# MEDIA TRANSLATION IN BBCMUNDO INTERNET TEXTS

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, several authors have underlined the need to enforce a critical approach to translation studies in order to explore ideologies in both source and target languages and cultures (Hermans; Olk). In this article we shall study BBCMundo's news web texts and their source English BBCWorld reports from a critical approach. The paper is divided into two sections. Firstly, we analyse two series of news texts. We shall discuss the use of headlines in the STs and TTs, and proceed to study the strategies used in the main bodies of the reports, notably omissions, additions and permutations. In a final section, we shall carry out the discussion about the ideological implications of the translational strategies identified in the previous sections.

KEY WORDS: Editorial routines, translation strategies, critical approach, news discourse.


RESUMEN

En los últimos años, diversos estudiosos han señalado la necesidad de aplicar un enfoque crítico a los estudios de traducción con el fin de analizar la ideología subyacente en los textos origen y meta (Hermans; Olk). Este artículo estudia, en dos secciones, textos meta publicados por en BBCMundo y los correspondientes textos origen en inglés procedentes de BBCWorld. En la primera se analizarán dos grupos de textos. Se estudiará el uso de los titulares en los textos origen y textos meta, así como las estrategias utilizadas por sus autores en los artículos, especialmente las omisiones, adiciones y transformaciones, que son también objeto de estudio en el análisis del discurso de este género. Concluiremos con una sección de discusión sobre las implicaciones ideológicas de las estrategias traductológicas estudiadas en las secciones anteriores.

PALABRAS CLAVE: normas editoriales, estrategias de traducción, enfoque crítico, discurso de la noticia.

## A CRITICAL APPROACH TO TRANSLATION STUDIES

News texts have been the object of analysis of critical linguistics since the late 1970s. In a seminal work, Fowler et al. established the tools to underpin the ideology that permeates all public discourse and, particularly, that of news texts.

The tools they selected were somehow eclectic but owed much to Halliday's model of descriptive linguistics. Fowler acknowledged that much in a recent revision of that initial work (Fowler, "Critical" 3-6). The trend would continue in the next decades thanks to the interest of van Dijk (*Noticia*), who studied issues such as racism in the press, Fowler (*Language*), Bell (*Language*; "Discourse") and Fairclough (*Critical*; *Media*; *Language*). The flexibility of critical linguistics allows it to combine with other disciplines (Fairclough, "Political"144). It is this interdisciplinary character what makes it applicable to other fields such as Translation Studies.

In fact, the call for a critical approach to Translation Studies (hence TS) has already been made by a number of scholars. Hatim & Mason worked with the power implications of the lexical choices made by translators (*Discourse* 89; *Translator* 172), and have also acknowledged the importance of the study of ideology in language within this discipline (*Discourse* 143). More recently, Olk has underlined the fact that a CDA approach to the field of TS can "reveal how translation is shaped by ideologies and in this way contributes to the perpetuation or subversion of particular discourse" (101). Following Hermans (160-161), Brownlie believes that "a critical descriptive approach" has a greater potential for questioning presuppositions than other approaches, since the latter tend to import their "agendas" from other disciplines (61).

In this paper, we shall opt for Fairclough's model of critical discourse analysis, or CDA. In his three-dimensional approach to the analysis of communicative events, Fairclough speaks of "text, discourse practice and sociocultural practice" (*Critical*; *Media*; *Language*). In our corpus the texts are written taking the form (or genre) of news reports, and the discourse practice refers to the production and subsequent consumption of the texts. This actual production process might involve correspondent reporting and/or the use of agency dispatches besides translation strategies. As regards the first dimension, we shall cover the lexicon as well as features of textual organization. Texts, according to Fairclough (*Media* 58), and drawing on Halliday & Hasan (26-28), have three specific functions: *ideational, interpersonal* and *textual.* In his model, these functions can be examined by means of ten questions as regards their vocabulary, grammar and structures (*Language* 92-100). Since the study concentrates on the translational aspects of media texts, we shall adapt Fairclough's questions to cover the relational and expressive values of words (*Language* 94-98) in connection with their translational nature of the Spanish texts; the experiential values of the grammatical features (100-104), and notably the presence of certain strategies characteristic of English news media writing (such as transitivity processes) in the Spanish TTs; and the syntactic characteristics as well as the general structuring of the texts (110-116), concerning the ways in which writers can control the participants in the communicative events.

As for the second dimension, discourse practice, this is concerned with the *interpretation* of the text. Fairclough offers a two-fold approach consisting of institutional processes (such as editorial routines) on the one hand, and discourse processes (affecting transformations in production and consumption) (*Media* 59-61). In this paper, we shall consider the way in which text producers and text consumers interact in the interpretation of the text as presented (Fairclough, *Media* 55) and

the likely contradictions in this interaction. Finally, we come to the third dimension, that is, the so-called *explanation* (*Language* 135). This level may involve a range of aspects that constitute social and cultural practice, including economic, political and cultural. In this sense we are concerned with deciding on the power relations exerted by text producers as representatives of the company they work for, on the elements in the discourse with an ideological character and on the nature of the (likely) struggles between the participants (*Language* 138).

The developments in TS over the last decade offer elements more concomitant with CDA than it might be initially thought of. In fact, there are two concepts which need to be addressed before proceeding. Fairclough's framework uses two concepts, *translation* and *mediation*, which do not correspond to the way in which they are used in TS. He often uses the term "translation" to refer to the linguistic changes operated in a given text in its original language (*Critical* 61). These processes are clearly linked with production or editing techniques rather than with translational strategies. Since some of these processes have been used by CDA and TS researchers alike, we shall cover the following: permutations, omissions and additions. As regards the term "translation," here it will be solely used to refer to the act of transforming the messages, views, opinions and comments expressed in a given language, taken as the source language, into another language.

The second concept shared by both CDA and TS is that of "mediation." The mediation process is interpreted as a chain between text producers and text consumers. Drawing on Hall et al. (61), Fairclough states that the "translation" of official viewpoints into "a public idiom" is frequent in the media (*Media* 71-72). We shall use the term *mediation* in connection with *transformative acts* involving changes into another language. Thus, we understand the role of translators as "intercultural mediators" (Venuti; Campbell 3; Peeters 217-227). Hatim & Mason have spoken of different types of mediation (*Discourse* 223-238; *Translator* 143-163) *minimal mediation* (*Translator* 148-152), *maximal* (*Translator* 153-159) and *partial* (*Translator* 159-161), although they have also stressed the importance of translators as mediators seeking to overcome incompatibilities as regards "ideologies, moral systems and socio-political structures" (*Discourse* 223). Consequently, the mediating role of the translator does not always relate to the function of media text producers as mediators. We shall return to the issue of mediation in the final section.

## THE CORPUS AND THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This paper is part of a project researching the various linguistic and ideological components in the reporting of European news events in the Internet. In two previous pieces of research we covered the way in which quality British and American news websites presented the Spanish government's claims that the terrorist group ETA was to blame for the 3/11 attacks (Valdeón). In a second paper we established that BBCMundo texts function largely as translations of English articles published by the BBCNews website. We identified a number of deficiencies

concerning discursive practices, editorial policy routines, on the one hand, and translational processes, on the other. We showed how both shared certain strategies in the transformative act, such as permutations, additions or omissions, and, although their goals differed, the overall effects of these changes on the resulting texts were for the most part negative (Valdeón).

In this paper we turn to new aspects concerning the likely ideological bias present in the TTs. Once it has been established that BBCMundo tends to publish a significant number of translated versions of BBCWorld reports, our aim is to analyse the ideological component that permeates through the target texts and the strategies used. The corpus gathered for the study includes 50 articles, 25 in Spanish from BBCMundo and other 25 from BBCNews. The selection of texts took into account two points. On the one hand, we selected reports that were clearly identified as STs, together with their corresponding TTs in Spanish. On the other, the majority of the texts covered international rather than Spanish news, and, consequently, the focus is shifted here from the analysis of national news to the study of the reporting of international events. The objective is to obtain a wider perspective and ascertain whether the deficiencies identified in the previous paper are pervasive. The specific aims are explicited below:

1.  Since BBCMundo has been conceived as specific for Spanish readers, the writers/translators should take into account this specificity, as has been noted by many researchers (A. Bell, "Language"; Nord; Mason), to provide the consumers with efficient texts that mediate between the source writers and the ultimate readers. Firstly, we shall consider the translational strategies used in the headlines, since there are important differences in sentential formation in the two languages. Secondly, we shall cover the structural and lexical choices of the heads and main bodies of the news items, paying particular attention to the following strategies: omissions, additions and permutations.
2.  Secondly, we shall establish comparisons between those texts reporting on political issues and those dealing with non-political topics. Because of their less threatening nature, we might infer that the translational strategies used in the latter might vary. We shall reflect upon whether the strategies used and identified in the previous two sections account for the specificity of the target readership, on the quality of the mediating process, and on whether the interests and sensitivity of the Other are respected in the Spanish versions.

## HEADLINES

The most interesting headlines from the corpus are listed below. The first series is politically-laden, whereas the second one introduces other lighter topics. We have included the English headlines as "a" and the Spanish counterparts as "b." The same reference will be used below to comment upon the main bodies of the texts.

Political issues
Ex. 1a. Gibraltar celebration "offensive"
Ex. 2a. Chechen president killed by bomb
Ex. 3a. US and EU pledge support to Iraq
Ex. 4a. US hands over sovereignty in Iraq
Ex. 5a. Iraqis to take custody of Saddam
Ex. 6a. Defiant Saddam appears in court
Ex. 7a. Gunman kills Dutch film director

Ex. 1b. Gibraltar celebra con polémica
Ex. 2b. Explosión mata presidente checheno
Ex. 3b. Apoyo a Irak prometen EE.UU. y UE
Ex. 4b. El poder pasa a manos iraquíes
Ex. 5b. Irak se hará cargo de Saddam Hussein
Ex. 6b. "Soy Saddam Hussein, presidente de Irak"
Ex. 7b. Asesinan a cineasta holandés

Non-political issues
Ex. 8a. Bill Gates to star in Frasier
Ex. 9a. Spain hosts "culture Olympics"
Ex. 10a. Why does Dali still delight?
Ex. 11a. Anti-Bush film wins Cannes prize
Ex. 12a. Madonna starts 50-day world tour
Ex. 13a. The myths of sex before sport

Ex. 8a. Bill Gates y Frasier, juntos en TV
Ex. 9b. Barcelona, capital del diálogo
Ex. 10b. "Salvador Dali, yo mismo, es muy rico y ama el oro"
Ex. 11b. Cannes: Moore gana la Palma de Oro
Ex. 12b. Madonna inicia nueva gira mundial
Ex. 13b. Deporte y sexo: el debate

Although Allan Bell claims that news headlines are fairly regular across languages (*Language* 187), English headlines follow well-established patterns, quite distinct from Spanish ones. These include the omission of auxiliaries and articles, the transformation of verb tenses, and the use of specific vocabulary not to be found in other contexts (Swan 359-369), whereas in Spanish they follow the same structural patterns as in the standard variety of the language. Additionally, English headlines are affected by transitivity, a process noted by Halliday as being capable of offering "different encodings" of the same "state of affairs" (322). This process allows writers to consider several ideological possibilities and use those that may benefit their own positions and suppress those that do not (Fowler 1991: 70). Thus, the main *actor* (Halliday 30-33; Fowler, "Language" 71; Jucker) in the news event receives initial focus, whether we are dealing with nations or individuals. Particularly noticeable is the case of Ex. 3a and Ex. 4a, where "US and EU" and "US" are given initial prominence in news items dealing with Iraqi topics. In Ex. 5a, on the other hand, "Iraqis" appear as the subject of the headline with no reference to

external powers. The function of these headlines seems to be quite different. Whereas in the first two cases, there is a clear evaluative presentation of the role of Western powers in the country, in the third example the headline strives to convey the idea of the Iraqi judiciary taking full responsibility for the new status quo.

The emphasis in the matching Spanish headlines, on the other hand, has been shifted to Iraq in all three cases. In Ex. 3b, the translator has used a syntactic process alien to Spanish: "Apoyo a Irak" has been fronted to receive initial focus, but the resulting headline is unnatural in the target language. In Ex. 4b, the writer has omitted any reference to the US and the two noun phrases, "el poder" and "manos iraquíes," emphasize the idea of Iraqi sovereignty over foreign powers. Finally Ex. 5b renders the source headline literally, but relayed as a well-formed Spanish sentence. However, this type of headlines is rare and can only be found in Ex. 12a and 12b in the second series. The tendency is, then, to carry out adaptation processes of some type for the target audience. We might distinguish four major strategies. Firstly, translators might shift the emphasis of the news item. This might be done by means of an introductory noun (as in 13b), by using the active voice instead of the passive (as in Ex. 2b) or, as in the already mentioned Ex. 3b, by having recourse to an unnatural fronted element.

The second strategy involves the use of a direct quotation of words uttered by the main actor of the news item. In Ex. 6a, the English text producer gives initial emphasis to Saddam by making him the subject of the headline. A premodifier offers the reader an evaluative comment on the stature of Saddam before court: he is presented as "defiant," an adjective with a clear connotative reference. In the Spanish version, the report is introduced with a quotation: "Soy Saddam Husseim, Presidente de Irak." The connotative effect of the headline outweighs the informative content of the source headline by omitting the reference to the actual news event, the fact that Saddam is to appear before court in Iraq. The evaluative component receives, thus, complete focus as the headline reproduces Saddam's actual words before court. These already imply defiance, since the readers will be aware of the fact that Saddam has been ousted from power, but will be unable to understand the words out of context, unless they proceed to read the report. The headline might be performing here one of its functions, namely to attract the reader's attention (A. Bell, "Language" 189), but the ideological imposition is present event though the use of direct speech might project the image of objectiveness.

In the third strategy, text producers opt to perform a complete change of the ST. Often this is done by means of idiomatic expressions, which, behind their metaphoric appearance, also carry an ideological component. These expressions will serve to attract the readers and anticipate an interpretation of the communicative event. For instance, Ex. 9a and 9b are an example of a permutation that, taking the target readership into account, performs a more positive mediating role. The English original chooses Spain as the actor of the news item, which refers to the opening of the so-called "Forum," a series of cultural events taking place in Barcelona over the summer of 2004. The headline describes this as "culture Olympics," in inverted commas, reproducing the comparison used by the organizers themselves. The inverted commas signal the use of direct speech, even if translated

into English. The Spanish version, on the other hand, prefers "Barcelona" as the actor of the news event and turns the city into the much more positive and ambitious "capital del diálogo," but also in accordance with the expressed wishes of the organizers.

Finally, the fourth strategy involves toning down the political component present in the original headline by substituting or omitting some of its elements. In Ex. 11a, for instance, the writer gives initial emphasis to the political nature of the film that was awarded the first prize at the 2004 Cannes Festival. This element disappears in the Spanish version, which merely presents Moore as the winner of the prize. This also applies to Ex. 1a and 3b where the reference to the "offensive" nature of the celebrations in Gibraltar has been toned down to "celebra con polémica."

## STORIES PROPER

Omissions. This strategy allows the writer/translator to adapt the text to the space requirements of the website. 17 out of the original 25 source texts have undergone drastic processes of reduction, both in the first and second series. The Spanish service is not allotted the same space, and writers must leave out part of the content in the original. Very often the deletion is straightforward, and once the main news event is communicated to the readers, additional information is omitted altogether. This occurs in Ex. 8a and 8b. In this item, the English text provides information about Bill Gates' cameo role in the TV comedy programme *Frasier* to mark the 200th episode of the series. The last ten paragraphs offer additional information about the history of the sitcom, which are deleted in the Spanish article. But not all the examples of omission are so straightforward. Frequently, certain elements within sentences are judged unnecessary and, therefore, left out. Ex. 3b follows the source text rather literally but part of the information has been omitted. Thus, in

> Ex. 3a
> The summit also covered trans-Atlantic trade issues, the crisis in Sudan and Iran's nuclear programme.
> The situation in Iraq just days before the scheduled handover dominated the brief summit at Dromoland Castle, in County Clare —the first between the US and the EU since the latter's expansion to 25 members in May.
> (...)
> And a deal was signed to make the EU's planned satellite navigation system compatible with the existing US Global Positioning System.
>
> Ex.5b
> En la cumbre, que duró sólo unas horas, también se trataron temas de comercio trasatlántico, la crisis humanitaria en Sudán y el programa nuclear de Irán.
> Sin embargo el punto dominante fue Irak, donde, a cuatro días del traspaso de poder, la situación de seguridad sigue siendo bastante inestable.

We notice here the omission of what might have be regarded as irrelevant points for non-English speakers, such as the location of the summit and the fact that the meeting is the first of its kind after ten new states joined the EU. On the other hand, the reference to the precarious situation in Iraq has been added. Thus, the focus falls on the issue of Iraq, rather than on the relationship between the EU and the US, which could have been judged crucial in the English edition. As regards the other issues discussed in the summit, the deletion process affects the reference to the agreement on a technological issue. Space reasons, but also the complexity of the topic, which might have proved highly time-consuming for the translator, may have had an influence on the final decision about what to include in the TT.

Let us now turn to report on the death of Theo Van Gogh ("Gunman kills Dutch film director"). The Spanish text follows the original line by line, with some awkward lexical choices that to support this view (such as the use of "controversial" in both the ST and TT). The only deviation from the original text comes in the final section of the report when the ST introduces the views of Dutch personalities, including Queen Beatrix and the Prime Minister. The latter is reported to have said: "Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende said "it is unacceptable if expressing your opinion would be the cause of this brutal murder. On a day like this we are reminded of the murder of Fortuyn. We cannot resign ourselves to such a climate," "he added." The Spanish text, on the other hand, is reduced to "El Primer Ministro holandés, Jan Peter Balkenende, condenó el crimen y manifestó que "es inaceptable que el expresar una opinión sea motivo de este brutal asesinato." The translator omits the second half of the Prime Minister's words, and more precisely the comparison being made between the murder of the film-maker and that of Mr Fortuyn, the founder of a right-wing party that criticized issues such as immigration or the influence of Islam on Dutch society. The writer/translator has suppressed the comparison between the murder of the extreme-right leader and the left-wing film director, and, consequently, the readers are spared of the opportunity to make their own judgement on Mr Balkenende's words.

Additions. The strategy of implementing a source text with additional information responds to both news writing strategies and translational processes. News writing usually resorts to an adaptation process that allows prospective readers to become familiar with foreign institutions, norms, history or events which may sound particularly alien to the reality surrounding the text consumer. For this reason, text producers often provide a little help by inserting information not supplied by the original source of the news item, whether this can be a news agency dispatch or the English news report. In Valdeón we showed how English-speaking news websites tend to provide their English readership with additional information about the terrorist group ETA. This strategy, irrespective of whether we regard it as addition or explanation, remains a feature of most BBCMundo texts.

Addition processes can be justified in the TTs for a variety of reasons. In Ex. 13a and 13b, the translator has added extra information about one of the actors of the news event. The report presents a number of interviews with sportsmen and women, giving their opinion about the effects of sex on the competition. In the ST we read that "George Best, who once said, "I used to go missing a lot –Miss Canada,

Miss United Kingdom, Miss Germany," disagrees. He would draw the line at having sex minutes before a match, but the night before? No problem." In the TT, the writer/translator introduces "futbolista británico" in the subject in order to familiarize Spanish readers familiar with the interviewee: "El ex futbolista, George Best, uno de los parranderos más famosos del mundo del deporte, dice por experiencia que hay una gran diferencia entre refocilarse pocos minutos antes del pitazo inicial y hacerlo la noche antes." But this is not the only change put into effect. On the one hand, the first half of Mr Best's views on sex before sport has been deleted. On the other, the addition of colloquial lexicon, such as "parrandero" and "refocilarse," minimize the significance of his role of within the article. The options made by the writer/translator might denote an ideological bias against the interviewee.

Finally, introductory additions are frequent in most TTs. In Ex. 8a and 8b, we read "Bill Gates, el fundador de Microsoft y hombre más rico del planeta" in the TT, whereas the ST assumes that the reader will be familiar with Bill Gates: "Bill Gates, the world's richest man." A similar process is carried out in other more political items. In Ex. 7b, the translator decided to complement the reference to the famous relative of the victim thus: "Van Gogh estaba relacionado con el conocido y fallecido pintor del mismo nombre," whereas the ST reads "Van Gogh —who was related to the famous Dutch painter." The need to add "fallecido" in the TT could be more than challenged.

Permutations. Permutation entails the transformation of the linguistic input that the writers and/or translators encounter in order to adapt it to the needs, policies or ideology of the company they work for. This adaptation process does not involve the total omission of part of the information or the addition of new information, but the alteration of the message in such a way that it could lead to more than one interpretation, that is, it activates ambiguity as a textual characteristic. Permutations can be the result of careful planning or the consequence of the pressure put upon the text producers to complete their tasks within certain time limits. The reason for the changes might differ but the resulting text will certainly be instrumental in exposing the ideological agenda of the news company.

Political issues are often the object of various types of transformations. Among the texts with a strong international component, those reporting on Iraq offer good examples of the subtle changes applied by the translators. In Ex. 4a and 4b the texts report on the ever-changing political situation in the country: the American government has handed over the power to a provisional Iraqi cabinet. As mentioned above, it is significant to notice that the reference to the US in the English headline has been omitted in the TT. Let us remember that the English headline reads "US hands over sovereignty in Iraq," where the *actor* carrying the full power of the event, the US, receives focal attention. In the Spanish headline, the readers will necessarily be aware of the political situation in the country, but the role of the American government is not focalized: "El poder pasa a manos iraquíes." This transformation also occurs in the head of the report. Thus, while the English text underlines the role of the US as performing the main action of the sentence ("The US has formally handed over power in Iraq, two days ahead of schedule"), the TT emphasizes the new situation ("Tras catorce meses de ocupación"), and, as

part of the transitivity process, which allows the writer to highlight an element of the news event, the translator prefers to put emphasis on the process itself ("el traspaso de poder al nuevo gobierno interino en Irak"). He/she also opts for a re-flexive verb to avoid the reference to the US as the main actor of the news event ("se llevó a cabo").

The manipulation of the story proper is much more extensive, as shown in the reshuffle of the the various events being reported. This is carried out by adding certain elements or omitting others that might have been considered to be politi-cally inconvenient for a Spanish-speaking audience. The following extract contains examples of how these transformations are applied:

> Ex. 4a
> The surprise move to bring forward the handover of sovereignty was first disclosed by Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari, speaking after talks with UK Prime Minister Tony Blair at a Nato summit in Istanbul.
>
> Ex. 4b
> La sorpresiva medida fue anunciada primero por el canciller interino de Irak, Hoshyar Zebari, cuando los líderes de la Organización del Tratado del Atlántico Norte (OTAN) se aprestaban a participar en una cumbre de dos días que se inicia este lunes en la ciudad turca de Estambul.

The source text provides precise information about the events that led to an early handover of power, the meeting of Nato leaders in Istambul and notably the talks between an Iraqi official and the British Prime Minister. Further down the ST refers to BBC's political editor in the region, Andrew Marr, who clearly points to the key role of Mr Blair in the ongoing political process in the region. The Spanish version, however, provides the same information but omits any reference to Mr Blair. In the ST we encounter a clearly ethnocentric perspective of the news event, underlining Britain's role in the new situation. This is judged to be threaten-ing for a Spanish readership, who had opposed the invasion of Iraq, and, therefore, it is deleted altogether. This omission forces the writer/translator to rearrange the background situation of the announcement. Thus, "after talks with UK Prime Min-ister Tony Blair at a Nato summit in Istanbul" becomes "cuando los líderes de la Organización del Tratado del Atlántico Norte (OTAN) se aprestaban a participar en una cumbre." Although the main point is the use of a more generic reference to "líderes" rather than to the "UK Prime Minister," the use of the full name of the organization together with its acronym also stands out in the text. This might sig-nal the lack of familiarity of the translator with news writing strategies in Spanish.

DISCUSSION

For the final section we shall rely on the definition of ideology as a set of assumptions accepted by the participant in a given stretch of discourse (Simpson 5; Fairclough, *Language* 2), shared by translation scholars (Hatim & Mason, *Discourse*

160-161; Hatim & Mason, *Translator* 143-163; Puurtinen 53-54). Hatim & Mason have spoken of the "assumptions which are closely bound up with attitudes, beliefs and value systems" (*Translator* 144). Gramsci's definition of the concept of "hegemony" (12) may also prove valuable in the discussion.

In Fairclough's approach, the third dimension attempts to articulate an explanation of the texts embedded within the social discourse in which they are produced. The type of discourse under scrutiny, however, presents a number of peculiarities quite distinct from the texts normally studied by critical linguists. First and foremost, the text producer is translating a text, not in Fairclough's sense, but as a transformative act into a foreign language for a foreign culture or cultures. This takes us to the second important difference. The cultural, social and political situation at which the news text is addressed varies considerably, but is also considerably varied. The text is received by speakers of another language belonging to very different social and cultural backgrounds. Thus, we come to the third major difference, text producers are working for a media organization that claims to prioritize certain journalistic standards, such as editorial independence and an objective approach to news events, over other aspects of the text production process.

It is also worth noticing that BBCMundo is merely one of the 43 non-English services provided by the BBC and, therefore, certain limitations as regards web space, time and budget will certainly apply. That is, the target texts are commissioned by a media organization that holds a hegemonic position in Britain and in the world (Allan 2004) although speakers of other languages produce them. In this sense, the BBC could be at a disadvantage with respect to their writers/translators since the organization will be unable to be in full control of all the aspects of the production process and, therefore, individual (rather that the corporate) "assumptions" might be at work on occasions.

All these aspects seem to contradict Katan's view that "translations are commissioned according to whether they fit into the target's culture (distorted, generalized or deleted) perception of the source culture" (223), which implies that the ethnocentric perception of the culture of the other (the source) is strengthened in the target text. Translations would be ethnocentric in nature since they are initiated in the target culture, and the target audience is given priority. However, bearing the previous points in mind, the translated news articles that we have examined differ from other target texts from the very start. In the case of BBCMundo texts, the production/translation process is initiated in the source culture by an institution also located in the source culture. The ethnocentricity of the process does not shift from the ST to the TT, but remains clearly embedded within the ST. Consequently, these texts are very much an anomaly within TS. They are commissioned within the source culture, source culture constraints apply to them, and the translators, even if speakers of the target language, are also embedded within the source culture. TTs do not function, thus, in the interest of the target readers.

The process is also influenced, as mentioned above, by the conditions of the text-producing system at work. Working for an Internet service puts additional pressures on the writer. Translation is a time-consuming activity for a company that needs expediency to post the materials on the net. Besides, text producers working

for the Spanish service of the BBC tend to be of Latin-American origin, as explicited in the BBCMundo homepage, and as reflected in the textual features of the resulting articles (Valdeón). Geographical origin can also have an effect on the TT, as Hatim & Mason point out (*Discourse* 40), since the birthplace of the translators is bound to affect the political stance the writers might take when relaying the ST, since they bring their own linguistic, political and cultural background into the production process. That seems to be the case of the translated versions of the texts reporting on American policies, or dealing with the murder of Dutch film-maker Van Gogh, where lexical choices and omissions seemed to signal personal options rather than editorial norms. For instance, in Ex. 7a and 7b, the deletion of the connection between the death of the film-maker, on the one hand, and right-wing leader Fortuyn, on the other, was unlike BBC's policy of detachment (M. Bell 158-160; Allan 163), and shows the interpretative nature of the writer's intervention in the transformation process. The English version included the comparison, but in the target text the translator chose to omit it.

Consequently, the peculiarities of BBCMundo's translation processes seem to make a major impact on the resulting TTs. These processes should be understood, first and foremost, as deeply rooted in the interest on the part of the BBC to remain a leading force in the global news market. The domestication of the STs is, therefore, seriously questioned since the source culture prevails over the target one. Foreignizing elements are obvious in the syntactic, grammatical and lexical choices of the TTs. However, the use of editorial strategies (omissions, additions and permutations) allows the producer to import ideological agendas, including personal ones, which are likely to pass unnoticed for the target audience. The BBC uses, thus, its historic prestige (Gramsci 12) in news production to maintain, through the Internet, its hegemonic position in the new globalized news market. This implies, in its most expedient forms, the elimination of material that the target readers might regard as threatening.

All the previous points highlight the hybridity of the TTs, a feature which is reinforced by the role played by the translators themselves. Non-European speakers of Spanish, with their own political and cultural backgrounds, carry out the translation/writing process, but, being London-based, they are also exposed to the heavy influence of the source language and culture. The product is finally consumed in a culture alien to the whole process of production and/or translation. Of the five types of factors intervening in the rendering of hybrid texts into another language (Trosborg 148), each and every one of them seems to favour a source-oriented projection, in particular the issue of the loyalty towards the policies of the news corporation. It might be even argued that the traditional position of the BBC as a global communication medium has been taken advantage of to project the image of unbiased journalism and specificity for a Spanish-speaking readership. However, the role of the translators as mediators between two or more cultures has been diluted by their role as mere intermediaries between the many private orders of discourse likely to consume the texts and a public order of discourse, that of the BBC, with its own ideological stance, very strict editorial policies and a rather negligent approach to the actual production of the TTs.

The fundamental question, as we conclude the paper, is whether the writer/translator working under pressure for a big news company can produce texts capable of avoiding the ethnocentricity identified in the TTs examined, and preserve their informative over the persuasive function. The constraints for the translator are, indeed, enormous. Firstly, these limitations largely derive from the capacity, and often willingness, on the part of the news corporations to put into effect policies that, while preserving fundamental rights such as the freedom of the press and the right to be informed, do not abuse them in an attempt to preserve contradictory ideological positions, which are projected onto the likely readership. Secondly, these companies should prize certain elements such as the quality of the resulting text over financial issues. If the BBC wants to offer its Spanish readers a service that prioritizes excellence, it needs to provide BBCMundo with the resources capable of allowing the writers and/or translators to produce reasonable reports. This does not necessarily imply eliminating the translation of texts posted on its English edition. News writing of any type relies, to some extent or other, on translational processes. But translated versions should be clearly identified as such so that the readers could be fully informed, both of the news event itself and of the production process of the news item. Otherwise, there could be grounds to argue that the BBC is taking advantage of its traditional prestige in the news market to promote a service that does not attain the expected quality. If this is the case, and at a time when the public does not need to rely any more on one sole medium, when hundreds of companies offer information in Spanish for Spanish speakers belonging to different backgrounds, the BBC would be betraying its well-deserved prestige in order to maintain that hegemonic position at whatever cost. This would hardly be the best scenario for the company in the new millenium, and would abuse the interactional role of the translator vis-à-vis the target readers. These companies should be flexible enough to adapt their foreign language editions to the needs of the target readers, rather than viceversa, which would imply toning down the ethnocentric, and, often, threatening nature that seems to characterize most of the texts examined.

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