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Methodological constraints and possible solutions in identifying indirectness in literary translations into Croatian

Snježana Veselica Majhut

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Zagreb University

sveselic@m.ffzg.hr

This paper has provided an overview of methodological constraints hampering larger-scale research on indirect translation. Since the 2000s a growing academic focus on indirect translation, a phenomenon for long marginalized by Translation Studies scholars, can be observed, in particular among scholars coming from the so called “peripheral” languages and cultures. However, methodological difficulties, coupled with conceptual and terminological inconsistencies, encumber the development of a more systematic and mutually comparable body of knowledge about indirect translation in various linguacultural contexts and translation domains. In this paper a particular attention has been paid to the methodological issues related to the collection of data on indirect translations of literary texts into Croatian. The use of various sources, ranging from bibliographies and national libraries catalogues to reference works is discussed, followed by an analysis of peritextual elements that can be symptomatic of the directness of translation. Among peritextual elements particularly indicative is the title, as has been shown on the example of the first Croatian translation of *The Prince and the Pauper* (1907) by Mark Twain and the first Croatian translation of Agatha Christie’s *Three-Act Tragedy* (1961). The discussion of methodological steps that can be used in such research is illustrated with examples drawn from my previous and current research on Croatian literary translation practices, with the aim to illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of the available sources and methods applied. Although in the Croatian context indirect translation has been abundantly practised, and is still widely present, this phenomenon is still not in the focus of Croatian translation scholars. A more extensive and sustained research of indirect translation into Croatian could bring valuable insights into the hidden dynamics of cross-cultural transfers through translation, and thus contribute to our knowledge about Croatian translation history as an integral part of cultural historiography as well as to our knowledge of contemporary translation practices in Croatia.

Keywords: indirect translation, cross-cultural exchange, peripheral language, bibliographic sources, paratext

1. Introduction

Research on indirect translation (ITr) can bring interesting insights, as it opens up a universe of intricate cultural dynamics and intercultural exchanges in Europe beyond the so-called dominant or central cultures. As it is commonly assumed that the communication between peripheral language groups is often conducted via a more central language, a growing interest in ITr comes mainly from “scholars linked to (semi)peripheral languages like Catalan, Chinese, Dutch, Hebrew, the Scandinavian languages etc.” (Ringmar 2012: 141). The concepts of hyper central, central, and peripheral languages were introduced to Translation Studies (TS) by Johan Heilbron (1999, 2010), who views the international translation system as a hierarchical structure in which languages occupy hyper central, central, semi-central and peripheral positions, the criterion of a language’s position being the share of book translations done using it as a source language (SL). Thus, as Heilbron further elaborates (2010: 2-3), today the hyper central position is occupied by English, a SL of 55 to 60 per cent of all book translations on the global market for translations. German and French (with a share of 10 per cent on the global translation market) have central positions while a semi-central position is taken by languages like Italian, Spanish and Russian. All the other languages, irrespective of the number of their speakers, have a peripheral position in the world system.

It should also be noted that the prestige status and centrality of a language is historically conditioned. Therefore, the position of English as a hyper central language, and consequently, as a mediating language (ML) for translations from some peripheral languages into other peripheral languages has not always been such. In Croatia, owing to historical circumstances, throughout the 19th century, and still in the early 20th century, German was used as an ML for the majority of translations of English and, even French, literary works into Croatian (cf. Filipović 1972: 9-69). However, apart from a few case studies, more extensive and systematic research on ITr as a means of mediating literary works into the corpus of Croatian translated literature, though much needed, is still lacking. Therefore, having this in mind, the aim of this paper is to provide an overview of methodological constraints and possible avenues to overcome them, which may stimulate Croatian TS scholars to conduct more extensive research of ITr practices into Croatian.

2. Emergence of indirect translation as a productive area of TS research

Among the first to highlight the importance of ITr was Gideon Toury, who in his seminal book *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*¹ devotes an entire chapter to ITr. Toury points out that researching ITr “especially if regular patterns can be detected, should be taken as evidence of the forces which have shaped

¹ First published in 1995. All the references in this paper are to the revised edition published in 2012.

the culture in question, including its concept of translation" (2012: 161), thus emphasizing that studies of ITr can be an important source of our understanding of a target culture (TC) and the dynamics of cross-cultural relations. It should also be noted that within his conceptualisation of translation as a socio-culturally embedded, norm-governed activity, Toury views directness of translation as one of the two preliminary norms². According to Toury, the relevant research questions regarding ITr involve

[t]he threshold of tolerance for translating from languages other than the ultimate SLs: is indirect translation permitted at all? In translating from what languages / text-types / periods (etc.) is it permitted / preferred / prohibited / tolerated?... Is there a tendency ignored / camouflaged, maybe even denied? If the fact is mentioned, is there a tendency / obligation to mark a translation as having been mediated, and is the identity of the mediating language made known? And is the language mentioned as a mediator necessarily the one which has served the translator? (2012: 82).

However, though practiced since ancient times, ITr has, as noted above, only recently become an object of more systematic research within Translation Studies (TS). The reason for the marginalization of ITr as a research topic, may be the conventional view, shared by both translation scholars and translators, of this activity as inferior to direct translation, which again may be traced down to the view of translation itself as a derivative, and therefore inferior, activity (cf. Ringmar 2012, Assis Rosa et al. 2017, Baer 2024).

However, since the 2000s the phenomenon of ITr has gained more, though still fragmented, attention from translation scholars. The growing scholarly interest in this phenomenon is evident from a recent increase in the number of publications and academic events addressing various aspects of this phenomenon. Recently, several books, both monographs (Špirk 2014, Pięta et al. 2022, Hadley 2023) and edited volumes (Assis Rosa et al. 2017, and Pięta et al. 2022), as well as contributions to TS journals (Dollerup 2000; Marin La Carta 2017, Pięta, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2017; Ringmar 2007, 2015; Assis Rosa 2013, Washbourne 2013, Baer 2024) have been published. Further, three special issues of TS journals were dedicated specifically to ITr (*Translation Studies*, Vol. 10, Issue 2, 2017; *Target*, Vol. 34, Issue 3, 2022; *Translation Spaces* Vol. 12, Issue 1, 2023). Also, in 2013 the University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies (ULICES) organized within the IndirectTrans 1 Project a conference dedicated to ITr³, which was followed by two panels at recent conferences of the European Society for Translation Studies (ESTS) addressing ITr (a panel discussion titled "Indirect Translation: State-of-the-art and Future Research Avenues," held at the 7th European Society for Translation Studies (EST) Congress "Translation Studies: Centers and Peripheries" held at Universität Mainz in 2013; a panel discussion titled "Indirect translation in the world we live

² The second preliminary norm refers to "the existence and actual nature of a translation policy" (Toury 2012: 82).

³ The Indirect Trans 1 project was a national, exploratory project focused on indirect translation of English literature into Portuguese during the first half of the 20th century.

in” at the 9th EST Congress “Living Translation: People, Processes, Products” held at Stellenbosch University, South Africa in 2019). In addition, entries on ITr are included in recent editions of referential TS literature, such as *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English* (2000), *Handbook of Translation Studies* (2012, 2021), and *Dictionary of Translation Studies* (1997).

When emphasizing the long historical presence of the practice of ITr, scholars (Dollerup 2000, Zogbo 2009, Assis Rosa et al. 2017) usually refer to translations of the Bible, which “for over a millennium [...] was available primarily in the form of indirect translations” (Blumczynski 2019: 43). In medieval Europe, ancient Greek texts and the Qur’an were translated indirectly, and this involved a highly complex process entailing intricate textual chains, as described by Theo Hermans:

In 1550, Thomas Nicholls published an English translation of Thucydides that was based on the French version of 1527 by Claude de Seyssel which was itself based on the Latin version by Lorenzo Valla of the original Greek. An anonymous Dutch Qur’an of 1641, purportedly printed in Hamburg but almost certainly in Amsterdam, derived from a German version that derived from an Italian version that derived from a medieval Latin version of the Arabic text. (2022: 119)

Another often quoted example is the first Russian translation of *One Thousand and One Nights* made from French as an ML, which was not an isolated incident but a consistent practice in 18th century Russia, as described by Adalyat Issiyeva (2021: 127):

Rather than consulting sources in their original languages, *Russian literati translated Arabic and Persian works from existing translations in French*, a language they were already fluent in. The Quran, as well as Arabic and Persian poetry, including *One Thousand and One Nights*, were known in Russian from French translations by André du Ryer and Antoine Galland.” (my emphasis)

As Toury points out (2012: 161), the reasons for recourse to ITr should not be simply reduced to a lack of competent translators in the SL, but should rather be seen as the result of intricate webs of cultural influences and historically conditioned changes in the prestige of certain languages as mediating agents. Toury illustrates his standpoint on the example of the development of Hebrew literature, which is characterized by “a symptomatic reversal of roles of two languages/cultures, German and English, as mediating and mediated agents.” (2012: 162).

Today, ITr is a widely present practice in various translation domains apart from literary translation: audiovisual translation, interpreting, and news translation, to name just a few⁴. With the onset of globalization, which imposes an increasing need for immediate interlingual translations of written or spoken

⁴ Limited by the scope of this article I will refer the reader to find more on ITr in audio-visual translation in Pięta et al. (2024), on ITr in interpreting in Pöschhacker (2022) and for the practice of ITr in news translation in Valdeón (2022).

material, it is expected that ITr will be an ever increasingly used mode of text or speech transfer from one peripheral language to another.

3. Conceptual and terminological issues regarding indirect translation

3.1 Terminological inconsistencies

Metalinguistic reading of Chapter 9 in Toury's *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* devoted to ITr reveals a problem pertinent to research on ITr: terminological inconsistency. While the chapter itself is titled "A lesson from indirect translation", a paragraph or two below Toury interchangeably uses the terms "second-hand translation" (2012: 162) and "mediated translations" (ibid.). Moreover, Toury's use of a set of interchangeable terms to refer to a single phenomenon is not an isolated example. Rather, terminological inconsistency with regard to referring to ITr as an object of study has persisted since Toury's introduction of ITr as a phenomenon deserving scholarly attention within the Descriptive Translation Studies paradigm. For example, Ringmar (2007) uses the hybrid solution "indirect (mediated) translation (ITr)" while in his entry in *The Handbook of Translation Studies* (2012), he uses the term "relay translation". As Assis Rosa et al. point out, terminological instability is an indicator that the concept of ITr is "still largely undertheorized" and that "research has not kept pace with the rapidly evolving practice" (2017:113)⁵.

It should also be noted that there does not seem to be consensus regarding the term to be used to refer to ITr within the Croatian TS community. For example, Pavlović (2015) uses the term "neizravan prijevod" while in a few case studies of ITr (cf. Drkić 2021, Jerkin 2023), as well as in translation criticism done by translators (Bukvić Pažin 2020, Badić 2022) the term "posredan prijevod" is used. Both solutions have their advantages and disadvantages: "neizravan prijevod" is a literal translation of the English term "indirect translation" and has its obvious antonym in "izravan prijevod" ("direct translation"). On the other hand, it has little potential for generating adequate terms to refer to an intervening language or text, both necessary elements in ITr. "Posredan prijevod" may be more transparent. Further, it offers the possibility of using "posrednički jezik" or "jezik posrednik", and "posrednički tekst" to refer to a mediating or intervening language and a mediating text.

In this paper I will consistently use the term "indirect translation", which is in line with the suggestion by Assis Rosa et al. (2017), thus supporting the efforts to introduce and maintain metalanguage consistency and overcome "messy" terminology (Pym 2011: 80). Concluding a comprehensive overview of terminological solutions used to refer to ITr, both as text and product, and the mediating texts and languages involved, Assis Rosa et al. (2017: 115) suggest the

⁵ Assis Rosa et al. (2017: 115-118) provide a thorough overview of various terminological solutions used in literature taking into account various language traditions and translation domains.

following designations: “the ultimate ST/SL > mediating text/language > ultimate TT/TL”, which are used in this paper.

3.2 *The concept of indirect translation*

An often-quoted definition of ITr is the one proposed by Kittel and Frank (1991: 3), which defines an ITr as a translation which is “based on a source (or sources) which is itself a translation into a language other than the language of the original, or the target language”⁶. In a similar vein, Gambier (1994: 413), defines ITr as “a translation of a translation”. Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997: 176) define ITr⁷, as “the procedure whereby a text is not translated directly from an original ST, but via an intermediate translation in another language.” However, as the research into ITr in various domains has developed, it has become evident that the actual practice of ITr may be more complex and involve more than two STs or two languages. Having this in mind, Dollerup (2000) argues for a distinction between a “relay translation” and a “support translation” pointing out that the complexity of this phenomenon in practice requires that we distinguish between situations where a translation from a language other than the language of the original is not intended primarily for an audience (for example, in court proceedings in Denmark where a witness statement is translated from Thai into English and then from English into Danish) and the situations in which an intermediary translation is produced for an audience of its own. In the first case, the term suggested by Dollerup is “indirect translation” (2000: 3). The term proposed for the latter situation is “relay translation” (ibid.), an already well-established term in interpreting. In addition to the suggestion that a distinction be made between “relay translation” and “indirect translation”, which does not seem to have been accepted, Dollerup draws attention to another aspect, related to the translation process, and labels it “support translation”. By support translation Dollerup means

[t]he strategy in which, translating a given source text, translators check translations into languages other than their own target language in order to see whether colleagues have found satisfactory solutions to certain problems - usually only to find that it is the same passages which prove problematic to translators in related languages. (2000: 8)

This, assumingly often used strategy, is illustrated by an example provided by Ewbank (qtd. in Dollerup 2000: 8-9) according to which Bertold Brecht translated Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus* using a number of source texts (STs): two editions in English and a modern German translation as well as consulting Latin

⁶ If not otherwise indicated all the translations are done by the author.

⁷ A lack of terminological consistency regarding ITr is also visible in the way Shuttleworth and Cowie formulate the relevant entry. In addition to “indirect translation” they provide a number of synonymous terms in brackets: “intermediate translation”, “mediated translation”, “retranslation”, and “second-hand translation”.

historians Livy and Plutarch. I should note that a similar example from Croatian translation history is documented by Filipović, who says that Stanko Vraz “when translating from English was in some cases quite cautious. Translating the first half of Byron’s *Sužnja šilonskoga*⁸, he helped himself with Bottger’s translation into German, but two years later translated the second half without the help of the German edition.” (1972:17)

In order to be able to analyse the complexities of ITr in practice, the issue that deserves attention is how many STs and SLs are actually involved, whether two or more than two. Assis Rosa et al. provide a comprehensive discussion of possibilities found in practice and propose a typology of ITr that would take them into account. Thus, they propose to distinguish between the following subtypes of ITr:

- Direct vs. Indirect translation (using the Ultimate Source Text(s) vs. using Mediating Source Texts);
- Compilative Indirect Translation (using more than one Mediating Text);
- Mixed Indirect Translation (using both the Ultimate Source Text and Mediating Text(s));
- Hidden or Open Indirect translation (whether camouflaged as such or openly and explicitly presented as an indirect translation). (2017: 13)

While this classification is useful as it enables us to account for a variety of actually used modes of ITr, one should also bear in mind that drawing a distinction between the proposed subtypes may present further challenges for the researcher, in particular in situations in which insight into the very translation process is not possible. For example, as explained above, “mixed indirect translation” may not be easily detected relying exclusively on bibliographic sources. Still, examining the online catalogue of the Croatian National and University Library (NSK) I have found an example of bibliographically recorded “mixed indirect translation”. Thus, the Croatian translation of John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s progress from this world to that which is to come* (first published in two parts in 1678 and 1684) was published in Croatian in 1937 under the title *Put kršćanina iz “grada Propada na goru Sion”*. The bibliographic record, based on the information in the peritext, reads: “prema engleskom originalu i češkom prevodu preveo i uredio te prvo izdanje na hrvatskom jeziku izdao uz pomoć američkih sestara Vacek Vinko” (Vacek Vinko translated and edited the first edition in the Croatian language according to the English original and Czech translation and published it with the help of the American sisters).⁹

It should also be noted that the above discussed conceptualizations understand ITr in its narrow sense, i.e. basically as a translation that uses a translation into a language other than the SL. However, Gambier (1994) and Assis Rosa et al. (2017) acknowledged that in its broad sense ITr may include a large variety of

⁸ *The Prisoner of Chillon* (1816).

⁹ Published by “Merkantile” in the publishing series “Biblioteka B. M. R.”

interlinguistic and intermodal processes and products, such as, for example, the adaptation of a film or video game that is based on a book: when a written text is translated into image and sound and from there again into a written text. (cf. Pięta 2021: 113). In the following overview of methodological constraints and possible options to overcome them, ITr is understood in its narrow sense.

4. Methodological challenges in detecting indirect translations

No matter what the purpose of a particular study of ITr might be, the first necessary step is to detect a set of ITrs in the target literary system. A fairly well-established set of methodological steps is described in the literature (Ringmar 2007, Marin-Lacarta 2017, Ivaska 2020) and applied in a number of case studies (Coll-Vinent 1998, He 2001, Boulogne 2009, Akkalyeva et al. 2021, Allwood 2021).

In the following sections I will outline the major sources of data and methodological options that can be used to uncover literary ITrs into Croatian. The discussion of methodological possibilities that can be used in order to detect ITrs of texts belonging to diverse literary genres and produced in various periods is illustrated with examples from my previous and current research on literary ITr into Croatian.

4.1. Bibliographic sources

Research of indirect literary translations is fraught with a number of methodological constraints, which complicate the extraction of data and make it a really laborious process. The first obstacle is related to detecting hidden or camouflaged ITrs, whose degree of hiddenness reveals the attitudes towards directness of translation in a given TC, which could then be interpreted as indications of the dominant preliminary norm of directness of translation.

The obvious source of data are bibliographic sources, among which the most commonly used are national libraries catalogues. To a certain degree, the reliability of the National and University Library (NSK) catalogue depends on the period for which research on translations into Croatian is to be done. Since 1997 all publishers in Croatia have been obliged to send a copy of each book published to the NSK (the so-called legal deposit), but this regulation is not always obeyed, which means that one cannot be certain that all published translations are registered in the catalogue. This is even more acute when a study of ITrs from historically distant periods is to be conducted. A valuable resource of bibliographic data on older translations is "Građa za hrvatsku retrospektivnu bibliografiju knjiga: 1835 – 1940" (Material for a Croatian retrospective bibliography of books: 1835-1940), which contains the list of Croatian books and other publications considered to be books in the period covered. The criteria for the inclusion of books in "Građa" are Croatian author, Croatian language and the Croatian territory, "Građa" contains bibliographic data on the translations into Croatian published in book form from 1835 to 1940. A valuable source of data on literary translations into Croatian

in the post-World War 2 period is *Svjetska književnost u hrvatskim prijevodima :1945-1985.:bibliografija*. In the preface to this bibliography (Dragojević and Cacan 1988: 5) it is said that the main sources used in its compilation, in addition to the NSK catalogue, were existing bibliographies in books and journals. As for that period there was no obligation of legal deposit in place, this means that data on some translations not included in the NSK catalogue could be found here.

Among the bibliographic sources applicable to TS research, though not specifically to research on ITr, I should highlight the UNESCO *Index Translationum* site. The *Index Translationum* is a list of books translated in the world, i.e. an international bibliography of translations. The database contains cumulative bibliographical information on books translated and published in about a hundred of UNESCO's Member States since 1979. However, since the database is based on data voluntarily submitted by UNESCO Member States, its completeness depends on national contributions. In addition, since 2012 the *Index Translationum* has not been updated due to a lack of national submissions.

However, the crucial point with regard to the reliability of all the cited bibliographic sources is that their data are provided by publishers and based on the information contained in the peritext. The conventions of cataloguing have changed considerably over time and at the moment each bibliographic record in the NSK catalogue follows the International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD) rules and provides the following categories of data or fields: type of publication, author, title, imprint, material description, note, content, ISBN (International Standard Book Number) and UDC (Universal Decimal Classification), information on the physical location of a book copy in the library and information on the other authors. The last field, "other authors", usually includes information on translators, illustrators, authors of forewords or afterwords. For the sake of space limitations, I will illustrate what data could be extracted from the NSK catalogue using a single example of a recently published openly declared ITr.

The Croatian translation of Haruki Murakami's novel *Shikisai o motanai Tazaki Tsukuru to, kare no junrei no toshi* (2013) was published in 2014 by Vuković&Runjić. In the field "title" the following data is provided: *Bezbojni Tsukuru Tazaki i njegove godine hodočašća / Haruki Murakami; [prema engleskom prijevodu Philipa Gabriela] prevela Maja Šoljan ([on the basis of the English translation by Philip Gabriel] translated by Maja Šoljan)*. After the data contained in the imprint (the place of publication, publisher, year of publication) there follows the field "note". This field is particularly interesting for translation scholars as it may contain information on the directness of translation or, in some cases, on the actual MT. In this example, the data provided in "note" are: "Prijevod djela: *Shikisai o motanai Tazaki Tsukuru to, kare no junrei no toshi*; prevedeno prema: *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and his years of pilgrimage*." (Translation of the work: *Shikisai o motanai Tazaki Tsukuru to, kare no junrei no toshi*; translated on the basis of: *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and his years of pilgrimage*). In the field "other authors" both Maja Šoljan, the translator of the Croatian text, which is the ultimate target text (TT), and Gabriel Philip, the translator of the English text, which was used as

a mediating text (MT), are cited. Therefore, this bibliographic record is completely transparent: the Croatian translation is an ITr in which English was used as the mediating language (ML). Further, the information on the ultimate ST, as well as the information on the MT and ML, are included in the bibliographic record. For a TS scholar this means that not much effort should be invested in detecting this ITr or conducting a comparative textual analysis, as the precise information on the MT is provided. However, one will often come across open ITrs that will not contain information on the translator of the MT or edition used. An example illustrating this situation is the bibliographic record of the Croatian translation of Jo Nesbø's novel *Flaggermusmannen* published by "Profil" in 2013 under the title *Šišmiš*. The field "title" reads: "Šišmiš / Jo Nesbø ; preveo s njemačkoga Dalibor Joler (Šišmiš/Jo Nesbø; translated from German by Dalibor Joler). In the field "note" it is said that it is "Prijevod djela: Flaggermusmannen" (Translation of the work: Flaggermusmannen). While it is acknowledged that the ML is German there is no data on the actual MT and the author of the MT, which presents an obstacle for conducting a comparative textual analysis.

The further back to the past one goes, the information on the directness of translation contained in the peritext, and consequently in the bibliographic record, is less transparent. On the one hand, this may present more obstacles for a researcher. On the other, a lack of transparency is quite revealing about the attitude of the TC towards the directness or indirectness of literary translation. Let me take an example of the Croatian translation of *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807) by Charles and Mary Lamb. The Croatian translation of *Tales* by Julije Benešić was published by "Knjižara L. Hartman (St. Kugli)" in 1918 under the title *Priče iz Šekspira*. The bibliographic record, extracted from the peritext, in the field "title" says: "engleski složili Charles i Mary Lamb ; po njemačkoj preradbi Elze Dorn preveo Julije Benešić" (put together in English by Charles and Mary Lamb; translated by Julije Benešić on the basis of the German adaptation by Elza Dorn).¹⁰ It is interesting to note that in 1945 "Suvremena naklada" published Benešić's translation again in the series "Knjige za mladež" (Books for Young Adults). While the first edition by Kugli contained seven coloured tables produced by Czech painter and illustrator Artur Scheiner, the edition published in 1945 was illustrated by prominent Croatian painter Ljubo Babić. More important is that in 1918 Benešić's translation is presented in the peritext as an open indirect translation and in 1945 all the traces of its indirectness are erased from the peritext and we are led to think that the Croatian text is a direct translation, while it is actually a "pseudo-direct translation", to borrow the term from Assis Rosa et al. (2017: 123).

Let me take an example of a translation of another type of literature than *Tales from Shakespeare* and published more recently. A globally highly popular photographic book on pregnancy titled *Et barn blir till*, co-authored by Swedish

¹⁰ Elza Dorn is the pseudonym of Else Dormitzer (1877-1958) a German journalist, author, activist and Holocaust survivor. She emigrated from Nuremberg to the Netherlands in 1938, but was eventually deported to Theresienstadt in 1943. In 1951 Dormitzer moved to the UK and reported extensively about her experiences.

physicians, Axel Ingelman-Sunberg and Claes Wirsen, and photojournalist Lennart Nilsson was first published in 1965 by Bonnier, a Swedish publishing house. As Solveig Jülich (2015: 491) describes, the book was a huge success, “with five Swedish editions, translations into English and several other languages, and publication in some twenty countries”. Jülich points out that a few months before the book was first published in Sweden, the American magazine *Life* published “a photo essay on the ‘Drama of Life before Birth’” (2015:492), which captured huge attention, primarily due to realistic pictures of the human foetus. Thus, the publicity the book attracted in the USA, on the book market of the hyper central language, may have prompted its translation into other languages. In 1966, a year after its release in Swedish *Ett barn blir till* was translated into English and published in the USA under the title *A Child is Born* by Dell Publishing. The book was published in Croatian by Zagreb-based “Stvarnost” in 1974 under the title *Život prije rođenja: dokumentacija u slikama o razvoju života čovjeka u majčinu tijelu*. The bibliographic record in the NSK catalogue, based on the information in the peritext is misleading when it comes to establishing whether the Croatian translation is translated from the Swedish ST or from an MT in a third language. According to the bibliographic record in the NSK catalogue, the texts are attributed to Axel Ingelman-Sunberg and Claes Wirsen, the photographs to Lennart Nilsson and the translation to Bosiljka Durst-Živković. The field “note” provides the following data: “Prijevod djela: *Ett barn blir till*” (The translation of the work: *Ett barn blir till*). The provision of the title in Swedish suggests that the translation was done on the basis of the Swedish text. However, an examination of the biographical data on the translator, Bosiljka Durst-Živković, contains no information on her translation activities from Swedish, or her competence in the language. According to the Croatian Biographical Lexicon, Durst-Živković obtained a PhD in histology and worked at the School of Medicine of the University of Zagreb. She published a number of research papers in medical journals while *Život prije rođenja* is the only translation attributed to her. Another step that can be taken and that leads one to suspect that a TT is an ITr is the title, which is evidently different from the Swedish title, whose literal translation into Croatian is “Dijete se rodilo”. Examining the catalogue of The British National Library I found the following record: *A child is born: new photographs of life before birth and up-to-date advice for expectant parents*. Therefore, it was evident that the title of the British edition was expanded and modified in a similar way as the Croatian title. This may be taken as a clue to which ML was actually used. However, this provides the room to formulate only a probabilistic hypothesis, which could be verified either by an interview with the translator and editor of this TT, or a close comparative analysis of the ST, MT, and TT. The latter possibility would require that the researcher have language competence in the three languages involved.

The example of *Život prije rođenja* illustrates that bibliographic sources may be misleading as a departure point in identifying ITrs. At the same time, the reliability of bibliographic sources may largely depend on the period in which the relevant translation was published. A good case in point is the Croatian translation of *Tjästekoivnas son*, an autobiographical novel by August Strindberg, published in

Swedish in 1886 and 1887. It was translated into German as *Der Sohn einer Magd. Die Geschichte der Entwicklung einer Seele* and first published in 1912 by Georg Müller Verlag in Munich in a translation by Emil Schering while the English translation was published a year later, in 1913. According to the NSK catalogue, it was first published in Croatian in 1917 by "Hrvatski štamparski zavod" in the series "Moderna knjižnica" under the title *Sin služavke: [povjest razvitka jedne duše]* (The Son of a Maid: The History of the Development of a Soul) in a translation by D. Zajčić¹¹ and with a preface by prominent Croatian writer Milutin Cihlar Nehajev. No information on the SL of the translation is provided. However, the NSK catalogue contains the record of the reprint of the 1917 translation, published in 1977 by Zagreb-based publisher "Zora" in which the translation is clearly indicated as having been done from German, as could have been guessed on the basis of the title: the Croatian title is a literal translation of the German title.

On the one hand, the inclusion of the indication that *Sin služavke* is an ITr in the 1977 reprint may be interpreted as a sign of changes in attitudes towards ITr. On the other hand, the entry in *Hrvatska enciklopedija* on August Strindberg¹² may lead us to a different conclusion about the perception of translation directness in Croatia. While it is emphasized that the first translation of Strindberg's work into Croatian was published in 1917, and that his complete works were published by "Zora" in 1977, there is no mention of whether these translations were done indirectly or directly from Swedish.

4.2 Titles as a revealing element of the peritext

When the bibliographic records do not provide transparent information on the directness of a translation, a useful peritextual element that can provide a clue about the directness of the translation is the title. Another example illustrating the importance of the title as a red flag for detecting an ITr is a first Croatian translation of Agatha Christie's crime novel *Three-Act Tragedy*, published by Zagreb-based "Stvarnost" in 1964 in the series "Jeftina knjiga" (Cheap Book). The bibliographic record in the NSK online catalogue provides scarce data. The field "title" reads: "Nikotin / Agatha Christie; [prev. Mira Mandić]" ("Nikotin" / Agatha Christie; [transl. Mira Mandić]). The field "note" gives: "Prijevod djela: Three act tragedy" (Translation of the work: *Three act tragedy*)¹³. Therefore, the catalogue record does not contain any clue related to the directness of the translation, while the note that this is the translation of *Three-act tragedy* suggests that the ST of the translation is the original text by Agatha Christie. As the comparison of

¹¹ The full name of the translator is Darko Zajčić.

¹² "Strindberg, August", in: *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje*. Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2013-2026. <https://www.enciklopedija.hr/clanak/strindberg-august>.

¹³ The novel was first published in the United States by Dodd, Mead and Company in 1934 under the title *Murder in Three Acts* and in the UK by the Collins Crime Club in January 1935 under Christie's original title *Three-Act Tragedy*.

the Croatian TT with the assumed ST showed considerable discrepancies, this led me to suspect that I was dealing with an ITr (cf. Veselica Majhut 2012). As no information on the translator was available, it was difficult to hypothesize about a possible ML. However, the title of the Croatian TT, which could not be related to the title of the English ST, proved to be a useful clue. Examination of the titles of the translations of *Three-act tragedy* into other European languages that were published prior to the Croatian translation showed that the titles of the translations into French (*Drame en Trois Actes*), Italian (*Tragedia in tre atti*) and Spanish (*Tragedia en tres actos*) closely follow the English title. Only the translation into German, titled *Nikotin*, was not based on the literal translation of the English title. As the bibliographic data in the online catalogue of the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (DNB) show, the German translation of the novel was published in 1935 by Goldmann under the title *Nikotin* in a translation by Otto Albrecht van Bebber.¹⁴ This, coupled with textual discrepancies between the assumed ST and Croatian TT, seemed to be a significant indication that the translation into Croatian might be an ITr from German. The next step was a comparative textual analysis, which showed that the Croatian TT closely follows the German MT. Therefore, the probabilistic hypothesis formulated on the basis of the peritextual data was verified (cf. Veselica Majhut 2012).

4.3 Prefaces, afterwords, and notes as peritextual clues

Information regarding the directness of translation may also be found in prefaces or afterwords, usually authored by translators, editors or literary scholars. In addition to being a useful source for detecting ITrs, these peritextual elements could be used to analyse the attitudes in a TC towards the directness of translation. Thus, a confirmation of the widely held belief that German was often used as an ML for translations of French literature into Croatian is found, for example, in the foreword to the Croatian translation of Maupassant's novel *Fort comme la mort* (1889), published in 1918. It was translated by Iso Velikanović and published under the title *Jaka kao smrt, roman jednoga slikara* in "Zabavna biblioteka" (1913-1941) (The Entertaining Library). In the foreword, Nikola Andrić, the editor of "Zabavna biblioteka", not only confirms the widespread use of German as an ML for literary translation into Croatian, but also openly repudiates this practice:

Probably no French author has been translated so much into Croatian, *and still -we do not have it translated [...]* novels ("Pierre et Jean" and "Bel-Ami") were published in scandalous translations...*where one can immediately see that these are bad translations of the worst German adaptations.* (my emphasis) (Zabavna biblioteka, set 9, vol. 96-97: 4)

¹⁴ The bibliographic records in the DNB catalogue show that Otto Albrecht van Bebber translated another two detective novels, but there are no other records of his translation activity. However, the bibliographic data show that Van Bebber was an author of several books.

4.4 *The translator's profile*

Another set of indicators suggesting that we might be dealing with an ITr is the profile of the translator, if the translator can be identified. In a large number of earlier translations, translators either used pseudonyms or there is no data on them available. If translators are identifiable, useful data will be extracted by examining their bibliography and biographical data that provide information on what languages they worked with, their level of education, the countries they lived or studied in.

An example of the translator's profile as a source of indications about the directness of translation is the Croatian translation of Agatha Christie's *Lord Edgware Dies*, which was published by Zagreb-based Lykos in 1961 under the title *Trinaest za stolom*. It was translated by Zvonimir Golob (1927-1997), a well-known Croatian translator and poet, who, according to our knowledge and bibliographic records, did not translate from English. His bibliography shows that he translated from German, both in tandem with Irena Vrkljan and autonomously. As a translator, Golob is known for his translations of poetry by Garcia Lorca and Neruda from Spanish. All of these were strong indications that *Trinaest za stolom* might have been translated on the basis of the German MT.

In the next step, the German and Croatian texts were compared and their comparison confirmed the hypothesis that the Croatian translation is an ITr from German. (cf. Veselica Majhut 2012).

Another example where the same sources of data were used to detect an ITr is taken from the corpus of early Croatian translations of Anglophone works of children's literature. In 1907, "Hrvatski pedagoško-književni zbor" (The Croatian Pedagogical-Literary Association) in its series "Knjižnica za mladež" (Library for Young Adults) published the first translation of Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* (1882). The NSK catalogue record cites the following: the title in Croatian *Kraljević i prosjak: pripovijetka za odrasliju mladež* [*The Prince and the Pauper: A Tale for more mature youth*] / Napisao Mark Twain; prevela Marija Fabkovića (written by Mark Twain; translated by Marija Fabković). Again, what is striking at first glance is a shift in the TT's title. Twain's novel was published under the title: *The prince and the pauper: a tale for young people of all ages*. The available biographical data show that Marija Fabković (1833 – 1915) was a Croatian teacher, pedagogue and translator. Born and educated in Prague, in 1873 she passed an exam qualifying her to work as a teacher in schools in Vienna. In addition to her pedagogical work, Fabković "translated from the French, German and Czech language for Croatian pedagogical and literary journals and magazines, and wrote over a hundred articles and other contributions."¹⁵ Therefore, the translator's educational background led me to check the titles of the translations of *The Prince and the Pauper* into the three languages she was fluent in and translated from: French, German and Czech. A search of the online library catalogues showed that a translation

¹⁵ "Fabković, Marija", in: Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje. Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2013-2026. <https://enciklopedija.hr/clanak/fabkovic-marija>

into German by Helene Lobedan titled *Prinz und Bettelknabe. Eine Erzählung für die reifere Jugend* (The Prince and the Pauper. A Tale for More Mature Youth) was published around 1905. Having in mind that the Croatian translator worked in schools in Vienna and thus was familiar with the books available on the German book market at the time led me to hypothesize that the MT of this translation was the German text. However, in order to reach a definitive conclusion further steps should be taken: at least, a close textual comparison, as was done in the case of *Nikotin* and *Trinaest za stolom*.

4.4 Epitextual data

In addition to textual comparison, useful data to verify that a TT is an ITr could be extracted from archival material, such as the correspondence and diaries of translators and editors. The above quoted example of Stanko Vraz's translation of Byron's *The Prisoner of Chillon* (1816), provided by Filipović (1972: 17), illustrates the use of such sources. Filipović bases his conclusions on insights into correspondence between Vraz and his contemporaries.

When dealing with contemporary translations confirmation of ITrs may be found either in interviews with translators and editors or their public statements. In the case of contemporary translations, such interviews and public statements may not be necessary in order to detect an ITr. But they may provide insight into the motivations behind using ITr, which is also worth researching. For example, Mišo Grundler, a translator from Scandinavian languages, says: "Of the somewhat older translations [I did], I would highlight the book *Utopija za realiste* (Naklada Ljevak, 2016) by Dutch historian Rutger Bregman, which I translated from English, because this was required by the author himself and the Dutch publisher" (Grundler 2019).

Conclusion

While the interest of TS scholars in ITr has been growing since the 2000s, most of research into this phenomenon is conducted by scholars coming from the background of the so-called peripheral languages and cultures, where the practice of ITr is abundantly present. While this practice is used in various translation domains, my focus in this paper is on literary ITr into Croatian, a topic that has not yet been systematically researched in the Croatian context.

As the major difficulties in researching ITr may lie in its being hidden, mostly due to its negative perception both by scholars and translators, I have presented major sources that could be used to track down literary ITrs, whether those produced in the past or today. The available bibliographic sources have two possible downsides: first, their reliability depends on the information contained in the peritext prepared by publishers and second, they may not provide complete data. For example, the peritext of Benešić's translation of *Tales from Shakespeare* in its first edition, published in 1918 by Stjepan Kugli, says that it is "translated

by Julije Benešić on the basis of the German adaptation by Elza Dorn”, while in the peritext of its reprint from 1945 published by “Suvremena naklada” this information is completely erased and it is presented as a direct translation.

On the other hand, publishers of contemporary translations are more open to acknowledging ITr and, therefore, the bibliographic records are more transparent and useful for a researcher, in some cases even providing information on the MT used.

Examination of titles, as a peritextual element, and their comparison with titles in other languages, may be revealing about the directness of translation. Translators’ profiles (biographical data on their education, language competencies, the places where they lived and the cultural communities into which they were immersed) may be valuable clues as to whether the translation is done directly or via a third, mediating language.

While all of these methodological steps could be useful, one should be aware that in many cases they could be used in order to formulate a probabilistic hypothesis, which should be verified, either by close textual comparison of the ST, MT and TT, or by interviews with translators or editors. In the case of historically oriented research of ITr, archival material, if available, such as correspondence, notes, manuscripts, or diaries are an excellent source of useful data. The example of Vraz’s translation of Byron’s *The Prisoner of Chillon* (1816) into Croatian, documented by Filipović (1972) on the basis of the insights into Vraz’s correspondence and manuscripts, highlights the process of producing a mixed indirect translation.

The identification of ITrs is the first and necessary step to be taken when researching ITr. Once this step is accomplished, systematic and sustained research can be conducted into literary ITr into Croatian that can generate valuable insights into the modes of cross-cultural exchange, both in the past and present.

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Metodološka ograničenja i moguća rješenja u identificiranju posrednih književnih prijevoda na hrvatski

Ovaj rad donosi pregled metodoloških ograničenja koja otežavaju obuhvatnija istraživanja posrednih prijevoda. Od početka 2000-ih zamjećuje se povećano zanimanje za znanstveno proučavanje posrednog prevođenja, fenomena koji je u traduktologiji dugo bio marginaliziran. Povećani je interes posebno vidljiv među traduktolozima koji dolaze iz tzv. „perifernih“ jezika i kultura. Međutim, metodološke poteškoće, uz konceptualnu i terminološku nekonzistentnost, otežavaju razvitak sustavnija i međusobno usporediva korpusa spoznaja o posrednom prevođenju u raznim jezično-kulturnim kontekstima i prijevodnim domenama. U radu se posebna pozornost posvećuje metodološkim problemima u prikupljanju podataka o posrednim prijevodima književnih tekstova na hrvatski jezik. Uz raspravu o različitim izvorima podataka, od bibliografija i kataloga nacionalnih knjižnica do referentne literature, rad donosi analizu peritekstnih elemenata koji mogu biti relevantni pokazatelji posrednosti ili neposrednosti prijevoda. Među elementima periteksta vrlo se indikativnim pokazao naslov ciljnog teksta, kao što se može vidjeti na primjeru prvog hrvatskog prijevoda Mark Twainova djela *The Prince and the Pauper* (1907) i prvog hrvatskog prijevoda romana Agathe Christie *Three-Act Tragedy* (1961). Prikaz metodoloških koraka koji se mogu koristiti u istraživanju posrednog prevođenja ilustriran je primjerima iz kojih prethodnih i sadašnjih istraživanja toga fenomena, s namjerom da se ilustriraju prednosti i nedostaci dostupnih izvora i korištenih metoda. Premda se u hrvatskom kontekstu posredno prevođenje već dugo koristi, i još uvijek je vrlo prisutno, taj fenomen nije zadobio značajniju pozornost hrvatskih traduktologa. Opsežnije i sustavnije proučavanje posrednog prevođenja na hrvatski može donijeti vrijedne uvide u skrivenu dinamiku međukulturnih transfera pomoću prijevoda, te time proširiti naše znanje i o hrvatskoj povijesti prevođenja kao nezaobilaznom dijelu kulturne historiografije i o današnjim praksama.

Ključne riječi: posredno prevođenje, međukulturna razmjena, periferni jezik, bibliografski izvori, peritekst