

## (IN)VISIBILITY: DISLOCATION IN FRENCH AND THE VOICE OF THE TRANSLATOR

MAIRI McLAUGHLIN

### *Abstract*

This article presents the results of the investigation of a corpus consisting of translated and original French taken from contemporary prize-winning fiction. The focus of the inquiry is the difference between original and translated French and the consequences for the voice of the translator. The differences between the two language types are examined through a case study of the syntactic structure known as dislocation. Through careful analysis of the form, function and usage of this construction in the two language types, I arrive at several conclusions. First, the very existence of formal, functional and usage variation highlights the differences between translated and original language, and this may in future play a greater role in governing the composition of corpora in linguistic research. Second, the way in which this variation manifests itself has consequences for the status that translation holds in a specific culture and the effects that translation can have on the target language. Finally, variation between the two language types is shown to be relevant to the debate regarding the voice of the translator: Lawrence Venuti's invisibility theory is reworked to include three types of invisibility.

### *Introduction*

In this article I will examine differences in the form, function and usage of the construction known as 'dislocation' across translated and original French. I will be using dislocation as a case study to look at significant differences and trends of difference between the two language types. The analysis of this one syntactic construction will provide a window onto patterns of variation between translated and original French. The differences that emerge between these language types have three consequences regarding the notion of authorship and the voice of the translator, the position of translation in the Western polysystem<sup>1</sup> and the effects on languages that rely heavily on translation.

A substantial body of work has been done on dislocation, particularly with regard to French, which makes it an appropriate choice of construction for this case study because we already have a certain understanding of its functioning.<sup>2</sup> In dislocated constructions an element is detached from its canonical position in the main clause and is instead found outside this unit, while a clitic pronoun inside the main clause is coreferential to the dislocated element. Tokens 1–4

---

<sup>1</sup>For Tel Aviv scholars such as Even-Zohar and Toury, the polysystem is the cultural/literary system whose operation in the target culture determines the status of translation and consequently the features of translation practice itself. See Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (Amsterdam, J. Benjamins, 1995), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>See Mylène Blasco-Dulbecco, *Les Dislocations en français contemporain: étude syntaxique* (Paris, Champion, 1999) for a relatively recent bibliography.

are examples of dislocated constructions taken from the corpus of contemporary French fiction used for this research.

- 1 ta tête, ça a l'air affreux
- 2 C'est grand l'Amérique
- 3 Son Éminence, un formidable homme d'affaires, il aimait ça, tirer les ficelles
- 4 Là Mazar y allait peut-être un peu fort

As can be seen from the examples, the dislocated elements can appear in a variety of positions and can belong to a range of grammatical categories such as noun phrases, verb phrases and prepositional phrases. The pronoun within the sentence is said to be linked to the dislocated element by coreference and can also have a range of functions such as subject (example 1) and object (example 3). Further details regarding the possible variants in the form are given in the next section. Dislocation can perform a range of pragmatic functions at the interactional and informational levels, such as establishing a topic, obtaining floor space and contrasting (a complete list and some examples are also given below).

Lawrence Venuti is primarily responsible for today's increased interest in the visibility and status of the translator in the West.<sup>3</sup> Venuti repeatedly bemoans the inferior status occupied by the translator in the contemporary Western polysystem: in his 'Call to Action' he states that translators 'can work to revise the individualistic concept of authorship that has banished translation to the fringes of Anglo-American culture' and provides practical advice about the kind of 'self-presentation' that will aid the translator in this quest.<sup>4</sup> According to what Venuti calls the 'regime of fluent translation', the Western translator today is invisible because the translator cannot be allowed to share authorship with the original author.<sup>5</sup> Although I do not wish to take an ideological stance, I make use of Venuti's work because it provides a relevant background to this research. In showing that translated and original language do differ, I will be arguing for the recognition of the voice of the translator and therefore acknowledging that the translator does by necessity possess a certain level of authorship.

While dislocation has been the subject of much investigation, the approach used here differs firstly in differentiating between translated and original French and secondly in furthering recent interest in syntax in translation.<sup>6</sup> Research by scholars such as Ebeling, Laviosa and Toury leads us to expect that there should be differences between translated and original language. Laviosa and Toury independently point to what could be considered a kind of stereotypicality in the language of translation where the more common

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (London, Routledge, 1995); and *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference* (London, Routledge, 1998).

<sup>4</sup>This is the final chapter of Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*.

<sup>5</sup>Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Mylène Blasco, 'Pour une approche syntaxique des dislocations', *Journal of French Language Studies*, 7:1 (1997), 1–21; Blasco-Dulbecco, *Les Dislocations*.

item is more likely to be used.<sup>7</sup> Laviosa's work is based on a corpus of translated and original English, and she shows that low-frequency words are rarer in translated English than in original English. Toury's work is more theoretical in approach, but similarly concludes that translation is a 'major factor of conservatism'.<sup>8</sup> Another reason for difference between these two language types is the influence of the original text. Ebeling considers the translation for 'there + verb' constructions between English and Norwegian (for example, 'there appeared a ship on the horizon') and clearly demonstrates influence of the syntax of the original over the syntax of the translation.<sup>9</sup> In this article I will be using data concerning dislocation to investigate differences between translated and original French caused both by a seemingly natural stereotypicality in translation and also by the influence of the original text.

### *Methodology*

Using a corpus of contemporary fiction either originally written in French or translated into French, the differences between the use of dislocation in original and translated French will be examined at the following three levels: frequency, form and function. The corpus consists of six texts selected from recent prize-winning novels during the period from 1998 to 2003 from the following prizes: The Man Booker Prize, The Orange Prize for Fiction, Le Prix Goncourt and Le Prix Femina. Prize-winning fiction was chosen in order to satisfy one necessary criteria of comparability, namely that of function. Given their classification as fiction by renowned literary prize boards, we can assume that they are judged by the target culture as works of fictional literature (see Appendix for a list of the works included). Dislocated constructions were taken from equal-sized sections of each work, and in total 221 dislocations were analysed. As a rough guide, there were 221 dislocations in the six 19,000 word sections. Based solely on these statistics, this construction may appear infrequent, but the fact that its frequency depends on factors such as genre, register and medium means that these statistics are not conclusive. In reality, this construction is by no means a marginal syntactic feature of French.<sup>10</sup>

The frequential, formal and functional differences between dislocations in the two language types will be investigated separately in the next three sections before I go on to consider the consequences of the differences found. The analysis of frequency makes use of two statistical tools (binomial distribution and the chi-squared test) in order to test for significant differences

<sup>7</sup>Sara Laviosa, 'Core Patterns of Lexical Use in a Comparable Corpus of English Narrative Prose', *Meta*, 43:4 (1998), <<http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/1998/v43/n4/index.html>> (accessed 23 August 2005); Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies*.

<sup>8</sup>Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies*, p. 273.

<sup>9</sup>Jarle Ebeling, 'Contrastive Linguistics, Translation, and Parallel Corpora', *Meta*, 43:4 (1998), <<http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/1998/v43/n4/index.html>> (accessed 23 August 2005).

<sup>10</sup>In the oral code the percentage of subjects dislocated can be as high as 10.19%; see Blasco-Dulbecco, *Les Dislocations*, p. 83.

between frequencies in the two language types. The syntactic and pragmatic analyses are based on previous work on dislocation and each example of the construction is described according to the matrices given in Tables 1 and 2. The syntactic analysis is broadly equivalent to that used by Barnes and Blasco-Dulbecco, while the pragmatic analysis draws both on Ashby and Barnes.<sup>11</sup>

Table 1 shows the possible syntactic variants, including the position of the dislocated element, its syntactic category and the clitic function. The dislocated element can be found to the left (LD) or right (RD) of the main clause, it can be repeated (R) or more than one element can be dislocated (MD): left dislocation, right dislocation and multiple dislocation can be seen in examples 1–3, respectively. The dislocated element can belong to a range of syntactic categories, with example 1 demonstrating a lexical dislocation. The other types need no explanation, apart from ‘Ce Que Phrase’, an example of which is to be found in 5.

5 ce qu'elle aurait fait naturellement si elle avait été seule ou habillée, elle n'osait le faire dévêue

While example 1 had a clitic with the subject function, the clitic in example 5 has the object function ‘le’. The other types of object functions can be seen in examples 6–8.

6 ça lui arrivait à elle

7 Alors vous, les belles-jolies...on n'en a rien à foutre!

8 Et moi, tu penses un peu à moi!

The dislocated constructions are classified for pragmatic function, as listed and exemplified in Table 2, with definitions of the functions taken from Ashby:<sup>12</sup> Contrast builds an overt contrast, Topic Shift introduces a new topic, Turn-taking introduces a speaker's turn, Filler has no clear pragmatic motivation but, coupled with hesitation, it acts as a filler at the discourse level, Clarification clarifies the referent being talked about, Epithet gives information about the referent, Turn-closing indicates the end of a speaker's turn, Weak has no apparent motivation and List Interpretation has a list of items dislocated which are then resumed by a clitic, as seen in example 9.

**Table 1.** Syntactic variants

Type	Syntactic category	Clitic function
Left dislocation (LD)	Lexical (Lex)	Subject (S)
Right dislocation (RD)	Pronominal (Pr)	Object LE (Le)
Repeated dislocation (R)	Infinitival (Inf)	Object LUI (Lui)
Multiple dislocation (MD)	Prepositional (P)	Object EN (En)
	Adjectival (Adj)	Object Y (Y)
	Ce Que Phrase (CQP)	

<sup>11</sup>William Ashby, ‘The Syntax, Pragmatics, and Sociolinguistics of Left- and Right-Dislocations in French’, *Lingua*, 75:2–3 (1988), 203–29; Betsy Barnes, *The Pragmatics of Left Detachment in Spoken Standard French* (Amsterdam, J. Benjamins, 1985).

<sup>12</sup>For full definitions and examples, see Ashby, ‘Left- and Right-Dislocations’, pp. 217–22.

**Table 2.** Pragmatic functions

Function	Examples
Contrast (C)	Un acteur il faut le voir sur un écran, un écrivain il faut le lire
Topic shift (TS)	L'été, c'étaient le bateau et les îles
Turn-taking (TT)	Ta tête, ça a l'air affreux
Filler (F)	(No tokens in corpus)
Clarification (Cl)	nous étions assis par terre tous les deux, Yves et moi
Epithet (E)	elle les dérangeait cette femme toute seule
Turn-closing (TC)	C'est très dur, cette scène
Weak (W)	c'est ça, aller vers les liliums, les orchidées
List interpretation (LI)	Boulettes, gaffes, conneries en tous genres, ils en rataient pas une

9 La loi métronymique, la correction, réglée comme papier à musique, ça c'était donné par le père.

It is also possible for one example to perform two functions, so some may be classified twice: this is particularly common for multiple dislocations where the dislocation of the different elements can have different pragmatic functions. Finally, the dislocations are classified according to the voice in which they are found using Leech and Short's well-known voice continuum:<sup>13</sup>

NRA NRSA IS FIS DS FDS

Definitions: NRA = narrative report of action; NRSA = narrative report of speech act; IS = indirect speech; FIS = free indirect speech; DS = direct speech; FDS = free direct speech.

#### *How frequency differs between original and translated French*

The classifications described in the previous section were used to examine all of the tokens in the corpus, and the results of the most interest to us here are now discussed. The results concerning frequency are by a long way the most significant in this investigation. Not only are these results the most statistically significant, they are also the results that are of the greatest interest as regards the language of translation. A sample of 90,000 words was taken from the six texts in equal parts, which produced a total of 188 dislocations. Table 3 shows the frequency of dislocated constructions in original and translated French. The binomial distribution shows a significant difference between the frequency of dislocation in the two language types.<sup>14</sup> In order to explain this difference, the results were analysed according to the different voice types as summarized in Table 4. The binomial distribution for each voice was calculated and it was found that only in the narrative voice, NRA, is the difference between original and translated French significant.<sup>15</sup>

The substantial difference between the frequency with which dislocation occurs in the two voices is related to the common perception that dislocation

<sup>13</sup>Geoffrey N. Leech and Michael H. Short, *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose* (London, Longman, 1981).

<sup>14</sup>The binomial distribution gives a difference in excess of two standard deviations.

<sup>15</sup>This time the figure is just under five standard deviations.

**Table 3.** Frequency

	Number of dislocations	Frequency of dislocation/10,000 words
Original	130	28.89
Translation	58	12.89

is a feature of the oral code.<sup>16</sup> The appearance of dislocation in the speech voices (direct speech and free direct speech) can be seen to reflect the perceived link between dislocation and the oral code because authors will use this construction to give the speech voices a more oral feel as they try to represent the real world on the page. It is interesting that this link is much more pronounced in translated French than it is in original French. In fact, the translator very rarely uses dislocation in narrative voices.<sup>17</sup> We can account for this fact by referring to Fludernik's evocation of the notion of 'typicalized "mimetic" features' used in speech presentation in novels.<sup>18</sup> There may be a parallel process in translated language whereby the translator subconsciously uses *stereotypical* mimetic features as a result of hypercorrection. This way, not only do we have one level of typicality in the representation of speech in the graphic code, we have a second level of *stereotypicality* in that the translator is performing a hypercorrection towards the stereotypical oral function of dislocation. While the figures for original French do not support this statement, the use of dislocation being almost equally split between speech and narrative, the translator is influenced not by the real distribution in original French, but relies on his/her perception of this distribution. It is commonly thought that dislocation is used to produce a certain 'orality' on the page, and it is this very perception that produces the translator's stereotypical usage. It is important to note that both the linguist's and other language users' perceptions concerning the nuances of dislocation are not necessarily representative of actual usage.

**Table 4.** Distribution of voice types

	Voice				
	NRA	NRSA	IS	FIS	(F)DS
Original	65	1		2	62
%	50	0.77		1.54	47.69
Translation	7		2	10	39
%	12.07		3.45	17.24	67.24

<sup>16</sup>See, for example, Blasco-Dulbecco, *Les Dislocations*, p. 94; Françoise Gadet, 'Le parlé coulé dans l'écrit: le traitement du détachement par les grammairiens du XXe siècle', *Langue Française*, 89 (1991), 110–24 (p. 112); Leo Hickey, 'The Style of Topicalization, how Formal is it?', in *The Pragmatics of Style*, ed. by Leo Hickey (London, Routledge, 1989), pp. 52–70.

<sup>17</sup>Table 4 shows that only 12% of dislocated constructions used by the translator come from narrative voices compared with 51% for the original French writer.

<sup>18</sup>M. Fludernik, *The Fictions of Language and the Languages of Fiction* (London, Routledge, 1993), p. 20.

*How form differs between original and translated French*

It will be remembered that the tokens of dislocation from the corpus have been analysed according to three syntactic criteria: the position of the dislocated element, its syntactic category and the function of the coreferential clitic. Only the results for the syntactic category of the dislocated element are of interest for the purposes of this article, because the results for the other two criteria do not show marked differences between original and translated French. Tables 5 and 6 give the full set of results for the category of the dislocated element in the different language types split up according to voice, where narrative consists of narrative report of action and narrative report of speech act, and speech consists of indirect speech, free indirect speech, direct speech and free direct speech.<sup>19</sup>

Although the chi-squared test does not give significance for the overall results, the fact that there are seven different categories significantly reduces the power of this test. I would therefore like to concentrate on two individual results rather than the whole, and look first at pronominal elements and then at prepositional phrases. The method of inquiry here is to assume that translated and original French are the same entity unless the results prove otherwise; this is known as the null hypothesis. The expected results then are those that are predicted by the null hypothesis, using chi-squared. Any unexpected results suggest that the null hypothesis is not true and therefore that translated and original French do not behave in the same way. The pronominal elements do show an unexpected distribution: there are consistently fewer pronominal dislocations than expected in translation, and more than expected in original French. While this result alone does not provide proof of stereotypicality in translated language, results from this and other studies lead us to suspect that what we see here is a manifestation of the effects of stereotypical usage because pronominal dislocations are always less common than are lexical versions, and the translator again opts for the more stereotypical form.

Looking at prepositional phrases in both types of voice, we notice that translated language uses this type substantially more than does original French. If we compare this with the English originals, we see that three of

**Table 5.** Dislocated elements in narrative

	Syntactic category						
	Lex	Pro	Inf	P	Adj	CQP	Total
Original	46	17	3	3		1	70
Translation	5	0	0	2		0	7
Total	51	17	3	5		1	77

<sup>19</sup>While defining narrative and speech in this way can be questioned, an approach which included indirect speech and free indirect speech under narrative would not alter the results nor the interest of this section because the number of tokens for each type is relatively low.

**Table 6.** Dislocated elements in speech

	Syntactic category						
	Lex	Pro	Inf	P	Adj	CQP	Total
Original	40	16	4	4		0	64
Translation	31	10	2	6		1	51
Total	71	26	6	11		1	115

these originated in gerunds and two in infinitives that have no direct syntactic equivalent in French, and that a dislocation with the preposition ‘de’ is used instead. This leads to a higher frequency of prepositional dislocations in the translated texts, and therefore constitutes evidence for the influence of the syntax of the original over the syntax of the translation. Examples 10 and 11 show this, as can be seen from their translations in examples 12 and 13.

10 I have no qualms about borrowing.

11 They don't think it's a bad thing to have lots of offspring.

12 Ça ne me gêne pas le moins du monde d'emprunter à d'autres.

13 Ils ne pensent pas que ce soit une mauvaise chose d'avoir une progéniture nombreuse.

#### *How function differs between original and translated French*

The difference between the pragmatic function of dislocations in original and translated French lies in the presence or absence of weak dislocations. Tables 7 and 8 give the figures for the entire corpus, but again I will concentrate on individual results.

The most interesting result concerns weak dislocations where it is immediately obvious that there is a substantial difference between their appearance in the two language types. While there are only two weak dislocations in translated language, there are thirteen in the original French. In order to analyse this difference, we are required to return to the origins of the term ‘weak’ in Barnes.<sup>20</sup> As Barnes points out, this is linked to the question of grammaticalization of the construction, since it is only if there is a large proportion of weakly motivated dislocations that we can predict a trend towards grammaticalisation. For Barnes, ‘the minimal degree of pragmatic motivation’ means that the dislocation of an element is serving to maintain the topic–comment structure. So a weakly motivated dislocation is not pragmatically empty, but it does not have one of the strong pragmatic functions such as contrast. Dislocation in English also uses a similar range of pragmatic functions but, as Cinque highlights, it makes no use of the weakly motivated type.<sup>21</sup> This is a controversial issue, as Barnes herself points out, and our figures do not support Cinque’s hypothesis. What we do know is that dislocation in

<sup>20</sup>Barnes, *Left Detachment*, pp. 24–6.

<sup>21</sup>Barnes, *Left Detachment*, p. 113.



**Table 7.** Pragmatic functions of dislocations in narrative

	C	TS	TT	F	Cl	E	TC	W	Li	Total
Original	17	28			2	4		10	6	67
Translation	2	3			1	0		0	1	7
Total	19	31			3	4		10	7	74

**Table 8.** Pragmatic functions of dislocations in speech

	C	TS	TT	F	Cl	E	TC	W	Li	Total
Original	11	27	3		7	4	2	7	3	64
Translation	15	21	1		9	1	0	1	3	51
Total	26	48	4		16	5	2	8	6	115

English is far less frequent, and it would therefore not surprise us if the construction had stronger pragmatic marking in English than in French.<sup>22</sup>

The fact that there are significantly fewer weak dislocations in translated French implies that there is again influence of the structure of the original over that of the translation. This result also ties in with the trend for stereotypical usage in translated language because translators (and speakers in general) are less likely to notice the weak function of dislocation. This is confirmed by the fact that there is a substantially higher proportion of contrastive dislocations in translated language than in original language. So at the pragmatic level the translator uses a stereotypical range of functions whereby the most common function of dislocation in original French becomes even more common in translated French and the weak dislocations are all but eliminated. At this stage we can pose questions regarding the nature of the translation act, concerning both the pragmatic and syntactic levels. In the majority of cases, the translator is only prepared to use a dislocated construction when there is a strong pragmatic need to do so. Thus adherence to the syntactic and pragmatic structure of the original causes the translator to deviate from the syntactic and pragmatic structure of original French.

### *The voice of the translator*

It has been shown that the syntax of translation is characterized by hypercorrection towards the target norm through an increased use of stereotypical features. Although this research is based on relatively small corpora, the results are interesting because they support some findings of previous research.<sup>23</sup> The fact that original and translated language differ suggests that the voice of the translator does have volume, even under today's Western

<sup>22</sup>For frequencies in a corpus of written English, see Ronald Geluykens, *From Discourse Process to Grammatical Construction: On Left-Dislocation in English* (Amsterdam, J. Benjamins, 1992), p. 125.

<sup>23</sup>See the Introduction.

'regime of fluent translation'.<sup>24</sup> Even where a translation is presented as a new original and the translator believes his/her text to be written in language equivalent to originally produced language, there is a level at which the 'I' of the translator shows through. Although the translator is in reality playing an active role in the authorship of the text, his/her voice is not generally perceptible and the translator still appears invisible. To have demonstrated a level, albeit reduced, of visibility for the translator does not lead us to question Venuti's main thesis regarding invisibility, but rather to develop this idea as follows.

I would like to suggest that there are three main types of visibility for the translator: (a) overt visibility when the translation is marketed as such; (b) covert visibility where it is obvious to the ideal reader that the translation is a translation (for example French versions of Virgil's *Aeneid* or cases of translationese); and (c) 'invisible' visibility where the translator's voice has volume that is only 'audible' through linguistic analysis. The type of visibility that we have seen in our linguistic analysis of contemporary fiction is type (c). This may surprise the contemporary reader in Western society where we are used to the translator's 'vanishing act'<sup>25</sup> that serves to protect the integrity of the original author. However, I do not think that the original author's integrity should necessarily be compromised by the translation of his/her works, and evidence can be found for this in the past where the presence of the translator as author did not diminish the prestige of the original author.

If we compare translation in the West today with, for example, the early modern period, we find several differences. First, the relationship between the original and translation was far less direct because the original inspired the translation and the translations displayed far less 'fidelity' (in the modern sense) to the original. Another remarkable difference concerns the prestige level of translation, which was far higher than it is today. In fact, the prestige of translation in France was so elevated that it was even considered by some to be the highest art form,<sup>26</sup> and others thought it to be the method through which the French language could be enriched. De Méziriac states: 'qu'un des meilleurs moyens d'enrichir notre langue, est de la faire parler aux plus doctes, et plus fameux Auteurs de l'antiquité'.<sup>27</sup> In fact, by the mid-seventeenth century, De Tende thought it possible that a translation could be 'plus belle que l'original'.<sup>28</sup> As Ayres-Bennett and Caron show, translation was even used as 'un modèle de style', a 'grammaire

<sup>24</sup>Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*, p. 5.

<sup>25</sup>Lawrence Venuti, *Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology* (London, Routledge, 1992), p. 4.

<sup>26</sup>For example, Charles Sorel is quoted as saying that Malherbe's translations are a 'parfait modèle de la narration'; see Bernadette Béarez-Caravaggi, 'Vers "les Belles Infidèles": les théories de la traduction en France de 1600 à 1640', in *Studi di cultura francese ed europea in onore di Lorenza Maranini*, ed. by Giorgetto Giorgi et al. (Fasano, Schena, 1983), pp. 181–200.

<sup>27</sup>Claude Gaspard Bachet de Méziriac, *De la traduction*, ed. by Michel Ballard (Ottawa, Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1998), p. 3.

<sup>28</sup>Gaspard de Tende, *De la traduction ou regles pour apprendre à traduire la langue latine en la langue françoise* (Paris, J. Le Mire, 1660).

appliquée'.<sup>29</sup> D'Ablancourt was thought to produce such models of style, since, as Béarez-Caravaggi<sup>30</sup> notes, he is praised 'comme l'un des maîtres les plus prestigieux et les plus sûrs dans l'art de bien écrire' on account only of his translation. A final difference concerns authorship. The level of authorship accorded to translators was so high in early modern Europe that we even have an example of a translator's bust being displayed where once the original author's was found in a plate at the beginning of a translation.<sup>31</sup> These three differences are inherently bound together because the less direct relationship between the original and the translation in the early modern period must rely to some extent on the prestige of the translator and his/her being accorded authorship.

It can be seen that the translator's high level of authorship does not compromise the role of the original author because the esteem in which Virgil was held never failed, despite numerous translations of his works during this period. He appears to assume a prophetic status<sup>32</sup> and authority on questions of morals and literary excellence; in the words of Hulubei: 'Virgile éduque, catéchise, instruit; c'est le meilleur pédagogue de l'époque'.<sup>33</sup> The differences between early modern Europe and the contemporary West also have an effect on the types of invisibility seen. While all types must have existed in all periods, the distribution between the three may have changed. What we can conclude from this is that Venuti's 'vanishing act' is not complete and that even where a translator's voice appears invisible, it cannot be entirely invisible and that (in)visibility of type (c) is always present.

### Conclusion

I will briefly draw a number of conclusions from this research. First, the differing patterns of usage in original and translated French call into question the use of corpora where no differentiation is made between the two language types. I do not wish to suggest that such corpora, and research based on such corpora, are not of use, rather that we should be more attentive to this type of factor when working with this type of corpus. Second, the translator's invisible visibility, in other words, his/her voice being present even where it appears to be absent, demonstrates that the translator should be accorded some level of authorship, a claim that can be used to support Venuti's call for an increase in prominence for translators.

<sup>29</sup>Wendy Ayres-Bennett and Philippe Caron, *Les Remarques de l'Académie française sur le Quinte-Curce de Vaugelas* (Paris, Presses de l'École Normale Supérieure, 1996), pp. 15, 13.

<sup>30</sup>Béarez-Caravaggi, 'Vers "les Belles Infidèles"', p. 183.

<sup>31</sup>This translation of Lucretius by John Evelyn was commented on by David Norbrook in a seminar at Oxford University, February 2004: *An Essay on the First Book of T. Lucretius Carus De Rerum Natura* (London, G. Bedle and T. Collins, 1656).

<sup>32</sup>See Ruth Thomas 'Introduction', in Virgile, *L'Eneïde de Virgile*, trans. by Louis des Masures, ed. by Ruth Thomas (The Hague: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1972), p. xviii.

<sup>33</sup>Alice Hulubei, 'Virgile en France au XVIIe siècle: éditions, traductions, imitations', *Revue du Seizième Siècle*, 18 (1931), 1-77 (p. 6).

As regards the significance of the results obtained from the corpus, two main paths for further research have opened. First, if stereotypical language use is indeed common to translations, then there may be a link to our appreciation of works in translation: the hypernormal language may in fact contribute to the low status held by translation in the contemporary Western polysystem. An investigation of the effects of translation on our interaction with a text would therefore be worthwhile. Another avenue to be explored concerns the existence of syntactic borrowing, since it has been shown that the original English text does influence the syntax of the translation. While this has not been investigated in this article, the influence of the syntax of the original coupled with the high frequency of translation from English into French adds to the likelihood of syntactic borrowing from English into French.<sup>34</sup>

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

### *Appendix*

#### Original French texts:

- Paule Constant, *Confidence pour confidence* (Paris, Gallimard, 1998).  
 Jean-Jacques Schuhl, *Ingrid Caven* (Paris, Gallimard, 2000).  
 Dai Sijie, *Le Complexe de Di* (Paris, Gallimard, 2003).

#### Translated French texts:

- J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrâce*, trans. by Catherine Lauga du Plessis (Paris, Seuil, 2001).  
 Ian McEwan, *Amsterdam*, trans. by Suzanne V. Mayoux (Paris, Gallimard, 2001).  
 Carol Shields, *Une Soirée chez Larry*, trans. by Céline Schwaller-Balajy (Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1998).

#### Original English texts:

- J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* (London, Secker and Warburg, 1999).  
 Ian McEwan, *Amsterdam* (London, Vintage, 1999).  
 Carol Shields, *Larry's Party* (London, Fourth Estate, 1997).

---

<sup>34</sup>Syntactic borrowing from English into French through translation forms the subject of my Ph.D. dissertation for Cambridge University (forthcoming).