



UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO
División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades

A translation from English into Spanish of sections 6.1 and 6.2 of
Readers Reading Literature, the sixth chapter of
Literature in Language Education

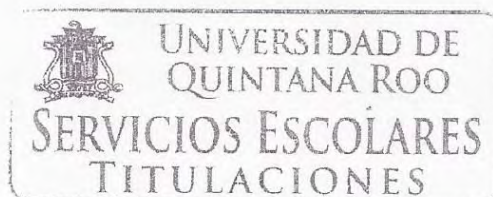
TRABAJO MONOGRÁFICO
Para obtener el grado de
Licenciado en Lengua Inglesa

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Chetumal, Quintana Roo, México. Noviembre del 2017



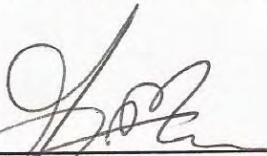


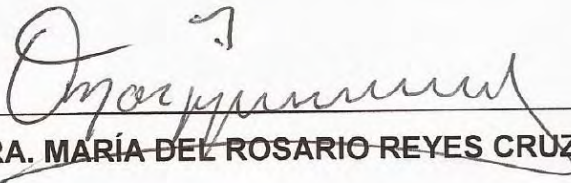
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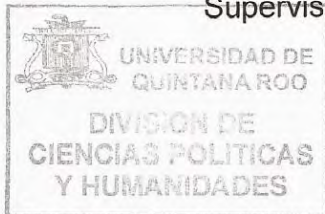
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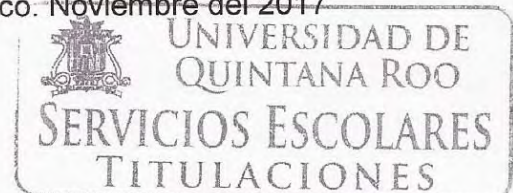
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'The stars are thin,' said Grey Brother, snuffing at the dawn wind. 'Where shall we lair to-day? For, from now on, we follow new trails.'

Last line of "The Spring Running", the last of the Mowgli stories.

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ABSTRACT

The following paper is an annotated translation from English into Spanish of sections 6.1 and 6.2 of *Readers Reading Literature*, an academic text about the potential pedagogic uses of literary texts aimed at teachers and researchers. An analysis of the translation techniques is also included.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

Translation is usually divided into two branches: technical translation and literary translation. This dichotomy, as explained by Finks (1997), segregates translators according to their area of expertise and the nature of the texts they work with: technical translators deal with texts whose main purpose is to convey instructive information in a specific area, whereas literary translation concerns itself with texts of aesthetic nature, where both meaning –the information contained in the text– and form –the way the text is written– are crucial elements that ought to be carefully rephrased in the target language. This segmentation of the discipline has also been mentioned by authors such as Newmark (1988) and Maillot (1997).

While hardly the most profitable field, literary translation has been the central element in many research papers and reflections in the fields of linguistics, literary theory and translation studies: Landers (2001), on his practical guide on literary translation, ponders on what differentiates this field from the rest, as well as the competences necessary to take on the challenges of translating a work of literature:

In technical translation, for example, style is not a consideration so long as the informational content makes its way unaltered from SL to TL. In literary translation, style can make a difference between a lively, highly readable translation and a stilted, rigid and artificial rendering that strips the original of its artistic and aesthetic essence, even its very soul. (p. 7)

Another scholar who wrote about the nature and importance of literary translation was Lambert (2002). While discussing the role of translation within the field of literary theory, he claimed that translations serve as an “intermediary system” between the systems of the source and target language. This intermediary system carries traits of both source and target languages, and, depending on the way the translation is written, these traits may be more evident to the reader or not. Translation is also a crucial component in the development of

literatures across the world, as they can be influenced and they can borrow traits from the literary works that they import and translate. The relevance of translation as a vehicle to import literature and new linguistic concepts has also been observed by García Yebra (1994) and Even-Zohar (2000).

For Newmark (1988), the translation of literature is the most difficult of its kind. The literary translator is usually constrained by the aesthetic form of the text, as well as by external factors, such as metric and rhyme. Since literary texts usually contain cultural and sometimes ideological elements, as well as the cultural conventions of the source language, the translator is tasked with translating lexical items (regionalism, proper names) and even extraordinary textual features (such as the quirkiness of a particular dialect).

Technical translation, as its name states, involves the translation of texts for practical purposes rather than aesthetic ones. A technical translation may range from the most mundane of texts, like an instructions booklet for a TV set, to documents concerning cutting-edge technologies, such as telescopes and jet engines. The focus on this kind of text is on meaning rather than form: as long as the key concepts make it from the source language to the target language, the translation may be considered accurate.

Technical translators are expected to be ideal readers: they ought to understand the entirety of the texts they are to translate in order to produce a translation that is faithful to the original document. As Sofer (2002) described, the first step of every translation is to scour the source text until one has come to understand the meaning behind every section and then determine whether one is able to carry out such a translation. A translator can only achieve a full understanding of a text if he is well-read on the subject he is translating, hence the division of technical translation into several specialties: legal translation, scientific translation, audiovisual translation, commercial translation and so on.

Newmark (1988) also discussed the characteristics of technical translation. To him, the most distinctive traits of technical texts are the terminology used by the authors, the particular style in which the text is written (academic, professional or popular) and the numerous items that complement the writing, such as diagrams, graphics, illustrations and figures. He mentions that technical booklets and scientific articles are diverse in nature and, at times, badly written, and thus concludes that it is difficult to draw any general conclusions about this discipline.

This project is a translation of an academic text focused on applied linguistics, more specifically, on research about the teaching of literature. Therefore, this translation would be considered a technical translation. The primary objective is to translate into Spanish the first two sections of the sixth chapter of *Literature in Language Education*, written by Geoff Hall. Since literature is a pivotal means of artistic expression, any material that can help Spanish-speaking teachers with their task is welcome addition to their pedagogic repertoire. This translation will hopefully help them devise better strategies for the teaching of literature analysis and help them with the arduous task of inspiring the newer generations to take up reading.

1.1: Rationale

Literature is a complex phenomenon, as it was to be expected from one of the highest expressions of human creativity. It encompasses far more than mere literary canons from a particular geography and a particular time: it involves the study of aesthetic forms, of the nature of poetic or literary language and the relationship between the contents of a literary work and the social context in which it was written, among other things. Given the difficulty of studying the aforementioned matters in an objective manner, it comes as no surprise that different schools of thought have arisen and offered different answers and interpretations to the literary phenomenon. This array of interpretation of the literature, as explained by Ceserani (2003), ranges from the schools of formalism and structuralism, whose claim was that literary language was an autonomous entity, independent from other forms of human expression and capable of addressing universal issues of the human condition, to more contemporary and less-uptight postures which regard literature not as higher form of human expression, but rather as another discourse act. To these theorists, among them authorities such as Eagleton (1996), literature is a product of the human imaginary and shares many of its traits and symbolisms with other forms of expression. The contents and perceived quality of a literary work, they argue, are determined by the culture and social status of its author and audiences.

Since literature itself is such an intricate, complex discipline, the teaching of literature, whether it is in an elementary context or in a university classroom, poses a significant

challenge to the teacher. As Juarez (1996) said, the literature teacher has to keep in mind several aspects before selecting the bibliography, which range from the grammatical contents of the text (which must be on par with the linguistic skill of the students) to the historical and social relevance of the text; Beach, Appleman, Fecho & Simon (2016) mention that the ultimate goal of the literature class, and, hence, of the literature teacher, is to have students respond positively to the literary works presented at class, to have them identify themselves with the contents and topics covered in the book. Not only do they have the task of introducing students to the most important works of a particular canon, but also of explaining them the basic features of literary language and providing them with the tools to interpret a text. Language teachers who decide or who are required to introduce their students to literary works have to cope with these issues in addition to their responsibilities as educators. Having a basic understanding of how readers process information when they read literary texts and of the comprehension problems unexperienced readers may face when they read literature could possibly help making the task of using literature in the language classroom more surmountable. The main objective of this translation is, thus, providing teachers with information from the sixth chapter of Geoff Hall's book *Literature in Language Education*, whose focus is on the uses of literature in the language classroom and, more specifically, on how readers handle the information contained in poems.

1.2: Objectives

This monograph will attempt to accomplish the following objectives:

- Translate into Spanish the sections 6.1 and 6.2 of *Literature in Language Education*, carefully adhering to the content of the original.
- Provide a thorough analysis of the strategies used during the translation process, paying special attention to the segments where the particularities of the English language may cause difficulties during the translation into Spanish
- Write a text that could fulfill both the needs of Spanish-speaking language teachers who are interested in improving their techniques or learning about the uses of literature in the classroom.

1.3: Relevance

Literature is a useful resource for the language class, from introductory levels to more advanced ones. It is not uncommon for elementary books to contain adaptations of popular works of English literature. Likewise, advanced books such as Oxford's University Press' New English File C1 usually contain excerpts from classical works or fiction, or even unabridged short stories.

Many authors have commented on the beneficial effects of including literature and literary exercises in the EFL curriculum: Rai (2011) and Maley & Mukundan (2011) have both spoken in favour of creative writing exercises as a way to help students improve their written language production, as they allow students to experiment with the poetic dimension of language and they involve dealing with linguistic constraints that are rarely found in other communicative exercises. Ying Lao & Krashen (2000) report that students who took part in a popular literature class and were encouraged to take up reading as a leisure activity showed a richer vocabulary and superior reading skills when compared to students who did not take the course. Savvidou (2004) makes an even bolder claim about the benefits of the inclusion of literature in the EFL classroom:

Apart from offering a distinct literary world which can widen learners' understanding of their own and other cultures, it can create opportunities for personal expression as well as reinforce learners' knowledge of lexical and grammatical structure. Moreover, an integrated approach to the use of literature offers learners strategies to analyse and interpret language in context in order to recognize not only how language is manipulated but also why. An integrated approach to the use of literature in the language classroom offers foreign language learners the opportunity to develop not only their linguistic and communicative skills but their knowledge about language in all its discourse types.

Other authors who also agree with these views have taken on the task of proposing new English teaching methodologies that incorporate literature to their repertoire of didactic

activities. Van (2009) wrote an overview of six methods that are rooted in traditional pedagogic and literary schools, such as structuralism and new criticism; Anwer (2003) published an article on how two approaches for the teaching of L1 literature, The Story Grammar and The Reader Response, were adapted to the needs of the EFL classroom, and Khatib, Rezaei & Derakhshan (2011) proposed five different methodologies for teaching literature as part of an EFL program.

This project intends to import a minuscule part of this trend by translating into Spanish the first two sections of the sixth chapter from *Literature in Language Education*, which are focused on how readers read poetry. The ultimate goal of this project is to provide teachers of Spanish language and literature with a useful tool that will allow them to understand how readers of literature process the information they read, and how they can take advantage of these processes in a language learning setting.

1.4: Literature review

Scientific and technical translation has always played a crucial role in history and in the advancement of human civilization. As recounted by Montgomery (2000), it has allowed the free trade of ideas throughout the world, which, in turn, resulted in the acquisition of knowledge upon which our present society rests today. The author also commented on the ever-changing nature of the discipline, for it is tied to the changes that are brought forth by the discoveries that are made and to the cultural requirements of each target culture.

It is important to differentiate scientific translation from another closely-related branch of the same field, technical translation. Pinchuck (1977) has discussed the main differences between these two completely different procedures:

So, while a technical text is designed to convey information as clearly and effectively as possible, a scientific text will *discuss, analyze, and synthesize* information with a view to *explaining* ideas, *proposing* new theories or *evaluating* methods. Due to these differing aims, the language used in each type of text, and consequently the strategies needed to translate them, may vary significantly.

Gómez & Gómez (2011) have also commented on this dichotomy of scientific and technical translation, and how it has often been merged together in a single macro-discipline. In their didactic proposal for translators of scientific and technical texts, even though they also follow the approach of combining scientific and technical translation, they point out the distinctive differences between the two: scientific discourses concern themselves with theoretical aspects and is often associated with the study and description of natural phenomena, whereas technical texts are centred around the practical applications of scientific knowledge.

As it was mentioned before, the translation of scientific prose several challenges that are not found in other branches of translation. Be it for the constant use of technical terms, the abundance of figures or the obscure meaning behind elaborate paragraphs, the practice of scientific translation has its own peculiarities that must be understood before anyone can hope to succeed in this endeavor. It is then, noteworthy that translation scholars have neglected the academic study of scientific translations. As Olohan & Salama-Carr (2014) pointed out: “translation scholars have not engaged much with studies of scientific discourse or of scientific knowledge, turning primarily to literary texts for their empirical analyses and the development of translation theory”. Since scientific discourse is considered “neutral”, as it lacks the aesthetic properties of literature, it is usually ignored in the field of translation studies, despite being one of the most profitable fields for professional translators. Most publications on scientific and technical translation are focused on the technical aspects or methodology of writing a translation of a scientific document rather than reflecting on the nature of scientific translation in itself.

One author who has worked on the description of scientific translation is Herman (1993). He said that the ultimate goal of scientific and technical translation is to convey the same meaning as the original as directly as possible. To him, there are three crucial elements that determine the success of a translated text: clarity (the translator has to take the necessary steps to make the translated message clear, even if it means re-arranging the order and structure of the paragraph), concision (eliminating words and content that is not strictly necessary for the comprehension of the idea) and correctness (producing an accurate technical writing in the target language).

Moving away from the definition and distinctive features of scientific translation, it is important to be aware of the peculiar challenges or hindrances that are likely to arise during the process of translating a scientific document. Trimble (1985) identified three grammatical elements that often pose a challenge to students of translation who translate from English into Spanish: the distinction of the passive voice from sentences where the verb to be + the past participle form of the verb are used in the description of the subject, the use of modal verbs –particularly *should* and *ought to*, which in the scientific discourse are used to describe obligation (albeit not as strong as the modal *must*), but are commonly used for mere suggestions– and the correct use of the definite article, *the*, whose numerous rules may confuse the translator and thus result in an incorrect interpretation of the information. A study by Batisda Ojeda, Arrieta de Meza & Meza (2008) confirmed that students of translation from English into Spanish do tend to transfer the grammatical rules of the source language into the target language when it came to the aforementioned grammatical elements.

Diéguez (2002) did a careful analysis of scientific discourse, highlighting the points that are of special attention for translators who work from English into Spanish. She explains that scientific texts demand not only proficiency in both source and target languages, but also that the translator is knowledgeable on the topic that is being translated. This will ensure that the translator will be able to deal with the peculiar style and syntax of scientific writing, as well accurately translating the specific terminology of a discipline from its SL to a TL. The author identifies three issues that often occur during the translation of scientific texts:

- Inter-linguistic problems: They arise due to the structural differences between English and Spanish. Among these one can find:
 - Two-lexeme long adjectival phrases modifying a noun.
 - High occurrence of –ing forms.
 - Polysemy
 - Phraseology
- Intercultural problems: They are caused by the differences between the cultures of the two languages.
 - Different systems of measurement (Fahrenheit degrees vs Celsius degrees).

- Pragmatic problems: They refer to the different communicative contexts of the source language audience and the target language audience.
 - Terminological explicitness (should acronyms be explained or is the audience expected to be familiar with them?)

Gamero (2001) made a classification of four specific competences or sub-skill that scientific-technical translators are expected to have. These include: knowledge on the scientific field of the text (to ensure the comprehension of the source material), correct use of technical terminology, knowledge on the specific conventions of scientific genres and knowing how to use documentation as a tool of the trade.

Olohan (2015) has also highlighted the importance of formal training and the peculiarities of scientific discourse; he has also drawn attention to the importance on genre in the field of scientific translation, for each format has its own particular demands that must be fulfilled (be it the straightforward language of manuals, the density of the academic abstract or the elaborate jargon of research articles). This is most evident in the translation of specialized genres and in the study of intercultural rhetoric: as it has been demonstrated by several studies (Sandoval Cruz (2015), Valero Garcés & Calle-Martínez (1997), Martín-Martín (2010) and Perales-Escudero & Swales (2011)), academic discourse between languages (in this case, Spanish and English) often differs in several crucial aspects, from the use of word modifiers to the arrangement of information.

It is also important to consider what scholars have said about the quality of translations, or, more importantly, how to determine the appropriateness of a translation. García Yebra (1994) addresses this situation on his *History and Theory of Translation*. While, according to him, translation studies do not concern themselves with the end product of the process –and rather focus on the phenomena that arise during the translation of a text–, there is a field that does study the appropriateness of a translation in relation to the original: translation criticism.

Many models have been proposed to determine the quality of a translation. A relatively simple model is proposed by García-Yebra (1994). His maxim is that a translation should “accurately translate all the elements in the original and not make a single addition. While it may seem simplistic at first, this guideline is rather difficult to achieve, since the lack of equivalence between languages often results in some sort of distortion of the message,

which may manifest itself in the form of an addition or an expansion, or in the omission of an element in the original.

Newmark (1988) proposes a more elaborate guideline to criticize a translation. His model requires the critic to perform a careful analysis of the original text and, afterwards, compare it to its translation to determine the strategies used by the translator to adapt the text into the target language, as well as the structural changes the text underwent. This model also takes into account deeper aspects that go beyond form, such as ideology and stylistics: it is important to determine whether the translator's personal ideology led him to alter the message of the original, and whether his writing meets the stylistic needs of the text and the needs of its target audience.

1.5: Methodology

The methodology of this translation has its foundation on the translation techniques proposed by Vinay & Darbelnet (1995), and also profits from the guidelines other authors have published, such as Baker (2011), López Guix & Minnet Wilkinson (2009) and García-Yebra (1997). Vinay and Darbelnet have stated that a translator relies on several techniques during the adaptation of a text into a target language. The use of these strategies is often a subconscious effort rather than a voluntary action, for no translator stops to think about what technique would work best as he is immersed on his job. The methodology, however, will be particularly useful for the analysis of translations, as it allows the author to acquire a better understanding of how translation is carried out.

Vinay and Darbelnet identify two broad categories of translation strategies: direct translation and oblique translation. The former refers to situations where the structural similarities between languages allow for a straightforward, almost element-by-element translation of the text; the latter, on the other hand, refers to situations in which a structural parallelism between languages does not occur, and, thus, an element-by-element translation would result in a violation of syntactic rules and, therefore, in an awkward, badly written translation. From these two broad categories stem the translation strategies most people are

familiar with: borrowing, calque, literal translation –the direct methods–, transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaption –the oblique methods–.

Borrowing, the simplest of them all –and sometimes not even considered a translation method *per se*– involves filling a lexical void in the Target Language by importing the word in question. This is usually the case with neologisms, words that have recently been coined and that, more often than not, make the jump from language to language without undergoing major changes (as in the word internet, which remained the same when it was borrowed by Spanish and French). García-Yebra (1997) draws a distinction between two types of borrowing: standard borrowing (whose application results in a barbarism) and a naturalized borrowing (whereby the imported word is adapted to the phonological and morphological structures of the target language). An example of both procedures would be as follows:

Naturalized borrowing: Igloo (English) → Iglú (Spanish)

Standard borrowing: Tortilla (Spanish) → Tortilla (English)

López Guix & Minnet Wilkinson (2009) suggest moderation with the use of this strategy in translations into Spanish, especially if it is being used to add a folkloric touch to the text rather than filling lexical voids. A translation can only take so many foreign words before a reader judges it as a poorly translated text.

Calque, as defined by Vinay and Darbelnet, is “a special kind of borrowing whereby a language borrows an expression from another, but then translates literally each of its elements. (Page 85).” Calque words can be easily mistaken for naturalized borrowings, so it is important to bear in mind that naturalized borrowings are merely phonological and morphological adaptations of foreign words, whereas a calque is a translation of a foreign structure relying on the lexicon of the target language.

Calque is divided into two types: lexical calques and structural calques. Lexical calques involve the translation of structures that do not interfere with the syntactic rules of the target languages, whereas structural calques do introduce new forms into the target language. Examples of the two types would be:

Lexical calque: Kindergarten (German) → Jardín de niños (Spanish)

Structural calque: Science fiction (English) → Ciencia ficción (Spanish)

López Guix & Minnet Wilkinson vehemently warn translators against several mistakes that may arise when they apply this strategy. Some examples of calque malpractice are paronymic calques (failure to spot faux amis), typographic calques (translation of SL typographic styles) and syntactic calques (forcing the syntactic rules of the source language into the target language).

Literal translation is, by far, the most common strategy employed by translators. It occurs when the parallelism between language structures allow for a word-by-word translation, and the only changes come from minor arrangements to adhere the translation to the syntactic rules of the target language. It is mostly found in translations between languages that are related (as is the case with Spanish and English, which are both Indo-European languages that share a roughly similar SVO syntax). An example of this method would be:

Noble and generous Cetacean, have you ever tasted man? → ¿Nunca ha probado usted al hombre, noble y generoso cetáceo? (From Rudyard Kipling's Just So Stories).

Transposition is the first of the oblique translation methods. It involves a change of word class during the transition from source language to target language, and is often the result of adjustments made to adapt the discourse into the syntactic demands of the target language, or simply for stylistic reasons.

Après son retour (French) → After he comes back (English)

López Guix & Minnet Wilkinson have identified a special type of transposition that often occurs during the translation from English into Spanish: **inverse** transposition. This occurs when two elements in the same sentence exchange their word class when they are translated into the target language:

The idea was incoherently delightful (English) → La idea era deliciosamente descabellada (Spanish).

Modulation involves a variation or a change in the translation by changing the perspective or angle from which it is seen. This technique goes beyond morpho-syntactic constraints and addresses issues that may arise during the translation due to the specific characteristics of each language, and it usually involves making small changes to the structure of a sentence to adapt it to the customs of the target language, such as turning negative sentences into positive sentences or changing an active voice for a passive voice.

It seems not unlikely (English) → Es muy probable (negative sentence into positive).

You are wanted on the phone → Te llaman al teléfono (change from passive into active).

Equivalence can be considered a much more elaborate type of modulation, as it also deals with the heavy modification of sentences. Rather than focusing on the structural aspects of the original text, equivalence deals with semantic elements: it seeks to convey the same meaning of the original text by relying on completely different structures. As Vinay & Darbelnet have said, “most equivalences are fixed and belong to a phraseological repertoire of idioms, clichés, proverbs, nominal or adjectival phrases, etc.”

It's better to be a big fish in a small pond than a small fish in a big pond → Más vale ser cabeza de ratón que cola de león.

Finally, **adaptation** is an extreme method of translation, only used when the situation in the source text is unknown in the culture of the target language. It has been described as a cultural equivalence, as the translator has the task to find situation that closely resembles the meaning of the original text, but is also compatible with the culture of the target language.

He kissed his daughter on the mouth → Abrazó tiernamente a su hija.

Later on, Vinay & Darbalnet would add two additional strategies to their translation methodologies: expansion and reduction. Rather than direct or oblique techniques, expansion and reduction seem to occur as a consequence of compliance to the syntactic rules of a language. Expansion refers to the event when a translator has to use more words to clearly translate what in the original text was written in only a few words. Reduction is the exact opposite: translating in a few words what in the original text was a longer passage.

Another author who compiled advice to help translator with their arduous task was Baker (2011). Her work does not focus on the structural changes that happen during translation, but rather on the possible complications that may arise on the different linguistic levels. She identifies five levels on which problems of non-equivalence between languages were likely to arise, and offers advice on how to handle these problems.

First of these is non-equivalence at word or lexical level, which involves the lack of correspondence of a lexical item between two languages. Among the possible strategies are the use of superordinates, cultural substitutions, loanwords, paraphrasing and illustrations.

Second level, simply labelled as “above word level”, involves the translation of idioms and fixed phrases. Baker advises to translate idioms by using idioms similar in meaning and form, using idioms similar in meaning but different in form, borrowing the foreign idiom, paraphrasing or simply omitting it.

The third level is grammatical level, wherein several crucial aspects of languages, such as the categories of gender, number, person, tense and aspect were disclosed. The strategies for translation will vary depending of the languages.

Fourth level deals with equivalences at textual level. This level focuses on the thematic structure of languages, or how the information is organized in the paragraph. Translators are advised to pay close attention to the way language is organized in the languages they work with, as well as certain aspects, such as the markedness of a structure.

The final level addressed on her book is that of pragmatic equivalence, and deals with matters that go beyond the structural aspects of language. Here, the translator takes into account the way language it is use by its speakers, as well as cohesion within a text system.

All of the aforementioned considerations were be kept in mind as the translation was being written.

CHAPTER II: TRANSLATION

6

La lectura de textos literarios

En este capítulo se verán algunos ejemplos de investigaciones relevantes sobre la lectura de textos literarios, incluyendo:

- Las actividades y procesos involucrados en la lectura de textos literarios (poesía y cuentos cortos).
- Posibles características distintivas de la lectura de textos literarios (en contraste con la lectura de textos no literarios).
- Los relativos éxitos y fracasos que ocurren durante la lectura de textos literarios y las posibles razones por las que ocurrieron.
- Las circunstancias especiales de la lectura de textos literarios escritos en una segunda lengua o en una lengua extranjera.

Nardoccio (1992) e investigadores posteriores (véase el capítulo 3) demuestran que los lectores con una formación avanzada en literatura y/o que tienen bastante experiencia leyendo textos literarios leen de forma distinta. El principio de este capítulo está enfocado a estudios sobre lectores experimentados de literatura, y posteriormente se examina a lectores con menos experiencia y lectores que leen literatura escrita en su segunda lengua. Se espera que la información sea del interés de los educadores, pero que también incentive a los lectores a llevar a cabo sus propias investigaciones sobre las circunstancias de la lectura de textos literarios en sus contextos, así como las prácticas y problemas de sus estudiantes.

6.1: Investigaciones sobre la lectura textos literarios: estudios cognitivos.

Cita 6.1: La validez ecológica en la investigación.

Apenas comenzamos a prestarle atención a la lectura, ésta se detiene o se convierte en otra cosa, especialmente la lectura de textos literarios. Nuestros intentos por medirla parecían causar que se evaporara.

(Hunt, 1996, s.p.)

Ahora considere la condición en la que un individuo está leyendo, sin ningún propósito en particular, textos incoherentes y sin sentido que el investigador ha redactado. Desafortunadamente, esta ha sido la situación de la mayoría de los estudios experimentales publicados durante los últimos veinte años.

(Graesser y Kreuz, 1993, p. 156)

Stein (1991), en un resumen útil de los métodos de investigación para los estudios empíricos sobre la lectura de textos literarios, apunta que los reportes verbales son preponderantes y destaca los puntos fuertes y débiles de ello. Evidentemente, es imposible estudiar de forma directa la lectura en sí: incluso algunos métodos de las “ciencias duras”, como la psicología o la neuropsicología, entre ellos la detección de movimientos oculares o el escaneo de actividad eléctrica en el cerebro o del flujo sanguíneo no estudian la lectura como tal, sino que estudian actividades relacionadas con el proceso de la lectura. Incluso estos métodos están sujetos a la clase de críticas como la citada anteriormente. Es muy frecuente que la investigación sobre la lectura se haga desde un insensible enfoque experimentalista, el cual, según el argot académico, “carece de *validez ecológica*”. Lo que fuera que se haya estudiado no fue una “lectura real” (“ordinaria”, “normal”, lectura natural). Por lo tanto, lo normal es que la lectura haya sido estudiada según es mediada o según la respuesta que provoca, generalmente verbal (reportes orales o escritos, cuestionarios) o, a veces, a través de otros

medios (música, danza o películas inspiradas por una historia, dibujos, diagramas o poemas, etc.).

Existe una creciente tendencia hacia los estudios cualitativos. Sin embargo, como señala atinadamente Steen, los autores de este tipo de estudios podrían emplear un mayor número de pruebas cuantitativas para dar seguimiento a los descubrimientos cualitativos exploratorios. La “comprensión” de un texto literario, como se sugirió en la sección de evaluación, no es un constructo directo. Otros métodos, empleados por Zwaan, o Bortolussi y Dixon, como se mencionó anteriormente, abarcan el estudio de los efectos de la transformación lingüística deliberada de los textos o los efectos de preparar a lectores con distintos niveles de conocimiento relevante antes de que comenzaran a leer, aunque, una vez más, esta manipulación conlleva el riesgo de perder de vista el objeto de estudio. Hanauer (1997b), por ejemplo, encontró que es más fácil recordar los elementos lingüísticos superficiales de un mismo texto cuando estos se presentan escritos en líneas de verso en vez de en párrafos en prosa. En lo que al procesamiento efectivo de textos literarios respecta, los estudios publicados por Nardoccio (1992) y otros autores antes mencionados muestran que los lectores experimentados o “expertos” de literatura leen de forma distinta y, por consiguiente, sacan mayor provecho de sus lecturas. De nuevo, el trabajo de Miall y sus colegas representa un intento interesante de complementar un mayor número de estudios etnográficos sobre la respuesta de los lectores (“sentimientos” despertados por la experiencia literaria) con un mayor número de investigaciones empíricas con sólidas bases psicológicas. Ahora que los antecedentes de estos estudios fueron cubiertos en su mayor parte en el capítulo 3, podemos considerar algunos estimulantes reportes de investigación sobre el estudio de la lectura de poesía y la lectura de historias para ver qué se puede aprender tanto de forma directa (hallazgos) como indirecta en términos de métodos de investigación y enfoques, incluyendo la lectura de textos literarios en una segunda lengua.

6.2: La lectura de poesía: estudios de protocolo de pensamiento en voz alta

El trabajo pionero de Richard (1929) fue mencionado al comienzo de este libro. Desde entonces, varios estudios clásicos han contribuido al establecimiento y difusión del uso de

los protocolos de pensamiento en voz alta en la investigación sobre la lectura de textos literarios. Evidentemente, la información que nos dan los estudios de protocolo es, principalmente, sobre los aspectos cognitivos de la lectura. Estos se enfocan en individuos que interactúan con un texto en un contexto inusual o, en el mejor de los casos, indefinido. Unos estudios más contextuales involucrarían, por ejemplo, examinar cómo interactúan los alumnos con textos literarios (Kim 2004) o estudios más amplios sobre el entendimiento y las actitudes culturales hacia la literatura y la alfabetización, y el efecto que tienen sobre la lectura de textos literarios (Zubair 2003b; revista *Changing English*) (véase el capítulo 7 más adelante).

Kintgen (1983): Lectores experimentados de poesía

El estudio de Kintgen (1983), en el cual seis graduados en literatura estadounidense relativamente experimentados (todos candidatos a doctorado) leen tres poemas ingleses, se mantiene relevante. Las respuestas verbales de los sujetos durante su lectura se grabaron con el fin de capturar el proceso del desarrollo de la comprensión a través de la percepción al “percatarse” de las características lingüísticas del texto mientras “los mismísimos procesos constructivos” van ocurriendo (pág. 17). Se consideraba que las investigaciones previas, como la de Richards, eran imperfectas dada su dependencia de respuestas escritas o reflexiones retrospectivas. Dos conclusiones destacan del resto del estudio: hay variaciones significativas entre los graduados en los rasgos (el lenguaje) que perciben y aprovechan para profundizar y en lo que encuentran desconcertante. (“Había grandes diferencias tanto en la forma en la que los lectores organizaban sus actividades como en los tipos de procesos elementales que enfatizaban”, pág. 102). La segunda fue que, a pesar de las diferencias, esta gama de respuestas está delimitada por su educación literaria (La idea de Fish de la literatura como una “comunidad interpretativa” con normas de conducta y formas de hablar e interpretar el significado de un texto). Los esquemas culturales (conjuntos de expectativas cognitivas) con respecto a “Shakespeare”, “un soneto”, “un poema” son claramente observables y se emplean en la lectura en estos protocolos. (Compare los movimientos “Conectar: literatura” y “Conectar: mundo” en la codificación de Kintgen).

Kintgen ha detectado varios grupos típicos de “movimientos” o “procesos elementales” en la lectura de un poema. Estos procesos no son completamente secuenciales, pero tienden a ir de

una etapa de enfoque en los elementos superficiales del texto a actividades de mayor libertad interpretativa y cognitiva. Un hecho interesante es que todos los sujetos de Kintgen comenzaron “con lo que casi parecía un ritual de descargo de entendimiento (pág. 134): leer poesía es difícil y se espera que sea difícil. Leer un nuevo poema tiende a confirmar este esquema.

Operaciones de los lectores en la lectura de poemas

1: LEER, SELECCIONAR, LOCALIZAR

2: COMENTAR, NARRAR

3: FONOLOGÍA, FORMA, PALABRA, SINTAXIS, TONO

4: PARAFRASEAR, DEDUCIR: MUNDO, CONECTAR: POEMA, CONECTAR: MUNDO, CONECTAR: LITERATURA, CONECTAR: FIGURA, GENERALIZAR

5: PROBAR, JUSTIFICAR

6: REPLANTEAR, ILUSTRAR, CUALIFICAR, RECORDAR

(Kintgen 1983, p. 38)

Con mayor detalle:

Movimientos del grupo 1

1: LEER: Se lee un poema o una sección de un poema. En este estudio, la mayoría de los lectores leyeron todo el texto al principio antes de pasar a operaciones más detalladas. Tienden a re-leer el texto mientras construyen gradualmente su interpretación.

2: SELECCIONAR: El lector selecciona una palabra o una línea y se enfoca en ésta.

3: ILUSTRAR: El lector lee en voz alta una parte del poema para ilustrar un punto.

4: LOCALIZAR: El lector busca un rasgo distintivo en el texto o especifica dónde se puede encontrar.

Se observa que las primeras etapas de la lectura de un poema giran en torno al texto, mientras que en las etapas tardías influyen tanto las primeras lecturas como las características del texto que se está examinando.

Grupo 2:

Aumenta la ocurrencia de COMENTARIOS. Los comentarios pueden ser cognitivos o afectivos (“es un poema extraño”, “es muy difícil de entender”, “tiene líneas muy buenas”).

Grupo 3:

Se ha observado en estos estudios de protocolo que la lectura de poemas hace que los lectores le den más atención a:

Rasgos LINGÜÍSTICOS, al menos para estos lectores formados y experimentados:

FONOLOGÍA (“el esquema de rimas es...”)

FORMA (“Es un soneto... La división sintáctica es en octavos y un sexteto...”)

PALABRA: Algunos lectores consultan diccionarios y leen sinónimos en voz alta.

SINTAXIS: Por ejemplo, la referencia anafórica provoca que los lectores presten atención en estos protocolos (“suyo”... ¿otros?... ¿ellos?”)

TONO: Por ejemplo, los lectores identifican un posible tono sarcástico o irónico.

Grupo 4:

Conforme la lectura se lleva a cabo y los lectores van construyendo su interpretación del poema, Kintgen anota un conjunto de “movimientos” claramente más interpretativos.

PARAFRASEAR: Los lectores intentan replantear lo leído en sus propias palabras.

DEDUCIR: (“presumiblemente...”).

CONECTAR: Las conexiones pueden ser entre secciones del mismo poema, entre el poema y otras obras literarias o el conocimiento del mundo, incluyendo hechos históricos y culturales en estos casos. Los estudios que se vieron en el capítulo 3 sugieren que el movimiento de Conectar es característico de los lectores de literatura más experimentados,

quienes también gustaban de conectar usos no literarios del lenguaje cuando buscaban la coherencia del texto (metáforas, símbolos).

Al GENERALIZAR, se intenta hacer una declaración de gran significado (“se habla de algo muy diferente en [estas líneas]”).

Grupo 5:

Las operaciones de PROBAR y JUSTIFICAR se ocupan de la validez de la interpretación en desarrollo. ¿Esto es correcto? ¿Eso es lo que ocurre en los sonetos de Shakespeare? ¿O en qué partes del poema puedo encontrar más evidencia para esta interpretación?

Grupo 6:

Una etapa relativamente tardía que parece ocuparse de presentar una respuesta pulida y coherente. En esta etapa el lector se aproxima al ensayo escrito, el cual puede llevarse a cabo en un contexto educativo.

REPLANTAR (de forma más elegante).

ILUSTRAR, CUALIFICAR (Se busca una mayor precisión).

RECORDAR (Se revisan las operaciones previas en orden para desarrollar un argumento sobre el significado del todo, lo que “está ocurriendo”).

Si se deja de lado la inusual sensibilidad de los participantes, producto de su formación, las reservas más obvias con respecto a los datos de Kintgen son la “naturalidad” y lo completo de los protocolos grabados (véase la discusión del método del protocolo en la parte 3) y el hecho de que estos lectores leyeron los poemas solos, grabando sus respuestas con un micrófono, cuando una experiencia educativa ordinaria de lectura de poesía es en grupo en el salón de clases, con el profesor encabezando la discusión. Sin embargo, tanto los lectores de poesía como los profesores reconocerán varios de estos rasgos como procesos por los que atraviesan los lectores en una gran variedad de situaciones. En efecto, yo sugeriría que los grupos en las aulas son capaces de lograr, mediante la interacción, gran parte de lo que estos lectores más expertos hicieron por su cuenta. Se podría decir que los profesores deberían

incentivar el desarrollo de habilidades meta-lingüísticas con el tipo de operaciones señaladas aquí. También sugeriría, aunque esto requiere un mayor número de investigaciones formales de la que sé que existen, que el lector que lee en su segunda lengua será particularmente sensible a las operaciones lingüísticas de este esquema (procesamiento ascendente), lo cual será una ventaja hasta cierto punto, pero podría igualmente causar un “cuello de botella” o “corto circuito” en la construcción de una interpretación y una respuesta más significativa.

De Beaugrande: Lectores ordinarios de poesía

De Beaugrande (1985) ofrece un estudio más simple y menos detallado que confirma a grandes rasgos la descripción hecha por Kintgen (a pesar de que no hay ninguna referencia explícita hacia su trabajo) y que podría ser más útil para los primeros intentos de estudios de protocolo sobre la lectura de poesía. Cabe recalcar que, si bien los sujetos de este estudio son hablantes y lectores nativos del idioma, ahora son estudiantes a nivel licenciatura sin formación literaria: “lectores ordinarios”, tal como lo sugiere el título del artículo.

De Beaugrande trabajó con un grupo de estudiantes de primer año en los Estados Unidos que estaban inscritos en un curso de “Introducción a la poesía”, mismo que él impartía. El que los sujetos estuvieran inscritos al curso se puede interpretar como un indicador de interés o compromiso, pero no indica un nivel avanzado de conocimientos. Algunos estudiantes exitosos regularmente elegían poemas “difíciles” para estudiar (como los de Richard Eberhart), lo que animó a de Beaugrande a darles un poema no identificado escrito por el mismo autor para ver qué opiniones formulaban los estudiantes. De nuevo, hacemos notar que a los estudiantes les gustaban los otros trabajos de este poeta, pero también que la obra no es inmediatamente comprensible, como lo sería una balada tradicional. Las etapas típicas que se identificaron en estos estudios de protocolo fueron las siguientes (empleando los términos que utilizó de Beaugrande):

La poesía y el lector ordinario

ENMARCAR/MONTAR

DAR RODEOS

CITAR

ASOCIACIÓN DE PALABRAS CLAVES

PARAFRASEAR

NORMALIZAR

GENERALIZAR

MONTAR parece representar un esfuerzo por pensar y para descomponer el poema en proporciones más manejables (Se les pidió a los estudiantes que leyeran el poema completo una vez). (“Lo primero que me decía era...”; cuando te fijas en el título...”).

El DAR RODEOS fue, tal como se predijo, un fenómeno prevalente a lo largo del estudio, particularmente durante las etapas tempranas; señala que las declaraciones eran provisionales, inexactas o inciertas (“creo”, “parece”, “quizás”, “puede ser”). De Beaugrande también notó el uso frecuente de expresiones vagas como “alguien”, “algo”.

Se dice que los estudiantes CITAN cuando estos repiten palabra por palabra del texto, y da a entender que se esfuerzan para tener una frase o palabra presente en su memoria de trabajo mientras la comentan.

ASOCIACIÓN DE PALABRAS CLAVE: Se aprovechaba la presencia de ciertas palabras en un intento de encontrar un tema, sinónimos y asociaciones a partir de la memoria explorada alrededor de ellos. El título, por ejemplo, provocó que se diera este fenómeno con frecuencia. Es evidente que la operación se presta para ser explotada en clase. De igual manera, es sorprendente (mi propia observación) que las palabras claves en las que estos estudiantes se enfocaban consistían en un conjunto muy limitado, lo cuál podría ser evidencia

a favor de los argumentos de “trasfondo” de van Peer y Miall, como se discutió en el capítulo 4.

PARAFRASEAR: Kintgen la incluyó en su codificación bajo el nombre de “citar”. De Beaugrande clasifica el parafraseo de sus estudiantes en dos tipos: NORMALIZANTE (intentar expresar el lenguaje poético con expresiones cotidianas) y GENERALIZANTE, por la cual se entiende el desarrollo de ideas menos específicas pero más reconocibles a partir de las palabras precisas del poema. (Canción de tordo que atraviesa todos los males humanos / OK / esta / la canción del tordo es un recordatorio de, umm / que la vida sigue y de que todavía hay belleza a pesar de todas las cosas que suceden alrededor de ti”).

Algunas diferencias notables con respecto a los lectores expertos de Kintgen parecen ser una menor tendencia a probar y validar y, tal vez la más significativa, el referirse al idioma sólo al nivel léxico en vez de enfocarse en la forma, la rima, el sistema de sonidos o la sintaxis, aunque esto debería estudiarse más a fondo con poemas más comparables (Sonetos de Shakespeare, etc.). Es interesante notar que este poema tiene un esquema de rimas y forma regular, sin embargo, estos “lectores ordinarios” parecen centrar sus esfuerzos en “traducir” el poema a términos cotidianos en una etapa temprana en lugar de centrarse en los aspectos formales y en su posible significado, como hicieron los lectores más expertos (aunque, sin duda alguna, la clase a la que los lectores ordinarios asistían había cubierto estos aspectos formales). Se podría decir que estos “lectores ordinarios” están restándole importancia a los aspectos literarios distintivos de la experiencia de la lectura de poesía y expresando su inseguridad y falta de confianza, pero, a pesar de todo, parecen haber encontrado la dificultad del poema digna de más atención a la que normalmente prestarían a un texto no literario. El artículo nos presenta una imagen interesante de una etapa en el desarrollo de la competencia literaria y, por supuesto, muchos lectores jamás lograrán este nivel de apreciación. Es evidente que hacen falta más estudios sobre “lectores ordinarios” para dar más información a las prácticas educativas, como se discutió en el capítulo 3, y que se le debe dar más atención a contextos más naturalistas de lectura de textos literarios. Los investigadores en segundas lenguas estarán particularmente interesados en el rasgo de “hablar alrededor de una tarea” de estos datos.

Hanauer: Lectores de poesía escrita en su segunda lengua

Hanauer (2001) se dispuso a investigar el valor de la lectura de poesía en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua utilizando un “enfoque en la forma” / “hipótesis de aprendizaje basado en tareas” (Skehan 1998; Doughty y Williams 1998), es decir, que la “tarea” de leer poesía ayudaría a los alumnos a percatarse de ciertos rasgos culturales y lingüísticos y, así, ayudaría a promover el aprendizaje en una forma deseada. Hay evidencia, como la que se revisó en los capítulos 3 y 4, que demuestra que las formas lingüísticas superficiales de la poesía son más fácil de detectar y retener, a diferencia de las situaciones donde el lenguaje contiene bastante contenido y hay una pérdida rápida en la retención y la atención a las formas precisas. Este estudio es de interés adicional, pues demuestra cómo se puede recolectar y analizar información cuantitativa para dar soporte y extender hallazgos más cualitativos.

Se derivaron los estudios de protocolo a partir de diez parejas (díadas) de estudiantes de inglés de alrededor de 20 años cuya primera lengua era el hebreo y que estaban inscritas en una facultad de pedagogía en Israel. Desde una perspectiva metodológica, se ha dicho que este método dialógico es menos extenuante y distractor y, por consiguiente, aumenta las probabilidades de que los protocolos resulten más “naturales” que los ejercicios en solitario tradicionales que implican pensar en voz alta (como en el estudio de Kintgen, aunque de Beaugrande utilizó una técnica de entrevistas). Las estudiantes no eran especialistas en literatura, pero se les catalogó como lectoras “avanzadas” de inglés como lengua extranjera. Se les pidió que verbalizaran en voz alta en inglés (véase la discusión de la metodología del protocolo en la parte 3). Juntas, leyeron el poema “Suzanne”, de Leonard Cohen. El cuidadoso desarrollo metodológico de un sistema de codificación se describe a continuación, incluyendo el establecimiento de la fiabilidad del interposicionamiento. Una progresión típica a través de nueve categorías de respuestas surgió como resultado de este cuidadoso trabajo, bastante parecida a las operaciones en los hablantes nativos identificadas por Kintgen y de Beaugrande (aunque, de nuevo, ninguno de estos dos estudios fue citado. Una de las aspiraciones de este libro es que los académicos en estas áreas sean consciente del trabajo de sus semejantes).

Hanauer (2001): Respuestas de los lectores de poesía escrita en su segunda lengua

PERCATARSE

CUESTIONAR

HIPÓTESIS INTERPRETATIVA

REFORMULACIÓN DE LA HIPÓTESIS INTERPRETATIVA

CONTRAARGUMENTO DE LA HIPÓTESIS INTERPRETATIVA

DECLARACIÓN ELABORADA DE LA HIPÓTESIS INTERPRETATIVA

CONOCIMIENTO DEL MUNDO

INTEGRACIÓN DEL CONOCIMIENTO

DECLARACIÓN GENERAL

PERCATARSE: Los participantes dirigen su atención a una línea, palabra o frase en específico. Se percatan de las repeticiones y/o de las diferencias o de un uso inusual de la gramática (“mira, aquí dice “tú has tocado su cuerpo perfecto”, pero aquí dice “él tocó tu cuerpo perfecto”, mira”).

CUESTIONAR: Hacer preguntas sobre el significado específico de una oración, línea, cláusula o palabra en el poema, o sobre el contenido del poema como un todo. (“¿Hay otro significado de la palabra “espejo?” “¿Qué es el ‘Ejército de la Salvación’?”).

HIPÓTESIS INTERPRETATIVA: Se propone una interpretación, a veces en respuesta a una pregunta (etapa anterior) que a menudo involucra una inferencia más allá de la información dada, pero, en todo caso, relacionada con una sección o aspecto del poema.

REFORMULACIÓN DE LA HIPÓTESIS INTERPRETATIVA: Confirmación de una hipótesis formulada anteriormente. Generalmente se parafrasea en lugar de utilizar las mismas palabras.

CONTRAARGUMENTO DE LA HIPÓTESIS INTERPRETATIVA: Se cuestiona o se niega la hipótesis previamente formulada.

DECLARACIÓN ELABORADA DE LA HIPÓTESIS INTERPRETATIVA: Se añade una nueva idea o información nueva, o se modifican los puntos fuertes de una declaración original.

CONOCIMIENTO DEL MUNDO: Motivadas por el texto, las estudiantes utilizan su conocimiento del mundo a largo plazo para desarrollar una interpretación. La información no se encuentra en el texto en sí (por ejemplo, aquí se discutió ampliamente sobre “Jesús”).

INTEGRACIÓN DEL CONOCIMIENTO: Se establece una conexión entre dos declaraciones anteriores y se llega a una interpretación nueva y más amplia.

DECLARACIÓN GENERAL: Se hace un comentario personal motivado por el poema o por la discusión del poema. El comentario no es relevante para la interpretación del texto. (Ejemplo: una participante comenzó a hablar de algunos aspectos de su relación con su novio con su compañera de lectura).

Como Kintgen, Hanauer resalta la variación en las respuestas, pero, nuevamente, como hemos estado encontrando en la lectura de textos literarios, hay muchas áreas de respuesta en común en lo que se percata, se discute y se le presta atención. Percatarse e Hipótesis Interpretativa fueron las categorías más utilizadas (casi el 60 por ciento de las declaraciones). Nuevamente (compare la discusión de de Beaugrande), lo que llama la atención son palabras y frases en lugar de rasgos poéticos o la forma gráfica (61 por ciento contra 7 por ciento). Un análisis posterior de las relaciones temporales de las categorías llevó a Hanauer a proponer una progresión típica en la lectura de poesía escrita en la segunda lengua del lector (para su base de datos).

Hanauer (2001): Etapas en la lectura de poesía escrita en la segunda lengua del lector

- 1: Recolección de datos
- 2: Construcción de una interpretación local
- 3: Desarrollo de una interpretación local
- 4: Redirección de la interpretación
- 4: Construcción de interpretaciones globales

Primero, los sujetos se percatan de una serie de rasgos. Posteriormente, los rasgos notados se intercalan con una pregunta o una serie de preguntas. Después, se desarrolla una interpretación utilizando su conocimiento del mundo e infiriendo. Se forma una interpretación local y, posteriormente, se desarrolla y se confirma. Sin embargo, otra etapa típica es (4) la redirección de una interpretación utilizando nuevamente el conocimiento del mundo y/o tomando en cuenta otros rasgos que se detectaron posteriormente. Se elaboran contraargumentos (la propia discusión de Hanauer es más sutil y precisa de lo que pareciera ser a partir de este breve resumen). Una interpretación global más coherente del poema comienza a emerger (finalmente) a través de la integración de las interpretaciones previas y del conocimiento del mundo. De nuevo, la cuantificación es de especial interés para demostrar la predominancia de Desarrollo de la interpretación y de la Interpretación Local (etapas 3 y 2): “En resumen, los datos muestran que las participantes hacían mayor uso de las primeras tres funciones. Las características centrales de la tarea de leer poesía en parejas eran la recolección de datos, proponer hipótesis interpretativas y luego desarrollar estas hipótesis” (pág. 315).

El estudio de Hanauer demuestra que la lectura de poesía involucra prestar mucha atención a los datos lingüísticos en la construcción de significados. Si bien este estudio no puede demostrar “la adquisición de una segunda lengua”, sí demuestra que el “enfocarse en la forma” fue una práctica promovida durante la lectura de poesía para estas alumnas relativamente avanzadas, así como la práctica de construcción de significado en el procesamiento del discurso. “Los estudiantes de idiomas extienden (extendieron) sus conocimientos de la gama potencial de usos y significados de una estructura lingüística

existente” (pág. 319). Finalmente, Hanauer siente que su conclusión está justificada: “El estudio respalda la postura de que la poesía puede usarse en la clase de lengua extranjera con estudiantes avanzados como una tarea que puede mejorar el conocimiento lingüístico y cultural de la lengua meta” (pág. 320).

Algunas observaciones adicionales son las siguientes: primero, que la variable de la segunda lengua no pareció cambiar las conductas de los lectores de poesía, al menos, se presume, pasado un “umbral” lingüístico (esto es congruente con gran parte del argumento de este libro). Segundo, independientemente de cómo se interprete el hecho, los lectores de textos escritos en su segunda lengua, al igual que los “lectores ordinarios” menos experimentados de de Beaugrande, no identifican los rasgos más “literarios” del poema, aunque sí tienden a converger en las mismas áreas léxicas. El aspecto más revelador de que los lectores invocaron un esquema de “poesía”, “cuadro” o género fue que se pudo demostrar que prestaron mucha atención a los rasgos lingüísticos superficiales.

CHAPTER III: TRANSLATION ANALYSIS

As it was mentioned in the first chapter, the analysis of this translation has its foundation on Vinay and Darbelnet's direct and oblique translation techniques. Despite belonging to the Indo-European family of languages, English and Spanish both possess distinctive traits that often do not allow the application of direct translation techniques. These may range from rather evident surface elements, such as English's rather rigid syntactic order, which contrasts with Spanish's more flexible syntax, to less-obvious but still important elements, such as the tendency of the English language to favour concise sentences –whereas Spanish often indulges in long, often relying on compounding by subordination– or the differences in punctuation conventions. It is, then, worthwhile to take a closer look at the structural changes a text undergoes during its transition from the source language to the target language.

While such an effort lacks a practical purpose, since most translators and language specialists are already aware of the differences between the languages with which they work, it is a decent exercise for students of modern languages and translation to be aware of the mutations the structures of the source text undergo during the translation process, and also to highlight the importance of oblique translation methods, whose absence in a translation would result in an awkward text and could potentially hamper the transmission of the original message.

It is also worth mentioning that translators do not *consciously* rely on these translation methods. As stated by Kelly (1977), compared stylistics may provide us some insight on the differences between languages at a grammatical level, but little can they do to explain the processes that take place in the mind of translators as they work their craft. It is true that the judgement calls they make are grounded on their linguistic and cultural knowledge of both source and target languages, but, as for the *process* they follow when they translate, especially oblique translation, little is known for certain. What is more, some authors, such as Delisle (1980) have argued that, rather than being a methodology of translation, Vinay and Darbelnet's translation techniques are only useful for the analysis of the end product.

In the following section, the aforementioned translation techniques will be used to carry out a contrastive analysis between the original text and the target text. It should be noted that, given the scientific nature of the source material, as well as the lack of cultural connotations, examples of the most elaborate oblique translation techniques are scarce and, in the case of equivalence and adaptation, non-existent.

3.1: Direct translation

3.1.1: Borrowing

As it was previously stated, borrowing involves the insertion of a foreign term into the lexicon of the target language. This strategy should only be resorted to when there is no equivalent term in the target language and it is not possible to use a superordinate or to paraphrase, either because it would result in loss of information or because the term is a neologism, which has no superordinate and is completely foreign to the target culture. In these cases, borrowing is a valid technique that ensures the accurate translation of the text and enriches the vocabulary of the target language. Borrowed words are generally perceived as undesirable barbarisms at first, but eventually they are absorbed by the target language and accepted by the majority of speakers –particularly naturalized borrowings–. Spanish words such as *fútbol* and *internet*, which were once borrowed to compensate for a semantic void in the language, have become so common that few people would think of them as foreign words.

If one is to follow to that definition, then it is evident that borrowing was not a technique used during the translation of this text. The majority of the terms found on the target text were equivalent on the lexical level with terms in Spanish, and during the few instances where a term could not be directly translated into Spanish, paraphrasing and amplification was used. The only occasion where a foreign term was preserved in the translation involved the name of a publication. The English name was simply borrowed for the Spanish translation and written in italics.

Source Text	Target Text
(Zubair 2003b; journal <i>Changing English</i>)	(Zubair 2003b; revista <i>Changing English</i>)

3.1.2: Calque

Calque involves equivalence above word level, that is, the translation of phrases, expressions or compound words. What is of importance on this level is not the translation of the constituents of the phrase, but rather the structure of the foreign expression. If a direct translation of the phrase complies with the grammatical rules of the target language, the calque is considered a lexical calque. If, however, the translation does introduce a structure deemed atypical by the rules of the target language, the calque will be considered a structural calque. The latter, much like borrowings, often end up being absorbed by the speakers of the target language, to the point they do no longer consider the structure to be foreign.

Calque was not often used during this translation. Since the text that was translated belonged to an academic genre, the language used by the author favoured formal, short sentences that did not allow the recurrence of structures that would be calqued. Among the few examples of calque that could be found in the translation are:

Source Text	Target Text
De Beaugrande worked with a group of <u>first-year freshmen</u> students in the USA, <u>taking an “Introduction to Poetry” class with him.</u>	De Beaugrande trabajó con un grupo de estudiantes <u>de primer año</u> en los Estados Unidos que estaban inscritos en un curso de <u>“Introducción a la poesía”</u>
[...] using a <u>‘focus on form’/ ‘task-based learning’ hypothesis</u>	[...] utilizando un <u>“enfoco en la forma” / “hipótesis de aprendizaje basado en tareas”</u>

The first one is first-year freshmen: a freshman is a student currently enrolled in his first year of higher education. While the structure in English works, as “freshmen” is being used as a noun, with “first-year” being used as an adjective phrase, translating it into Spanish was not feasible, as the equivalent for the word freshman is already “estudiante de primer

año”. A structural calque was, therefore, inappropriate. A lexical calque was used, dropping out the word freshman to avoid redundancy.

The second example followed the structural calque technique. The structures of both “focus on form” and “task-based learning hypothesis” were preserved in the Spanish version. Only one minor adjustment was made in the last example, pushing the word “hypothesis” to the beginning of the phrase.

3.1.3: Literal translation

It goes without saying that literal translation was the most prevalent technique in this project. It is safe to assume that both the syntactic similarities between Spanish and English, and the stylistic restrictions imposed by the genre of the text were factors that contributed to the high number of instances during which literal translation was relied on. Scientific and academic texts, despite their technical jargon and specific format, tend to use straightforward structures with little to no embellishment. What follows are several examples of this technique:

Source text	Target text
In this chapter examples are given of significant investigations into the reading of literature, including:	En este capítulo se verán algunos ejemplos de investigaciones relevantes sobre la lectura de textos literarios, incluyendo:
Kintgen detects several typical groups of ‘moves’, or ‘elementary processes’ in reading a poem, not completely sequential, but tending to move from more concentration on the surface features of the text to freer interpretative and cognitive activity.	Kintgen ha detectado varios grupos típicos de “movimientos” o “procesos elementales” en la lectura de un poema. Estos procesos no son completamente secuenciales, pero tienden a ir de una etapa de enfoque en los elementos superficiales del texto a actividades de mayor libertad interpretativa y cognitiva.

<p>Notable differences from Kintgen’s expert readers would seem to be less tendency to test and validate, and, perhaps most noticeably, referring to language only on the level of lexis rather than form, rhyme, sound system or syntax, though this would need to be pursued further against more comparable poems (Shakespearean sonnet, etc.).</p>	<p>Algunas diferencias notables con respecto a los lectores expertos de Kintgen parecen ser una menor tendencia a probar y validar y, tal vez la más significativa, el referirse al idioma sólo al nivel léxico en vez de enfocarse en la forma, la rima, el sistema de sonidos o la sintaxis, aunque esto deberá estudiarse más a fondo con poemas más comparables (Sonetos de Shakespeare, etc.).</p>
<p>Like Kintgen, Hanauer stresses variation in response, but again, as we constantly find in literature reading, there are also striking common areas of response in what is noticed and discussed and how much attention is given.</p>	<p>Como Kintgen, Hanauer resalta la variación en las respuestas, pero, nuevamente, como hemos estado encontrando en la lectura de textos literarios, <u>hay</u> muchas áreas de respuesta en común en lo que se percata, se discute y se le presta atención.</p>
<p>Hanauer’s study shows poetry reading involving close attention to linguistic data in constructing meanings.</p>	<p>El estudio de Hanauer demuestra que la lectura de poesía involucra prestar mucha atención a los datos lingüísticos en la construcción de significados.</p>
<p>Additional observations that can be made, are first – consistent with much of the argument of this book – that the second language variable did not seem to change behaviours of poetry readers, at least if, presumably, past a linguistic ‘threshold’.</p>	<p>Algunas observaciones adicionales son las siguientes: primero, que la variable de la segunda lengua no pareció cambiar las conductas de los lectores de poesía, al menos, se presume, pasado un “umbral” lingüístico (esto es congruente con gran parte del argumento de este libro).</p>

The most evident difference between the source text and the target text is the length of the sentences. The Spanish translations had, in average, 7 additional words per instance of literal translation. This is the result of the indirect translation technique known as expansion. As López Guix mentioned, English tends to brevity and conciseness, whereas Spanish tends to elaborate more. A mere word-for-word translation could possibly convey the same content, but following this method would result in a cumbersome text, whose structure would be clearly foreign. A translator ought to keep in mind whether a language favours shorter or longer clauses in order to make the necessary stylistic adjustments and meet the expectations of the target audience.

3.2: Oblique translation

3.2.1: *Transposition*

Transposition involves a change in the grammatical category of a word. Unlike the other oblique translation strategies, which are used to make up for a lack of direct equivalence between the languages, transposition can, at times, be a voluntary choice. As noted by López-Guix, The translator may deem necessary to change the grammatical category of a word out of stylistic reasons. That is not to say that transposition is to be downgraded to the category of optional technique. A well-redacted text that takes into account the stylistic needs of the genre is certainly going to have a better reception than one that strictly adheres to the grammatical categories of the original text, not to mention that, on several occasions, it is only natural to change grammatical categories to make the text flow smoothly.

Some examples of the transpositions found in this translation are:

Source text	Target text
[...] show that readers with advanced <u>literary</u> training	[...] demuestran que los lectores con una formación avanzada <u>en literatura</u>

SELECT: the reader chooses a word or line <u>to concentrate on.</u>	SELECCIONAR: El lector selecciona una palabra o una línea <u>y se enfoca en ésta.</u>
Earlier stages of reading a poem are observed to be more <u>text-driven</u>	Se observa que las primeras etapas de la lectura de un poema <u>giran en torno al texto</u>
<u>leaving aside</u> the unusually highly trained sensitivities of the participants [...]	<u>Si se deja de lado</u> la inusual sensibilidad de los participantes, producto de su formación [...]

In the first instance, the word underlined, literary, is an adjective. In the Spanish translation, the adjective is dropped out in favour of a prepositional phrase (albeit the prepositional phrase itself functions as a descriptive adjective to the compound “formación avanzada”).

In the second instance, a verb in its to-infinitive form is used to denote purpose or objective. In the translation into Spanish, this is changed in favour of a compound by coordination. The tacit subject is the same as in the first clause (el lector) and “to concentrate” is translated as “se enfoca” changing from an infinitive form into a conjugated form (present indicative).

The third instance is a prime example of an obligatory transposition. Text-driven, as indicated by its hyphenation, is an adjective. In the translation, the structure has to be translated as the verb of a subordinate clause (nominal subordination. The subordinate clause is the direct object of the sentence).

The fourth instance of transposition involves a phrasal verb conjugated in the present participle. The function being performed is introducing a subordinate clause (which, in turn, has an adverbial function). In the translation into Spanish, the structure has been changed into a conditional sentence, where the verb is conjugated in the preterit imperfect of the subjunctive mood (copretérito de subjuntivo).

3.2.2: Modulation

Modulating from the source language into the target language involves an exhaustive analysis of the translation that goes beyond mere structural issues. Occasionally, the

expressions and common usage of the target language, as well as the constraints imposed by the genre and the readership elicit a change of perspective in the text. If deemed necessary, the translator will have to do minor, yet crucial, adjustments to what otherwise would be a literal translation to ensure the naturalness of the language.

A few examples of modulation in this translation would be:

Source text	Target text
This information should be of interest to educators in itself	Se espera que la información sea del interés de los educadores
Research into reading has too often taken the form of insensitive experimentalism,	Es muy frecuente que la investigación sobre la lectura se haga desde un insensible enfoque experimentalista
Re-readings of the whole recur as an interpretation is gradually constructed.	Tienden a re-leer el texto mientras construyen gradualmente su interpretación.
as the reading progresses and a developing understanding of the poem is being constructed by a reader	Conforme la lectura se lleva a cabo y los lectores van construyendo su interpretación del poema,
CITING is used to label students quoting word for word from the text	Se dice que los estudiantes CITAN cuando estos repiten palabra por palabra del texto
Initially, a series of features are noticed.	Primero, los sujetos se percatan de una serie de rasgos.

It is clear that what was mostly modulated were instances involving the passive voice. In the first, second and third example, the active voice was replaced and translated as a reflexive passive (pasiva refleja) in Spanish. In the third example, a change of perspective was employed: in the original text, the phenomenon of re-reading was the subject of the clause, and, in Spanish, the role of subject was tacitly given to the subjects of the experiments, with re-readings now functioning as the object of the verb “tienden”. Example number four

is the inverse of example number three: the passive structure of the original was changed into active to highlight the fact the role of the reader in the process of understanding a text. The same also occurs in example number six.

3.2.3: A brief note on Equivalence and Adaptation

The last two oblique translation strategies lie on the extreme end of the spectrum: A much more sophisticated modulation, equivalence is resorted to when the incompatibilities between the two languages escape the boundaries of the morpho-syntactic level and extend to the semantic one. Completely different structures are to be used if the translator is to convey the same idea as in the original or, on the very least, provide the reader with a general idea of what was included. As it was pointed out before, idioms, fixed phrases and popular expressions make up the bulk of equivalences.

Adaption, on the other hand, addresses a situation where there is no equivalence whatsoever between languages: there are no similarities between these cultural connotations of the SL and the TL, and the translator is forced to adapt the text to the cultural customs of the target audience, usually at the cost of losing some of the content in translation.

No examples of either strategy were found during the analysis of this translation. The lack of equivalence between languages stops at the modulation level.

This has a rather simple explanation. As it was pointed out in the outset of this project, one of the defining traits of scientific-technical translation is the lack of embellishment of its prose, opting instead for a dry-yet-efficient style to convey information in a straightforward manner. This is to ensure that the reader grasps the main ideas of the text with as much ease as possible, an essential element of every scientific article. In the words of Ahmad (2012): “The use of linguistic features is well maintained in scientific composition because any deviation from lexis and syntax in scientific text will, really, mar the easy grasp of the text, hence it is inadmissible” (p. 47).

In the source text, a recount of experiments on applied linguistics, there are no instances where cultural content of the source language creates a conflict with the expectations of the target readership, or where there is a semantic void that would hamper the reading experience of the target readers. It was not necessary to make use of these

strategies, as the original text contained no passages that required knowledge of the English-speaking culture to be understood.

3.3: Additional considerations

3.3.1: Title of the chapter

The original title in English is *Readers Reading Literature*, a noun phrase consisting of a noun (readers), which is being modified by the present participle of the verb “read” and its object, “literature”. This type of structure is typical of the English language, but it cannot be imitated in the Spanish language without coming across as awkward. Doing so would be a syntactic calque, a practice that is frowned upon and is best avoided. The title chosen for the Spanish version (*La lectura de textos literarios*) is not an exact translation of the original in English, but its syntactic structure follows the grammatical rules of Spanish and accurately summarises the contents of the chapter.

3.3.2: Instances of expansion and reduction

Despite the constraints of the genre, which calls for succinct sentences and simple syntactic structure, examples of expansion are scattered across the entire translation. One only needs to take a look at the word count of both the original and the translation: the extension of the source text was 3570 words, whereas the target text boasts a total of 4290 words, an increase of 720 words. While this figure may seem considerably large at first, one must bear in mind that there is a high likelihood that a significant fraction of this number corresponds to function words, which are confined to structural functions, like articles and prepositions. It should also be mentioned that several words in the English language need to be broken down when they are translated into Spanish. Some specific examples of expansion are:

Source text	Target text
protocol studies	estudios de protocolo de pensamiento en voz alta
[...] to freer interpretative and cognitive activity.	[...] a actividades de mayor libertad interpretativa y cognitiva.
Operations of readers reading a poem	Operaciones de los lectores en la lectura de poemas
Poetry reading is seen also in these protocols to prompt increasing attention to:	Se ha observado en estos estudios de protocolo que la lectura de poemas hace que los lectores le den más atención a:
De Beaugrande (1985) offers a simpler, less in depth study which tends to confirm Kintgen in outlines	De Beaugrande (1985) ofrece un estudio más simple y menos detallado que confirma a grandes rasgos la descripción hecha por Kintgen
Hanauer's study shows poetry reading involving close attention to linguistic data in constructing meanings.	El estudio de Hanauer demuestra que la lectura de poesía involucra prestar mucha atención a los datos lingüísticos en la construcción de significados

The first example stands out from the rest as the most drastic expansion, and at first glance it may seem that there is no evident explanation as to why a complete prepositional phrase was added to the word “protocolo”. The reason is that, upon consulting with an expert on linguistics, I was told that the correct term in Spanish for “protocol studies”, in the context that was presented in the text, was the long one that was used in the translation.

The rest of the expansions were the result of either the addition of function words or English terms whose translations required the use of two or more words in Spanish. This is evident in examples two and three, where “freer” was translated as “mayor libertad” and “of readers reading a poem”, which becomes “de los lectores en la lectura de poemas”.

Examples of reductions and omissions are scarcer:

Source text	Target text
Kintgen (1983) remains an important <u>book-length</u> study of six relatively experienced American literature graduates (PhD candidates) reading three English poems.	El estudio de Kintgen (1983), en el cual seis graduados en literatura estadounidense relativamente experimentados (todos candidatos a doctorado) leen tres poemas ingleses, se mantiene relevante.
A relatively late stage seems to be concerned with presenting a more polished and coherent response	Una etapa relativamente tardía que parece ocuparse de presentar una respuesta pulida y coherente
Hanauer (2001) <u>specifically</u> set out to investigate the value of poetry reading in second language learning,	Hanauer (2001) se dispuso a investigar el valor de la lectura de poesía en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua

Evidently, there were more cases of omission than reduction. Example number two is the only one containing a reduction (from 15 words in the original to 14 words in the Spanish version). Example number one and example number three are, respectively, cases of omission of modifiers (an adjective and an adverb). These were not omitted due to a lack of a corresponding term in Spanish, as both words are perfectly translatable. The reasoning behind their omission was a stylistic choice: There is no direct translation of “book-length”, thus, in order to translate it, one would have to rely on paraphrasing; “specifically” does have an equivalent term (específicamente), but inserting it in the Spanish version disrupts the flow of information. In both cases, the omission was done to favour a simple, straightforward style.

CONCLUSION

Translation is a difficult endeavour. It is a game where complex matters, such as equivalence between languages, constraints imposed by the genre and the expectations of the target audience and the comprehension of the source text in its totality and style all play a pivotal role in the construction of the target text. It is the writing of a text that not only conveys the same meaning of its source (or as much as it is possible), but that also respects its readers by adjusting itself to the grammatical conventions of their mother language, from sentence length and punctuation rules to accurately identify the nuances between synonyms so as to choose the most appropriate word. It is a discipline that draws much from the most contemporary and sophisticated studies in linguistics and akin sciences as it does from seemingly unrelated fields, such as pedagogy, engineering and mathematics. As long as the written language is involved and as long as there is a need for communication among speakers of different languages, there will be a need for translation.

Translating an academic text posed a number of challenges that required creative yet efficient solutions. The sentences could not be overly long, and the terminology had to be carefully chosen to satisfy the needs of the audience. Since the studies were psycholinguistic in nature and aimed at a highly educated and demanding audience (educators and linguists interested in the construction of comprehension and meaning among readers), an accurate rendition of the contents of the original was expected. The terminology had to be looked up in various sources and, in one occasion, an expert had to be consulted.

It would be cautiously optimistic to say this project has fulfilled its objectives. To my view, the translation is faithful to the contents and style of the original, and it adjusts itself to the expectations and needs of the target audience. The analysis of the end product was thorough and included the most prominent examples of the translation techniques mentioned by Vinay and Darbelnet and, what is more, I am mildly confident that the text would be of use to educators of language and literature, particularly in the higher education level, whose first language is Spanish and whose English skills do not allow them to read and fully understand the original text. Of course, the only people who can the quality of this project

are the readers of the translation. Only they can offer an unbiased opinion and determine whether the translation met its objectives or not, and if it serves their purposes.

There is no such thing as a definitive translation. Each translator has their own style, not to mention that there are endless ways one can arrange a sentence, particularly when one is working with oblique translation. Some may convey information in a clearer, more straightforward way, and others may prefer to indulge in the length of compound sentences; there is nothing set in stone. Languages also change over time, and what once was a suitable translation soon becomes archaic and is in desperate need of updating. The state of the art changes, and source texts and their translations cease to be relevant. Translations are fluid, never static, and never perfect. To anyone who decides to trot this path, I should like to say that the best attitude a translator can have is an open mind: embrace criticism, work on your craft and accept that there will always be other experts who will not entirely agree with your choice of words or with the specific way you chose to illustrate an idea. And that is perfectly fine. As long as there are thinking humans, disagreements will occur, and from those disagreements and discussions, new knowledge will come to be.

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6

Readers Reading Literature

In this chapter examples are given of significant investigations into the reading of literature, including:

- the activities and processes involved in literary reading (reading poetry; reading short stories);
- possible distinctive features of reading of literature (as opposed to reading of non-literary texts);
- relative successes and failures in reading literary texts, and possible reasons for these;
- the special circumstances of reading literature in a second or foreign language.

Nardoccio (1992) and later researchers (see Chapter 3) show that readers with advanced literary training and/or extensive experience of reading literature do indeed read differently. This chapter begins by considering studies of expert literature readers reading, but goes on to look also at less expert and second language readers of literature. This information should be of interest to educators in itself, but is also intended to prompt readers to further investigations of their own circumstances of literature reading and their own students' practices and problems.

6.1 Researching the reading of literature: cognitive studies

Quote 6.1 Ecological validity in research

As soon as we begin attending to reading, it stops, or becomes something else. This seemed even more true of 'literary reading'. Our attempts to measure it seemed to cause it to evaporate.

(Hunt 1996: n.p.)

Consider next the condition in which an individual is reading pointless, incoherent, experimenter-generated text for no particular purpose. Unfortunately, this has been the typical state of affairs for the majority of the published experimental studies during the last twenty years.

(Graesser and Kreuz 1993: 156)

In a useful overview of research methods used in empirical studies of literature reading Steen (1991) notes the predominance of verbal reports research and strengths and weaknesses of this. It is self-evidently impossible to study reading itself, directly. Even 'hard science' methods from psychology or neuropsychology such as eye movement detection, or scans of electrical brain activity, blood flows, etc., are not studying 'reading' as such. They are studying activities involved in the reading process. Even these are subject to the kind of criticisms made in quote above. Research into reading has too often taken the form of insensitive experimentalism, which, in the jargon, 'lacked *ecological validity*'. Whatever was being studied, it was often not 'real reading' ('ordinary', 'normal', natural reading). Usually, therefore, reading has been studied as mediated or responded to, notably verbally (oral or written reports, questionnaires), or sometimes in another medium (music, dance or film inspired by a story, drawings, diagrams of poems, etc.). Increasingly, the preference has been for qualitative investigation, though in principle, as Steen rightly argues, more quantitative testing could have been used to follow up more exploratory qualitative findings. 'Comprehension' of a literary text, it was suggested under 'Assessment', is not a straightforward construct. Other methods, as used by Zwaan, or Bortolussi and Dixon, described above, have included study of the effects of deliberate linguistic transformations of texts, or the effects of priming readers with different frames or levels of relevant knowledge before they begin to read a text, though again, the manipulations risk loss of the desired object of study. Hanauer (1997b), for example, finds better recall of surface linguistic features of the same text when presented in verse lines, than when presented as a prose paragraph. In terms of effective processing of literary text, studies by Nardoccio (1992) and others discussed above, show that experienced or 'expert' readers of literature read differently and gain more from their readings of texts as a result. Again, the work of Miall and colleagues represents interesting attempts to supplement more ethnographic reader response studies into affect ('feelings' aroused by literary experience) with more psychologically informed empirical research.

With the background of such studies largely established in Chapter 3, we turn now to consider some stimulating reports of research into the study of poetry reading, and of the reading of stories, to see what can be learned both directly (findings) and more indirectly too, in terms of research methods and approaches, including the reading of literature in a second language.

6.2 Reading poetry: protocol studies

Richards' (1929) pioneering work was mentioned at the outset of this book. Since then a number of classic studies have further established and extended the case for protocol research into literary reading. Obviously, protocol studies tell us most about the cognitive aspects of reading. They focus on individuals interacting with text in an unusual or at best undefined context. More contextual studies would involve, for example, examining classroom interaction around literature texts (Kim 2004) or wider studies of cultural attitudes to and understandings of literature and literacy as they impact on literature reading (Zubair 2003b; journal *Changing English*) (see Chapter 7 below).

Kintgen (1983): Expert readers of poetry

Kintgen (1983) remains an important book-length study of six relatively experienced American literature graduates (PhD candidates) reading three English poems. Verbal responses while reading were recorded in an attempt to capture the process of developing comprehension through perception, 'noticing' linguistic text features, as it occurs in time, 'the constructive processes themselves' (p. 17). Earlier research (such as Richards) was seen as flawed to the extent that it relied on written responses or retrospective reflection. Two conclusions perhaps stand out from the fascinating detail of the study: there is significant variation between the graduates in the features (language) they notice and seize on to elaborate, and in what they find puzzling. ('[R]eaders differ greatly both in the organization of their activities and in the types of elementary processes emphasized', p. 102). Second, this undoubted range of responses nevertheless occurs within recognisably 'trained' limits, learned from their literary education (Fish's idea of literature as an 'interpretative community' with norms of behaviour and ways of talking and taking meaning from text). Cultural schemas (sets of cognitive expectations) with regard to 'Shakespeare', 'a sonnet', 'a poem' are clearly observable and employed in reading in these protocols. (Compare 'Connect: Literature', and 'Connect: world' moves, in Kintgen's codings.)

Kintgen detects several typical groups of 'moves', or 'elementary processes' in reading a poem, not completely sequential, but tending to move from more concentration on the surface features of the text to freer interpretative and cognitive activity. Interestingly, Kintgen's subjects all begin 'with what almost seems a ritual disclaimer of understanding' (p. 134): poetry reading is hard and is expected to be hard. Reading a new poem tends to confirm this schema.

Operations of readers reading a poem

1. READ, SELECT, LOCATE
2. COMMENT, NARRATE
3. PHONOLOGY, FORM, WORD, SYNTAX, TONE

4. PARAPHRASE, DEDUCE: WORLD, CONNECT: POEM, CONNECT: WORLD, CONNECT: LITERATURE, CONNECT: FIGURE, GENERALIZE
5. TEST, JUSTIFY
6. RESTATE, ILLUSTRATE, QUALIFY, RECALL.

(Kintgen 1983: 38)

In more detail:

Group 1 Moves

1. READ: a poem or section of a poem is read. Most readers in this study read through the entire text once at the outset before returning to more detailed operations. Re-readings of the whole recur as an interpretation is gradually constructed.
2. SELECT: the reader chooses a word or line to concentrate on.
3. ILLUSTRATE: the reader reads aloud a part of the poem to illustrate a point.
4. LOCATE: the reader searches for a feature in the text or specifies where it is to be found.

Earlier stages of reading a poem are observed to be more text-driven, where later stages are demonstrably affected by earlier reading as much as by features of the text currently being attended to.

Group 2

COMMENT increasingly occurs. Comments may be cognitive or affective. ('It's a strange poem'; 'It really is hard to figure out', 'Has some great lines').

Group 3

Poetry reading is seen also in these protocols to prompt increasing attention to:

LINGUISTIC features, at least for these trained and experienced readers:

PHONOLOGY ('The rhyme scheme is...')

FORM ('It's a sonnet... The syntactic division is into an octave and a sestet...')

WORD dictionaries are consulted by some readers, synonyms are aired aloud.

SYNTAX anaphoric reference, for example, prompts some attention in these protocols ('"their" ... others? ... they?')

TONE readers identify possible sarcasm or irony, for example.

Group 4

Again, as the reading progresses and a developing understanding of the poem is being constructed by a reader, Kintgen records a set of more obviously interpretative 'moves':

PARAPHRASE readers attempt restatements in their own words

DEDUCE ('so presumably...')

CONNECT: connections can be between sections of the poem, between this poem and other works of literature or other world knowledge, including historical and cultural knowledge in these cases. 'Expert' studies reviewed in Chapter 3 suggest this Connect move is characteristic of more experienced literary readers. These literary readers also liked to connect non-literal uses of language in their search for coherence (metaphors, symbols)

GENERALISE attempt to stand back and make a statement of larger significance ('something very different is being talked about [in these lines]').

Group 5

TEST and JUSTIFY operations are concerned with the validity of the developing interpretation. Can that be right? Is that what happens in Shakespeare sonnets? Or, where in the poem can I find more evidence for this interpretation?

Group 6

A relatively late stage seems to be concerned with presenting a more polished and coherent response, and is here moving closer to the written 'essay' which may eventually be produced in educational contexts:

RESTATE (more elegantly)

ILLUSTRATE, QUALIFY (greater precision now searched for)

RECALL (going over previous operations, now marshalling as part of a more developed argument about what it all means, what is 'going on'.)

Obvious reservations about Kintgen's data, leaving aside the unusually highly trained sensitivities of the participants, would be the 'naturalness' and completeness of protocols recorded (see discussion of protocol method in Part 3), and the fact that these readers read the poems alone, recording their responses into microphones, where a more typical educational experience of poetry reading is in a group in a classroom, with a teacher leading. Nevertheless, readers of poetry and teachers alike will recognise many of these features as processes that readers in a wide variety of situations typically go through. Indeed, I would suggest that groups in classrooms are able to achieve interactively much of what these more expert readers did for themselves alone. Arguably, teachers should support increasing meta-linguistic facility with the kind of operations outlined here. I would also suggest, though this requires more formal investigation than I am aware of, that the second language reader will be particularly sensitive to the linguistic operations in this schema, ('bottom-up' processing) which will be an advantage to a point, but could also be a potential cause of 'bottleneck' or 'short circuit' in constructing a more meaningful interpretation and response.

De Beaugrande: Ordinary readers of poetry

De Beaugrande (1985) offers a simpler, less in depth study which tends to confirm Kintgen in outlines, (though no explicit reference is made to Kintgen's

work), but may be more immediately serviceable for first research efforts in protocols of poetry reading. Also, while the subjects of the study are still first language speakers and readers, they are now non-expert undergraduates 'ordinary readers', as the title of his article suggests.

De Beaugrande worked with a group of first-year freshmen students in the USA, taking an 'Introduction to Poetry' class with him, which can be taken to indicate some interest or commitment, but no advanced level of expertise. Some successful students regularly selected a 'difficult' poet to study (Richard Eberhart), which prompted de Beaugrande to present them with an unidentified poem by the same author to see what they made of it. Again, we note that the students liked other works by this poet, but also that the work is not immediately comprehensible as (say) a traditional ballad might be. Typical stages identified from these protocols were as follows, using de Beaugrande's own terms.

Poetry and the ordinary reader

FRAMING/ STAGING
 HEDGING
 CITING
 KEYWORD ASSOCIATIONS
 PARAPHRASING
 NORMALISING
 GENERALISING

STAGING seems to represent an effort to think, and to break down the poem into more manageable proportions. (Students were asked first to read the whole poem through once.) ('The first thing that I got from it was...'; 'when you look at the title now...').

HEDGING was prevalent throughout, particularly in earlier parts, as would be predicted, that is signals that statements were provisional, inexact or uncertain ('I think', 'it seems', 'maybe', 'perhaps'). De Beaugrande notices also frequent uses of vague expressions such as 'someone', 'something'.

CITING is used to label students quoting word for word from the text, and suggests the effort is to have a phrase or word present in working memory as it is commented on.

KEY WORD ASSOCIATION Certain lexical items were seized on in an attempt often to name a topic, and synonyms and associations from memory explored around them. The title, for example, prompted much of this kind of work. The operation obviously lends itself to classroom exploitation. It is

striking too (my own observation) that the key words seized on by these student readers consist of a very limited set, which would seem to offer more support for the 'foregrounding' arguments of van Peer and Miall, discussed in Chapter 4.

PARAPHRASING Noticed, like citing, by Kintgen as well. De Beaugrande divides his respondents' paraphrasing into **NORMALISING** (bringing closer to everyday expression the unusual or poetic expression) and **GENERALISING**, which is understood as developing less specific but more recognisable ideas from the precise words of the poem. (*thrush song piercing human ills /OK / this/ the thrush song is a reminder that um / that life goes on around and that there's still beauty despite all of the things around you*).

Notable differences from Kintgen's expert readers would seem to be less tendency to test and validate, and, perhaps most noticeably, referring to language only on the level of lexis rather than form, rhyme, sound system or syntax, though this would need to be pursued further against more comparable poems (Shakespearean sonnet, etc.). Interestingly, the poem does use a rhyme scheme and regular form. However, the effort of these 'ordinary readers' seems to be to 'translate' the poem into more everyday terms at an early stage rather than dwell, as the more expert readers did, on formal aspects and their possible significance (though undoubtedly the class they were following would have been referring to such matters.) Arguably, these 'ordinary readers' are downplaying the distinctively literary aspects of the poetry reading experience, expressing their uncertainties and lack of confidence, but nevertheless seem to have found the difficulty of the poem worthy of more concentrated attention than would normally be given to a non-literary text. The paper as a whole gives an interesting snapshot of a stage in the development of literary competence, and of course many readers will never even achieve this level of appreciation. Certainly, more studies of 'ordinary readers' are needed to inform educational practices, as argued in Chapter 3, and more attention to more naturalistic contexts of literary reading. Second language researchers will be particularly interested in the 'talk around task' features of such data.

Hanauer: Second language readers of poetry

Hanauer (2001) specifically set out to investigate the value of poetry reading in second language learning, using a 'focus on form' / 'task-based learning' hypothesis (Skehan 1998; Doughty and Williams 1998), i.e. that the classroom 'task' of poetry reading would raise linguistic as well as cultural awareness and so could promote learning in desirable ways. Where much language is experienced as meaning, with rapid loss to memory and attention of the precise forms, evidence of the kind reviewed in Chapters 3 and 4, shows that the surface linguistic forms of poetry are typically noticed more and

retained for longer. The study is of additional interest because it shows how quantitative information can usefully be gathered and analysed to support and extend more qualitative findings.

Protocols were derived from ten self-selected pairs (dyads) of female Hebrew learners of English in their twenties in a teacher training college in Israel. Methodologically, it is proposed that this dialogic method is less exhausting and distracting and likely to result in more 'natural' protocols than traditional sole think aloud exercises (as in Kintgen, though de Beaugrande used more of an interview technique). The students were not literature specialists, but classified as 'advanced' readers of English as a foreign language. They were asked and prompted to verbalise aloud in English (see discussion of protocol methodology in Part 3). Together, they read Leonard Cohen's poem 'Suzanne'. The careful methodological development of a coding system is described including the establishment of inter-rater reliability. A typical progression through nine categories of response emerged from this careful work, bearing much comparison with the native speaker operations identified by Kintgen and de Beaugrande (though again, neither of these previous studies is explicitly cited: one aspiration of this book is to support workers in these areas becoming more obviously aware of each others' work).

Hanauer (2001): Responses of second language poetry readers

NOTICING
QUESTIONING
INTERPRETIVE HYPOTHESIS
RESTATEMENT OF INTERPRETIVE HYPOTHESIS
COUNTER-STATEMENT OF INTERPRETIVE HYPOTHESIS
ELABORATIVE STATEMENT OF INTERPRETIVE HYPOTHESIS
WORLD KNOWLEDGE
INTEGRATING KNOWLEDGE
GENERAL STATEMENT

NOTICING Participants direct each other's attention to specific lines, words or phrases; repetitions and/ or differences are noticed, or unusual grammatical usage ('look here it says "you've touched her perfect body" but here it says "he touched your perfect body" see').

QUESTIONING Asking questions relating to the specific meaning of a sentence, line, clause or word in the poem, or larger 'content of the poem' questions ('Is there another meaning of "mirror"? 'What is "Salvation Army"?)

INTERPRETIVE HYPOTHESIS An understanding is proposed, sometimes in response to a Question (previous heading), often involving inferencing beyond

the information given, but in any case typically dealing with a section or aspect of the poem.

RESTATEMENT OF INTERPRETIVE HYPOTHESIS Confirmation of a previously stated hypothesis, but usually paraphrased rather than in the same words.

COUNTER-STATEMENT OF INTERPRETIVE HYPOTHESIS A challenge or negation of a previously stated hypothesis.

ELABORATIVE STATEMENT OF INTERPRETIVE HYPOTHESIS A new idea or new information added, or strength of an original statement modified.

WORLD KNOWLEDGE Long-term world knowledge is brought in to help develop an interpretation, triggered by the text but not in the text (e.g. here a wider discussion of 'Jesus').

INTEGRATING KNOWLEDGE Two previously stated utterances are connected and a new and more comprehensive interpretation is produced.

GENERAL STATEMENT A personal comment prompted by the poem or discussion of the poem, but not directly relevant to its interpretation (e.g. a participant began to discuss aspects of her relationship with her boyfriend with her poetry reading partner).

Like Kintgen, Hanauer stresses variation in response, but again, as we constantly find in literature reading, there are also striking common areas of response in what is noticed and discussed and how much attention is given. Noticing and Interpretive Hypothesis were the most common categories used (nearly 60 per cent of utterances). Once again (compare discussion of de Beaugrande), what was noticed were words and phrases rather than poetic features or graphic form (61 per cent vs. 7 per cent). Further analysis of the temporal relations of categories leads Hanauer to posit a typical progression in poetry reading in a second language (for his dataset).

Hanauer (2001): stages of poetry reading in a second language situation

1. Collecting data.
2. Constructing a local interpretation
3. Developing a local interpretation
4. Redirecting an interpretation
5. Constructing global interpretations.