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# Traduttore Traditore

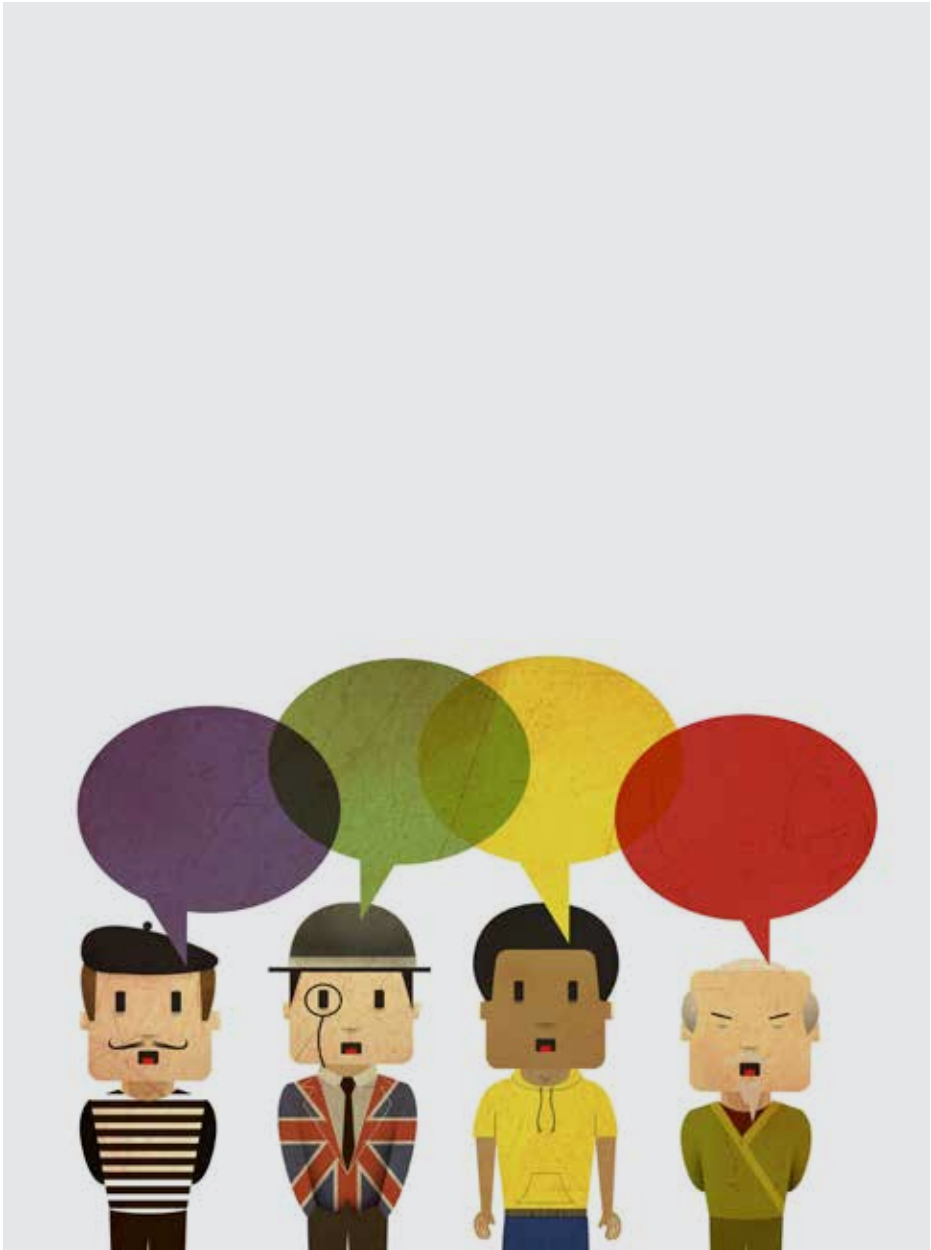
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I came to the conclusion that focusing my project on languages would be an exceptional idea and, my tutor, Anna Suana Rovira advised me to focus it on translation. I believe that was a truly favourable proposal, due to the fact that I was considering studying a degree in translation, and that I believe translation is not given the importance that it should, in behalf of the relevance it has had through centuries. That makes me feel translators do not enjoy the social recognition they should, due to their importance, not only in economic terms, but in politics and tourism as well, and it is a key factor for culture's universality. Being able to read in your own language authors who used to write in really different languages from yours is a huge privilege which is only possible thanks to translators' jobs. Having said that, I believe that the importance that translators have in our daily basis life and in the government and corporations is absolutely obvious, and I wanted to recognise their job the way they deserve it.

I have worked on the topic of translation in a theoretical and practical way with the support of my tutor and further professionals, who have guided and helped me to structure the project through the entire process.

The most considerable struggle I have had preparing my project was doing the practical part, for which I decided to subtitle the British TV series *Humans* to Catalan. I

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chose to subtitle *Humans* because I wanted a series which hadn't been translated yet, so I had to pick up one that had just been released in the United Kingdom. I knew that it would be a challenging task, but I did not expect it to take so long and to be so frustrating when I did not understand something that was said, because when that happened the only thing I could do was to listen to the same sentence again and again, and sometimes, not even like this could I understand what they were saying. However at the end, with my tutor's help, we could solve it out, and I have learnt a lot about subtitling. I have also improved my English, specially my knowledge on phrasal verbs, which were the main struggle for me when translating. I first wanted to subtitle the whole first episode, but I quickly realised that it is way more difficult that I thought, so I ended up translating half of it instead. To make the subtitles I used a professional programme called «Subtitle WorkShop» because a professional on translating and subtitling I interviewed called Núria Hernández Barba, recommended it to me, and she also explained me some of the rules that need to be followed in order to make good subtitles. For example, you have to pay attention to the length of the sentences, the time that they should be shown, or other things that might not look so important, but that actually are. I consider that even if it was a big challenge for me it has been worth the effort. Once the subtitles were done, while reading the transcription, I could see that the way I had unconsciously translated it was using the literal translating method, which is one of the different methods I had described in the theoretical part of the project, and I found that really delightful. I also dealt with other types of translation, such as translation word by word, faithful translation, semantic translation, adaptive translation, free translation, idiomatic translation and, last but not least, communicative translation, which are different ways in which a translation can be done. All of the methods mentioned are used depending on the kind of translation that is desired, and even though they can be combined, each of them has their own rules.

Furthermore, I clarified in my project in a quick but precise way translation's history, and I explained the different translation theories. This was probably the toughest part, but I did my very best to simplify it as much as possible, and I believe I succeeded in making it straightforward and smooth.

The first thing we ought to consider when thinking about translation's history is that if we know that oral language is previous to scripture, we have to think that interpretation is previous than written translation as well. We have to suppose that since the beginning of history if two villages wanted to make a peace treaty or a war declaration they needed an interpreter, and those were the beginnings of translation. The first interpreters from which we have historical references, were in Egypt and they helped the pharaohs in their commercial relationships, and they were people of a really high status. The most ancient written translation that has ever been found

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was in Egypt as well and it is the Rosetta Stone, which has inscriptions in three different languages. Those translations were mainly used for business but translators have had a lot of importance when it comes to culture as well. As you probably know, the Romans were strongly influenced by the Greek culture and, obviously, in order to understand their literature and their traditions, they needed interpreters. For example, two of the most famous ones were Cicero and Horace, who changed drastically the perception of translation in their time, because as you can imagine, translation has evolved in all those years.

It wasn't till the fifties, once the Second World War had ended, that translation was started to be studied as an academic discipline. Since then lots of professionals have been working on it and they have developed different translating theories, which are the Equivalence theory, the Finality theory, the Descriptive theory, the Indeterminist's theory and the Localization's theory.

Among these theories one of the most important ones is the Equivalence theory, which says that the original text and the translated text have the same value, meaning that different languages express exactly the same thing. For example, if in English we identify Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> with bad luck, and we want to translate it for example, to Spanish, should we translate it as «Martes 13» or «Viernes 13» if we want it to have the same equivalence? If we translate it as Viernes 13 because Friday means Viernes, it loses its superstition meaning, because in Spanish culture the bad luck day is Martes 13, so it does not have the same value. But if we translate it as Martes 13 it does not have the same value either, because we are not translating Friday with its meaning.

Another important theory is the Finality theory, which says that an action comes determined by its finality, so that the translator's decisions do not have to be dominated by the original text or for the equivalence's theory, unless those are the translation's finality. For example, if we were to translate the book *Mein Kampf*, we should not analyze how the German text used to function when it was written, but the function that the text should have right now, for the current reader, which is clearly different from the function Hitler wanted to give to his book when he wrote it.

Last but not least, the Localization's theory internationalizes the original text, to later translate it from the international script, not from the original one, so it is easier and faster for translators. For example if an American company wanted to translate a document using the localization's theory, even if they would normally write the date writing first the month, then the day and then the year, they would write it using the international way, which writes the day first, in order to make it easier to translate it to other languages.

Even though I focused my task on subtitling, I worked as well on the different kinds of translations according to the source and the communicative function. I dedicated

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part of the project to automatic translation, which is gaining strength nowadays, but I do not believe that it will ever be able to replace «traditional» translating, because to make a good translation, common sense is essential, and machines cannot have it. Poetry's translation is another topic in which I have worked, and which actually struck me, and to which I would have liked to dedicate more time. In fact, I do not rule out the possibility of expanding my knowledge on it in the future.

As you can see translation is way more complex than it might look, and that is why there is an Italian proverb that says «Traduttore traditore», which literally means «translator traitor». We should understand this sentence as to translate is to betray, because translating can be trickier than what it looks like, especially when translating literary texts because translators have a little more freedom than when translating a scientific or a legal document. That can sometimes make translators bring their own beliefs when interpreting a document, which could really harm the document's accuracy, and that is why translators should try to fight against that. Another problem that a translator can face is to try to translate sentences that can have different meanings depending on the cultural differences between the places where the two languages are spoken.

All in all, it has been an interesting project and I am truly proud of how it has turned out.

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