

Literary translation live! Insights into the factors influencing translatorial decision-making.

Claudine Borg

University of Malta

Risku and Windhager (2013: 43) have recently called for further research into translatorial decisions in order to gain a better understanding of translation in practice. Similarly, Mason (2014: 38) highlights the importance of studying translatorial decisions and the contextual factors impinging on these in real translation practice. This contribution analyses the factors influencing translatorial decisions and choices in the post-drafting phases of the extended translation process. In other words, it focuses on reasons motivating self-revisions in literary translation. It presents the findings of a doctoral study which investigated in-depth an experienced literary translator while working live on a whole literary translation. In line with studies of translation as a situated activity, the translator was examined at his place of work while he prepared a translation for publication. There was prolonged engagement in the field as ninety hours of fieldwork spread over seven months were carried out. Data were gathered through drafts versions, think-aloud, ethnographic observations, and semi-structured and retrospective interviews; they were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. The findings illustrate that translatorial decision-making is complex and motivated by a broad range of reasons. In the case of this translator, the most prominent reasons governing self-revisions were loyalty to the ST and its author, TT/TL considerations/requirements, and personal preferences. Interestingly, the latter played a considerable role in this translator's process. Think-aloud, combined with interviews, revealed that personal preferences stem from three interrelated factors: the translator's ideology, poetics as well as his personal experiences. Therefore, they are influenced by the social environment in which he operates.

References:

- Mason, I. 2014. 'Discourse and translation – A social perspective'. In J. House (ed.) *Translation: A Multidisciplinary Approach*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 36–55.
- Risku, H. & Windhager, F. 2013. 'Extended translation: A sociocognitive research agenda'. *Target* 25 (1): 33–45.