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NEW FACULTY Lecture Series

MAIRI McLAUGHLIN

The French Department

TRADURRE/TRADIRE

*Translation as a Cause of Linguistic Change
from Manuscripts to the Digital Age*



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PREFACE

The goal of the New Faculty Lecture Series, previously called the Morrison Library Inaugural Address Series, is to foster scholarship on campus by providing new faculty members with the opportunity to share their research interests with their colleagues and students. We see the role of an academic library not only as a place where bibliographic materials are acquired, stored, and made accessible to the intellectual community, but also as an institution that is an active participant in the generation of knowledge. New faculty members represent areas of scholarship the University wishes to develop or further strengthen. They are also among the best minds in their respective fields of specialization. The Morrison Library will provide an environment where the latest research trends and research questions in these areas can be presented and discussed.

— Editorial Board

TRADURRE/TRADIRE

*Translation as a Cause of Linguistic Change
from Manuscripts to the Digital Age¹*

MAIRI McLAUGHLIN

The French Department

¹ A large part of the research for this project was carried out during the summer of 2011 while I held a University of California Regents' Junior Faculty Fellowship.

INTRODUCTION

The title of this paper begins with a famous Italian *bon mot* that is — ironically — very hard to translate. *Tradurre/tradire* is a pun that plays on the formal similarity of two Italian verbs: *tradurre*, meaning to translate and *tradire*, to betray. The juxtaposition of these unrelated verbs conveys very neatly a well-known paradox about translation: it is impossible to take what was said or written in one language, and make an exact reproduction of it in another. In translating, even the best translators are forced to make changes. To translate, then, is to betray the original. Scholars, writers and translators have picked over this paradox for centuries, examining the different kinds of betrayals that can take place and assessing their significance. It is not my intention here to revisit the question of infidelity in translation. Instead, I am going to focus on an entirely different part of the *tradurre/tradire* paradox, namely how translation affects language. I will argue that translation plays an important role as a cause of linguistic change. As they work, translators affect not only the text that they are translating, but the language itself. In this context, to translate might be to betray your own language.

I begin in Section 1 by describing my approach to translation. The second section of the paper features a series of different examples of how it can lead to linguistic change: I start in medieval England, then take a brief look at Renaissance France before exploring translation in the global news industry today. In the third section, I draw on these examples to propose the first theoretical model of how translation operates as an agent of change.²

1 LINGUISTICS AND TRANSLATION STUDIES: A NEW APPROACH

Translation in Linguistics

It would be impossible to claim that translation is not part of historical linguistic research. Translation is used relatively often as an analytical tool. Linguists compare successive translations of the same text — for example, a work of classical literature — to measure linguistic change. The principle behind this approach is that the meaning of the original stays constant so the differences between translations from different periods show where linguistic change has taken place. It is for this reason that linguists have referred to translation variously as a ‘time machine’ (Lakoff 1972) or ‘barometer of linguistic change’ (Dekeyser 1991: 158). Although this approach has led to interesting results in historical linguistics, particularly

² I discuss this same model in McLaughlin (forthcoming).

in the field of semantic change,³ translation is merely employed as a tool of analysis and is not itself the object of study.

When it comes to the effects of translation as an agent of change, linguists tend to associate it with particular moments in the history of individual languages. Translation has been linked to changes that took place in a number of languages under the influence of Russian in the Soviet era (Lehiste 1979, Iartseva 1981-82: 86). The translation of scientific texts from French led to important changes in technical vocabulary in eighteenth-century Spanish (Lépinette 1998), and more recently, translation from English has been linked to a whole host of changes taking place in contemporary Swedish (Gellerstam 2005).

Despite the fact that some of the cases are relatively well known, the work that has been done on them has tended not to circulate beyond the body of literature on the particular languages involved. This has resulted in two main problems: first there is no general recognition of the importance of the role of translation in the wider discipline of linguistics. Translation is not listed in the index of the most popular historical linguistics textbooks such as McMahon's (1994) *Understanding Language Change* or Campbell's (1998) *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction*. Neither is it to be found in the index of Blackwell's *Handbook of Language Variation and Change* (Chambers, Trudgill and Schilling-Estes 2002). The second problem is that although scholars accept that translation played a role in some individual cases, linguists have yet to gain any real understanding of exactly how it operates as a factor. The work presented here directly addresses both of these problems. The first aim is to draw attention to translation as a factor in linguistic change, and the second is to develop the first theoretical model of the workings of this factor.

Over the last thirty years, this lack of interest in translation has been highlighted on a few occasions. It was lamented by Danchev (1984: 55) in the 1980s, by Blake (1992: 4) in the 1990s and most recently by myself (McLaughlin 2011: 111). However, I suggest here that it is only now becoming possible to address the problem. Recent developments in general linguistics certainly provide the right context. More importantly, it is the work that has been done in translation studies that really makes this project possible. Translation studies emerged as a discipline in its own right in the 1980s and 90s. The field has since seen the development of approaches, theories and tools that — I suggest — will allow us now to explore the role of translation in linguistic change from the broadest possible perspective. Translation studies is often referred to not

3 See, for example, the research carried out by van Hoek and Goyens (e.g. van Hoek and Goyens 1990, Goyens and van Hoek 1999).

just as a discipline, but as an interdiscipline because it sits at the intersection of so many different fields. In fact, the two disciplines of translation studies and linguistics are often brought into dialogue with each other. However, their interaction has until now remained asymmetric: concepts and methods from linguistics have been widely used — with considerable success — in translation studies but linguists have incorporated very little of the work done by translation scholars.⁴ A broader goal of this project, then, is to redress this asymmetry by illustrating how work from translation studies can be used to inform general linguistic theory.

Translation Studies

The area of research that most informs my project is Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS).⁵ The principal aim of this approach is to describe translation norms, that is to say, the linguistic behavior of translators. Under this approach, Even-Zohar (1978) was the first person to highlight the fact that translation practice varies between different cultures, and between different historical periods.⁶ This fact is then explained by Toury (1995: 13) with reference to the notion of the ‘polysystem’; the polysystem is the literary or cultural system that operates in the target culture. For Toury, it is the status of translation within the polysystem that determines how translators behave. The key observation for my project is that translation practice varies not independently of the rest of the target culture but as part of it.

Approach

Before considering some examples of what I refer to as translation-induced linguistic change (McLaughlin 2011: 112), it is useful to establish how translation is to be conceptualized. For the purpose of the present study, translation is defined as the production of a text in the presence of a text in another language. This definition is by necessity extremely broad: it cannot restrict translation to today’s stereotype of a version that is faithful, literary and written because my purpose is to examine translation as a factor from a universal perspec-

4 Corpus-based Translation Studies (CTS) is the sub-field that has drawn the most on methods from linguistics. For a relatively recent account of the role of corpora in translation studies, see Laviosa (2003).

5 It is important to note that I draw very little from Corpus-based Translation Studies (CTS) despite the fact that it is generally considered an important offshoot of DTS. The reason for preferring the earlier work is that its conception of translation is significantly broader; most of the work done in CTS focuses on relatively faithful translation, generally involving Western-European languages and often involving literary texts. This narrow focus on a particular type of translation clearly means that the tools and findings of CTS are unlikely to be very useful in a study which concerns translation across time and space.

6 This is something that I have also drawn attention to in my own work on translation in French (McLaughlin 2008a).

tive. The model that I have developed therefore allows a) for translation to come from a range of different domains; b) for it to take place in either the graphic or oral code; c) for the skopos (purpose) of the translation to vary; and d) for many different kinds of translation norms to be present. In the next section, I present three case studies that involve translation-induced linguistic change in order to illustrate its importance.

2 TRANSLATION-INDUCED LINGUISTIC CHANGE

Medieval English

Open any history of the English language, and you are likely immediately to be told that the origins of written prose in English lie in translation from Latin.⁷ The earliest English texts, whether by Bede at the beginning of the eighth century, or produced under King Alfred in the ninth, were all based on Latin sources.⁸ The medieval concept of authorship was comparatively broad; our own restrictive understanding was imposed later by the Romantic ideal. The broader notion meant that medieval authors could produce a close rendering of an original but that they were also free to base their texts more loosely on one or multiple sources (Ellis 2008: 3, Wheatley 2008: 177). Translation, both close and free, is thus credited with the development of literary prose in Old English. It is hard to imagine translation making a greater contribution than sparking off one of the most important literary traditions. However, translation also began to affect another area of the language. Most Old English translations were of a religious nature: they include books of the Bible, Biblical commentaries and lives of Saints. This meant that religious terms were sometimes borrowed through translation. Leith (1997: 20) cites examples such as *apostle*, *bishop*, *choir* and *mass* which come from Latin or Greek and which are for the most part first attested in translations.⁹

After the arrival of the Normans in the eleventh century, the frequency of translation increased. England in this period is multilingual: it has two high languages, Latin and French, alongside the lowly vernacular varieties of English. Although translation from Latin is a constant in this period, the first translations from French appear in the twelfth century (Kib-

7 See for example Leith (1997: 7). On the role of translation in the development of written prose in English, see Ellis (2008: 1-4), Godden (1992) and Schaefer (2006). The volume edited by Katovsky and Mettinger (2001) illustrates the importance of language contact more generally for the history of English.

8 On the history of literary translation in the Old and Medieval English period, see *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English, Volume 1: To 1550* (Ellis (ed.) 2008).

9 First attestations for these words are given in relevant entries of the *Oxford English Dictionary* online <<http://www.oed.com/>> [accessed 10.01.11].

bee 1991: 18) and their number will increase in the thirteenth century. These translations include some verse narratives that were originally written in French, such as the *Roman de la rose*, but also many French translations of classical texts (Görlach 1991: 167-68, Wheatley 2008). By the thirteenth century, French had become a very prestigious language across Europe (Kibbee 1991: 27). The following quotation reveals the language ideology of thirteenth-century England:

“Remember clarkes dayly dothe theyr delygens,
In to oure corrupte speche maters to translate
Yet betwene frenche and englysshe is grete deffens.
Their longage in redynge is douse and dylycate.
In theyr mother tonge they be so fortunate.
They have the bybyll and the apocalyps of devynyte,
With other nobyll bokes **that in Englyche may not be.**”

(*Shepherds' Calendar*, 1506, cited by Kibbee 1991: 108, emphasis mine)

This excerpt shows that there was such a gap between English and the learned languages that it could not even be bridged by translation. Although a small number of words had been borrowed through translation in the Old English period, there was a marked increase from the twelfth century onwards. This is linked to the relatively low prestige of the vernacular: the Middle-English translator assumes the inferiority of English so is more likely to reproduce the original French or Latin word in the translation. The stark difference in status between English and the learned tongues in turn transforms the language of the translator into a prestigious variety itself. Dury (2001: 76) recently sketched a picture of medieval Europe in which the learned elite consciously imitated what he calls “translation-influenced written language.”¹⁰ The effect of this influence can be felt at a number of levels: new words are borrowed into English, but important changes are also brought about at the level of syntax and style (Catto 2003, Shaefer 2006). From the fourteenth century into the Renaissance, the Latinate syntax of faithful translation has been linked to the use of many structures in English, including absolute and participial constructions, nominalizations and the passive (Blake 1992: 20, Shaefer 2006). Historians of English have for a long time highlighted the lasting

10 Dury (2001: 76) writes: “Recent historical work (Clanchy 1987) has emphasized the multilingual nature of medieval English (and European) society and the frequency and apparent naturalness with which speakers switched from one language to another. It is now easier to imagine a population of bilinguals in the post-migratory centuries, concentrated in certain areas of general cultural innovation, imitated because of their prestige and power (partly derived from their command of language), themselves imitators of translation-influenced written language and of the shared Latin superlect.”

influence that Latin and French models had on the development of standard written English. The question that I am treating here requires a different perspective: what I would like to do is to draw attention to the fact that most of this influence is due to translation.¹¹

Renaissance French

We turn now to the Renaissance: it is at this moment that vernacular languages such as French, Italian, German and English began to expand into new domains and to replace Latin as the high language of learning, religion and administration. In order to serve these new functions, the vernacular languages needed to acquire new linguistic features. Translation was the primary source of innovations for these languages. There were three different types of translation that all played a role in the evolution of Renaissance French. First, there was the impulse to translate Greek and Latin texts, which was at the very heart of Renaissance humanism, the cultural movement that stemmed from a return to the literature and culture of classical antiquity. Second, the fact that the re-discovery of the classical world had begun in Italy led to an increased prestige for all things Italian. The French looked to Italy in admiration of its language, literature and culture. This admiration inspired the translation of such Italian works as Boccaccio's *The Decameron*, Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, and Machiavelli's *The Prince*.¹² The third type of translation is religious: although the translation of the Bible is not a new enterprise, its importance increases considerably in the sixteenth century, due in part to the advent of printing but also to the fact that reading the Bible in the vernacular was not just accepted but actively encouraged in the Reformation.¹³

It is easy to understand the cultural reasons behind each of these three types of translation, classical, Italian and religious. However, there emerged a new and very particular motivation that drove both translators and their patrons, namely the desire to show that the French language was fit to rival both the classical languages and Italian. Translation became a kind of national cause, as we see in Peletier's words:

“Davantage, les traductions quand elles sont bien faites, peuvent beaucoup enrichir une langue. Car le traducteur pourra faire française une belle locution latine ou grèque: et apporter en sa cité avec le poids des sentences, la majesté des clauses, et élégances de la langue étrangère.” (Peletier 1555: 31)

11 For example, see Schaefer (2006: 287).

12 On the translation of Italian texts into French in the sixteenth century see McLaughlin (2008b: 189).

13 See Hall (1974: 151), Picoche and Marchello-Nizia (1989: 26) and Ayres-Bennett (1996: 157).

The effects of translation on Renaissance French are relatively well known. In general, we can say that its impact was far more extensive than it had been in the early medieval period, both in France and in England. Translation played a central role in the standardization of the French language: it facilitated the elaboration of the vernacular tongue by providing new words, new structures, new stylistic features and even new genres. At the lexical level, Pope (1934: 30) talks of a *deluge* of new words arriving into French from Latin and Greek. And more words were borrowed from Italian into French in the sixteenth century than at any other point (McLaughlin 2008b: 186). A significant proportion of all of these borrowed words enters French through translation. Translation also results in the introduction of a whole range of syntactic constructions. Rickard (1989: 77-78) highlights six new structures whose use increased during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries under the influence of translation. One of these constructions is the French imitation of the Latin ablative absolute, in a sentence such as:

la lettre lue, il sorta

The most obvious stylistic feature that arose out of translation is the use of binomials. These are cases in which writers used two close synonyms instead of just one word. A good example of this comes from Des Masures' (1560) translation of Virgil's *The Aeneid*. In order to translate a relatively simple Latin description of Dido as "recens a vulnere" (recently wounded), he uses two binomials in French:

"sa **playe & dure bresche**, Estant encor toute **recente & fresche**" (Des Masures 1560: book VI, l.450, emphasis mine)

The sixteenth-century translator uses two words for wound (*playe & bresche*) and two words for recent (*toute recente & fresche*). In the case of sixteenth-century binomials, the role of translation was twofold. First it established binomials as a new stylistic feature which would turn into what Rickard (1968: 13) called a 'craze' in the Renaissance. Second it facilitated the borrowing of learned terms from Latin and Greek. Translators would often use binomials to help readers understand a new word: the borrowed term would be accompanied by the more familiar vernacular equivalent thus easing its integration.

Although these are among the most significant types of translation-induced change, I suggest that its most important effect took place at the metalinguistic level because it led directly to the increase in prestige of the French language. If at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Latin was the most prestigious language, it had been replaced by French in the majority of its functions by the start of the next century. Translation therefore had the effect intended by translators such as Peletier; as Rickard says, it "encouraged other writers to use

French rather than Latin, since translation, when well done, showed that French could after all express ideas hitherto confined to Latin.” The impact of the translator in this period was summed up very well by Lusignan who said that the Renaissance translator “opéra sur la langue tout autant que sur le texte (1986: 149).”

Translation in the Global News Industry

The third and final example of translation-induced linguistic change comes from a more recent area, the contemporary news industry. This was the case that I analyzed in my book *Syntactic Borrowing in Contemporary French* (McLaughlin 2011). The hypothesis tested in the book is that the translation of news today can lead to the borrowing of syntax from English into French. I have also investigated how news translation from English could influence contemporary Italian (McLaughlin 2008b: ch. 7). Comparing the results from these two investigations suggests that what is happening in French is likely to be repeated for the many languages across the world into which news is translated from English. My work focuses on what happens at the level of syntax. I found that it is unlikely that news translation will lead to entirely new constructions, but it seems very plausible that it will lead to changes in the form, frequency and function of constructions that already exist in the translating language. The passive will serve as a good example to illustrate this. English makes significant use of the prototypical passive construction with the verb *to be* and the past participle as in:

The book was read (by John)

French has a parallel construction, but it is used considerably less frequently than its English counterpart:

Le livre a été lu (par Jean)

Instead, French also makes use of a number of other constructions, including a) the impersonal passive, b) the pronominal passive and c) the *se faire* passive:¹⁴

a) Il a été lu un livre

b) Ce livre se lit vite

c) Il s'est fait tuer

I investigated what happens when journalists translate from English into French. Because the prototypical passive is dominant in English, it ends up being used almost to the exclusion of all other passive constructions in French. 97% of passives in translated news are

¹⁴ For a detailed discussion of these constructions, see McLaughlin (2011: ch. 3).

prototypical (McLaughlin 2011: 61, Table 6). This is a much higher percentage than would be observed in non-translated news. The main finding of the investigation was that news translation can lead to this kind of ‘selective borrowing’ that affects existing constructions but not to the ‘global borrowing’ of entirely innovative structures (*ibid.*: 108).

I attribute the potential of news translation to influence other languages in this way to two main factors. The first is quite simply the massive volume of translation of news from English. English is the working language of the press; international news articles in every language are likely to have at some point been translated from English.¹⁵ In today’s globalized world, individual news outlets such as newspapers, radio stations and television channels cannot hope to send their own journalists to report on particular events. Before blowing the whistle on the Newscorp phone hacking scandal earlier this year, the investigative reporter Nick Davies published a fascinating analysis of the industry called *Flat Earth News* (Davies 2008).¹⁶ He reveals many uncomfortable truths about the press, one of which is the reliance of news outlets on both press releases and news dispatches distributed by large international news agencies such as Reuters or the Associated Press. These wholesale distributors of news are also responsible for most of the translation in the press. Whatever changes are introduced through news agency translation therefore have the potential to be distributed extremely widely. The second factor that makes news translation a likely source of linguistic borrowing is the fact that the translation takes place at very high speeds. The two main—if somewhat opposing—aims of news agencies are to provide accurate information, and to provide it quickly. These values are perfectly captured by the slogan in Figure 1 that Reuters used in the mid 2000s:

FIGURE 1: Reuters slogan¹⁷



The urgency of news translation forces the translators to remain generally very close to the original text and it is this fidelity that feeds the kind of selective influence that is produced by news translation.

15 On translation in the global news industry, see Bielsa and Bassnett (2009) and McLaughlin (2011).

16 For information on the phone-hacking scandal, see The Guardian’s dossier <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/phone-hacking>> [accessed 12.01.11].

17 This slogan is no longer in use but it can still be seen on pages of the Reuters website that have not been updated (e.g. <<http://about.reuters.com/knownow/register.asp>> [accessed 10.01.11]).

3 THE FIRST MODEL

Model

In Section 2 I illustrated three very different cases in which translation has led to linguistic change. The fact that it has affected different languages in very different historical contexts hopefully demonstrates that translation has an important role to play in the evolution of linguistic systems. However, the very differences between such situations could be misleading — and probably were in the past — because they might suggest that we are looking at isolated instances. In this third section, I hope to show that this is not the case and that it is in fact possible to capture generalizations that explain why translation operates as a factor when it does. This constitutes the first attempt to articulate a theoretical model of the workings of translation as a factor in linguistic change.

Outcomes

The model consists of two components: the first indicates what kind of linguistic effects can be produced and the second indicates under what conditions translation can influence linguistic change. The full list of outcomes is provided in Table 1. It should be noted that in this section, I draw not just on the three case studies presented in Section 2 but on a wider range of instances in which scholars have evoked translation as an agent of change.

TABLE 1: Outcomes

LINGUISTIC CHANGE	METALINGUISTIC CHANGE
Phonetics and phonology	Language ideology
Orthography	Prestige and language attitudes
Morphology	Standardization
Syntax	
Lexis	
Style	
Discourse-pragmatics	

The case studies presented in Section 2 suggest that translation can produce two main types of change: linguistic change, and metalinguistic change. Linguistic change affects the material forms of the language, whereas metalinguistic changes involve people's judgments and perceptions. Beginning with linguistic change, I propose that translation can in theory affect any level of the language, from its phonology to style and discourse-pragmatics. At each

level, two types of change can be produced: translation can lead to the introduction of new forms, or it can affect the use of an existing form. The evidence that I have surveyed indicates that certain levels are particularly susceptible to influence. The lexical level is probably affected most frequently as words are borrowed through translation, but orthography is also often involved. At this level, the translation of the Bible has made an extraordinary impact: the missionary impulse to translate the Scriptures resulted in many languages across the world acquiring a writing system for the first time; even some of those that already had a written form — including, arguably, Old English — owe the development of their literary language to Bible translations.¹⁸

Syntax, for its part, can also be affected but this tends only to happen when the translation is faithful. Without close translation, it is hard to see how word order or sentence patterns could be imported. The first two case studies considered in Section 2 offer a clear illustration of this. Translation is not linked to syntactic change in Old English; syntactic borrowing through translation first occurs in the Middle English period and it increases in the Renaissance in both French and English. The increased influence at the level of syntax is paralleled by an increase in the fidelity of translation. The increased fidelity can be attributed to the growth in the authority of classical works from the fourteenth century onwards. This is illustrated by the following quotation that comes from Oresme's preface to his translation of Aristotle's *Ethics*:

“je ne ose pas esloingnier mon parler du texte de Aristote, qui est en pluseurs lieux obscure, afin que je ne passe hors son intencion et que je ne faille” (Oresme, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1370-72, cited by Brucker 1997 : 66)

Oresme does not dare to stray far from the original lest he should betray the meaning of Aristotle's text. Shore (1989: 315) gives an example of faithful translation in the late medieval period where the French word order parallels very closely that found in Latin:

- a) quarum nomina et effectus quidam astrologi scripserunt
- b) des quelles les noms et les effectz aucuns astrologiens ont mis par escript (Shore 1989: 315)

This may be an extreme example, but it shows why there is a link between faithful translation and syntactic change affecting word order.

¹⁸ See Van Hoof (1990: 28) who writes that “D'emblée, la traduction biblique allait devoir se doubler d'un travail linguistique considérable auquel certaines cultures sont redevables les unes de la naissance de leur langue écrite, les autres, du développement de leur langue littéraire.”

It is also worth pausing to remark upon the role that translation plays in the introduction or construction of genres. The example of binominals in Renaissance French shows how translation can contribute to the stylistic repertoire of a language. Indeed, translation was at the time held as the principal means of introducing new stylistic features. De Méziriac echoes this widespread sentiment in a lecture called *De la traduction* that was to be given at the *Académie française* in its founding year:

“un des meilleurs moyens d’enrichir notre langue, est de la faire parler aux plus doctes, & plus fameux Auteurs de l’antiquité” (De Méziriac, *De la traduction*, 1635/1998: 3)

De Méziriac calls for the translation of classical works into French because it is one of the best ways to enrich the French language. However, the influence of translation does not stop at the level of individual features: it can also prompt the introduction of entirely new text types. We have already seen it linked to the development of the literary genre in Old English. Thanks to a recent trend to study the history of the English language through its text types, we are beginning to appreciate the extent to which the foundations of many other genres lie in the imitation of Greek and Latin through translation.¹⁹ Such genres include scientific writing (Taavitsainen 2001) and the English of public business (Catto 2003).

Turning now to metalinguistic change in the second column of Table 1, although it does not affect the material form of the language, it merits a place in the typology of effects because it can be instrumental in determining what the future of that language will be. Translation can affect language ideologies, prestige and language attitudes, as well as the process of standardization. The most significant way that translation can affect language ideology is when it leads to the introduction of a new writing system. I can think of no other change that would have such a profound effect on speakers’ conceptions of their own language than when they see it represented in graphic form for the first time; it prompts a kind of original linguistic self-consciousness.

Translation can also impact the prestige of a language relative to others. The translation of works of antiquity in late medieval and Renaissance Europe was probably the single most important factor in the rise of the vernacular languages. This effect has been seen before. In fact, the Latin language itself owes its prestige in part to the translation of Greek texts. Cicero’s very famous appeal for translation “non verbum pro verbo” comes from the introduction to his translation of Greek speeches into Latin:

“nec converti ut interpres, sed ut orator, sentiis isdem et earum formis tamquam

19 On telling the history of English through the history of its text types, see Görlach (2004).

figuris, verbis ad nostram consuetudinem aptis. In quibus non verbum pro verbo necesse habui reddere, sed genus omne verborum vimque servavi.” (Cicero, *De optimo genere oratorum*, 46 BC, cited by Copeland 1989: 18)

Copeland argues very convincingly that his motivation was linguistic. Greek was the more prestigious language at the time, so Cicero wanted to use translation to set a new standard for Latin. The translation is carried out, in her words, “not to service of the source text, but to the benefit of the target language” (Copeland 1989: 19). Moreover, we see this same call for translation today. For example, Bissiri wants to see literary texts translated from French into indigenous African varieties so that they in turn can become languages of literature:

“Fondant mon propos sur l'idée que la phase actuelle de la littérature africaine en langues européennes est une situation de transition, je propose l'utilisation du pidgin [...] pour servir de passage vers cette situation souhaitée.” (Bissiri 2000 : 212)

So we have Cicero, a whole host of Renaissance authors and contemporary Africanists *all* advocating translation as a tool to increase the prestige of vernacular tongues.

Here we come across another interesting paradox: translation is often called upon to facilitate the expansion of vernacular tongues but its influence tends to reach a maximum, after which the imitation of other languages falls out of favor. Take the case of Renaissance French: as it acquired the necessary linguistic features and became the authoritative language in a range of new domains, it was viewed less and less as linguistically inferior. In the second half of the sixteenth century, therefore, people were mocked for peppering their language with Latinate constructions and words borrowed from Italian. Tory and Rabelais both use the same overly-Latinized French phrase to ridicule this practice:²⁰

“Despumons la verbocination latinale et transfretons la Sequane au dilicule et crepuscule, puis deambulons par les Quadrives et Platees de Lutece, et comme verisimiles amorabundes, captivon la benivolence de l'omnigene et omniforme sexe feminin.” (Tory, *Champ fleury*, 1529, cited by Pope 1934: 28)

De Clerico (1999: 177) puts it nicely when she says that “cette culture de lettrés engendre sa propre caricature.” But it is not just in France that this happens: English inkhorns were similarly ridiculed in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Latin, too, has been mocked for its imitation of Greek: so much so, in fact that the nineteenth-century French linguist Darmesteter laments the fact that classical Latin poetry was never anything more than a kind of borrowing!

20 On Renaissance French criticism of Latinization, see De Clerico (1999: 177-78), Ewert (1933: 285) and Pope (1934: 28).

“Ainsi la forme de *toute* la poésie latine classique, au lieu d’être une forme nationale, ne fut jamais qu’une forme d’emprunt.” (Darmesteter 1891-97: I: 12)

Paradoxically, the new authority of the vernacular, which is due in large part to translation, in turn affects the practice of translation itself because the older faithful, imitative practice goes out of favor.

Factors

The second part of the model concerns the factors that determine whether and how translation will influence the evolution of a language. In Table 2 I have grouped together what I consider to be the most important variables. There are translatory variables that relate to the type of translation involved, linguistic variables that concern the source and target languages, cultural variables relating to features of both cultures, and social variables pertaining to the target speech community. For each type, I have indicated the most important factors. It is not possible to discuss each factor in detail here so I will restrict my comments to those that are the most significant.

TABLE 2: Factors

TRANSLATORY	LINGUISTIC
<p>Translation practice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Domain 2. Volume <p>Conception of translation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skopos 2. Perception of translation’s function <p>Translation norms</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fidelity 2. Degree of resistance 	<p>Nature of the target language</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elaboration 2. Standardization 3. Presence of literary register 4. Stylistic conventions <p>Nature of the Source Language</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Standardization 2. Dead language
CULTURAL	SOCIAL
<p>Linguistic ideology</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perception of standardization 2. Relative prestige <p>Status of translation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prestige in polysystem 2. Volume relative to other arts 3. Conception of the author <p>Identity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Link between language and nation 	<p>Nature of the speech community</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conditions for diffusing innovations <p>Technology</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technology for diffusing translation

Beginning with translatory factors, it quickly emerged from this research that the domain in which the translation takes place is an essential variable. It is apparent that certain domains are more likely to be involved in linguistic change, including science, literature and religion. We have already examined the role that literary translation plays in stimulating vernacular writing (see Section 2). It strikes me that the translation of sacred texts has an important role to play. It is the very particular nature of this text type that makes it a likely source of influence. The words themselves are accorded so much weight because in the religious domain the text itself can become the doctrine. In addition, the sacred texts of more mainstream religions have the potential to reach extremely large audiences. When it comes to scientific and technical translation, I see a link with a particular type of linguistic change, namely the direct borrowing of learned terms. We could think, for example, of the translation of technical texts from English into many languages today.²¹

When it comes to the conception of translation at a given moment, by far the most important factor is whether translation is thought to have a role to play in the development of the language. If translation is seen as the key to linguistic elaboration, then its language is quite simply more likely to be imitated. We have already seen several examples of this; in fact, it becomes such a trope in the Renaissance that Du Bellay ends up reacting against it in his *Deffence et illustration de la langue francoyse* in 1549. Its fifth chapter is significantly entitled *On why translations are not sufficient for the perfection of the French language* (Du Bellay 1549). Finally, in this section, translation norms determine first and foremost precisely which kinds of linguistic outcomes are even possible: we have already seen that syntax can only be affected if translation is relatively faithful.

Moving on to look at linguistic factors, the level of standardization of the target language emerges as the most important variable. We have already seen that translation plays a fundamental role in the process of standardization (see Section 2). It provides linguistic material and textual models to help the variety expand into new domains and it also contributes to its rise in prestige which is a prerequisite if a vernacular is to be accepted as a standard. Once a variety has expanded and become standard, then, there is quite simply less scope for translation-induced change. This is well illustrated by the case of news translation today. Although there is selective borrowing, I argued that it cannot lead to entirely new constructions because of the strength of the norm in French (McLaughlin 2011: 110). The presence of

21 This link is made by Beer (1989: 4): “Demonstrable need in a target language for technical terminologies, whether social, scientific, or philosophical, precipitates direct imports or closely calqued approximations.”

obviously non-standard features like a new construction would undermine one of the main values of the news agency, namely accuracy.

Comparing medieval English and medieval French shows that the effects of translation are also limited by the stylistic conventions of the target language. The earliest French translations contain far more words borrowed from Latin than do their English counterparts. Godden (1992: 516) explains that although most Old English literary prose was based on Latin sources, their authors tended not to borrow as much from Latin because of some “deep-seated and widely shared feeling about the inappropriateness of Latin borrowings to tone.” Godden (1992: 524-25) provides some examples from King Alfred’s translation of Boethius. Rather than creating borrowings for abstract terms such as *fortuna*, *fata* and *providentia*, he tried to find approximate equivalents in Old English such as *wyrd* and *woruldgesæld*. In French, on the other hand, early religious translations contain a great number of lexical borrowings from Latin, particularly when it comes to abstract terms. In the relatively short *Life of Saint Alexis* that dates from the eleventh century there are thirty learned borrowings from Latin, including *miracle*, *nobilité* and *trinité* (Pope 1934: 29). What is of course ironic here is that although Alfred avoided such Latinisms, we actually use all three of the examples he cites today: *fate*, *fortune* and *providence*. These terms came into the language through translation from Latin or French once the stylistic conventions had changed in the Middle English period.

The final linguistic variable to account for is the nature of the source language: it is clear that translation-induced linguistic change is more likely to take place if the source language is standardized, and even more so if it is a dead language. The reason for this is that a fixed code generally appears more prestigious than a wildly varying vernacular. In this case, translation is likely to inspire codification whereby rules will be established for the language and variation eliminated. Looking just at the linguistic factors, then, the most favorable circumstances for translation-induced linguistic change are when a standardized or dead language is in contact with a non-standardized vernacular. This probably explains why translation from Latin played just such an important role in the development of the national standards in Europe.

Turning to cultural variables, we have already seen that translation can affect linguistic ideologies; however, the existing ideology can in turn determine whether and how translation-induced linguistic change will take place. I have highlighted here the importance of the community’s perception of standardization. It is not just the linguistic reality that matters, but what people believe about the status of their language and the discourse that surrounds

it. This is what happens in the history of French. Although translation remains very prestigious in the seventeenth century, it stops being a source of innovation largely because of the belief that French has reached a state of perfection. The language of translation remains a model of good style in that century, but it is not because it is integrating foreign elements; rather it is considered the place where the best use can be made of the internal resources of French.²² The status of translation within the target culture is also an important factor in determining whether it will produce a linguistic effect. Its position is so humble in the Anglophone world today that it is extremely hard to imagine how it could impact the English language. However we have seen ample historical evidence that it was once normal, in the pan-European context, to aspire to the language of literary translation. Even if translation is not prestigious, its volume in certain domains can be enough to make it a likely source of influence. We might think, for example, of the impact of the translation of product names and marketing materials by technology giants such as Apple, Google, Facebook and Amazon. The *i-* prefix of Apple's *pods*, *pads* and *phones* could well become a prestigious form leading to neologisms in other languages because Apple chose to retain the prefix in their product names: there is *l'iPhone* in French, *l'iPad* in Italian and *der iPod* in German.

Social variables in the final category affect translation-induced linguistic change just as they affect linguistic change in general. The speech community needs to be such that innovations can be diffused. The question of technology, however, is very pertinent to this discussion of translation. Technology has an enormous impact on translation norms and we have seen that norms can determine both whether *and* how translation will affect an individual language. For example, news translators are compelled to work at high speeds, thus producing very literal translations. Technological advances in the digital age have brought ever closer the moment at which news is reported by an agency and the moment at which it is received by the general public. It is also technology that determines the potential size of the audience. The readership of a manuscript is smaller than that of a printed book which is in turn smaller than the potential audience of a news story today that will be printed, broadcast and made available online. We might have to wait a few more years before we can begin assessing which author—public relationship is most likely to lead to translation-induced change. Is it the one-to-one relationship that accompanies the manuscript translation, the one-to-many relationship of printed books or what I assume will eventually be seen to accompany digital

22 I am grateful to Wendy Ayres-Bennett for pointing out that translation does continue to be a source of influence in the seventeenth century despite the fact that it is less likely to lead to borrowing.

technology, namely a many-to-many relationship as more and more people produce their own online content, including translations?

In sketching the first theoretical model of the workings of translation as a factor in linguistic change, I hope to have shown that translation should no longer be thought of as a factor that operates in an *ad hoc* manner. Instead, we can use our knowledge of individual cases that have until now been studied only in isolation in order to begin to understand why it operates when it does and what effects it will have. I am certain that the model will change in time. What I hope is that it inspires colleagues in linguistics and translation studies to come together and share their expertise to further our understanding.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I hope to have shown that translation merits a place in linguistics. Translation is not the only factor that influences language change; it is not even the most important one. As we have seen, however, the evolution of countless languages has been affected by translation-induced linguistic change and it continues to touch languages across the world today. But how does translation fit into the discipline? I suggest that its proper place is in contact linguistics, the field of research concerned with language contact. Translation is, I believe, a central linguistic practice. In contact linguistics, it is one of several mechanisms, such as the code switching of bilinguals, that allow languages to influence each other. Until recently, the research has been focused on just one type of contact, namely societal bilingualism where all members of the speech community are bilingual. Translation-induced linguistic change requires a different kind of model. To understand what this would look like, I would like to use a metaphor inspired by the work of my colleague Tim Hampton. He drew our attention to the figure of the ambassador (Hampton 2009). As I see it, then, translation functions as a kind of linguistic ambassador, travelling between languages, negotiating, mediating, representing and, ultimately, influencing.²³ We end, then, where we started, namely with the politics of linguistic diplomacy. In the light of the wealth of changes that we have seen tonight that are all triggered by translation, my own conclusion on the *tradurre/tradire* paradox is that the true betrayal is the refusal to recognize and celebrate the linguistic changes that are introduced by translation.

23 Hampton (2009) associates the function of the ambassador with negotiating, mediating and representing. I have added influencing to this list, since it is a primary effect of translation as linguistic ambassador.

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