

# Towards a taxonomy of narrativity for creative translation

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This paper will investigate creativity in translation through narrativity. The general thesis is that while machines may ‘translate’ texts, only humans can narrativise, “to enable an understanding of the characters, events and experiences that are the subject of the discourse” (Alleyne 2015: 62). Narrativity, as Baker tells us (2006: 9) is “*the* principal and inescapable mode by which we experience the world”. The question then is how can or should use narrativity to ensure that texts are understood. There is much discussion in translation studies about how pernicious or otherwise the use of narrativity might be in translation (e.g. Baker 2006, Pym 2016), but precious little on how the judicious use of narrativity might be the way to allow the reader to experience another world, while at the same time bestowing more respect and status to the translator as mediator.

The paper will continue by itemising the main elements of narrative theory useful for translators, with examples from published translations. In particular, the conscious use of narrativity will be seen to be vital when translating for Outsiders (rather than for peers or Insiders), and in general for those who have little access to the extra-contextual areas of knowledge that are tacit or assumed in the text. The areas of narrativity that will be focussed on include manifesting, relevancing and cohering through both overt stance and through covert or stealth procedures.

Given that it is in the created narrative rather than in the translated text that engagement with the text is ensured, it will be argued that the ability to successfully recreate the narrative will be what separates the highly respected translator from the machine.

## **References**

Alleyne Brian (2015) *Narrative Networks: Storied Approaches in a Digital Age*, London: Sage

Baker, Mona (2006) *Translation and Conflict*, London: Routledge.

Pym, Anthony (2016) “A spirited defence of a certain empiricism in Translation Studies (and in anything else concerning the study of cultures)” *Culture and Society* 5(2), 289–313