Mairi McLaughlin
University of California, Berkeley
mclaughlin@berkeley.edu

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The Linguistics of Translated Texts: The Language of Translation as the 'Third Code'[1]

Introduction

Given the very diverse nature of translation studies – something that is clearly illustrated by the range of topics that have already been covered in this seminar – I want to start by describing my approach and the context of my work. To begin with, I'm a linguist and my area of specialism is variation and change in French and general Romance syntax. However, from the first piece of research I carried out as a Masters student in France, I was struck by how important the language of translation could potentially be for the evolution of French syntax. There is certainly historical evidence that translation has influenced the development of different languages in the past. If we take sixteenth-century France as an example, this is a period characterised by the expansion of what will become the French language into new functional domains: it is replacing Latin, for example, as the language of administration and learning. During this period, translation has an effect on the language at several levels: first, at the sociolinguistic level translation from Latin contributes to the growing prestige of French because it was thought that being able to translate classical texts into French showed that it was capable of treating the same subjects as the classical languages. Second, at the linguistic level this period sees the borrowing of words from both Latin and Greek and also from the Italian dialects. Even some basic words in contemporary French were borrowed from Italian in this period such as *réussir* (to succeed) and *manquer* (to miss / be absent). Perhaps more significantly, morphemes were also borrowed from Italian and Latin in this period. A good example is the suffix *–esque* that is still used in contemporary French in words such as *arabesque, grotesque, burlesque*. Finally, it has also been suggested that the syntax of French might have changed under influence from Italian at this stage (Lebègue 1952: 28, Pope 1952: 31, Huchon 2002: 166). For example, it

[1] Some of the data discussed in this presentation were originally published in McLaughlin (2008).

may have contributed to the rise of the pronominal passive in an example such as *ce vin se boit frais* (this wine is drunk chilled). I am not going to enter into the specifics of this debate today, not least because there is still substantial research to be carried out before firm conclusions can be drawn, but it does illustrate how significant translation could potentially be for the evolution of a language.

If my main area of research is variation and change in French syntax, then much of the methodology I use comes from the field known as Corpus-based Translation Studies. This field is relatively new, dating from the mid-1990s and it is associated with scholars such as Mona Baker and Sara Laviosa. It results from the application of the techniques of Corpus Linguistics to translation studies: large corpora of texts are used to investigate and describe language use. A fairly recent definition of Corpus-based Translation Studies is given by Laviosa (2003: 45): "Corpus-based Translation Studies (…) can be defined as the branch of the discipline that uses corpora of original and/or translated text for the empirical study of the product and process of translation, the elaboration of theoretical constructions, and the training of translators." It is clear from this quotation that the corpus-based approach has a very wide range of potential applications but today I'm going to focus on just one question: to what extent is the language of translation – the third code – different from originally produced language at the syntactic level and what consequences might this have?

I Features at the lexical level

This first section is relatively brief: I will sketch out some of the important work that has been done by other linguists on the lexical features of the language of translation. The purpose of this section is to illustrate some of the techniques that I will then use to analyse the syntax of translation in the second section. Although terms such as 'simplification' and 'stereotypicality' often come up when talking about the language of translation as the third code, it is important to note that it is not the aim of this research to judge translations or translators: the scale of the project is such that the practice of individuals is not considered, and those working in Corpus-based Translation Studies are in general not interested in questions of aesthetic or quality of translation, but rather in offering a description of the norms of translational behaviour.

There are two research projects that are relevant precursors to my work on the syntactic features of translation: the first is a project by Laviosa (1998). Her work involves the investigation of the use of lexical items in a large computerised corpus of journalistic and narrative prose in English including both texts translated from other languages, and texts written originally in English. Through her analysis of translated and original English, Laviosa (1998: 8) isolated four patterns of lexical use that she thinks may be typical of translated English in general:

> i. "Translated texts have a relatively lower percentage of content words versus grammatical words (i.e. their lexical density is lower);
>
> ii. The proportion of high frequency words versus low frequency words is relatively higher in translated texts;
>
> iii. The list head of a corpus of translated texts accounts for a larger area of the corpus (i.e. the most frequent words are repeated more often);
>
> iv. The list head of translated texts contains fewer lemmas.[2]"

Together, these four trends show that there is less lexical variation in translated language. The fact that these results are very reliable – both across text type and in terms of their statistical significance – means that they constitute fairly strong evidence, at least for English, that there is a difference between the language of translation and original language at the lexical level. This reduction in variation is something that will also be seen at the syntactic level.

The second study I wish to discuss is by Ebeling (1998) and it concerns translation between English and Norwegian. His research is relevant because it bridges the work on lexis by Laviosa and the investigation of syntax that I am about to present. He considers the use of a presentative construction for which there is a close parallel in English and Norwegian: there is an example in (1).

(1) There is a waiting room along the hall

Det er et venterom borte i gangen (Ebeling 1998)

While there is a clear structural parallel between these two constructions, there is a difference in the way they are used because a greater range of verbs can be used after *det* in Norwegian than after *there* in English. This is illustrated by example (2).

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[2] The list head is a tool used by Laviosa to assess the level of lexical variety in her texts: it is essentially a list of the most frequent words so that a smaller list head implies less lexical variation.

(2) og mellom dem slynget det seg underlige draker og fabeldyr

and between them there twined themselves strange dragons and fable animals

'and between them twined dragons and fantasy animals' (Ebeling 1998)

Ebeling investigates the use of this structure in the English and Norwegian Parallel Corpus and the result that is of the most relevance here concerns the translation of English *there* constructions into Norwegian *det* constructions.

Ebeling's findings are summarised in Table 1 that shows what kinds of verb follow *there* and *det* constructions in English and Norwegian. There is a clear asymmetry in the table, since almost all of the *there* constructions in English are followed by a verb of existence – which is always *to be* – while only 57% of the equivalent Norwegian constructions are followed by verbs of existence.

	English	**Norwegian**
Verb of existence	1193 (98%)	1183 (57%)
Other verb	21 (2%)	893 (43%)
Total	**1214 (100%)**	**2076 (100%)**

TABLE 1: Usage of there *and* det *constructions in English and Norwegian (Ebeling 1998)*

This raises the question of what happens to *there* constructions when they are translated from English into Norwegian. There are three possibilities: either they are translated as *det* constructions with a verb of existence, as a *det* construction with another verb or as a completely different construction. Out of the total 1193 *there* constructions with *to be* that Ebeling analysed, 310 were not translated using a *det* construction. The remaining 883 tokens were translated as *det* constructions and Table 2 shows the frequency with which they were followed by the different types of verb.

Construction	**Frequency**
Det + verb of existence	786 (89%)
Det + other verb	97 (11%)
Total	**883 (100%)**

TABLE 2: Translation of English there *constructions with* to be *as* det *constructions (Ebeling 1998)*

Since the 57% - 43% split in originally produced Norwegian turns into an 89% - 11% split in translated Norwegian, Ebeling (1998: 7) concludes that "this then seems to be a case of translationese, that is, over-use of verbs of existence in translated Norwegian text." The term translationese deserves some attention because it is generally associated with examples of mis-translation (Gellerstam 2005: 202). The kind of translationese that

Ebeling has highlighted is different because it does not result in individual uses that strike the reader as incorrect, or abnormal. He therefore makes a distinction between "deviation from the target system" which would result in something a reader will interpret as incorrect or abnormal and "deviation from the target norm", where the individual examples are not incorrect, but the text as a whole does not conform to the norms of the target language. I will come back to both of these notions over the next two sections.

II Features at the syntactic level

Although this example from Ebeling (1998) to some extent straddles syntax and lexis, I focus only on the syntactic level because if translation has the potential to influence the development of a language, it is arguably more significant if it is the syntax rather than the lexis that is affected. This can be illustrated using Ebeling's findings, since one could posit that with time – and, of course, extensive translation from English into Norwegian – the *det* construction will change causing a reduction in the range of verbs used and a move towards verbs of existence being favoured in this construction, as in English.

In this second section, therefore, I'm going to present some research that I have carried out on the use of a particular syntactic construction in translation from English into French. The construction is known as dislocation, and it also exists in English: there are examples in (3) and (4).

(3) **moi je** pense qu'il va venir
me I think that he will come
'I think he'll come'

(4) **le livre** je **l**'ai lu
the book I **it** have read
'I've read the book'

In this construction, an element outside the main clause is corefential with a pronoun within the main clause (Ayres-Bennett and Carruthers with Temple 2001: 257): in (3) *moi* and *je* refer to the same person, and *le livre* and *l(e)* refer to the same object in (4). This construction is also found in English but it less frequent and it also seems to have stronger pragmatic force: it might be used with a contrastive purpose as in (5) or for emphasis as in (6).

(5) **John** I like **him**, but **David** I can't stand **him**

(6) **John he**'ll be there

While it is used in both of these ways in French, it is also found in examples with substantially less pragmatic force: for example (3) could be read either with contrastive force, or as something closer to a simple variant of *je pense qu'il va venir*.

I decided to investigate this construction because it permits contrastive analysis, existing as it does in both languages, but also because there are important differences in the way it is used in French and English. Below is a summary of the corpus of texts that I used to investigate dislocation.

French originals:

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).

French translations:

J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrâce*, tr. by Catherine Lauga du Plessis (Paris, Seuil, 2001).

Ian McEwan, *Amsterdam*, tr. by Suzanne V. Mayoux (Paris, Gallimard, 2001).

Carol Shields, *Une Soirée chez Larry*, tr. by Céline Schwaller-Balaÿ (Paris, Calmann- Lévy, 1998).

English originals:

J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* (London, Secker and Warburg, 1999).

Ian McEwan, *Amsterdam* (London, Vintage, 1999).

Carol Shields, *Larry's Party* (London, Fourth Estate, 1997).

The corpus was compiled specifically for the project and it consists of originally produced and translated French fiction, with three works in each category. Since one of the biggest problems in compiling such corpora is the question of comparability, I decided to use very recent prize-winning fiction so that the genre can as far as possible be considered homogeneous. I selected a 19,000-word section from each text so the investigation is based on 90,000 words of French and in total there were 188 dislocations. The aim of the investigation was to determine whether there is a difference in the way this construction is used in translated and original French. The frequency of tokens across both language types is shown in Table 3.

	No. of tokens	**No. of words**	**Freq. of tokens / 1,000 words**
Original French	130	45,000	28.89
Translated French	58	45,000	12.89
Total	188	90,000	

TABLE 3: Frequency of tokens across original and translated French

It can be seen clearly in this table that dislocation is used more frequently in originally produced French.[3] The main finding of the investigation is therefore that there are significantly fewer tokens of dislocation in translated French than in originally produced French.

The next step is to determine why there should be a difference between the way dislocation is used in the two types of language and I think that there are two explanations: first, that dislocation is used in translated language in a stylistically stereotypical way, and second, that it is used in translated language in a pragmatically stereotypical way. Beginning with the question of the style, the main value associated with dislocation in French is orality: in what is still the most thorough treatment of dislocation, Blasco-Dulbecco (1999: 94) is categorical: when it is found on the page, it reflects an oral tone. For this reason, I looked at the way dislocation was used across the different voices in speech: the results are presented in Table 4.

	Original	**Translation**
NR(S)A	66 (51%)	7 (12%)
(F)IS	2 (1%)	12 (21%)
(F)DS	62 (48%)	39 (67%)
Total	**130 (100%)**	**58 (100%)**

TABLE 4: Frequency of tokens according to voice

The first category is the narrative, the second indirect speech (or free indirect speech) and the final category is direct (or free direct) speech.[4] What is interesting about the distribution of these results is that while over 50% of the dislocations in original French are found in the narrative voices, only 12% of the dislocations in translated French are found in narrative. The fact that less than half of the tokens in originally produced French appear in the more oral voices is interesting, since linguistics are generally

[3] This result is seen to be statistically significant according to binomial distribution.
[4] This classification is based on the speech voice continuum presented in Leech and Short (1981).

content to assume that the primary stylistic function of dislocation is oral. This is not something I have time to discuss today, but the question is treated at greater length in McLaughlin (2011). Instead, today I want to focus on the fact that this distribution is not mirrored in translated French. My hypothesis is that the translator prefers to use dislocation in indirect and direct speech because of the stereotypical oral value of the construction.

It is useful to illustrate this point with some examples: the use of dislocation in (7) in originally produced French can be compared with its more stereotypical use in (8) and (9) in translated French.

(7) **Un acteur** il faut **le** voir sur un écran, **un écrivain** il faut **le** lire.

an actor (expl) must **him** see on the screen, **an author** (expl) must **him** read

'You need to see an actor on the screen, you need to read an author'

(8) "**Ça** me plaît **cette idée**"

it me pleases **this idea**

'I like that idea'

(9) "**Moi je** n'en suis pas sûre."

Me I (neg) about it am (neg) sure

'I'm not sure about it'

Of course, this is not to say that there are no examples of dislocation in the narrative in translation, but the weight of the results shows that this is true to a lesser extent here than in originally produced French. The explanation I would like to offer essentially comes down to a question of salience: as exemplified by Blasco-Dulbecco (1999: 94), there is broad consensus among linguists that the primary stylistic function of dislocation in French is to indicate orality. I would suggest that this is something that translators are also aware of – either consciously or subconsciously – and this is supported by the data presented here. At the same time, I argue in McLaughlin (2011) that there are other possible motivations for the use of dislocation in modern French and these seem to have been overlooked to some extent by linguists, and, significantly for this investigation, also by translators. In general, the translators are using dislocation when the oral tone is appropriate, but they are less likely to use it as an alternative to the 'default' non-dislocated construction.

The second explanation for the lower frequency of dislocation in translated texts is that it is used stereotypically also in terms of its pragmatic function. Again, this is illustrated by data from the corpus. Table 5 shows the distribution of the tokens of dislocation according to their pragmatic function, based on analyses by Barnes (1985) and Ashby (1988).

Function	**Original French**	**Translated French**
Contrast	28 (21%)	17 (29%)
Topic shift	55 (42%)	24 (41%)
Turn taking	3 (2%)	1 (2%)
Filler	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Clarification	9 (7%)	10 (17%)
Epithet	8 (6%)	1 (2%)
Turn closing	2 (2%)	0 (0%)
Weak	17 (13%)	1 (2%)
List interpretation	9 (7%)	4 (7%)
Total	**131 (100%)**	**58 (100%)**

TABLE 5: Frequency of tokens according to pragmatic function

There is a lot of information in this table but certain results help to explain the lower frequency of dislocation in translated language. To begin with, dislocations that are weakly motivated have no strong pragmatic effect such as contrast (Barnes 1985: 24-26). It is striking that there are seventeen such dislocations in original French but only one in translated French. This distribution points to something similar to what was seen in Table 4 for stylistic function: the relative absence of weak dislocations suggests that when it is used in translation, dislocation is almost always pragmatically motivated. This parallels the stylistic stereotypicality because dislocation is being used with its typical pragmatic function rather than appearing on some occasions as a simple variant of constructions without dislocation, as happens more frequently in originally produced French. This suggestion is supported by two other results in the table: both the contrastive and clarification function are more frequently used in the translated section of the corpus. This is further evidence that dislocation is used with stereotypical pragmatic functions because both of these functions have a relatively strong pragmatic effect in comparison to some of the other functions. Examples (10), (11) and (12) illustrate the weak, contrastive and clarification functions respectively.

(10) **ne pas penser à ceux qui avaient disparu c**'était les perdre pour toujours

NEG NEG to think of those who had disappeared, it was them to lose for ever

'not thinking of those who had disappeared was to lose them forever'

(11) **Toi, tu** racontes ce qui t'est arrivé […] **moi, je** raconte ce qui m'est arrivé

you you tell that which to you happened […] **me I** tell that which to me happened

'you tell what happened to you […] I'll tell what happened to me'

(12) **Ils** se connaissaient donc, **l'homme et elle**

They each other know then **the man and she**

'They know each other then, she and the man'

Before concluding this section, I will summarise the results and begin to consider their implications. The most interesting finding is that dislocation is used significantly less frequently in the translated texts. This result is in line with what Ebeling discovered about translation between English and Norwegian because although dislocation is also found in English, it is less frequent than it is in French. Therefore, just as the choice of verb in translated Norwegian matches more closely the English pattern rather than the Norwegian pattern, so the choice of syntactic construction is affected by syntactic patterns in English. The significance of this finding is that it underlines the fact that there is a difference between translated and originally produced language. This is a tendency that has been observed in much of the work within Corpus-based Translation Studies and some evidence from the lexical domain was presented above.

The next question, therefore, is why it might be important to recognise the existence of this difference. There is a clear intersection here between this thread of investigation and the work of Lawrence Venuti, although our aims and methodologies are very different. His 1995 book *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* sets out what is probably his most famous contribution to the field, namely his invisibility theory. He argues that translation into English today is defined by the absence of the voice of the translator: he writes "under the regime of fluent translating, the translator works to make his or her work 'invisible,' producing the illusory effect of transparency that simultaneously masks its status as an illusion: the translated text seems 'natural,' that is, not translated" (Venuti 2008: 5). Venuti points to two aspects of current translation practice that ensure invisibility: first, the fact that the translator writes under this 'regime of fluent translation' and second, the fact that Anglo-American readers judge translations by this same fluency. This becomes something quite negative for Venuti. His aims in developing this argument range from the ideological to the downright practical: he calls for more recognition of the work done by translators, he is pushing for an acknowledgement of the status of the translator as author and he also simply wants to see better renumeration for translators today (Venuti 2008: 275).

The interest of my work for this theory concerns the question of invisibility. The body of work done in Corpus-based Translation Studies that points to significant differences between the two types of language would indicate that there is no such thing as complete invisibility. Even within the cultural context that Venuti describes, it seems that the translator will always have a voice as an author despite this voice being visible not to the reader but through analysis of the type described here. I imagine that this is not something that Venuti would disagree with, but it does suggest a modification for his theory and it illustrates how a bridge can be made between Corpus-based Translation Studies and Translation Studies proper. This ties in with a point made by Laviosa (2003: 47): she says that the role of Corpus-based Translation Studies (CTS) "cannot, in my view, be fully and effectively realized without reflecting on the theoretical links that exist or can be developed between CTS and the traditional and long-standing approaches within the discipline with their wealth of theoretical elaborations, invaluable sources of hypotheses that can be tested empirically and on a large scale with a corpus-based methodology". Her point is that it is not enough to simply apply the methodology of corpus linguistics to translation studies but that it is important to make the link between the results of corpus-based enquiry and the more theoretical questions that are at the centre of translation studies today. In this way, this investigation serves as an illustration – albeit on a much smaller scale than some other corpus-based studies – of the way in which empirical corpus-based research can be applied to theoretical translation studies.

The second result to emerge from this investigation is that there is an element of stereotypicality in the language of translation. This again feeds back into Venuti's invisibility theory, since choosing the stereotypical, default, or unmarked option is presumably something that contributes to the fluency he rails against. Venuti opposes much of the domesticating trend in the practice of translation and asks translators not to be afraid of foreignizing: "the ultimate aim of the book is to force translators and their readers to reflect on the ethnocentric violence of translation and hence to write and read translated texts in ways that recognize the linguistic and cultural differences of foreign texts" (Venuti 2008: 34). I think that the notion of stereotypicality that emerges from the corpus-based studies is also a feature of this fluent domesticating strategy.

III Consequences

Three possible consequences emerge from this research into dislocation that shows a difference between its use in translated and originally produced French. The first consequence has already been mentioned and it seems quite evident: there needs to be a reworking of the notion of invisibility and a recognition of the authorial status of the translator. The second consequence is entirely speculative, but it seems impossible not to wonder whether the apparent stereotypicality of the language of translation might influence the reader's enjoyment of the text. This question is far from my own domain of investigation and it is not something that I intend to pursue, but it at least seems possible. It is mentioned here because it highlights a recurrent theme in translation studies beginning with scholars such as Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury who linked the norms of translation practice to the status of translations within the cultural and literary context in which they are produced. Venuti (2008) illustrates this when he argues that the relatively low status of translation can be used to explain why the regime of fluent translation exists because the low status prevents the translator from having authorial status. The stereotypicality highlighted here may be another such case: there is potential for a vicious circle to appear where the more stereotypical translation becomes, the less enjoyable it will be for the reader and, as a result, its status will reduce even further. It seems to me that this is exactly the kind of circle that Venuti is trying to break and it will be very interesting to see how this develops in the future.

The third consequence of this work is the topic of this final brief section, namely that if the language of a translation can be influenced by the language of the original text then, in the right circumstances, this could lead to language change. This question is addressed in McLaughlin (forthcoming). The aim of this research was to test the common assumption that because of large scale and frequent translation from English into French, it will borrow not just words like *shopping* or *old school*, but also syntactic constructions. For example, it is often assumed that translation in the press will lead to adjectives appearing more and more frequently before the noun in French to match English instead of following the noun as is more common in French (Ayres-Bennett 1996: 244). In order to test the hypothesis that syntax can be borrowed this way, I carried out fieldwork in an international news agency responsible for the wholesale translation of news dispatches from English into French. These translated dispatches are then used by French newspapers to write their international news stories. I compiled a corpus of a thousand news dispatches in French and English and analysed their syntax to see if there is evidence that the original English influences the translations. There is no time today to go through the methodology and results in any detail, but I would like to highlight one particular finding that brings us back to Ebeling's (1998) distinction between 'deviation from the target system' and 'deviation from the target norm'.

It is often assumed that this type of language contact through news translation will result in the borrowing of completely innovative constructions. For example, if French were to borrow the present progressive from English the new construction might look something like the token in (13).

(13) the boy is eating the cake

*le garçon est mangeant le gateau

If this being used in French because of translation from English it would be an example of syntactic borrowing caused by deviation from the target system in translation. There was relatively little of this type of influence in the journalistic French I investigated: in fact, it emerged that the news agency journalists translate extremely fast with very little deviation from the target system. Despite the lack of deviation from the system, however, it remains possible that this kind of translation could lead to changes in the language because of deviations from the target norm. I will discuss just one example here, namely the use of the passive in French. French has a prototypical passive construction that is a close parallel to the English passive: there is an example in (14).

(14) Le livre a été lu (par Jean)

The book has been read (by John)

'The book was read (by John)'

However, there are some differences in the way that these constructions are used. In general it can be said that French has a wider range of constructions that can be used to have an effect similar to that of the English passive. For example, there is the pronominal passive *ce vin se boit frais* that was discussed in the Introduction. Most of these equivalent constructions are not available in English, which means that English relies to a greater extent than French on the prototypical passive. Alongside this difference in frequency, there are further differences between the two languages and the effects that these differences have are seen in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6 concerns the frequency with which the agent is expressed in tokens of the prototypical passive in English and French. The first two columns summarise Granger-Legrand's (1976) comparison of its frequency of expression in the two languages: it can be seen that the agent is expressed more frequently in French. The final column shows the frequency of expression of the agent in my corpus of news agency dispatches that had been translated from English into French.

	Granger-Legrand		**McLaughlin**
	French	**English**	**French**
+Agent	34%	20%	20%
-Agent	66%	80%	80%

TABLE 6: Frequency of expression of the agent in Granger-Legrand (1976) and McLaughlin (forthcoming)

It is very striking that the frequency of expression of the agent in the translated news agency dispatches matches exactly the norm for English at 20% and this supports the hypothesis that translation in the context of the press can lead to deviation from target norms.

A similar pattern can be seen in Table 7 that gives data for those passive constructions that do have an expressed agent in English and French. The data concerns the animacy and number features of the subject and the agent. Granger-Legrand (1976) provides statistical evidence that there is a preference in French for the subject to be animate and the agent to be inanimate rather than the other way around. Similarly, there is a preference for the subject to be singular and the agent plural. In both cases, the preference is present in English but crucially this is to a lesser extent than in French.

	Granger-Legrand		McLaughlin
	French	**English**	**French**
+An -An	79%	60%	58%
-An +An	21%	40%	42%
Sg Pl	72%	55%	58%
Pl Sg	28%	45%	42%

TABLE 7: Relative ordering of noun phrases with different animacy and number features in Granger-Legrand (1976: 31) and McLaughlin (forthcoming)

As before, it can be seen that the news dispatches I analysed that had been translated from English into French match the English pattern more closely than the French pattern.

These results are very similar to what Ebeling found for the *det* construction in Norwegian but they are significant because of the effect that they could potentially have on the evolution of French syntax. Although there is as yet no model of how the language of translation could influence an individual's usage, it can be seen at this stage that the English original can alter the way a construction is used in French. This change could have important consequences if it starts to influence usage in originally produced language, since it could lead to an increase in frequency of the prototypical passive. This in turn would likely correspond to a reduction in frequency of other constructions that play a similar role to the prototypical passive and also potentially some day to their loss. If this were to happen, for example, to the pronominal passive it would represent a very significant development in the history of French syntax because having a pronominal passive is a feature of the syntax of the Romance languages: it developed after Latin, and it unites the language family today and distinguishes it, for example, from English. For now, however, this is merely a hypothesis and both time and research are required to determine how likely it is that it will happen, but it certainly illustrates the potential significance of the language of translation for language change.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the aim of this presentation was to illustrate how linguistics could contribute to translation studies and, at the moment, this seems to be principally through the corpus-based approach. The particular area that I have worked on seems to be pushing towards a recognition of the difference between translated and originally produced language and it therefore seems appropriate to consider the language of translation as the third code. However, it is very important to point out that the project I described here is on a small scale because of the close reading that it involved: more extensive investigation of larger corpora and a wider range of constructions will be required to provide more concrete evidence. There is little doubt, however, that this is the direction in which we are heading.

As well as the interest for scholars in applying linguistics to translation studies, something that has also emerged here is that the study of translation can be relevant for linguistics: the investigation of news agency translation suggests it is at least possible that the syntax of English will influence the syntax of French through translation in the press. Overall what this material shows is that the linguistics of translation is currently very fertile ground for research.

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