TRANSLATE USING A"HIPTIONARY"

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Abstract: These days hipsters are so hip that they refuse to be called so and strongly believe that anyone who identifies with this category is `hip-o-critical`. With this `hiperstification` process, today hipsters come in all shapes and political persuasions. Age does not define them either. Not everyone who is hip is young (teenager), and not everyone who is young is hip. It has become a mentality a certain approach to life in all layers of society. Today we witness the dawn of a modern hipsterdom. What used to be representative of subculture has become mainstream, and its fighters can be met everywhere, from New York to Paris, from Bucharest to Budapest, from Cluj to Tg. Mures. It is no longer the tag of a discreet circle of people, understood only by members."Eventually the hip sensibility was adopted by bigger and bigger circles until it boomeranged back to the small towns, Leland says. "Now there's no lag time. Those syntheses and exchanges take place not in physical spaces but metaphorical ones — in cyberspace, in the marketplace, in the media. So stuff that looks like hip is everywhere"[1]

Keywords: "hiptionary", translating idioms, hip sensibility, mainstream

The culture of hipsters is omnipresent. It can be discovered in fashion, music and lifestyle. As a very positive phenomenon, it crosses borders of delimited preferences: there are no more borderlines of ethnicity, social status or sexual preferences. This is like a new revolution, exploding and influencing our young. It is pervasive in a funny way, as many people will judge hipsters and construct newer and newer discourses about them, hipsters themselves do not agrre with being identified as hipsters, the revolutionary phenomenon has become so popular thaty, though it used to be anti-pop culture, pop culture has swallowed it, and it has become trendy to be a hipster.

We might get the impression that our hipster students could lose of their ultra-coolness, as the hipsterism ripples out, at a huge distance from metropolises, however, what we must state is that the coolness hasn't lost its authenticity, moreover, it has become even heightened by inhabitants of smaller cities. As hipsterism was all about anti-trends, it is actually cooler to be a hipster in Tg. Mures than one in New York-"everyone knows about New York City"[2].

Many critics say that there is no originality in this whole phenomenon, no authentic initiative or substance to it. Hipsters are all posers, striking their poses, but lacking any kind of culture or vision for the future. Well, I have to disagree. These individuals take part in many movements and initiate numerous actions with a clear vision for the future:"Let's Do It, Romania!", "Youth in Action", "Critical Mass", just to point out a few movements they initiate in which their passion, awareness and enlightenment is evident.

[1] http://www.npr.org/2011/11/16/142387490/the-hipsterfication-of-america, accessed on 28.11.2016.
[2] http://www.npr.org/2011/11/16/142387490/the-hipsterfication-of-america, accessed on 11.01.2017

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Translate using a ”hiptionary”

If we wanted to devise a `hiptionary`, we would have to read John Leland's book, *Hip: The History* in which he examines what constituted a century of `hip` in a well researched and exciting way. He traces the movement ”through bluegrass, the Jazz Age, early cartoons, writers of the Beat Generation and contemporarily, hip-hop combined with cyber culture, he shows the factors that gave these trends their energy and the reasons why many of these are relevant to thi day in forming generations of hipsters for tomorrow.”[3]

What strikes us the most is how Leland proves in his book that the role of technology has always been and always will be that of transmitter of hip. ”For example, ragtime music did not become popular with most Americans until the invention of the player piano. Because of this, white Americans who would never set foot in a honky tonk bar could now buy rolls with the music already on it and listen to this new music in the relative tranquility of their own homes. This continues on through history as phonographs and wireless radios begin to pipe the sounds of jazz from Harlem to white enclaves across America. Motion pictures show how other cultures act. Even if what they show are often crude stereotypes, Americans are being presented with the new and exotic. Technology acts as the undertow that takes Americans from their established culture and presents them with the new, the foreign, and the just plain different. The youth seeking to identify themselves as different from their parents can embrace and further mutate these new forms of expression and the status quo can scratch their heads in either bewilderment or consternation. Technology doesn't necessarily create hip, but it accelerates its frequency and amplifies its wavelength.”[4]

The hipsterification process in translation

These days hipsters are so hip that they refuse to be called so and strongly believe that anyone who identifies with this category is `hip-o-critical`. With this `hiperstification` process, today hipsters come in all shapes and political persuasions. Age does not define them either. Not everyone who is hip is young (teenager), and not everyone who is young is hip. It has become a mentality a certain approach to life in all layers of society. Today we witness the dawn of a modern hipsterdom. What used to be representative of subculture has become mainstream, and its fighters can be met everywhere, from New York to Paris, from Bucharest to Budapest, from Cluj to Tg. Mures. It is no longer the tag of a discreet circle of people, understood only by members.”Eventually the hip sensibility was adopted by bigger and bigger circles until it boomeranged back to the small towns, Leland says. "Now there's no lag time. Those syntheses and exchanges take place not in physical spaces but metaphorical ones — in cyberspace, in the marketplace, in the media. So stuff that looks like hip is everywhere”[5]

Beyonce, Kafka and Camus

While mainstream society is busy with Beyonce's marriage, reality shows or the sensationalist news offered to it every evening, living the typical life of a consumer, having fun at the MacDonalds, occasionally at the mall, a cultural revolution has been consienieously going on since the 2000s. Children choose jumpers with no inscription at all (in their aware refusal to make sweatshops more profitable), or if they wanted inscriptions, they had to be highly intellectual, unique, or rare at least (proving their reading experiences: inscriptions of Kafka, Camus). They listen to underground/alternative/indie music, they participate in cultural festivals where they ostentatively read books in front of their tents. They want to make a better future possible for the next generation, (riding their second-hand bikes, eating organic gluten-

[3] John Leland, *Hip:The History*, Harper Collins Publishers, New York, 2005.
[4] http://www.amazon.com/Hip-The-History-John-Leland/dp/0060528184#reader_0060528184, accessed on 28.04.15.
[5] http://www.npr.org/2011/11/16/142387490/the-hipsterfication-of-america, accessed on 28.11.16.

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free grains, teaching younger kids to „Leave no Trace" when in nature, and more than anything else, „they wanted to be recognised for being different — to diverge from the mainstream and carve a cultural niche all for themselves. For this new generation, style wasn't something you could buy in a department store, it became something you found in a thrift shop, or, ideally, made yourself. The way to be cool wasn't to look like a television star: it was to look like as though you'd never seen television."[6]

Hipster students facing Otherness

Today we are constantly committed to the discovery, exploration and invention/re-invention of the `Other`. We witness "a multitude of differences. We are the ones who offer virtual encounters, we use and abuse of interfacing and interactivity. Once we get beyond the mirror of alienation (beyond the mirror stage that was the joy of our childhood), structural differences multiply ad infinitum – in fashion, in morality, in culture."[7] Raw otherness, difficult otherness – the otherness of nationality, race, mental sanity, of economic status – haveceased to exist. Otherness, similar to everything else, has fallen into the category of consumerism, the laws of a universal market, which, if boken down, is the law of demand and supply. Alterity has become a rarity, an exotic commodity, thus it is worth extremely much on a social and psychological hierarchy of values. No wonder, our students (and we too) struggle so much to simulate the uniqueness of the Other, of the different. "A veritable obsession with ecology extends from Indian reservations to household pets (otherness degree zero!) – not to mention the other of "the other scene", or the other of the unconscious (our last symbolic capital, and one we had better look after, because reserves are not limitless). Our sources of otherness are indeed running out; we have exhausted the Other as raw material. (According to Claude Gilbert, we are so desperate that we go digging through the rubble of earthquakes and catastrophes.)"[8]

Otherness- an obsession

In the past, anything that belonged to the Other was rejected, hated. In the meantime, we grew to be attracted in a way to the exotic in the Other, to the unknown that it represented. Slowly, Western societies started to be obsessed with the notion and phenomenon of alterity, the individual's highest goal has become to be different, to be the Other. "Consequently the other is all of a sudden no longer there to be exterminated, hated, rejected or seduced, but instead to be understood, liberated, coddled, recognized. In addition to the Rights of Man, we now also need the Rights of the Other. In a way we already have these, in the shape of a universal Right to be Different. For the orgy is also an orgy of political and psychological comprehension of the other – even to the point of resurrecting the other in places where the other is no longer to be found. Where the Other was, there has the Same come to be."[9]

Today's society has a nightmare of being mediocre. People would do almost anything in order to avoid the impression of mediocrity. For us, life has become too short to live it in mediocrity. Hipsters feel this urge to differ, conveying the message of difference through old-fashioned glasses, intelligent quotes from difficult literature and unique clothing. The hipster would rather die than live in constant mediocrity, and pities all those who do not dare to seize the opportunity to differ. This yearning for something else, something Other than the usual manifests itself as a drama in students' life, a psychologcal struggle. „And where there is no longer anything, there

[6] Matt Granfield, *HipsterMattic*, Allen&Unwin, Melbourne, 2011, p.32.
[7] http://www.ubishops.ca/baudrillardstudies/vol3_1/baudrillard2.htm, accessed on 29.04.15.
[8] Idem.
[9] ibidem

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the Other must come to be. We are no longer living the drama of otherness. We are living the psychodrama of otherness, just as we are living the psychodrama of "sociality", the psychodrama of sexuality, the psychodrama of the body – and the melodrama of all the above, courtesy of analytic metadiscourses. Otherness has become sociodramatic, semio-dramatic, melodramatic."[10]

There are often implicit ‚rules' about what someone should do in a particular situation. For example, when there are two job opportunities, the ‚rule' says that you should take the one with higher pay. But is that what you want? Does it help you achieve your dream? Maybe the job with less pay will help you achieve your dream while the one with higher pay doesn't. Do you have the courage to be different and follow your dream?

Another worry hipsters face day-by-day is if someone worries more about being loved than being what they love. They consider average people do not dare to be different because they are trying to meet other people's expectations. They often worry more about what other people say than about what matters to them. But living someone else's life is a bad way to live your life. Why should anyone miss an opportunity only because of what others might say?

"All we do in psychodrama – the psychodrama of contacts, of psychological tests, of interfacing – is acrobatically simulate and dramatize the absence of the other. Not only is otherness absent everywhere in this artificial dramaturgy, but the subject has also quietly become indifferent to his own subjectivity, to his own alienation, just as the modern political animal has become indifferent to his own political opinions. This subject becomes transparent, spectral (to borrow Marc Guillaume's word) – and hence interactive. For in interactivity the subject is the other to no one. Inasmuch as he is indifferent to himself, it is as though he had been reified alive – but without his double, without his shadow, without his other. Having paid this price, the subject becomes a candidate for all possible combinations, all possible connections.The interactive being is therefore born not through a new form of exchange but through the disappearance of the social, the disappearance of otherness. This being is the other after the death of the Other – not the same other at all: the other that results from the denial of the Other.The only interaction involved, in reality, belongs to the medium alone: to the machine become invisible. Mechanical automata still played on the difference between man and machine, and on the charm of this difference – something with which today's interactive and simulating automata are no longer concerned. Man and machine have become isomorphic and indifferent to each other: neither is other to the other."[11]

It is by no means clear that the other exists for everyone. Does the other exist for the Savage or the Primitive? Some relationships are asymmetrical: the one may be the other for the other without this implying that the other is the other for the one. I may be other for him although he is not the other for me. At the English class, we are trying to contribute to the taming of this otherness, domesticating idioms and phrasal verbs through the process of assisted translation exercises. These idiomatic phenomena cause students to be reluctant when it comes to actually using them, however, the moment they manage to grasp the actual meaning of these phrases, they will willingly use them.

'Taming' idioms

I asked my hipster students to make a list of the best ways to ‚tame/translate' idioms. These are a few examples of how they view this issue:

[10] http://www.ubishops.ca/baudrillardstudies/vol3_1/baudrillard2.htm, accessed on 29.04.15.

[11] Jean Baudrillard, *The Transparency of Evil: Essays On Extreme Phenomena* (c 1990). Translated by James Benedict. New York: Verso, 1993:124-138., at http://www.ubishops.ca/baudrillardstudies/vol3_1/baudrillard2.htm, 29.04.15

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1. Try to find an idiom in the target language which uses the same words, the same structure and has the same exact meaning. This is the top notch solution, but you often will not find it.

2. Try to find an idiom in your language which uses different words, but has the same structure and the same exact meaning

3. Try to find an idiom in your language that has different words, different structure but the same exact meaning

4. Try to find an idiom in your language that has different words, different structure and a slightly different meaning, and complete it with a short explanation.

5. Try to find an English native speaker who can explain the meaning to you. Then, once you get the meaning you'll probably find in your memory a similar idiom in Italian. Alternatively, you can always ask your grandma, who is usually an endless source of idioms!

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