

**THE KNOWLEDGES OF THE TRANSLATOR:
FROM LITERARY INTERPRETATION TO
MACHINE CLASSIFICATION**

**Edited by
Malcolm Coulthard
and
Patricia Anne Odber de Baubeta**



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SPANISH TRANSLATIONS OF JOYCE'S *EXILES*

Raquel Merino Álvarez & Inés Uribe-Echeverría Fernández

University of the Basque Country, Vitoria

This paper deals mainly with the study of three Spanish translations of Joyce's single play *Exiles* that are, in turn, part of the corpus used in a wider project. The choice of topic is therefore not haphazard but the result of the conclusions drawn after studying a large number of drama translations into Spanish from plays originally written in English. Such study, carried out in the last six years (Merino 1992), focuses on the second half of this century on translations of plays originally written in English by playwrights of varied geographical origin and diverse fame and box-office success. Plays by dramatists like Joyce were considered along those of Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, Edward Bond, Willy Russell or Terence Rattigan, together with commercial plays, whose authors are nowadays virtually unknown or forgotten (Jack Popplewell is a case in point).

With this representative wide corpus of texts to study, we set out to discover how drama originally written in English had been translated into Spanish in the last four decades. Over 150 editions of drama translations were analysed, 100 TT-ST pairs were compared at a macrostructural level and a selection of prototypes were finally submitted to close microstructural comparative analysis.

When handling editions of drama, the specificity of the genre affects the way this type of texts are published. The dual nature of drama, written to be performed, is clearly reflected in the way playtexts are published and made available to the public. Some publishing companies or collections favour the page and some the

stage and so we find acting and reading editions openly characterised as such.

Approximately half of the 150 target drama texts submitted to study were **reading editions** and the other half **acting editions**. The former presents the text to the reading public constantly referring to the source author, the source culture, the source literature and any information about the production of the play would focus on the source language performance rather than the target language performance. In this type of editions the label 'translation' is preferred to 'version' or 'adaptation', thus implicitly or explicitly implying that the transference of the text is consciously faithful, close to the source text. In reading editions one usually finds metatexts (introductions or essays that accompany the playtext) which would inform the reader about the source author and source culture.

Acting editions, on the other hand, are presented as 'immersed' in the target culture. In acting editions the performance of the text is almost always mentioned - invariably the performance in the target language-. Any other commentaries or essays in the edition would accordingly tend to show the play in the target cultural context. Hence the target author or director or producer usually substitute the source author as the focus of attention (for example in the blurb). Acting editions present drama texts as close to the stage (the target stage). The label 'version' is preferred in acting editions as a way of stressing the dimension of performance (spectacle) in drama. (In this case acting editions may well tend to be prospective, offering the text to the public before it is performed, or retrospective, making available the text of a play which has already been performed).

This dual characterisation of editions of drama into acting and reading is closely related to the results of the comparative study of TT/ST pairs in the corpus. The macrostructural comparison of TT/ST pairs revealed three main translation strategies used by translators. Texts published as reading editions are generally quite close to the original. Translators of this type of texts seem to adhere to the source text and produce a translation of the adequate type, whereas translators of dramas published as acting editions seem to manipulate-while-translating, either by

excising or adding textual material, that is, following overall deletion or addition strategies with a view to making the text acceptable.

The twofold characterisation of editions of drama into acting or reading and the three main translation strategies found in the target texts analysed lead us back to the main concern of this paper: the Spanish texts of *Exiles*. These three Spanish target texts are an extreme example of reading editions of translations of the adequate type. Chronologically, the first target text studied is *Exilados*, translated by Osvaldo López Noguero, published in Argentina in 1964 (TT₁). The second target text is the first translation of Joyce's play published in Spain in 1971, signed by Javier Fernández de Castro (TT₂). The third Spanish text is Fernando Toda's translation published in 1987 by Cátedra (TT₃) where Toda mentions the other two TTs in a separate chapter about editions of *Exiles* in Spanish. By doing so the translator of TT₃ acknowledges for the first time a textual tradition of Joyce's play in Spanish.

Textual comparative analysis of ST & TTs of *Exiles*

The descriptive/comparative study of the texts of *Exiles* was carried out in two stages (Uribe-Echeverría 1993). In the first, each TT was compared with the English standard ST in order to find out what type of translation each target text was. In the second, the TTs were compared with each other with a view to discovering the type of relationship, if any, among the three Spanish playtexts whose textual tradition was openly acknowledged by the translator of TT₃.

The 'réplica', an inherently dramatic unit posited in the PhD dissertation mentioned above (Merino 1992), has been a vital tool in both stages of the comparative study. Although some English equivalent terms such as 'turn' or 'utterance' have been considered, and others even suggested after the presentation of this paper in Birmingham (the French 'replique' kindly offered by Prof. P.P. Newmark), the Spanish word adopted originally will be used here throughout. The *réplica* is the minimal structural unit by means of which drama is structured and

given its peculiar character. Drama on the page, as well as on the stage, is basically made up of *réplicas*. Higher structural divisions -scenes, acts, etc. can be further subdivided into *réplicas*. In each of these minimal units both levels of dramatic language are reflected: primary and secondary text (or in Juliane House's terms, frame and dialogue, House 1981). On the page a *réplica* is basically introduced by the name of the character whose speech follows, the name together with all indications and stage directions, that is, everything which is not to be verbalized on the stage, makes the secondary text of a *réplica*. The words to be uttered by a character/actor on the stage constitute the primary text of a *réplica*. After acknowledging the existence of the *réplica*, this unit allowed for the study of a large number of TT/ST pairs at a macrostructural level and further at a microstructural level, once TT/ST pairs of *réplicas* had been established (Merino 1992). At the macrostructural level all Spanish TTs of *Exiles* proved to be exceptionally faithful to the ST. Virtually the same number of *réplicas* in the original were rendered in each of the translations.

After comparing the first TT and the English original, and more precisely TT₁/ST pairs of *réplicas*, we found that exclamations are much commoner in TT₁ than in the original and that this feature is more noticeable at sentence level. An unusual elaborate syntax and peculiar word order at sentence level are some of the traces of the translator's personal style in the target text and of his imprint on the final product. As expected, we found traits of the Argentinian variety of Spanish such as the more frequent use of the Indefinite Past Tense rather than the Imperfect Past, when there is a choice of Past tenses in Spanish, or the use of the second person pronoun 'usted/ustedes' as opposed to the standard peninsular 'tú/vosotros' and the corresponding verb forms. The use of specifically Argentinian vocabulary is also visibly characteristic of this TT₁.

When attaining the comparison of TT₂ and ST it seemed difficult to define the relationship of this second TT with the original without referring back to the first TT, for so many of the peculiarities of TT₁ were also found in TT₂ that it was

obvious that this second translation was closely related to the first. Among the most characteristic instances of this 'likeness' are mistranslations and translator's lapses which are constantly reminiscent of similar slips in the Argentinian text.

When compared with the ST, TT₃ appeared as a fairly literal and intended literary translation, very close to the ST in all respects and even more so to the syntactic structures of the original. Still it could be deemed as a scrupulous and precise rendering of the original to the most minute detail, (though, at times, it seemed to defy standard Spanish syntax).

Although the results of the comparative analysis of TTs and ST were revealing in themselves, by far the most interesting type of textual transfer traced is that between TT₁ and TT₂, that is, an intralinguistic relationship (which could not be predicted beforehand). The Argentinian translation seems to have been copied word for word by Javier Fernández de Castro, the target author of the second TT. This process of intralinguistic transfer seems to have taken place at three levels. First we have numerous examples of straight word for word transcription as well as many cases of copy with very slight modifications. When these slight changes are effected it is mainly in order to adapt the characteristics of the Argentinian variety of Spanish to the peninsular standard, thus making the text acceptable in terms of language variety. Such is the case, for example, of the use of the second person pronoun 'usted/ustedes' and the corresponding verbal forms which are adapted to the peninsular 'tú-ustedes' (Example no. 1 at the end of the paper). Following this strategy of almost word for word copy, Fernández de Castro has likewise reproduced inequivalences or outstanding errors present in the Argentinian translation (Example no. 2). Lastly, errors or misinterpretations made by the copier in the process of 'transcribing' the Argentinian text are also found in TT₂. Examples like no.3 can only be explained if the alleged translator of the second TT misinterpreted TT₁ while copying it out, rather than misinterpreting in the process of translating the original.

As for the relationship between TT₃ and TT₂ it must be noted that there are

some occurrences which prove that Fernando Toda used the second TT when working in his translation. It is obvious that the relationship between these texts is closer precisely in those passages where the original seems to pose more difficulties and it is also in those passages that Fernández de Castro exceptionally deviates from the Argentinian text he practically copies down (Example No. 4).

Conclusions

By way of conclusion it can be said that all editions of the Spanish TTs of Joyce's play *Exiles* are extremely close and faithful to the original. Shifts are avoided and are kept to a minimum when rendering the original. The reason for this type of predictable behaviour on the part of the translators (and even on the part of the plagiarist) is that Joyce is a sacred figure in world literature and as such 'respected'. This trend towards faithfulness, of which the Spanish texts of *Exiles* are an extreme example, is often found when dealing with drama translations of plays by famous authors, often thus respected when they have become established in the literary source or target system. This type of translations are almost always published as reading editions. Probably, another reason for this extreme closeness to the original may lie in the very complexity of the text.

The second important conclusion that may be drawn is that when one sets out to study translations, i.e. the interlinguistic transfer that has taken place between a ST and one or more TTs, other types of textual transfer seem invariably to be at work and can be studied using the same methodology. These kinds of intralinguistic transfer which range from adaptation, through rewriting, to plagiarism, operate also within the same language and culture. In the world of Spanish theatre, for example, there have always been cases of adaptation or rewriting of Spanish drama (mainly of the classics) into Spanish. The same can no doubt be observed in British or any other theatre for that matter (*'The War of the Words', 1980*).

In our case, when we set out to discover the type of textual tradition underlying the three Spanish target texts of *Exiles*, we were far from predicting the

clear case of plagiarism that was to be unveiled in the second stage of the study. TT₂ cannot be described as a rewrite or an adaptation, it is basically a case of plagiarism. And precisely this non-acknowledged misappropriation of someone else's translation, polished and presented anew, has ironically been the most successful of all. It has been reprinted at least six times and is still being reprinted. This target text was even used for the 1991 performance of the play in Madrid. In all, for the vast majority of Spanish readers and theatregoers, TT₂ has been, as still is, the only Spanish text of *Exiles*.

In sum, drama translations, irrespective of their foreign source, are subject to the same types of textual and non-textual transfer which govern the manipulation of drama in the original language: they may be adapted, rewritten or plagiarized. They may also be published, as reading or acting editions, and they may even be performed.

EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE No. 1 (ST/TT₁/ TT₂)

II, r.277 BERTHA. Please change your coat, Robert, when I ask you. You might get a very bad cold from that. Do, please.	II, r.271 Berta: Por favor, cámbiese la chaqueta. Haga lo que le digo, Roberto. Puede atrapar un resfriado muy serio. Vamos... Vamos.	II, r.273 BERTHA. Por favor, cámbiate de chaqueta. Haz lo que te digo, Robert. Puedes coger un resfriado muy serio... Por favor...
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EXAMPLE No. 2 (ST/TT₁/ TT₂)

II, r.143 [<i>He breaks off and turns aside, unable to speak.</i>]	II, r.140 (<i>Se le corta la voz y se vuelve sin poder hablar.</i>)	II, r.140 (<i>Se le corta la voz y se da la vuelta, incapaz de hablar.</i>)
II, r.155 Because in the very core of my ignoble heart I longed to be betrayed by you and by her- in the dark, in the night- secretly, meanly, craftily.	II, r.152 ¡En el fondo de mi innoble corazón deseaba ser traicionado por tí y por ella! Traicionado..., en la sombra de la noche... secreta, pérfida, completamente.	II, r.152 En el fondo de mi innoble corazón deseaba ser traicionado por tí y por ella en la sombra de la noche... secreta, pérfida, completamente.

EXAMPLE No. 3 (ST) /TT₁/ TT₂

II, r.167 The blinding instant of passion alone- passion, free, unashamed, irresistible- that is the only gate by which we can escape from the misery of what slaves call life.	II, r.163 La única puerta para huir de esa miseria que los esclavos llaman vida, es el instante enceguedor de la pasión: la pasión libre, que desconoce la vergüenza..., la pasión irresistible .	II, r.164 El enceguedor instante de la pasión- esa pasión libre, sin vergüenza, irresistible- es la única fuerza por la que podemos huir de esa miseria que los esclavos llaman vida.
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EXAMPLE No.4 (ST)/(TT₁)/TT₂/ TT₃

II, r. 134-135-136 Ricardo: ¿Y te vuelvas inclusive contra ti mismo por haberme conocido o haber tenido que ver con nosotros dos?	II, r. 137-138-139 RICHARD. And you turn even against yourself for having known me or trafficked with us both? II, r. 134-135-136 RICHARD. ¿Y cuando te vuelvas incluso contra ti mismo por haberme conocido y haber tenido relación con nosotros dos?	II, r. 137-138-139 RICHARD. ¿Y cuando te vuelvas incluso contra ti mismo por haberme conocido o haber tenido relación con nosotros dos?
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