

Translation grants in stateless cultures: a comparative analysis of the Basque, Catalan and Galician literatures

Olga Castro

University of Warwick

Laura Linares

University College Cork

Literary translation plays a crucial role in the internationalisation of cultural and publishing markets – not only does it influence the development of a literary system and the construction of any literary canon, but it also constitutes a marker of status in the economic global system. As such, source-culture institutions very often offer support policies to help disseminate ‘their’ literatures abroad. Especially in the case of stateless nations and minorised languages, financial support is absolutely decisive. In the case of Spain’s stateless literatures in the Basque, Catalan and Galician co-official languages, since the early 2000s the three regional governments have been subsidising translations into other languages. Despite this financial effort, little is known about how successful these initiatives are from the target-culture perspective.

This paper investigates the most recent Basque, Galician and Catalan translation support policies and book industry practice, offering a comparative analysis and identifying best practice. Through the study of quantitative data (the amount of translation grants and money), qualitative data (textual analysis of the English translation of the call for grants), interviews (with stakeholders, governmental translation policy-makers and representatives from the three publishers’ associations), and participant observation at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2018 (observing how the three cultures promote the internationalisation of their books via presenting their translation grants and selling translation rights), we will offer unique insights into the extent to which translation support policies from each of the source cultures can be considered successful, and also more generally into the particularities of the book industry practice in these three stateless cultures and minorised languages.