

« COMPREND-IL LEUR LANGAGE, COMPRENDROIENT-ELLES LE SIEN ? »:  
MARIA EDGEWORTH'S *ENNUI* (1809) INTO FRENCH  
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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the first translation into French of one of Maria Edgeworth's Irish tales, *Ennui*, which was published in 1809 in the first series of *Tales of Fashionable Life*. Our goal is to provide a translémic analysis of the target text by using Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS). After a contextualization of Edgeworth and her work, we will describe both the source and the target text taking into account the changes operated in the French text and the consequences for its reception in France. This study is of particular interest for two reasons: at the turn of the nineteenth century, Edgeworth was very popular in Great Britain as a bestselling writer of feminocentric novels and educational essays written in collaboration with her father. Also, Edgeworth was concerned about giving an accurate portrait of Ireland and Irish speech, which was not easy to render into French at that time.

KEY WORDS: Maria Edgeworth; Translation studies; *Ennui*; Descriptive Translation Studies; Ireland

RESUMEN

Este trabajo se centra en la primera traducción al francés de uno de los relatos irlandeses de Maria Edgeworth, *Ennui*, que se publicó en 1809 en la primera serie de *Tales of Fashionable Life*. Nuestro objetivo es ofrecer un análisis translémico del texto meta usando los Estudios Descriptivos de Traducción (EDT). Tras una contextualización de Edgeworth y su obra, describiremos el texto fuente y meta teniendo en cuenta los cambios operados en el texto francés y sus consecuencias para la recepción en Francia. Este estudio es de especial interés por dos razones: a principios del siglo diecinueve, Edgeworth era muy popular en Gran Bretaña por sus grandes ventas de novelas feminocéntricas y ensayos educativos escritos en colaboración con su padre. Además, a Edgeworth siempre le preocupó dar un retrato adecuado de Irlanda y del discurso angloirlandés, lo que no era tan fácil de trasladar al francés.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Maria Edgeworth; Estudios de traducción; *Ennui*; Estudios Descriptivos de Traducción; Irlanda

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Maria Edgeworth (1768-1849) was one of the most important nineteenth-century British writers. She produced a large corpus of tales for children, pedagogical novels, novels of manners and Irish tales. Scholars have repeatedly turned attention to the latter since Edgeworth inaugurated the regional novel and the Big House novel which would be later followed by writers such as Walter Scott or Ivan Turgenev. Edgeworth's success soon reached the Continent, where she was cherished and lots of translations of her works appeared. Still, the particular form of these translations, their context and the impact of these texts in Edgeworth studies have not been properly analyzed yet. This paper is part of a larger project about the Anglo-Irish author's reception on the Continent which aims to study the first translation of Edgeworth's *Ennui* (1809) into French. This analysis is interesting since Edgeworth was later translated into other European languages (Spanish, for instance; see Fernández Rodríguez 2008; 2010; 2012; 2014a; 2014b) and the role of French mediation is paramount here. Following Gideon Toury, any attempt to study a translation must begin with a proper contextualization (1995: 29), in this case about Edgeworth's life and *oeuvre*, and later we will focus on the main features of the source and target texts bearing in mind Even-Zohar's theory and also some macrotextual aspects (the narrative point of view, prologues, footnotes, etc) and microtextual ones (the study of units of analysis or the *segments* established between texts, as well as the deviations or modifications operated in them) (Snell-Hornby 1995).

### 1.1. METHODOLOGY

For our purpose, we will adopt an approach that considers all the factors surrounding the production and reception of the text. Such an approach is offered by Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), more specifically Even-Zohar's and Toury's contributions. The former defines the literary system as “[t]he network of relations that is hypothesized to obtain between a number of activities called literary, and consequently these activities themselves observed via that network” (1990: 28). In his groundbreaking article, Even-Zohar also explains how the elements conforming the polysystem (*producer, consumer, market, product, institution and repertoire*) are integrated and depend on each other (1990: 34).

Long before Even-Zohar, another Israeli scholar, Toury had stated that a translated text must respect adequacy to the source language and acceptability in the target language: “This ultimate goal, to serve as a message in the *target* cultural-linguistic context, and in it alone, is by no means an indifferent factor in the production of the translated text. Rather, it may well be one of the main factors determining the formation and formulation of any translation” (1980: 16). Toury investigated translation norms in culture arguing that a translation cannot share the same systemic space with its original; not even when the two are physically present side by side (1995: 26). However, translations often serve as a basis for further acts of translation: a translation is picked up and assigned the role of a source text in accordance with the concerns of a new prospective recipient system (1995: 26-7). Toury also insists that translation activities and their products cause changes in the target culture because they fill in gaps. In this sense, Toury retakes André Lefevere's idea of the close connection between translation and rewriting, which is nowadays undervalued in literary theory and comparative literature, for two reasons: it is a strategy to adapt what is foreign to the norms of the new culture and it is also a proof that reception has taken place (1985: 106). Translations are intended to cater to the needs of a target culture, but they also deviate from its sanctioned patterns and a certain amount of deviance is preferable to complete normality. For Toury, there is no problem in considering translations as a special system or a genre of their own within a culture (1995: 27-8) and translations have a temporal character: “historical contextualization is a must not only for a *diachronic* study, which nobody would contest, but also for *synchronic* studies, which still seems a lot less obvious, unless one has accepted the principles of so-called ‘Dynamic-Functionalism’ ” (Toury 1995: 64).

## 1.2. MARIA EDGEWORTH

Born in Oxfordshire, Maria Edgeworth was the third child of Richard Lovell Edgeworth and his first wife Anna Maria Elers, who died when her daughter was only five. At fifteen, Maria went to live on her family's estate in Ireland. She became her father's estate manager and educated her twenty-one brothers and sisters. Maria read the most influential British (Adam Smith, Edmund Burke, Edmund Spenser) and continental thinkers (Stéphanie-Félicité de Genlis, Armand Berquin, Jean François Marmontel or Jean Jacques Rousseau) and the Edgeworth household was frequented by very important public figures, like Erasmus Darwin or Josiah Wedgwood. Between 1791 and 1803, Maria spent various periods abroad, in Bristol, the industrial Midlands, London, Paris and Edinburg. In Paris she mixed with progressive intellectuals, like Etienne Dumont and refused the only marriage proposal she received in her life from a Swedish courtier with scientific interests, Abraham Niclas (Clewberg) Edelcrantz. Her stay in Edinburg allowed her to socialize with Dugald Stewart, a Scottish empiricist philosopher, and novelist Elizabeth Hamilton. Maria corresponded with Anna Laetitia Barbauld, and later on, in 1814, with Walter Scott, who later claimed her as an important influence.

Maria's work was influenced by her family's Anglo-Irish status and Richard Lovell's interests. At first, Maria wrote about educational matters (*Practical Education* 1798) arguing for a rationalist and secular approach to education. This book marked her emergence as a writer of note and her reputation quickly spread via translations and liberal journals in Europe and America. She also composed stories for children and adolescents and achieved great success. However, she will always be remembered for *Castle Rackrent* telling the story of the ruin of the Rackrent family. Her novels about contemporary society (*Belinda* [1801], *Leonora* [1806], *Patronage* [1814] and *Helen* [1834]) are inserted into the feminocentric tradition cultivated by Jane Austen.

After Richard Lovell's death, Maria's productivity slowed. She completed his *Memoirs* which met with a very hostile reception. Reviewers accused him of paganism and Maria of perjuring herself by trying to defend him. She had second thoughts about publishing a new work for adults, but she produced *Harry and Lucy* (1825) and *Helen*. Edgeworth's work clearly informs the social novel of the nineteenth century. It emphasizes the education of children and the moral management of a large estate thus anticipating Dickens, Thackeray and others.

## 2. ENNUI AND TALES OF FASHIONABLE LIFE (1809)

Applying Even-Zohar scheme to the British polysystem, Maria Edgeworth was the *producer* or authoress of a *product*, *Ennui*, which was aimed at British readers or *consumers* composing a *market* involved with the selling and buying of literary products and with the promotion of types of consumption. In that sense, Edgeworth became very popular in Great Britain: with *Patronage* she trebled what Scott earned from *Waverley* (1814) and it produced seven times what Austen earned from *Emma* (1816). As for the *institution*, it refers to the publishing houses, critics and journals, which most of the times praised Edgeworth's works. Finally, the *repertoire* is that part of the literary system selecting the rules and materials governing both the production and the use of the product. In this case, it refers to the paradigm of the regional tale which was founded by Edgeworth and appreciated by King George III himself to the point of admitting that reading *Castle Rackrent* had given him fuller acquaintance with his Irish subjects (Butler 1972: 359).

For Toury, a text's position (and function) —including the position and function which go with a text being regarded as a translation— are determined first and foremost by considerations originating in the culture which hosts them (1995: 26). *Ennui* is contained in the first series of *Tales of Fashionable Life* (1809), together with *The Dun*, *Almeria* and *Madame de Fleury*. This series describes and contrast high life in England, Ireland and France and is presented in a preface signed by Richard Lovell. Maria's father

explains that the author wants to point out some of the errors of the high classes and to disseminate the ideas exposed in *Professional Education* (1809). He defines *Ennui* as a story where “[t]he causes, curses and cures of this disease are exemplified, I hope, in such a manner, as not to make the remedy worse than the disease” (1809, I: vi). It was welcome by reviewers (Butler and Loughlin, 1999: 1-liv). *The Edinburgh Review* considered *Ennui* the funniest story in *Tales of Fashionable Life*:

a story, more rich in character, incident and reflection, than any English narrative with which we are acquainted: — as rapid and various as the best tales of Voltaire and as full of practical good sense and moral pathetic as any of the other tales of Maria Edgeworth. The Irish characters are imitable; — not the coarse caricatures of modern playwrights — but drawn with a spirit, a delicacy, and a precision, to which we do not know if there be any parallel among national delineations (1809, I: 380).

For Marilyn Butler, Maria Edgeworth's biographer, *Ennui* helped inaugurate a new style of sociological realism: “The life of the landlord is realized in fiction for the first time, and his working relationships with tenant, employees, and neighbours, are handled with freshness and truth. At its most convincing Glenthorn's experience is based on Edgeworth's; not merely the detail of administering the estate of Edgeworthstown, but the whole ideal of social utility which Edgeworth had learnt from the Lunar generation” (Butler 1972: 373). Much later, in her introduction to the Penguin Classics edition, she argues: “[*Ennui*] is a fictional allegory on a sweeping scale, which represents an age of political revolution for Ireland as for France, and uncovers the social and economic revolution in train in Northern and Western Europe” (1992: I).

The plot hinges on an exchange of two infants in the cradle: the peasant is brought up as the future Earl, Lord Glenthorn, while the true Earl becomes a peasant blacksmith, Christy. The former has never been to Ireland before and is suffering from “ennui” as a result of dissipation, including gambling, eating and irresponsibly spending money. Glenthorn gets married to save his patrimony, but he does not get on well with his wife. On his twenty-fifth birthday he meets an old Irishwoman, Ellinor O'Donoghue, and loses conscience as he falls down from his horse. The person who nurses him during his convalescence is Ellinor, so, as a sign of gratitude, Glenthorn promises her that he will leave Sherwood Park and travel to Ireland within a year. He soon puts his plan into practice after discovering that his wife has run away with one of his former guardians. In Ireland, Glenthorn sees the contrast between the beauty of the land and the poverty of its inhabitants, who revered him as their lord. He takes contact with daily life and practical issues: his tenants voice their complaints to him and he is instructed in Edgeworthian principles by his agent, the Scotsman M'Leod, who thinks that problems cannot be solved by giving money to people, but by teaching the Irish how to prosper and by educating them. During his stay in Ireland, Ellinor is close to him and Glenthorn provides her with an English-styled cottage that Ellinor never tidies up due to her neglect. In one of his visits to Ormsby Villa, the protagonist meets Lady Geraldine, a charismatic young woman looking more French than English and she is soon fascinating for him. Tenants respect Glenthorn and he is asked to help Owen, Elinor's son, since he is involved in the rebellion as a conspirator. At that moment the truth about his birth is unveiled by Ellinor herself. Glenthorn decides to restore Christy to his position as an Earl, as he publicly voices, and he returns to England with the aim to become a barrister, a position that he finally achieves. In London, he is introduced to Cecilia Delamere, the heiress to the estates he foolishly lost by gambling. As the novel comes to an end, Glenthorn sees his wife's funeral: her lover, a Mr. Crawley, made her believe they would get married, but that never happened and she ruined herself. Glenthorn's marriage to Cecilia takes place at the same time that he is informed that Christy's wife is an adulteress, the Irish gentleman has more and more debts and there is no peace at the castle. Finally, Glenthorn Castle is burnt down and the heir, Johnny, is found dead. The first person narrator adds that the property is now being reconstructed and Glenthorn plans to come back to Ireland to live there.

## 3. L'ENNUI OU MEMOIRES DU COMTE DE GLENTHORN

In the French case it is significant that Edgeworth uses the form of the “tale” in the same way as Jean-François Marmontel’s “conte”, that is, a humorous short story a bit more complex than a fable. According to Marmontel, the conteur seeks to paint scenes and respects the *vraisemblance* and customs trying to achieve “la finesse et sur-tout la gaieté” (1818: 525). Therefore, the consumers were familiar with this popular genre in the French *repertoire*. Besides, French readers were not more detached from Ireland than the British audience, and in Paris there was some interest in exotic literature: Ireland still represented an insular Other in James Macpherson’s Ossian poems and Lady Morgan’s novels, which began to be translated in France at that time. Edgeworth’s work was backed by the *institutions* and obtained good reviews, as it will be seen.

Edgeworth became very popular in French-speaking countries after the first translations of *Practical Education* in *Bibliothèque Britannique* and a summary of some of Edgeworth’s translations into French is offered by Colvin (1979 : 89-90 ; see also Van Bragt et al. 1995: 327-8; Fernández Rodríguez 2014a and 2014b). Her success coincides with a favourable attitude to the English culture which influenced the medicine (Newton), laws (Bentham) or the novel (Austen). The text is the first translation of *Ennui* into English and is introduced by an “Avis de l’éditeur” explaining that four months ago they had offered “La Mère intrigante” which is now sold out. Part of the review of *Ennui* by *The Edinburgh Review* is reproduced and translated with the note “Une analyse de cet ouvrage a paru aussi en juin 1810, dans le journal de littérature anglaise, que je publie tous les mois sous le titre de *Monthly Repertory*” (Edgeworth I, 1812: ii):

*“Of miss Edgeworth’s Tales “Ennui” perhaps is the best and most entertaining...more rich in character, incident and reflection than any english [sic] narrative with which we are acquainted. As rapid and various as the best tales of Voltaire, and as full of practical good sense and moral pathetic as any of the other tales of miss Edgeworth. The Irish characters are inimitable. Not the coarse caricatures of modern play-wrights [sic]; but drawn with a spirit, delicacy, and a precision, to which we do not know if there be any parallel among national delineations, C’est à dire*

*De tous les contes de miss Edgeworth, l’Ennui est peu être le meilleur et le plus amusant...plus riche en caractères, en incidents, et en réflexions, qu’aucune narration anglaise que nous connoissons: aussi rapide, aussi varié que les meilleurs contes de Voltaire, et aussi rempli de sages préceptes de conduite et de morale pathétique qu’aucun des contes de Miss Edgeworth. Les caractères irlandais sont inimitables. Ils ne ressemblent point aux grossières caricatures de nos modernes faiseurs de comédie. Ils sont tracés avec une vivacité, une précision, une délicatesse que nous font douter qu’on puisse leur rien comparer en ce genre”* (Edgeworth I, 1812: ii-iii).

Galignani finishes warning that “peu d’ouvrages offrent autant de difficultés, comme on pourra s’en assurer en parcourant l’original” (Edgeworth I, 1812: iv), exactly the same as they did when they published *L’Absent*.

The review in *Journal de Paris* was positive in general (they even compared Edgeworth with Frances Burney), but there is one point in *Ennui* which should be more reinforced:

*[Ennui] est plus riche qu’aucune narration anglaise. Sans parler de Fielding, de Richardson, de Goldsmith et de Godwin, je ne citerai que miss Burney parmi les femmes, comme incomparablement supérieure à miss Edgeworth [...] Sa manière est pure, élégante et spirituelle, mais laisse desirer plus de sensibilité, plus d’abandon. La lecture de cet ouvrage amuse, et donne souvent sujet à penser; mais elle ne laisse aucune de ces vives impressions qui font sortir un roman de la foule et lui assignent un rang distingué parmi les productions de ce genre (1812: 4)*

Translators usually worked in a hurry and did not revise the text whose owner was the editor. In our study, the editor of *Ennui* is Giovanni Antonio Galignani (1757–1821), a famous Italian newspaper publisher from Brescia. This man had lived for some time in London where he published twenty-four lectures on a new method of learning Italian without grammar or dictionary. Once in Paris, he and his wife, Anne Parsons, offered linguistic breakfasts and teas to persons desirous of mastering English or Italian. Mrs. Parsons-Galignani established an English bookshop and a circulating library. In 1808, he began to publish a monthly publication, *Repertory of English Literature*. On the fall of Napoleon in 1814, Galignani commenced issuing guide-books and a daily paper printed in English, *Galignani's Messenger*, a tri-weekly which speedily became a daily paper and circulated among English residents all over Europe, as the stamp duty and postage rendered London journals expensive. The following year, Galignani published a Paris guide in English and German, on opposite pages, for the use of officers of the allied troops. According to Christine Hayes, Galignani, Barrois, Baudry and Bossange saw piracy as a threat to their literary capital; however, they often resorted to this practice with English and Spanish works at the beginning of the Revolution (2010: 76). Brunel, Pichois and Rousseau (1983) maintain that during the nineteenth century “le plus grand choix de livres étrangers se trouve dans les librairies spécialisées, qui s'adjoignent parfois des cabinets de lectures, lesquels reçoivent également des revues et des journaux: tous les Parisiens connaissent de longue date la librairie Galignani. La Bibliothèque américaine, la Bibliothèque polonaise, offrent des ressources analogues” (1983: 42). Diana Cooper-Richet explains that the Galignanis boasted of preserving paragraphs which had been deleted in London and of adding complete information about authors and detailed references. They also translated very quickly and could publish a translation just a few weeks after it came out in Britain (2001: 133). From the 1830s, Galignani and Baudry launched the “Collection of Ancient and Modern British Authors” including the novels most recently published in England by Fenimore Cooper, Charles Dickens, Maria Edgeworth, Henry Fielding, Walter Scott or William M. Thackeray. For Cooper-Richet, thanks to these publishers it was possible to see the evolution of the first English Romantic works in Paris (2001: 134).

Pierre Louis Dubuc was responsible for the translations of *Ennui* (1812), *Manoeuvring* (1812), *Les deux Grisélidis* (1813), *Vivian* (1813), *Émilie de Coulanges* (1813) and *L'Absent ou la Famille irlandaise à Londres* (1814) (Cointre et al., 2006: 300, 311). He also translated Sydney Oweson's, William Ireland's, A.M. Porter's, Jane West's and Jane Porter's works into English (Cointre 2006: 303, 313, 315; Polet 2000: 366).

The translation uses the standard older form of French spelling, gradually replaced from the third quarter of the eighteenth century, though not abandoned by the Académie Française until 1835. As we have already emphasized, *Ennui* is a complex text, and the register shifts markedly under the influence of more literary models. This can be registered with songs and verses by famous poets. Cross-references are essential to Edgeworth's manner as they are to other Anglo-Irish writers: Swift, Burke, Berkeley or Sterne. In translation, songs suffered a cultural transposition since they were transformed into popular songs in French. Elinor's song, for instance, is not literally translated and only the rhyme is preserved for stylistic effects:

“There was a lady loved a swine:  
Honey! says she,  
I'll give ye a silver trough.  
Hunk! says he!” (Edgeworth 1809, I: 129)

D'une superbe auge d'argent  
Je veux te faire le présent,  
A son pourceau chéri disoit certaine femme.  
Le pourceau répond en grognant:  
Non, non, je n'en veux point, je n'en veux point, madame (Edgeworth 1812, I: 180)

Mr. Devereux is a witty poet and one of the most fashionable young men in Dublin. Glenthorn appreciates this *connoisseur* because he is intelligent but not pretentious, and Devereux marries Lady Geraldine at the end thanks to Glenthorn's mediation since the young lady's mother, Lady Kildagan, aspires to a wealthier man for Lady Geraldine. The poet quotes a few lines by Spencer which are later expanded in Dubuc's work: "Full little knowest thou that hast not tried,/What hell it is in sueing long to bide" (Edgeworth 1809, I: 175) becomes "Funeste ambition! sombre enfer des vivants,/S'il ne les a sentis, qui peindra tes tourmens?" (Edgeworth 1812, II: 58). The whole excerpt is later freely translated into French as follows:

"Full little knowest thou that hast not tried,  
What hell it is in sueing long to bide;  
To lose good days, that might be better spent,  
To waste long nights in pensive discontent,  
To speed to-day, to be put back to-morrow,  
To feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow,  
To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares,  
To eat thy heart through comfortless despairs,  
To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,  
To spend, to give, to want, to be undone" (Edgeworth 1809, I: 176).

Funeste ambition! sombre enfer des vivants,  
S'il ne les a sentis, qui peindra tes tourmens [sic]?  
A poursuivre un objet qui s'éloigne sans cesse  
On use les beaux jours de sa belle jeunesse;  
On abreuve ses nuits d'amertume et de pleurs,  
Qu'attendent au réveil de plus vives douleurs;  
Agité par l'espoir, tourmenté par la crainte,  
Ayant pour tout refuge [sic] une inutile plainte,  
Après des cris, des pas, des travaux superflus,  
La fin de tant de peine est de n'espérer plus (Edgeworth 1812, II: 59).

The tendency to free translating coexists with literal translation and ellipsis. For instance, Devereux translates other verses into French which are faithfully preserved (Edgeworth 1809, I: 192-3). However, Edgeworth opens some chapters with verses —namely chapter 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 13 and 18— which are not reproduced in the French version nor Thiebault's quote in French on the first page of *Ennui*:

"Que faites-vous à Potzdam?" demandois-je un jour au prince Guillaume. "Monsieur," me répondit-il, "nous passons notre vie à conjuguer tous le même verbe; *Je m'ennuie, tu t'ennuies, il s'ennuie, nous nous ennuyons, vous vous ennuyez, ils s'ennuient; je m'ennuyois, je m'ennuierai,*" &c.

THIEBAULD, Mém. de Frédéric le Grand.

There are some supplementary paratexts which are defined by Genette as a special area of transaction between two key elements of the polysystem, the producer and the consumer (1987: 8). It is taken for granted that the target reader is not necessarily familiar with British drama. Regarding footnotes, there is one on Garrick's play *Bon ton à l'office*: "Cette pièce de théâtre qui, en anglais, a pour titre High life below stairs, est du célèbre Garrick" (Edgeworth 1812, I: 81) and another about the word play on "yawney and sawney": "Pairing me and Mr. M'Leod, whom she had seen together, her ladyship observed, that Sawney and Yawney were made for each other; and she sketched, in strong caricature, my relaxed elongation of limb, and his rigid rectangularity" (Edgeworth 1809, I: 140) is rendered into French as "Les expressions qu'elle employa furent sawney and yawney. La première est consacrée depuis longtemps [sic] par les Anglais à ridiculiser les Ecossais; la seconde est visiblement formée du verbe to yawn, qui veut dire bâiller" (Edgeworth 1812, II: 10). The translation contains another footnote on the family

of the Surfaces: “Tous les amateurs de littérature anglaise savent que dans la comédie de M. Sheridan, intitulée *School for Scandal*, un jeune hypocrite porte le nom de Joseph Surface. Cette pièce a été transportée sur le Théâtre-Français, avec le titre de *Tartuffe de mœurs*” (Edgeworth 1812, II: 124)

The subtitle of *Ennui* is very revealing: “Memoirs of the Earl of Glenthorn”. The use of the first person narrative reflects certain moral attitudes in *Ennui*. The narrator is auto and intradiegetic in Genette’s terms since Glenthorn is the hero of his own narrative (1972: 239). *Memoirs* implies looking back from reflection and insisting on the authenticity of events. Glenthorn also adopts a didactic attitude and introduces the following comments:

The philosophy we learn from books makes but a faint impression upon the mind, in comparison with that which we are taught by our own experience; and we sometimes feel surprised to find that what we have been taught as maxims of morality prove true in real life. After having had, for many years, the fullest opportunities of judging of the value of riches, when I reflected upon my past life, I perceived that their power of conferring happiness is limited, nearly as the philosophic poet describes; that all the changes and modifications of luxury must, in the sum of actual physical enjoyment, be reduced to a few elementary pleasures, of which the industrious poor can obtain their share: a small share, perhaps; but then it is enjoyed with a zest that makes it equal in value perhaps to the largest portion offered to the sated palate of ennui. These truths are as old as the world; but they appeared quite new to me, when I discovered them by my own experience (Edgeworth 1809, I: 323).

La philosophie que nous puisons dans les livres fait peu d'impression sur nous en comparaison de celle que nous inculque l'expérience; et souvent, dans la pratique, nous sommes surprise de voir se vérifier les maximes de morale que la lecture nous avoit enseignées. Après avoir eu pendant plusieurs années la facilité d'apprécier au juste les richesses quand je vins à réfléchir [sic] sur ma vie passée, je vis que leur influence sur le bonheur est vraiment aussi limitée que le soutiennent quelques poètes [sic] philosophes. Je vis que les raffinemens [sic] du luxe le plus varié et le plus recherché se bornoient au bout du compte à quelques plaisirs élémentaires qui ne sont point inaccessibles aux pauvres; s'il ne leur en échoit qu'une légère portion, ils la savourent avec une vivacité que ne connut jamais l'opulence blâsée. Ces vérités, toutes triviales qu'elles sont, me parurent nouvelles, quand ma propre expérience me les fit apercevoir (Edgeworth 1812, III: 45-6).

The incorporation of new registers or their application to new contexts is one remarkable feature of Maria’s writing style and contributes to create irony, which here is unfortunately lost. This is what happens almost at the beginning when Glenthorn is abandoned by his wife and the only thing that interests him are boxing-matches. The vocabulary about boxing simply disappears in French thus reducing the effect of Edgeworth’s prose on the reader:

Whilst I was in this critical state of ineptitude, my attention was accidentally roused by the sight of a boxing-match. My feelings were so much excited, and the excitation was so delightful, that I was now in danger of becoming an amateur of the pugilistic art. It did not occur to me that it was beneath the dignity of a British nobleman to learn the vulgar terms of the boxing trade. I soon began to talk very *knowingly* of *first-rate bruisers*, *game men*, and *pleasing fighters*; *making play* — *beating a man under the ropes* — *sparring* — *rallying* — *sawing* — and *chopping*. What farther proficiency I might have made in this language, or how long my interest in these feats of prize-fighters might have continued, had I been left to myself, I cannot determine; but I was unexpectedly seized with a fit of national shame, on hearing a foreigner of rank and reputation express astonishment at our taste for these savage spectacles (Edgeworth 1809, I: 58-9).

Au milieu de ces fluctuations de mon caractère, je fus un moment intéressé par le spectacle d'un combat de boxeurs. J'y pris un goût si vif, je m'y attachai tellement, que je courus vraiment le risque de devenir un amateur assidu de cette espèce de pugilat. Je ne fis pas seulement réflexion qu'il étoit au-dessous de la dignité d'un noble anglais de se mettre dans la



tête les termes d'un art aussi grossier. Je ne sais pas précisément jusqu'à quel degré j'aurois poussé ma science sur ce point important, si j'avois été livré à moi-même; mais je fus saisi d'un accès de pudeur nationale, en entendant un étranger exprimer le dégoût que lui inspiroit ce sauvage spectacle (Edgeworth 1812, I: 83-4).

### 3.1. TRANSLATING GENDER

Female characters, in particular, were wittier and less submissive in British texts. Cecilia Delamere is directly related to Miss Broadhurst in *The Absentee* since both affirm they would only marry for love. For Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, the marriage Glenthorn–Delamere implies acquiring a new line of maternal heritage and Glenthorn's rebirth as a chief (1991: 164-5). Mitzi Myers adds that the name “inserts into the fictional text a factual local family which, like the Fitzgerald–Geraldines, came over with Strongbow: the Longford Delameres, the country historian records, were Anglo-Normans resident in Ireland since the twelfth century” (1996: 388). However, Lady Geraldine is a cultivated woman who seduces Glenthorn and, like Ellinor, she takes him away from lethargy: “The warmth of Lady Geraldine's expressions, on this and many other occasions, wakened dormant feelings in my heart, and made me sensible that I had a soul, and that I was superior to the puppets with whom I had been classed” (Edgeworth 1809, I: 190). Lady Geraldine attacks conventionalisms and the rich. Her charm, which Glenthorn notices on their first meeting, is much better described in English than in the French translation, where some parts are shortened:

Her voice was agreeable: she did not speak with the Irish accent; but, when I listened maliciously, I detected certain Hibernian inflections; nothing of the vulgar Irish idiom, but something that was more interrogative, more exclamatory, and perhaps more rhetorical, than the common language of English ladies, accompanied with much animation of countenance and demonstrative gesture. This appeared to me peculiar and unusual, but not affected. She was uncommonly eloquent, and yet, without action, her words were not sufficiently rapid to express her ideas. Her manner appeared foreign, yet it was not quite French. If I had been obliged to decide, I should, however, have pronounced it rather more French than English (Edgeworth 1809, I: 137-8).

Le son de sa voix étoit agréable, quoiqu'un peu haut; elle n'avoit point l'accent irlandais; mais en l'observant attentivement, je lui en trouvai quelques nuances (Edgeworth 1812, II: 5-6).

A general feature of French fiction for women in the eighteenth century was that it used to emphasize sentimentality and eliminated the heroines' witty retorts. As a consequence, the target readers did not appreciate Elizabeth Inchbald's, Jane Austen's and Edgeworth's female characters like in the original versions (Cossy 1999; Bour 2007: 29-31). Glenthorn is attracted by Lady Geraldine's intelligence, her condemnation of vice and her idea that the Irish have to be more self-confident and defend their identity. The French translator introduces a soft Geraldine by erasing those negative qualities that might shock readers:

High-born and high-bred, she seemed to consider more what she thought of others than what others thought of her. Frank, candid, and affable, *yet opinionated, insolent, and an egotist*, her candour and affability appeared the effect of a naturally good temper, her insolence and egotism only those of a spoiled child [...]. She was not ill-natured, yet careless to whom she gave offence, provided she produced amusement; *and in this she seldom failed*; for, in her conversation, there was much of the raciness of Irish wit, and the oddity of Irish humour. The singularity that struck me most about her ladyship was her indifference to flattery. She certainly preferred frolic (Edgeworth 1809, I: 143-4, my italics).

Fière de son rang et de ses talens, elle sembloit s'occuper plus de ce qu'elle devoit penser des autres, que de ce que les autres devoient penser d'elle. Franche, affable, ingénue, ces qualités

sembloient le résultat de son bon naturel; son orgueil, sa suffisance paroissent être les défauts d'un enfant gâté [...] Son naturel n'étoit point mauvais; seulement, pourvu qu'elle s'amusât, elle craignoit trop peu de déplaire. Ses plaisanteries d'ailleurs, étoient presque toujours piquantes, car elle valoit beaucoup de cet esprit et de cette originalité, qu'on trouve particulièrement chez les Irlandais. Elle recevoit les compliments [sic] avec indifférence, et eût, je crois, préféré la raillerie (Edgeworth 1812, II: 14-6).

The comparison she makes when she criticizes Miss Tracy is toned down in French: “In the language of the bird-fanciers, she has a few notes nightingale, and all the rest rubbish” (Edgeworth 1809, I: 145) shifts into “Dans le langage des oiseleurs, on diroit qu'elle a deux ou trois notes de rossignol, et tout reste est barbare” (Edgeworth 1812, II: 17). She laughs at Craiglethorpe, who wants to write a travel book in Ireland, and some structures are omitted from the English text:

“There is not a man, woman, or child, in any cabin in Ireland, who would not have wit and ‘cuteness enough to make my lard believe just what they please. So, *after posting from Dublin to Cork, and from the Giants’ Causeway to Killarney; after travelling east, west, north, and south*, my wise cousin Craiglethorpe will know just as much of the lower Irish as the cockney who has never been out of London, and who has never, *in all his born days*, seen an Irishman but on the English stage; where the representations are usually as like the originals, as the Chinese pictures of lions, drawn from description, are to the real animal” (Edgeworth 1809, I: 156-7, my italics).

[...] Il n’y a pas ici une femme, un enfant qui n’aient l’art de faire croire à Milord tout ce qu’ils voudront. Ainsi, mon cher cousin, après avoir battu l’Irlande dans tous les sens, la connoitra à-peu-près comme le badaud de Londres, qui n’est de sa vie sorti de sa chère ville natale, et qui n’a vu d’Irlandais que sur le théâtre, où les représentations sont exactes comme celles que nous donnent les Chinois, des lions qu’ils peignent d’après des ouï-dire (Edgeworth 1812, II: 32-3).

Glenthorn evolves from having the idea that “young women were divided into two classes; those who were to be purchased, and those who were to purchase” (Edgeworth 1809, I: 18) —which was the impression he had of his wife— to a new view once he meets spirited Lady Geraldine, but the translation prefers to eliminate a paramount detail of her characterization:

I think I owe to Lady Geraldine my first relish for wit, and my first idea that a woman might be, *if not a reasonable*, at least a companionable animal. I compared her ladyship with the mere puppets and parrots of fashion, of whom I had been wearied (Edgeworth 1809, I: 163, my italics).

[...] c’est elle qui m’apprit qu’une femme pouvoit être une compagne aimable. Je comparai cette sémillante irlandaise avec les poupées et les perroquets que j’avois fréquentés jusqu’alors (Edgeworth 1812: 42).

Edgeworth identified herself with Lady Geraldine who represents the rights of woman in *Ennui*. Lady Geraldine adopts unconventional stances about love and courtship. She curiously makes Glenthorn stronger and is as good at imitating people and copying their voices as at telling Mr. Craiglethorpe lies about Ireland to make him compose a false *New View of Ireland* (Edgeworth 1809, I: 156-7). Though in English Lady Geraldine articulates her nationalist views, place names are reduced to a generic, so the French readers cannot clearly see that she is referring to Ireland and not to Great Britain:

“We Irish might live in innocence half a century longer, if you didn’t expedite the progress of profligacy; we might escape the plague that rages in neighbouring countries, if we didn’t, without any quarantine, and with open arms, welcome every suspected stranger; if we didn’t encourage the importation of whole bales of tainted fineries, that will spread the contagion from Dublin to Cork, and from Cork to Galway!” (Edgeworth 1809, I: 185)

“Nous autres Irlandais, nous aurions pu vivre encore cinquante ans dans l’innocence, si vous n’aviez point hâté les progrès de la corruption, et, si, sans en exiger de quarantaine, vous n’aviez pas reçu à bras ouverts, tout étranger suspect, si vous n’aviez pas encouragé l’importation de tous les colifichets, de toutes les pernicieuses bagatelles, qui répandent la contagion sur la surface entière de notre pays” (Edgeworth 1812, II: 72).

Lady Geraldine ends up married to Devereux and travelling to India with him because he gets a post there. Despite his attraction for Lady Geraldine, Glenthorn marries a very different woman and he makes a contrast between them: Cecilia is a discrete lady with the qualities of the perfect wife whose portrait is practically unaltered for the target readers while the translation emphasizes Lady Geraldine’s capacity to laugh and imitate people as a satirists and caricaturist:

Cecilia Delamere was not so entertaining, but she was more interesting than Lady Geraldine: the flashes of her ladyship’s wit, though always striking, were sometimes dangerous; Cecilia’s wit, though equally brilliant, shone with a more pleasing and inoffensive light. With as much generosity as Lady Geraldine could show in great affairs, she had more forbearance and delicacy of attention on every-day occasions. Lady Geraldine had much pride, and it often gave offence; Cecilia, perhaps, had more pride, but it never appeared, except upon the defensive: without having less candour, she had less occasion for it than Lady Geraldine seemed to have; and Cecilia’s temper had more softness and equability. Perhaps Cecilia was not so fascinating, but she was more attractive. One had the envied art of appearing to advantage in public — the other, the more desirable power of being happy in private. I admired Lady Geraldine long before I loved her; I loved Cecilia long before I admired her (Edgeworth 1809, I: 367-8).

Cécilia Delamère n’étoit pas aussi amusante que Lady Géraldine, mais elle intéressoit davantage. L’esprit de cette dernière étoit toujours vif et piquant, mais il blessoit quelquefois. Celui de Cécilia quoiqu’aussi brillant, jetoit en éclat plus agréable et plus doux; ses saillies s’exerçoient plus sur les choses que sur les personnes; elle n’avoit pas le talent de Lady Géraldine pour la caricature, mais elle excelloit dans les peintures gracieuses. L’une possédoit au plus haut degré l’art comique de l’imitation. Et le genie de la satire; l’autre avoit peut être moins d’étendue dans ses pensées; mais ses observations générales sur la société et les moeurs annonçoient plus d’impartialité et un jugement plus exquis. Avec autant de générosité que lady Géraldine en pouvoit mettre dans les choses importantes, elle montoit plus d’indulgence et des attentions plus délicates dans les moindres détails de la vie. La fierté de celle-là devenoit quelquefois offensante, Cécilia en avoit peut être davantage, mais elle ne la laissoit voir que lorsqu’elle étoit attaquée. Avec une égale pureté d’intention, lady Géraldine se mettoit plus souvent dans la nécessité de justifier de la sienne. Sans doute Cécilia étoit moins séduisante, mais elle attachoit bien autrement. Le monde admiroit dans l’une le pouvoir si recherché de paraître avec avantage en public; les vœux plus sages de l’autre n’aspiroient qu’au bonheur domestique. J’admirais long-temps [sic] l’une avant de l’aimer; pour Cécilia je ne l’avois point admirée encore que je l’aimois déjà (Edgeworth 1812, III: 107-9).

### 3.2. IRISH SPEECH

The translation reflects French poetics, namely the tradition of free dynamic translation known as *les belles infidèles* aiming to provide target texts which are pleasant to read. This continued to be a dominant feature of translation into French well into the eighteenth century and one of the figures to adopt this approach was Nicolas Perrot D’Ablancourt. In order to preserve the *bon goût*, the linguistic and narrative elements considered as low and ordinary were erased from the text, as well as extravagant language and too violent or affective scenes: as one author declared, “ils sont trop spéciaux pour être compris de tout le monde, et surtout des gens de la bonne société” (West 1932: 341). For D’Alembert, the translator’s task was not to copy the original, but to offer an adaptation according to French taste

and decency and to please the reader. However, changing the form does not necessarily imply being unfaithful to the text: the theory of compensation made this possible (West 1932: 345). One review contributing to consolidate this adaptation doctrine was *L'Année Littéraire*, where the French critic Élie-Catherine Fréron stated:

La grande règle de toutes les règles est évidemment de plaire au lecteur français, que les longueurs ennuient, que choquent certains détails. On ne considère pas le roman étranger comme un objet d'art qu'on tente de reproduire avec tout le respect et tout le soin qu'il mérite, mais comme une carrière d'où il s'agit de tirer le plus des pierres possible pour les vendre au meilleur prix [...] Il n'est question que de trouver une main assez habile pour lever l'écorce, c'est-à-dire pour établir l'ordre, retrancher les superfluités, corriger les traits, et ne laisser voir enfin ce qui mérite effectivement de l'admiration (qtd. in Van Tieghem 1966: 17).

As Rachel Williams explains, translation was perceived as a literary creation and the translation stemming from this tradition had a strong influence on the development of French literature. Besides, there was an implicit link between translation as a woman —beautiful but guilty of having betrayed the original text— and the act of writing works that will be translated, linked to man, creation and to an original paternity (2010: 15-6). Williams argues that the pre-nineteenth-century French method of translation was not noted for its fidelity to the source text and instead attempted to insert foreign works within the French literary tradition through the use of conventionally French styles of writing rather than preserving their difference.

Another view of translation soon competed with *les belles infidèles*. Mme de Staël placed greater emphasis on fidelity and the preservation of the source text's stylistic features. Through Romanticism, translation moved away from *les belles infidèles* towards a more rigorous notion of what formed a quality translation. Instead of theorizing translation as a locus of cultural difference as Friedrich Schleiermacher proposed in *Über die verschieden Methoden des Übersetzens* (1813), in the aftermath of the French Revolution, foreign authors were domesticated, they travelled abroad to the target reader. As Lawrence Venuti explains, Schleiermacher's theory rested on the respect for the foreign culture and is in line with the vernacular nationalist movements that swept through Europe during the early nineteenth century (1995: 99-107). In our analysis, what is perpetuated is a translation method which is uniform and neglects a paramount aspect in Edgeworth's *oeuvre*: Irish speech.

One of the most interesting points is the approach to dialect. Brian Hollingworth has analyzed the way Edgeworth uses the vernacular in her writings. For this scholar, Edgeworth is careful not to alienate her readers by making native language accurate but intelligible and she indicates the Irish vernacular by pronunciation —through variant spellings of words common to standard speech, such as *afore*, *plase*, *preferred*, *pint*, *shister*, *childer*, *tink* which are graphically indicated in the ST vocabulary —*herriot*, *gosssoon*, *kilt*—and idiom. The latter means that the narrative is discursive, that is, it refuses to stick to the point, and is reflected in interjections like *plase your honour*, *long life to him*, *bless him*, particular Irish idioms or Irish bulls. All these features offer no threat to comprehension (Hollingworth 1997: 89-92). Sándor Hervey proposes an interesting solution to translate dialect: “the safest decision may after all be to make relatively sparing use of TL (Target Language) features that are recognizably dialectal without being clearly recognizable as belonging to a specific dialect” (1995: 113). The translator could later introduce a clarifying addition, which can be the most suitable due to the proximity between dialect and substandard varieties. However, in *Ennui*, there is no difference between the narrator's standard English and the characters' dialect as it happens with the representation of Ellinor O'Donoghue's speech. She is the best representative of native speech and culture since she introduces them to Glenthorn. According to Julie Costello, Edgeworth mixes politics and maternity in *Ennui*, where “it is Ellinor, and hence Ireland, who feeds England, regulates the consumption of the Ascendancy class, commands their affections and shapes their identities” (1999: 174). For this scholar, *Ennui* means a critique of utilitarian colonial policy and the realization of the potential dangers of ungoverned local affections and loyalties (1999: 174).

During Glenthorn's recovery after falling from his horse, Ellinor accompanies Glenthorn to his castle, she scarcely stirs from his bedside and Glenthorn realizes that "however unpolished her manners, and however awkward her assistance, the good — will with which it was given, made me prefer it to the most delicate and dexterous attentions which I ever believed to be interested" (Edgeworth 1809, I: 39). Both the talks and tales of Lady Geraldine and Ellinor O'Donoghoe embody "a distinctive strand of Irish culture and woman's wit, which first stirs his [Glenthorn's] feelings and begins to animate the male Sleeping Beauty" (Myers 1996: 384). Elinor and Glenthorn slowly build up a mother and son relationship during Glenthorn's illness and Ellinor depicts to him the Irish past and nation as an archaic and exotic country:

I remember once her telling me, that, "if it *plased* God, she would like to die on a Christmas-day, of all days; because the gates of Heaven, they say, will be open all that day; and who knows but a body might slip in unknownst?" When she sat up with me at nights she talked on eternally; for she assured me there was nothing like talking, as she had found, to put one *asy* asleep. I listened or not, just as I liked; any way she was *contint*" (Edgeworth 1809, I: 40).

Je me souviens qu'elle me disoit un jour: je voudrois bien mourir un jour de Noël parce que les portes du paradis seront toutes grandes ouvertes ce jour là, et je pourrois bien m'y glisser sans être reconnue. Pendant la nuit elle ne cessoit de parler, parce que, disoit-elle, il n'y avoit rien qui fit mieux dormir que d'entendre parler. Que je l'écoutesse ou non elle, elle étoit toujours contente (Edgeworth 1812, I: 59)

"Heaven bless your sweet face! P' the nurse that suckled yees when ye was a baby in Ireland. Many's the day I've been longing to see you," (Edgeworth 1809, I: 29)

"Le ciel répande sur vous ses bénédictions! C'est moi qui suis la nourrice qui vous a allaité, tandis que vous étiez en Irlande. Combien il y a de temps que je désire de vous voir" (Edgeworth 1812, I: 43).

"Oh! he's only shy, God bless him! he's as quite now as a lamb; and kiss one or other of yees, I must," cried she, throwing her arms about the horse's neck" (Edgeworth 1809, I: 29).

"Oh! le voilà tranquille; il est doux comme un agneau. Il faut absolument que je l'embrasse un de vous deux, dit-elle, en étendant ses bras vers le portrait de mon cheval" (Edgeworth 1812, I: 44).

A similar instance can be found regarding the postilion driving the carriage from Dublin to Glenthorn Castle. The protagonist is afraid the chaise will break down, but Paddy mends it and feels proud of controlling the horse to the amazement of other French and English travellers in a scene evocative of Edgeworth's *Essay on Irish Bulls* (1802). By the way this is rendered into French, the target audience cannot realize his *différence*.

"Ah! didn't I compass him cleverly then? Oh, the villain, to be browbating me! I'm too cute for him yet. See there, now, he's come to; and I'll be his bail he'll go *asy* enough *wid* me. Ogh! he has a fine spirit of his own, but it's I that can match him: 'twould be a poor case if a man like me cou'dn't match a horse any way, let alone a mare, which this is, or it never would be so vicious" (Edgeworth 1809, I: 73, my italics).

"Eh bien! dit-il ne l'ai-je pas mis à la raison: ce drôle-là vouloir me résister! Ah! je suis trop fin pour lui, je répons qu'il ira maintenant. C'est un diable d'obstiné; mais ce seroit plaisant qu'un homme comme moi fût obligé de le céder à un cheval. Oh! je dédie tous les chevaux du monde" (Edgeworth 1812, I: 105)

The French text manipulates some expressions in English which add local colour to the narrative and portrait characters, for instance the scene of the riding group stopping and spending the night in an inn near Glenthorn estates. They are near a beach and one postilion says to the other:

“Past twelve, for *sartain*,” said John; “and this bees a strange Irish place,” continued he, in a drawling voice; “with no possible way o’ getting at it, as I see.” John, after a pause, resumed, “I say, Timothy, to the best of my opinion, this here road is leading on us into the sea.” John replied, “that he did suppose there might be such a thing as a boat farther on, but where, he could not say for *sartain*.” Dismayed and helpless, they at last stopped to consult whether they had come the right road to the house. In the midst of their consultation there came up an Irish carman, whistling as he walked beside his horse and car (Edgeworth 1809, I: 77, my italics).

—Il est au moins minuit; mais nous sommes dans un bel endroit pour le demander. Ce chemin-ci a bien l’air de nous mener tout droit dans la mer — Peut-être nous trouverons plus loin quelqu’espèce de barque, mais...je n’en suis pas bien sûr. — Enfin ils s’arrêtent pour se consulter entr’eux. Ils ne savoient que décider quand vint à passer un voiturier qui précédoit son cheval et sa charette en sifflant (Edgeworth 1812, I: 110-1).

Interestingly, the narrator’s speech is also undistinguished in other situations. As we can see, French translations very frequently transformed direct speech into indirect with the consequent absorption of the character’s voice by the narrator, for example, when Jimmy Riley brings cheese to Glenthorne in the city and tells him how things are:

“Oh! there he is, his own honour; I’ve found him, and *axe* pardon for my boldness; but it’s because I’ve been all day yesterday, and this day, running through Dublin after *yees*; and when certified by the lady of the lodgings you was in it here, I could not *lave* town without my errand, which is no more than a cheese from my wife of her own making, to be given to your honour’s own hands, and she would not see me if I did not do it”

[...] He assured me that he and his wife were the happiest couple in all Ireland; and he hoped I would one day be as happy myself in a wife as I deserved, who had made others so; and there were many on the estate remembered as well as he did the good I did to the poor during *my reign*. (Edgeworth 1809, I: 381).

“Oh! le voilà, c’est lui-même, je l’ai trouvé, et je demande pardon de ma hardiesse; mais c’est que je n’ai fait hier et aujourd’hui que vous chercher dans tous les quartiers de Dublin. Et quand votre hôtesse m’a certifié que vous étiez ici, je n’ai pas voulu quitter la ville sans m’acquitter de ma commission qui n’est pas autre chose qu’un fromage que ma femme a fait elle-même; et elle m’a bien juré qu’elle ne me reverroit pas si je ne vous le remettois pas main propre.

[...] Il m’assura que sa femme et lui formoient le ménage le plus heureux de l’Irlande; qu’il espéroit que je serois heureux aussi un jour avec mon épouse, comme je le méritois, après avoir fait le bonheur des autres. Il ajouta qu’il n’étoit pas le seul qui se ressouvînt de tout le bien que j’avois produit pendant mon administration (Edgeworth 1812, III: 126-7).

In *The Absentee*, Edgeworth introduces a Falstaff-like character, Sir Terence O’Fay, whose speech singles him out from the rest of characters due to the complexity and richness of his idiolect. O’Fay is anticipated by Joe Kelly, a half-witted Irishman who ingratiates himself with Glenthorne by a mixture of drollery and simplicity and by suffering himself to be continually his laughing stock. Kelly is a united-man and conspirator of the rebellion. With Kelly, the narrator uses the character’s words, but the translation neutralizes dialect preferring standard English:

“This fellow, the son of a bricklayer, had originally been intended for a priest, and he went, as he told me, to the College of Maynooth to study his *humanities*; but, unluckily, the charms of some Irish Heloise came between him and the altar. He lived in a cabin of love, till he was weary of his smoke-dried Heloise, and then thought it *convanient* to turn *sarving* man, as he could play on the flute, and brush a coat remarkably well, which he *larned* at Maynooth, by brushing the coats of the superiors. Though he was willing to be laughed at, Joe Kelly could in his turn laugh; and he now ridiculed, without mercy, the pusillanimity of the English *renegadoes*, as he called the servants who had just left my service; He assured me that, to his

knowledge, there was no manner of danger, *excepted a man preferred being afraid of his own shadow, which some did, rather than have nothing to talk of, or enter into resolutions about, with some of the spirited men in the chair*" (Edgeworth 1809, I: 233-4)

"Il étoit fils d'un faiseur de tuiles, et avoit d'abord été destiné à la prêtrise; on l'avoit envoyé en conséquence faire ses études au collège [sic] de Maynooth. Malheureusement les charmes d'une Héloïse irlandaise se placèrent entre l'autel et lui. Il vécut quelque temps dans la cabane de l'amour, mais bientôt de sa maîtresse enfumée il se décida pour le métier de valet, auquel il apportoit de grandes dispositions, vu qu'il jouoit de la flûte, et qu'il avoit appris à broser les habits en s'exerçant sur ceux des supérieurs du collège [sic] de Maynooth. Joe Kelly, tout en permettant qu'on le raillât, savoit rendre la pareille. Il répandoit abondamment le ridicule sur les domestiques anglais qui avoient quitté mon service; il les appeloit des renégats, Selon lui, 'il n'y avoit pas l'apparence de danger; mais certains hommes ont peur de leur ombre, et d'autres étoient bien aisés d'avoir une occasion de parler, de prendre des résolutions vigoureuses et de figurer dans les tribunes et dans les assemblées'" (II: 138-9).

The use of dialect is not systematic in *Ennui*, though. On three occasions, at least, characters prefer unmarked speech: when Ellinor talks about Christy's problems (Edgeworth 1809, I: 273-8), when Ellinor discovers her identity (Edgeworth 1809, I: 296) and before she dies. In these cases, which are remarkable turning points in the plot, the French text remains uniform:

"It's too late," said she, "quite too late. I often told Christy I would die before you left this place, dear; and so I will, you will see. God bless you! God bless you! and pray to him to forgive me! None that could know what I've gone through would ever do the like; no, not for their own child, was he even such as you, and that would be hard to find. God bless you, dear; I shall never see you more! The hand of death is upon me — God for ever bless you, dear!" (Edgeworth 1809, I: 335-6).

"Il est trop tard, me répondit-elle, il est trop tard; j'ai souvent dit à Christy que je mourrois avant votre départ, et vous verrez que cela arrivera. Que Dieu vous bénisse! priez-le de me pardonner. Aucune des mères qui connoîtront ma conduite ne sera tentée de m'imiter, quand même elle auroit un fils qui vous ressemblât, ce qui seroit difficile à trouver. Dieu vous bénisse! mon enfant; je ne vous reverrai plus; la main de la mort est étendue sur moi" (Edgeworth 1812, III: 62-3)

*Ennui* also includes two letters displaying Irish speech. The historical background of Edgeworth's work is the Irish Rebellion. As a matter of fact, some of Glenthorn's experiences are a thinly disguised rendering of Edgeworth's own difficulties at the hands of Protestant bigots in County Longford (Butler 1972: 368; Corbett 2002). The 1798 Irish Rebellion appears in the tale when the rebels plan to kidnap Glenthorn in order to force him to join them, but he learns about the plot and succeeds in capturing the rebel gang. The protagonist receives an anonymous letter while he is sitting on a rock by the sea:

"Your life and character, one or t'other—say both, is in danger. Don't be walking here any more late in the evening, near them caves, nor don't go near the old abbey, any time—And don't be trusting to Joe Kelly any way—Lave the kingdom entirely; the wind sarves.

"So prays your true well-wisher.

"P.S. Lave the castle the morrow, and say nothing of this to Joe Kelly, or you'll repent when it's all over wid you" (Edgeworth 1809, I: 262)

"Votre réputation et votre vie courent également des risques. Ne vous promenez plus ici le soir, près de ces souterrains, ni près de la vieille abbaye. — Ne vous fiez plus à Joe Kelly, — quittez l'Irlande; le vent vous favorise.

"Tels sont les vœux de votre véritable ami.

"P.S. Partez de votre château demain, et ne dites rien de ceci à Joe Kelly, où vous pourriez vous en repentir quand il n'en seroit plus temps" (Edgeworth 1812, II: 176)

Once the protagonist assumes his new life as Christopher O'Donoghoe and goes to live in London, he receives one letter from his foster-brother, the earl. Again, the new earl's characteristic speech—revealing his illiteracy but at the same time his attachment to Glenthorn—passes unnoticed in French:

“My dear and honourable foster-brother, larning from Mr. M'Leod that you are thinking of *studeeing*, I send you inclosed by the bearer, who is to get nothing for the carriage, all the *bookes* from the big *booke*-room at the castle, which I hope, being of not as much use as I could wish to me, your honour will not scorn to accept, with the true veneration of

“Your ever-loving foster-brother, and grateful humble servant, to command.

“P.S. No name needful, for you will not be astray about the hand.” (Edgeworth 1809, I: 376, my italics).

“Mon cher et honorable frère de lait, ayant pris de M. M'Léod que vous vous adonnez à l'étude, je vous envoie par le présent voiturier qui ne prendra rien pour le port, tous les livres de la bibliothèque du château; comme ils ne me sont pas aussi utiles que je les voudrois, j'espère que vous me ferez l'honneur de les accepter.

Agréez les sentimens respectueux de votre affectionné frère de lait, et de votre serviteur humble et reconnoissant.

Tout prêt à vous servir.

P.S. Il est inutile que je signe, car vous reconnoîtrez bien l'écriture” (Edgeworth 1812, III: 120).

The hero suspects that the anonymous letter he has received was written by Mr. M'Leod, Glenthorn's rational advisor and a trustworthy agent. Like other Scottish characters in Edgeworth's *oeuvre*, M'Leod is linked to the Scottish Enlightenment and he relies on the enterprising mind and the will to improve society through learning. M'Leod uses dialect very sparingly—his motto is “I doubt”. However, he resorts to vernacular speech when he says goodbye to Glenthorn. The detail is unfortunately disregarded in the translation:

“It's very *weel*, my lord, it's very *weel*, if you say you meant nothing offensive, it's very *weel*, but if you think fit, my lord, we will sleep upon it before we talk any more. I am *a wee* bit warmer than I could wish, and your lordship has the advantage of me, in being cool. A M'Leod is apt to grow warm, when he's touched on the point of honour; and there's no wisdom in talking when a man's not his own master” (Edgeworth 1809, I: 269, my italics).

—C'est fort bien, milord, c'est fort bien; puisque vous m'assurez que vous n'avez pas eu l'intention de m'offenser, je n'ai plus rien à dire; ainsi dormons là-dessus, avant d'en parler. Je suis un peu plus animé que je ne le voudrois, et vous avez sur moi l'avantage d'être parafaitement de sang froid. Un homme comme moi, s'échauffe aisément quand son honneur est blessé; et quand on est échauffé, il est prudent de se taire (II: 186-7)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

As a respected novelist, Edgeworth became a name on the Continent thanks to her popularity in Great Britain and her enlightened ideas regarding education. After the success of her works, the first translation of Edgeworth's *Ennui* was eagerly awaited and welcome in France. Unfortunately, the result is far from successful if we compare the original text with Dubuc's, which is heavily determined by French poetics and *les belles infidèles*. The target text keeps the fidelity of the original regarding the plot and there are no changes in the narrative point of view. However, in Toury's and Even-Zohar's terms, acceptability in the French polysystem is the main criterion governing the translation, which prepares the text for



French *consumers* and the French *institution* by manipulating the source text and at the expense of sacrificing the fascinating world and voices contained in *Ennui*.

Cultural references are either substituted by French ones or freely translated. The integrity of the text is not preserved since some paratexts are eliminated or appended to explain some terms to the target reader. Edgeworthian irony, which was always praised by the readers and the reviewers, is lost in most cases. There is a transformation of some characters regarding the original version, so their speeches and the narrator's description of their personality are much reduced. Female characters become far more submissive than their English counterparts, in accordance with the sentimental heroine the French audience would appreciate. Both the original intention to introduce strong female characters who make an impact on the hero and Edgeworth's feminist views are diluted, so the target text does not reveal Edgeworth's complex ideas which later drew the attention of gender studies.

With respect to Irish speech, the French translation exhibits a tendency to lose some local colour in favour of generalizations. Edgeworth's effort to convey an accurate portrait of Ireland to the English readers is not clear in Dubuc's text which renders Ireland in much more refined and uniform terms. As a matter of fact, this translation presents a country which is not very far from the rest of the United Kingdom while Edgeworth's Irish tales insist on Ireland as a very particular member of the Union, as cultural studies have shown. Dialect is not only undifferentiated from standard speech, but its function in the narrative is totally neglected, producing a qualitative loss of meaning in French. All these changes and transformations follow the line of other texts published in France at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but they also imply that Edgeworth's particular wit, style and portrait of Ireland would still have to be discovered for the readers of the most prestigious language at that time.

## 5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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