Theoretical, Methodological and Terminological Issues Regarding Indirect Translation: An Overview

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The practice of indirect translation, here understood as a translation of a translation (see Gambier 1994, 413; 2003, 57), has a longstanding history (e.g. *Bible*, *I Ching*, Shakespeare translation or the activity of the so-called Toledo School), widespread use in various areas of today's society (audiovisual, computer-assisted and literary translation, localization) and, arguably, a promising future (e.g. due to globalization and the increasingly high number of working languages in international organizations, which entails editing documents via the *linguae francae*). Despite all this, indirect translation was traditionally attracting only marginal attention from translation scholars and only in recent years has it become a more popular concept in translation studies research. This growing popularity is evident from the noticeable surge in the number of

scientific publications (see Pięta in this special issue) and academic events (e.g. those held in Barcelona, Germersheim and Lisbon in 2013), as well as the founding in 2016 of an international network of researchers working on indirect translation (IndirecTrans, http://ulices.org/projectos-investigacao/indirectrans-2.html). These recent developments have made a significant contribution to the state of the art of translation research, e.g., by challenging the conventional binarism in the study of translation or yielding insights into the historiography of intercultural relationships and the complex role of intermediary centres in the cross-cultural transfer between peripheries. However, they have also shown that a great deal of research still remains to be done. In particular, it has become apparent that research on indirect translation is still very fragmented and as a consequence this concept is still largely undertheorized, and its position within Translation Studies is still marginal. Regarding indirect translation, research does not keep pace with the rapidly evolving practice.

In an effort to overcome this fragmentation, to launch this area of research from a scientific basis and accelerate the production of (a common core of) knowledge, this special issue aims to shed light on the state of the art of the research on indirect translation, expand/challenge our current understanding of this practice and reflect on future research avenues. As regards the questions to be asked, this issue focuses on the conceptual, terminological and methodological issues encountered by research on indirect translation.

1   Claims, assumptions and motivations

Before addressing the main terminological, theoretical and methodological issues, it may be useful to start by identifying main claims, assumptions and motivations regarding indirect translation. It is said to be a common practice. Given an apparently still predominant demand for closeness to the source text, indirect translation tends to be

negatively evaluated because it is said to increase the distance to the ultimate source text and, as a consequence, it also tends to be hidden or camouflaged due to this predominantly negative evaluation. If translation tends to be considered bad, because derivative, indirect translation is claimed to be worse. It is said to be more frequent in the reception of (geographically, culturally and linguistically) distant literary systems (but see, e.g., Maia 2010, for examples countering this trend) and it tends to decrease as relations between distant systems become closer. Indirect translation is also claimed to be followed by direct translation, whenever retranslation occurs (but ample proof against this also abounds). Historically, indirect translation appears to decrease especially as adequacy or source-orientedness prevails; however, it tends to increase, when acceptability or target-orientedness prevails (Boulogne 2009, Ringmar 2007, Toury 2012). Due to globalization, indirect translation apparently tends to increase, given that within an international network of power relations, intercultural text transfer tends to be mediated by dominant systems. As a consequence, indirect translation tends to be made from a peripheral language into another peripheral language via a central or hypercentral language within the world system or the regional system of translation (Heilbron 2010).

As for its motivations, it tends to occur apparently due to a lack of translators or lack of linguistic competence, or due to difficulty in obtaining the original text or in translating from a very different language. Issues regarding the higher price of translating from a very different language, as well as power relations between languages, cultures, and agents within the world translation system are also mentioned as possible causes for indirect translation (for more reasons, see, e.g., Washbourne 2013).

2   Terminological issues

If we choose to tread an onomasiological path, indirect translation, defined as translation of a translation (cf. Gambier 1994, 413), has developed a metalanguage that is often described as "messy" (Pym 2011, 80). Many publications in the field regret this terminological instability (and often perceive it as a typical symptom of undertheorized research areas), but the overwhelming majority do not justify their terminological choices. Metalinguistic surveys are even less common (but see Ringmar 2007, 2-3, Pięta 2012, 13, Schultze 2014) and so are explicit attempts to promote a certain degree of terminological standardization (but see Pym 2011, 80).

Taking a different viewpoint, and informed by a conviction that terminological and semantic diversity does not necessarily mean metalinguistic confusion, this section aims to contribute to putting some order into the metalanguage of indirect translation research and increasing the awareness of terminological and semantic differences. For this purpose, it will systematize some of the most salient terminological and semantic discrepancies, pinpoint noticeable terminological and semantic patterns and consider some of the causes and effects of metalinguistic instability, and perhaps even make recommendations as to those needing urgent solution related to the concept of indirect translation. The underlying rationale is that indirect translation research - and Translation Studies in general – should strive for a discourse that (a) is unambiguous and harmonized (but not completely uniform); (b) optimizes (rather than unnecessarily multiplies) the already rich repertoire of terms and their meanings; (c) cultivates "an awareness of differences in usage and where terms are clearly defined within the language and the school of thought for which they apply" (Snell-Hornby 2007, 322). This section focuses on the metalanguage used by translation scholars rather than practitioners (for the simple reason that there is not enough data available on the latter,

but see, e.g., Brodie 2013) and in English (mainly because in most of the remaining languages indirect translation terminology appears to be largely underdeveloped).[1]

2.1　Terminological discrepancies

When acknowledging the metalinguistic diversity, studies tend to refer to discrepancies between terms denoting the indirect translation *process* and/or its *end text*. Since an exhaustive listing would be impossible here, **Erro! A origem da referência não foi encontrada.** Table 1 presents only a selection of terms.

Term	Example of a source	Designation of:
compilative translation	Popovič (1976)	process and end text
double translation	Edström (1991, 11)	process and end text
eclectic translation	Ringmar (2007, 3, after Stackelberg 1987)	process and end text
end target text	Ringmar (2012, 141)	end text
final translation	Xu (1998, 11)	end text
indirect translation	Špirk (2014, 137)	process and end text
intermediate translation	Toury (1988, 139)	process and end text
mediated translation	Linder (2014, 58)	process and end text
pivot translation	Vermeulen (2012)	process
receptor text	Edström (1991, 4)	end text
relay (translation)	Dollerup (2000, 19)	process
relayed translation	Dollerup (2014, 20)	end text
retranslation (re-translation)	Bauer (1999, 20)	process
second-hand translation	Popovič (1976, 19)	process
secondary, tertiary etc. translation	Ringmar (2015, 169)	end text
T2	Washbourne (2013, 607)	end text
target text	Špirk (2014, 137)	end text
ultimate target text	Pięta (2012, 313)	end text

Table 1. **Selected terms for the process and/or the end text (in alphabetic order; bold used for terms appearing in more than one table).**

However, the discrepancies are also evident in terms used for the language of the ultimate target text, as well as for other intervening texts and their corresponding

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[1] This suggestion is based on a metalinguistic survey of non-English publications listed in Pięta (in this issue) and is in line with comments made by researchers consulted for the purpose of this study, although a more systematic research is clearly needed to check this. German seems to be an exception, perhaps due to the long-standing project "Göttingen Sonderforschungsbereich: Die literarische Übersetzung — 1985–1997," which systematically researched early-modern translations via French into German.

languages. Illustrative snapshots of this divergent terminology are offered in **Erro! A origem da referência não foi encontrada.**, 3 and 4.

Term	Source
language C	Landers (2001, 130)
target language	Toury (1988, 139)
third language	St. André (2009, 230)
ultimate target language	Pięta (2012, 313)

Table 2. **Selected terms for the end text's language (in alphabetic order; bold used for terms appearing in more than one table).**

Term	Source
first-hand translation	Toury (1995, 129)
indirect translation	Washbourne (2013, 608)
intermediate translation (text/version)	Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997, 76)
intermediary translation (text/version)	Dollerup (2000, 19)
mediating text (translation/version)	Pięta (2012, 313)
original (text)	Dollerup (2000, 18)
original source text	Edström (1991, 4)
pivot (translation)	Grigaravičiūte and Gottlieb (1999, 46)
primary source (text/translation/version)	Kittel (1991)
relay translation	Washbourne (2013)
source text	Landers (2001)
target text	Toury (1995)
ultimate original	Toury (1995, 129)
ultimate source text	Pięta (2012, 313)

Table 3. **Selected terms for the intervening text (in alphabetic order; bold used for terms appearing in more than one table).**

Term	Source
clearing house (language)	St. André (2010, 86)
gateway language	Chengzhou (2001, 197)
intermediary language	Dollerup (2014, 30)
language A, B	Landers (2001, 130)
mediating language	Pięta (2012, 313)
mediator language	Edström (1991, 3, after Nida 1959)
middle language	Hyung-jin (2008, 77)
original source language	Landers (2001, 130)
pivot language	Grigaravičiūte and Gottlieb (1999, 46)
relay language	Hyung-jin (2008, 77)
second, **third language**, etc.	Hyung-jin (2008, 77)
source language	Chengzhou (2001, 197)
target language	Dollerup (2000, 18)
transmitter language	Edström (1991, 4)
ultimate source language	Toury (2012, 82)

Table 4. Selected **terms for the intervening languages (in alphabetic order; bold used for terms that appear in more than one table).**

As shown in Tables 1 to 4, different terms are often used with the same or analogous meaning. In turn, a comparison of all four tables also makes it clear that the same terms are often used with different meanings as well. Such a terminological and conceptual instability, evidenced by such cases of synonymy and polysemy, is also verifiable in Translation Studies in general (Van Vaerenbergh 2007), so it seems unrealistic to expect indirect translation research to be an exception. However, in line with the rationale laid down in section 2 we propose that, when analysing the chain of texts and languages in the process considered here, it may be more beneficial to use the following designations: **the ultimate source text/language** > **mediating text/language** > **ultimate target text/language**. It should be stressed that these terms do not imply that further action or research may not change their status.

Additionally, when referring to the process and/or its ultimate target text, it may also be more beneficial to use 'indirect translation', as it offers the following advantages:

- unlike , e.g., 'pivot' or 'relay' translation, which describe the action of the translator producing the mediating text, it describes the much more significant (Pym 2011, 80) action of the translator working from the mediating text

- unlike, e.g., 'relay' or 'retranslation', it has a straightforward antonym (direct translation)

- it appears to be a convenient umbrella term to encompass various hyponyms (e.g., 'compilative', 'second-hand translation', see section 3.1)

Additional issues must also be acknowledged regarding terminological preferences such as the possibility that some terminological choices may also have been, to a certain degree, influenced by the researchers' national/linguistic and school/branch affiliations. E.g., the choice of 'indirect translation' may have been modelled on

'tradução indirecta', the corresponding term in Portuguese, which has been the main source or target language in our research. Additionally, since our research has been strongly anchored in descriptive approaches to translation, it is must also be acknowledged that that the labelling 'indirect translation' and 'ultimate source language' is related to the impact of the use of such terms by Gideon Toury, one of the founding fathers of Descriptive Translation Studies (Toury 1995).

2.2   Terminological patterns

A survey of appellations and definitions featured in publications focused on indirect translation (listed in Appendix 1 in Pięta in this issue) made it possible to discern the following patterns with regard to publications in English:

- 'indirect translation' has gained ground against other competing designations for both the process and the ultimate target text;[2] interestingly, this tendency runs counter to the preferences indicated in the majority of dictionaries, handbooks and encyclopaedias of translation and Translation Studies written in English[3]

- when referring to the process and the ultimate target text, native speakers of Iberian languages (Penas Ibáñez 2015, Zubillaga Gomez 2015) tend to opt for indirect translation (a calque from, e.g., the Catalan *traducció indirecta*). The same can be said about native speakers of English (Brodie 2012, Landers 2001)

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[2] This apparent predominance is not recent (it was first identified in 2006 in Ringmar (2007, 3) and then reiterated in 2011 in Pięta (2012, 313)) and is also confirmed by the counting of hits obtained in November 2016 from *Bibliography of Translation and Interpreting* (BITRA) (Franco 2001) and *Translation Studies Bibliography* (TSB) (Gambier and Van Doorslaer 2004) (all fields were queried on terms from Table 1; inverted commas were used to assure that the returned hits correspond to exact expressions).

[3] From the ten works consulted only three foreground 'indirect translation' in dedicated entries (Chan 2004, Classe 2000, Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997). A dedicated entry in Baker and Saldanha (2009) favours 'relay', whereas Gambier and Van Doorslaer (2013) prefers 'relay translation', and Popovič uses (1976) 'second-hand translation'. Kittel et al. (2004-2011) does not provide a single entry but, as estimated in Schultze (2014), altogether favours 'intermediate translation'. The index in Malmkjær and Windle (2011) includes only 'pivot translation.' The remaining works identified here do not include this concept in their list of entries and indexes (Baker and Malmkjaer 1998, Delisle, Lee-Jahnke, and Cormier 1999).

- when referring to the process, publications featuring Chinese and Japanese languages as the ultimate source or target language tend to opt for 'relay (translation)' (Xu 1998, Chengzhou 2001, St. André 2010)

- 'mediated translation' (after, e.g., the Portuguese *tradução mediada*) is predominantly used (with reference to the process and the ultimate target text) in publications that feature Iberian languages as the ultimate source or target language (Coll-Vinent 1998, Linder 2014)

- when referring to the process, publications dealing with both oral and written translation tend to favour 'relay translation' (modelled on 'relay interpreting') (Dollerup 2000, St. André 2009)

- publications on audiovisual translation (Grigaravičiūte and Gottlieb 1999, Vermeulen 2012) and machine translation (Paul and Sumita 2011) tend to favour 'pivot translation'

- the use of 'retranslation (re-translation)' in the sense of (the subordinate or a hyponym of) indirect translation appears to have been most frequent in publications dealing with Chinese as the ultimate source or target language (Bauer 1999, Idema 2003, Heijns 2003, St. André 2003, Jianzhong 2003); but this use is extremely rare now

- initially the term 'second-hand translation' tended to be considered as a synonym of indirect translation (Popovič 1976, 19, Kittel and Frank 1991, 3); nowadays 'second-hand translation' is more often used as a hyponym of indirect translation, co-hyponyms being third, fourth-hand translation, etc. (Špirk 2014, 132-133).

Of course, since the surveyed list of publications is not exhaustive, further research is needed to test these patterns and perhaps identify more.

2.3   Reasons and consequences

From the above discussion the following explanations for terminological instability in indirect translation research can be discerned:

- what is under scrutiny is not a simple phenomenon given once and for all but rather one that is complex and constantly evolving (thus being bound to generate different terms and meanings);
- national/linguistic traditions and school/branch affiliations appear to induce specific terminological preferences;
- definitions are seldom straightforward; and
- terminology is sometimes employed uncritically and inconsistently

This metalinguistic instability hinders efficient communication between experts from the same and neighbouring fields, between teachers and students and also between scholars and practitioners. As such, it may also have contributed to the still rather weak visibility of indirect translation research in the translation studies community, in translator training and the translation industry.[4]

2.4   Future research avenues with regard to terminology

This survey shows that there are important metalinguistic questions that still require systematic studies. For example,

(a) how has indirect translation been labelled and defined:

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[4] For more reasons behind this weak visibility see, e.g., Dollrup (2014) or Pięta and Bueno Maia (2015).

- in different domains of the translation industry (audiovisual, literary, scientific, technical translation, etc.) and in neighbouring research fields (book history, textual and genetic criticism, etc.); have there been any changes over time; how can indirect translation research benefit from these terms and definitions?

- by scholars and practitioners using languages other than English; have there been any changes over time?

(b) are terminological patterns identified in publications focusing on indirect translation also verifiable in translation studies with different foci?

It is hoped that future research following this special issue may bring further answers.

3   Conceptual issues

If we take a gnosiological path, 'indirect translation' is sometimes used in translation studies with meanings that are far removed from the one considered here: a translation of a translation. For instance, Gutt (1989) uses this label to denote a translation that does not aim at interpretative resemblance to the source text (Pym 2011, 80). Indirect translation is also used to designate a group of strategies described in Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) and applied when the structural/conceptual elements of the source language cannot be translated without altering meaning or upsetting the grammatical/stylistic elements of the target language (e.g., Newmark 1991, 9). Presently, however, a far more recurrent designation to describe this notion is 'oblique translation' (Vinay and Darbelnet 1995, 31). Finally, the appellation is sometimes used to describe work into the translator's non-native languages. This happens mostly in English publications by Spanish-native speakers (e.g., Mira Rueda 2015) although it is much more commonly designated as 'inverse' or 'L2' translation (e.g., Pym 2011, 84).

However, even when indirect translation (or other terms listed in Table 1**Erro! A origem da referência não foi encontrada.**) is used with the meaning analogous to the one proposed here one cannot help but notice significant discrepancies.

3.1 Defining Indirect Translation

Probably the most often quoted definition is offered by Kittel and Frank (1991, 3), indirect translation "[is] based on a source (or sources) which is itself a translation into a language other than the language of the original, or the target language". Gambier (1994 and 2003) defines it, in a nutshell, as a translation of a translation whereas Toury (2012, 82) states it involves "translating from languages other than the ultimate SLs [source languages]". In a more recent formulation, Pym (2011, 80) states that indirect translation amounts to

> the historical process of translation from an intermediary version. For example, Poe was translated into French by Baudelaire, then from French into Spanish by a number of poets. The Spanish versions would then be called 'indirect translations', and the first translation, into French, could then logically be called a 'direct translation'.

The definition by Kittel and Frank and by Pym stress that, even if we take indirect translation at its simplest in terms of number of languages, it tends to involve (a) one source text, in one source language (respectively the Ultimate Source Text and the Ultimate Source Language, see section 2.1.) and one source culture; then (b) a first translated text in a second language (a Mediating Text and a Mediating Language, see section 2.1) and within a second national culture; and then (c) a second translated text in

a third language (the Ultimate Target Text and the Ultimate Target Language, see section 2.1), located within a third national culture. To a certain extent, the constellation of both concepts and terms used in the study of indirect translation suggest actual communicative situations may be rather more complex, than this. Reality tends to involve one or more texts in the ultimate source language, one or more texts in a mediating language, one or more texts in several mediating languages, and sometimes mediating texts in the ultimate target language too. However, some of the above-cited definitions explicitly exclude this possibility. Additionally, both Gambier (1994 and 2003) and Toury (2012) do not make this definition depend upon the use of three different languages, thereby making it possible to consider, e.g., only two languages in defining this phenomenon, but several mediating agents, texts and processes.

We suggest more transparent designations for the various subtypes of indirect translation phenomena could be: (a) Direct vs. Indirect translation (using the Ultimate Source Text(s) vs. using Mediating Source Texts); (a) Compilative Indirect Translation (using more than one Mediating Texts); (a) Mixed Indirect Translation (using both the Ultimate Source Text and Mediating text(s)); (c) Hidden or Open Indirect translation (whether camouflaged as such or openly and explicitly presented as an indirect translation).

In order to describe, understand and explain the phenomenon of indirect translation it appears useful to distinguish **several types of indirectness**, depending on

    (a) the number and type of mediating texts involved in the process (one or more)

    (b) the number of intervening languages (one or more) and their choice - involving the use of only one mediating language, vs. the use of more than one mediating language and/or the ultimate source language, one or more mediating language(s), and the ultimate target language;

(c) the degree **of indirectness** (second-hand, third-hand…);

(d) the **presentation of indirectness** (either hidden or open);

(e) the **status of indirectness** (which for research purposes can be either proven or only presumed).

Regarding the type of intervening texts, research might benefit from distinguishing them according to: (a) their language (Ultimate Source Text vs. Mediating Text vs. Ultimate Target Text); (b) their importance or role in the translation process (primary vs. secondary); (c) the frequency of their use during the translation process (permanent vs. occasional use); and also their **intended receiver** (public texts, i.e., for wider readership vs. private texts, designed for use by the translator only).

As for the **intervening languages**, research may move forward with a clear identification both of the role played by languages within the translation process, and also of their statuses within a world or regional system of translation as suggested by Casanova (2004) or by Heilbron (1999, 2010). Accordingly, one might firstly distinguish between the Ultimate Source Language, Mediating Languages, and the Ultimate Target Language; and, secondly analyze them in terms of such categories as dominated/(semi-)peripheral languages(s) vs. dominant/(hyper)central language(s). Most importantly, such an identification might allow for the development of not only descriptive studies of indirect translation but also for descriptive-explanatory or, in the long run, even predictive ones.

Definitions differ in terms of the number of languages involved. Hence, they may be grouped as follows: (a) those whereby the number of languages is not imposed (e.g. Gambier 1994, 413); (b) those whereby indirect translation involves (**at least) three** languages, thus making it impossible to consider, e.g., back-translation (L1>L2>L1), interlingual translation of intralingual modernization (L1>L1>L2) or retranslation

(L1>L2>L2) as indirect translation (Edström 1991, 2, Bauer 1999, Landers 2001, St. André 2009); and (c) those whereby indirect translation involves **at least two** languages, thus making it possible to consider the abovementioned practices as indirect translation (Toury 1988, 139, 2012, 82).

Definitions also differ in terms of the relationship between the Mediating Language, Ultimate Source Language and Ultimate Target Language. Some definitions (a) impose no restrictions as to this relationship (Gambier 1994, 413); (b) other stress that the **Mediating Language differs from both the Ultimate Source Language and the Ultimate Target Language**, thus making it impossible to consider retranslation or interlingual translation of intralingual modernization as indirect translation, but making it possible to consider back-translation as indirect translation (Kittel and Frank 1991, 3); (c) others still point that **the Mediating Language differs from the Ultimate Source Language**, thus making it impossible to consider interlingual translation of intralingual modernization as indirect translation, but making it possible to consider back-translation and retranslation as indirect translation (Toury 2012, 82); (d) whereas other definitions stress that **the Mediating Language differs from the Ultimate Target Language**, thus making it impossible to consider retranslation as indirect translation, but making it possible to consider back-translation and interlingual translation of intralingual modernization as indirect translation (Toury 1988, 139).

Another important variable is the profile of the intended receiver of the Mediating Text. According to this criterion, the existing definitions can be grouped into those whereby (a) no restrictions are imposed (Gambier 1994, 413), (b) the Mediating Text is intended only for the **translator working from the Mediating Text** (Dollerup 2000, 19); or (c) the Mediating Text is intended for a **wider audience, e.g., published** (Dollerup 2000, 19).

By now it should be clear that the definition suggested here represents a particularly flexible inclusive approach, as it does not impose restrictions regarding any of the abovementioned variables. As such, when compared to definitions that are restrictive in their coverage, this approach seems more likely to reflect and keep up with the complex and fast-evolving practice of indirect translation. It thus seems a more convenient entry point for the launching of this still undertheorized field of research from a scientific basis. An additional advantage is that the definition of indirect translation as a translation of a translation is clear and concise (thus avoiding ambiguous interpretations) and builds on an existing proposal (thereby helping to optimize current definitions and control their excessive proliferation). However, it is also recognized that such a radically open approach may lead to the questioning of indirect translation as an autonomous concept given that such a degree of flexibility may raise the problem as to where exactly indirect translation ends and, e.g., retranslation begins.

3.2   Towards a classification

In this introduction, we accordingly suggest a classification system, based on three variables:

(a) the number of intervening texts;

(b) the number of intervening languages; and

(3) the choice of intervening languages.

The combination of these criteria allows for the identification of ten categories, which may be identified by jointly using the labels: direct, indirect, compilative or mixed translation, as shown in Table 5.

Texts	Languages	Languages and Texts	Classification of Process and Ultimate Target Text
1 Ultimate Source Text	1 language	1 Ultimate Source Language Text	1. Direct Translation
		1 Mediating Language Text	2. Indirect Translation (Mediating Language-mediated)
		1 Ultimate Target Language Text	3. Indirect Translation (Ultimate Target Language-mediated)? Or Retranslation?
n Intervening texts = **Compilative**	1 language / n texts	n Ultimate Source Language Texts	4. Compilative Direct Translation
		n Mediating Language Texts	5. Compilative Indirect Translation (Mediating Language-mediated)
		n Ultimate Target Language Texts	6. Compilative Indirect Translation (Ultimate Target language-mediated)
	n languages / n texts = **Mixed**	Ultimate Source Language + Mediating Language Texts	7. Compilative Mixed Direct and Indirect Translation (Mediating Language-mediated)
		Ultimate Source Language + Ultimate Target Language Texts	8. Compilative Mixed Direct and Indirect (Ultimate Target language-mediated)
		Mediating Language + Ultimate Target Language Texts	9. Compilative Mixed Indirect (Mediating Language + Ultimate Target Language-mediated)
		Ultimate Source Language + Mediating Language + Ultimate Target Language Texts	10. Compilative Mixed Direct and Indirect (Mediating Language + Ultimate Target Language-mediated)

Table 5: Tentative classification of indirect translation

Additionally, when subcategorizing indirectness, the following variables appear potentially relevant:

 (a) the **subcategory of indirectness** (exposed and hidden indirect translations [and checking (exposed) direct translations]);

(b) the **degree of indirectness of the translation process** (second-hand, third-hand translation, etc.);

(c) the **degree of indirectness of the proofreading process and editing process**;

(d) the **mediating language(s)** (the number of languages/cultures involved and their statuses);

(e) the **text-type** (literary [fiction, poetry, drama] or non-literary [LSP…]; the genre [novel, sonnet]; the mode [written, oral]; the medium [internet, smartphone, TV, printed media, manuscript, volume, periodical], etc.) and also

 (f) the **participants** (author, translator, publisher, editor, proofreader, intended reader and their profiles [commissioning procedure, initiative by publisher vs. translator; status in source culture vs. mediating cultures]);

(g) the **setting** (time and place of publication);

(h) the **intercultural relations** (the existence of non-existence of diplomatic relations between countries, ideological and political affinities between regimes [and censorship], translator training programmes, language teaching programmes, international book fairs, international prizes, etc.);

(i) the **degree of tolerance towards indirectness (a** greater tolerance [correlate to a higher number of exposed/open indirect translation] or a lower tolerance [correlate to a higher number of direct translations, exposed/open direct translations, and/or hidden indirect translations].

3.3   Open conceptual issues

Open conceptual issues still remain for research to cover. Among the most relevant, it is possible to identify the following: is the number of languages to be taken as the main criterion for indirect translation? What issues are raised by intersemiotic translation? How are we to deal with intralingual translation (a translation for children into Portuguese based on a pre-existing Portuguese version for a different reader) are we to classify it as indirect translation or as retranslation? Is it possible to develop effective diagrams for representing indirectness, when several sources are possible and/or probable? How can we deal with the difficulty in accessing information (since covertness is frequent due to negative evaluation)? How are we to deal with presumed indirect translation, when no proof can be produced, no mediating text identified? Which are the main tendencies for indirect literary translation? How do variables

correlate? Are such tendencies different for non-literary translation? For different text types?

4   Methodological Issues

For the sake of addressing methodological issues, three preliminary observations should be made. Firstly, in what follows a distinction is made between studies specifically focused on the phenomenon of indirect translation and historical translation studies dealing with corpora that comprise target texts which, according to relevant data on the pre-history of their transfer operations, may be classified as indirect translations. In other words, there is a plethora of reception studies that deals with indirect translations but only a few works on indirect translation. These works tend to adopt narrow definitions of indirect translation and consider this practice to involve one or more mediating language texts (i.e., comprising solely the cases of Indirect Translation and Compilative Indirect Translation, see Table 5). Secondly, it should be stressed that indirect translation does not seem to require a methodology of its own *vis-à-vis* Translation History. It does, however, seem to call for the discussion of some important questions that are not posed, or at least not posed on the same terms, when dealing with direct transfers. Thirdly, it should be clarified that this section is primarily concerned with the historical study of indirect translation of literary texts. This is because the major part of research on indirect translation has had a historical slant, as the articles in this special issue show.

Some recent works on indirect translation deplore the scarcity of research on indirectness, justifying this apparent lack of interest mainly with the low prestige of the practice of indirect translating (Ringmar 2007, St-André 2010, Pięta 2014). In general, this appears to be a valid argument: indirect translation is considered, indeed, an undesirable practice according to translators' professional ethics in given fields of

communication. Nonetheless, there seems to be a more decisive reason behind the fact that research on indirect translation has not yet reached a desirable degree of sophistication. It should be borne in mind that the same paradox – a successful scientific discipline on a phenomenon with a low symbolical capital – was the basis of the constitution of Translation Studies as a whole, as Ferreira Duarte eloquently put it (cited by Maia 2015, 320).

However, these reasons apparently have more to do with methodological issues regarding the study of indirect translation. It is a very time-consuming and costly area of research, since it is text-oriented, calls for specific areas of expertise and, to make matters worse, is still far from providing a meaningful buckle of data that could allow to discern transnational patterns, historical multinational trends or, even, tendencies in supranational behavior. For these reasons, studies on indirectness still need to make a case for themselves.

Identifying indirect translations is a very time-consuming and costly research. It typically begins by hypothesizing on the indirectness of a target text whenever features perceived as indicators of an additional stage of mediation are observed (be it by a third language – according to some definitions –, an additional transfer process or the intervention of additional mediating agents). These features can be displayed both on the paratextual and the textual level.

The importance of paratexts in identifying translations has been argued for, e.g., in Lambert and van Gorp (1985). Pym (1998) presents a working definition of translation based on the description of paratexts: "[if] a paratext allows different discursive slots for an author and a translator, then the text may be said to be a translation (working definition)." (Pym 1998: 62) Regarding indirect translation, suspicions arise if, e.g., the researcher identifies discursive slots not only for the source-text author and the target-

text author, i.e., the translator, but for a third agent, the author of a mediating text (mostly by means of an explicit reference to a third language). This third entity can be overtly identified or declared in the paratext; this would be the case, e.g., of a Portuguese translation of a Polish text bearing the information "translated from English". However, the researcher will frequently be dealing with hidden indirect translations, which, by the way, might also be labelled pseudo-direct translations (indirect translations purporting to be direct translations). In this case, the traces of a third agent will be either presented as, for example, prefaces or introductions by a third-language expert on the Ultimate Source Text author or denounced by covert features as the transliteration of the author's name.

Some textual features may also lead us to hypothesize on the impact of a third language or a third literary repertoire on a particular target-text. Concerning the consequences of the mediation of a third language's code (Even-Zohar 1990: 50) or poetics (Lefevere 1985: 217) in fictional narrative, these are frequently traceable through the analysis of macro-textual shifts. Take, for example, 18th-century French translations adapted foreign novels to the generic model which was in line with the French taste. In these translations, known as *les belles infidèles*, some chapters were cut-off and new chapters were added so that the target-text would comprise all expected *topoi*, as adventurous episodes with customs and daggers and a happy married ending (van Gorp 1985, Boulogne 2009, Maia 2010). Due to the hegemonic status of French in the World Republic of Letters until the mid-20th century, these translations were frequently used as Mediating Texts in the making of different European target texts. Concerning the impact of a third language, it can usually be inferred from micro-textual features

symptomatic of negative interference, such as translation errors, syntactic structures, loan words,[5] proper names (in case of fictional writing), etc.

After these very laborious tasks, a researcher should have a more solid hypothesis of whether or not the target text in question is an indirect translation. However, the nature and degree of indirectness of a particular target text can only be determined by the identification of the mediating texts and, thus, mediating languages. Hence, in order to both confirm the indirectness of the target text and determine its degree of indirectness, much effort is still needed. For this purpose, some of the research tasks include: (a) research on the translator's biography, regarding information such as which foreign languages they master, which books belong to their personal library, where they live, whether they know the source-text author or other translators of the Ultimate Source Text (b) collecting data on the book market, such as which translations were the most well-known; which publishers were exporting to the city where the translation was produced, which booksellers were providing foreign-language texts and from which languages (c) identifying different *linguae francae* in a particular time and place, bearing in mind that within one country there may be different bridge-languages (e.g., regions near national borders, or literary and cultural associations dedicated to specific foreign contexts).

At this point, the researcher should have short-listed an array of possible source-texts and mediating languages. The next stage should be the comparison between the target text and the possible mediating texts. Ideally, this comparison should yield descriptive results similar to the ones pointed out by Boulogne in the following quote:

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[5] More on this in Toury (2012) and Hanes (forthcoming).

[a] macro-structural and micro-textual comparison of *De geobroeders Karamazov* (1913) with the early French translations of the same source-texts, has shown that this Dutch translation is a remarkable amalgam of two different French translations. About eighty-five percent of the pages are translated from *Les frères Karamazov* (Dostoievksy, 1906), a translation by Wlademir Bienstok and Chales Touquet. The remaining fifteen percent are translated from *Les frères Karamazov* (Dostoievsky, 1888), a polemical translation by Ely Halpévi Kamisly (1858-1936). (Boulogne 2009: 266)

This apparently simple descriptive research task regarding the Ultimate Target Text involved considerable expertise and means that one cannot but stress. Firstly, such a research project depends on the researcher's knowledge of the language(s) of the Ultimate Source Text, potential Mediating Texts, and Ultimate Target Text, namely, Russian, French German, and Dutch; and considerable time and financial means to explore potential mediating texts, namely the preexisting French and German translations.

As previously argued, study on indirectness especially, yet not exclusively, in the case of literary translation, shares the methodology of Translation History. When listing the research questions to be addressed by historical translation studies, some authors distinguish between the external and internal history of translation. External history regards "who translated what, how, where, when, for whom and with what effect?" (Pym 1998, 5). Internal history deals with the analysis of the aesthetical and ideological makeup of the target texts. To sum up, it is possible to distinguish external and internal history of translation in these terms: the former is "the kind of history to be construed

from context" and the latter is "the kind of history to be construed form text" (Koster 2002, 24).

As a matter a fact, a considerable number of relevant data on the phenomenon of indirectness has been uncovered by target-oriented projects in the history of literary exchanges between peripheral languages with "what" questions not explicitly concerned with indirectness. To name but three examples: Boulogne (2009) started by asking "which Dostoyevsky's novels were translated into Dutch?"; Pięta (2016) asked "which Polish literary texts were translated into European Portuguese?"; Špirk (2014) asked "which Czech literary texts were translated in 20th-century Portugal?" As explicitly stated by Pięta (2014:17), researchers tend to interpret the "how" question as inquiring on the direct or indirect nature of the transfer of the studied literary products.

Even though, it is theoretically correct to affirm that the choice of source text pertains to the external, contextual, history of translation, it should be made explicit that, as far as methodology is concerned, identifying mediating texts and mediating languages comprises considerable work with texts. It is thus fair to claim that the study of indirect translation is probably the area, within Translation Studies, more closely linked with the traditional practices of close reading as literary criticism or the Spanish *filología* or the renewed area of genetic criticism.

Identifying indirect translation, mediating texts and mediating languages is very demanding in terms of textual analysis and, for that reason, extremely time consuming. This may prove to be one of the reasons preventing translation scholars from studying indirectness. In order to study indirectness as (a) a large-scale phenomenon; (b) a history and context bound-phenomenon; and (c) a practice governed by translation norms, we still need relevant historical data on 'what has been translated indirectly in a certain context.'

In every project of Translation History, the researcher should start by observing the backdrop and moving on to the particular case-study, moving from context to text, or from macro to micro (Assis Rosa 2013, 39-40). This is the reason why Pym (1998, 39) argues in favor of compiling lists as the first step in Translation History projects: "little history can be construed from the analysis of isolated translations. Worse, quite superficial history can result from hypotheses that are pumped up after summary testing on just one or two cases."

This is to say that to understand why indirect translation occurs, relevant data are needed on existing indirect and direct translations in different contexts. However, whereas lists of target texts (both direct and indirect) can and should be extracted from bibliographies and online catalogues, indirect translations cannot be listed only in that way. As Ringmar (2007, 7) clearly puts it: "The information in catalogues and bibliographies is mostly based on paratexts on title-pages and consequently as reliable as its sources, which means that it is not always to be trusted."

Because setting up a comprehensive cartography of the historical phenomenon of indirect translation is not a realistic project for a researcher or even one research team, our present knowledge concerning indirect translation is still fragmentary and dispersed, as it is mostly based on case-studies. For this reason, comprehensive and relevant questions as to "why indirect translation occurs" can only be tackled by means of hypotheses based on such case studies. Nonetheless, the above-mentioned examples suggest that multiple conclusions concerning different episodes of the history of indirect translation are scattered within various studies on Translation History.

Does this mean we should give up doing research in indirect translation? Most certainly not! Indirect translation has the ability of providing relevant data for timely questions and real-life concerns. One of the many questions addressed by indirect translation is

the need and consequences of adopting *linguae francae* by migrant communities in an increasingly globalized world. In the 2010 volume of the *Handbook of Translation Studies*, Lieven D'hulst meaningfully relocates the study of indirect translation within research in Translation History. In a list of eight research questions (*quis*, *quid*, *ubi*, *quibus auxiliis*, *cur, quomodo*, *quando*, *cuo bono*), indirect translation is mentioned under the more general research question "ubi"/"where?" (D'hulst 2010, 4). This seems to point out that the study of indirect translation may be productive in, on the one hand, shedding light upon microcosmopolitan gestures (Cronin 2006) to engage with culturally distant Others[6] – who sometimes can be our next-door neighbors in hybrid global capitals. On the other hand, it may be instrumental in denouncing malign consequences, of the colonizing power of global languages, as the homogenizing role of English translations (Venuti 1995).

5   On this special issue

This special issue developed from a conference on "Voice in Indirect Translation" held at the University of Lisbon (JET1 2013), as well as from a panel presented at the 2013 Congress of the European Society for Translation Studies. For a panoramic and balanced overview on this topic, each article in this special issue was intended to bring expertise in a different linguaculture, stressing main concepts, findings and methods, as well as highlighting difficulties encountered and benefits gained from conducting a particular line of research.

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[6] In his speculation on the possible motivations for publishing indirect translations in current times, Ringmar declares that some foreign works are rendered indirectly, because of an absolute lack of target-culture translators who are competent in a particular source-language. Ringmar also suggests that "the case of absolute lack is perhaps the least interesting as there is no real choice between indirect and direct translation (…)" (Ringmar 2007). We tend to disagree with Ringmar on this point. Even if there was no translator available to produce a direct translation, a choice was still made between (indirect) translation and non-translation. In our reading of the phenomenon of indirect translation, the above-mentioned case of an "absolute lack" of translators, signals a cosmopolitan openness to distant cultures with which a particular target culture feels a rather urgent need to communicate.

Lacarta's article provides very useful guidelines for researchers dealing with indirect translation. The author begins by listing bibliographic sources relevant to the study of indirect translations and explaining their pros and cons. She then guides the researcher, firstly, through the analysis of the paratext and, afterwards, through the textual comparison between the Ultimate Target Text and possible Mediating Texts. Finally, she provides convincing arguments in favour of a sociological approach to the study of indirectness. All in all, Marin Lacarta offers an overview of the research questions posed by recent works on indirect translation and indicates intriguing possibilities for future research, such as the importation of new research methods from neighbouring disciplines.

Alvstad presents a reflection on collaborative indirect translation, based on the case study of a contemporary Swedish series of eleven books translated indirectly into Swedish from Assamese, Bengali, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Tamil or Urdu. Against a backdrop of generalized negative evaluation of indirect translation which also influences decision makers and financing institutions, the paper analyses the arguments in favour of indirect translation put forth in the *Indiska biblioteket* (The Indian library) series.

Witt draws on extensive archival sources to present an overview of the main issues raised by the extensive practice of indirect translation by means of the use of interlinear intermediates in the Soviet Union. This practice was part of a large-scale translation project for the purpose of creating a Soviet literature. On the one hand, such practices thrived, as they were institutionalized since the early 1930s, both by means of special administrative treatment within the literary system and by educational efforts. On the other hand, they were argued and criticized, thus producing a very prolific corpus for research on indirect translation. More importantly, this case study on the use of the so-

called *podstrochniki* proves the advantages of considering a flexible definition of indirect translation, also covering cases where the mediating text is produced in the ultimate target language, for the only purpose of producing an ultimate target text.

Hadley suggests the consideration of a "concatenation effect hypothesis" according to which indirect translations are particularly prone to omit or replace cultural specificities belonging to the source language, culture and text. The author builds a case by resorting to the categories of the discursive identity spectrum proposed by Robyns and by testing this hypothesis by presenting selected information collected from published case studies on indirect translations from a broad range of different languages and cultures.

This volume also included an extensive (though selective) critical and annotated bibliography by Pięta, which contributes to present this special issue as a desirable stepping stone for further research on this phenomenon.

Before a concluding remark, a reference should be made to the need of process-oriented cognitive studies of indirect translating and translation didactics. Thanks to the growing number of exchange student programs it is more and more frequent classes of bilingual translation practice to include students from a third linguistic context (e.g., a Chinese student attending a course in English-Portuguese translation at the University of Lisbon). Kussmaul (1991) successfully demonstrated through think-aloud protocols how translating encompasses the different stages of creative processes. It seems that entering inside the black-box of an undergraduate translation students from China in their rendering of a Portuguese text into English, probably bridging the source text and the target text with Mandarin or another Chinese dialect, may produce relevant data that could afterwards be used in curriculum design.

As far as the historical study of indirectness is concerned, an urgent task appears to be to collect the multiple relevant conclusions and hypotheses spread in multiple case

studies published or in various countries or presented in different universities. To fulfil this task, it seems necessary to create an international research team willing to list and (critically) read works in Translation History, the corpora of which deal with indirect translations. The data to be thus gathered will hopefully allow for drawing a chronology of the analyzed historical episodes and mapping such episodes may enable us to identify explored and unexplored eras and contexts.

Indirect translation is collaborative in nature. So is the research on indirect translation. Work hard. Work together. This is its most valuable methodological recommendation.

Acknowledgments

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