"NO MAN IS AN ISLAND"—WORKING AS A TRANSLATOR IN EU-FUNDED PROJECTS

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ABSTRACT. "No Man is an Island"—Working as a Translator in EU-Funded Projects. Our paper aims at comparing and contrasting two professional experiences while involved in EU-funded projects as translators of official documents. The article is divided in two main sections. The first section of our research will deal with the difficulties of translating a scientific text, specifically texts in the field of natural sciences. Thus, we will tackle issues such as the nature of the scientific text, the problems arising from the lack of a complete corpus of specialized terminology. The second section will discuss part of the 'problematic translations'. Not only will we highlight the complexity of this European project, but we will also discuss several problems which arose while working on translating the study conceived within the framework of the abovementioned European network: “Social media and language learning: beliefs, attitudes and uses in Latvia, Poland, and Romania”. The arguments will be exemplified using authentic texts that have been published within the respective projects.

Keywords: social media, translation, scientific text, natural sciences, corpus, project, source text, target text.

REZUMAT. „Niciun om nu este solitar” - Experienţa profesiei de traducător în cadrul proiectelor finanţate de Comisia Europeană. Lucrarea noastră urmăreşte să compare şi să diferenţieze între două experienţe profesionale în calitate de traducatori, legate de implicarea în proiecte finanţate de Comisia Europeană. În prima secţiune ne vom ocupa îndeaproape de trasarea dificultăţilor ce intervin în traducerea textului ştiinţific, îndeosebi a textelor din domeniul ştiinţelor naturii. Astfel, dintre problemele analizate menţionăm natura textului ştiinţific şi lipsa unui corpus complet de terminologie specializată. A doua secţiune îşi propune să exploreze complexitatea proiectului european „Învăţarea limbilor străine şi reţelele de socializare”. În plus, lucrarea va prezenta unele dintre problemele ivite la traducerea studiului realizat în cadrul acestui demers, studiu intitulat „Reţelele de socializare şi învăţarea limbilor străine:

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Introduction: The scientific text — general aspects

The scientific text has particularities that both facilitate and hinder the translator’s work. Science is a rigorous domain and this is reflected in the scientific text, which is formal, factual and lacks metaphors and other stylistic devices that might impair meaning (denotation). These characteristics ease the translator’s work. Heidrun Gerzymisch-Abrogast in “Contrastive Scientific and Technical Register as a Translation Problem” summarizes as follows the main features of the scientific and technical register:

Descriptions of scientific and technical (ST) register in LSP research have been largely systems- or langue-oriented, concentrating on such important lexical phenomena as frequency and distribution of terms and term-formation patterns resulting in neologisms and faux amis [...]. On the syntactic level it was possible to isolate the more frequent use (in comparison with common language) of syntactic function words, participles, infinitives and the present tense. It was also established that sentences are likely to be lengthier, nominalizations more frequent, and the passive voice more popular in ST texts (Wright and Wright Jr. 1993: 22).

The Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies (2nd edition) dedicates an entry to the issue of scientific and technical translations. The views are given a chronological approach, starting with the first theorist to tackle the issue: Rudolf Walter Jumpelt writes Die Übersetzung naturwissenschaftlicher und technischer Literatur in 1962, where he asserts for the first time the main requirements for technical and scientific translation: simplicity, clarity and precision, while in terms of equivalence, his view is that it is a “criterion for establishing correspondence between source text and target text,” but it is seen as “dependent on context and situation” (Baker and Saldanha 2009: 247). In terms of easiness and register, another theorist from the 1960s, C.A. Finch (An Approach to Technical Translation, 1969) believes that technical translation is easier than translation of literary works because a scientific text and its corresponding translation are meant to be read by other scientists, which means the “style” is absent (Baker and Saldanha 2009: 247).

As noted by B. Hatim and J. Munday, it is the growing importance of international organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union that has made the translation of documentation a necessity, an intrinsic part of the dual process of globalization and localization (2004: 112).
As we are going to see, writing and implementing EU-funded projects involve a great deal of translation work where English can be seen as both SL and TL. The body of the paper is structured into two parts: section 2.1. aims at analyzing a corpus of texts resulting from two different projects in the field of natural science, while section 2.2 focuses on the problems encountered in the translation of a study which came to be published as part of the assignments imposed by a project in the field of language learning. All these three projects which were meant to provide adequate support to Eastern European countries, were evaluated and financed by the European Union.

2. The projects

2.1. Phare and Seventh Framework Programme

The projects I have been involved in so far have been related to ecology and reproduction technologies in small ruminants. The first project was part of the PHARE program to assist Eastern European countries with the accession to the European Union. It was called “Comparative studies regarding the biodiversity of coastal habitats, the anthropogenic impact and the possibilities for conservation and restoration of important European habitats between Cape Midia (Romania) and Cape Kaliakra (Bulgaria)” and it spanned 12 months, October 2007 to September 2008. It was a joint action between Romania and Bulgaria and it involved education and research institutions, non-governmental organizations and local authorities in the fields of environmental protection and infrastructure development. Its main goal was to assess the anthropogenic impact on the coastal habitats between the two locations given (Cape Midia and Cape Kaliakra) and to propose strategies for the preservation of these areas.

The second project is part of the Seventh Framework Programme, a concept that unites all European research initiatives with the purpose of strengthening such goals as competitiveness and employment. The project is entitled “Hormone-free non-seasonal or seasonal goat reproduction for a sustainable European goat-milk market” and it is still running (2010-2013). It is constituted as a consortium between numerous partners from various countries such as France, Portugal, Romania, Greece, and others. The partners have specific tasks to perform, from research of particular aspects related to the topic of the project to larger administrative roles. The purpose of the project is to improve the quality of goat dairy products at European level by changing the approach to goat reproduction and by developing new hormone-free methods of obtaining goat milk all year-round. The results will have considerable impact on the European dairy market and also on the environment.

My personal involvement in the projects I have been a member of was to translate:
• the project sent for evaluation to a national or international authority;
• the correspondence (e-mails) between the project members;
• the articles and books containing the results and recommendations of
  the project;
• the posters and power point presentations for conferences;

I also participated in several congresses related to the projects where I
helped with interpretation during the presentations. My experience in all
these was isolated because I was the only translator hired in the projects. In
terms of the accuracy of the scientific content, I relied on my own knowledge
and experience in the field, on the internet resources and specialized corpora,
as well as on the collaboration with the researchers involved. In what follows I
will refer to my personal experience in translating scientific texts and the
difficulties I encountered.

2.1.1 How “technical” must a translator be?

One of the main problems a translator has to face is the amount of
knowledge needed on a specific domain. It is difficult for someone who has
never translated a scientific text to do so convincingly and completely accurately
for the first time. Before getting involved in research projects for the Faculty of
Natural Sciences, I acquired experience by teaching specific English to natural
sciences students for six years, during which time I wrote two course books for
this specialty. I also translated numerous scientific articles for my colleagues in
various domains such as plant morphology and physiology, animal morphology
and physiology, animal and human anatomy, ecology, biochemistry, reproduction
biotechnologies, agriculture, horticulture, geography and meteorology. All this
experience helped me improve my knowledge of these domains constantly.

Henry Niedzielski and Leonid Chernovaty in “Linguistic and Technical
Preparation in the Training of Technical Translators and Interpreters” analyze
the priority of technical over linguistic competence. They give evidence to the
fact that neither choosing linguists over technicians nor vice-versa resulted in
improved technical translations. However, the view of theorists in the 1960s was
that generally “a good technical translation is possible only when the translator is
technically competent, i.e., when he has a strong background in the technical field,
be it metallurgy, chemistry or electronics.” (Wright and Wright Jr. 1993 : 125).
The solution offered by subsequent translation theorists and translator trainers
was to solve the problem by combining the teaching of both sets of skills from the
very beginning in LSP courses (Wright and Wright Jr. 1993 : 125).

It is crucial for translators to have even minimal knowledge of the science
they translate. It makes the difference between a hilarious and unprofessional
translation, where words and phrases are misused, and a rigorous and
professional translation that sounds as accurate as the original text. I will give an
example. If a translator that has no experience with botany is asked to translate the categories of lichens, according to external configuration, the results may be as follows: *licheni crustosi = crusty lichens, licheni foliacei = follicular lichens, licheni fruticuloși = fruity lichens*. The rationalization may not be far from the truth since *crustosi* means having a crust, *foliacei* may refer to some follicle and *fruticulos* to the fruit. Someone who has no knowledge of botany may infer this and leave the translation as such with no remorse. To the informed reader, namely an English speaking botanist in Australia, for example, the translation is at best funny and at worst unprofessional. The correct translation is *crustose lichens, foliose lichens* and *fruticose lichens*. A translator that has knowledge in this branch of science knows that 1. *crusty* cannot be used in this context because lichens do not have a crust but look like a crust on rocks, 2. *foliacei* refers to the leaves and not the follicles (Lat. *folium* = leaf) and 3. lichens do not bear fruit, nor look like fruit, and in this case *fruticulos* is a technical word that means *shrub-like*, namely this kind of lichens look like shrubs.

Knowledge of the domain does not mean that the translator must be a scientist himself, but it helps the translator distinguish between apparently similar terms or activities. A wrong ending or a single letter may change the information offered by a sentence and thus the entire experiment or process described. Science requires the utmost accuracy and so does the scientific text. Otherwise, the results may be disastrous. Mark Herman, in his essay “Technical Translation Style: Clarity, Concision, Correctness” insists on the same idea: “knowing and conveying the context of the original document is crucial” (Wright and Wright Jr. 1993: 12). Accuracy is therefore one of the most important qualities of a scientific translation.

2.1.2 Finding equivalence and the issue of terminology

Apart from being well versed in the technical or scientific domain, the translator must also be proficient in English and aware of specific expressions and phrases used in scientific texts. There are issues specific to the English language, which makes it so plastic and easy to use, namely its capacity to condense information in shorter phrases. A simple example would be: instead of

*the use of treatments without hormones,*

translate

*the use of hormone-free treatments.*

Using such expressions instead of paraphrases gives the translation a more professional aspect and possibly the approval of native speakers. However, in order to use such techniques, one must know them. Knowledge of such expressions and others related to the scientific register can be acquired by reading scientific texts written by native speakers. Corpora are the best
source and I was first made aware of their benefits by obligation. Within the
projects, the researchers needed information about the most recent discoveries
in their field and about the experiments done by other scientists in other parts
of the world. Thus, I was often asked to translate from English into Romanian.

This task I found to be more difficult and challenging. While it helped
me understand the use of certain phrases employed in the scientific register,
the main problem was to find the appropriate terms in Romanian. Surprisingly, it
is easier to find terms in English because the resources are more extensive, even
though a complete dictionary of scientific terms is an impossibility. Science is very
dynamic and new discoveries are made practically daily. This means, new
realities and concepts need to be named, which leads to an endless string of new
words that arise perpetually. The dictionaries need permanent updating and the
fast pace of scientific discoveries does not allow for enough time to reprint such
books. This dynamism makes the constant updating and reprinting of such
dictionaries a not very lucrative business. The internet resources prove to be
the most useful in this domain. The glossaries can be easily updated and
completed with new meanings. The corpora are also available online and, as I
mentioned above, this is one of the best resources for good scientific English.

Returning to the difficulty of finding specific terminology, I have found
that the English resources are more numerous, especially online, and many
scientific terms are very similar in Romanian and English. For example, if I
want to find the exact English word for “zaharoză”, I will make a few changes I
know to be more appropriate to English spelling and search the word online.
Thus, I can safely assume that if a similar word exists in English, I should
change “z” to “s”, “h” to “ch” and “oză” to “ose” in view of similar words I may have
encountered. I usually use an internet instrument which corrects spelling
errors and indicates possible versions of the correct word, if it is the case. This
way, I find that “zaharoză” is “saccharose” in English. The same applies to most
scientific terms that are very similar in Romanian and English. Usually, all it
takes is to observe the rules of English spelling and pronunciation and change
certain letters as you can observe in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>English Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i → y</td>
<td>gymnoplast → gymnoplastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t → th</td>
<td>hifă → hypha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f → ph</td>
<td>fosforic → phosphoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l → ll</td>
<td>clorofilă → chlorophyll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z → s</td>
<td>eozină → eosin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c → k</td>
<td>eucariot → eukaryote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c → ch</td>
<td>membrana coroidă → choroid membrane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h → ch</td>
<td>zaharoză → saccharose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chi → cy</td>
<td>chist → cyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ri → rhi</td>
<td>rizoid → rhizoid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r → rr</td>
<td>hemoragie → hemorrhage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>addition of final e</td>
<td>gamet → gamete, spor → spore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Knowledge of derivation rules is also very important because scientific terms are rich in this regard. The problem occurs mostly with adjectives, where the right ending must be added to a practically similar term in both English and Romanian. I will illustrate with a few examples:

parazitar – parasitic
detritivor – detritivorous
sezonier – seasonal
ovulator – ovolatory

The scientific glossary is permanently enhanced due to the numerous possibilities of derivation with suffixes and prefixes. Thus, the following suffixes and prefixes are quite common in scientific contexts:

-\textit{liză} \rightarrow -\textit{lysis}: \textit{chemoliză} \rightarrow \textit{chemolysis}
-\textit{oză} \rightarrow -\textit{ose} / -\textit{osis}: \textit{lactoză} \rightarrow \textit{lactose} / \textit{meioză} \rightarrow \textit{meiosis}
-\textit{term} \rightarrow \textit{therm}: \textit{endoterm} \rightarrow \textit{endotherm}
-\textit{fil} \rightarrow -\textit{phil} (with the variations –\textit{phile}, \textit{philia}, -\textit{plilic}): \textit{acidofil} \rightarrow \textit{acidophile}
\textit{rizo-} \rightarrow \textit{rizoid} \rightarrow \textit{rhizoid}
\textit{phito-} \rightarrow \textit{phytoplancton} \rightarrow \textit{phytoplankton}
\textit{sim-} \rightarrow \textit{sym}: \textit{simbioză} \rightarrow \textit{symbiosis}
\textit{amfi-} \rightarrow \textit{amphi}: \textit{amfibian} \rightarrow \textit{amphibian}

Needless to say that the Word processor does not recognize many of these words, either because of their sheer number (the included word recognition program is updated only when the entire Office pack is updated, which happens at most on a yearly basis), or because they are restricted to specific branches of science which are not very common, or because they are recent entries in the world of science.

Related to the table above, I would also like to specify another vocabulary issue that occurs in scientific texts and contexts more than in any other domain. Many of the highly technical or specific terms come from Latin or Greek, having thus special plural forms according to their respective ending. Thus, the irregular plural rules are observed here more than anywhere else as there are numerous terms with such plural forms. You will find a few examples for each category in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SG.</th>
<th>PL.</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-A</td>
<td>-AE</td>
<td>vertebra \rightarrow vertebrae; hypha \rightarrow hyphae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-IS</td>
<td>-ES</td>
<td>hypophysis \rightarrow hypophyses; metamorphosis \rightarrow metamorphoses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ON</td>
<td>-A</td>
<td>mitochondrion \rightarrow mitochondria; encephalon \rightarrow encephala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-UM</td>
<td>-A</td>
<td>bacterium \rightarrow bacteria; apothecium \rightarrow apothecia;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-US</td>
<td>-I</td>
<td>bronchus \rightarrow bronchi; thalamus \rightarrow thalami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ORA</td>
<td>-ERA</td>
<td>corpus calosum \rightarrow corpora calosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>genus \rightarrow genera</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of course, in order to use it, the word must appear in a satisfactory majority of specialized texts (preferably written by native speakers), and possibly even in glossaries or dictionaries. The word must also be double checked for the correct meaning to make sure it is similar in both languages and thus no changes occur in the text. The terminology is thus an easier problem to solve from Romanian into English.

2.1.3 Other problems of the scientific text

Apart from general knowledge of the field of biology-related sciences and the specific terminology, another difficulty in translating such texts is the actual organization of the text in adequate sentences, the use of appropriate collocations, the correct use of prepositions, prepositional phrases and verbal phrases, as well as abbreviations and symbols. This is actually where the skill of the translator works its magic. The Romanian scientists often know the equivalence of specific words, but cannot connect them into coherent sentences because they usually lack knowledge of English grammar.

Mark Herman, in the same essay quoted above, advises: “If the syntactical and lexical features of the source and target languages differ, clarity often requires that the sentences in the target language be completely recast” (Wright and Wright Jr. 1993: 13). He also suggests that a translation may be better than the original by eliminating redundant words and by polishing the original style (Wright and Wright Jr. 1993: 17). Scientists are not novelists and their purpose is to convey clear information, therefore their style is not literary. Some of them have no inclination to writing at all, which means the original texts can often be clogged with repetitions, redundancies, even grammatical errors. Personally, I have encountered numerous such examples. This is a situation when the translator must step in and not simply translate word for word, but clarify the meaning rendered.

The scientists that write projects often do that in a hurry, rushed by impending deadlines. They are bound to make mistakes, from spelling and grammar to punctuation and agreement. They also rely heavily on the work of the translator because the English version is the one that is usually read by the evaluating authority. Thus, in a way, the translator carries important responsibility for the approval or rejection of a project. Sometimes, the translation is blamed directly and the response is something like “the English version of the project was incomprehensible, therefore the project is rejected.”

Two major problems in this regard are: the length of the Romanian sentences and the use of passive voice. Very often, these two problems are encountered in the same sentence because the passive voice is very commonly used in scientific contexts and the sentences describing experiments are long and do use passive voice. The difficulty is to manage the sentence in terms of
word order so that it makes sense and does not change meaning. The solution is often to simply cut the long Romanian sentence in two or more smaller English sentences. Here is an example:

Ciupercile inferioare (Archimycetete si Phycomycetele) se comportă ca și celelalte plante studiate până acum în ceea ce privește înmulțirea dar la ciupercile superioare (Ascomycetete și Basidiomycetete), după ce are loc plasmogamia (P) mai trece o perioadă de timp până când se petrece cariogamia (C), deci există o fază în care micelul este dicariofază, deci alcătuit din celule în care se află câte doi nuclei.

And a possible solution:

In terms of reproduction, inferior fungi (Archimycetes and Phycomycetes) behave like the previously studied plants. However, in superior fungi (Ascomycetes and Basidiomycetes), there is a time period between plasmogamy (P) and karyogamy (C). This means there is a phase where the mycelium is dikaryotic = dikaryophase, that is, made up of cells with two nuclei.

Here are a few more examples for various problems (word order, condensed expressions, passive voice) that can be encountered in the translation of a scientific text:

S-au constituit trei loturi pentru fiecare specie a câte 2 femele, care au fost sincronizate prin utilizarea de bureți Chronogest impregnați cu 35 mg acetat de fluorogestonă.

Note the use of condensed phrases:

Three two-female groups were established for each species. The animals were synchronized by the use of Chronogest sponges impregnated with 35 mg of fluorogestone acetate.

Pentru realizarea unei reproducții intensive cele mai utilizate în prezent sunt tratamentele hormonale (gestagene în asociere cu gonadotropine serice), dar pornind de la caracteristica sezonieră, fotoperiodică a activității sexuale se urmărește fundamentarea unor metode de modulare fotoperiodică.

Note the changes in word order dictated by the English language need for clarity:

Hormonal treatments (gestagens in association with serum gonadotropins) are currently the most used for the purposes of intensive reproduction. However, starting from the seasonal characteristic of sexual activity, namely photoperiod, new methods are searched for photoperiod modulation.

The theoretical views are not very conflicting when it comes to scientific and technical translation. The general belief is indeed that the scientific register is factual, has a clear tone and presents realities that must
not be altered by the translation. This requires a qualified translator with experience in the respective field, with intelligence and imagination to help him fill in the gaps and missing links and with ability to use language in a clear, concise and accurate manner. The collaboration with researchers in scientific projects demands from a translator the ability to work under pressure and produce sound translations that pass the exam of the evaluation committees.

2.2. Comenius Programme

Unlike my colleague, the project I have been a member of belongs to the category of lifelong learning programmes funded by the EU Commission in order to encourage digital educational content and inclusive education (see http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius/doc1004_en.htm). With the involvement of internationally known media companies, pan-European e-learning portals and publishers, social partners, universities, vocational training institutions and public bodies, the European network “Language Learning and social media: 6 key dialogues” aims at exploring the relationship of language learning and social media in the web 2.0 era.

2.2.1 Project Presentation

The programme required my involvement as both researcher and member in the translation team. As such, my personal contribution to this project ranged from taking part in webinars to doing administrative paperwork, to translating the documents containing the results and key recommendations of the project, and to managing the translation of a study conceived within the framework of the European network called “Social media and language learning: beliefs, attitudes and uses in Latvia, Poland, and Romania”. This study was the result of the mixed-method research: the interviews and questionnaires were carried out with language learners/teachers from Poland, Romania and Latvia. As basic research instruments, the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview were used to address the language learning and teaching habits as well as attitudes in both native language and foreign languages. While the questionnaire was used to assess the characteristics of the research population, their behavior and their attitudes to social networks, the semi-structured face-to-face interview addressed the research topic in open type questions and allowed the interviewees to express their attitudes and motivations in using participating in social networks and their experiences while teaching and learning languages.

2.2.2 Translation techniques

In the following pages, attention will be devoted to some examples of "problematic translations" and to the translation theories generally applied in
the case of cultural or semantic discrepancies between English and Romanian texts.

The following represent only some of the translation strategies in use today:

**Diffusion.** This approach consists of conveying the same information through a longer lexical form in the target language. The word ‘learners’ for example was not translated by a single Romanian word and the translators of the study thought it appropriate to use an entire paraphrase either by “cei care studiaza” or “persoanele care studiaza”.

**Conservation.** The option to leave the original term in the target text is an alternative solution for those English words belonging to computer literature not corresponding to an equivalent concept in Romanian. Such untranslatable IT terms abound in the document and the solution the translators resorted to was to appropriate some of them as neologisms by adding definite articles. Most of them denote types of internet connections broadband (13), dial-up (16), social media wikis, chat, blog, (7) e-mail (22), podcast (27) and general IT terminology bookmarking, peer-to-peer (7), site (13), authoring (22). In my opinion, the conservation of the original form in the target language enables the translator to keep the "shade of specificity" of the original term itself.

**Differentiation.** This strategy operates a differentiation between words in the target language according to their context. It is not uncommon, in fact, to find English terms with a double equivalent in Romanian. An example is given by the word social, which is the adjective related either to the noun society or to the verb to socialize, and which, therefore, can be translated by both "social" and "de socializare". For this reason, in the first draft, one of my colleagues failed to apply the strategy of differentiation and translated “social networks" by “retele de socializare". When faced with a similar problem, the equivalent for individuals (19), another colleague consulted me on whether to opt for populaţia, indivizi or utilizatori (which, in the end, was the selected one) since, in English, the meaning of this word seemed ambiguous to her.

**Literal translation.** This is a technique generally used to bridge conceptual gaps in the target language. This kind of translation is also called "overt translation" (Fawcett 1997: 113) as it is instrumental and visibly reads like a translation. When using this particular strategy, the translator generally refers the reader to footnotes for further details and explanations. The goal of literal translation is to reproduce the idea expressed by the original word in the target language. Literal translation often represents a valid strategy of approach for those terms that are completely absent in Romanian. This is the case of internet messaging which was literally translated as mesageria pe internet (7) since my colleague thought of it as the most adequate solution to make the concept clear to the target reader.
One of the threats in legal translation is represented by those words that, in spite of their similar etymology, refer to different meanings in the source and target languages. False cognates or the so-called "false friends" are very common and especially dangerous for the translator, since even a small oversight can have serious repercussions in any field. For instance, when trying to find a suitable Romanian equivalent for the participle form of the verb to contribute, one of my colleagues chose the word “contribuitor” ("s. m. acționar care contribuie la plata datoriilor în caz de lichidare a societății") over “colaborator, partener”. Another example was the translation of the noun perceptions by precepte (sn. reguli privind conduita).

3. Conclusions

3.1. Independent vs. dependent translation

The two translating experiences detailed in 2.1. and 2.2 can be briefly defined as independent/dependent translation respectively (cf. also D. Robinson 2003). In the first section, we detailed the work and the problems typically encountered by the independent translator: no matter how experienced in translating texts from the field of natural sciences, s/he may feel overwhelmed with isolation or insecurity and with the sense that the responsibility for the approval of the project ultimately lies with the translation of the document. As a result, it is natural for the independent translator to search for support and specialist help in both virtual and real worlds (on-line research/collaboration with actual researchers).

On the other hand, the advantages of group work are obvious even in the area of academic translation: dependent translators are likely to develop their interpersonal intelligence, their time-management and their teamwork skills. Moreover, as seen in 2.2, at the text level, the process of feedback render committee translation superior to individual translation in terms of accuracy.

3.2. The role of translator in cultural mediation

Generally speaking, differences in culture and traditions represent one of the main hindrances to the translator’s work. Before we can transfer a specific concept from one language to another, it is necessary that such a concept exist in the target language, both at cultural and linguistic levels.

Firstly, it must be remembered that the idea of semantic equivalence remains a much-discussed concept. Many translation theorists maintain that equivalence between two languages is a pure and unattainable ideal and the expression will be used here to designate a simple linguistic correspondence.
Sapir believed that translating does not only imply the choice of "equivalent" linguistic terms, but a real change in the way we perceive everyday reality: "No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same worlds with different labels" (Sapir 1929: 214).

Solutions are not simply found in dictionaries but in a correct and realistic approach to the text: as we have proved in the present pages, translating involves an accurate work of research and terminological consultation on specialized texts. The translator becomes a researcher and a mediator who, after having deepened his/her knowledge in a specific field, acts between two universes that are conceptually and linguistically distant from each other.

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EU Commission web site, Comenius Multilateral Projects: