Cultural Representation Through Translation: an Insider-Outsider Perspective on the Translation of Tourism Promotional Discourse

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ABSTRACT: Intercultural communication, and particularly tourism translation, means making the cultural values of a given destination accessible to an audience that is not familiar with them. The purpose of tourism information is in fact to negotiate the encounter with the Other, a negotiation involving different stakeholders, the main ones being, on the one hand, translators and intercultural mediators and, on the other, international tourists.

In the attempt to provide accessibility to international visitors, qualified as Outsiders, cultural identities will have to be mediated. Translators and intercultural mediators with different degrees of expertise in the field of tourism set themselves the task of translating the foreign into discourse, so as to produce a sense of otherness that will be recognised as different from the familiar. However, this process is extremely delicate, as it undergoes sophisticated stages of linguistic and intercultural transformations. Translators will have to find a balance between an adaptive,

naturalising strategy of translation, which makes the foreign destination accessible to Outsiders, and the necessity to maintain a certain authenticity flavour (MacCannell 1976), because cultural diversity, rather than identity, is at the basis of the tourist offer.

Translators and mediators will also have to find ways to stimulate the visitors' curiosity and capture their attention. To this end, translation strategies that go beyond lingua-cultural transfer processes will be discussed, with special attention to models specifically derived from the field of Tourism Studies.

KEY WORDS: translation; intercultural mediation; translation theory; tourism studies; tourism discourse

INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS IN TOURISM TRANSLATION

The general understanding of the world – which is socially and culturally produced – is always mediated by frames, i.e. cognitive models representing knowledge and beliefs related to frequently recurring situations (Fillmore 1985). Basically, the function of frames, filters and other mental models is that of setting priorities on certain elements to be perceived, and simplify or even bypass those considered less relevant, simply because of their being too far from one's accustomed world-view. A tension between the complexity of cultural systems and a general human tendency to reduce that complexity into manageable chunks appears to characterise a number of approaches to the study of tourism phenomena – including those focusing on intercultural communication. Drawing upon models developed within Neurolinguistic Programming (O'Connor 2001), Katan has distinguished amongst three "Universal Filters" to be used to mentally map reality, namely deletion, distortion and generalisation:

> The first, 'deletion', is a simple non-perception of the Other. The second filter is 'distortion', which acts to fit what is perceived into the perceiver's world, relating (and hence distorting it) to other more familiar experience. The third filter is 'generalisation', which tends to gloss over or completely ignore individual contexts and forms the basis of stereotyping. (Katan 2016b: 64-5)

Hence, cultural difference has to be made less specific, distorted or deleted, for the risk is that of disrupting communication. It is as if cultural difference, i.e. a cultural expression or an event in the case of tourism, could be perceived only when 'recognised' as fitting into a certain schema or frame. In case it doesn't, the alternative is not to perceive it (deleting it), transforming and adapting it to the target frame, or, finally, substituting it with universal concepts which may lose sight of the specificity of the context (Katan

2004: 147-8). This may sound like a negative prospect to all of us interested in preserving the specificity of cultural identities.

Problems arise in fact in the translation of tourist texts. Tourism source texts (STs henceforward) are written for the benefit of Insiders, that is readers that share a similar world-view as the ST's author and have a privileged access to its contents (Katan 2016b: 69). Outsiders, on the other hand, do not have the same language competence of Insiders nor do they share the same cultural filter (House 1997). As a consequence, they will activate strategies to frame their perception or, more plausibly, they will rely on translators to help them access cultural difference. In a word, translators mediate texts not only from a lingua-cultural point of view, but they also have to gauge the distance between the worldviews of Insiders (or original recipients of tourism texts) and Outsiders (recipients of translations). E.T. Hall has labelled the whole process of gauging the distance between Insiders' and Outsiders' worldviews "contexting", which refers to "a decision concerning how much information the other person can be expected to possess on a given subject" (1983: 81).

Context is a fundamental notion not only in Linguistics and Translation Studies, but also and especially in Intercultural Studies. Hall's well-known distinction between High Context (HC) communication and Low Context (LC) communication is a case in point. In the first case, i.e. HC communication, the information must be inferred from the context surrounding the text, whereas in the second case, i.e. LC communication, the information necessary to decode the text is to be found within the text itself. So for example, meanings in HC cultures are not made explicit, and have to be interpreted within the context of specific situations or within the context of culture as a whole. On the contrary, messages are made explicit in LC cultures, and nothing is left to contextual inference. This distinction separates HC cultures that are more context-oriented (i.e. the Mediterranean culture), from LC cultures that are more text-oriented (i.e. the Anglo-American culture) (Katan 2004).

The process of mediation becomes extremely complex if translators want to go beyond the surface of meanings and relay messages incorporated into specific worldviews. This would be the task of 'mindful' translators, where 'mindful' is a term derived from social psychology and eventually employed for translating tourism discourse (Katan 2013, 2016b).

MINDFUL BUT SILENCED TOURISM TRANSLATORS?

Mindfulness has become an extremely popular concept in Tourism Studies. One of its first applications was proposed by Moscardo as early as 1996, when she cited a definition of people's behaviour in everyday situations as illustrated by social psychologist Ellen Langer. Langer claimed that people generally choose between a mindful and a mindless behaviour:

> Mindlessness is single-minded reliance on information without an active awareness of alternative perspectives or alternative uses to which the information could be put. When mindless, the individual relies on structures that have been appropriated from another source (Langer, Hatem, Joss and Howell 1989: 140, quoted in Moscardo 1996: 380).

Moscardo explains that there are two kinds of mindless behaviour: the first is when people find themselves in familiar or repetitive situations and respond with routine behaviour. The second is a sort of "premature cognitive commitment" (1996: 381): in this case people can be mindless either in front of information they do not consider important, and take at face value, or when they accept fixed definitions or stereotypes.

However, people may decide to take the opposite path and choose mindfulness instead, which is described as:

> a state of mind that results from drawing novel distinctions, examining information from new perspectives, and being sensitive to context. [...] When we are mindful we recognize that there is not a single optimal perspective, but many possible perspectives on the same situation. (Langer 1993: 44)

Not surprisingly Katan has used the "mindful" concept in his description of a dynamic and intervening type of translation, particularly sensitive to the distance between STs' and TTs' worldviews (2014, 2016b).

Moscardo applies the two terms to the specific context of tourism, describing tourists' behaviour, or rather, their response to the visit and interpretation of destination sites (1996, 2014, 2017). She draws inspiration from the work of Tilden (1977), a pioneer of heritage interpretation. An American novelist and playwright, in the early 1940s Tilden began to write about national parks and published *Interpreting Our Heritage* in 1957. By "interpretation" Tilden refers to the activities carried out by guides or tourism interpreters illustrating national parks, museum exhibitions or tourist sites. Moscardo's own model of tourism interpretation develops Tilden's early work by introducing the notions of mindfulness and mindlessness: the result is an approach that brings together a series of concerns related to guides' interpretation and visitors' response.

One of the key points in Moscardo's argument concerns the cognitive load to be conveyed by guides' interpretation of tourist sites/sights. She points to the necessity for the guide/interpreter to regulate the amount of new information to be proposed in each tourist offer, so as to produce a mindful response from visitors, that is an interested, active attitude and a willingness to reassess the way they view the world. Quite paradoxically, in fact, when interpreters provide an excessive amount of novel information, they produce the opposite result, as visitors' efforts will be directed at reducing the complexity into a more reasonable picture. As Moscardo has put it:

> when there is too much novelty, conflict or information in a setting, mindfulness will not result in enhanced cognitive performance, as much of the active information processing will be directed towards trying to develop some system to deal with the

information overload. Further, too little information in the setting is likely to induce mindlessness, as visitors can easily create a routine to deal with the setting. (1996: 384)

These words have a strong resonance in Translation Studies, particularly for the translation of tourist texts. In fact Kelly has expressed a very similar concern about the need to regulate the amount of information translators should provide their readers with:

it is not simply a case of the foreign visitor requiring more, or more explicit, information, but also of the foreign visitor requiring that information to be dosified in some way to prevent an overload which could lead to a breakdown in communication. (1997: 35)

Methodological similarities between these two research areas, that is Tourism and Translation Studies, are striking. However, a fundamental difference concerns the material aspect of language transfer. For example, in the two cases cited above, Kelly is clearly addressing *foreign* visitors, that is Outsiders in terms of language use (and culture), whereas Moscardo's and Tilden's interpreters deal with generic visitors, who are defined neither from a linguistic nor from a culture-specific point of view. And yet their methodology, particularly Moscardo's mindfulness model, appears to be perfectly suitable for Translation and Intercultural Studies analyses.

All the aspects related to language transfer processes appear to be a grey area in Tourism Studies. In spite of the fact that visitors are very often qualified as international tourists, language issues do not seem to have a place in tourism research. Translation as language mediation is hardly ever mentioned. And this does not seem to be just a methodological oversight, but rather a theoretical gap. This may be due to the fact that, although case studies often consist in empirical analyses of tourism experiences all over the world, the theoretical bases of tourism research are firmly grounded in the Western, Anglo-American tradition, and based on universal assumptions (for a critique on these issues see Atelejevic, Pritchard and Morgan 2007; Pritchard, Morgan and Atelejevic 2011; Atelejevic, Morgan and Pritchard 2011). Urry's tourist gaze is a case in point (1990).

Furthermore, publications produced in this field are invariably in English. As a consequence, they do address cross-cultural issues related to cultures where languages different from English are used, but they regularly do so in English. Here I do not want to enter the debate on the use of International English or English as Lingua Franca. My point is simply that translation and language mediation are topics Tourism Studies steers clear of, although this discipline necessarily focuses on phenomena that consist in culture and language exchanges.

Dann's book-length analysis of the language of tourism in a sociolinguistic perspective ends with these words:

so pervasive and essential is the language of tourism, that, without it, tourism itself would surely cease to exist. In the absence of a sociolinguistic basis, the world's largest industry would simply grind to a halt, and we would all remain at home – deaf, dumb, and blind to the beauties of creation and the voice of the Other. (1996: 249)

Yet, in spite of the fact that extracts from translated texts from a number of languages abound in this seminal work, no reference is made to translation, nor to any other language mediation process. The only interlinguistic process mentioned is that of 'languaging', which basically consists in the use of loan words. Dann links this strategy to the exploitation of rhetorical figures such as alliteration or onomatopoeia in tourist texts, as if the interlinguistic nature of languaging could be considered only at a symbolic or figurative level. Surprising as this situation may appear in a work dedicated to filling a gap in tourism research by studying its linguistic manifestation, still Dann's volume is just the tip of the iceberg. As pointed out earlier, apparently language exchanges, language mediation or translation processes are not considered relevant enough aspects in Tourism Studies.

The same can be said about the pivotal role of language mediators. Tilden's interpreter is a typical example of monolingual guiding, although we should be reminded of the lapse of time since the first publication of *Interpreting Our Heritage* in 1957, a time when interlinguistic and intercultural issues had not yet come to the fore. A number of publications have paid special attention to the actors of what has been defined as the "tourism mediation" process (Zátori 2016; Ooi 2006; Scherle and Nonnenmann 2008). Zátori has gone so far as to label these professionals of the tourist industry as "destination experience mediators" (2016: 117), that is people, organisations or texts providing guidance and interpretation (in a Tildean sense) on tourism matter. Here is Zátori's list of people and service providers to be included in the category of destination experience mediators:

> service providers, individuals or goods, which give advice to tourists on what to notice, how to consume various tourism products. Tour operators, tour and programme providers, tourism promotional authorities, tour guides, travel reviews, guidebooks and friendly locals. (*ibid.*)

Although we may suppose that all these providers will have to deal with language transfer and translation in one way or the other, no mention of this is made throughout Zátori's article – which concentrates on international tourism practices. This is obviously a limit for the research conducted in the field of tourism and the reasons for this should be looked for in a long-lasting dependence on authoritative theories, which have not been accommodated to the fast-changing reality of contemporary tourism practices yet (Pritchard, Morgan and Atelejevic 2011; Atelejevic, Morgan and Pritchard 2011).

The work that springs most immediately to mind is Cohen's influential article on "The tourist guide" (1985), probably the earliest acknowledgement of this professional

role. Cohen identifies the origin of the modern tourist guide in two distinct figures of the past: the pathfinder and the mentor. The first represents the pragmatic, or leading aspects of 'guiding' in the tourist sense, whereas the second stands for the interactive and communicative components of this role. According to Cohen, an increasing shift of attention towards the communicative features has occurred in the course of the centuries. Pathfinders were initially locals, employed by Outsiders to lead them in foreign territories, and for this reason they had to be able to communicate at least in two different languages. As travel conditions improved, they were increasingly replaced by guidebooks and maps. The role of the mentor, personal tutor or spiritual guide, on the other hand, was more heterogeneous in its nature, bringing together geographical competence and moral authority. Eventually, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this role was subsumed under the figure of the tutor, who accompanied young noblemen on their Grand Tour. Yet, Cohen does not specify that these people were very often scholars or educators who did not necessarily have any competence in foreign languages. And it is precisely these historical figures that serve as basis for Cohen to sketch out his model for contemporary tourist guides.

Cohen is significantly silent about the importance of tourist guides' language competence, and even when translation is eventually mentioned, it is not recognised as one of the fundamental skills of this profession – skills that are however set out with extreme clarity in what can be defined as a far-sighted taxonomy of the competences of tourist guides.

Here I will illustrate only the communicative aspects mentioned by Cohen (1985: 14-16), in order to point out elements that appear to be particularly relevant for present-day translators and intercultural mediators, too. Such communicative aspects have been divided into four categories, which correspond to four activities, and namely:

1. Selection: guides should point out objects of interest to the tourist, that is "those which they deem worthy of their [visitors'] attention" (14). In fact selection will structure the tourists' attention.

2. Information: the guide should provide visitors with correct and detailed information.

3. Interpretation: the guide should produce interpretation according to a principle of 'naturalisation': "In its general form, transcultural interpretation takes the form of translation of the strangeness of a foreign culture into a cultural idiom familiar to the visitors" (15).

4. Keying and Fabrication: a distinction is made between "keying" – a sort of performance to present as authentic what is in fact a "staged" attraction – and "fabrication" – when it becomes apparent that the attractions illustrated by the guide have been made up. However, this distinction appears to be set up more in terms of degree than kind, although fabrication is given a definite moral bias, when Cohen illustrates it as "a type of activity which does not meet with general approval" (16).

These aspects of the tourist guide's role seem to be perfectly suitable for translators and intercultural mediators too – particularly for those working in the field of tourism. As a matter of fact, three of them match rather closely Katan's Greimas-derived

definition of the tripartite function of tourism discourse, consisting respectively of *vouloir* (to desire), *savoir* (to know) and *pouvoir* (to be able). These three functions or language modalities represent the promotional (*vouloir*), informative (*savoir*) and performative (*pouvoir*) aspects of texts. Katan makes clear that it is up to the translator to decide which function should prevail in any single text (2016b: 70; see also 2012: 89). Hence, when *vouloir* aspects are given prominence, destination promotion will be paid special attention; when the translator decides instead to focus on the *savoir* features of a text, s/he will provide extensive background information; and finally, the *pouvoir* function will be emphasised every time translators provide practical, pragmatic information (on the application of Greimas's modality functions to translation cfr. also Chesterman 2002).
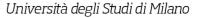
However, the last two competences of Cohen's tourist guide do not have a correspondence with Katan's translational model. In the case of "keying" and "fabrication", the tourists' interest is not produced merely by making destinations appealing through effective strategies of presentation (*vouloir*). Rather, keying and fabrication seem to take the process a step further and create their own objects of desire in a rather artificial way. And yet Cohen highlights only the negative aspects of fabrication, qualifying it as a deceptive activity, instead of considering its constructive and inventive nature.

Eco (1986), amongst others, has helped us to see the postmodern appetite for reproductions that is apparent in our modern times: people fabricate copies in an effort to produce something that is better than real, namely, more interesting than what is encountered in everyday life (see also Hannabuss 1999). Setting aside the escapist nature of this phenomenon for the time being, I would rather emphasise the creative, popular and disseminating function of reproductions. Popularisation, in the sense of making things accessible to the community at large, together with creativity, are the hallmarks of Lefevere's concept of rewriting (1992), which displays remarkable similarities with Cohen's notions of keying and fabrication. Rewritings – translations or remediations of original texts, as well as artificial reproductions of authentic material in the field of tourism – function as reality for those who have no access to the "original" (Bolter and Grusin 1999). Furthermore, rewritings are potentially subversive, as rewriters' creative powers are by definition manipulative.

From creativity to forgery the step is not too long, Cohen would possibly say, inadvertently subscribing to fidelity norms in translation... However, a negative reading of phenomena like rewriting, adaptation, keying and even fabrication appears both reductive and outdated in our contemporary globalised world. Thirty years ago Lefevere argued that all rewriting is manipulative, and this is the reason why we should study it, in order to restore to translation its often overlooked social relevance (1992: 9).

ADAPTATION, TRANSLATION AND TRANSCREATION

Three decades after Lefevere's appeal to validate rewriting as a legitimate translation category, and almost four decades after the dawn of *Skopostheorie* (Nord 1997), which

culminated the target-oriented shift initiated by Nida (1964), Translation Studies are still debating over the boundaries between translation proper, rewriting and adaptation (Chan 2012; Dollerup 1999; Milton 2009; Venuti 2007).

Bastin's 1998 definition of adaptation as "a text that is not generally accepted as a translation but is nevertheless recognized as representing a source text" (Bastin 2009: 3), has gone unquestioned for a long time, since there has been no other comprehensive definition to date. According to Bastin, adaptation phenomena take us beyond questions of linguistic and intercultural transfer, because they draw attention to the role of the translator as a creative and active participant in communication.

Attempts at using creativity as a pivotal criterion to distinguish translation from other text transfer strategies have been repeatedly proposed in the history of translation, one of the most recent being the advent of transcreation. The term has been used to define a number of translation activities taking place in different contexts, such as post-colonial literature (Lal 1972; Mukherjee 2004; Trivedi 2007; Gopinathan 2006; Milton and Bandia 2009; Vieira 1999), audio-visual translation (Di Giovanni 2008; Zanotti 2014) and games localisation (Mangiron and O'Hagan 2006; Bernal 2006). Furthermore, intercultural practices in such diverse fields as marketing, digital media and advertising have also been recently defined as "transcreation", rather than translation. This development has generated a controversial terminological and economic divide, due to the supposedly different roles and responsibilities of the two categories (Gaballo 2012; Ray and Kelly 2010; Pedersen 2014; Katan 2016a).

In any case, the difference between the two has been legitimated by the market, rather than by the professional or academic communities – apart from a few exceptions (Agorni 2018: 89-90). Such difference seemingly consists in the more adaptive policy and the strong naturalising tendencies of transcreation, as opposed to translation. Hence, transcreators are by no means hampered by fidelity criteria: in fact they are free to deal holistically with the text in its semiotic and cultural context. Significant methodological consequences are already evident: transcreators tend to work on broad semiotic units, combining language with images, sounds and other digital effects (Di Giovanni 2008), whereas translators are still anchored to more traditional language transfer processes, stemming from a perception of languages as symmetrical systems (Snell-Hornby 1988).

Since the transcreation industry tends to consider transcreation as a more prestigious activity compared to translation, Pedersen (2014) has been one of the first scholars to argue that the reasons behind a development that is relegating translation to the margins should be thoroughly investigated. Katan takes Pedersen's argument a step further when he admits that the "T/I's [translator's/interpreter's] traditional language mediation role is itself under threat" (2016a: 366). However, he comes to different conclusions, as he refuses to take a pessimistic stance. On the contrary, he turns the argument upon itself, encouraging translators and interpreters not only to make the best of this situation, but also to use it to their own advantage. As he puts it himself:

> The option of using this relatively new term, the 'transcreator', would allow both the
> professional T/Is and their associations to separate the roles, rather than anguish

over them. So, at the cross-roads, individual professionals could continue taking the traditional turn to specialize as low-risk 'faithful' T/Is, [...] or they could 'simply' step into the role of transcreator, which would allow them to take advantage of an already assigned professional recognition of their creative role [...]. (377-8)

Other, admittedly few, but extremely influential, scholars have expressed moderately optimistic views on the rapid changes in the translation profession, principally due to radical developments in areas like information and communication technologies. For example both Gambier (2014; 2016) and Schäffner (2012) do not consider the process of redefinition of competences and professional roles in the field of translation as threatening for professionals working in those areas, but, on the contrary, see it as symptomatic of a new awareness of the complexity characterising intercultural communication. Gambier goes as far as to envisage more opportunities for translators in the near future, as well as the promise of a social recognition in terms of status.

It is tempting to subscribe to this optimistic picture, particularly for professionals working on tourism promotion, where freedom, creativity and cross-cultural adaptation are the rule, rather than the exception. In a recent publication I wondered whether transcreation could be a viable approach for the translation of tourist texts (Agorni 2018: 92). Now, I would like to put it differently, and ask whether tourist texts could be translated at all, if not by transcreating them.
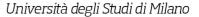
TRANSLATING TOURISM

It is not easy to classify the characteristic features of the language of tourism, given the extreme variety of its thematic and communicative components. Drawing upon the vast literature on this topic that has been produced in particular by Italian linguists and Translation Studies scholars (Agorni 2012a; 2012b; Calvi 2000; Cappelli 2016; Castello 2002; Denti 2012; Francesconi 2012; Maci 2013; Manca 2012; Nigro 2006), I have attempted to bring together the specific traits of the language of tourism by paying special attention to their communicative function. The results have been inserted in the threefold framework below:

> 1. Strategies meant to produce functional texts by addressing the specific needs and expectations of their receivers (for example, use of persuasive techniques, strategies of reader inclusion, etc.).
> 2. Selection of specific genres (such as the guidebook, brochure or flier), characterised by the appearance of a strong persuasive function in a text type which is predominantly informative or descriptive.
> 3. A strong presence of culture-specific elements, which metonymically represent foreign destinations. (Agorni 2016: 14)

Similarities with Katan's model of analysis mentioned above are apparent, although not exactly in a one-to-one correspondence. Rather, each of the characteristics

I have tried to define seems to be related to a specific combination of the language modalities illustrated by Katan. Strategies in no. 1 correspond to both *pouvoir* and *vouloir* functions (enabling and persuasive at the same time). The specific tourist genres mentioned in no. 2 bring together *vouloir* and *savoir* features (persuasive and informative) and, finally, the high presence of culture-specific elements combines *savoir* and *vouloir* aspects (informative and persuasive) of tourism discourse.

It seems particularly difficult to classify strategies or language functions into singular categories in the case of tourism discourse, as they appear not only to be related with each other, but also to overlap in a functional sense, one enhancing the other. For example, the high occurrence of culture-specific elements in tourist texts – in terms of information on the historical, artistic and cultural features of a certain tourist site – fulfils an informative and persuasive function (*savoir* and *vouloir*) at one and the same time: destination promotion is functionally realised by increasing tourists' knowledge.

All the communicative strategies listed above are strictly interconnected, but the strong presence of issues related to culture-specific elements, which represent foreign destination, is the most apparent feature of the language of tourism – and the main challenge for the translator. In fact translators negotiate the amount of information to be channelled through translation so as to help readers decode cultural difference (Moscardo 1996; Kelly 1997). Basically, they should recreate the function of the ST in the new TT cultural context, by adjusting texts to new communicative situations. The notion of cultural filter, proposed by House (1997) has been developed to provide translators with the methodological basis of this operation: "the translator has to take different cultural presuppositions in the two language communities into account in order to meet the needs of the target language addressees in their cultural setting, and in order to keep the textual function equivalent in source and target cultures" (1997: 70).

Degrees of translators' intervention may vary from a minimum to a maximum (Agorni 2012b). Mediation can be represented as a line or a continuum connecting two extremes, which stand for Venuti's well-known opposing approaches to translating, i.e. domesticating and foreignising strategies (Venuti 1995). Translators should avoid the two extremes and find a balance between the necessity of transforming STs into accessible TTs and, at the same time, providing appealing tourist offers (Agorni 2016: 18). In other words, TTs should be accessible for target readers, who should be able to fully comprehend their messages. Yet, this does not mean that culture-specific features need be toned down and/or substituted by familiar meanings, activating the filter of distortion illustrated earlier (Katan 2016b: 64-5). The risk of this strategy would be to produce domesticated tourist proposals which would not appeal to tourists, who are in search of a taste of the foreign. A way in between the two poles of domestication and foreignisation will have to be negotiated in relation to the specificity of each translation process, particularly in the field of tourism, where translators are asked to find a balance between the necessity to provide both accessible and appealing contents (Agorni 2012a: 6). Therefore, a number of different approaches can be employed to mediate culture-specific elements, the most frequent ones being: adding explanatory information, omitting details/information considered not relevant for the receiving cultural context,

generalising elements deemed too specific for the reader, substituting source with target linguistic and cultural references, enhancing the persuasive function of the language and finally adopting 'languaging' techniques or introducing loan words (cfr. Agorni 2018: 93). Language is the substance of each of these practices, and yet a contrastive linguistic approach does not appear to provide a sufficient methodological basis for the translation of tourist texts. An intercultural mediation approach would probably fare better, if not disjointed from its essential linguistic base.

Yet, I believe that in the specific case of tourism translation the approaches developed within Translation Studies could benefit from the addition of methodological frameworks borrowed from Tourism Studies. Hence, the next section will be dedicated to methodological issues, and namely to explore the possibility of introducing theoretical insights originated in Tourism Studies into the current debate on the role of translators and transcreators that is taking place within Translation Studies.

METHODOLOGICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR TOURISM TRANSLATION: A WAY IN BETWEEN TRANSLATION AND TRANSCREATION?

Multidisciplinary research is a necessary condition both in Translation and Tourism Studies, but, to date, there have been no apparent contacts between the two disciplines. In fact I have argued that concerns with the core linguistic dimension of translation and intercultural transfer are still to come within the field of Tourism Studies. Then, it is up to Translation Studies to take the lead and open a dialogue on methodological terms with its fellow discipline. This could bring about very interesting effects, first of all on the definition of the tasks of all professionals involved in tourism activities, destination experience mediators or translators alike.

Destination experience mediators have already been mentioned (Zátori 2016) as people or service providers with key responsibility in tourism promotional activities. They operate on the tourist experience: some scholars have used the verb "to craft" – "crafting tourism experiences" (Ooi 2006: 52) – to emphasise both the degree of responsibility of tourism mediators as well as the creativity inherent in their tasks.

Working from a sociological background, Ooi has drawn special attention to the way in which the shifting of tourists' attention shapes the quality of their experience. Mediators help tourists pay attention to some things and ignore others, focusing their gazes (Urry 1990), as well as providing an interpretation for what they are looking at. Hence, these mediators offer tourists different angles to perceive the sites they are visiting. Urry has singled out the visual element as the most important aspect of the tourist experience (although the importance of the other senses has been increasingly highlighted in his following works, see Urry and Larsen 2011). Other studies produced in the field of tourism have pointed to other ways to attract and hold visitors' attention: for example, Ooi refers to the way in which tourists can be stimulated intellectually (see also Moscardo 1996), or by means of their imagination or emotions (Lengkeek 2001; Ooi 2002).

But another fundamental element to be taken into consideration is given by the fact that people cannot pay attention to everything they see or perceive. As a consequence, attention-grabbing strategies have to be employed in tourism promotional discourse, as in any other type of advertising. Tourism mediators direct visitors' attention, who become dependent on them not only in order to perform their activity, that is tourism itself, but also to enjoy it. However, mediators do not have a total control over tourists' activities. The latter, in fact, have to find the best way to negotiate among a number of concerns that define the specificity of their own experience – the Insiders-Outsiders knowledge gap being just one among many. As Ooi has pointed out:

> The mediation of experiences does not, however, mean the absolute control of tourists' attention, but a balance of the need for tourists to notice and interpret tourism products in desirable ways, while at the same time allowing them to feel engaged in making choices, bridging the foreign/local gap and overcoming difficulties. (2006: 58)

In this case of Ooi's work, as in most, if not all, publications in the field of Tourism Studies, language and intercultural difference is not taken into account as one of the most prominent elements in the tourist encounter. The gap Ooi refers to in the previous quotation basically concerns the difference between residents and non-residents, that is Insiders and Outsiders differentiated only in terms of lack of local knowledge. This perspective undervalues deep-rooted, culturally-determined differences, as well as discursive and textual practices that are language specific – but not unbridgeable. Without pushing the argument as far as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis would have it, reality as represented by language is differentiated through each language system in use, at least to a certain extent.

Translators and intercultural mediators should therefore possess linguistic and intercultural competences, but they could further add to them those skills that have been outlined by research on tourism mediators produced in the field of tourism. For example, the skills mentioned in this extract could be particularly useful:

> tourism mediators play a vital role in sculpting tourism experiences. They play the role of selecting and accentuating items for tourism consumption. As mentioned earlier, tourists visit a place for only a short period of time, lack local knowledge and are unlikely to invest much time and effort in getting to know a destination in great depth. Tourism mediators offer a shortcut by pointing out sights and sites that are interesting and significant. These mediators also educate tourists about various attractions, and thus sculpt tourism experiences. In essence, tourism mediators help to frame tourism experiences. (Ooi 2006: 66)

Hence, the methodological ingredients that Translation Studies could borrow from Tourism Studies are not only the mindful perspective, already applied to intercultural mediation by Katan (2014), but also the concepts of selecting and drawing attention to specific destination features, ideas that seem to be close to Cohen's categories of keying

and fabrication, meant in a positive connotation. Thus, translators operating in the field of tourism could work in a way similar to "destination experience mediators", in terms of freedom, creativity and responsibility. Linguistic and intercultural transfer processes would be integrated by strategies such as selection, information, interpretation (in the sense of popularisation), and keying or attention-grabbing methods. Thus, functional intercultural communication could be enriched by a touch of creativity and one of the main consequences of this move could be a salutary detachment from the concept of fidelity, or strict adherence to the ST, a concept that is still negatively affecting tourism translation quality (Kelly 1997). Thanks to the contributions from Tourism Studies, the priorities of translators and intercultural mediators would be not only to make texts accessible to the T audience by means of a painstaking linguistic and cultural mediation, but also to produce functional and appealing tourist offers.

Whether all this would take us beyond the boundaries of translation, and place itself instead in the domain of transcreation, with hints of copywriting, should not be a concern at this initial stage of differentiation. Rather than seeing the two as competing definitions of tasks and expertise (on different payrolls), we should appreciate the reassessment of competences we are already witnessing in the proliferation of terms used to designate translation practices (Gambier 2016).

Finally, by borrowing these ideas from the tourism and hospitality area we hope to stimulate a parallel discussion within Tourism Studies about the fundamental importance of language in any tourist exchange. Hence, definitions such as tourism mediation, transcreation, or simply tourism translation could be applied to define a large-spectrum activity in which linguistic, intercultural and socio-cultural considerations could be equally balanced.

TRANSLATING CULTURAL EVENTS IN A MEDIATION PERSPECTIVE: A CASE STUDY

In order to open the space for a new conceptualisation of translation in the field of tourism, topics have been explored only at an abstract theoretical level up to this point. However, the risk is that the discussion may be perceived as detached from the matter at hand, that is its application in terms of translation practice. Hence, in this section I would like to introduce an analysis of a real-life tourism experience, by discussing an authentic English translation published and distributed in Italy.

The scope of the analysis will not be to evaluate this work, but rather to test the assumptions advanced in the previous sections, concerning a fruitful integration of Translation and Tourism Studies' frameworks, the result being a more creative and 'intervening' approach to translating (Katan 2016a). The gap in terms of background knowledge between Insiders and Outsiders has already been emphasised by Katan himself (2016b), and this is certainly one of the main dilemmas in the tourist experience. In fact Tourism Studies scholars, such as Hannabuss (1999), appear to be rather pessimistic, arguing that, no matter what, Insiders knowledge is beyond the possibilities of Outsiders. I would rather say that nowadays translators and intercultural mediators

could challenge that view. Hence, my preliminary hypothesis will be that by exercising a high degree of mediation, and going beyond what is normally accepted in terms of linguistic and cultural adaptation (see House's "cultural filter" [1997], for example), translators could bridge the gap between Insiders and Ousiders' knowledge. By aiming at a similarity in terms of response to the tourist offer, translators would certainly step into a 'productive', rather than 'reproductive' role, in the sense that they would take upon themselves the responsibility of rewriting the text, or parts of it, according to creative criteria.

As a matter of fact, translators' space of manoeuvre has already been expanded to a rather large extent in specific contexts such as audio-visual translation (Di Giovanni 2008; Zanotti 2014), games localisation (Mangiron and O'Hagan 2006; Bernal 2006), digital media, marketing and advertising (Gaballo 2012). As we know, in all these cases the notion of transcreation has been taken to substitute translation, as if the latter would fall short in terms of creative adaptation strategies. However, I have already pointed out that rather than fuelling the debate about the distinction between translation and transcreation, it seems more productive to bring the discussion down to a pragmatic level and take advantage of new, wider interpretations of translation practice (Agorni 2018: 101). It is my contention here that the insights borrowed from Tourism Studies and mentioned in the previous section could be used to conceptualise translating in the field of tourism as an enriching and resourceful form of intercultural mediation, which could enable translators to bring Outsiders closer to Insiders in terms of background knowledge. Katan's definition of the threefold function of tourism discourse illustrated above will be employed as methodological basis developed in a Translation Studies perspective, to be enriched by means of Tourism Studies practices, such as selection, information, keying and attention-grabbing strategies.

In order to test the hypothesis formulated above – whether a creative and adaptive approach to translating could make tourism texts more accessible and appealing to Outsider tourists – a bilingual leaflet about the Palio in Ferrara has been selected as representative of the quality of tourism translation in Italy. Ferrara is in fact one of the most touristic cities in the North of the country, and the text is currently available not only at local Tourist Information centres, but also at the central Tourist Information site of the Region Emilia Romagna based in Bologna, as well as at other official Tourist centres in nearby regions.

Printed every year, the leaflet features the program of the Palio, a re-enactment of historical facts and local folklore which takes place every year over the four weekends in May. A variety of live entertainments come together in this event, which culminates with the traditional horse races held in Piazza Ariostea, a large oval square named after the Italian poet Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533). In this spectacular site the city's eight Contrade, or city quarters, compete for the Palio, namely a finely decorated velvet banner. Not as internationally known as the Palio of Siena, nevertheless this Palio has a long-standing tradition.

For reasons of space we shall focus only on the first, introductory part of the leaflet, called "Il Palio più antico del mondo", i.e. "The oldest Palio in the world". The opening page of the original leaflet is reproduced below, together with its translation in English.

IL PALIO PIÙ ANTICO DEL MONDO

Un sogno lungo 753 anni. Questo è il Palio di Ferrara. Era infatti l'anno 1259 quando, per festeggiare la vittoria riportata a Cassano d'Adda da Azzo VII "Novello d'Este" su Ezzelino da Romano, si corse il primo Palio di Ferrara. Certo, nulla a che vedere con quello che si corre oggi in piazza Ariostea, anche se il tempo non ha mutato la partecipazione della gente, la passione e la voglia di vedere trionfare i propri campioni. Un passaggio importante, sotto il profilo della storicità della manifestazione, è quello registrato nel 1279, quando quella che era ormai diventata una spettacolare tradizione popolare, venne istituzionalizzata dal Comune. Gli Statuti disponevano che il Palio si corresse due volte l'anno: il 23 aprile in onore di San Giorgio, patrono di Ferrara, e il 15 agosto, in onore della Vergine Assunta. Il premio per il vincitore era appunto un "palio", cioè un prezioso pezzo di stoffa. L'immagine più affascinante che ci regala la memoria delle "corse del palio", è certamente quella che si può ammirare negli affreschi della Sala dei Mesi a Palazzo Schifanoia.

THE OLDEST PALIO IN THE WORLD

A dream which has been lasting for 753 years. This is "Il Palio di Ferrara". The very first Palio was ran in 1259, in order to celebrate the victory of Azzo "Novello" da Este the Seventh over Ezzelino da Romano in the battle of Cassano d'Adda. There is no doubt the current races are different from the one run in 1259, although time has not changed people's participation, passion and desire of seeing one own's champion winning. An important transition, under the profile of the historicity of the event, occurred in 1279 when the palio was institutionalized by the city authorities. The statute ordered the Palio had to be raced twice a year: on each 23rd of April, in honour of the patron of Ferrara, St George, and on each 15th of August, day consecrated to the Assumption of Virgin Mary. The prize awarded to the winning jockey was a palio, a piece of fine fabric. Nowadays only one race per year is held, on the last Sunday of May. The early Palio is vividly evoked in the frescoes in the "Salone dei Mesi" (Hall of the Months) in Ferrara's Palazzo Schifanoia.

Image 1. Leaflet describing the Palio of Ferrara (2013).

Apart from some obvious grammatical mistakes, the TT is extremely close to the ST, both in terms of syntax and sentence structure. As a consequence, this translation is not accurate enough, mostly as far as the informative (*savoir*) and promotional (*vouloir*) aspects are concerned. As I have pointed out earlier, it is difficult to operate a clear-cut distinction between the two categories defined by Katan, as one appears to improve the quality of the other. This is especially evident in the case of historical information, which carries not only a foreign flavour but also a sense of times past, when human life appeared to be more authentic. Escapism and tradition are paradoxically played out together at historical festivals. In this case, historical details and narratives – basically *savoir* – take on a promotional function: they are used not only to instruct visitors, but also to entertain them.

The function of the titles is generally that of introducing the subject and create reader expectations. Here, reference to the "oldest Palio in the world" produces a certain suspense in all those readers who have never encountered the word "Palio" before. Hence, this term could be used as a functional attention-grabbing element, by providing an explanatory definition of the origins of this historical festival, which can be traced back to medieval times. This information should open the text, so as to establish the setting for the narration of the events. Here is an example of the type of translation to be produced in the creative and enriching approach described earlier:

> The Palio in Ferrara is a festival of medieval origin taking place annually over the four weekends in May. This historic re-enactment has a long-standing tradition: indeed it was first held in 1259 to celebrate the Este Lord Azzo VII Novello and his victory over the army of Emperor Frederick II.

In this example, both the *pouvoir* and *savoir* aspects of language usage are simultaneously activated when the festival's is defined as "a festival of medieval origin" and a "historic re-enactment". At the same time, practical information is also presented, when we learn that the events take place annually "over the four weekends in May" – thus triggering the *pouvoir* function of this translation.

References to historic details are challenging for the translator of tourist texts, as generally target readers do not have the background knowledge necessary to grasp their significance. Normally translators reduce the specificity of historical details by referring to a broader, more general context, accessible to a wide readership. Both omission and its opposite, that is the introduction of new explanatory material, are alternative strategies to generalisation. In this TT, omission has been practiced in the case of a minor historic character, Ezzelino da Romano. Reference to the protagonist mentioned in the ST, Azzo VII Novello, has become more accessible by linking it with the name of a better-known historical figure, that is Emperor Frederick II, Azzo's principal opponent – although not in the battle described by the ST. Frederick II is never mentioned or hinted at in the ST: he has been introduced anew in the TT, as an instance of fabrication – in its positive and creative meaning. This strategy in fact does not misrepresent historical events: rather, references to specific historical details have been

substituted by a more accessible piece of information, which retains some connection with the historical context mentioned in the ST, but is more comprehensible for a wide international readership. The TT's flavour of authenticity is not lost; on the contrary, it is enhanced as a result of introducing a well-known historical figure.

Fidelity to the ST may sometimes blind translators to central elements in a text. The official brochure does not mention the horse races, the most exciting ingredient of the whole Palio experience in Ferrara, which sees the eight Contrade confronting each other. The ST's intended recipients do not need the horse races to be mentioned, as this element is implied in Italian word "palio" itself. Spelling out this information would be redundant for Insiders. The same cannot be said as far as Outsiders are concerned, however, who would be unable to infer this meaning, which should be made explicit in translation.

ST's fidelity runs inevitably counter both the *savoir* and *vouloir* aspects of this translation, as the tourists' insufficient knowledge of the event may jeopardise their very intention to visit Ferrara or to attend this particular event. Therefore, the importance of the horse races should be foregrounded in any promotional account of the Palio to trigger off the *vouloir* aspects of this event. In this perspective, translators could, or rather, should go so far as to introduce additional material in a creative and yet mindful way, in order to avoid an overload of information, on the one hand, but, on the other, highlight the present-day significance of this historical re-enactment. For example, reference to the races could be introduced in the section describing people's enthusiastic response to the Palio experience:

> These races represent the culminating point of the present-day event too, when citizens and tourists alike participate with intense partisan spirit and cheer their champions on in the impressive piazza Ariostea.

Attempts at framing this cultural event for international visitors could be further investigated, but the samples discussed above appear to form a rather significant picture. In spite of the fact that a specific cultural filter cannot be activated in the case of international recipients – necessarily *non*-culturally identified – strategies oriented towards a wide-ranging degree of accessibility have been suggested. Obviously, this is a preliminary work: a single case is not sufficient to confirm the hypothesis concerning the possibility of bridging the gap between Insiders' and Outsiders' knowledge by means of a creative and enriching type of mediation. Not only further research on this topic should be conducted on a corpus of texts to be analysed, but results should also be tested, so as to discern receivers' – that is Outsiders' – reactions. Yet, the analysis above is relevant from a methodological point of view, as it has illustrated the ways in which strategies currently used in Tourism Studies (for example, selection, information and keying) can be applied in the translation of tourist texts. Whether these interventions fall into the category of translation, trascreation or even adaptation does not seem to be the real point of the matter, which is instead to discuss the space for manoeuvre for translators and intercultural mediators working in the field of tourism.

CONCLUSION

Translators translate, circulate meanings and make things happen. The consequences of their interventions not only on the page but also in everyday life are extraordinarily apparent in a field such as tourism, an area in which economic, cultural and social issues converge. Yet, translators are very often constrained, or even silenced in a globalised society in which the term culture, even when it is used in the plural, is still seen in a monolingual perspective, only too often the Anglo-American one.

It is the case of Tourism Studies, a field in which intercultural relations and culture clashes are core motives. The material presence of languages in a very large percentage of tourist encounters is hardly ever mentioned by research in this field. The reasons behind this should be further investigated, but for the time being this chapter has attempted to set up a dialogue between Tourism and Translation Studies, hopefully opening a space for discussion. Concepts related to mindfulness, interpretation and creativity, as they are currently used in Tourism Studies, could help translators go beyond not only an old-fashioned fidelity notion – which still looms large in tourism translating – but also fruitless disputes over delimiting and restraining the translators' roles.

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