Getting the most out of collaborative translation: an Italian-Australian case study

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Le nombre d'étudiants qui se lancent dans des projets de traduction théâtrale collaborative ne cesse de croître, qu'ils soient orientés vers le processus (MARINETTI & ROSE, 2013) ou vers le produit final (comme chez PEGHINELLI, 2012). De plus en plus de traducteurs de théâtre collaborent avec l'auteur, des acteurs et/ou des metteurs en scène afin de produire une pièce « jouable » ou d'analyser le processus de traduction. Mon article illustre une approche différente et plus expérimentale de la traduction collaborative pour le théâtre. En m'inspirant des théories de Kershaw et Nelson *sur Practice as Research* (KERSHAW & NICHOLSON, 2011; NELSON, 2013), je me suis engagée dans un projet collaboratif où la salle de répétition était conçue comme un terrain d'expérimentation pour les théories traductives, et non pas seulement comme une occasion supplémentaire de réviser le texte-cible pour la mise en scène ou de réaliser une traduction collective, ou encore dans le cadre d'une étude ethnographique orientée vers le processus. Ce type de collaboration avec acteurs et metteurs en scène permet au traducteur-chercheur de tester les hypothèses théoriques formulées en matière de traduction théâtrale, tandis que les acteurs apportent une dimension pratique à cette recherche. Cette approche empirique a transformé la salle de répétition en une sorte de laboratoire, et dans la mesure où les acteurs n'avaient pas conscience de ce que le traducteur voulait mettre en lumière, le résultat ne risquait guère d'être biaisé.

The number of scholars who venture into collaborative projects in theatre translation is increasing, whether process-oriented(MARINETTI & ROSE, 2013) or product-oriented (as in the case of PEGHINELLI, 2012). More and more translators collaborate with the playwright,

with actors and/or directors to produce a 'performable' piece, or to analyse the process of translation. With this article I illustrate a different and more experimental approach to collaboration in theatre translation. Following Kershaw et al.'s and Nelson's theories on *Practice as Research* (KERSHAW, MILLER, WHALLEY, LEE, & POLLARD, 2011; NELSON, 2013), I engaged in a collaboration project where the rehearsal room served as testing ground for the translator's theories, and not just as site for a further round of revisions of the target text for the performance, or for a collective translation, or for an ethnographic process-oriented study. This kind of collaboration with actors and director allows the translator/researcher to test the hypothesis s/he formulates while approaching the translation of the play text from a theoretical point of view, whereas the actors provide the practical component of the research. This empirical approach turned the rehearsal room into a kind of laboratory; and since the actors were unaware of what the translator wants to elicit, the result was unlikely to be biased.

Collaboration in Theatre Translation: to each his own

The number of scholars who venture into collaborative projects in theatre translation is increasing, whether with a process-oriented(MARINETTI & ROSE, 2013) or a product-oriented approach(as in the case of PEGHINELLI, 2012). More and more translators collaborate with the playwright, with actors and/or directors to produce a 'performable' *piece*, or to analyse the process of translation from an ethnographic point of view. However, a kind of collaboration where professional actors are required to act as translators or linguistic advisors does not fully exploit their competence, which lies in the actual practice of their stage craft. In this article, I outline a different way to collaborate in theatre translation: one that fully utilizes the competence of each of the participants in the process. Such collaboration with other agents is to approach theatre translation from a multidisciplinary perspective, where everybody contributes according to their specific professional skills. And multidisciplinarity is possible only when researchers are willing «to give up the certainty of the 'solid' theories and methods of their own, familiar discipline»(VAN DIJK, 1995, 459), and to embrace theories and disciplines «which may appear antagonistic [or even irrelevant] to translation studies»(UPTON & HALE, 2000, 12). Such approaches could open the doors to new areas of research, collaborative projects, and even contribute to the creation of innovative methodologies.

This article, based on my ongoing doctoral project of the translation of two Australian plays by David Mence *Convincing Ground* (2013a)and *The Gully* (2013b), into Italian,[1]is divided into four sections. The first section is a brief theoretical introduction, where I illustrate my adaptation of Kershaw et al.'s model of Practice as Research to the practice of collaboration in theatre translation(KERSHAW, MILLER, WHALLEY, LEE, & POLLARD, 2011). In the second section, I outline the workshop which took place in Melbourne [2] with the collaboration of two casts of professional actors, and director Alison Richards. The role of the actors was to explore some selected scenes under the guidance of the director. This

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[1] I have chosen these plays by David Mence for my doctoral project because one represents a dark event in Australia's history, while the other depicts a post-apocalyptic Australian future. I thought they would be interesting pieces to present to an Italian audience. All the excerpts from the plays are from the original script provided by the author. All translations from and into Italian are mine.

[2] The workshop was possible thanks to funding received from the Monash Institute of Graduate Research, and the Monash Academy of Performing Arts.

empirical approach turned the rehearsal room into a kind of laboratory where I could test some of the hypotheses I formulated while approaching the translation of the plays into Italian. The results of the experiment are reported in the third section of this article, while in the fourth section I draw my conclusions.

Theatre Translation as «Practice as Research»

In the past decades academic research in the arts in general, and in theatre in particular has experienced a shift towards what is now defined as Practice as Research (henceforth PaR).[3] In Australia, practice-led research is the most commonly used term. However, Robin Nelson prefers the term PaR, as, according to him, it underlines the key role of the practical component; «knowing-doing is inherent in the practice and practice is at the heart of the enquiry and evidences it […]» (NELSON, 2013, 10). Since the practical component is a central part of my research, and is aimed at providing evidence for the theoretical exegesis of my translation, Nelson's terminology seems more suitable to my project.

The literature on theatre translation is thriving with interesting case studies, including collaborative translation projects such as the ones mentioned above.[4] If my research followed that pattern, the chances of adding something to the already rich literature on the topic would be very slim. Nelson made an observation on the literature on PaR that could be easily applied to the literature on theatre translation. He claims that:

> [t]he literature is dominated by the presentation of case studies which do not always bring out clearly what constitutes research (as subtly distinct from professional practice). Furthermore, case studies do not typically aim to illuminate a generic methodology distinguishing the approach of practitioner-researchers nor offer an exemplary pedagogy to support the development of new practitioner-researchers (NELSON, 2013, 4-5).

By recrafting the key principles of PaR for the translator-researcher (henceforth, TR), the rehearsal room serves as testing ground for the translator's hypotheses, and not just as a site for a further round of revisions of the target text for performance, or for a collective translation. This opens up new ways for the TR to combine translation theory and theatre practice. Even better, it allows the TR to find ways to test translation theories *through* theatre practice in a kind of laboratory.

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[3] For a brief overview of the history of PaR, refer to Nelson (2013).

[4] For a detailed review of the literature on theatre translation, refer to Serón Ordóñez, (2013, 2014).

Kershaw et al. identify five features of theatre and performance which constitute the «not-without-which aspects of PaR» (KERSHAW et al., 2011, 65). These are: «Starting Points, Aesthetics, Locations, Transmission and Key Issues»(KERSHAW et al., 2011, 64). Their model was conceived specifically for theatre practice. In order for it to be applicable to the practice of theatre translation, I adapted it as follows:

Starting points: The research question(s) the TR wishes to address; or the aspect(s) of the performance of a translated text the TR wishes to analyse;

Selection: The excerpt(s) of the play(s) selected to address the related question;

Location: Where the experiment takes place, and who has access to it;

Method: The procedure to follow;

Outcome:

Expected;

Actual. The key issues emerging from the exploration are dealt with in this section.

According to Kershaw et al., starting points can be created in two different ways. The researcher/practitioner can either state a research question, which the proposed project wishes to address; or researchers can «encounter *hunches* (or more conventionally *intuitions*) that spur them to root around for a starting source» (KERSHAW et al., 2011, 65, original italics). Whether research questions emerge while approaching the translation of the text from a theoretical point of view, or as «hunches», it is important for the PaR to address a very specific issue. To put it in Nelson's words, in PaR «the articulation of a research inquiry needs to be as clear as possible»(NELSON, 2013, 10). In the model proposed, the research inquiry is the *starting point,* and the *method* needs to be tailored specifically to address the proposed research question. The TR, however, needs to enter the rehearsal room with an open mind, well aware that all his/her assumptions could be challenged 'on the floor.' This research method aims to meet what Nelson identifies as a requirement of research in the arts, i.e. «to demonstrate a rigour equivalent to that of the sciences» (NELSON, 2013, 39). VanGelder and Beatens claim that «the research methods of the hard sciences are closer to those of research in the arts than the methods and models of the humanities» (VAN GELDER & BAETENS, 2009, 105). The proposed model hopes to address this need for scientific rigor in the art of theatre translation.

The workshop: nature and method of investigation

The aim of the workshop was to test the effects of translation on two main aspects of performance: gesture[5] and rhythm. The notion of rhythm, usually associated with tempo, requires some explanation. As a translator with a background in linguistics and with access only to a written text, I could merely consider tempo as «the number of syllables uttered in a time unit»[6] (BECCARIA, 2004, 750), and rhythm as «the movement or sense of movement communicated by the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables» (CUDDON & PRESTON, 1998, 753). In theatre, «tempo is most commonly associated with words such as "speed, "pace" and "rate"» (MORRIS, 2015, 148) and has been considered «linked with an *external* sense of time […]. Rhythm on the other hand is often associated with words such as "pattern", "individual", "action", "intensity", "stress" and "accent"» (MORRIS, 2015, 148, original emphasis), and is considered internal. With my investigation I wanted to see if the translator could anticipate the theatrical tempo-rhythm by studying and trying to reproduce the linguistic rhythm on the page (tempo is obviously outside the translator's control).The aspects of rhythm that the translator can control are the length of the utterance, and to a certain extent the stress pattern (the intrinsic rhythmical difference between the two languages, i.e. stress-timed *vs*. syllable-timed, is taken as a given).

The workshop was conceived as a kind of double-blind experiment, where two different groups of actors were cast, which I will refer to as Group A and Group B. Group A consists of professional Australian actors and drama students; Group B consists of second and third generation Italian-Australian actors who speak fluent Italian. Group A featured Niamh Siobhan Hassett, Robert Meldrum, Tom Middleditch, and Jillian Murray; while Group B featured Rosa Campagnaro, Josephine Eberhard, Salvatore Gulinello, and Joe Petruzzi. Neither group was aware of what the TR wanted to test; and had access to the other group's script.

Both groups had been provided with the full script of both plays, and a **selection**, *i.e.* a file with selected scenes from the plays. They were requested to be familiar with the selected scenes, but not to learn the script. Director Alison Richards was aware of what I wanted to test, and designed specific activities to carry out in the rehearsal room

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[5] The word gesture in theatre often refers to theatrical gesture. However, I refer to gesture as the object of study of the relatively new discipline of Gesture Studies. You can refer to Kendon(2000, 2004), McNeill (1985, 2000), McNeill and Duncan (2000), among others, or visithttp://www.gesturestudies.com/

[6] « numero di sillabe pronunciate per unità di tempo ».

in order to enable me to find my answers. Since the aim was to test how language influences certain aspects of the performance, if either group had had access either to the other group's script or performance (prior to theirs), their own exploration of the same excerpt could have been biased. The workshop ran for three days, each divided into two sections of 2.5 hours each, subdivided into two sub-sections with a break in between. On day one and two, session 1 featured one group of actors only, and session 2 both groups. The morning of day three was devoted to side-by-side explorations, where both casts workshopped the same selected scenes together. On the afternoon of day three there was a full reading of *The Gully*, and only the presence of Group B was required.

In the rehearsal room

PaR model for the experiments

Due to space constraints, in this paper I will only report on twoof the several experiments carried out during the three-day workshop. These experiments were conceived to test the impact of the other agents (actors and director), and of suprasegmental features to the shaping of the rhythm of a translated play in performance.[7]The PaR model is the same for both experiments:

Starting point: when the translator has done everything possible (from a linguistic point of view) to preserve the rhythm of the spoken dialogues, will the rhythm be preserved? And will the power balance between the characters enacted through dialogue? Are there other factors that the translator cannot foresee? If the same director for the same scenes directs two groups of actors, will there be differences between the two versions in the two different languages? Could those differences (if any) be attributed to the different languages, or to other factors? If so, which ones?

Selection:
  a. Experiment one:A scene in*Convincing Ground* when the indigenous woman, Renanghi, interrogates the whaler Bill Dutton about his life;
  b. Experiment two:A scene from*The Gully* where the two male characters Clark and Worm keep the female characters Lizbie Brown and Fontanelle gagged, and tied to a chair.

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[7] The outcome of the experiments on gesture will be presented at the seventh Conference of the International Society for Gesture Studies: Gesture – Creativity – Multimodality, which will take place at Nouvelle Sorbonne in Paris (France) on 18-22 July 2016.

Location: Drama Theatre, Monash University; Accessible to: both groups of actors (according to the criteria explained); the director; the supervisors; and the TR (the author was admitted into the rehearsal room only on day 3, in order not to alter the group dynamic throughout the explorations).

Method:

α. Group B reads the scene in the first session;

β. Group B explores the scene under the guidance of the director;

χ. Group B re-reads the scene after the exploration;

δ. Group A reads the scene in the second session;

ε. Group A explores the scene under the guidance of the director;

φ. Group A re-reads the scene after the exploration;

γ. Film and compare (for the TR);

Outcome:

a. Expected: Strong similarities in the length of utterance and, to a certain degree, in stress pattern;

b. Actual: See **Erreur ! Source du renvoi introuvable.**and **Erreur ! Source du renvoi introuvable.**.

Needless to say, in order to investigate the starting point (1), the TR needs to make sure that all the linguistic aspects of rhythm are maintained since, as Bentley argues, any «dramatist measures dialogue by split seconds. How long a person speaks can be as important as what he [sic] says»(BENTLEY, 1996, 80, in XU & CUI, 2011).

Group B opened the workshop and was the protagonist of the first section. The decision was made for two reasons: Firstly, for purely logistical reasons related to some members of Group A; secondly, because together with the director, we decided to alternate groups in the first section of days one and two, in order to give each group in turn the possibility to observe and reflect on the other group's exploration.

Experiment 1: exploration of the scene by both groups

Convincing Ground is a short play in one act, and is a dialogue between two historically accurate characters: Dutton, a white whaler, and Renanghi, an indigenous woman. In the selected passage, which occurs about halfway through the play, Renanghi interrogates Dutton about his current life, and his relationship with his wife.

The passage was chosen because I had noticed strong similarities in the tempo-rhythm of the English and the Italian version when the text

was read out loud.[8] I wanted to find out what happens to the rhythm of a translated text when it becomes more deeply investigated with a view to a performance, i.e. when taken to the stage.

The workshop began with a reading of the selected scene by Group B. After a first reading, Alison encouraged Joe and Rosa (in the role of Dutton and Renanghi respectively) to think of key words and passages to enable me to see how stresses would reflect the key points in the passage, and if there was any difference between the two versions. According to the director, an actual enactment of this scene was not necessary, since it is a passage where there is not much physical action. Joe noticed how the power balance keeps shifting in this dialogue. Both actors noticed how Dutton is losing power in the first part of the conversation, when Renanghi presses him with incessant questions. According to Rosa, the question *dove dormi?* («where do you sleep?») can be 'translated' as «Are you still with your wife?» After Joe/Dutton says *non lontano* («not far»), Rosa/Renanghi stresses the *non lontano*, as if to echo Dutton, and their conversation is built up on *non lontano*. When Renanghi asks *E la tuadonna?* («And what about your missus?»), they started wondering whether Renanghi is fishing, or she knows and just wants him to admit it. According to Rosa, Renanghi's *sì* («yes») in reply to Dutton's *adesso?* («now?») marks the point where Renanghi is losing power. It was interesting to see how Rosa's reading translated into an almost shouted *sì* («yes») and *vogliosaperlo* («I want to know»), a paralinguistic feature totally dependent on the actor's interpretation, and therefore outside the translator's control. When Joe came to the line *Passa la maggior parte del tempo a cercare di farmivedere le cose a modosuo* («A lot of her energy goes towards trying to get me to see things her way»), he slowed down the pace of enunciation, as according to him *a modo suo* («her way») is vital in that exchange (**her** way, as opposed to **ours**, Dutton and Renanghi's), and he chose to stress that with the speed of delivery.

In the second section of day one, Group A was encouraged to explore the text in the same way, but their approach was slightly different. Because Robert Meldrum and Jillian Murray are not only experienced actors, but have worked together on many occasions, they have developed their own routine when working on a script. During the second reading of the script, they would add their own comments or their own interpretation, *i.e.* what they imagined the characters would think while uttering a sentence, as the following table shows:

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[8] Convincing Ground, translated as Il Baleniere, had a public reading at La Mama Courthouse in Carlton on 23rd May 2015. The reading featured Joe Petruzzi and Josephine Eberhard, and was directed by Laurence Strangio. While the actors were reading their lines, the author and I were following the English script.

Lines in the original script	Lines added by the actors[9]
RENANGHI You're a coward. *Pause.*	Robert: Why am I a coward? What are you talking about?

RENANGHI   Where do you sleep?
        Pause
             Bill?
 DUTTON   What's it to you?
	Robert: Am I gonna tell you? Or am I gonna say fuck off? I'm not gonna tell you.
	 Jillian: Just give me a little bit then.

DUTTON Not far	Jillian: Ok, so let's think about that. Not far is not good enough. What does that mean?

Proceeding this way allowed the actors to identify what to them were key moments, or turning points within the passage. The exploration of the scene by both groups enabled me to see a variable that I had not taken into consideration prior to the workshop, that is, the role of the structural (*i.e.* grammatical) differences between the two languages, which can affect the overall rhythm. For example, while reading the sentence «It's even worse than when we lived here», Jillian stressed the personal pronoun subject «we». Robert's response to that was: «What's significant then though is that she has introduced our relationship, 'we'; I don't pick up on that, 'it's just a place to sit and rest, it doesn't have to be clean'». The Italian translation of that line is: *E' anche peggio di quando abitavamo qui*. This is probably one of the reasons why Rosa and Group B stressed the word *peggio* (worse).Italian is a pro-drop language, which means that the subject of the sentence can be omitted, since it can be inferred from the inflection of the verb (*abitavamo* – [we] lived). Because of this, in my translation I omitted the subject. In spoken Italian, the personal pronoun subject is omitted more often than not. If the subject is made explicit, the sentence usually takes on a different connotation. For example, if I had translated Renanghi's line as *E' anchepeggio di quandonoiabitavamo qui* / *E' anchepeggio di quando abitavamo qui noi* (including the personal pronoun subject *noi*), that would probably be perceived as «we» in opposition to someone else, maybe the interlocutor, Dutton. However, from the exchange it is clear that Dutton does not live and sleep there. It is true that also from the Italian version the audience would understand that the two characters have a past, which is introduced by Renanghi with the word *abitavamo*([we] lived). But it is also true that the Italian language does not allow for the possibility of stressing «we» without a clear opposition to another feasible subject, which would be further stressed with the Italian pronoun at the end. When Group B was exploring the scene, the issue

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[9] All the examples reported are taken from the footage of the workshop, which was entirely filmed.

of stressing different items in the sentence emerged. When asked to find the stress in Renanghi's line *Allora è una brava donna?* («So she's a good woman?»), Rosa first tried to stress *brava* (good), but Josephine correctly pointed out that with the Italian intonation system, that choice would be awkward; and Joe rightly affirmed that in order to stress *brava* in Italian, the sentence would have to be rearranged as follows: *Allora è una donna brava?* (lit. *so she's a woman good). This is, of course, a possible interpretation, but one that automatically excludes any other possible reading. A similar issue arose with Renanghi's question «Where's she at?». According to Robert, Renanghi could have said either «Where's **she** at?» (stress pattern xXx);or «Where's she **at**?» (xxX). My Italian version *Dov'è?* does not feature the personal pronoun subject for the reasons explained above. The two versions have not only a different stress pattern, but also a different subtext. While the change in stress pattern is relative (because both versions contain two unstressed syllables and one stressed syllable), the overall effect is different, and the Italian linguistic system does not allow for that difference to emerge; unless the translator chooses to translate the line as *Dov'è lei? / Lei dov'è?*, in which case it would be 'equivalent' to «Where's **she** at?». This translatorial choice would however deprive the Italian-speaking actor of the possibility of exploring different readings of the line.

Outcome

Despite the slightly different approaches by the two groups, the explorations confirmed what has long been speculated about, that is, that the decision by an actor (or director) to stress certain elements within a sentence or a passage depends on their own reading of the text, and that sometimes, different readings result in a different rhythm. This realm is obviously out of the translator's control. The new element that emerged from this exploration is the role played bythe grammatical structure of the language on the overall effect of a spoken line. The fact that Italian is a pro-drop language, for example, implies the impossibility of using the personal pronoun subject without putting it in opposition to some other subjects. That prevents the Italian-speaking actor from stressing that element without an implication that may have not been present within the English text. A further implication is that, if the translator chooses to include the personal pronoun subject in a sentence, it imposes a certain reading on the actors (the opposition between the subject mentioned, and other hypothetical subjects). Naturally, features such as tempo and tone of voice alter rhythm, and its effect on power dynamics, as experiment two shows (**Erreur ! Source du renvoi introuvable.**).

While experiment 1 shows the effect of the structural elements of the language on rhythm, through experiment 2 some of the cultural implications embedded within the language, and the related theatrical tradition, emerged.

Experiment 2: exploration of the scene by both groups

The scene is set at the beginning of act II. In act I of the post-apocalyptic play written by Mence (2013b), we learn that three men manage to eke out an existence because they have found a trickle of water in the desolation of the wastes. At the end of act I the young boy, Worm, enters the hut pushing the two women he had found by the trickle: Lizbie Brown and Fontanelle. Act II opens with a conversation between the two older men on how reckless it was of Worm to take the two women to the hut. After this brief exchange, Clarke engages in a dialogue with the two women. He wishes to exercise his power by dictating the pace of the conversation. In this scene, Fontanelle pretends to be mute, so the contribution of the actresses in this role in this specific scene was limited to the non-verbal aspects of the performance. The roles assigned to each actor for each group during the workshop are:

Character	Group A	Group B
CLARKE:	Robert Meldrum	Joe Petruzzi
WORM:	Tom Middleditch	Salvatore Gulinello
LIZBIE BROWN:	Jillian Murray	Josephine Eberhard
FONTANELLE:	Niamh Siobhan Hassett	Rosa Campagnaro

The first group to engage with this scene was Group B, in the first session of the first day. The director first asked the actors to read the scene 'cold', and then asked them to explore the scene 'on the floor'. Two chairs were positioned back to back, so that the actresses could enact being held hostage.

Joe Petruzzi in the role of Clarke used irony to underline his position of power. When ungagged, Josephine Eberhard in the role of Lizbie Brown started giving her version of the facts. At that point the director interrupted her, asking her to let the words flow, as if the gag had stopped them, thus encouraging her to speed up the tempo of the enunciation, to which Joe/Clarke would reply by trying to slow her down:

Source text	Target text
LIZBIE BROWN I told you, we are	LIZBIE BROWN Ve l'ho detto, siamo

missionaries from Land's End! Our convoy was attacked by crows! Please, we fled into the wastes and… She fell! She fell and – CLARKE Hang on! Hang on! What'd you say your name was?	missionarie di Fineterra! Il nostro convoglio è stato attaccato dai corvi![10] Siamo scappate nel deserto e... lei è caduta! E' caduta e - CLARKE Aspetta, aspetta… Come hai detto che ti chiami?

When exploring the same scene with Group A in the following session, the director gave the same set of instructions to the different group of actors. Initially Jillian Murray in the role of Lizbie Brown was pacing her lines at a different tempo, closer to Robert's/Clarke's, but when given the same directions Alison gave to Josephine, she increased the speed of utterance. Alison gave Jillian the same directions she had given Josephine in the previous session, in order to test the effects of the different language of the text, without the 'interference' of the actor's own reading. The overall result was that the two dialogues could practically overlap (in terms of tempo). However, this also shows that by controlling the speed of utterance, Jillian wanted to portray aLizbie Brown who was still somehow in control of the situation, and not overwhelmed by emotions, or by Clarke's power. That was a conscious decision on the part of the actress, as she did not want to play the stereotyped character of the woman held hostage.[11]However, what emerged from this experiment is that not only the language, but also its cultural, and specifically theatrical traditions can have an impact on the overall rhythm of a passage, regardless of the translator's choices.

Outcome

The Gully is a comedy where the influence of Pinter is evident, both in the atmosphere, and in the «ominous syntax» (MENCE, 2014). Robert Meldrum in the role of Clarke asserted his dominance through his body, his proxemics, his lascivious attitude, and his majestic voice. Joe Petruzzi in the same role and in the same selected scene was a lot more ironic. Both actors, in tune with the character, enjoyed their position of power, which is enacted also through the language, as Joe noticed. They both showed a touch of sadism, but while Robert Meldrum's acting was reminiscent of the protagonists of Pinter's dark comedies, Joe Petruzzi's was not. Is it possible that this is the case because in the Italian theatrical tradition, dark comedy in a Pinteresque sense does not exist? And while Joe Petruzzi is of course familiar with the genre, when acting in Italian he resorted to a whole

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[10] In order to maintain the same rhythm, I decided to omit «Please», which would not add anything to the Italian version.

[11] Personal communication, 17th February 2016.

different set of strategies to enact the situation. His Clarke was abusive and yet sardonic. How much of this outcome is to be ascribed to the actor's upbringing, to his personal acting style, or to a genre which is more prominent in one theatrical tradition rather than in the other, cannot be determined. This, however, is a realm over which the TR has no control. I was interested in seeing if/what other factors could influence theatrical rhythm in translation, and whether those were out of the translator's control. The result of this specific experiment is twofold. On the one hand, it empirically confirms what Bassnett (among others) theorized, that is, that body language, as much as acting style, are culture-bound (BASSNETT-MCGUIRE, 1981; BASSNETT, 1978, 1985, 1991, 1998). On the other hand, it also shows how a language carries within itself a whole set of implications. The case of Joe Petruzzi is emblematic. He was born in Australia, lived in Italy for some years, but studied acting in Sydney and New York, and has never performed in Italy, and very seldom in Italian.[12] While his theatrical upbringing is Anglophone, when workshopping *The Gully* in Italian he seemed closer to the model of the type of Italian comedy which has its roots in the work of Carlo Goldoni (VESCOVO, 2006), and is usually lighter in tone and lacks that gloomy vein we find in some British playwrights such as Pinter. Having direct access to the actors, I was able to ask them about their relationship with the work of Pinter, who was a great source of inspiration for David Mence[13]. Robert Melrdum is a great fan of Pinter and his work, while Joe Petruzzi has not worked on Pinter since acting school.[14] In fact, in Joe Petruzzi's acting we find that laid-back irony which was absent in Robert Meldrum's interpretation.

The experiment proves that the only element through which the translator can control the power balance between the characters (other than lexical choices)is the length of the speaking turns[15], and to a smaller extent the rhythmic pattern of the utterances. When the translator gets that balance right, it is more difficult for actors and/or director to alter it. However, as already mentioned, through the speed of utterance, an actor can show more or less control over the situation, and thus the power balance can be slightly shifted. Other factors out of the translator's control, such as acting style, and cultural implication intrinsic within the language, have proven to have an impact on the overall effect of the scene. After the exploration, the actors and the

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[12] The first time that Joe Petruzzi had performed in Italian was for the public reading of Convincing Ground – Il Baleniere at La Mama Courthouse. Joe Petruzzi, personal communication.

[13] David Mence, personal communication.

[14] Joe Petruzzi, personal communication.

[15] For a discussion on power relations and speaking turns in real-life conversation, see Linell & Luckmann (1991) and Orletti (2000).

director engaged in a conversation about the difference between the scenes that had been explored thus far:

> Alison: «The two scenes from *Convincing Ground*… the language carries the action so the question of where they [the characters] are in space even though it's implied doesn't seem to make such a big difference, but in this scene it seems to me the physical placement…»

> Robert: «Yeah, I mean, there's so much to explore, isn't there? I mean, how much he can be sexually, you know, intimidating right from the beginning, how much contact I'll have with their bodies […] If they were two radio plays as you [Alison] say the first one… just with our voices alone we could convey a lot of what's happening between us, but not so the second one.»

> Jillian: "And all the pauses through it. I mean, the pauses speak, don't they?"

All these aspects of the rhythm of the performance of both the English and the Italian script could not have emerged just by studying the script on the page, no matter how thoroughly.

Conclusion

In the model of collaboration adopted, actors and directors were not involved in the actual process of translation or editing, and were not asked to give translatorial advice, even though their exploration of the selected scenes led me to make some changes in my translations. It was their contribution as actors, as practitioners, which enabled me to see how the language of a particular line, once enacted, would be more or less effective. This, however, was not the main purpose of the workshop, even though such outcome could be expected. The model instead was specifically conceived to enable the TR to explore hypotheses, which naturally emerge when the text is approached from a merely theoretical point of view.

This collaborative approach was successful for two distinct, yet related reasons. On the one hand, it allowed me to test my theories and to address my research questions. On the other hand, it shed light on elements that I had previously not taken into consideration, thus raising more questions, which may require further investigation. Overall, it has proven to be an effective enquiry method, which aims to move away from the widespread case study model; to bring out the actual object of investigation; and to offer a general methodology for the theatre TR. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the model could be applied to other kinds of enquiry related to theatre translation, and for any type of language.