

Introduction.
Translating LSP in Literature through a Gender Perspective

Specialised or ‘LSP’ translation and literary translation have often been presented as two worlds apart. Scholars have in particular highlighted the differences between literary and specialised translation by underlining the creativity of the first and underplaying the technical complexity which often characterises the second. Literary translation and specialised translation have traditionally been considered as two research fields in their own right.¹ Highlighting the differences between the scope of the two fields Peter Newmark talks about a ‘divided’ profession – and, we could add, research landscape– where “one area is concerned with knowledge, facts and ideas, information, and reality; the other with human individuals, nature and the occupied planet in the imagination; the first with facts, the second with values; the first with clarity of information, the second with style as a reflection of character”.²

The present monographic issue aims to broaden the discussion on the supposed binary of literary-specialised translation starting from two premises: the first is that literature can be viewed as a specialised field in which the translator needs to acquire specific competences relating to literary genres that will enable him/her to shape their translations appropriately; the second is that specialised vocabulary pervades literary texts according to their content and topic. Indeed, literary texts engage with many aspects of our life from the banal to the sophisticated and include terms and expressions from various domains.

As for the first premise, the translator of a literary text needs some specific competences dealing with stylistics and narratology and should also be ready to do some archive work on the authors, to know who they are, where they live (or where they lived), their life-story, the works they have written and, last but not least, also which of their works have been translated and into which language/s. The translator needs to become closer to the author’s own culture in order to be able to detect anticipated intertextual references in the source text. From a linguistic but also ‘technical’ point of view, in order to translate effectively s/he must be able to recognise narrative styles, textual typologies, rhetorical figures, literary tropes and narrative elements recurrent in the source text be it prose, poetry or drama. Literature possesses its linguistic and rhetorical characteristics and specific textual forms, and from this perspective, can be considered ‘specialised’, or at least it shares with special-language texts a “common territory” of generic range, cultural features, readers, and the outcomes of the translator’s agency.³ Analysing literary translation, Cees Koster (2014) has recently identified ‘style’ as a ‘technical’ translation problem connected to concrete stylistic translation choices and has referred to a translational stylistics based on cognitive poetics.⁴ Moreover, translating a literary text means dealing with linguistic

¹ See Margaret Rogers, *Specialised Translation: Shedding the ‘Non Literary’ Tag* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015); Khurshid Ahmad and Margaret Rogers, eds., *Evidence Based LSP: Translation, Text and Terminology* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007); Heidrun Gerzymisch-Arbogast et al., eds., *LSP Translation Scenarios*, Special Issue of *MuTra Journals*, 2 (2008).

² Peter Newmark, “Non-literary in the Light of Literary Translation”, *The Journal of Specialised Translation*, 1 (January 2004), 8.

³ Margaret Rogers, “From Binaries to Borders: Literary and Non-Literary Translation”, in Helle V. Dam et al., eds., *Moving Boundaries in Translation Studies* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), 151-167.

⁴ Cees Koster, “Literary Translation”, in Juliane House, ed., *Translation: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014), 140-157.

peculiarities reflected in the narrative and with communicative frames, it means deciding how to translate (or not to translate) archaic, dialect and rare words, culturally bound terms, and idiomatic expressions, just to cite some of the many elements that have to be identified, interpreted and then translated in such texts. From this standpoint, a specialisation in the many linguistic, textual and cultural possibilities of literary texts is central to translation competence, as much as it is important for a translator of specialised texts to engage knowledgeably with LSP texts in the source and target linguacultures in both form and content, often negotiating linguistic, textual and cultural differences.

Moving on to the second premise, literary texts are fruitful ground for specialised vocabulary; their language often incorporates terms and expressions from specialised fields. For example, in science fiction novels the general-purpose lexicon is supplemented by vocabulary from engineering or medicine or astronomy; in a thriller, the language can refer to legal and medical domains. The use of LSPs can also extend beyond the lexical level to syntactic structures in which the terms are embedded.⁵ This integration of specialised lexicons and even higher-level features can be detected in all literary genres according to the topics and issues in the narrative. In addition, specialised terms in literary texts can also be understood as intertextual elements referring to the history and culture of the setting or settings of the work. Since texts belong to a specific time and space they are products of a specific culture and the task of the translator is to be able to recognise the web of discourses and references present in a source text, as a starting point for translation decisions to come. Intercultural awareness brings an interpretive capacity to the translating process and translation choices, because words are used in the particular linguistic and cultural context in which they are embedded and are part of a linguistic network governed by syntactic, semantic, lexical and cultural stylistic relations. These relations must be understood and perceived by translators to convey adequately and appropriately the meaning of those words in the target language. Thus, literary translation requires cultural and stylistic competences, and insufficient knowledge in syntactic, semantic or lexical areas can lead to mistranslation or inaccurate translation.

The new approach undertaken in this issue, however, moves beyond a focus on the ‘technical’ specificities of literary texts and an outline of how aspects of specialised languages present in literary texts can be recognised and translated. It also aims to discuss these issues from a gender perspective, or at least, through a gender-aware position. How can gender issues and gendered language affect the interpretation, translation and reception of a literary text incorporating some LSP features? In which ways can gender become a central issue in the translator’s work in this respect? How far do gender issues impact on the translation of LSP terms? From the mid-90s on, much has been written about translation and gender but very few studies have taken into account gender in specialised translation⁶ and none has approached the literary text as a specialised one and through a gender-aware perspective.⁷

This monographic issue brings together a range of contributions capable of depicting and reflecting on major contextualised examples of linguistic and textual features including LSP-type features that focus on stylistic, narrative and communicative frames, patterns and schemata. The issue consists of three sections, commencing with a consideration of the growing importance of LSP and Translation Studies within the field of Literature. The articles included highlight how LSP features can be traced in literary and cultural texts (such as films) and how gender issues and gendered language can affect the

⁵ Margaret Rogers and Michael White, *Thinking German Translation. A Course in Translation Method: German to English*, Third Edition (Routledge: Abingdon and New York, 2020), 217.

⁶ Mercedes Bengoachea, “Feminist Translation? No way! Spanish Specialised Translators’ Disinterest in Feminist Translation”, *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 42 (January 2013), 94-103; Emerk Ergun, “Bridging Across Feminist Translation and Sociolinguistics”, *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 4 (May 2010), 307-318; Olga Castro “Re-examinando horizontes en los estudios feministas de traducción. Hacia una tercera ola”, *MonTI* vol. 1 (2009), 59-86.

⁷ I am referring to Sherry Simon, *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996); Luise von Flotow’s *Translation and Gender: Translating in the Era of Feminism* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1997); Eleonora Federici, ed., *Translating Gender* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011); E. Federici and V. Leonardi, eds., *Bridging the Gap between Theory and Practice in Translation and Gender Studies* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2013).

reception of the original and/or the translated text.

The opening contribution by Cristina Carrasco in Section 1 (Literary translations and the specialised lexicon) analyses the body as a semiotic system where identities are articulated and translated. Starting from the specialised language of beauty and in particular of hair, the author demonstrates how the translation of specialised words connected to an ideal of women's beauty in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's representation of African women's appearance and hairstyles is not only due to prejudices against non-white women but is also the result of racist implications in a binary and oppositional relationship between white and black people. In so doing she demonstrates that gender narratives not only condition identity but also translate the existential circumstances in which black women live. Similarly, Emilio Amideo's article demonstrates how the specialised language of music can influence a literary work both thematically and structurally through the example of Jackie Kay's novel *Trumpet* – in which gender plays a key role for the central character – and its translation into Italian. In his analysis the author reflects on how a re-semanticisation of musical jargon adds new meanings and connotations to ordinary words and how this re-signification mirrors experiences that otherwise would be destined to remain unspeakable. The shadow of colonialism and ethnic difference is also at the centre of Eleonora Federici and Luisa Marino's essay on a proposed translation into Italian of Suneeta Da Peres Costa's novella *Saudade*, full of echoes and specialised lexical items connected to the history of colonial Angola. This contribution, which focuses on the practice of translation, demonstrates how a deep knowledge of the author, of her work, of the centrality of gender issues in the text and of the historic-cultural setting relating to the Angolan colonial past, so well depicted in the novel, are necessary elements to effectively translate all the nuances in the text, and particularly those embedded in the culture-based terminology.

The articles in Section 1 show how translation is a key issue in the transmission of values and ideologies and how specialised lexicons deeply influence either an author's style or his/her willingness to portray with precision a place, a history or a culture. Section 2 (Education for gender equality) includes two articles which focus on the importance of promoting gender equality in education. Isabel Garcia Perez's article demonstrates how awareness-raising on gender issues is the key to rejecting any kind of social prejudice including patriarchal sociocultural traditions and attitudes. Starting from the premise that any canonised codified form of language and the compilation of dictionaries can bring the writer to the legitimisation of gender inequalities, the author analyses the translations into Spanish and into English of Elisabetta Cametti's novel *I guardiani della storia*, highlighting the differences among the three languages regarding linguistic sexism. In her examination of the texts Garcia Perez skilfully outlines how gender inequality in the social and cultural spheres can influence the reception of the translated texts principally focusing on specific professional terms like 'lawyer' or 'manager'. Maria del Pino Valero Cuadra and Antonio Lérida Muñoz also deal with the education and transmission of gender inequalities and stereotypes considering two works for children and young adults, *Manolito Gafotas* by the Spanish writer Elvira Lindo, and *Kika Superbruja* by the German author KNISTER. In comparing the translation of these works into Spanish, German and English the authors reveal how the representation of characters leads the reader to understand both the mentality of a society and the conventions which drive it. They demonstrate how texts for children can change and be culturally adapted to recipients through translations, manipulations of the source texts and additions. From this perspective a gender-aware manipulation of gender stereotypes is argued to be welcome in order to teach children to think about gender differences in a more egalitarian way. In other words, translations which are more neutral are preferred to perpetuating binomic oppositions of femininities and masculinities.

Section 3 on Literary genres, specialised languages and adaptations, starts with Federico Pio Gentile's article focusing on a widely read literary genre, detective and crime fiction, taking as its case-study Maureen Jennings' novel *A Journeyman to Grief*, an interesting example of crime fiction and of the use of various specialised languages in the detective novel. The author underlines how language acts as a mirror of diverse communicative contexts ranging from the deployment of police procedural

forensic methods to mental patterns and sociolinguistic implicatures dealing with slavery, the definition of emotional and physiological differentiation, and issues of gender perspective. Nicolangelo Becce's contribution also dwells on a specific literary genre, fantasy, a choice quite popular among teenagers; he does so by analysing one of the most canonical TV series adaptations, *A Game of Thrones* taken from George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* together with its comic rewriting, the graphic adaptation titled *A Game of Thrones. The Graphic Novel*. Utilizing corpus linguistic methodology Becce analyses gender power relations through an examination of the characters' use of language or of silence. Through the transposition from book to movie to graphic novel almost nothing changes in these respects: female characters are always relegated to a secondary role in spite of the possibilities of the genre that would permit a subversion of gender categories. Adaptation is analysed also in Eleonora Sasso's contribution based on the adaptation of a classic literary text into a movie, namely, McGrath's cinematic adaptation of Jane Austen's novel *Emma*. The author takes the discussion on gender, translation and literary text a step further by choosing to analyse and to investigate how gender and humour have been translated in this film and demonstrating how the specialised lexicon is an important part of cultural transmission. The section is closed by an investigation on literary journalism', a textual typology that seems able to welcome features of feminist discourses and language. Through an examination of Spanish newspapers, Marilicia Di Paolo demonstrates how feminist keywords and key-concepts can be introduced to newspaper readers thanks to the printed press.

Through the multifaceted and varied topics addressed in this special issue we want to follow and take a step further the work done by other scholars in "redefining, rethinking and reshaping literary translation theory and practice"⁸ not only through relations with other disciplines but also through a connection with specialised translation and a gendered approach. We hope this issue can be a beginning point in analysing the relation between aspects of specialised languages in literature, translation and gender issues.

⁸ Jean Boase-Beier et al., "Introduction", in Jean Boase-Beier et al., eds., *Literary Translation: Redrawing the Boundaries* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014), 4.