TRANSLATOR'S CHOICES IN SAUL BELLOW'S *THE ADVENTURES OF AUGIE MARCH*

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Abstract: The present paper attempts to offer an analysis of the main difficulties imposed by the translation of a text such as *The Adventures of Augie March*. The main problem traced by the translator in this case concerns the choice of the most adequate range of Romanian tenses that would faithfully render the 'biographical' flavour of the original text. We will try to provide arguments that support the selection of tenses which we have opted for in translating Saul Bellow's novel.

1. Preliminaries

One of the main problems[1] posed by the translation of Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March* has to do with selecting the adequate system of tenses in Romanian so as the voice of the original text should not be in any way impaired or even completely lost to Romanian readers. This proves to be a veritable conundrum for a various number of reasons:

a) firstly, as is commonly known and repeatedly demonstrated in the literature, there are very few correspondences between the temporal systems of English and Romanian;
b) previous studies (de Swart & Molendijk, 2003, Vişan, 2006) have drawn attention to the tendency of certain Romance languages (French, Romanian) to use their Present Perfect in narrative contexts (to the detriment of the standard choice, i.e. the Preterite);
c) The English Simple Past – the main tense used in Bellow's text – is known to be ambiguous between a 'narrative' and a 'habitual' reading, which is not the case in Romanian;
d) Saul Bellow uses this temporal ambiguity of the Simple Past to his advantage: the text vacillates between the purely narrative tone and the descriptive one, where sequences of past events become characteristic features of the main hero's past life;
e) Saul Bellow has a knack of further confusing the reader by consciously making use of cohesion-disrupting devices to the extent that the translator has a hard time figuring out when (s)he should switch to a narrative (eventive) tense (i.e. *perfect simplu*, *perfect compus*) or to a descriptive (stative) one (i.e. *imperfect*)

This paper is therefore concerned with justifying the options made by the translator with respect to the following correspondences:

a) choosing between the Romanian *perfect simplu* (PS) and *perfect compus* (PC) when translating the narrative value of the English Simple Past;
b) choosing between the Romanian *perfect compus* (PC) and *imperfect* (IMP) when dealing with ambiguous instances of the English Simple Past.

The arguments we will try to provide are supported by the framework of Discourse Representation Theory (Kamp & Reyle, 1993, Smith, 2003) as well as by a bunch of theoretical studies on translation (Berman, 2000, Blum-Kulka, 2000).

[1] Saul Bellow's text (published in 1953) is widely known as a genuine stumbling block for translators. The author himself admits to having played with syntax and creating a completely new 'textual order'. Thus the difficulties posed by translating this text range from syntactic to lexical-semantic ones. We have chosen to overlook these numerous problems in favour of the 'temporal' dilemma that makes the topic of the present paper.

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2. Grammatical deficiency and grammatical proficiency

The point we start from is the concept of 'grammatical deficiency' discussed by Jakobson (1959) in his famous article on translation. Jakobson draws attention to the fact that more often than not the source language might be 'richer' than the 'target language'. In other words, the target language might be seen as 'deficient' with respect to its lexical-grammatical resourcefulness in providing correspondent elements. From this perspective Jakobson distinguishes between:

a) word-deficiency – the impossibility of the target language to provide equivalents for certain lexical items.

This deficiency might be repaired by resorting to loan-words, loan-translations, neologisms, semantic shifts or circumlocutions in the target language.

b) grammatical deficiency[2] – the impossibility of the target language to provide equivalents for structures (a good example for this kind of deficiency is the impossibility of Romanian to provide a morphological equivalent for the English Progressive)

This deficiency, Jakobson says, might only be repaired by paraphrase[3]. In other words, grammatical deficiency can only be repaired lexically. If we are to believe this statement, a good reparation for the lack of a Progressive morpheme in Romanian would be to use the Romanian adverb *tot* instead. Compare, for instance, the sentence *He is watching TV* to *Se tot uita la televizor*. However, it is quite clear that the two sentences are not really equivalent. It means that Jakobson's statement is only partially valid. As demonstrated by our example, grammatical deficiency is not so easily repaired and sometimes no paraphrase can help.

Nonetheless, Jakobson's 'grammatical deficiency' is as good a term as any for the situation we are confronted with in translating *Augie March*: in this case, Romanian appears as 'grammatically deficient' since it cannot provide an equivalent tense for the semantically richer English Simple Past. The translator has to repair this deficiency by resorting to whatever means he/she has at his/her disposal, namely by making alternate use of either PS/PC or IMP.

Furthermore, Jakobson fails to mention the opposite situation, namely the situation when the target language appears to be 'richer' than the source language. Unlike English, which exhibits only one genuinely narrative tense (i.e. the Simple Past), Romanian can make use of PS, the standard narrative tense, or of PC, whose narrative function is much more recent in

[2] The term is commented upon by Nida: "In general, *the grammatical modifications can be made the more readily*, since many grammatical changes are dictated by the obligatory structures of the receptor language. That is to say, one is *obliged* to make such adjustments as shifting word order, using verbs in place of nouns, and substituting nouns for pronouns. *The lexical structure of the source message is less readily adjusted* to the semantic requirements of the receptor language, for instead of obvious rules to be followed, there are numerous alternative properties." [emphasis mine] (Nida, 1964 in Venuti, 2000: 134) Nida claims that grammatical deficiency is more easily repaired than lexical one. Our experience with the translation of Saul Bellow's text gives us reason to disagree with this statement.

[3] If some grammatical category is absent in a given language, its meaning may be translated into this language by lexical means. Dual forms like Old Russian брама are translated with the help of the numeral: "two brothers." It is more difficult to remain faithful to the original when we translate into a language provided with a certain grammatical category from a language devoid of such a category. When translating the English sentence "She has brothers" into a language which discriminates dual and plural, we are compelled either to make our own choice between two statements "She has two brothers"-"She has more than two" or to leave the decision to the listener and say: "She has either two or more than two brothers." Again in translating from a language without grammatical number into English one is obliged to select one of the two possibilities-"brother" or "brothers" or to confront the receiver of this message with a two-choice situation: "She has either one or more than one brother." (Jakobson, 1959, in Venuti, 2000: 112)

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Romanian literature. To use a correspondent term, in this case Romanian appears as 'grammatically proficient', since it provides two possible variants for the one sported by English.

While the grammatical deficiency mentioned above is harder to justify, the literature provides enough support for the choices made with respect to the second problem we pointed out concerning the translation of *Augie March*, namely that of grammatical 'proficiency'. We thus follow de Swart & Molendijk, 2003, Vişan, 2006, in opting for PC in translating Saul Bellow's text (which is a first person narrative[4]). The fact that the voice of the narrator is in the first person prompts the contemporary Romanian translator to exclude PS, normally seen as the narrative tense par excellence. This option is motivated by the fact that the first person pronoun is a deictic element mainly associated with a [+ proximous] feature, as opposed to the third person pronoun which is seen as [+distal]. Although an equivalent of the preterite in its narrative function, PC contains a present, hence [+proximous], morpheme and it is structurally equivalent with the English Present Perfect. It thus appears as the logical choice for a combination with the first person pronoun. A combination between PS and the first person pronoun, still seen as the norm in traditional grammar books, would sound rather obsolete in this case. Thus, the Romanian translator opts for a grammatical 'modernization' of his/her text, in accordance to the tendencies of modern Romanian.

Compare the two Romanian texts below, which correspond to one and the same fragment taken from the first chapter of Saul Bellow's novel. The first version contains the PS variant, whereas the second contains the PC version:

(1) "Who is to blame?" said Grandma Lausch when I came home. "You know who? You are, Augie, because that's all the brains you have to go with that piss-in-bed accoucherka's son. Does Simon hang around with them? Not Simon. He has too much sense." I thanked God she didn't know about the stealing. And in a way, because that was her schooling temperament, *I suspect* she was pleased that I should see where it led to give your affections too easily.

Variant 1: - Cine e de vină? îmi spuse Bunica Lausch când mă întorsei acasă. Ştii cine? Tu eşti de vină, Augie, pentru că n-ai mai multă minte în cap decât să te întovărăşeşti cu pişăciosul ăla de fiu de *accoucherka*. Îl vezi pe Simon că stă cu ei? Nu. Are mai multă minte de-atât.
Îi mulţumii lui Dumnezeu că nu aflase nimic de hoţii. Şi, într-un fel, pentru că era în dispoziţia ei pedantă, *socot* că se bucura că înţelesesem unde poţi ajunge dacă îţi dăruieşti prea uşor afecţiunea.

Variant 2: - Cine e de vină? mi-a spus Bunica Lausch când am venit acasă. Ştii cine? Tu eşti de vină, Augie, pentru că n-ai mai multă minte în cap decât să te întovărăşeşti cu pişăciosul ăla de fiu de *accoucherka*. Îl vezi pe Simon că stă cu ei? Nu. Are mai multă minte de-atât.
I-am mulţumit lui Dumnezeu că nu aflase nimic de hoţii. Şi, într-un fel, pentru că era în dispoziţia ei pedantă, *socot* că s-a bucurat că am înţeles unde poţi ajunge dacă îţi dăruieşti prea uşor afecţiunea.

A further argument in favour of our choice is supported by the fact that the author makes frequent use of the 'paranthetical' present tense in the narrative (see an illustration of this phenomenon in the example above). This strategy is meant to create a distinct link to a [+ proximous] speech situation. This fact is made clear at the end of the novel, which is supposed to take place in an imaginary present, 'as we speak'. This situation further supports

[4] The narrator's voice is ostensibly identical to that of the main hero, Augie March. Bellow deliberately sets up a connection between the main character of the novel (the story-teller) and the reader (the listener). "In a sense Augie is heading to the point where he will become the author of his own story. He will not necessarily be capable of writing it. He will be capable of thinking it. This is what the convention of the first person amounts to. The narrator expresses his thoughts, and the novelist gives them written shape." (Martin Amis, *A Chicago of a Novel*)

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the claim that PC, which preserves some of its original [+present] flavour, seems to be the appropriate option in this case.

3. Translating cohesion

Having provided an answer to the first question we announced in the introduction, let us proceed with the second problem we have identified: what to opt for when translating ambiguous instances of the Simple Past. As demonstrated by various studies in the domain of discourse analysis (Halliday, 1978, *inter alia*), temporal anaphora is a cohesion device. Moreover, as shown by Smith (2003), in her classification of text types, the type of tenses used in a paragraph is closely linked to the type of text we are dealing with. Consider Smith's (2003) classification below:

Smith (2000, 2003) identifies two categories of discourse modes:

a. *temporal discourse modes:*
   - narrative
   - report
   - description

b. atemporal discourse modes
   - informative
   - argument- commentary

The linguistic features characterizing these modes are

- the type of text advancement (i.e. what is the strategy by means of which the text progresses)
- the entities that are introduced into the universe of discourse

These entities can be:

1) **eventualities** (which are temporally located)

These eventualities are mainly *events* (e.g. *Henry came home.*) or *states* (*Susan is tall.*).

2) **abstract entities** (which are not anchored in time)
   - *facts* – objects of knowledge (e.g. *I know that Mary refused the offer/ Mary's refusal of the offer was significant.*)
   - *propositions* – objects of belief (e.g. *I believe that Mary refused the offer / Mary's refusing of the offer was unlikely.)*
   - *projective propositions* – unrealized (e.g. *Mary wants to go to Bangkok. / They asked him to go to Bangkok./ We commanded him to go to Bangkok.*)

Certain types of discourse *will favour certain classes of entities*: for instance the universe of a narrative discourse is more likely populated by events and states, whereas the descriptive mode is mainly characterized by the presence of states. Likewise, an informative mode will favour facts and states, etc.

Temporal modes are characterized by advancement through time or space, or as Smith (2000) puts it, they "advance as location changes"; whereas "atemporal modes advance by metaphorical changes of location through the information space of the text. The semantic domain of an atemporal discourse is terrain to be traversed: a metaphorical space. Atemporal discourse advances as key reference moves metaphorically from one part of the domain to another." (Smith, 2000)

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Let us briefly discuss the temporal modes and see the different patterns of tense interpretation that each of these discourse types evinces.

a. the narrative mode

As we have already mentioned, in narrative texts, we are dealing with events and states in close relationship to each other. The assumption here is that narration advances by means of perfective sentences that relate to each other, and by means of explicit temporal adverbials. The key word here is *progression* (Kamp and Rohrer, 1983, Hinrichs, 1986). The principle of narrative progression states that a narrative piece of text cannot be characterized by reverse order (Caenepeel and Moens, 1994).

For instance a text such as:

(2) a. He stroked my forehead thoughtfully, got up quietly and left me to the continuation of a very long sleep. (Alice Walker, *Possessing the Secret of Joy*)
b. She put on her hat and jacket as noiselessly as possible and, going to the back entry window, got out upon the roof of a low porch, swung herself down to the grassy bank, and took a roundabout way to the road. Once there, she composed herself, hailed a passing omnibus, and rolled away to town... (Louisa M. Alcott – *Little Women*)

is marked by a pattern of **continuity**, progression

(3) e1..... e2.....e3

and the events relate to one another, without being reversible. One cannot for example reformulate the text successfully as

(4) * e2 ... e1... e3

Whenever the narrative text contains one or more *states*, one can also speak about an **anaphoric** pattern – the state (expressed by a state verb or a progressive) is simultaneous with the time of the previous event:

(5) Mary wrote the letter on Sunday. It was urgent. She mailed it.
(6) e1.....s e2

(7) Mary went outside. It was snowing. She came back in.
(8) e1.....s e2

b. description

In the case of the descriptive mode, we are dealing with states, events taking place at the same time. These events are mainly atelic. Tense has an **anaphoric** dimension.

(9) a. It was rather a pretty little picture; for the sisters sat together in the shady nook, the sun and shadows were flickering over them, the aromatic wind was lifting their hair and cooling their hot cheeks... (...) Meg sat upon her cushion, sewing daintily with her white hands, and looking as fresh and sweet as a rose, in her pink dress, among the green. Beth was sorting the cones that lay thick under the hemlock nearby...(Luisa M. Alcott – *Little Women*)

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b. Across America sex and death were barely distinguishable. Runaway women died in the rigors of ecstasy. Stories were hushed up and reporters paid off by rich families. One read between the lines of the journals and gazettes. In New York City the papers were full of the shooting of the famous architect Standford White by Harry K. Thaw, eccentric scion of a coke and railroad fortune. (E.L.Doctorow – *Ragtime*)
c. Minta was a rather good walker. She wore more sensible clothes than most women. She wore very short skirts and black boots. She would jump straight into a stream and flounder across. (V. Woolf – *To the Lighthouse*)

(9)a. is a classical example of description. I have also placed in this category those texts where the habitual past tense is used with a static, descriptive dimension.

Now let us come back to the problem that we announced at the beginning of this paper: we were saying that in his novel, Saul Bellow plays with elements of cohesion so much so that the translator becomes confused. In other words, if we were to apply Smith's (2000, 2003) classification of discourse modes, we have to look at the eventualities populating the world of Bellovian discourse so as to identify the discourse mode of the paragraph we are supposed to translate. If that paragraph is made up of a sequence of events in progression, we are dealing with a narrative paragraph. If we are dealing with states linked by an anaphoric principle, the paragraph in question is identifiable as a descriptive paragraph. The narrative paragraph is translatable by means of PC (seen as a preterite in this case, a tense which expresses events). The descriptive paragraph is translatable by means of IMP (a tense which expresses states).

Consider the fragment under (10), which poses problems for the translator from this point of view. This fragment is a randomly selected one, since the novel abounds in such instances of ambiguity:

(10) (a) But Padilla was a gifted crook all the same and took pride in his technique. (b) (!) We *made* a date for **Saturday**, and he *gave* me an exhibition. **When** we *walked* out of a shop I couldn't tell whether or not he had taken anyhting, he was so good at maneuvering. (c) (!) Outside he'**d** show me a copy of Sinnott's *Botany* or Schlesinger's *Chemistry.* Valuable books only; he'**d never** take orders for cheaper ones. Handing me his list, he'**d** tell me to pick the next title and he'**d** swipe it even if it was kept back of the cash desk. He went in carrying an old book with which he covered the one he wanted. He **never** hid anything under his coat, so that if they were to stop him he could **always** plead he had set down his own book to look at something and then picked up his own and another, unawares. Since he delivered the books on the same day he stole them, there was nothing incriminating in his room. It was greatly in his favour that he didn't in the least look like a crook, but only a young Mexican, narrow-shouldered, quick in his movements, but somewhat beaten down and harmless, that entered the shop, put on specks, and got lost with crossed feet in thermodynamics or physical chemistry. That he was pure of all feeling of larceny contributed a lot to his success. (d)There's an old, singular, beautiful Netherlands picture I once saw in an Italian gallery, of a wise old man walking in empty fields, pensive, while a thief behind cuts the string of his purse. The old man, in black, thinking probably of God's City, nevertheless has a foolish length of nose and is much too satisfied with his dream. But the peculiarity of the thief is that he is enclosed in a glass ball, and on the glass ball there is a surmounting cross, and it looks like the emperor's symbol of rule. Meaning that it is earthly power that steals while the ridiculous wise are in a dream about this world and the next, and perhaps missing this one, they will have nothing, neither this nor the next, so there is a

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sharp pain of satire in this amusing thing, and even the painted field does not have too much charm; it is a flat place.

We have noted with (a), (b), (c), (d) some fragments of this unit, which are to be contrasted.

The first part of this text poses interesting problems from the point of view of text typology and the translation of the tenses used for the creation of this text. In other words, we are confronted with at least two problems here, derived from each other:

a) we have to establish whether the first paragraph is a description or a narrative
b) we have to decide what tenses to use in translation: IMP or PC?

Note that the first paragraph makes use of apparently contradictory elements of cohesion: the first sentence (a) contains a state verb: therefore, according to the rules of paragraph construction, we normally would think that we are dealing with a description. However, the subsequent elements of cohesion (in part (b)), the deictic advebs *Saturday* and *when,* are definite adverbs of time, which should impose a narrative reading (an eventive reading), hence they would require a combination with a Preterite-like tense, i.e. PC. This eventive, sequential interpretation is supported by the syntax of the paragraph (the clauses are linked through coordination).

On the other hand, the presence of frequentative *would* (in part (c)) indicates that this section of the paragraph is to be contrasted with the next sentences, since *would* imposes generalization, hence the use of IMP in translation. Further on, one can see that frequentative *would* is dropped completely, for reasons of economy. This might constitute a problem for the translator, since he has already been unsettled by a flouting of rules in the (b) part of the paragraph. The stative interpretation (IMP) is however reinforced by the presence of other elements that convey this idea of 'habitual' interpretation, namely the frequency adverbs *never, always*.

The fact that we are after all dealing with a description is supported by the second paragraph (part (d)), which is definitely a generalization, as is demonstrated by the use of the generic present. If things are so, we must needs reinterpret part (b) of the first paragraph, which we initially identified as being narrative (eventive), and recalculate the overall meaning of the whole first paragraph as stative (a description). The text type is established therefore by a process of *reanalysis* and the tenses used shift from PC (for part (b)) to IMP.

Consider below the Romanian version of the fragment under (10), which observes the principles of *computation* and *reanalysis* discussed above: the first paragraph is interpreted as descriptive, hence the temporal forms used are IMP:

(11) Însă Padilla era un hoţ talentat şi se mândrea cu tehnica lui. Stabileam să ne întâlnim sâmbăta şi atunci îmi făcea o demonstraţie. Când ieşeam dintr-o librărie, nu eram în stare să spun cu certitudine dacă luase de-acolo ceva sau nu, era tare bun la învârteală. Ajunşi afară îmi arăta ori un exemplar din *Botanica* lui Sinnott sau din *Chimia* lui Schlesinger. Numai cărţi scumpe; nu lua niciodată comenzi pentru de-alea ieftine. Dându-mi lista lui, îmi zicea să aleg eu următorul titlu, că el o s-o şterpelească chiar şi dacă era pusă în spatele tejghelei. Intra cu o carte veche cu care o acoperea pe cea pe care o dorea. Nu ascundea absolut nimic sub haină, aşa că dacă l-ar fi oprit, ar fi putut imediat să susţină că şi-a pus cartea jos să se uite la alta şi că a luat o a doua din greşeală, fără să-şi dea seama. De vreme ce ducea cărţile la destinaţie imediat ce le fura, nu se găsea nici o dovadă împotriva lui la el în cameră. În favoarea lui era şi faptul că n-arăta deloc ca un escroc, ci doar ca un mexican tânăr, cu umeri înguşti, cu mişcări

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rapide, cumva istovit şi inofensiv, care intra şi el în librărie, îşi punea pe nas ochelarii, şi se pierdea cu picioarele împleticite prin termodinamică şi chimie fizică. Faptul că nu obținea nici o plăcere din furt contribuia grozav la succesul lui.

Există o frumoasă pictură veche olandeză, unică, pe care am văzut-o într-o galerie italiană, înfățișând un bătrân ce păşeşte pe un câmp pustiu, îngândurat, în timp ce un hoț vine în spatele lui şi îi taie baierile pungii. Bătrânul, înveşmântat în negru, se gândeşte probabil la Cetatea Domnului, însă are totuşi un nas cam lung şi pare prea mulțumit de visarea lui. Însă ce te frapează la hoț este că este închis într-un glob de cristal, iar pe glob se află o cruce mare, ce pare să fie un însemn al puterii imperiale. Asta vrea să însemne că puterea lumească e cea care fură, în timp ce înțelepții ridicoli se află într-un vis perpetuu despre această lume şi despre cea viitoare, şi poate că, pierzând tâlcul acesteia, rămân fără nimic, nimic din cea de aici sau din următoarea, astfel că se distinge un ton înțepător de satiră în acest obiect amuzant, şi până şi câmpul pictat nu are mult farmec; este un loc plat.

4. The risks of 'explicitation': destroying the 'polylogical' dimension of the novel

The last section of this paper is devoted to debating whether the decision made by the translator as a result of the arguments presented in the third section is the valid one. In what follows we shall briefly discuss some of the risks a translator might run into when attempting to perform 'reanalysis' by means of computation when translating fiction. The studies we quote belong to Berman (2000) and to Blum-Kulka (2000).

Berman (2000) draws attention on the many problems a translator is faced with when tackling novels. He devises what he calls an 'analytic[5] of translation', where he lists the following possible deforming tendencies in the translation of novels. It is absolutely vital, he says, that the translator should try and retain the 'shapeless polylogic'[6] of the novel he is translating. This is possible only if the translator is aware of the following deforming tendencies in translation:

1. rationalization – the translator might want to recompose sentences and the sequence of sentences so as to rearrange them according to a certain idea of discursive *order*.

2. clarification – the translator does away with ambiguity, moving from polysemy to monosemy. This phenomenon of explicitation is inherent in translation.

3. expansion – the translator overtranslates the original, the resulting translation becomes inflationist

4. ennoblement (rhetorization) – the translator tries to make his/her version more 'rhetoric' or more 'poetic' than the original

[5] "I propose to examine briefly the system of textual deformation that operates in every translation and prevents it from being a 'trial of the foreign'. I shall call this examination the *analytic of translation*. Analytic in two senses of the terms: a detailed analysis of the deforming system, and therefore an analysis in the Cartesian sense, but also in the psychoanalytic sense, insofar as the system is largely unconscious, present as a series of tendencies or *forces* that cause translation to deviate from its essential aim. The analytic of translation is consequently designed to discover these forces and to show where in the text they are practised […].The *negative* analytic should be extended by a *positive* counterpart, an analysis of operations which have always limited the deformation, although in an intuitive and unsystematic way. These operations constitute a sort of counter-system destined to neutralize, or attenuate, the negative tendencies. The negative and positive analytics will in turn enable a *critique of translations* that is neither simply descriptive nor simply normative." (Berman, 2000: 286)

[6] "The Babelian proliferation of languages in novels pose specific difficulties for translation. If one of the principal problems of poetic translation is to respect the polysemy of the poem (cf. Shakespeare's *Sonnets*), then the principal problem of translating the novel is to respect its *shapeless polylogic* and avoid an arbitrary homogenization." (Berman, 2000: 287)

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5. qualitative impoverishment – the translator loses the expressivity of some lexemes because those lexemes do not have a counterpart in the target language (this has to do with Jakobson's word-deficiency)

6. quantitative impoverishment – the translator cannot make use of all the range of synonyms offered by the source language, so he makes use of fewer synonyms (again, word-deficiency)

7. the destruction of rhythms – the translator disrupts the multiplicity of rhythms that characterizes the respective novel (the novel's melophrasis)

8. the destruction of underlying networks of signification – the translator overlooks the subtext that carries the network of word-obsessions typical of the respective novel (to use Berman's example, the translator will deliberately ignore the range of augmentatives that are abundant in Arlt's novel *Los Siete Locos*)

9. the destruction of linguistic patternings – the translator makes the text more cohesive and homogeneous, but paradoxically the text becomes less coherent than the original and more inconsistent

10. the destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization – the translator cannot render the register variation of the original and he either ignores it or replaces it by an unsuitable equivalent

11. the destruction of expressions and idioms – the translator translates the idioms of the original text by word-for-word expressions (e.g. red herring – translated literally)

Of these deforming tendencies that Berman cautions us against, we are mostly concerned with those under 2, 3 and 8, 9. Blum-Kulka (2000) comments on these items and reduces them to two important ones, as seen below

a) shift of cohesion[7] (explicitation) – changes in cohesive forms, decomposition (cf. clarification) and re-composition (cf. expansion)

b) shift of coherence[8] – the possibility that texts might change their meaning potential through translation (cf. the destruction of underlying networks of signification, the destruction of linguistic patterns, as explained by Berman, 2000)

Since any translation is bound to give rise to shifts in cohesion and coherence, the translator's choice must necessarily be supported by a conscious attempt to 'repair' these disruptions and recapture the flavour of the original text.

These arguments give us reason to believe that a successful and consistent translation of the Bellovian text should take into consideration the quirks and kinks of the language that characterizes the novel to be translated.

Section 3 has offered a Romanian version of a fragment from *Augie March*, a fragment in which Bellow deliberately flouts the rules of cohesion and plays with these disruptive strategies in order to create a certain rhythm and a polylogical dimension in his prose. In fact, as repeatedly stated, the whole novel is characterized by this strategy.

This section makes it clear that a successful translation of such a fragment as the one under (10) has to be made in accordance with the stylistic choices made by the author himself. It is the reason why we have finally opted for a similar choice in the final Romanian version submitted for publication. We believe that only a process of conscious computation and

[7] Cohesion is seen as 'an overt relationship holding between parts of the text, expressed by language specific markers' (Blum-Kulka, 2000: 297)

[8] Coherence is seen as 'a covert potential *meaning relationship* among parts of a text, made overt by the reader or listener through processes of interpretation' (Blum-Kulka, 2000: 297)

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reparation in translation can provide the newly translated text with a 'polylogical' dimension, without destroying its 'meaning potential'. The diagram below retraces the steps we have taken in the translating of the fragment under (10):

(12) COMPUTATION (Smith, 2003) – EXPLICITATION (or reanalysis)[9] (Berman, 2000, Blum-Kulka, 2000) – RECALCULATION – REPARATION

Our proposal has the merit of offering some solutions for a possible future 'positive' counterpart in the analytic of translation started by Berman (2000).

We offer below the final Romanian version of the fragment discussed in this paper:

(13) Însă Padilla era un hoţ talentat şi se mândrea cu tehnica lui. Am stabilit să ne întâlnim sâmbăta, şi el mi-a făcut o demonstraţie. Când ieşeam dintr-o librărie, nu eram în stare să spun cu certitudine dacă luase de-acolo ceva sau nu, era tare bun la învârteală. Ajunşi afară îmi arăta ori un exemplar din *Botanica* lui Sinnott sau din *Chimia* lui Schlesinger. Numai cărţi scumpe; nu lua niciodată comenzi pentru de-alea ieftine. Dându-mi lista lui, mi-a zis să aleg eu următorul titlu, că el o s-o şterpelească chiar şi dacă era pusă în spatele tejghelei. A intrat cu o carte veche cu care a acoperit-o pe cea pe care o dorea. N-a ascuns absolut nimic sub haină, aşa că dacă l-ar fi oprit, ar fi putut imediat să susţină că şi-a pus cartea jos să se uite la alta şi că a luat o a doua din greşeală, fără să-şi dea seama. De vreme ce ducea cărţile la destinaţie imediat ce le fura, nu se găsea nicio dovadă împotriva lui la el în cameră. În favoarea lui era şi faptul că n-arăta deloc ca un escroc, ci doar ca un mexican tânăr, cu umeri înguşti, cu mişcări rapide, cumva istovit şi inofensiv, care intra şi el în librărie, îşi punea pe nas ochelarii, şi se pierdea cu picioarele împleticite prin termodinamică şi chimie fizică. Faptul că nu obţinea nici o plăcere din furt contribuia grozav la succesul lui.

5. Conclusions

Our paper has dealt with two important choices regarding the translation of Saul Bellow's novel, *The Adventures of Augie March*.

Firstly, we chose between PS and PC, the two preterite variants Romanian had available as equivalents for the narrative Simple Past. In that, we showed that Romanian appeared as the 'grammatically proficient' target language.

Secondly, we chose between PC and IMP when dealing with instances of ambiguities imposed by the polysemy of the English Simple Past. From this point of view, we identified the grammatical deficiency of Romanian as the target language. Here we made use of Smith's (2003) classification to show how to reanalyse possible disruptions in the cohesion of the text (i.e. the disruption of temporal anaphora). We further showed, by making use of Berman's (2000) and Blum-Kulka's (2000) analytics of translation, that such a rectification (explicitation, to use Blum-Kulka's term) might run the risk of impairing upon the polylogic of the novel in question. Our proposal was that further recalculation should be performed so as reparation could be obtained. The resulting Romanian text will thus, at least partly, recapture the voice of the original in a consistent manner.

[9] Interestingly enough, the operation of explicitation (a shift in cohesion) we performed when translating fragment (10) had to do with a mending of the already existing shift in cohesion, deliberately created by the author himself.

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