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The Retranslation and Mediated Translation of Audiovisual Content in Multilingual Spain: Reasons and Market Trends

Abstract

Retranslations are the second, third, fourth or nth-translations of the same text produced at a later stage. In the case of audiovisual content, retranslations occur under certain circumstances. Focusing on Spain as a multilingual country, where regional languages demand new translations, frequently conceived as mediated translations, this article concentrates on the definition of retranslation and the differences between retranslation and mediated translation, and also lists the major reasons why retranslations, be them redubbings or resubtitlings, are commissioned and carried about. Economic, historical, linguistic and political issues triggering retranslations will also be dealt with, and some translational conclusions will be drawn, as well as some new avenues of research grounded on retranslations.

1. Introduction

Retranslation is a concept that started developing within Translation Studies (TS) in the last decades of the twentieth century. Still an under-researched topic (Zanotti 2015: 110), most authors have used this term to describe a second or many subsequent translations of a Source Text (ST) into the same Target Language (TL) (see Zaro 2007: 21-34). From a diachronic perspective, retranslation might be perceived as being in binary opposition to the term 'translation' itself: the latter is described as the first translation of a given text into a given TL; conversely, the former is to be seen as the second, third, fourth or nth-translation of the same text produced at a later stage. This concept underlies an inherently diachronic feature, since two translations of the same text into a given TL (e.g. in the case of concurrent circumstances) cannot be considered as retranslations but as (first) simultaneous translations.

Retranslation has almost exclusively been developed and investigated within literary translation (Paloposki and Koskinen, 2004). Consequently, it is very rare to find studies devoted to other types of translated texts, most likely because the retranslation of such text types is uncommon. For instance, legal or scientific translated text might be retranslated only when major

mistakes have been detected, be they language- or content-related, thus making the TT unfit for its professional purpose. When dealing with literary texts, however, many factors may contribute to their retranslation. Interestingly, when dealing with video-game translation, many use the term retranslation to indicate “the continual changes [of the translation] made by developers up until the very last weeks before release day” (Bernal-Merino 2014: 176). Other authors use it meaning subsequent localizations of a same game, usually made by fans (Lepre 2015), while some others use it as a synonym of *indirect or mediated translation* (Toury 1995: 129-146). I will discuss the intersection of these concepts in the sections that follow, as well as whether they can be applied to translations into contact languages in Spain.

2. An overview of the retranslation of audiovisual content

As far as audiovisual translation is concerned, retranslation can be defined as the second or subsequent translation(s) of the ST into the same target language. Here, I am referring exclusively to interlinguistic translation, thus excluding for the purposes of this article intralingual translations, intersemiotic translations (such as audiodescriptions) and adaptations of a pre-existing text (be it literary or not) into an audiovisual product, i.e. media adaptations, franchises and remakes, which are examples of media localization too (Chaume, forthcoming) that can also be retranslated in the sense of readapted.

Retranslated audiovisual products are mostly limited to films, since all other genres are hardly ever retranslated. For instance, documentaries are translated once and then aired several times over many years, with few exceptions, such as *Cosmos: A Personal Voyage* (Carl Sagan, 1980), which was redubbed in Latin American Spanish because the original dubbing was lost due to the effects of the earthquake in Mexico in 1985. Only a significant technological change that hinders the broadcasting of an old dubbed or subtitled documentary (as I will show shortly) or major mistakes in the translated text detected by the client (or hypothetically, by the audience) can also justify retranslating such texts. This latter scenario is quite infrequent and may be caused, for instance, by the fact that the translation has been assigned to a translator or company with little experience in the dubbing or subtitling industry.

Dubbing documentaries, cartoons or TV series is often perceived as an artistic endeavour and contributes (or amounts to) perceiving the final product

as a work of art. Consequently, the client and the audience may prefer watching a TT that has been completed when the original programme was released, rather than something that sounds ‘more modern’. For example, *Las Hurdes* (*Terre Sans Pain*, Luis Buñuel, 1932) is a myth-based documentary that seeks to detect symbolic references based on Surrealism (Benet 1999: 150). It has been broadcast many times using the existing dubbed track, which was made shortly after the documentary came out. Both its translated script (full of archaic language) and dubbing, featuring specific voice inflections and pitch – that nowadays may sound farfetched –, have become integral parts of the documentary, contributing to giving the dubbed TT a specific identity and personality that has allowed it to achieve ‘work of art’ status. Similarly, cartoons or TV series such as *Top Cat* (Joseph Barbera & William Hanna, 1961-1962) or *The Road Runner Show* (Gerry Chiniquy, Friz Freleng, Chuck Jones, Rudy Larriva, Robert McKimson, Hawley Pratt, 1966-1973) continue to be broadcast by different VoD platforms, digital channels or via cable TV using the original dubbed version that was created almost fifty years ago. Both their translations and dubbed tracks (which are already an indivisible whole anyway) are an integral part of these cartoons, to the extent that they could hardly be accepted in any other dubbed version or translation, as will also probably happen in ten-years’ time for the translation and dubbing of *The Simpsons* (James L. Brooks, Matt Groening & Sam Simon, 1989-) into several languages.

Generally speaking, films are also bound to be perceived this way. In so-called dubbing countries, TV broadcasters and film clubs usually broadcast dubbed (and nowadays also subtitled) versions of films that were created when the film was first released. This may be due to the fact that the dubbed and subtitled tracks are an integral part of the translated film, or because the audience likes the original dubbing (as happens with cartoons and TV series) reminiscent of a given time period, or even because quality translations as they used to be done in the past stand the test of time (Hernández Guerrero 2002: 83). However, mere economic reasons are also to be considered. Film clubs and broadcasting companies already have the translated version of a given film they can use over and over at no extra cost. That said, there are film genres that do indeed call for retranslation, as I will explain in the next section.

3. Indirect or mediated translation as retranslation

Before considering the reasons that may lead to the retranslation of an audiovisual text, it is important to tackle the phenomenon of indirect, or

mediated, translation. Within AVT, this concept often overlaps with the idea of retranslation, not only in terms of professional conditions but also in terms of the professional practice as such. In Spain, regional broadcasters now broadcast their own content in Catalan, Galician and Basque, the other languages of Spain, since they are official languages in the territories where they are spoken. Consequently, a considerable number of classic and modern films have had to be translated into those languages. Many of these films, either dubbed or subtitled in Spanish have been converted into DVDs and marketed in this format, or they may be found on the Internet, on streaming services, in film clubs in their city, etc. Therefore, translators easily make use of them as intermediary texts when translating to those co-official languages. Broadcasting companies buy the broadcasting rights of each film along with the original script and, very often, its Spanish translation. The translator who is commissioned to translate the new film into one of the regional languages (usually) needs to verify whether the film has already been dubbed or subtitled into Spanish and distributed as a DVD or in VoD platforms (this will also have some implications on the translation of the title, which should be as similar as possible to the Spanish version). The process of the translation, in these cases, almost equals to the process of a retranslation, whereas the product is not a retranslation, but an indirect translation carried out as a retranslation.

Toury (1995) remarks that using the first translation as a source text for the new TT should not be considered as illegal or negligent conduct. Yet Toury also explains that, if using the original TT is the result of the new translator's lack of knowledge of the source language or their general incompetence, this should be considered as malpractice. In all other cases, which are the majority, Toury affirms that such conduct is regulated according to established norms, which relate to factors that influence the target language and culture as well as the conceptualization of translation in general.

In my opinion, not all the cases that Toury considers reproachable can be completely dismissed: in many cases, for marketing reasons, the commissioner is forced to resort to 'indirect' or 'mediated translation' due to the lack of available professional translators working with that pair of languages. For instance, many Japanese cartoons (also known as *anime*) have a Japanese script and are translated into Spanish or other peninsular languages from their English version, which has previously been translated from Japanese (Ferrer Simó 2016). In many European subtitling companies, translating from templates with English subtitles is the order of the day when dealing with films spoken in Asian languages such as Hindi, which is used for most AVT content created in Mumbai, or spoken in African languages, such as Arabic (whose

pivot language is normally French), or even in Eastern European languages, which are little known in Western Europe. The dearth of translators translating from Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Turkish, etc., forces commissioners to rely on the TT in English, which is the pivot language. This practice cannot be sanctioned if it is accepted in the target culture as normal AVT practice. It also depends on the relationship between the target and source culture and on the fact that these foreign cultures and languages are still perceived as extremely exotic. Other factors may be the position of the source culture with respect to the target culture, the broadcasting intent (i.e. addressing children and teenagers, rather than adults), the status of the audiovisual genre (i.e. if it does or does not aim to achieve the status of a work of art). In other words, there are a series of preliminary norms (Toury 1995) that will help us define those more general norms within the target culture that contribute to shaping the decision-making process regarding whether or not to allow the use of indirect translation. This can also explain for which genres 'indirect' or 'mediated' translation is allowed or even preferred, for which genres it is mostly used, which pivot languages they normally translate into and which original languages are normally not translated. It can also contribute to understanding whether it has been clearly stated that the TT is the result of indirect translation or not, what the actual source language is, etc.

In the specific context of regional languages in Spain, it seems important to consider the implications that may be brought about by the increasing usage of indirect translation. Indirect or mediated translation is a very popular option in AVT into Catalan, Galician and Basque for reasons often connected to poor working conditions, e.g. time pressure, demands for quick turnaround, low fees, etc. The translator may also lack experience or sufficient knowledge of the source language, thus not even checking the ST dialogues. In such cases:

the indirect translation becomes a sort of retranslation, or overlaps with this concept, if there is a reason for having a film retranslated (e.g. a new policy on language planning, since all the speakers of regional Iberian languages also understand Spanish perfectly) and the new translation does not start from scratch but proceeds from a previous translation (García de Toro 2003; my translation)

with which the latter shares the same geographical, political, sociolinguistic bases, and derives from the same language family (Ibid.). Catalan and Galician are Romance languages that share similar grammar structure and lexis compared to Spanish. These factors allow the translator to use the same

translation solutions used in the Spanish version, resorting merely to literal translation.

Therefore, translations into Spanish co-official languages are not retranslations as such, but indirect translations that are carried about in the form of retranslations. In this sense, the process of translation into Spanish co-official languages may indeed be defined as a type of indirect translation, but it can also be seen as something in between mediated translation and retranslation because it shares with the latter more than just diachronic similarities:

- it employs the first translated version as a reference text (but not always as its main source, as happens in indirect translation) to create a new TT, sometimes copying the former's translation solutions.
- however, the mere fact that the translator refers to, uses or even translates from the original ST to create his or her own version is something that does not happen in indirect translation. In other words, the solutions that are taken from the first Spanish TT are transformed and integrated with solutions inspired by the original source text.

Indirect or mediated translation has its own driving reasons (e.g. the source text originates from an extremely exotic culture for the target culture; the first translation has been done into a language whose culture can boast international literary prestige; etc.). Yet the reasons leading to indirect translation from Spanish into one of these co-official languages appear to be more similar to the reasons that normally lead to retranslation rather than indirect translation.

Being a more contemporary type of translation, AVT can help to better define the concepts of retranslation and mediated translation or add nuances along a continuum that places these two practices at its end, although they are actually totally separate. AVT scholars should be more ambitious and include in their research those practices that, because they are peripheral and marginal, or somehow far from our research focus, may seem difficult to tackle or access. The case of videogame translation mentioned above is a fitting example as its practitioners sometimes use the terms 'rettranslation' and 'mediated translation' interchangeably or refer to different practices with the same term.

A discipline must be able to describe and explain all those phenomena that occur in its field of enquiry. Translation Studies is by now a research field in its own right and its scholars should strive to cover all those modes of language and culture transfer that take place within human communication via translation, from one source language into another or more. Devising different theories to explain each and every translation mode, or neglecting some of

them, is a step backward rather than forward in the attempt to advance in our research field. General translation theories should become flexible enough to explain other processes of culture and language transfer. For instance, peripheral practices such as indirect and mediated translation may help subvert some tenets that have been taken for granted in our field, thus also expanding the horizon in TS and forcing us to open up towards research areas that have been unexplored so far. AVT has allowed us to question, once again, the already extremely relative concept of equivalence (Chaume 2018); it has also contributed to overcoming binary oppositions between source and target text by exposing indirect and mediated translation as an existing practice in this industry.

4. Reasons for Audiovisual Retranslation

Thus far, I have only hinted at some of the reasons that may lead to the retranslation of audiovisual products. Listing and analysing the driving reasons for this practice can help us to understand why audiovisual content is retranslated and why audiovisual retranslation can often be placed in between retranslation proper and indirect retranslation. The following discussion is hardly exhaustive; however, I would like to mention the eight most frequent reasons why a film may be retranslated, long after the completion of its first translation. I will concentrate on Spain as a case in point and on feature films only, for the reasons explained earlier on.

a) Broadcasting format

Audiovisual products may be broadcast on the big screen, on TV or via online streaming, and may also be distributed via DVD or Blu-Ray. When a film is to be broadcast via different formats, sometimes it needs retranslation. In other words, changes in format sometimes require a new translation. *Jaws* (Steven Spielberg, 1975) has two dubs into Castilian Spanish, one for the cinema and the other one for DVD distribution. This happens because each format requires the retranslation of the original text and each broadcaster is an independent company that may use different technologies that may be incompatible with the one used in the first version. It may also happen that a company does not want to pay for the translation rights owned by another company (see below). Interestingly, in some countries these rights are only paid when the film is dubbed and not subtitled since adaptors can claim rights, but subtitlers cannot. Also, it may happen that the broadcasting company has to

pay for the broadcasting rights of a dubbed film because the written translation of the script cannot be found (and sold separately) or may have been modified during the dubbing process. The company may then commission another translator for a new translation because the first translation is already protected by copyright. However, the new translator can check the previous translation and create a new version based on it, as I explained earlier. VoD platforms have opened up new opportunities for translators, who may be asked to retranslate all the classics, as well as new productions for both dubbing and subtitling.

b) Translation mode

I use the term ‘translation mode’ to refer to the different types of AVT practice available worldwide. Changing mode entails retranslation due to copyright issues. It may also happen that the company commissioning a new mode is different, or the client has decided to distance him/herself from a previous translation. These and many other reasons make retranslation the easiest and fastest option. The subtitled version of a film can be commissioned to a new translator that may often use the dubbed version for reference and vice versa. In dubbing countries, more often than not, the subtitles are created after the dubbed version has been released. In these countries, a subtitled version may also be commissioned in the first place if the film is considered to be an art film and needs to cater to a specific audience; then the dubbed version may come afterwards. In all these cases, though the translation is different, changing mode can be considered to be a kind of retranslation, where one translation is usually based on the other one.

c) Obsolescence

Diachronic reasons rarely justify retranslation (they are instead more common in literary translation), but they do exist. A text that was translated into Spanish more than fifty years ago may be considered obsolete in terms of voice dramatization, if not for its translation (Zanotti 2015, points out several examples in Italian). In Latin American Spanish, *The Exorcist* (William Friedkin, 1973) has up to three different dubbings, the first one in Sissa-Oruga Studios, in the seventies, the second one in Macías TV Studios, in 1998, and the third one in 2000, in Auditel Studios, which is the extended version. The company that owns the broadcasting rights of a film may want to make the dubbing track sound more up-to-date and thus asks for a new translation that will be used to redub the movie with more modern voices and using a more modern dubbing style, which aims to sound less farfetched than the ‘old-fashioned’ dubbing. This is rarely done because all-time classics are also directly associated with

their dubbing, and the audience hopes (or takes for granted) that the actor in a film set in the 1940s will be dubbed using a speaking style that matches that time period.

Films may also suffer from material ageing. Many films have been broadcast several times over many decades and may present sound problems that cannot be fixed. This forces companies to retranslate and redub them. Therefore, Zanotti (2015) claims that according to the degree of obsolescence and censorship with respect to the first translation, in the case of dubbing, redubs may be grouped into three broad categories: a) redubbing as revoicing, when just a new performance is carried about without changing the translation (due to material aging, for example), b) redubbing as revision, when the translation is revised at the levels of stylistic nuances, mistranslations and inaccuracies and c) redubbing as retranslation, when a new translation is commissioned because the old one is dated or was censored, or because new footage has been added as a result of restoring previously cut scenes.

Spanish regional languages may sometimes require (re)translations, especially in those cases where the very first movies were dubbed by inexperienced dubbing actors. In some other cases, retranslation is required for the first films dubbed into the regional languages. Thirty or forty years ago, those translators, dialogue writers, dubbing actors, dubbing directors and engineers lacked sufficient experience to create quality local versions.

d) Language varieties

One of the reasons for the failure of old multilingual productions (Izard 1992; Chaume 2012, i.e. versions of the same film that were shot in many languages and performed by different actors and by several directors in Hollywood and later in Joinville) was that the viewers in the country where the film was shot did not like the way Hollywood actors performed in their language. For instance, when a multilingual version was shot in Spanish, many of the (amateur) actors were cast in Latin America and obviously said their lines in Latin American varieties of Spanish. These language varieties annoyed European Spanish viewers, who wanted actors who could perform in peninsular Spanish. In the 1930s, Spanish dubbing started to develop, not only in Spanish but also in the other Iberian languages. The latter practice was, however, terminated in the 1940s, when dictator Francisco Franco banned to dub foreign films into Basque, Catalan and Galician and also to broadcast them in their original versions: Franco made it compulsory to dub all foreign films into Spanish (Whittaker and Wright 2017). A few years later, some attempts were made to try to reconcile the many diatopic varieties of Spanish with the

so-called ‘español neutro’ (Petrella 1997), a prefabricated language variant that sought to merge the significant features of the most prominent varieties of Spanish. Its most appreciable applications can be found in the dubbing of many classic Disney movies. Nonetheless, like multilingual films, neutral Spanish is now called into question, leading to the retranslation of films into different Spanish varieties. Disney for example has done four different Spanish versions of *Cars* (John Lasseter, 2006): one in *español neutro*, another one in Mexican Spanish, another in Argentinian Spanish – *rioplatense* – and another one in European Spanish – Castilian Spanish –. Each dubbed version has been distributed in the country where that language variety is spoken. Consequently, the subtitled or dubbed version of a North American film that is broadcast in Argentina is not created by the same translator who did the Spanish subtitling of the dubbed version broadcast in Spain. These translations do not overlap, though they can be easily found on the web and consumed all over the world.

e) Language Planning

Sometimes, the retranslation into two or more geographical varieties of the same language is not the result of existing differences, but due to the viewers’ preferences and due to language planning. In Spain, one very clear example is worth mentioning here: the same film, cartoon, documentary or TV series are translated (i.e. dubbed or subtitled) in two different language varieties in Catalonia and in the Valencian Community. In Catalonia, they are translated into so-called ‘Eastern Catalan’ (Central Catalan) whereas in the Valencian Community they are translated into ‘Western Catalan’, popularly (and legally) called ‘Valencian’. Both communities share deep historical, geographical, economic and social ground; however, viewers are used to hearing one or the other variety. Historically, the Catalan TV station started broadcasting in 1983 and its programmes could be received perfectly by any device in the Valencian region; hence, everyone in that region got used to hearing the dubbed versions in Eastern Catalan. However, a new Valencian TV station was established six years later in 1989 and only some years after came the prohibition for the Catalan TV station to broadcast in Valencia. Since then the Valencian political parties in power have prohibited the broadcasting of any translation (be it dubbed or subtitled) in Eastern Catalan in Valencian TV (and vice versa, which is even more puzzling, since Catalan political parties have no doubt about the fact that Valencian varieties of Catalan belong to the Catalan language). As for Valencian, the reasons are merely political. The parties in power based their electoral programme on the difference between Valencian and Catalan to underscore that these two communities and cultures are different. The attempt

to encourage linguistic unification in this area (which, for many, may hide other processes) as well as the constant reminder that each region has its own specific features have resulted in the need to translate twice each and every source text into the same language (i.e. Catalan, be it Eastern or Western), due to language censorship. The situation is taken to the extreme when the Valencian translators receive a text that has already been translated into Central Catalan. The only thing the translator has to do is make a few morphological and lexical changes to adapt the prototypical Catalan text to the variety used in the Valencian region, thus making everyone happy. *Nintama Rantarō* (Tsutomu Shibayama, 1993-) has been dubbed into the three main varieties of Catalan: Central Catalan for TV3, Valencian (Western Catalan) for RTVV and Balearic for IB3.

Similar examples can be found elsewhere, although they differ in terms of political attitude and present their own specific features. For instance, in France any film dubbed in Quebec is also redubbed and post-synchronised to fit the French variety spoken in France, yet the same does not happen in reverse.

e) Economic reasons

Whether or not a client is willing to pay for a translation is a key factor in deciding whether to retranslate a text using the original source text or its first translation. Buying the copyright for the translation of a movie is unlikely to cost more than redubbing it (a process that can exceed €10,000 for a full-length movie). However, sometimes it is technically difficult to buy the translation of a film because it has become an integral part of the target audiovisual production. This price goes far beyond the fees a translator receives to translate a full-length production. Consequently, opting for a retranslation becomes a much easier and cost-effective solution, as was the case of *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial* (Steven Spielberg, 1982), which was retranslated and readapted by Jesús Javier Callejo Canale for SDI Media Mexico in 2002, when the extended version was released (some scenes shot for but not included in the original version were introduced, such as E.T. taking a bath).

f) Author's copyright

Along with the reasons listed so far, a series of legal issues must also be borne in mind. When a translator translates for dubbing, s/he is granted author's copyright (which instead does not still happen in subtitling in some countries). Consequently, acquiring this type of translation implies acquiring its author's rights too. From a legal point of view, it is again much simpler to commission a new translation rather than embark on a lengthy process that requires looking

for the translation, acquiring broadcasting and author's copyright and finally being able to use the film. In the case of *Cinderella* (Walt Disney, 1950) actress Evangelina Elizondo sued Disney demanding a huge amount of dollars in royalties, and the company decided to redub the film into two new versions: The Mexican one in *español neutro* for Latin America and the Castilian Spanish one for Europe.

g) Missing records

It is sometimes difficult to find the original translation and use it for retranslation. This may happen not only due to the translator's negligence but for other reasons, too. Many films have disappeared from official records, or even from the Internet. Sometimes, these films appear in official archives, but it is impossible to retrieve information regarding their distribution in the target country. Others have been recorded as distributed across the country but have been discontinued. Others simply cannot be found in DVD format or on the web. Finally, a translator may not have the time to carry out a lengthy search and finds it easier just to retranslate the film.

Scarface (Brian de Palma, 1983) was dubbed into Spanish in the eighties, but in the track where the dubbed voices were recorded, the engineer also recorded the music and effects of the film. It has been impossible to find the soundtrack, so the film has been redubbed to offer more sound quality (the guns' effects, the music and ambient sound). For that reason, the distributor commissioned the new dubbing to a company in the Basque Country.

All these reasons play a key role in professional practice. It is therefore worth considering the consequences of AV retranslation from a professional and translational standpoint.

5. Professional and translational consequences

From a merely economic point of view, retranslation means *creating more work for the AVT industry*. For instance, the Valencian AVT industry is happy to produce another version for each film, TV series, cartoon or documentary, which have usually been translated in Eastern Catalan too. If this procedure were to stop, the Valencian AVT industry would collapse; however, this would be an advantage for the Catalan AVT industry, which could sell its dubbed films to the Valencian Community. The same happens if we consider the many varieties of Spanish (dialects) across the country and across the world. An increased volume of AVT work implies *an increase in translation work*. Translators

are therefore extremely happy about retranslation, not only because it offers more work, but also because it can be done by relying on an already existing TT. In general, retranslation creates more work opportunities and more chances to have professionals that work in a more dynamic industry.

From a linguistic point of view, retranslation can revive dated TTs, make a film more appealing by using more modern language that meets the current audience's expectations, thus making it as contemporary as the old TT when it was first created. It should however be borne in mind that many people may regard updating the verbal text of an old film as a sort of betrayal in terms of equivalence (see Paolinelli 2004: 177-178, who advocates against the quality of some Italian low-cost redubs). In other words, the register of the TT usually reflects the one used in the ST and changing the former may be felt to be inadequate. For instance, a Hollywood crime drama from the 1940s is hardly ever retranslated using 21st century register; production companies prefer remaking old films. The original translation is based on the lexis and jargon of that decade, and has become a 'sacred' and equivalent version of the ST. Such lexis and jargon can no longer be found even in 21st century American English.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, language fragmentation favours retranslation, as the Catalan, Spanish and French cases reported above demonstrate. Retranslations can enhance language variety. This may ultimately depend on the political parties' decisions to rule against language unity, but this has to be considered case by case.

As far as translation is concerned, it is obvious that more similarities are going to be detected if a retranslation has been based on the previous TT than if a translator has had no access to it. As for subtitled versions that have been created after dubbing, and the other way round, the same considerations hold. That said, what is lacking at the moment is a vast descriptive study that can pinpoint the operational norms at the microtextual level. In other words, we need a comparative analysis of the first TT and its retranslation that can detect patterns that show when the translator relied on the previous TT and when s/he did not. In the former case, it may be intriguing to find out whether the retranslation is merely a palimpsest hiding its previous version(s).

From a translational standpoint, investigating retranslation can certainly foster descriptive translation studies. Besides the ever-important analysis of the preliminary norms informing retranslation as a professional practice, new avenues of inquiry have been opening up for researchers. They may include exploring operational norms at the microtextual level, which may question translational rules from a diachronic perspective and within the same culture (e.g. what quality standards can be found in each specific time period and why

translators translated that way? Among other factors, did linguistic or religious censorship influence translation at that time? etc.). Furthermore, research could try to establish whether retranslated texts are merely palimpsests (e.g. what has been retained and what has not from the previous TT and why?), how retranslations or previous TTs are used, how culture-specific references and intertexts are dealt with or used, and so on.

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