

# Gatekeepers and stakeholders: valorising indirect translation in theatre

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The translation of dramatic texts for performance in the English language frequently takes an indirect route: a mediating text – a literal translation – is employed (and sometimes specifically commissioned) for a target language writer to create a performance text. As I argued in my 2018 article, although this practice varies from Assis Rosa, Pięta, and Bueno Maia's understanding of indirect translation as 'a translation of a translation', interrogating the role of the intermediate text as a discrete step in the translation process sheds light on the significance of intermediary activity within indirect translation theory. The current paper focuses on a specific aspect of the theatrical variant of the indirect translation process: examining how the contributions of the translators and writers to the performed text are reflected in contractual agreements and fees. The data is drawn from my ongoing research project mapping the real-time commissioning of literal translations of four Dutch plays for eventual performance in English.

I will analyse the range of entities participating in the contractual documentation required to execute the various steps of bringing a translated text onto the stage: not only individual stakeholders, such as playwrights, translators and target text writers, but also gatekeepers, for example, theatrical and literary agents, producers, commissioning theatre companies, and state or cultural organisations. What do the variations in contractual terms and practitioner fees indicate about the valorisation of the different roles in the translation process? My paper argues that the examination of gatekeepers and stakeholders in theatre translation sheds light on issues of ownership and livelihood that have implications for a wider theorisation of indirect translation.

**Keywords:** contractual documentation, literal translation, performance, practitioner fees, theatre translation

Assis Rosa, Alexandra, Hanna Pięta, and Rita Bueno Maia. 2017. 'Theoretical, Methodological and Terminological Issues Regarding Indirect Translation: An Overview.' *Translation Studies* 10 (2): 113–132, p. 113.

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