

THE LURE OF GRAMMATICAL RECTIFICATION



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Abstract: There is an almost inevitable normative urge in translation whose results often show more conformity than their originals, a habit that affects deviant authors more than the conventional ones. Joyce's *Ulysses* is polytropically deviant and transgressive and in this poses additional problems. One of them is a technique that tries to imitate the immediacy and seeming randomness of intruding impressions and associations before the emerging thought is mentally articulated with syntactic precision. The interior monologue, or stream of consciousness, is characterized by its as yet uncoordinated (or not necessarily coordinated) form, it is often fragmentary or in disarray, deficiently grammatical (or only in part), often just a jerky pre-edited series. Translations to all appearances incline towards order or syntactical improvement, according to the rules of the target language. The essay attempts to show how translators deal with such issues, whether they are aware of them at all and what devices have been employed, if any. Punctuation is frequently resorted to for the sake of clarification. It is obvious that syntactic rules or usages or the need for inflection in the respective languages may get in the way of recreative ventures. A fear that a resulting "defective" construction might be attributed to a translator's lack of compe-

Resumo: Existe um ímpeto normativo quase inevitável na tradução, e os resultados dessas frequentemente exibem uma maior conformidade do que os originais dos quais derivam, um hábito que afeta os autores desviantes mais do que os autores convencionais. O *Ulysses* de Joyce é desviante de modo politrópico e transgressor, impondo com isso problemas adicionais. Um deles é a técnica que busca imitar a imediatez e a aparente aleatoriedade de impressões e associações intronmetidas, antes que o pensamento emergente seja articulado mentalmente com precisão sintática. O monólogo interior, ou fluxo de consciência, é caracterizado por sua forma momentaneamente não coordenada (ou não necessariamente coordenada), frequentemente fragmentária ou desordenada, gramaticalmente deficiente (ou somente em parte), e que se mostra frequentemente como uma sequência pré-editada espasmódica. Ao que tudo indica, as traduções pendem para a ordem ou para a melhoria sintática de acordo com as regras da língua alvo. Este ensaio busca mostrar como os tradutores lidam com tais questões (quer estejam cômnicos delas de algum modo) e quais artificios empregaram, se é que algum o foi. A pontuação é algo a que frequentemente recorrem em prol da clarificação. É óbvio que as regras ou usos sintáticos ou a necessidade de inflexão de línguas particula-

tence rather than an author's idiosyncrasy is certainly at work as well. Specific cases are examined, specially items where a particular impression impinges on the mind and determines the (pre-)linguistic shape of a thought. The focus is on German, with forays into Dutch, as well as on Romanic languages where syntactical norms may militate against Joyce's relaxed flexibility.

Palavras-chave: Grammar and Syntax; Inchoate thoughts; Indeterminacy; James Joyce; Officious rectification.

res pode obstar empreendimentos recriadores. O medo de que uma construção que resulte “defectiva” possa ser atribuída à falta de competência do tradutor em vez de a alguma idiosincrasia do autor também está certamente em jogo. Casos específicos são examinados, especialmente aqueles em que uma impressão particular impacta sobre a mente e determina a forma (pré)linguística do pensamento. Enfoca-se o idioma alemão, com incursões ao holandês assim como a línguas romances cujas normas sintáticas possam pesar contra a descontraída flexibilidade de Joyce.

Keywords: Gramática e Sintaxe; Pensamentos incoativos; Indeterminação; James Joyce; Retificação inoportuna.

One of the first oddities that struck readers of *Ulysses* in 1922 was the verbal simulation of what goes on in the mind and the respective techniques for it. Joyce had not invented, but certainly perfected, what soon came to be called the interior monologue or the stream of consciousness – terms that are sometimes used synonymously, sometimes with definitional distinction.

Joyce introduces a sense of immediacy, as though he were recording perceptions, thoughts and associations as they intrude, and whatever takes place in the mind, without rational control or regimentation. There is generally a change into present tense, with deictic pointers (“here”), seeming randomness and fragmentation, an as-we-go-along-ness – all well known.

In Homeric Greek “thinking” was often expressed as “I spoke to myself”,¹ but my focus is less on speaking than on a stage of pre-speech assembly – what already has been verbalized but not yet been structured. Utterance is the result of ordering stray impressions or inchoate formulations in the mind, for this they have to be brought into some order in accordance with grammatical rules. To articulate means to join (*articulus*, a joint) the stray elements into communicable coherence. This incipient stage before articulation does not translate easily or automatically into other languages with all their syntactic regulations, so that there is a constant tendency to impose those norms that

¹ One common formula is that he “spoke to his own mighty spirit” (*Odyssey* V:47, *et passim*).

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Joyce's original wording is at no pains to observe.

Someone like Stephen Dedalus is able to think in well-wrought sentences that could be spoken or even printed as they are, so that at times plausibility may be strained – as in his faultless allusive periods in the Library discussion. That is far less true of Leopold Bloom with his all too human fumbling and blundering. His thinking may well result in acceptable sentences, but the units of thinking are not sentences but pre-organized associations.

This probe concentrates on thoughts that are not yet quite formulated, a state of mind before internal editing sets in. Translations have a penchant towards refinement, not necessarily conscious or intentional, to elevate an initial disarray into syntactical constructions. It is possible that English lends itself better to rendering the illusion of thoughts as they incur in seeming randomness or through chance associations than other, especially inflected languages. Words like “sound”, “rear”, “round”, “right”, etc. can serve as nouns, adjectives or nouns (and in the interior monologue do not have to be any of those specifically²), homonyms and homophones abound. A corresponding latitude and flexibility may not be possible in, say, Latin-derived languages or in Finnish or Korean. Each language imposes its own restrictive syntactic rules. Compounds may or may not be possible, the word order can be rigid or free, and idiomatic uses fluctuate widely.

In what follows, a series of samples will be offered to illustrate how translations deal with pre-articulated, pre-grammatical mental processes. In discussing these, one must not overlook, however, the fact that in translation any departure or deviation from linguistic standards will be attributed to the translator's fallacy, or held to be a transmissional error, whereas the author's signature may legitimate even the most blatant violations of syntactic rules in the source language.

Impact

Translators naturally think in terms of sentences, but Joyce does not always oblige. He often captures fleeting thoughts, fragmentary ideas, associations, etc. Such items are here termed “short mind”, analogous to shorthand in writing. What passes through the mind is not necessarily grammatical, though evolving thoughts are probably co-determined by innate syntactical patterns. In translation, for obvious and excellent conventional reasons, inchoative thoughts have a tendency to be turned into reasoned reflections in the form of tidy sentences. Thoughts of course can occur as such sentences, as in the case of highly articulate Stephen Dedalus, who seems to think in well-wrought (often perhaps too well-wrought) prose.

One sub-species is the Impact Structure: it begins with what first strikes the mind. Something, perceived, thought, remembered, felt, “occurs” in a sort of intrusion. Bloom has been thinking of a luminous crucifix, and then, a few moments later: “Phosphorus it must be done with” (8.21). “Phosphorous”

² Is the first word of “Monkeydoodle the whole thing” (7.104) a noun or a verb – and not perhaps just a vague notion?

impinges, and the rest – “it must be done with” – is a secondary grammatical arrangement trailing after. A French rendering imitates this by manifest reduplication: *Du phosphore ça doit être fait avec du phosphore* (F/A 221), whereas *Kann nur mit phosphoreszierenden Substanzen gemacht sein* (G/G 172) is a quasi scientific interpretation and an entirely different mental process.

In “Lestrygonians”, devoted to food and eating, Bloom notices Dilly Dedalus: “Good Lord, that poor child’s dress is in flitters. **Underfed** she looks too” (8.41). Notice that “she looks too” is not strictly necessary, it is added to the prime impression. The French version of 1929 moves this towards a more distancing contemplation: *N’a pas l’air non plus de manger à sa faim* (F/M 148). Others come closer, but begin with the appearance rather than what has appeared:

Sieht auch **unterernährt** aus. (G/G173)
 E ha l’aria d’esser **denutrita** anche. (I/DA 205)
 Parece **desnutrida** también. (S/S 186)

The natural order is followed in: “**Unterernährt** sieht sie ebenfalls aus” (G/W 211), but the interposed “ebenfalls” (as well, equally) turns the whole sentence from a quick impression into a reasoned reflection.

Bloom thinks of what it is to give birth to a child, “Doubled up inside her trying to butt its way out blindly, groping its way out. Kill me that would” (6.375). The mere imagination leads to a shocked “**Kill me ...**”. A more rational “Ça me **tuerait**” (F/A 235), “Me mi **ammazzerebbe**” (I/DA 218), “A mí eso me **mataría**” (S/S 195), tones the shock down, less so in “Mi **ucciderebbe** una cosa del genere” (I/T 178). The German rendering “**Umbringen** würde mich das” (G/W 225) comes closer to an imagined experience.

Often thoughts jostle upon each other, as in one of Bloom’s memories of Molly singing long ago: “Full voice of perfume of what perfume does your lilactrees” (11.730). The constituent parts are easy to reconstruct. Bloom recalls the sound: “Full voice of...”, then synesthetically also the smell, “of perfume”, which brings to mind the question “what kind of perfume does your wife use” (5.258) in Martha Clifford’s letter of the morning. Molly’s perfume associated with the smell of lilac trees long ago brings the memory back to that first encounter.

This is a tough assignment for translators. *Volle Stimme nach nach welches Parfum gebraucht deine Flieder duftend* (G/G 309) tries to follow suit but is signally inelegant with its doubled *nach* (possibly something went wrong in typesetting?) and the appended *duftend*. In German adjectives are inflected, therefore *deine* needs a female ending (*Frau* in the letter), which however cannot accord with (masculine) *Flieder*. Wollschläger avoids this by separating *Deine* from *Flieder* by a comma: *Volle Stimme, voll vom Duft von, was für ein Parfum benutzt Deine, Flieder* (G/W 381). The three commas clarify the disruptions that the original leaves implied.

The gist of these remarks is that order tends to replace the seeming randomness of jostling thoughts, as when Bloom is trying to work out when exactly the full moon was that Mrs Breen mentioned (8.584):

Wait. The full moon was the night we were Sunday fortnight exactly there is a

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new moon. (8.587)

This parses as a disrupted sequence like: The full moon was [... when?] the night we were [that was] Sunday fortnight [aha!] exactly there is a new moon.

The groping is less obvious in the German structure: “Vollmond in der Nacht genau am Sonntag vor vierzehn Tagen, ja, jetzt ist Neumond“ (G/G 190). The revelatory “genau” (“exactly”) has moved to a different place in the thought process and a reflective “ja” is added between commas. Wollschläger basically takes the same approach:

Vollmond war doch an dem Abend, wo wir, Sonntag vor vierzehn Tagen war das, genau, dann ist jetzt Neumond. (G/W 234)

The various intrusive items are signalled by commas, four in all, as well as the modal adverb “doch”, suitable for remembering. German has an abundance of such calibrating words (“ja”, “nämlich”, “etwa”, etc.), they slip in almost unnoticed, add a certain tone or colour or indicate a particular attitude or slant of the speaker; in their nature they are idiomatic markers and hard to define. On the whole they lend an air of more distanced contemplation. Where to insert them into a translation is a perpetual problem and often dependent on individual taste.

Notice how Joyce captures the order of perception when Bloom crosses O’Connell Bridge: “Looking down he saw flapping strongly, wheeling between the gaunt quaywalls, gulls” (8.51). What we discern first (most likely an evolutionary necessity for survival) is motion before we may find out *what* is moving. So what Bloom notices is “flapping” and “wheeling”, impressions or actions, before they are assigned to gulls. Such accuracy is lost when the gulls are let out of the bag prematurely, that is, put before their optical impact, as in French: *Il aperçut sous lui des mouettes qui battaient des ailes véhémentement, et tournoyaient entree les parois de pierre* (F/M 148). The newer French translation looks at pains to recreate the sequence (flapping – aha: gulls!): *En regardant par dessus bord il vit, qui battaient des ailes avec force, tournoyant entree les murs lugubres duquai, des mouettes* (F/A 222). The effect is created at some cost: to have a comma and a relative pronoun (“, qui”) disrupts an even process and provides an air of close observation, but the initial flapping is fittingly clarified at the end, an act of recognition.

Terrinoni seems to achieve the effect highlighted here with far less strain: *Guardando in giù vide svolazzare con forza, roteare tra gli spogli muraglioni, gabbiani* (I/T 169).

The grammatical restraints imposed by other languages tend to make translations more orderly and often more logical, away from a raw immediacy. Once again, English with minimal inflection and with its abundance of short words that may double as nouns, verbs and adjectives, and in particular its easy handling of verbal participles and gerundial forms (see “flapping” above), seems to be singularly suited to imitate the fractured nature of volatile thought.

The English adjective is unburdened by endings and so can move much more freely than the inflected ones as they are in German so that certain collo-

cations become impossible. Bloom recalls his mistake at a railway station: “Then jump in first class with third ticket” (15.637). No reader is likely to doubt that Bloom did not have a third ticket, but that his ticket was third class. German has to spell this out more clearly: “Und dann in die erste Klasse mit einem Billet Dritter” (“with a ticket of the third”, G/W 623). Note that “Jump” is not recorded. The earlier translator used the infinitive: “Springen dann in die erste Klasse mit einem Billett dritter (G/G 501; the difference between “Billet” and “Billett” has to do with German spelling conventions). Joyce can use a simple all-service “jump”, this has either to be resolved into a verb form with a specific tense or else can be left out as more or less implied. The problem is similar in French, where the infinitive was used in identical formulation: “Et ensuite sauter en première classe avec un billet de troisième (F/M 438= F/A 657).

The more or less fixed place of adjectives can lead to changes in the presumed order of perception. “Gleaming silks” is what strikes Bloom in Grafton Street (8.631). This presents no problem in German, Glänzende Seide (G/G 192), or Dutch: Glimmende zijde (D/B&H 200). But Romance languages have to put the noun before the adjective, as in “Soies brillantes” or “Soies chatoyantes” (F/M 165, F/A 246), in Italian: “Sete brillanti” or “Sete luccianti” (I/DA 228, I/T 184), “Sedas rutilantes” in Spanish (S/T 192). Utterly “correct” of course, this nevertheless results in a different effect: it is the gleaming that is noticed first before it is recognized to be silk. The same applies to sound: “High voices” (8.634) which becomes “Laute Stimmen” (G/G 192) or “Hoge stemmen” (D/B&H 200), as against “Voix haut perchées” (F/A 246) and “Voci alte” (I/T 184).

A perceptive process is inverted, perhaps inevitably because of innate usage and maybe the identical effect could not be expressed without strain – if it is deemed necessary in the first place.

Pre-Grammar

Translations often do not tolerate loose ends. Bloom's peripheral observation of Mrs Breen rummaging in her bag is mentally jotted down in condensed ungrammatical form: “Pastille that was fell” (8.244). Translations may substitute cool reflection and may lose the immediacy: “Ce qui aurait dû être une pastille tomba” (F/A 230) or “Quelque chose qui tombe, une pastille” (F/M 154); “Pastille was dat die daar viel” (D/B&H 188). The uncertainty of identification may take the form of a question: “Fiel da nicht eine Pastille?” (G/W 220). Terrinoni preserves the sequence: “Pastiglia ecco cosa caduta” (I/T 174).

Bloom just having left a crowded restaurant with disgusting eaters now calls up an idea of a communal institution that might take time to become a reality: “Suppose that communal kitchen years to come perhaps” (8.927). What is a mere hasty sketch may be turned into an impeccable construction: “Vielleicht ist in ein paar Jahren die städtische Küche da” (G/G 194); “Nehme an, in ein paar Jahren gibt's Gemeindegüchen, vielleicht” (G/W 239) – in these balanced considerations the afterthought is anticipated. “Figurions-nous cette cuisine en commun qui nous attend un jour peut-être” (F/M 167): a relative clause is more controlled than an appended afterthought.

The transition from a rapid jostle to cool composure can be illustrated

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by an analogy from a dialogue in *Dubliners*. In “Counterparts” Farrington is humiliated by his boss and faced with a sarcastic rhetorical question:

“— Tell me ... do you take me for a fool? Do you think me an utter fool?”
The man glanced from the lady's face to the little eggshaped head and back again; and, almost before he was aware of it, his tongue had found a felicitous moment:
“— I don't think, sir, he said, that that's a fair question to put to me.” (D91)

The thought has come to him unexpected, it even bypasses the brain: “his tongue” had found an answer. Some time later Farrington rehearses a retroactive re-arrangement by which he regains his composure (composure is close to com-position) when he ...

... preconsidered the terms in which he would narrate the incident to the boys:
— So, I just looked at him – coolly, you know, and looked at her. Then I looked back at him again – taking my time, you know. "I don't think that that's a fair question to put to me," says I. (D 93)

Notice the pauses expressed by full stops, dashes and commas: they are the result of rational control, the very opposite of an earlier, totally unreflected impact. Punctuation suggests rational command.

Grammatical rectification has by and large been the norm in *Dubliners* translations, as in that famous emotional outburst of Lily, the caretaker's daughter, in “The Dead”: “The men that is now is only all palaver and what they can get out of you” (D178). We may not even realize the colloquial shortcut: surely what men “can get out of you” is not what “men ... *is*” (or “are”). Not only first generation translators tend to make Lily more in control of her syntax:

Die Männer von heute sind alle Schwätzer und wollen von einem nur immer nur was haben. (Dubliner, trans. Georg Goyert. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970, 195)

Les hommes d'aujourd'hui, ça ne vous débite que des sornettes, et ils profitent de tout ce qu'ils peuvent tirer de vous. (Gens de Dublin, traduit par Yva Fernandez, Hélène du Pasquier, Jacques Paul Reynoud, Paris: Plon, 1926, 204)

These utterances – the men of now are babblers and always *want* something of you; they *profit* from what they can get – are far less psychological, but logically constructed and far longer. And also, far less memorable. Even a rendering of 1994 is at pains to produce a reinterpretation which is logical, but far less spontaneous:

Les hommes de maintenant, ils cherchent à vous avoir avec leurs grands mots et c'est tout. (Gens de Dublin, translated by Benoît Tadié, Paris: Flammarion, 1994, 220).

In the seventies Dieter E. Zimmer showed fewer qualms following precedent, at least up to a point:

Die Männer heute haben nur Palavern im Kopf und wozu sie einen rumkrie-

gen. (Dubliner, trans. Dieter E. Zimmer. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1987, 182)

This comes much closer but is still more grammatical: Men only have palaver *in mind* and (roughly) what they can make one consent to. Perhaps nowadays it might be possible to risk an almost verbatim: “Die Männer von heute *sind* nur Palaver und wozu sie einen rumkriegen.” Joyce has paved the way for taking risks and infringing rigid rules.

Folly am I writing? ... That’s marriage does, their wives.

There is no question about the meaning of “Folly am I writing? Husbands don’t” (11.874 when Bloom is composing his letter to Martha Clifford, but “Folly am I writing?” is no straightforward sentence (“folly” is not its object). A computer, word-by-word, translation shows this quite well: “Folie suisse écrire?” results in one sense. Instead of short-mind, there is more logical streamlining in the various translations:

Verrückt, dass ich schreibe” (G/G 314)
 Albern, daß ich schreibe” (G/W 387)
 Est-ce que ce n'est pas bête à moi d'écrire? (F/M 273)
 De la folie pure d'écrire ça? (F/A 403)
 Sciocchezza scrivere? (I/DA 377)
 ¿Es una tontería que esté escribiendo?(S/S 317)
 ¿Es una tontería que escriba? (S/V 440)
 ¿Qué tonterías estoy escribiendo? (S/T 320)

Notice also that Joyce’s four words are considerably extended to up to nine.

The shorthand of a fleeting thought about husbands writing love letters, “That’s marriage does, their wives” (11.874), is tacitly refined into a tidy sentence that would not make a teacher frown:

C'est le mariage qui veut ça. (F/M 273)
 C'est la faute du mariage, leur femmes. (F/A 403)
 È conseguenza del matrimonio, le mogli. (I/DA 377)
 Eso es lo que el matrimonio da, sus mujeres. (S/T 320)
 É o casmento que faz, as esposas. (Po/G 462)
 Kommt vom Heiraten, ihre Frauen. (G/G 314)
 Das heißt, das kommt von der Ehe, ihre Frauen. (G/W 387)

In the view offered here throughout, this is not a complete sentence with the relative pronoun being left out, possibly an Irish feature, but something like “That’s marriage, it does that [to husbands] [because of] their wives”, the result of a contraction.

Secret Touch

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Drinking Burgundy with his lunch, Bloom experiences a Proustian moment: “Seems to a secret touch telling me memory” (8.898), but it does not transform into a clear sentence; bodily impressions joined to memory are not comfortably verbalized. Some translations offer more rounded off constructions, partly in paraphrase, which again suggests more rational control:

C'est comme une caresse secrète qui me rappelle des choses. (F/M172)
 C'est comme une caresse furtive qui parle à ma mémoire. (F/A 257)
 È come una carezza segreta che mi risveglia ricordi (I/DA 238)
 Sembra al tocco segreto raccontarmi il ricordo (I/T 191)
 Parece como un toque secreto que me dice un recuerdo (S/V I301)
 Parece um toque secreto contando-me recodação (Po/G 199)

A mere touch can become a caress and relative pronouns clarify relations. The result is, again, more thought and less of a partly physical signal.

Foreshortening

“**Sad about her lame** of course”, Bloom silently commiserates with limping Gerty MacDowell, “but must be on your guard not to feel too much pity” (13.1094). Understood without effort, the not quite syntactic contraction – which perhaps qualifies for a lame structure – “Sad about her lame of course” spawns improved but slightly more extended articulations:

Triste évidemment qu'elle boite ...” (F/M 370)
 Triste qu'elle boite bien sûr ... (F/A 542)
 Tut mir natürlich leid, dass sie hinkt, ... (G/G 425)
 Traurig natürlich, dass sie lahm ist, ... (G/W 527)
 Triste per lei zoppa naturalmente, ... (I/DA 509)
 Mi spiace che era zoppa ovvio ma attento a non provare troppa pietà,... (I/T 372)
 Ellendig van haar manke natuurlijk ... (D/B&H 443)

Flustered Bloom, deflected by Blazes Boylan, hastens towards the National Museum, in his embarrassment taking stock of the surroundings and the building ahead: “Sir Thomas Deane was the Greek architecture” (8.1180). Two thoughts are run together, Thomas Deane was the architect, the architecture is Greek. Symptomatically here, the *Reader's Edition*, according to its principles, introduces a helpful full stop: “Sir Thomas Deane was the. Greek architecture” (175).³ The montage-like procedure would be easy to preserve: “Sir Thomas Deane era l'architettura greca” (I/T 198), but some translators probably felt the disruption might jar on their readers and have recourse to clarification: “Sir Thomas Deane **c'était** le style grec” (F/M 180), “Sir Thomas Deane **c'était** l'architecture grecque” (F/A 268). The Spanish “and” introduces a more logical sequence: “Sir Thomas Deane y su arquitectura” (S/T 209). Some of the fluster has evaporated.

³ JOYCE, James. *Ulysses. A Reader's Edition*. Edited by Danis Rose. London: Picador, 1997.

... that was what they call now

Interior monologue passages are often amalgamates of a fragmentary sequence. “Kosher” laws are compared to modern views: “Hygiene that was what they call now” (8.751). Past and present are blended, yet the past has disappeared in logical condensations like: “Nennt man heute Hygiene” (G/G 195); “Igiene la chiamano ora” (I/DA 233), “Higiene lo llaman ahora” (S/V I, 294); “Hygiëne heet dat nu” (D/C&N 185). “C’était de l’hygiène, comme ça s’appelle maintenant” (F/M 168). Subirat’s Spanish “Eso era lo que ahora llaman hygiene” (S/S 206) puts “hygiene”, the word that impinges first, at the end, again intimating a more meditative air.

That a sequence like

Karma they call that transmigration for sins you did in a past life the reincarnation met him pike hoses (8.1147)

is an associative but uninterrupted muddle is borne out by officious editorial punctuation and a split into four sequential items: “Karma they call that, transmigration for sins you did in a past life, the reincarnation, met him pike hoses” (*Reader’s Edition* 174). If the translation sets off with “On appelle ça Karma ...” (as a French version does, F/A 266), an impact has again been replaced by reflection. Wollschläger’s “Karma nennen sie **diese** Transmigration um irgendwelcher Sünden willen, die man in einem früheren Leben begangen hat, Reinkarnation, mit ihm zig Hosen (G/W 256), takes a different turn – and also introduces accommodating separations. The wording also testifies to a potential and ever-present danger of misreading Joyce’s shorthand, “nennen sie diese Transmigration” puts “that” into an adjectival position, it renders “they call that transmigration ...”.

It may be worth a thought if stray associations, before they are assembled into grammatical constructions, can in fact contain the equivalent of articles, pronouns or punctuation, all of which belong to the machinery of grammatical gear shifting in the service of sensible articulation. “Wine.” occurs to Bloom when “his midriff “yearned” (8.794). This becomes “**Du** vin” in French (F/M 169, F/A 252). Is there something corresponding to “du” – that is, to an article, in the mind? Native French speakers may determine whether a simple “Vin” would pass muster, as it does in Italian “Vino” (I/T 188).

Tiresome Pounds

Bloom imagines a humanitarian plan for newborn babies: “... out of all the taxes give every child born five quid at compound interest up to twentyone”, and he tries to work out the sum in his head:

... five per cent is a hundred shillings and five tiresome pounds, multiply by twenty decimal system, encourage people to put by money save hundred and ten and a bit twentyone years want to work it out on paper come to a tidy sum, more than you think. (8.383)

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His thought process is open to misconstruction. Five pounds are first converted to “a hundred shillings”, which increases to “a hundred shillings and five”. At this point Bloom realizes that English pounds are arithmetically troublesome: “[it is] tiresome [to count in] pounds”, instead he has to “multiply by twenty” (as in pounds), the “decimal system” would make it easier.

Some translators, however, collocate differently and take “tiresome” to be attributive (belonging to “pound”) rather than predicative (“it is tiresome”), and so they construct: “plus ces fameuses cinq livres”, “e le cinque famose sterline”, “e le cinque maledette sterline”, “fünf dumme Pfund”, “y las dichosas cinco libras”, “et toujours ces cinq livres”, “mais as constantes cinco libras”, “e cinco librinhas tediosas” (F/M 158, I/DA 218, I/T 178, G/G 184, S/T 184, F/A 236, Po/H 183, Po/G 305).⁴ Wollschläger’s rendering seems to be a rare exception: “... sowas Umständliches, diese Pfundrechnerei” (“so cumbersome, this calculation in pounds”, G/W 225) which signals that not the pounds are tiresome but their handling is.

Psychological Sequence

Most examples have been taken from Bloom’s much less structured thought processes. Stephen Dedalus’s reflections are notably more clearly and often elaborately structured – but perhaps not always so. In one instance he imagines multitudes listening to Daniel O’Connell on the Hill of Tara condensed into: “Miles of ears of porches” (7.881). This has been objected to on logical grounds: porches have no ears, but ears have porches, therefore the sequence should be amended to “Miles of porches of ears” (*Reader’s Edition*, 147), which makes more sense. But perhaps the unreasonable order resolves itself into a mental process. Masses of people listening become synechdochally “Miles of ears”; but “ears” calls up an association with a Shakespearean “And in the porches of mine ear did pour”, still fresh in Stephen’s mind (7.750). Psychological causation, not logic, may be at work. The translators, fortunately in this case, do not impose their own superior logic on Joyce’s text.

Blending their Voices (11.852)

Several components can be crammed into one short run, as when Bloom listens to a rendition of the “The Croppy Boy”. Bloom hears the performing voice and, familiar with the plot and words of the ballad, comments internally:

The false priest rustling soldier from his cassock (11.1081)

This conflates words from the song (“The **priest** said naught, but a *rustling* noise / Made the youth look up in wild surprise”) and Bloom’s internal

⁴ These samples seem to show that translators, in a quandary, tend to seek advice from their predecessors. Morel’s French version of 1929 (which bears the official stamp of “entièrement revue ... par l’auteur”) often served as a model.

comments: “The robes were off, and in scarlet there / Sat a yeoman captain with fiery glare”. A “false priest” is joined to a “rustling” noise, in paraphrase a soldier (“yeoman captain”) is behind the disguise of the cassock (“robes”). Such a muddle of words heard and words imagined may very well change substantially in the arrangement of another language, this all the more so since early translators may simply not have recognized the submerged text of “The Croppy Boy”, which by now annotation has made generally available. Most resulting sentences are autonomous and grammatically complete, and few readers would be able to pick out what is at stake:

Der falsche Priester schüttelte Soldat aus seiner Soutane (G/G 320)
 Der falsche Priester rauschte als Soldat aus seiner Soutane (G/W 395)
 Le faux prêtre surgissait soldat de sa soutane bruissante (F/M 279)
 Le faux prêtre faisait bruire en soldat sa soutane (F/A 412)
 Il falso prete usciva soldato dalla sottana fruscante (I/DA 385)
 Il falso prete togliendosi la tonaca fruscante si rivelava soldato (I/T 291)
 El falso sacerdote saliendo disparado como soldado de la sotana. (S/T 327))
 De valse priester komt ritselendals soldaat uit zijn soutane. (D/V 331)
 De valse priester ritselt als soldaat uit zijn soutane te voorschijn. (D/N&C 304)
 De valse priester die soldaat uit zijn soutane ritselt (D/B&H 336)

Calibrating the Right Nuance of Wrongness

There is nothing objectionable in the French versions of a convoluted Eumaeus passage: “... il se demandait s’il ne lui arriverait pas quelque chose **qu’il pourrait mettre par écrit** avec la même chance que M. Philip Beaufoy” (F/M 572); “...il se demanda s’il pouvait avoir un bonheur approchant celui de M. Philip Beaufoy **si c’était mis par écrit**” (F/A 960). But any schoolteacher would red-pencil the English original for a faulty construction: “... he wondered whether he might meet with anything approaching the same luck as Mr Philip Beaufoy **if taken down in writing**” (16.1227). It is not of course Mr Beaufoy who is “taken down in writing”, but whatever Bloom would report. The French translators straightened this out, turning vague implication into clarity. Typical Eumaeus awkwardness is often ironed out: “... ob er wohl annähernd das gleiche Glück haben würde wie Philip Beaufoy, **wenn er alles niederschriebe**” (G/G 652), “... **wenn er das alles einmal niedergeschrieben**” (G/W 811), “**als hij eens iets neerschreef**” (D/V 715), “**si lo ponía por escrito**” (S/V 650), etc. De Angelis may come closest: “... Mr Philip Beaufoy, **una volta messo per iscritto**” (I/DA 838) in some seeming awkwardness.

It is easy to legislate that such editorial amendments of blatant deviations from a notoriously wobbly original should not be tolerated, but Eumaeus delightful infelicities may well be the most tricky of all translation impasses.

Translations in their nature inevitably flatten out idiosyncrasies. What struck early, often puzzled or indignant readers of *Ulysses* as reckless or inept departures – staccato breaks, inconsequences, fragmentation, changes of register, etc. – is likely to disappear, either as the result of officious emendation, in part because of inbred rules of the target languages, or else because of a fear

THE LURE OF GRAMMATICAL RECTIFICATION

that irregularities may be attributed to the translator's incompetence. Through no one's fault or lack of skill, translations are subject to normative adjustment. The more eccentric, specific, local or, in Joyce's case, refracted an item is, the less are its chances of travelling across to different cultural conditions.

It goes without saying that comments on all samples on show are meant to be descriptive, not evaluative. The upshot is that what is here subsumed as inchoative, or pre-grammar, or shortmind, on the whole has not been the main concern of translators and is just one aspect among many others and perhaps more pressing ones. An implication is that translators in the future deserve encouragement to venture out more on chancy limbs, to risk breaking rules as the author did; they may no longer inevitably prioritize grammar and rationality over the nascence of thoughts as has been the convention so far. The notorious eccentricities of *Ulysses* may well serve as a general absolution from conventional pedantry. This naturally must not lead to a pedantic decree that the original sequence or word order has to be preserved at all cost. Translation consists in optimizing rivalling incompatibilities.

Translators, like all of us, try to get things right, which becomes an intricate task when things as in *Ulysses*, are often intrinsically wrong or athwart. One of the first traits of Bloom is that he is "righting her breakfast things on the humpy tray" (4.7). It anticipates his persistent striving. He hardly ever gets things quite right – which makes him easy to empathize with –, but he is resilient and keeps trying against odds. Roads can be rocky and trays can be humpy ("its hump bumped as he took it up", 4.297), and so is Bob Doran for one ("humpy, tight"), and so is, above all, the bumbling prototype of *Finnegans Wake* – "he may be humpy, nay, he may be dumpy" (*FW* 606.34). But so also is Joyce's entangled prose. Perhaps this whole clumsily detailed essay is an encouragement to make Joyce translations, where necessary, more consonantly humpy and bumpy or even jumpy.

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