BACK TO BASICS:
TRANSFER AS A METAPHORICAL PROCESS

METAFORİK BİR SÜREÇ OLARAK ÇEVİRİ

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Abstract

This paper is a reflection about written translation's transfer sub-competence as a two-folded process: a first moment of abstraction while reading the source text and a second of concretion writing the target text. These two mechanisms correlate directly with the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axis of language as exposed by Saussure and Jakobson. If we consider them as the two basic kinds of synecdoches, generalizing and particularizing, the result would be that transfer between a pair of languages functions exactly as metaphors do, according to the neo-rhetoric theories of the Group µ of Liège. In our line of reasoning, translation is considered mainly from the point of view of a linguistic and, therefore, mental process. However, translation competence is not exactly a linguistic competence and its nature seems to be completely different. Obviously, it works with pairs of languages instead of a single one, but it can still be related to some processes observed by Jakobson in aphasic patients. These linguistic mechanisms clearly connected with translation can be defined in terms of rhetoric figures, especially tropes. We add an example of Turkish-Spanish translation analyzing the problems presented by the differences of syntactic structures in both languages.

Keywords*: Transfer, Translational competence, Tropes, Paradigmatic axis, Syntagmatic axis.*

Özet

Bu makale, yazılı çeviride aktarımın bir alt edinç olarak nasıl ikili bir süreç gibi işlediğine dair kavramsal bir tartışma içermektedir. Bu süreçlerden ilki, kaynak metnin okunması sürecindeki soyutlama, ikincisi ise erek metnin yazılması esnasındaki somutlaştırmadır. Bu iki mekanizma Saussure ve Jakobson tarafından ortaya konduğu biçimiyle dilin dikey (dizisel) ve yatay (dizimsel) eksenleri ile ilintilidir. Bu ikili süreci, kapsamlayışın iki temel türü —genelleştirici ve özelleştirici— ile ilişkilendirirsek sonuç, iki dil arasındaki aktarımın, aynen neo-retorik Liège µ Grubu'nun vurguladığı gibi eğretileme gibi gerçekleştiği olacaktır. Savımıza göre, çeviri dilsel ve bu nedenle de zihinsel bir süreçtir. Çeviri sadece dilsel bir yeti değildir görüşü hakim olsa da, dilsel yetiden farklı bir doğaya sahip de görünse —diğer farklılıkların yanında tek bir dille değil iki dille işlev görmektedir— Jakobson tarafından afazi hastalarında gözlemlenmiş dilsel süreçlerle ilişkilendirilmesi olanaklıdır. Bu ilişkilendirmeyi de kullanarak çeviriyle açıkça ilişkili bu dilsel mekanizmalar retorik figürler, özellikle de değişmeceler olarak tanımlanabilir ve çeviri sürecini aktarım alt edinci bağlamında tanımlarken bu retorik figürlerden yararlanılması çevirinin dilsel doğasına vurgunun anlaşılmasını daha da kolaylaştırabilir. Ayrıca, Türkçe ve İspanyolca'da sözdizimsel yapıların farklılıklarıyla ilgili sorunsalların incelendiği bir çeviri örneği verilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Aktarım, Çeviri yetisi, Eğretileme, Kapsamlayış, Dikey-yatay eksen.*

Μεταφορὰ δέ ἐστιν ὀνόματος ἀλλοτρίου ἐπιφορὰ

(«Metaphor —transfer— is the application of an alien noun by transference»)

Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1457b

1.1 Introduction

In an article published in the Spanish newspaper *El País* in 2014[1], the writer and professor Rafael Argullol criticized the gradual abandonment of the book as a basic way of propagation of knowledge in benefit of highly specialized and not much read papers. An excessive bureaucratization at the university and the obsession to get the maximum number of credits in the minimum time, adds to more traditional evils of the institution, like endogamy. Not only professors have their protégés and establish all kind of networks to help them, but also at the same time, they create hermetic fields almost inaccessible to whoever lacks a similar specialization jargon.

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[1] «La cultura enclaustrada», 5de abril de 2014.

The urge of writing, added to the obligation to present a solid theoretical foundation reflected in an abundant bibliography, causes articles and papers, designed to meet a series of material criteria (abstract, keywords, footnotes and bibliography), to offer manuals or anthologies as sources of the discipline, instead of the original texts of the theories that they are supposed to apply to the material under study. Theories obtained from tertiary sources are used for the analysis of a primary source. This can be especially troublesome when those texts are translations into languages, usually English, in which there are no equivalents for the terms of the original language. To mention a few examples, in English translations is usually kept in French the Saussurean dichotomy «language / speech» («langue / parole»), in part solving the problem. However, it is more difficult to find an optimal solution in English to the difference established by G. Genette between story, «récit» and narration since there is not a word for «récit», as we do in Spanish, for instance («historia/ relato/ narración»).

This is only a consequence of the lack of a desirable thinking on classical theories, which are often disdained with critical opinions obtained from anthologies and without direct mention to the original texts. A more serious matter is when a critical opinion is based on a second one. The researcher might rise objections to the possible application of the theory A' to a text B without seeing it necessary to go to the original system A. In this case, we would be virtually conducting a study using tools with missing key pieces or even without paying attention to the object of study itself. In the field of philology, and often in translation studies, usually happens what Lefevere said about comparative literature:

> Incomprehensible as it may seem to the commonsensical mind, comparatists long preferred to write books in language A about the use of metaphors, say, in books written in languages B and C, without being in the least concerned whether those books were available in language A; they would certainly not have thought of making them available. (1995, p. 5)

All of this is motivated by the immediate need to get the much-desired points. Yet, in theory, institutions like the ANECA in Spain value works fruit of «reflection»[2]. This kind of reflection, even if it has to be documented, is often absent when it comes to basic texts of the discipline, or disciplines if we carry out multidisciplinary works, something that should be common in the field of humanities. This is another consequence of the haste imposed by the

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[2] In the instructions for philosophy, philology and linguistics they said, at least in 2013, that to achieve a positive evaluation it was necessary that the works presented

current system. There are so many publications that it is virtually impossible to read all of them, so we are obliged to read the most directly related to our very limited field, and not even that. Therefore, we have finished not only reaching a tremendous specialization, but also limiting perspectives that should be fundamental to offer broad visions.

1.2 Translation as a linguistic operation

Therefore, from time to time it is convenient to go back to the basics, if only to think a little about the profession or branch of knowledge we are working in, or in the case of academics dedicated to translation studies, both at the same time. It is always useful to go back to Descartes, who in the *Discourse on Method* (1637) proposed introspection as the best starting point for this type of non-experimental research:

> But after I had been occupied several years in thus studying the book of the world, and in essaying to gather some experience, I at length resolved to make myself an object of study, and to employ all the powers of my mind in choosing the paths I ought to follow, an undertaking which was accompanied with greater success than it would have been had I never quitted my country or my books. (*Discourse on Method*, Part 1, trans. by John Veitch, 1850)

This introspection effort can bring into light the motivation of the linguistic intuitions of the native speaker whose value has been defended by Chomsky from the beginning and that are so necessary for the translator's work as long as we pretend to go a little beyond "because it is usually said this way" or "because the Royal Academy of the Language says so".

If we follow this Cartesian-Chomskyan procedure and we use our intuition as (a) native speakers, and (b) translators to our native tongue, we can conclude that translation is, above all, an operation of a linguistic nature and, despite other variants that may exist, is usually carried out between a pair of languages: the original and our own. If we go further in this introspection, intuition also suggests that translation is very closely related to two other processes, reading and writing, at least but not only in written translation, more specifically literary translation. It is obvious that to translate we first read the text in the original language and then we write in the target language, our own. Here we are trying to avoid using the pronoun "it" on purpose ("we write *it*") to leave

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were "result of research or documented reflection". It can be seen a clear difference between "research", like in experimental sciences, and the more traditional way of working in humanities: "documented reflection".

aside the debate about whether the text is inherently the same or if it becomes a different thing on being transferred to another language.

In chapters V and VI of the second part of his *Course in General Linguistics*, Saussure distinguishes between two types of relationships that hold together the elements of the language system and that "correspond to two forms of our mental activity, both [orders] indispensable to the life of language" (p. 123). The first type of relations —Saussure called them syntagmatic— are stablished among the components of the utterance, due to the linear nature of the sign. In other words, the relationships the elements have with each other at all levels of the spoken chain, from phonemes to the various components of a complex text. On the other hand, each one of the components of the utterance can awaken a series of associations with other elements related to it. In the statement "The child reads", "child" is linked to the verb and hence we say "reads" in the third person of the verb, but is also associated with other possible words or groups of words that might appear in its place: "John", "Peter" or any name; "he", "this one" or another pronoun; "the girl", "the man" or any other being able to read, even metaphorically. It is what Saussure called "associative relations" and Hjelmslev renamed "paradigmatic relations". Saussure also says that syntagmatic relations are *in praesentia*, i.e. they exist among elements actually present in the spoken chain, while the paradigmatic are *in absentia* because they only exist "in a potential mnemonic series" (p. 123).

Reading is an activity that progresses especially in the syntagmatic axis. We go on reading the pages one after another and what appears in the text —the events, if it is a narrative work— conditions what follows. Moreover, the principle of economy of language implies that the writer cannot tell us everything, so what we read or hear has to be significant or at least we, as readers, will consider it as such. This is the justification for the famous phrase attributed to Chekhov whereby if at the beginning of a work a nail appears, someone will hang from it (there is another version with a pistol). As we advance in reading, we are opening and closing doors and possibilities that lead us to predict what may happen next. We will be right or not in our guesses, but will never admit surprises at the price of coherence. However, although much has been said about the active role of the reader, we are never allowed to choose alternative paths, and even narrative genres that do offer the possibility —as some video games, for example— present a very limited number of them. In short, reading is an activity that moves itself in time through the syntagmatic level, but does not allow movement in the paradigmatic. Even if we let go our imagination making use of the associations that the text awakens in us, we have to stop reading to do it.

In writing, however, it is crucial the paradigmatic axis, that axis *in absentia* by which components of the text —or utterance— are related to other elements that could occupy their place. When we write, we advance by the syntagmatic axis in accordance with the grammatical rules of the language, but also we are constantly weighing alternatives before deciding on any of them. In fact, what are doubts and corrections but a movement through the paradigmatic axis? In this sense, writing is accurately active and creative since it involves a capacity of decision on the result. As much as the reader's participation is fundamental to the interpretation or interpretations of the text, it is not in its composition or in its last formal aspect. The ability to choose between multiple possibilities and, therefore, deciding on one of them corresponds only to the writer.

In his 1956 work "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances", Roman Jakobson connects Saussure's two axes with different types of aphasia and, at the same time, with two tropes that represent different forms of expression: the metaphor and the metonymy (Jakobson, 1956, pp. 76-82). In the metaphor, the mental process is that of analogy, the resemblance, though it may arouse connotations that follow the other axis of relations. If we compare teeth with pearls, it is because they share a number of similarities, such as being white and bright. On the other hand, metonymy is the substitution of one element for another with which it has a relationship of contiguity; if we drink a glass (of wine), actually we are drinking what it contains; and if we say I read Tolstoy, actually we are reading a book written by him, without any relationship of resemblance between the book and the writer. Jakobson relates the "metaphorical process" (p. 76) with romanticism and symbolism and more "lyrical" poetic forms, and speaks of a "predominance of metonymy" in more realistic literary trends too. However, if we consider that he also speaks of epic poetry, we could understand it more strictly as an opposition between lyric and narrative genres (pp. 77-78).

In any case, more important to our reasoning is that he also states that the type of aphasia which supposes a "similarity disorder" —i.e., related to the paradigmatic axis and, therefore, the metaphoric processes—, affects the "polyglot ability" of the speaker:

> Such an aphasic can neither switch from a word to its synonyms and circumlocutions, nor its heteronyms, i.e. equivalent expressions in other languages. Loss of a polyglot ability and confinement to a single dialectal variety of a single language is a symptomatic manifestation of this disorder. (p. 68)

That is to say, the ability to change languages, to *translate*, in a broad sense, is a shift in the paradigmatic/metaphorical axis of associations. Although any translator of such different languages as, for example, Spanish and Turkish, knows the importance of morphosyntactic levels while s/he is translating, it is absurd to wonder what happens to them in this type of aphasia since lack of understanding of vocabulary precludes re-expression in the other language at every level. These aphasic are unable to identify different varieties of their own language as such and, therefore, lack the ability to detect other languages because for them any other choice than their own idiolect may well be a foreign language.

> [F]or an aphasic who has lost the capacity of code switching, his "idiolect" indeed becomes the sole linguistic reality. As long as he does not regard another's speech as a message addressed to him in his own verbal pattern, he feels, as a patient of Hemphil and Stengel expressed it: "I can hear you dead plain but I cannot get what you say... I hear your voice but not the words ... It does not pronounce itself." He considers the other's utterance to be either gibberish or at least in an unknown language. (Jakobson, 1956, p. 68)

This inability of expression and understanding in the axis of the "similarities", as Jakobson says, helps us to understand how the mechanisms of speech work. Following this reasoning, there may be a relationship between the use of heteronyms ("equivalent expressions in other languages") and hypernyms ("word whose meaning is included in other words", according to the Academic dictionary, the example given is that 'sparrow' includes the meaning of 'bird'). This is a mechanism often used in translation, called "generalization" by Hurtado Albir, and by which "it is used a more general or neutral term" (2001, p. 270). For example, Jakobson says that a patient of Goldstein "never uttered the word *knife* alone, but according to its use and surroundings, alternately called the knife *pencil-sharpener*, *apple-parer*, *bread-knife*, *knife-and-fork*", in the last two cases giving the term a more "syntagmatic" use, just in the same way that he was able to use the term "bachelor apartments" but not the word "bachelor" as the equivalent of 'unmarried man' (1956, pp. 65-66) . Therefore, both the selection of hypernyms in the paradigmatic axis as well as the translation of one word for another one in a different language would be the same procedure, or at least equivalent.

1.3 Translation as a mental operation

It is time to turn our eyes to another classic, in this case of translation studies: Eugene Nida. As is well known, the theoretical system of Nida is based on Chomsky, especially on his books *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965) and *Language and Mind* (1968), where he developed the ideas of deep and surface structure (translated into Spanish as "latent" and "patent" structures by C.P. Otero[3]) and the concept of "kernel sentences". Nida understands the translation process as a transfer between surface structures of the languages involved carried out in three stages:

> (I) analysis, in which the surface structure (*i.e.,* the message as given in language A) is analyzed in terms of (a) the grammatical relationships and (b) the meanings of the words and combinations of words, (2) transfer, in which the analyzed material is transferred in the mind of the translator from language A to language B, and (3) restructuring, in which the transferred material is restructured in order to make the final message fully acceptable in the receptor language. (Nida & Taber, 1969, p. 33)[4]

In other words and oversimplifying a little, in the first stage the translator analyzes syntagmatic relations (Nida says 'grammatical', which is also perfectly valid in this context) between the constituent elements of the utterance in order to reach the "kernels" or "basic structural elements out of which the language builds its elaborate surface structures" (1969, p. 39). These kernels are very similar to the simple propositions that, according to Chomsky, or at least the Chomsky of *Language and Mind* (1968, pp. 14-15), form the deep structure. However, in this analysis the translator follows a more or less opposite way to the formation of sentences in natural languages; i.e. the translator goes from the surface structure to the deep structures or, at least, that is what s/he should achieve by grammatical analysis according to Nida. At the end of the day, it is not a very different idea to what Jakobson says using data from aphasic patients to deduce the processes of language acquisition.

In fact, this reduction of the text to simple kernels can be very useful:

> From the standpoint of the translator, however, what is even more important than the existence of kernels in all languages is the fact that
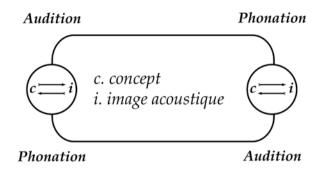
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[3] *Aspectos de la teoría de la sintaxis*. Madrid: Aguilar, 1971.

[4] It is interesting to see that Nida and Taber use, precisely, the term "acceptable" in the line of Gideon Toury.

> languages agree far more on the level of kernels than on the level of the
> more elaborate structures. This means that if one can reduce grammatical
> structures to the kernel level, they can be translated more readily and
> with a minimum of distortion. (Nida & Taber, 1969, p. 39)

This is extremely practical for Nida's suggestion of the necessity of a "dynamic equivalence" according primarily to what the text is intended to say, to its ultimate intention (or "pragmatic intention"). Although it is a very debatable theory, both in the possibility of finding a radical dynamic equivalence in texts in which form really matters, as literary texts for example, and in the belief of an interpretative process —in brief, a reading process— that would reduce everything to syntactically simple nuclei, the truth is that it may be quite practical, especially when translating between such dissimilar languages as Turkish and Spanish. It is also useful for our purpose here since it reiterates Jakobson's assertion that the action between languages called "transfer" by Nida is carried out along the paradigmatic axis through mechanisms of metaphorical nature. Of course, in most cases, it is not possible to ignore completely the syntagmatic relations, above all in languages with such diverse grammatical systems as Turkish and Spanish, but the basis remains the same. Translating a Spanish *pretérito indefinido* by one of the two possible Turkish past tenses is an operation that will probably be carried out following the syntagmatic axis of relations in the sentence, but it is a choice between two possible options as well. In fact, it would be nonsensical even thinking about it if we ignore the equivalence of the verb on the other language, or we are not able to express it as in the case of aphasic patients. What is the use of asking ourselves what would be the best verbal tense to translate "When I was young I used to eat a lot" if we do not remember the equivalent in the other language of the verb "to eat"?

What is the difference, then, between looking for a synonymous word in the same language or an equivalent in another? Obviously, in the second case, there is a change of system, to continue with the quote of Nida, from A to B, but it seems that the mechanism is similar and not very different from any other communicative exchange if we think, following Saussure again, that the act of language is mostly a mental process.

Audition   Phonation

c ⇄ i   *c. concept*
               i. image acoustique   c ⇄ i

Phonation   Audition

Using the graphic of the *Course*, but thinking about two different linguistic systems instead of a sender and a receiver, we could say that the mental fluctuations between concepts and sound-images during the normal act of communication, in the mind of the translator takes place between similar concepts (according to Nida) and different acoustic images. However, concepts are not the same either in both languages and it complicates the process of translation, but we chose them following always this paradigmatic/metaphorical axis. Now is again useful Nida's idea of reaching the kernels, this time of the lexical "units", especially thanks to the componential analysis he proposes (pp. 63 *et seq*.).

Viewing and analyzing the various features of meaning of a term allows us to differentiate it from others which share semantic field with it and, therefore, to make a more accurate translation. Nida gives the example of the "chair / stool / bench / hassock" group that includes "minimal contrasting features" such as "with/without legs", "with/without back", "for one/two or more person (-s)" (p. 64). The composition of a term can be very complex and every one of its features might be more or less important, but what concern us is that all terms share a common semantic basis, regardless of their distinctive semes, which usually can be formulated with a hypernym. That is, a chair, as the DRAE says, is "a seat with back, usually with four legs, and only for one person", and a bench "a seat with or without back for three or four people", but it is clear that both are "seats". Now, if we remember that patient of Goldstein mentioned by Jakobson as an example of "similarity disorder", he was unable to make kernel sentences —as Nida would call them— such as "a bachelor is a man who is not married", but found no problems using expressions like "bachelor apartments" in which the core of the meaning lies in the idea of 'housing' being the word "bachelor" just a modifier. These aphasic patients "tend to supplant the contextual variants of one word by different terms, each

of them specific for the given environment" (Jakobson, 1956, p. 65). This type of language disorder gives the impression of being similar to the problem of "Funes the Memorious" in Borges' short story:

> He [Funes] was, let us not forget, almost incapable of ideas of a general, Platonic sort. Not only was it difficult for him to comprehend that the generic symbol *dog* embraces so many unlike individuals of diverse size and form; it bothered him that the dog at three fourteen (seen from the side) should have the same name as the dog at three fifteen (seen from the front). (Trans. by James E. Irby)

If this is really so, these aphasic patients would be unable, in general, to use terms of broader meaning[5]; *i.e.*, they would be incapable of abstracting the common features shared by several different words and, therefore, to use or understand metaphors. For them, it would be very difficult to "compare thee to a summer's day", just because they would not know how to relate common semes between a human being and a day, being both different in essence.

As Antin Fougner Rydning stated in a very interesting article (Rydning, 2004), these procedures are "synecdocheal" in nature, both the mechanism of designation in the original language and the reexpression in the target language. However, she observes it from the point of view of cognitive linguistics while we are more interested in seeing them as tropes, as rhetorical figures. While she deals with the way synecdoches are reformulated in the target language on the basis that they are the basic designation mechanism[6], we will focus on that the process of abstraction leading to the use of one word for another is of a synecdocheal nature when it occurs between different languages in the mind of a translator.

However, this poses a serious problem, at least from the point of view of traditional rhetoric, because synecdoche has always been interpreted as a form of metonymy. Moreover, metonymy, if we remember Jakobson, is related to

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[5] This is not the case of "wild-card words", as stated by Jakobson citing Freud and Goldstein (1956, p. 64). However, these words ("machine", "thing", "piece") practically lack of meaning. Thus, it would not be a process of abstraction, but a mere substitution by a term that can mean anything. In a lecture to our students, novelist Ahmet Ümit said that after finishing the first draft of a novel he always looked for the word "thing" —in Turkish it is used more widely than in Spanish— and substituted it for a more precise term whenever it was possible. It is a strategy clearly performed in the paradigmatic axis that would be impossible for these aphasics.

[6] As Le Guern said when talking about species and genus synecdoches (1973, pp. 35-38).

the other pole, that of contiguity, the syntagmatic. In that case, is translation a process that develops through the paradigmatic axis, the syntagmatic, or both?

1.4 Metaphor as the combination of two synecdoches

Of the three major tropes ("Use of a word in a different sense than properly belongs to it, but having some connection with it; correspondence or likeness", DRAE), metaphor, metonymy and synecdoche, the latter has been the most elusive and difficult to define. Partly because, as also the same DRAE states, synecdoche is a resource that works "in a similar way to metonymy". As a matter of fact, "frequently, synecdoche is included within metonymy, theoretically a very close notion and sometimes difficult to distinguish from the first on a practical level" (Azaustre & Casas, 1997, p. 87). The extremely useful *Diccionario de términos filológicos* of Fernando Lázaro Carreter defines synecdoche as follows:

> Trope that responds to the logic scheme *pars pro toto* or *totum pro parte*. It occurs when one word is used for another, their respective concepts being in the relation of: (a) genus for species or vice versa [...]; (b) the whole for the part or vice versa [...]; (c) singular for plural or vice versa [...], etc.

The resemblance between metonymy and synecdoche, or their similar mechanism, has often led to confusion between the two tropes, usually because traditional rhetoric has focused on making classifications based on individual cases in both tropes, as can be confirmed to some extent in the previous definition. To add more confusion, it also happens what Michel Le Guern affirms: "the rhetorical tradition has placed within the category of synecdoche an entire heterogeneous set of facts of which only a part is related to the metonymic process" (1973, p. 41)[7].

This confusion has also led often to consider synecdoche as one form —or, more exactly, two forms— of metonymy, or to ascribe to metonymy certain phenomena that occasionally were considered synecdoches. It happens even in the study of Jakobson on aphasia, as mentioned by Le Guern too: "The works of Jakobson that establish the position between metonymy and metaphor include within the category of metonymy a number of facts to which the rhetoric used to put the label of synecdoche" (1973, p. 33). Even, apparently, within the category of metaphor itself also.

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[7]   Here we use the Spanish translation by Augusto Gálvez-Cañero y Pidal.

The definitions offered by Antonio Azaustre and Juan Casas in their *Manual de retórica española* seem to be quite helpful to differentiate between metonymy and synecdoche. According to them, metonymy is a "trope based on the relation of contiguity existing between two concepts, which allows the interchange of their denominations" (1997, p. 86), while synecdoche is a "trope based on the relation of contiguity discernable not between two concepts, but between the constituents of the same concept" (p. 87). That is, metonymy occurs between two distinct entities (glass/wine; painting/Goya), while the synecdoche is carried out within a single one (sail/ship; soul/person; head/cattle).

For Le Guern, metonymy "is explained by an ellipsis" and can be unveiled by making explicit the elided elements —as it could be in the example of "I took [the contents of] a glass"—, which correspond to any of the traditional categories of metonymy —in this case, container for content—. In his opinion, "it is clear that the mechanism operates on the disposition of the story in the direction of the syntagmatic axis" since it is not intended to replace the term for another, but to expand it. However, it is not the same with synecdoche, although "it is not impossible to interpret the synecdoche by an ellipsis, but it would have to involve a more complex ellipsis" (1973, p. 31). And this happens because "[s]ynecdoche appears more clearly as a modification of the relationship between word and thing that a modification added to the relationship of the words with each other" (p. 32).

However, even Le Guern admits that we do not have to give too much importance to this difference since it is a matter of degree rather than of nature, and both tropes occur in the syntagmatic axis "without the need to involve a process of abstraction, as in the metaphor" (*ibid.*). He discard also some traditional types like the synecdoche of species and genus for being "facts that occur in the normal operation of designation" (p. 37), like using "fish" instead of "tuna" as an answer to the question "what you ate today?", for example. All this proves that Jakobson was right, as Le Guern recognizes. Therefore, the difference between metonymy and synecdoche would not be too important except for the "two traditional categories of synecdoche of the part and synecdoche of the whole", because "they are distinguished by the relation of inclusion that links the figurative term and the term proper which it appears to replace" (p. 41).

It is time to leave aside for a moment the opinions of Le Guern to bring back our arguments to the field of translation. Le Guern admits that in the synecdoche there is "a change in the relationship between word and thing"

(p. 32), i.e., in the referential function and in the very designation mechanism used in everyday's speech. However, is it not precisely the same that Jakobson says when he speaks of Goldstein's patient with a "similarity disorder"? Hypernyms and hyponyms follow mechanisms traditionally considered as typical of the synecdoche. In that case, some synecdoches, at least the *totum pro parte* kind —"Spain won the game last night", for example—, occur in the paradigmatic axis through a process of abstraction; that is to say, in the axis of metaphor, and not as syntagmatic relations. This idea will allow us to relate synecdoche with Nida's theory of reduction of the text to elementary kernels (or the minimal unit, whatever it would be for every translator in any given situation) for later reformulation. If we accept Le Guern opinion viewed through Jakobson glasses, we would have to say that the synecdoche is a metonymy that makes use also of metaphorical procedures. It is a metonymy because it involves the use of a concept instead of a different one ('football team' for 'country'), but works through an abstraction mechanism more characteristic of the metaphor.

It is easy to see the weakness of this reasoning, as it could also be explained by an ellipsis, like metonymy does, as even Le Guern suggests —"[the football team of] Spain won the match", although we must also admit that it is questionable whether the football team is a part of a country—. Nevertheless, this idea allows us to lead the discussion to the field of translation thanks to the *General Rhetoric* of Group μ of Liege (1982, especially pp. 171-194 of the Spanish edition) and their theory that the metaphor is, actually, a combination of two synecdoches.

According to them, metaphors are built from two synecdoches, generalizing the first one and particularizing the second. To give an example, one of the main characteristics of the teeth is the fact of being white (generalizing), as are pearls (particularizing from the idea of 'whiteness'). Le Guern objects, quite rightly, that while in metonymy and, by extension, in the synecdoche, the referential meaning is not altered, in the metaphor this meaning is destroyed to be rebuilt in a completely new sense (Le Guern, 1973, pp. 17- 19). If we are talking about cattle, the meaning of the word "head" does not change even if we refer to the whole animal; however, it is not the same if I say "head of garlic" because in this case we do not talk exactly about heads.

In any case, what concerns us most of the contribution of Group μ to the study of metaphors is the following affirmation by Le Guern:

The fact of relating metaphor and synecdoche that way creates a very clear opposition between the latter and metonymy, which, in turn, will be defined, at least partially, as a change of direction not perceived as synecdocheal nor metaphorical. The binary opposition traditionally established between the group metonymy-synecdoche and the metaphor is thus replaced by an opposition among three elements. (Le Guern, 1973, p. 15)

Let us accept this tripartite division, for the sake of our reasoning; let us admit also that the mechanisms of generalization and particularization of the synecdoche follow the axis of selection by similarity and not the axis of combination by contiguity, according to Jakobson metaphoric and metonymic poles respectively; that writing follows above all the metaphoric pole while reading follows the metonymic; and that the ability to change language systems corresponds to the metaphorical pole. Thus, we might conclude, for the moment, that translation is an activity of metaphorical nature through the paradigmatic axis by means of some processes of synecdocheal kind, provided we also admit Nida's postulates of (a) analysis-understanding, (b) transfer, and (c) restructuring-reformulation. In that case, translation could be considered a metaphor or a metaphorical process to be more precise, by which a generalizing synecdoche takes place in one language; there is a change of linguistic system; and then another one, this time particularizing, is performed in the language of arrival.

1.5 The (sub-) competence of transfer as metaphorical process

To complete this idea is now convenient to turn to the notion of translational competence, nowadays conceived as a complex ability, result of a series of sub-competencies, skills and tactical and strategic capabilities. The idea of a translational competence derives from Chomsky's linguistic competence, which is be the ability of a native speaker to use —in a very broad sense— his/her own language, as opposed to "performance", which is the actual use of that competence. Yet, if a bilingual speaker, also in a very broad sense, is by definition competent in two languages, but not all bilinguals are able to produce appropriate or acceptable translations, it has to be because translation requires a competence that is not the purely linguistic competence, obviously still needed.

There are various models that try to explain or specify what this "translational competence" is, and how we can acquire or improve it (vid. Hurtado Albir, 2001, pp. 382-408). In general, almost all definitions and proposed models include

in the translational competence everything an ideal translator would need, from linguistic capacity, to writing, negotiation or documentation abilities, even creativity, capacity of adaptation to the environment, physical skills, etc. However, almost all proposals include a "transfer" competence or sub-competence that is what really differentiates translating from other linguistic and social activities. The group PACTE[8] of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, whose principal investigator is the above mentioned Hurtado Albir, has proposed an integrated "holistic model" which consists of six interrelated sub-competences: (a) linguistic/bilingual; (b) extralinguistic, knowledge of the world and particular areas; (c) transfer; (d) instrumental and professional; (e) psychophysiological; (f) and strategic. The center of them all is the transfer sub-competence, while the strategic sub-competence affects every one of the other five (Hurtado Albir, 2001, pp. 395-396).

Our intention is not to insist in what characterizes a professional translator, but the purely mental mechanism of the translation process itself, particularly in written texts; so we will limit our analysis to the transfer sub-competence only. Going back to Nida, in one pole of the translation of a written text we find a process of reading, that according to the dichotomy proposed by Jakobson, takes place above all in the syntagmatic-metonymic axis of contiguity, if only by the way it develops itself in time and in the physical space of the book's pages —from the upper left corner to the lower right in Latin alphabet—. On the other end we have the reexpression through writing, which requires a particularly intense effort on the paradigmatic-metaphorical axis of selection, even if it is not possible to neglect the syntagmatic axis to achieve an acceptable translation. However, as we have seen, if we consider a way of reading focused on translation, it needs a certain amount of abstraction also to achieve a proper reformulation in writing —now in another linguistic system—, specifying the abstract conceptual magma. Writing, too, will develop through a linear axis of relations among elements of the speech chain, now in the target language. Both activities could be considered partly synecdoches by the traditional rhetoric. We have a clear metonymy (while reading) and a synecdoche (the abstraction of what we read) in the source language; and another synecdoche (the concretion of what we understand) and a metonymy (writing) in the target language. Between both poles and both systems is the so-called "transfer".

This transfer competence, which is not only linguistic but also cultural in a broad sense, is a kind of jumping from one system to another that not all bilingual speakers are capable of doing efficiently. That "knowing correctly to go across the translation process, that is, to be able to understand the

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[8] Proceso de Adquisición de la Competencia Traductora y Evaluación.

original text and reexpress it in the target language depending on the purpose of translation and the characteristics of the addressee" (Hurtado Albir, 2001, p. 385), includes between one end and the other something that, if we accept the theory of Group μ, could be acknowledged as a metaphorical process, as a result of two synecdoches, although in this case the first one is in the source language and the second on the target language.

The mechanisms of these two synecdoches can be very complex if we consider that, as stated by Sergio Viaggio[9], every utterance —every text or kernel— includes a series of phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, and rhythmical structures, and differences in field, mode and tenor, to be interpreted according to a set of beliefs, experiences, norms and practices according to specific times and places and to the main and secondary pragmatic intentions of the author (2004, pp. 71-101). And all this must first be interpreted in the source language and then reexpresed on the target language. To the best of our ability, of course.

1.6 The metaphorical transfer in Turkish-Spanish translation

My experience as a translator of written texts is limited to the Turkish-Spanish pair, two languages very different from the linguistic point of view and in some cultural aspects. However, and perhaps precisely because of that, what predominates translating from Turkish into Spanish are the aspects more strictly linguistic. Using the Cartesian method of introspection, my experience tells me that at the time of translating, when I read something I think is a unit of meaning, I first follow the axis of the contiguity, the syntagmatic-metonymic axis, be it a complete sentence, or something longer —a paragraph— or less —a subordinate clause, for instance—. This is due to the drastic structural differences between Turkish and Spanish. First, the Turkish verb is written at the end of the sentence, which, among other consequences, requires Spanish translator to jump from the subject to the verb above the rest of the sentence. Second, complex sentences, especially subordinated, are not built by means of conjunctions, but with infinitives, gerunds and participles of various types, which reinforces that sense of dependence among elements inside the sentence, the main feature of the syntagmatic axis, as long as they can be considered nouns (that can be determined by personal suffixes), adverbs (depending on verbs) or adjectives (depending on nouns). Finally, the morphological characteristics of Turkish as an agglutinative language allow a series of derivations often

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[9] Viaggio is the author of maybe the most comprehensive model of the translation process as interlingual mediation published in Spanish so far.
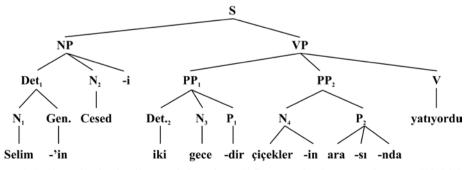
only understandable in the syntagmatic axis, even if they are expressed by completely different words in the target language (*i.e.* by paradigmatic means) . In other words, as a reader the translator can understand the meaning following the syntagmatic axis, but has to make use of the paradigmatic axis to reexpress it. For instance, "ölmek" means 'to die' ("morir" in Spanish), but the factitive "öldürmek" ('to make die') can be only expressed by another verb in English or Spanish ("to kill" / "matar").

Once understood both the syntactical relations and the semantic content, even if sometimes the latter acquires an almost secondary role, begins the work of restructuration. In terms of Hjelmslev, we would have arrived to the substance of the content, which must be given a new form. At first, it can be done in a very Chomskyan way by means of units almost devoid of meaning if we consider only the morphology and syntax. Even if this would be an absurd approach, as far as you cannot translate ignoring the meaning, the fact is that the translation from Turkish allows "gaps" of meaning that can be "filled" afterwards making use of the dictionary, since in most cases the key is to understand the structure of the sentence, clause, kernel, utterance or whatever we take as a unit of meaning. This syntactic-semantic magma in which we only handle functions and meanings has to be concretized later in the target language —Spanish in our case— following another "synecdocheal" procedure, in this case a particularizing synecdoche.

As an example, we will use the simple sentence that starts the story "Genelev Çiçekçisi" ("The Brothel's Florist") by novelist Ahmet Ümit:

"Selim'in cesedi iki gecedir çiçeklerin arasında yatıyordu"

This sentence does not present any problems of vocabulary to whoever might be able to recognize and interpret its syntactic structure, in this case is the following, without entering in excessive subtleties:

['Selim's body the // two nights since // flowers the / among them on // laid']

In this simple sentence, we can see some of the problems that arise when we translate the structures into Spanish, as the fact that the complement of the noun (in genitive case, nonexistent in Spanish) precedes it ("Selim'in cesedi", 'Selim's body', but also in "çiçeklerin arasında" 'among the flowers' etc.), or that prepositions are actually postpositions. Of course, all of this is much more complicated as soon as subordinate verbs appear. In any case, once understood and "abstracted" the unit being translated —Nida would say "analyzed"—, the process will continue reexpressing, in order, (a) the subject ("Selim's body"), (b) the verb ("yatıyordu" 'laid') and (c) complements of time ("iki gecedir" 'two nights since') and place ("çiçeklerin arasında" 'among the flowers'): "The body of Selim laid for two nights among the flowers" / "El cadáver de Selim yacía desde hacía dos noches entre las flores".

However, even a sentence as simple as this offers many possibilities from the point of view of paradigmatic-metaphorical selection, at least in Spanish. "Cadáver" or "cuerpo" ('body'); "two days" instead of "two nights" —perhaps "days" is a more acceptable translation—; "laid" or "have been" ("estaba") or even "llevaba" as a verb of time if we express the sentence as follows: "El cadáver de Selim llevaba dos días entre las flores". Not to mention the possibilities of changing the order in the complements, something not so necessary in this example, but almost mandatory in complex sentences of some length.

Much more complex is the third sentence of the same short story, that can be only expressed in Spanish with a subordinate clause: "Cumartesi gecesi öldürüldüğünü düşünüyorduk" ("We thought he had been killed on Saturday night"). In this sentence, the word "öldürüldüğünü" is the past participle of the passive form of the factitive of the verb "to die" in the accusative case of the third person, meaning in a very vague sense: "he who has been put to dead by somebody". However, as translators, we do not think about all this grammatical categories and merely see "had been killed", which means a selection in the paradigmatic-metaphorical axis. The selection of the pluperfect past tense in Spanish, required by the syntagmatic relations within the sentence in the target language, would be made according to the syntagmatic-metonymical axis.

In short, after reading and understanding, there is an initial process of abstraction that we can relate to synecdoche; afterwards we make a change of language system; then the previous abstraction is concretized in other similar synecdoche, now particularizing; and we proceed to the reexpression, both in the morphosyntactic-syntagmatic level, as well in the selection-paradigmatic axis. In this case, if we admit that part of what Jakobson called metaphoric

procedures are actually synecdoches and continue as a hypothesis the idea of Group μ of Liege that metaphor is composed of two synecdoches, as arguable as it can be especially from the point of view of traditional rhetoric, we can conclude that the transfer sub-competence is a process of metaphorical nature since it combines two synecdoches, one generalizing and the other particularizing, according to an interpretation of the translation process following the principles of Nida.

1.7 Conclusion

What conclusions can be drawn from all this? It is hard to say. Actually, it is just a speculation about a process that, like all mental processes, has a lot of mystery in it. What strange synapses allow veteran interpreters hear in a language and speak another? How does this work? It is like playing a musical instrument; you need to work hard, but also talent. The need for the latter is often forgotten because it is not something that can be taught or formulated. How can we really know what happens in the mind of a translator when s/he is making that leap between languages?

The intention of this paper has been twofold. On the one hand, to think a little about something that, as translators, we consider an almost automatic process; if only for the fact that sometimes it is good to stop and think about what we do. On the other, to go back to the origin of translation as a linguistic fact and remember that, as a form of expression, is also closely related to rhetorics in its classical sense. All this made from a structuralist point of view, but without dismissing cognitive or cultural orientations. We often have the impression that linguistics is considered an excessively abstract matter to be applied to translation, and that more "literary" issues as rhetorics should be left to philology, or that is the message that, as a teacher, I receive from many students.

Nowadays, the need to live at full speed implies that everything should have an almost immediate useful application. It is not the case of what we have tried to expose in this paper. A constant characteristic of Humanities has always been its ability to move freely between related subjects avoiding an excessive specialization, and, besides, to do so in the field of speculative thought, in pure abstract reasoning. Obviously, considering language transfer a metaphorical process or not has no direct utility to teaching or practicing translation, as neither do the relations between linguistics, translation studies and rhetoric. However, are not induction, deduction and (thinking) by analogy the three

main modes of reasoning? And are not they, in short, forms of synecdoche and metaphor? Thus, it is not the fact of thinking by itself a form of "translating" reality?

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