atoms and signifies on its own account as "image" thanks to its *iconic* character: in the "baroque" "the written word tends toward the visual," which from a linguistic point of view leads to the unity of the linguistic baroque and the figurative baroque (*ibid.*, p. 176ff.).

The fact that human beings "have something to say to each other" does not stand outside the world produced by language understood as a human modelling device. Therefore, we cannot resort to the need to say something as a means of explaining the origin of language in Lamarckian terms (on this aspect see the critical considerations made by Ferruccio Rossi-Landi, 1985, pp. 225-226). "Verbal language does not arise from a general need to communicate" (*ibid.*, p. 233), but rather from the need for a certain level in social communication. This involves both communicative procedures which have not yet developed into nonverbal *languages*, therefore are not yet specifically human, as well as the modelling (and not communicative) procedure of language, species-specific to human beings, through which the world is signified and interpreted.

> First of all we must highlight the non-reducibility of language to mere communication, otherwise we could not place the linguistic capacity in a coherent framework of the phylogenesis of nerve structures and relative psychical functions. (*Ibid.*, p. 234)

Though language found its major means of externalization and augmentation in vocalization and in verbal (oral and written)

signs generally, this does not mean that such externalization and augmentation are not possible through other languages as well. On the other hand, "in-fants" (who, as the term says, do not speak) communicate very efficiently through nonverbal terms (being a question of *vital* communication). Not only that: through the support of this type of communication they also acquire verbal language. And when, as in the case of deaf-mutes, the development of language in the phonic form is impossible, we may observe that writing (if adequately elicited by those who care for these people) finds other possibilities of implantation (gesture, design) that enable development of the capacity for language, without support from speech. And sometimes the results are noteworthy.

The character of writing proper to language enables verbal and nonverbal languages to function as signs on their own account, a sort of excess with respect to their cognitive, communicative and manipulative function, which is also present in animal behavior though only in terms of repetition. The consistency of dialogism among interpretants and, therefore, the capacity to supersede signality in the direction of *signness*, to surpass *signification* in the direction of *significance* (what Barthes, 1971, calls the *third sense* with respect to communication or the message and to signification) are associated with writing as it characterizes language.

4. Artaud Translator of Carroll. *L'arve et l'aume*

L'arve et l'aume is the title of Antonin Artaud's French translation of *Humpty Dumpty*, sixth chapter of *Through the Looking-Glass* by Lewis Carroll. Artaud translated this text as an intern in a psychiatric hospital in Rodez, September 1943. Subsequently, in 1947, he reviewed his translation with important corrections in the proofs for publication in the journal, *L'Arbalète*, directed by Marc Barbezat. Artaud adds the subtitle "Anti-grammatical enterprise on Lewis Carroll and against him."

Artaud very soon (June 1944) expressed the conviction that he had reached his translation as though it were his own original work and personal comment.

After six years of internship in a psychiatric hospital and transfers from one hospital to another, in February 1943 he finally reached the asylum in Rodez where he was entrusted to Doctor Gaston Ferdière. In a letter to the latter dated September 17th of that same year, Artaud announced that his name was Antonin Artaud and that he was "only a writer." Also, he requested work that was precise and objective to which he could "anchor himself," proposing a translation of Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass* for the painter Delanglade. He had already translated for Ferdière a little poem from the same volume entitled *Tèma Con Variazióni*.

By curious coincidence, as recounts Artaud in a letter to Ferdière (23 September 1943), Delanglade brought him *Humpty Dumpty* to translate in the afternoon of the same day. Artaud, that morning, had begun writing again (therefore, on the same day, but *before* seeing the text). What he wrote concerned the meaning of words, which he thought he was sure about and which, on the contrary, escaped him after having experimented them. Why? Words meant what I made them say, that is, what I put into them. Consequently, he was surprised when Ferdière himself signalled the passage from Carroll's book on the problem of verbal invention and, therefore, yet again the open problem of the origin of language. "The question is," says Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean so many different things." "The question is which is to be master—that's all!," says Humpty Dumpty.

From insanity to problems of language, to problems of meaning: a trajectory that was familiar enough. Only here transition comes about through the mediation of writing, writing in *Through the Looking-Glass*, but *before* the latter, and before the work of translation, through Artaud's own writing, Artaud who was "only a *writer*."

But *L'arve et l'aume* is also writing in which a practice exercised through the years surfaces painfully and asserts itself angrily, as Artaud works towards the theatre of cruelty. This leads to Artaud's *antigrammaticality*, against the French language, against the pre-scribed text, against Lewis Carroll himself, against the order of discourse. What is at stake here, in this work

of translation, as in the theatre of cruelty, is "existence" and "flesh," the body, life.

Word play in Carroll, including his use of portmanteau words which Artaud initially described as being characterized by stupefying topicality, do not go beyond a caricature of equal exchange between signified and signifier without denouncing the pretence, hypocrisy, sacrifice, removal and repression upon which such exchange logic is based, without undermining social structures, productive mechanisms, ideological assumptions served by exchange. Ultimately, Carroll's writing was *representative* of the superfluity of being (cf. Deleuze, 1993). Carroll peeps into the looking glass, but knows how to keep away from the double he glimpses, the shadow. An infinity of psychical trickeries, with no passion. Affected language. The revolt evoked by Carroll's works is sedated by Carroll himself. The battle of the deep, its monsters, the mix-up of bodies, the turmoil, the subversion of order, encounter of the bottommost with the elevated, of food with excrement, words that are eaten, *Alice's underground adventures* (the original title of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*), all this is supplanted and cancelled, as observed by Deleuze, by a play of surfaces: rather than collapse, lateral sliding movements. As says Deleuze, the animals of the deep become paper figures without consistency. Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass* invests the surface with a mirror and starts a game of chess. Not that the surface has less nonsense than the deep, but it's not the same kind of nonsense. Pure events without contaminations shine above mixed up bodies, above their actions and intricate passions. Like vapours from the earth they release something incorporeal on the surface, a pure expression from the deep: not the sword, but the strike of a sword; a strike without a sword like a smile without a cat (Deleuze, 1993, pp. 37-38).

Artaud moves across the text by Lewis Carroll (to read is "read *across*") in what becomes an *antigrammatical enterprise* against Carroll himself. Revolt against the self and against the ordinary conditions of self betrayed by Carroll's text, in the dual sense of "betray"—that is, loss ("through to loss of the whole body") and revelation in spite of oneself—, becomes the aim of the reading-translating-writing text by Artaud (cf. letter to H.

Parisot of 20th and 22nd September, 1945, in Artaud, 1989). Artaud fails to translate just one fragment in the poem "Jabberwocky," in the chapter entitled *Humpty Dumpty*. As he explains in his second letter cited to Parisot, Artaud did not love this poem which suffered from affected infantilism. Jabberwocky is the work of a coward who never wished to suffer his work before writing it. I love poetry by the famished, the diseased, the outcasts, the intoxicated, says Artaud: François Villon, Charles Baudelaire, Edgar Poe, Gérard de Nerval, and the poetry of those tortured by language, who are at a loss in their writings, and not the poetry of those who pretend they are lost so as to make a better show of their consciousness and science of both loss and writing.

All the same Jabberwocky regards him, reflects him like a faded image. In fact, it is Artaud's text that is represented. His text, the translating text is the double with respect to which Carroll's is a bad imitation, a vulgar reproduction. This puts Artaud in a position to claim that Jabberwocky is nothing more than the result of plagiarism, the edulcorated copy, spineless and ineffectual, of a work written by himself (cf. Artaud's letter to H. Parisot of 20th and 22nd September, 1945). And he wished to add a post-scriptum for publication, in which he stated that on reading Lewis Carroll's poem on fish, being, obedience, the sea and God, on the revelation of a blinding truth, his sensation was that it was he who had conceived and written that poem in past centuries only to find his own work in the hands of Lewis Carroll (letter to M. Barbezat of 23rd March, 1947, now in the preface to *L'arve et l'aume*, 1989). Ultimately, Carroll's text was considered to be no more than a *transcription*, while the translation is the creative *writing*.

In translating Carroll's text Artaud produces a text with respect to which Carroll's text sounds false and incomplete. The pre-scribed text had been crossed and the reading-translation was not its repetition but a betrayal, an antigrammatical enterprise against it, an act of cruelty. For this reason and without contradicting himself with respect to his initial statement, Artaud claims that if his poem is compared to Carroll's text in English it will be obvious that it belongs to him, Artaud, and is not at all the French version of a text in English (cf. *ibid.*).

Critique of representation, of the imitative and reproductive relation, is at once critique of transcription and recovery of writing, of *ante litteram* writing, of human life itself, of the body as writing.

Critique of transmitted discourse, of the pre-scribed text, of memory, tradition, historical-natural language, of the economy of truth, of responsibility with alibis which makes for a good conscience. The word and its annotation, phonetic writing, cease to be dictated, citation, re-citation and order. The word withdraws from the generality of the concept and from repetition, identification, reiteration, levelling onto signality, as such completely subjugated to a process of codification and decodification. To recover the word as writing is to exalt the unrepeatable part of the utterance, that part which cannot be reconducted to the constant elements of a historical-natural language. The utterance rediscovers its uniqueness, unrepeatability, responsivity, responsibility without escape, without alibis: "qu'une expression ne vaut pas deux fois, ne vit pas deux fois; que toute parole prononcée, qu'une forme employée est morte et n'agit qu'au moment où elle est prononcée ne sert plus et n'invite qu'à en rechercher une autre" (Artaud, 1964 [1938], p. 117). Writing as transcription is cancellation of the body, of the vital gesture, of the utterance, which can occur but once.

The scene of verbal and nonverbal writing as the scene of writing and not transcription is a space without an *archè*, it is *anarchic*, in other words, it is not reproduced on the basis of another space, an alibi, it is a totally exposed space, full of risks. And its time is not the time of phonic linearity, but diachrony in which recovery of presence in representation, in repetition, is impossible. The word and the written sign become gestures by writing freed from transcription, projected beyond representation, beyond the language of words and beyond the mnemotechnic function of annotation, of phonetic writing. The word rediscovers its materiality, its resistance, its consistency as a signifier which is not subservient to a signified, which is not transparent or subordinate to discourse intention. The word and gesture become body once again and do not dissolve in the direction of sense. They meet in the *glossolalia* that runs through Artaud's poetry. Return

to the threshold where the word is no longer a cry, but nor is it rarefied in the concept, in meaning: this explains Artaud's interest in the problem of the origin of verbal language and of historical-natural languages, expressed in his return to writing beginning from madness. The word maintains its alterity, its singularity, its difference, with respect to any return to a scene different from the one it consists of, a scene that must guarantee its identity and recognizability, that must act as an alibi.

L'arve et l'aume: on the one hand, matter (purport) as understood by Louis Hjelmslev, on the other, human "language" understood as a modelling device, as writing, producing interpreteds and interpretants on the plane of content and expression. Similarly to Hamlet's cloud which changes aspect from one moment to the next, sign work invests matter, as understood by Hjelmslev, with different forms, and it is on matter thus understood that every historical-natural language traces its specific subdivisions; matter is physical, acoustic in the case of historical-natural languages, relatively to expression form, but it is also the amorphous "mass of thought," relatively to content form. In the same way, as regards linguistic work deposited in the different historical-natural languages, like sand which can be put into different forms, like a cloud which can take different shapes, matter may be formed or restructured differently in different languages (cf. Hjelmslev, 1961, §13, "Expression and Content"). In spite of its alterity with respect to a given configuration, in spite of other possibilities, matter always gives itself as *signified*, it *obeys* a form and presents itself as matter. "Obey," a central verb in *L'arve et l'aume*.

The stiffening, the ossification of words, that codify, block and paralyze thought, this is but one aspect of the general sclerotization of human signs which must restore the forgotten resources of language understood as an infinite modelling process, as writing. The consequence of such sclerosis, of such hardening and petrification, says Artaud in *Le Théâtre et son Double,* is that culture on a whole prevaricates over life, dictating law to life instead of being a means to understanding and practicing life: "Quand nous prononçons le mot de vie," specifies Artaud, "faut-il entendre qu'il ne s'agit pas de la vie reconnue par le dehors des

faits, mais de cette sorte de fragile et remuant foyer auquel ne touchent pas les formes" (Artaud, 1964 [1938], p. 19). On the one hand, life thus understood, *arbre*; "matrix matter" (Carlo Pasi in Carroll, 1993, p. 78), larva, embryon, egg; on the other, forms susceptible to petrification, *aume*, the *being* that human life has become.

To a petrified culture that perseveres in self-reproduction, there corresponds a petrified conception of theatre, theatre of representation, petrified theatre. But theatre has its *shadow*, that forms its *double*: "Mais le vrai théâtre parce qu'il bouge et parce qu'il se sert d'instruments vivants, continue à agiter des ombres où n'a cessé de trébucher la vie" (Artaud, 1964 [1938], p. 18). The withering of verbal and nonverbal language, its limitation, has led to the loss of the relation to the shadow, to life, to the body. Official language must be broken in order to reach life, the human being's habitual limits must be refused, the boundaries of so-called reality must be infinitely broadened, beginning from the reconstruction of theatre, the specialized place of representation. This requires preparation, calculation. We cannot be content with being "simples organes d'enregistrement" (*ibid*., p. 133).

Being is repetition, victory over living, over the alterity of the body. Being is life which perseveres in being, in self-repetition, on the level of words as well, in reconfirming itself, withdraws from life; *conatus essendi*, which economizes on itself, does not expose itself, does not want risks, preserves itself. Being is the present which by restraining itself, keeping itself aside, in reserve, for identity ends up losing itself. Death caused by obstination of presence, death as repetition. As says Derrida, to refuse death as repetition is to assert death as expenditure, waste, present and without release. In this sense the theatre of cruelty could be considered as the art of difference and of expenditure without economizing, without reserve, without release and without history. Plato criticizes writing as body, Artaud as cancellation of body, of live gesture which only ever takes place but once (cf. Derrida, Preface to Artaud, *Le Théâtre et son Double*, in Artaud, 1961, pp. xxx-xxxi).

In Artaud's translation of *Humpty Dumpty*, the translating text supersedes the text claimed to be the "original" and reunites

with the matrix matter, the *arve,* through an act of cruelty—which had already been calculated and practiced for some time on the scene of the theatre of cruelty, even before having encountered this text by Carroll,—against the text, against the English language, which Artaud knows well, and against the French language. The result is a metamorphosis-rebirth in a text that claims to be more original that the original text, because it carries itself over to and exposes itself to its very own origin more than the original had ever risked doing.

This gives rise to a sensation of maximum proximity among the two texts, which Artaud signals in his post-scriptum, but also of their maximum distancing and difference. "Car on ne se rencontre pas avec un autre," like Lewis Carroll in his poem "Jabberwocky" in *Humpty Dumpty*, "sur des points comme : être et obéir ou vivre et exister. Mes cahiers écrits à Rodez pendant mes trois ans d'internement, et montrés à tout le monde, écrits dans une ignorance complète de Lewis Carroll que je n'avais jamais lu, sont pleins d'exclamations, d'interjections, d'abois, de cris, sur l'antinomie entre vivre et être, agir et penser, matière et âme, corps et esprit" (Artaud, 1989, pp. 7-8).

5. Life, Survival and Translation

Translatability concerns the relation between *text* and *language*, and the more a text has crossed a historical-natural language in the direction of what Benjamin calls "pure language" (Benjamin, 1997 [1923], p. 162) (this is the *crossing over* which makes for a literary text), not only the more is it translatable, but the more it *calls for* translation (*ibid.*, p. 152). Translation is called for: "if translation is a mode, then translatability must be essential to certain works" (*ibid.*, p. 153).

Thanks to its relation with "pure language" (*ibid.*, p. 162) not only is the text translatable, but it is destined to be translated, and "It is clear that a translation, no matter how good," says Benjamin, "cannot have any significance for the original. Nevertheless, it stands in the closest connection with the original by virtue of the latter's translatability" (*ibid.*, p. 153).

Benjamin considers this relation as a "vital connection," (*ibid.*) so much more intimate precisely because, as in vital manifestations, translation does not have any significance for the original. The artwork survives in translation, just as a life form survives in its descendents, but neither in one case nor in the other does this concern individual life.

In the case of artworks, translation does not add anything to their life, but rather constitutes their "survival" (*ibid.*). Works of art have a life, "to which translation bears the highest witness" (*ibid.*, p. 158). Benjamin makes a point of specifying that the idea of *life* and of *survival* of artworks "should be considered with completely unmetaphorical objectivity" (*ibid.*, p. 153).

A very close relation is established between the "text" and "life." This connection is confirmed by the relation identified in a "global semiotic perspective" (Sebeok) between *semiosi*s and *life*.

Both in the case of the translated text and of life that survives in succeeding generations, relations of translation connect "generator" with "engendered," where "translation is a mode" (*ibid.*, p. 152), relations between *interpreted* and *interpretant*, where a relation of *absolute alterity* connects the "original" with the "translation": that which is engendered is another life, which flourishes in another time and does not belong to the life but to the "afterlife" (*ibid.*, p. 153) of the original.

No doubt something persists in the connection between the original and its translation, and between the living and the engendered, where a relation of resemblance intervenes; but such persistence foresees separation, discretion, "the dead time" (Levinas, 1961); resemblance foresees diversity, irreducible alterity.

Translation depends (in the dual sense of "being made possible" and of "being caused") on affinity among historical-natural languages, determined by their shared participation in "pure language." Writes Benjamin:

> If the kinship of languages manifests itself in translation, it does so otherwise than through the vague similarity of original

> and copy. For it is clear that kinship does not necessarily involve similarity. In this context the notion of kinship is in accord with its narrower usage, to the extent that in both cases it cannot be adequately defined by similarity of origin, although the concept of origin remains indispensable in defining the narrower usage. —Wherein can the kinship of two languages be sought, apart from a historical kinship? No more in the similarity of literary texts than in the similarity of their words. All suprahistorical kinship of languages consists rather in the fact that in each of them as a whole, one and the same thing is intended; this cannot be attained by any one of them alone, however, but only by the totality of their mutually complementary intentions: pure language. (1997 [1923], p. 156)

In our interpretation "pure language" corresponds to "common speech" or "linguistic work," as understood by Rossi-Landi (1998 and 1991), or, if we pass from the verbal to the semiotic, to "language," as understood by Sebeok.

Shifting from historical-natural language to "pure language" by opening and dialogizing historical-natural languages, so that one language is viewed with the eyes of another (Bakhtin), translation is more than mere communication, it "is more than a message" (Benjamin, 1997 [1923], p. 158); this is obvious in the translation of literary works where communication is inessential.

Though we have shifted Benjamin's discourse on translation in other directions with respect to his own, and though we have translated him into our own words and interpreted him in the light of other languages and other texts, we may conclude our considerations with his own words which now resound differently in this new context:

> Just as fragments of a vessel, in order to be fitted together, must correspond to each other in the tiniest details but need not resemble each other, so translation, instead of making itself resemble the meaning of the original, must lovingly, and in detail, fashion in its own language a counterpart to the original's mode of intention, in order to make both of them recognizable as fragments of a vessel, as fragments of a greater language. For that very reason translation must in large measure turn its

> attention away from trying to communicate something, away from meaning; the original is essential to translation only insofar as it has already relieved the translator and his work of the burden and organization of what is communicated. (*Ibid.*, p. 161)
>
> (…) True translation is transparent, it does not obscure the original, does not stand in its light, but rather allows pure language, as if strengthened by its own medium, to shine even more fully on the original. (p. 162)
>
> (…) To set free in his own language the pure language spellbound in the foreign language, to liberate the language imprisoned in the work by rewriting it, is the translator's task. (p. 163)

Translation does not *represent* the original text, but rather *portrays* it, in other words, the effect of a translation is to *re-veil* and not to *un-veil* the original which gives itself as *icon* and not *idola* (cf. Luciano Ponzio, 2000), deferring from the *said* to *saying*, from the *sayable* to the *unsayable*. "The interlinear version of the holy scriptures is the prototype or ideal of all translation" (*ibid.*, p. 165).

Translation from Italian by Susan Petrilli

University of Bari

References

ARTAUD, Antonin (1961). *Il teatro e il suo doppio*. Ed. by G. Morisco and G. Neri, pref. by J. Derrida. Turin, Einaudi.

— (1964 [1938]). *Le théâtre et son Double*, suivi de *Le théâtre de Séraphin*. Paris, Gallimard.

— (1989). *L'arve et l'aume, suivi de 24 lettres à Marc Baberzat*. Paris, L'Arbalète.

BAKHTIN, Mikhail (1993 [1922]). *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*. Ed. by M. Holquist & V. Liapunov (trans.). Austin, University of Texas Press, 1993.

— (1997 [1929]). *Problemi dell'opera di Dostoevskij.* It. trans. by M. De Michiel and A. Ponzio. Bari, Edizioni dal Sud, 1997.

— (1952-53). "The Problem of Speech Genres." In Bakhtin 1979. Eng. trans. 1986, pp. 60-102.

— (1979). *Estetika slovesnogo tvorcestva* (Aesthetics of verbal art). Moscow, Iskusstvo. It. trans. C. Janovic. *L'autore e l'eroe. Teoria letteraria e scienze umane*, 1988, Turin, Einaudi.

— (1986). *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Ed. C. Emerson and M. Holquist. Austin, University of Texas Press.

— (2003). *Linguaggio e scrittura* (1926-1930). Intro. A. Ponzio, It. trans. L. Ponzio. Rome, Meltemi.

BAKHTIN, Mikhaïl Mikhaïlovitch, Ivan Ivanovič KANAEV, Pavel Nikolaevič MEDVEDEV and Valentin Nikolaevič VOLOSINOV (1995). *Bachtin e le sue maschere. Il percorso bachtiniano fino alla pubblicazione dell'opera su Dostoevskij (1919-29)*. Ed. by A. Ponzio, P. Jachia and M. De Michiel. Bari, Dedalo.

BARTHES, Roland (1971). "Le troisième sens." In Barthes, *L'obvie et l'obtus. Essais critiques III*. Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1982.

— (1978). *Leçons*. Paris, Éditions du Seuil.

— (1982). *L'obvie et l'obtus. Essais critiques III*. Paris, Éditions du Seuil.

— (1984). *Le bruissement de la langue. Essais critiques IV*. It. trans. B. Bellotto. *Il brusio della lingua*. Turin, Einaudi, 1998.

BENJAMIN, Walter (1955). *Schriften*. Frankfurt, Surkhamp Verlag. It. trans. *Angelus Novus* (1962) by R. Solmi. Turin, Einaudi.

— (1963). *Ursprung des deutschem Trauerspiels*. Frankfurt, Surkhamp Verlag. Eng. trans. J. Osborne, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, Verso, London, 1998.

— (1997 [1923]). "The Translator's Task." Trans. Steven Rendall. *TTR*, X, 2, pp. 151-165.

BLANCHOT, Maurice (1982 [1949]). "La letteratura e il diritto alla morte." It. trans. in *La follia del giorno.* Milan, Elitropia, 1982.

— (1955). *L'espace littéraire*. Paris, Gallimard.

— (1969). *L'entretien infini*. Paris, Gallimard.

CALVINO, Italo (1988). *Lezioni americane*. Milan, Garzanti.

CARROLL, Lewis (1982). *The Complete Illustrated Works of Lewis Carroll.* London, Chancellor Press.

— (1992). *Alice in Wonderland*. Ed. by D. J. Gray. London, W.W. Norton & Co.

— (1993 [1947]). *Humpy Dumpty*. French trans. by A. Artaud, It. trans. by G. Almansi and G. Pozzo, ed. by C. Pasi. Turin, Einaudi.

DELEUZE, Gilles (1993). *Critica e clinica*. It. trans. by A. Panaro. Milan, Cortina.

ECO, Umberto (1962). *Opera aperta*. Milan, Bompiani. Partial Eng. trans. A. Cancogni. *The Open Work*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1989.

— (1979). *Lector in fabula*. Milan, Bompiani. Eng. trans. *The Role of the Reader: Exploration in the Semiotics of Texts*. Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 1979.

— (1990). *I limiti dell'interpretazione*. Milan, Bompiani. Eng. trans. *The Limits of Interpretation*. Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 1990.

HJELMSLEV, Louis (1961). *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language*. Ed. by F. J. Whitfield. Wisconsin, The Regents of The University of Wisconsin. It. trans. G. C. Lepschy *I fondamenti della teoria del linguaggio*. Einaudi, Turin, 1968.

JAKOBSON, Roman (1963). *Essais de linguistique générale*. Paris, Minuit.

KRISTEVA, Julia (1982 [1969]). *Le langage, cet inconnu*. Paris, Seuil. It. ed. by A. Ponzio, with an interview by A. Ponzio with J. Kristeva. *Il linguaggio, questo sconosciuto*. Bari, Adriatica, 1992.

LÉVINAS, Emmanuel (1961). *Totalité et infini*. The Hague, Nijhoff. It. trans. Adriano Dell'Asta, *Totalità e infinito*. Intro. by S. Petrosino. Milan, Jaca Book, 1990.

— (1972). *Su Blanchot.* It. trans. by A. Ponzio. Bari, Palomar.

PEIRCE, Charles Sanders (1931-58). *Collected Papers.* Vols. 1-8. Cambridge (Mass.), Belknap University Press of Harvard University Press.

— (1980). *Semiotica: i fondamenti della semiotica cognitiva.* Ed. by M. A. Bonfantini. Turin, Einaudi.

PETRILLI, Susan (2001 [1998]). *Teoria dei segni e del linguaggio*. Bari, Graphis.

— (1995). *Materia segnica e interpretazione*. Lecce, Milella.

— (1996). *Che cosa significa significare?* Bari, Edizioni dal Sud.

— (1998a). *Teoria dei segni e del linguaggio*. Bari, Graphis, 2001, 2nd edition.

— (1998b). *Su Victoria Welby. Significs e filosofia del linguaggio*. Naples, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane.

— (ed.) (1999-2000). *La traduzione*. Athanor, 2. Rome, Meltemi.

— (ed.) (2000). *Tra segni*. Athanor, 3. Rome, Meltemi.

— (ed.) (2001). *Lo stesso altro*. Athanor, 4. Rome, Meltemi.

— (ed.) (2003a). *Linguaggi*. Bari, Giuseppe Laterza.

— (ed.) (2003b). *Translation Translation*. Rodopi, Amsterdam.

— (ed.) (2003-04). *Lavoro immateriale*. Athanor, 7, Meltemi, Rome.

PETRILLI, Susan and Augusto PONZIO (1999). *Fuori campo. I segni del corpo tra rappresentazione ed eccedenza*. Milan, Mimesis.

— (2004). *Semiotics Unbounded*. Toronto, Toronto University Press.

PONZIO, Augusto (1992). *Tra semiotica e letteratura. Introduzione a Michail Bachtin*. Milan, Bompiani.

— (1994a). *Scrittura, dialogo, alterità. Tra Bachtin e Lévinas*. Florence, La Nuova Italia.

— (1994b). *Fondamenti di filosofia del linguaggio* (in collab. with P. Calefato and S. Petrilli). Rome-Bari, Laterza.

— (1997a). *La rivoluzione bachtiniana. Il pensiero di Bachtin e l'ideologia contemporanea*. Bari, Levante Editori.

— (1997b). *Che cos' è la letteratura?* Lecce, Milella.

— (1997c). *Metodologia della formazione linguistica.* Rome-Bari, Laterza.

— (1997d). *Elogio dell'infunzionale. Critica dell'ideologia della produttività*. Rome Castelvecchi. New enlarged ed. Mimesis, Milan, 2004.

— (1998). *La coda dell'occhio. Letture del linguaggio letterario*. Bari, Graphis.

— (2001). *Enunciazione e testo letterario nell'insegnamento dell'italiano come LS*. Perugia, Guerra.

— (2002). *Il linguaggio e le lingue. Introduzione alla linguistica generale*. Bari, Graphis.

— (2003). *Tra semiotica e letteratura. Introduzione a Michail Bachtin*. Milan, Bompiani.

— (2004a). *Semiotica e dialettica*. Bari, Edizioni dal Sud.

— (2004b). *Leggere traducendo*. Fasano (Brindisi), Schena.

— (2004c). *Linguistica generale, scrittura letteraria e traduzione*. Perugia, Guerra.

— (2004d). *Ipertesto e traduzione letteraria*. Rimini, Guaraldi.

— (2006a). *The Dialogic Nature of Sign*. Ottawa, Legas.

— (2006b). *La cifrematica e l'ascolto*. Bari, Graphis.

PONZIO, Augusto and Susan PETRILLI (1993). "Exchange in Alice's World." In A. Ponzio, *Signs Dialogue and Ideology*. Ed. by S. Petrilli, pp. 15-20. Amsterdam, John Benjamins.

— (2000). *Il sentire della comunicazione globale*. Rome, Meltemi.

PONZIO, Luciano (2000). *Icona e raffigurazione. Bachtin, Malevic, Chagall*. Bari, Adriatica.

PRETE, Antonio (1994). *L'albatros di Baudelaire*. Parma, Pratiche Editrice.

— (1996). *L'ospitalità della lingua*. Lecce, Manni.

ROSSI-LANDI, Ferruccio (1975). *Linguistics and Economics*. The Hague, Mouton.

— (1985). *Metodica filosofica e scienza dei segni*. Milan, Bompiani.

— (1992b). *Between Signs and Non-signs*. Ed. by S. Petrilli. Benjamins, Amsterdam.

— (1994 [1972]). *Semiotica e ideologia.* Ed. by A. Ponzio. Milan, Bompiani.

— (1998 [1961]). *Significato, comunicazione e parlare comune*. Ed. by A. Ponzio. Venice, Marsilio.

— (2006 [1968]). *Il linguaggio come lavoro e come mercato*. Ed. by A. Ponzio. Milan, Bompiani.

SEBEOK, Thomas A. (1981). *The Play of Musement*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

— (1986). *I Think I Am a Verb*. New York/London, Plenum Press.

— (1991). *A Sign Is Just a Sign*. Bloomington-Indianapolis, Indiana University Press.

STAROBINSKI, Jean (1971). *Les mots sous mots. Les anagrammes de Ferdinand de Saussure*. It. trans. *Le parole sotto le parole. Gli anagrammi di Ferdinand de Saussure*. Genoa, Il Melangolo.

VOLOSINOV, Valentin, N. (1980 [1926-1930]). *Il linguaggio e pratica sociale*, scritti 1926-1930. It. trans. R. Bruzzese and N. Marcialis, ed. by A. Ponzio. Bari, Dedalo.

— (1973 [1929]). *Marksizm i filosofija jazyca*. Leningrad, Eng. trans. L. Matejka and I.R. Titunik. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* . Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard University Press.

ABSTRACT: Translation and the Literary Text — In the present paper we shall focus on literary translation, on the question of the translation of "complex" or "secondary" texts, but with the intention of making a contribution to the problem of translating non-literary, "simple," "primary" texts as well. In other words, we shall examine the problem of text translation from a semiotic perspective. In fact, this study founds translation theory in sign theory developing a semiotic-linguistic approach to the problem of translation in the direction of so-called interpretation semiotics which also implies the semiotics of significance. Translation concerns both simple and complex texts, which correspond respectively to Mikhail Bakhtin's primary and secondary texts. Simple texts concern non literary discourse genres whilst complex texts the literary genres, where the former are better understood in the light of the latter, and not vice versa. This paper also focuses on the concept of the literary text as a hypertext maintaining that the hypertext is a methodics for translative practice. The relation between the *text* and *language* understood as a modeling device is also important for an adequate theory of translation and sheds light on the question of translatability. Another central issue in this study is the relation between translation and intertextuality.

RÉSUMÉ : La traduction et le texte littéraire — Le présent article s'intéresse à la traduction littéraire et à la traduction des textes complexes ou secondaires, et se penche également sur les problèmes liés à la traduction des textes non littéraires, simples, ou primaires. Nous aborderons donc cette problématique sous un angle sémiotique. Cette étude, en plus de révéler l'importance de la théorie de la traduction dans la théorie du signe, développe une approche sémiotique et linguistique au problème de traduction en matière d'interprétation sémiotique, laquelle comprend la sémiotique de la signifiance. La traduction s'intéresse aux textes simples et complexes, lesquels correspondent respectivement aux textes primaires et secondaires proposés par Mikhaïl Bakhtine. Les textes simples concernent le genre non littéraire, tandis que les textes complexes sont associés au genre littéraire, qui comporte plus de difficultés que le genre précédent. Par ailleurs, cet article étudie le concept du texte littéraire en tant qu'hypertexte et soutient que ce dernier est une méthode pour la pratique traduisante. La relation entre le *texte* et la *langue,* comprise en tant qu'agent de

modélisation, est importante pour forger une théorie adéquate de la traduction. Cette relation nous éclaire également quant à la question de la traduisibilité. La relation entre la traduction et l'intertextualité est une autre problématique cruciale dont traite le présent article.

Keywords: discourse genre, hypertextuality, intertextuality, listening, otherness.

Mots-clés : analyse de discours, hypertextualité, intertextualité, écoute, altérité.

Augusto Ponzio
Dipartimento di Pratiche linguistiche e analisi di testi
Università di Bari, Facoltà di Lingue e Letterature Straniere
Via Garruba 6, Bari 70100, Italia
augustoponzio@libero.it