

Research article
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AUDIOVISUAL AND LITERARY TRANSLATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARD PROOFREADING

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Abstract

Before a translation is published, it undergoes the process of revision. There are two types of revision, self-revision, and other-revision, and the latter can be carried out by a translator or by a domain expert. Some broadcasting and publishing houses in Croatia also hire proofreaders to check the translation. The aim of this research was to explore how translators perceive the cooperation between translators and proofreaders. A semi-structured interview with audiovisual and literary translators was conducted for the purposes of this research. The findings show that translators expressed interest in communication with proofreaders to gain experience, resolve doubts and find the best possible translation solutions, as well as to get feedback. The translators find corrections that improve the quality of their translations welcome but disagree with preferential changes. This research has also pointed to the importance of external circumstances in the cooperation between translators and proofreaders.

Keywords: proofreaders, translators, literary and audiovisual translation, revision, interview

1. Introduction

In contemporary Croatian translation practice, most literary and audiovisual translations undergo revision by a native Croatian speaker, a proofreader, also

known as a *lektor*.¹ A *lektor* is usually a person who holds a university degree in Croatian and is responsible for proofreading various texts, including translations. The aim of this study was to explore the attitudes contemporary Croatian translators have toward proofreading, how they perceive their cooperation with proofreaders in the translation process, as well as their beliefs concerning the role of the proofreader in this process. This study looks into the current situation with respect to revision in Croatia. It will explore how translators in Croatia view the role of proofreaders and looks into the possible historical, cultural, and other reasons which motivate proofreaders in their proofreading process.

Section 2 offers a brief theoretical overview of the translation process in revision, and revision in particular, and explores the agents that participate in this process. Furthermore, Section 3 provides an overview of the role of proofreaders in Croatia. This is followed by methodology and results, and the paper ends with a discussion and conclusion.

2. Translation process and translation revision process

The translation process (Hansen 2003, 26) includes every step a translator takes during the creation of the translation, from starting to work on the source material to finishing the translation in the target language. This description of the translation process makes it seem like the translation itself is a very solitary process, where the translator works in isolation. With the rise of *language service providers* (LSPs), as well as industry regulation, such as ISO 17100:2015, which clarified the role other actors have in the translation process, the role of other agents, besides translators, has become increasingly visible. This has led to increasing research interest in the translator as a social being, with the attention switching from the text to the translator, as well as other agents in the translation process, such as clients, target text authors, source text recipients, editors, reviewers or proofreaders (Wolf 2011, 2).

Abdallah (2012, 5) and Solum (2018, 545) stress the collaboration necessary to create a finished translation, noting that translators work in *production networks*. The concept of *production networks* (Abdallah 2012, 5) illustrates a shift from a

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linear client-translator relationship and instead suggests a vertical composition of the network, where there are multiple human and non-human actors involved in the creation of the project, such as language service providers who serve as intermediaries between the client and the translator. The role of other agents in the translation process, as well as the role of translators as participants in various social networks and cultures, has led to more research on translation revision. As translation revision is becoming prominent in contemporary translation practice, understanding the role of agents in the translation process can help understand how a translation is produced, and therefore, how this can affect the translation itself (Pym 1998, 5).

2.1. *Translation revision and proofreading*

ISO 17100:2015 (International Organization for Standardization 2015, n.p.) describes revision as a “bilingual examination of target language content against source language content for its suitability to the agreed purpose.” Mossop (2011, 135) defines revision as “the process of looking over the translation to decide whether it is of satisfactory quality, and making any needed changes.” According to Mossop (2011, 135), revision is motivated by the desire to attain quality, but the meaning of quality may depend on various criteria, such as the desire to achieve customer satisfaction, to protect the local language from the influence of English, or to ensure that the translation is suitable for its purpose. Robert and Remael (2016, 580-581) describe revision as a process of checking the translation to make sure that the quality is satisfactory and implementing any required changes. Therefore, revision focuses on ensuring that the quality of the translation is improved to meet the necessary demands requested by the target text recipient and/or client and to ensure that the purpose of the translation is fulfilled.

There are some differences in the terminology used when it comes to the concept of revision. As pointed out by Robert, Remael, and Ureel (2017, 3), the term revision depends on the person doing the revision, the time when revision is done, the type of text being revised, and the way it is revised. Mossop (2019, 116) lists terms such as *revision*, *re-reading*, *cross-reading*, *proof-reading*, *review*, and *quality control* as the most frequent terms used to describe some kind of revision, all of them used in various settings and contexts.

According to ISO 17100:2015 (International Organization for Standardization 2015, n.p.), proofreading is related to examining the target language content and applying corrections before a translation is published. The key difference between the ISO 17100:2015 definition of revision and the Croatian term *lektura* ('proofreading') is that revision is typically bilingual, where both the source and target texts are compared at the same time, whereas proofreading highlights the examination of the language content. It should be noted that, when checking subtitles, Croatian proofreaders sometimes watch the source material. For example, this practice has been introduced in recent years by the Croatian public broadcaster, HRT, as it was indicated by the participants of the interviews conducted for this study.

2.1.1. Translation competence and translation revision competence

In Translation Studies, the process of translation revision conducted by somebody other than the translator is mostly researched from a didactic or a conceptual point of view (Robert, Remael, and Ureel 2017, 2).

As Hansen (2009, 274) points out, *translation revision competence* is different from *translation competence*. Translation competence is the sum of knowledge that translators need to possess to successfully translate, the knowledge that is described by Bell (1991) as source and target language knowledge, text-type knowledge, subject area knowledge, contrastive knowledge, and communicative competence. Further development of the translation competence basis, notably the European Master's in Translation Competence Framework (2017, 4-11), also increased the visibility of other competences needed for translation. The competences needed for translation are described in the EMT Framework as *language and culture competence*, *translation competence*, *technology competence*, as well as *personal and interpersonal competence* and *service provision*.

Similarly, a model of translation revision competence has also been developed by Robert, Remael, and Ureel (2017, 14). They described it as consisting of multiple revision sub competences, notably *tools and research* (procedural knowledge related to the use of translation and revision conventional and electronic tools), *revision routine activation* (knowledge and ability to apply standard revision operations which lead to acceptable target language solutions), *knowledge about*

revision (declarative knowledge about what revision is and what it includes), *strategic knowledge* (procedural and conditional knowledge to guarantee an efficient revision and solve problems which might be encountered), *interpersonal knowledge* (the ability to cooperate with different actors involved in the translation project, such as the translator, translation company, source text author and commissioner, in particular dealing with potential conflicts, and the ability to communicate meaningful feedback), and *psycho-physiological components* (consisting of cognitive and attitudinal competences, such as memory, perception, attention, fairness and tolerance, and sociability, respect for others, patience, honesty etc.). Mossop (2019, 198) also stresses the importance of interpersonal relationships, as one of the major challenges in revision work is avoiding unwarranted changes, which are described as both a waste of time and damaging for interpersonal relationships.

Valdez and Vandepitte (2020) explored the attitudes and expectations translators and revisers specializing in biomedical translation have about one another. In their study, they adopted Bicchieri's theoretical framework (Bicchieri 2017, 1153). Valdez and Vandepitte focused on normative attitudes, empirical expectations, and normative expectations about other agents, as the participants expressed them when referring to competences and working practices. Normative attitudes are described as the attitudes about what other agents should do in a situation, empirical expectations relate to what other agents do in a particular context, and normative expectations denote the agents' beliefs on what others believe they should do (Valdez and Vandepitte, 2020, 150). The translators who participated in the study stressed the importance of collaborative work, and expressed a strong negative attitude toward preferential changes, citing they think some revisers decide to implement certain corrections because they feel it is their obligation, and change things just for the sake of changing them. Participants also pointed out that this kind of approach to revision affected their confidence. Valdez and Vandepitte's study stressed that the lack of communication and trust between translators and revisers can diminish the quality of the translation, and in the end, it can damage the image of the translator. Valdez and Vandepitte suggest improvements in interpersonal communication between translators and revisers should be done to solve potential miscommunication issues and possibly change preconceived ideas they might have about one another. Their research further

stresses the importance of interpersonal competence for both translators and revisers, as well as the increasing need to better understand what the other is doing with the text they are ultimately working on together.

However, in previous research on translation revision, as well as the skills necessary for revision competence, the focus seemed to be on revision, as this type of revision is standard practice in LSPs. In Croatia, however, *lektori* proofread audiovisual and literary translations in a process known as *lektura*.

3. *Lektori*

The Croatian term *lektor* refers to “a person who reads and corrects the language and style, as well as polishes the manuscript while it is being prepared for publishing” (Hrvatska enciklopedija n.d., s.v. *lektor*, translated from Croatian by the author). This definition is very general, and it does not cover all social and cultural aspects of the job, as stressed by Lewis (2002, 184). Kovačec (2000, 125) claims the Croatian word *lektor* is difficult to translate into other languages, given that many other cultures do not have, or do not even allow, this type of revision. However, as *lektori* also check the target content and implement corrections, their role is the closest to that of a proofreader as described by ISO 17100:2015 (International Organization for Standardization 2015, n.p.). This is why the term proofreader is usually used to describe *lektori* in English, and therefore, this term will be used to denote *lektori* in the remainder of this paper.

According to Lewis (2002, 187), in Croatian society, some people view proofreaders as purists who want to preserve Croatian. Linguistic purism (Thomas 1991,12) describes a desire of a speech community to preserve a language from undesirable elements, which reflects nationalism and xenophobia. While nationalism and xenophobia not tolerated overtly, linguistic purism is, as Thomas (1991, 43) claims. This issue can be reflected in the Croatian past. Ever since the establishment of Croatia and its fight for independence from Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, the issue of the purity of Croatian has been perceived by many as one of the symbols of Croatian culture and its distinctive elements. Having a separate language seemed to go hand in hand with the legitimization of independence, and efforts to keep Croatian pure from outside influence, especially from the influence of neighboring Serbia, were strong (Kapović 2011, 48). Therefore, especially during

the 1990s, proofreaders were often tasked with correcting undesirable expressions to make the language “better” (Starčević, Kapović, and Sarić 2019, 12).

Many Croatian linguists commented on the role of proofreaders in Croatia, especially from the perspective of normative literature, the political situation, and their decision-making process. Kovačec (2000, 126) stresses that the process of *lektura*, if controlled, could direct the linguistic development of a language, as well as promote certain expressions, while completely suppressing others. According to Kovačec (2000, 131), the problem arises when there is no singular body deciding what is considered “correct”, therefore proofreaders often have to make decisions based on their own criteria, or the criteria provided by normative literature. Samardžija (2000, 27) also comments that proofreaders often find themselves between political demands and flawed normative literature, which often leads to them using their linguistic feeling, which he considers subjective. Matasović (2000, 141) raises the question of how far proofreaders are allowed to intervene, and he also notes this could lead to a situation where the way a person speaks becomes more important than what they are saying.

Previously listed comments described proofreaders in the context of flawed normative literature, which may provide conflicting advice. Some of the authors also reflected on the idea that some people perceive proofreaders as linguistic purists. However, this kind of view is mostly argued by using examples from the Croatian past. Currently, proofreading as a profession in Croatia is under-researched, so there is not enough information on how the profession has developed over the years, and if its perception has changed over time. Even though varied perceptions of proofreaders in Croatian society have been presented by Croatian linguists, it is important to point out that proofreaders are nevertheless participants in the process of creating texts and they play an important role in the translation process as well. In contemporary Croatia, proofreaders collaborate with translators, and proofreaders are an integral part of the translation process.

4. Methodology

4.1. Aim, research problem, and research questions

The aim of this research was to describe the cooperation of audiovisual and literary translators and proofreaders in Croatia, what elements affect their cooperation, and the attitudes of translators toward proofreading.

Translators' previous experience with proofreaders was examined to understand what affects their cooperation, what their attitudes toward proofreading and working with proofreaders are, as well as to explore suggestions for future improvement of the cooperation between translators and proofreaders. More specifically, the following research questions were studied:

1. How do translators perceive their cooperation with proofreaders?
2. Which aspects of their cooperation are perceived as positive, and which as challenging?
3. What is the translators' perception of the corrections they receive from proofreaders?
4. What are the suggestions translators have for improving their cooperation with proofreaders?

4.2. Data collection

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with seven literary and/or audiovisual translators conducted from February to June 2021. The interviews were originally conducted in Croatian and were later transcribed and translated into English.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they allow participants to freely express their opinion and talk about their experiences. Moreover, they allow the interviewer to ask for clarification (Rubin and Rubin 2005, 7), allowing deeper quantitative insight. Individual interviews also allow participants to freely express their opinions and talk about their experiences, with the information remaining confidential.

Prior to the interviews, the participants were asked to fill out a short questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. It contained sociodemographic questions (gender, age, education, type of employment, the types of translations they do, and the language combinations they work with). They were also asked to

choose how often they work with proofreaders on a scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always).

The interview guide consisted of 28 questions dealing with translators' experiences, first associations for proofreaders, cooperation with proofreaders, experiences of working with proofreaders, proofreaders' corrections, reactions to corrections, influence on translations, and suggestions for improving their cooperation with proofreaders (see Appendix). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews were conducted and recorded via Zoom. Before the interviews, participants were also asked to sign consent forms.

4.3. Participants

Seven audiovisual and/or literary translators working in Croatia participated in the study. Audiovisual and literary translators were chosen as proofreaders mostly revise audiovisual and literary translations, whereas other kinds of translations, i.e. in ISO-certified translation agencies, usually undergo bilingual revision by other translators. Sampling was purposive (Bernard 2017, 147) and invitations for interviews were sent to members of the Croatian Association of Audiovisual Translators and the Croatian Literary Translators' Association. Interviews were conducted from February to June 2021.

Two of the participants were male, and five were female, ages between 30 and 70. All of them work as freelance translators. Their language combinations are mostly English and Croatian, but others also translate from German, Romance languages like Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Catalan, as well as Scandinavian languages such as Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish. All participants had at least ten years of translation experience at the time of the study. Three participants had experience with audiovisual translation, and two worked as literary translators. Two participants worked as both audiovisual and literary translators.

The participants' answers will be presented under a coded name in the form of the letter LT for "literary translator", AVT for "audiovisual translator", or LAVT for "literary and audiovisual translator", followed by a number to distinguish each interview.

4.4. *Data analysis*

The interview transcripts, video footage, examples of corrections translators shared during and after the interviews, as well as field notes collected during this research were analyzed and sorted into categories using grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 2006). The aim of grounded theory is to generate a theory grounded in systematically collected and analyzed data (Glaser and Strauss 2006, 3). Grounded theory analysis is based on purposive sampling, whose aim is to select the participants who can provide the answers to research questions (Bernard 2017, 147). Following purposive sampling for this research described in the previous section, as many inductive codes, denoting social and psychological processes, are created from the early data collected. During this process, important terms and patterns are identified and marked. After this step, additional theoretical sampling is carried out to explore the leads in the data by sampling more participants.

The data were analyzed in three steps. Firstly, after three initial interviews, the participants' answers were analyzed in the first coding phase to find possible connections between their answers, which were then explored further in the following interviews. The participants brought up other kinds of experiences with revision worthy of future research scrutiny. However, due to the limitations of the scope, the participants' answers regarding other forms of revision, such as revision done by editors, as well as other forms of quality control, were excluded from the analysis, as the aim was to fully focus on their attitudes toward Croatian proofreaders who only check the target text before it is published. After all of the interviews were completed, the data was then analyzed in the process of intermediate coding, which built upon the initial codes set during the first coding phase, and core categories and data saturation was identified. The final step was advanced coding, which produces abstract categories, in which the gathered data for this research was divided into three categories:

1. Communication
2. Corrections
3. Circumstances

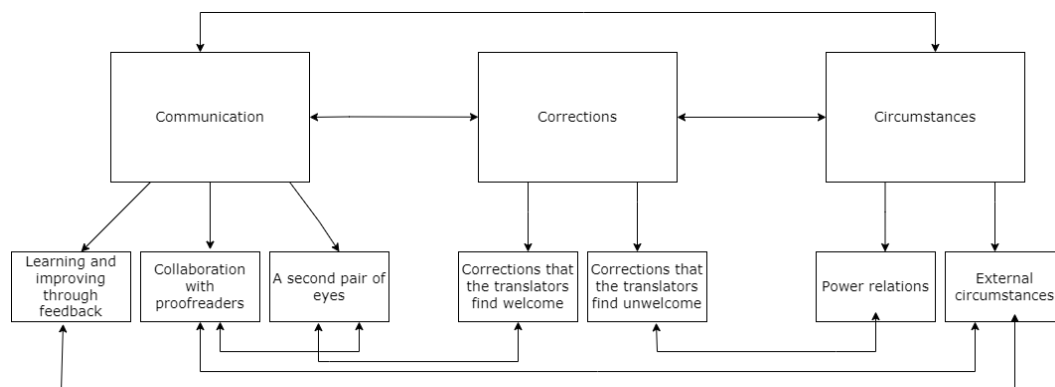


Figure 1. The categories and their subcategories

During the analysis, the data indicated that these categories, as well as their subcategories, are related. Figure 1. shows the relationships between the categories and the way they are interconnected.

5. Results

The data analysis produced three abstract categories, and the categories are also divided into their respective subcategories, as seen in Figure 1. It is important to note that data analysis has shown that the categories are interconnected and that an imbalance in one category, such as, for example, external circumstances, can have an effect on another subcategory, like collaboration with proofreaders. The results of the data analysis will be further elaborated in the following sections, which also contain the participants' replies translated into English.

5.1. Communication

Throughout the interviews, the first category which stood out was the desire for communication between translators and proofreaders. Some translators, predominantly audiovisual translators working for the public broadcaster, had experience working with proofreaders who would call them or send e-mails to discuss their translations, give them feedback, or ask them to clarify some parts of the translation:

LAVT1: Our cooperation deserves a straight A because translators and proofreaders communicated directly. Proofreaders would give their arguments, and ask the translator questions. We often reached a compromise or somebody would convince someone with

their arguments, and in my experience, that is the most fruitful way of cooperation, direct verbal communication.

Other participants who worked as audiovisual translators for private companies had mixed experiences. One translator described working as an audiovisual translator for a Croatian private company specializing in audiovisual translation, and said he would always get feedback from proofreaders, as well as ask them for advice when necessary:

AVT3: We worked with proofreaders, we sent our translation to a proofreader, they would call if they had any questions, fixed it, and so on.

Another translator who had experience working for both domestic and foreign translation companies, as well as for the Croatian public broadcaster, described the difference in the level of communication between proofreaders in those two cases. Whereas proofreaders at private companies would not always contact them and give feedback, proofreaders who worked for the Croatian public broadcaster, HRT, would almost always call or e-mail:

AVT2: Proofreaders working for cable TVs and private broadcasters never call, they just change it on their own, HRT proofreaders cooperate, they feel the need to call me, paid for by HRT, and they can talk, they are collaborators, while for commercial ones I just turn in the translation and I don't know what will become of it, who will chop it up and in what way.

Literary translators described working with proofreaders, who left comments in the translated documents for translators to see, to which the translators replied:

LAVT1: That is a very rough mode of communication because the proofreader says what they have to say or just crosses it out, and then I uncross it and add my comments, and the process just draws on.

They also said they occasionally met and discussed the translations, or they would talk about the corrections via e-mail:

LAVT2: The proofreader does the whole proofreading, everything is done with Track Changes and comments on the side, and after they are done, they send them to me to give my approval, because the translation is always a work of authorship, and the translator is, in fact, responsible for the content.

Literary translators also said that, due to financial cuts, proofreaders would sometimes be omitted from the workflow altogether, or the editors would do the proofreader's job in such cases:

LT1: I would have liked to have worked with proofreaders more, but many publishers are saving money on that, so, that is, they offer such low fees for proofreading, which I agree is not good, and then, of course, serious proofreaders don't want to do that, and editors do it.

It should be noted that, when asked how often they work with proofreaders, four of the participants rated it as a 3 in the questionnaire, meaning "Sometimes", and three of them rated it as a 5, meaning "Always". The participants explained that in situations when the proofreader was not included in the project, their translations were usually proofread by editors or by other translators.

All the translators who participated in the interviews, both those who always have proofreading as the next step after their translations, and those who only occasionally worked with proofreaders, expressed the desire for communication with proofreaders. The motivation for communication was trifold. The first reason was that this kind of collaboration helped translators learn, and improve their translations, through the feedback they received from proofreaders. Secondly, they appreciated being able to collaborate with proofreaders to find translation solutions. Finally, they explained proofreaders were another pair of eyes on the text, to catch any possible mistakes, and to give their opinion as first readers of the translation. What follows is a more detailed presentation of the three reasons.

5.1.1. Learning and improving through feedback

Translators reported that working with proofreaders enabled them receive linguistic feedback on their translations, which helped them learn and improve future translations. Having this kind of feedback was perceived as positive, and as a possible future improvement:

LAVT1: I made notes of the proofreaders' corrections and built up my... my literacy in my native language.

AT2 also pointed out the didactic role of the feedback she gets from proofreaders, describing them as partners, who improve something she wrote:

AT2: It's like a small lesson. So I learn, I learn with them. They also change my word order a little bit, and it's better, so I think they are useful. I wouldn't dare do this without them, no way.

The importance of having a good proofreader, who offers feedback and helps the translator learn, was stressed throughout the interviews. A good proofreader, as described by the participants, gave the translator feedback on how to improve their translation and their language, whereas a bad proofreader would often force their solutions, and would change the translation, sometimes making it even worse:

LAVT1: In my opinion, a good proofreader can help make the translation even better and open up a new perspective to you, as a translator. I have experienced that, and I like it very much. On the other side of the spectrum, a proofreader forces their opinion and has no understanding of what you are saying, sticks to the rules blindly, with no feelings for the context and language. They do their work mechanically, with no feeling for the text, and then the cooperation is problematic.

5.1.2. Collaboration with proofreaders

All participants mentioned that working with a proofreader should be collaborative and should result in a final translation of good quality. Participants also stressed the opportunity to ask proofreaders questions during and after the translation, request advice on how to improve something, or hear the proofreader's opinion. This is the second motivation why translators wanted to communicate with proofreaders.

This collaborative effort of both the translator and the proofreader was described by LT2 when talking about working with a particular proofreader:

LT2: The cooperation was great, really great. Whenever I would get stuck, like with determiners, which I often confuse, or anything else that I am not sure about. But she would always know how to explain it to me nicely.

AVT3 touched upon the importance of getting suggestions from proofreaders, noting:

AVT3: I like it when they write it as a suggestion, which means I don't have to take it, but rather 'here is a suggestion', and then you can decide if you really want to accept it or not.

However, participants said these suggestions are good if they are a way to improve their work, not just preferential suggestions. LAVT2 described working with a proofreader who wanted to needlessly change many aspects of the translation:

LAVT2: I recently worked with a proofreader who really likes to make sentences prettier. We sat for a few hours and looked at the text, because she wanted to make every sentence nicer and more poetic, even when there was nothing poetic about it.

Even though the translators prefer to get suggestions on how to improve their work, those suggestions were considered welcome only when they made the translation better. When suggestions were deemed unnecessary, it often meant they had to spend more time correcting the translation or discussing with the proofreader why certain suggestions are not good. As AVT3 summed it up:

AVT3: When I have to spend all day correcting a translation, which I translated in half a day, that for example can also be annoying.

5.1.3. A second pair of eyes

Finally, the translators wanted to communicate with proofreaders, because proofreaders also served as the first readers of the text. Therefore, they could express their opinion on the clarity of the translation, and what could be done to make the translation more understandable to the reader or viewer. LAVT1 described the proofreader as “the first to read the text as a reader”. Having this sort of feedback, which is not just formal, but also related to comprehension, helps translators improve their translations:

LT1: That’s why I am really grateful for good proofreaders and editors. Translators themselves are often too involved in the text to see some errors or contradictions.

AVT2, who often translates television series, also expressed the importance of a proofreader, as someone who also follows the way the story progresses:

AVT2: It's important to me to have my own proofreader, who follows me and the story, who corrects me when my concentration drops.

Overall, the participants who worked with colleagues they deemed good proofreaders described those experiences as enjoyable, as well as good learning opportunities. However, they also said they disliked getting too many unnecessary, preferential changes, which just made them lose more time working on

translations. A collaborative effort between the translator and the proofreader to make the translation better and more understandable to a target audience was considered welcome as long as both parties showed consideration for one another, and they can compromise.

5.2. Corrections

While reflecting on the corrections they received from proofreaders, the translators talked about the kinds of corrections they agreed with, usually having to do with formal errors, such as typos, punctuation, spelling, syntax, or standard grammatical forms of certain words. All participants agreed with these kinds of corrections, and they considered them important for improving the quality of their translations. The participants shared examples of the corrections they received from proofreaders, along with their comments on why they agreed or disagreed with certain corrections.

On the other hand, there were corrections translators did not agree with. Many participants considered these kinds of corrections preferential and they agreed these corrections did not improve the quality of the translation, but that they reflected proofreaders' attitudes toward their dialect, or they were caused by hypercorrection, which will be described in further detail below.

5.2.1 Corrections that the translators find welcome

The corrections that the participants found welcome were usually related to improving the syntax or rhythm of the sentence, to make it blend with the next sentence better. Punctuation, sentence structure, and word order, as well as lexical mismatches with the rest of the text, were the most common kinds of corrections the translators agreed with. When asked about the kinds of corrections she agrees with, LAVT1 described:

LAVT1: Syntax, when the sentence is clumsy, when tenses, conditionals are not right. That is the first thing a proofreader will spot, and this is where there is 100% improvement.

AVT1 also noted that working with proofreaders had helped her understand the importance of the flow of the sentence:

AVT1: Cohesion and coherence, the way sentences are connected, it can improve the quality of the text.

As LT2 pointed out, she agrees with corrections of this kind, especially when she is not sure which form is better:

LT2: Things like commas and whatnot are always a problem to me. They can correct anything there, they should correct it and correct it right, I don't mind at all.

5.2.2. Corrections that the translators find unwelcome

Even though the participants agreed that many corrections were welcome, especially from the proofreaders they deemed good, there were also some corrections they did not find welcome.

The kinds of corrections that not all participants agreed on usually have to do with certain lexical forms that the proofreaders deemed not good enough according to the client's rules, or to what was prescribed as correct by other Croatian language experts and those who are deemed to be the authority on language. Also, sometimes proofreaders claimed they had not heard of a certain expression before:

LAVT1: It's a matter of the author, it's a thing you don't touch. If everything is correct, and you just don't like it, or what I've often heard, "I have never heard about it", that is not an argument, or "I would never say it like that".

When asked about the kinds of corrections they disagreed with, AVT3 pointed out an important issue he had encountered. As a person who is not originally from the Croatian capital of Zagreb, he noted that while working in Zagreb, proofreaders who were Zagreb natives would sometimes correct his attempts to use his variety in Croatian. One such example was the word *lega*, an informal expression frequently heard on the streets of Osijek, the fourth largest city in Croatia, meaning "mate" or "pal":

AVT3: Some of them were rude, like, I don't know, there was a conversation where I used *lega*, because I had to use many synonyms for the word friend, so I used *kompa* and so on. Of all the words, *lega* bothered her.

He noted that only *lega* was corrected, while other, equally informal expressions more frequent in Zagreb were considered acceptable. AVT3 also reflected on the

experience of using his native variety of Croatian and the way some proofreaders reacted to it:

AVT3: There were some bad ones, of course. Some of them were really rude, especially to us Slavonians. Working in Zagreb, where the Zagreb dialect was pushed, and all Slavonian elements were completely erased.

Participants noted that proofreaders sometimes worked in a hurry, while also trying to follow the client's rules.

AVT2: Once, when the proofreader was in a rush, she did not look at the movie, and so there is a rule that we cannot use *traka*, but *vrpca*, they don't like *tamo*, they have *ondje* and *ovdje*, it's a rule that *ovdje* and *ondje* exist, and *tamo* does not, and the proofreader corrected the song "Hello darkness, my old friend", it said "Zdravo, *tamo*, *dragi prijatelju*", and the proofreader, not watching the movie, corrected *tama*, darkness, into *ondje*. They also don't allow *traka*, it has to be *vrpca*, and the same proofreader saw *traka*, *preticajna traka*, and she changed it to *vrpca* on autopilot.

AVT1 also reflected on the issue of proofreaders working in a hurry, pointing out the importance of communication in such cases:

AVT1: This can happen when the proofreader is in a hurry, if they don't have enough time, maybe not enough time to call. They are aware that this can happen, and they call us now, this could have happened ten years ago when they were unaware that these kinds of mistakes could happen without communication.

The issue of the rules set by the client, as well as other external circumstances, was also a topic of discussion during the interview, and they will be further analyzed in the following section.

5.3. Circumstances

The final area translators touched upon were circumstances, due to the power imbalance between proofreaders, translators, and clients, as well as because of external circumstances, such as short deadlines and low pay. The first issue that the translators touched upon was that of power relations, as the translators need to navigate between the client's rules, their own employment status, as well as normative standards for Croatian they need to follow.

The participants also brought up the issue of translation fees and the decline in the quality of service related to a reduction in translation fees. They described that

due to the lowering of translation and proofreading fees, the quality of their translation, as well as the quality of proofreading, might be affected.

5.3.1. Power relations

The first issue participants brought up was the issue of power relations between translators and proofreaders, and the client. AVT1 and AVT2 described the difference in power at the Croatian public broadcaster between proofreaders and translators:

AVT1: Proofreaders are usually in-house, we are freelancers. It would be great if the status of the translators was improved, so that we were in-house, not freelancers. Maybe this contributes to the fact that translators shrink back from proofreaders from the start, because they are employed there and you feel [they have] more authority, and you are just a small freelancer on the outside.

AVT2: They also have somebody above them, some academics who created and determined the rules for them, and then poor proofreaders, they are not poor, but because somebody said so, it has to be like this.

The issue with certain prescriptivist rules was also described by the translators who had experience working for HRT, as it is stipulated by the Law on Croatian Radio-Television that they must use the Croatian language and Latin script unless otherwise determined (Law on Croatian Radio-Television, 2001). However, the translators had mixed reactions to those rules. LAVT2 noted that occasionally, these rules meant that their translations were made more rigid by proofreaders, like changing the Croatian equivalent of "hi" to *bog* or *zdravo*, which are more formal and/or outdated, as opposed to a more informal *bok*. LAVT2 described it as:

LAVT2: And yet, there are some proofreaders who, let's say, really stick to some kind of possibly prescriptivist rules and have some ideas about which words are undesirable in Croatian just because of their origin, be it Serbian origin, Turkish, or something else.

AVT1, who also touched upon the rules set by the client, the public broadcaster, described it as such:

AVT1: It seems to me the client has certain rules, which have become normal to me over the years. If you work for somebody, you stick to certain rules, and of course, when cooperating, those rules can sometimes be circumvented, they are not always as rigid as it seems.

Of course, this does not mean that all translators disagreed with all of the corrections which were meant to improve the translation upon the correct usage of the language, as AVT2 pointed out:

AVT2: They trained us, and I know what should not be used. They really take care of the language and try to avoid as many foreign expressions as possible.

However, AVT2 also said both translators and proofreaders, in the end, need to adhere to the rules set by the client when working for the public broadcaster. When comparing it to working for private clients, she noted that there was less feedback in general, and she did not need to stick to the rules as much when it came to working with private companies.

Another example where the client's rules were prioritized in corrections was described by LT1:

LT1: I think that the publishing house has the right to have its own rules, which the translator should respect, but I did not agree with some of them, but I mean, it just wasn't worth it to me to advocate for some solutions because it's not like I had arguments, both are fine.

When talking about rules and authority, another issue was brought up by LT2, who described a situation where a proofreader insisted on following the rules prescribed by one grammar book, whereas she followed another. LT2 said it would be best if it was first agreed upon universal rules which should be followed. The kind of situation LT2 described is related to the fact that, in Croatia, there are multiple orthography guides the proofreaders can choose from, and some of them differ in certain aspects (Volenc 2015, 70). This can lead to corrections where the proofreader opted to follow one orthography guide, whereas the translator followed the advice from another.

LT2: We have multiple orthography books, and the rules are not the same in all of them. And it's a big issue, both with dealing with proofreaders and working in general.

5.3.2. External circumstances

Another issue that was brought up was related to external circumstances, notably time and pay, which greatly influence the ability to maintain a full translation workflow:

AT3: For companies, saving money is often the most important part, and so they decide if something will be proofread or not. If they don't have enough money for a project, then a proofreader is skipped, and of course, this does not depend on us.

Even though proofreaders are sometimes excluded from workflows, all of the participants agreed they are an important part of the translation process, as they all agreed that feedback, and having a second pair of eyes on a translation, is crucial. The issue of low translation rates was mentioned by LAVT2, who also noted that it can lead to more errors:

LAVT2: I noticed that, ever since the prices dropped, the translations have been getting worse, and proofreaders make mistakes, they don't correct some grammatical errors and stuff because they are in a hurry, to do it quickly and make some money. This does not depend on us, since the market is forcing us to do a worse job because we cannot dedicate ourselves to our job. We are rarely adequately paid, and given adequate deadlines to do it right.

6. Discussion and conclusion

Overall, the translators who took part in these interviews expressed a positive attitude toward working with proofreaders. Translators stressed the importance of three aspects of collaborating with proofreaders. Firstly, communication was described as a significant aspect of the translation process. The value of feedback, as well as being able to communicate about issues the participants encountered during the translation process was brought up, and all the participants commented on the importance of having an open channel of communication with the proofreaders. Translators noted that the proofreaders who were willing to explain their corrections and who were open to questions or discussions, were considered to be more cooperative, which led to a better perception of these professionals.

Audiovisual translators who worked for the Croatian public broadcaster, HRT, especially stressed how much they enjoyed being able to communicate with proofreaders and knowing what happened with their translation afterward, as well as being able to learn from the corrections they received. When comparing it to working for private companies, some said there was a difference in the level of communication they had with proofreaders, noting they preferred being able to get

more feedback. Literary translators also expressed a preference for being able to communicate with proofreaders, although they sometimes were not able to do so.

Being able to communicate with proofreaders when necessary was also stressed by Robert, Remael, and Ureel (2017, 14) and Mossop (2019, 198), who touched upon the importance of interpersonal competence when working with revisers. The desire for collaboration was also expressed by Valdez and Vandepitte's (2020, 162) participants. This goes to show that the importance of communication, as well as collaboration, during the translation process, seems to be universally necessary.

It can be concluded that the motivation for communication is linked to the fact that translators wanted to be able to learn from proofreaders' feedback. Having the ability to collaborate with proofreaders also meant translators were able to improve their translations and ask questions when in doubt. The participants said, however, that even though proofreaders' suggestions for improvements were welcome, they did not want unnecessary preferential changes, which just took more time out of their day to correct those errors, mirroring what Valdez and Vandepitte's (2020, 162) participants expressed about preferential changes. As opposed to the predominantly negative attitude the participants in Valdez and Vandepitte's research had toward changes made during the revision stage, the participants of this study mostly felt the changes suggested by the proofreaders were welcome, unless they were preferential, or if the proofreaders tried to do their job for them. Valdez and Vandepitte's research focused on translators who are specialized in a certain field of translation, whereas audiovisual and literary translators work with a broader range of subjects, which can explain the differences in the attitudes that were expressed.

The participants also noted that having a proofreader meant they had a second pair of eyes on the translation, who could spot certain errors, such as "translationese" (Mossop 2019, 115), i.e., too literal translations, where the text sounds like a translation. This aspect of the proofreaders was also described by Robert, Remael, and Ureel (2017, 14) as revision routine activation, that is, applying standard revision operations that lead to acceptable target language solutions. When the translators were asked about the corrections they received in the past, they were required to give examples of corrections they find welcome, as well as corrections they do not find welcome. Corrections related to grammatical

errors, typos, punctuation, spelling, word order as well as “translationese” were considered welcome, and described as examples of corrections that improve the overall quality of the translation. The participants expressed that they were very grateful when proofreaders spot these kinds of errors, as they are usually caused by working in a hurry, or a drop in concentration. Being able to correct this kind of error is in line with *revision routine activation* as well (Robert, Remael, and Ureel 2017, 14).

In contrast, translators described some kinds of corrections they did not find welcome. Along with preferential changes, the translators pointed out they sometimes noticed that proofreaders over-corrected certain parts of the translation, also described as “hyper-revision” or “over-revision” by Mossop (1992, 85). Another issue was correcting one’s native dialect, deeming it incorrect, for which the proofreader gave the argument they had never heard that expression before. Participants also pointed out the issue of prescriptivism, where certain unnecessary corrections were made, be it because the proofreader automatically corrected the expression before looking at the context, or because the proofreader did not have enough time to go through the translation in detail. Usually, these kinds of corrections were motivated by rules set either by Croatian language experts or by the client, who opted for a certain expression as the correct one and advised the translator and proofreader to avoid using other, equally legitimate expressions. This reflects the opinions expressed by Kovačec (2000, 125), and Samardžija (2000, 27), who noted that proofreaders deal with the issue of flawed normative literature or the political situation, where they have to resort to subjective decision-making. However, as opposed to predominantly negative views that Croatian linguists expressed about proofreaders, especially with relation to their subjectivity, and mentions of linguistic purism, the participants expressed mostly positive views of proofreaders, especially when it comes to the proofreaders that were willing to collaborate with translators, listen to their reasoning and arguments, and take them into account during the proofreading process. As the experience that the participants described is predominantly positive, this could be a possible indication that the attitudes toward proofreaders are changing, and that they might not be perceived in the mainly negative way described by Croatian linguists in the past.

The third category brought up from the interviews was the issue of circumstance. Continuing with the theme of the rules set by the client or commissioner of the translation, the translators mentioned, because proofreaders are usually in-house, while translators are usually freelancers, that translators sometimes, especially at the beginning of their careers, felt like proofreaders were closer to the client. Therefore, the proofreaders' opinions held more weight when it came to making the decision on which correction should be implemented. The translators said, however, that this had changed over the years, as they grew more familiar and comfortable with the proofreaders they worked with, and that having an interpersonal connection made them feel more comfortable expressing an opinion on the translation.

The issue of prescriptivism was brought up by the translators who had experience working for Croatian Radio-Television, HRT, the public broadcaster, which is legally obliged to use the Croatian language in their programs, and this meant sometimes adhering to more prescriptivist rules than the translators used in their personal life. In this case, the translators mostly opted for loyalty to the commissioner (cf. Nord 1997), as they had the final say in the translation. This sort of power relation was also brought up by literary translators, who reported that some publishing houses had their own set of rules, usually modelled on normative literature. Importantly, in the end, neither translators nor proofreaders, or even clients, have the final say in what the correct form of the Croatian language is, as Croatian language experts create normative literature on the correct forms of Croatian (Starčević, Kapović, and Sarić 2019, 12). Even Croatian language experts themselves are, in a way, influenced by the previous generation of Croatian language experts, active during the 1990s, who were part of the political ideology of nationalism, and linguistic purity, which aimed to purge foreign influence from the Croatian language, and therefore, Croatian society.

Opting for loyalty to the commissioner does not mean that the translators had no final say on what their translations would be like, or no authority to decide if certain expressions should be used. Many translators pointed out that, by communicating with proofreaders, they were sometimes able to circumvent certain rules or find a better solution that fits the context and respects the rules that they need to follow. Proofreaders, in a way, served as mediators between translators

and the client, making sure the quality of the translation was sufficient for the client's demands, as well as understandable to the target audience, which echoes Mossop's (2011, 135) definition of revision, with an emphasis on quality, as well as ISO 17100:2015, both of which emphasize the role revision has in making sure that the purpose of the translation is fulfilled.

Lastly, when the translators were asked about external issues which affect the relations between translators and proofreaders, the participants noted that a drop in translation fees, as well as short deadlines, can significantly affect the quality of the final translation, as both translators and proofreaders do not have sufficient time to fully dedicate themselves to their job. This sentiment mirrors the attitudes that the participants had in the research conducted by Valdez and Vandepitte's (2020, 161), who stress the importance of realistic deadlines to avoid mistakes that arise from rushed translations.

In conclusion, Croatian audiovisual and literary translators expressed the desire for collaborative work with proofreaders to create a better version of the final translation. The participants had mostly positive attitudes toward proofreaders, and they appreciated having another person go over their translation.

6.2. Limitations and future research

This research covered the attitudes Croatian audiovisual and literary translators have toward Croatian proofreaders, and the sample only consisted of translators specialized in those two areas. To get a more complete view of the Croatian situation, translators specializing in other areas of translation, as well as other kinds of revision, should be examined.

Another topic worthy of future research is the attitudes proofreaders have toward working with translators, as this would show the other side of the coin, as well as compare their attitudes and beliefs toward one another. Throughout the interviews, external influences which affect the translation process, such as deadlines, payment, as well as client expectations were touched upon, and they also open avenues for future research.

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STAVOVI AUDIOVIZUALNIH I KNJIŽEVNIH PREVODITELJA PREMA LEKTURI PRIJEVODA

Sažetak

Prije objave, prijevod se ispravlja i prolazi redakturu. Redakturu prijevoda može obavljati prevoditelj na vlastitom tekstu, a može je raditi i drugi prevoditelji, kao i stručnjak za određeno područje. U Hrvatskoj neke televizijske i izdavačke kuće zapošljavaju lektore kako bi pregledali prijevod. Cilj istraživanja je ispitati kako prevoditelji gledaju na lekturu prijevoda. U sklopu istraživanja proveden je polustrukturirani intervju s književnim i audiovizualnim prevoditeljima. Sudionici su iskazali želju za komunikacijom s lektorima da bi stekli iskustvo, riješili nedoumice i pronašli najbolja prijevodna rješenja te da bi dobili povratnu informaciju. Prevoditelji su izrazili stav da se slažu s ispravicima koji poboljšavaju kvalitetu prijevoda, međutim, ne slažu se s preferencijalnim ispravicima. Naposljetku, istražena je i uloga vanjskih čimbenika u suradnji prevoditelja i lektora.

Ključne riječi: lektori, prevoditelji, književni i audiovizualni prijevod, redaktura, intervju