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CHAPTER 5

Discourse and Text

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We have up to now focused on pragmatic and stylistic aspects of discourse. In Chapter 3, that is, we discussed how to interpret and re-encode meaning in relation to the extralinguistic environment – the context of situation and the context of culture, while in Chapter 4 we examined how to relate form to content in the translation process. It is now evident that the meaning of an utterance is not limited to what is expressed on the surface of the text but has to be interpreted according to the author's underlying intentions as activated in a given context. In this Chapter we shall be returning to a concept we came across in Chapter 3, that of *co-text*. A distinction was made between *context* and *co-text*: utterances need to be fully contextualised in terms of key features of both the situation (the context) and of the surrounding text (the co-text). So far we have considered the functional aspects of discourse, that is, language that is doing some job in some socio-cultural context. What concerns us here is the co-text, the way in which discourse is constructed above and beyond the sentence. In other words how are discourse structures created, and, more importantly for translation, how do the strategies used to develop unified and meaningful discourse differ from one language to another?

First, however, let us clear up some points of terminology regarding what is actually meant by *discourse* and *text*.

5.1. Discourse and Text

Both *discourse* and *text* refer to any stretch of language that has unity. This unity can come from the surrounding text or it can be interpreted according to the knowledge of the world outside language. Some linguists use *discourse* to refer to language as a piece of communication within the context of situation and *text* to denote the formal devices used for establishing connections between sentences in their co-text (Widdowson 1979:92-3, Leech and Short 1981:209-11). Thus, on a functional level an utterance is contextualised when it is set within the real-world environment (its *context of situation*) and on a formal level when it is linked to other sentences that precede and follow it in a larger unit (its *co-*

text or *linguistic context*). The same piece of language can therefore be considered from two different perspectives: seeing a piece of language as "discourse" means focusing on the pragmatic coherence that links utterances in communication; analysing the same piece of language as "text" involves focusing on the formal (linguistic and semantic) cohesiveness which links sentences.

A recent view of *text* and *discourse* envisages *texts* as particular instances of communication within a more general context of *discourse*: "Texts are ... manifestations of discourses and the meanings of discourses, and the sites of attempts to resolve particular problems" (Kress 1985:12). This is a useful terminological distinction to use with reference to translation since it provides an opportunity to see how particular instances of discourse may be realised in actual texts. It is, besides, complementary to the former text/discourse dichotomy.

5.2. Translating Texts

When we translate a text, we approach it as an integrated whole. The translation process entails much more than rendering the meaning of a sequence of isolated words, phrases or sentences into the TL. A text has unity and its meaning is interpreted not simply as a sum of the sentences or clauses that comprise it but as a combination of these to form a new, overall meaning. Translators need to be aware not only of relationships within the clause and sentences but also of how the text is organised as a whole, of relationships, that is, beyond sentence boundaries. It is the text, therefore, and not the word or sentence which is the basis for translation. Vocabulary and grammar are, of course, important to translation but they should be seen from a different standpoint: as components of a text within a context, whose meaning is to be decoded and re-encoded according to the overall text. The translation process starts from a given text, it analyses the text, and its final product is a new text in another language. This is why it is so important to read the whole ST before translating it.

The fact that translation is seen as a textual activity implies that translators need to activate their competence in analysing and organising discourse beyond the sentence in each of the two languages they are working with. Awareness of how communication takes place in the separate languages is a precondition for placing them in contact. Understanding how elements in the ST concur to produce a given meaning involves reading comprehension skills. But translation also requires writing skills if the TT is to read as a

meaningful whole. The interlingual skill that is called into play in translation is, of course, comparative text analysis: knowing how different languages use textual elements to produce the same overall meaning and effect.

In this and the following Chapters we shall be looking at problem areas in translation related to textual organisation. We shall therefore be paying particular attention to what constitutes a text, how it differs from a set of unrelated sentences and how to avoid destroying the meaning of a text by translating it into the TL as unrelated sentences. This Chapter will deal with the ordering of elements in clauses and sentences and its contribution to textuality; Chapters 6 and 7 will focus on aspects of coherence and cohesion in translation.

5.3. Thematisation

A text will generally be arranged in such a way as to focus the reader's attention on those parts of its content which are considered to be most important. The tendency to arrange sentences in such a manner as to draw attention to what is communicatively more important is called *thematisation*. Not every word of every part of the text can have the same weight since this would make reading and understanding an impossible task. The information load would be too great for the reader to handle. The options available to a writer for arranging information in a text are not arbitrary, however, since they serve the communicative purpose of making writers' intentions and their discourse more readily comprehensible. The information contained in a text is therefore arranged in such a way as to carry the writer's message forward and to focus the reader's attention on some elements rather than on others. This process involves associating new information to the information that is already known or shared by the reader, because of either the preceding co-text or the situational context.

Thus each sentence, or better each clause, can be divided into two: information that is already known to the readers and new information. The choice of what information to put where depends both on writers' hypotheses about what the reader knows and on the way they wish to organise their text. The starting point of the message, that is, what the clause is going to be "about", is the *theme* and occurs in the initial part of the clause.

Consider these two sentences cited by Halliday (1985:39)

A halfpenny is the smallest English coin.

(i.e. I'll tell you about a halfpenny: halfpenny = theme)
and

The smallest English coin is a halfpenny.

(i.e. I'll tell you about the smallest English coin: the smallest English coin = theme)

The theme, as we said, is context-dependent in that the reader already has access to the information offered in it. The remainder of the clause, called the *rheme*, functions as the new context-independent element. It holds the new information that is going to be given about the theme and therefore carries most of the sentence's communicative importance.

To take Halliday's example again:

A halfpenny is the smallest English coin.

(i.e. What about the halfpenny? It's the smallest English coin = rheme)
and

The smallest English coin is a halfpenny.

(i.e. What about the smallest English coin? It's a halfpenny = rheme).

The theme/rheme distinction is a functional one, but in English it coincides with the ordering of subject and predicate. The theme, as we said, is the first part of the clause and has the function of "announcing" the starting point of the message. When it occurs in this expected part of the clause, the theme is considered *unmarked*. In English declarative clauses the unmarked theme for a main clause is the subject.

Eurotunnel will connect the road and rail networks of Europe.

English is often called a SVO language because the normal syntactic sequence in declarative clauses is *subject + verb + object* with the *adverbials* following on, to form SVOA. One cannot, for instance, say:

*Happened an accident at work.

One has to say:

An accident happened at work.

Therefore the subject is normally the theme, the object is the rheme and the verb a transition between the two. When a sentence contains more than one clause, the theme/rheme division holds true for each clause.

In a yes/no interrogative structures, the theme is the operator:

Did Pamela get anything for her birthday?

and the *wh*- element in a *wh*- interrogative.

What did Pamela get for her birthday?

English relies to a great extent on word order and phrase structure to indicate grammatical function: a word in subject position, for instance, will have the function of a subject, and so on. This constitutes somewhat of a difficulty in Italian/English translation since there is much more flexibility in word order in Italian, a morphologically-inflected language. Compare the following:

Interessante è la notizia del nuovo referendum.
The news about the new referendum is interesting.

Parlano bene l'inglese.
They speak English well.

Fra i passeggeri non c'era nessun italiano.
There were no Italians among the passengers.

Departures from the normal word order are possible when a writer wishes to foreground some information contained in the clause. Any such change fulfils a textual function and is not simply a matter of free variation. Functional modifications are considered *marked* and whatever is brought to the front of the clause is "promoted" to theme. English has a variety of syntactic devices by means of which the basic elements of a clause can be rearranged: fronting, inversion, clefting, pseudo-clefting, active/passive voice, left and right dislocation. These variants are referentially similar but textually different and offer text-producers a variety of means with which to structure their discourse. This is an important factor in translating.

Let us now look more closely at how different information can be foregrounded in English by means of changes in the order of clause elements, and its relevance to translation.

5.3.1. When an element other than the subject is placed at the beginning of a clause it tends to receive primary stress and is therefore given prominence. This is known as *fronting*. Fronting may, for instance, be used to echo an element that has already been given contextually.

Ralph has gone trekking in Tibet for fun.
Fun you call it!

The most frequent type of marked theme in English is the adjunct.

On a grey morning with seagulls swooping over the Thames, Barry and his dog Tripper have secured a prime begging pitch – one end of Hungerford Bridge, the central London pedestrian link between the north and south banks. ... Commuters hurry past, dropping occasional coins in his black woollen hat. ... **Half-way across the bridge** stands David Tripp, aged 43, tunelessly playing a mouth organ.

But other elements can also be fronted:

Eileen he had not seen for years, but **Helen** he saw again yesterday.

Alternatively fronting may be used to give end-focus to another part of the clause. This is a common feature in journalism:

Poised for a sensational diplomatic triumph in Baghdad last night was **ex-premier Edward Heath**.

5.3.2. The fronting of a clause element is often associated with *inversion* in English. This can take the form of subject-verb inversion, as when place adverbials are transposed to theme position.

There, sitting at the entrance to the cave, was the guard.

When the fronted element is a restrictive or negative adverbial, there is inversion of subject and operator.

Never before had the roads been so treacherous.

Only if the Government gives us an unequivocal assurance that it is legal to trade on Sundays, will we support longer shopping hours.

5.3.3. Prominence can be given to a particular message by the division of the sentence into two clauses, each with its own verb. This can be done in English by means of devices called *clefting* and *pseudo-clefting*. In cleft sentences the anticipatory subject is an empty theme followed by the verb *be* and is used to give focus to a part of the clause which would otherwise not be highlighted. It is a very flexible device since it enables various

elements of the clause to be foregrounded. Consider the following Italian and English examples:

È con questi giovani che Carlo d'Inghilterra ha trascorso le ore più emozionanti della sua prima permanenza in Italia.

It is with these young people that Prince Charles spent the most stirring time of his stay in Italy.

In una tribù di poche centinaia di persone gli individui sono interscambiabili.

È in un mondo di miliardi di persone, in cui ci sono più incontri, più esperienze sessuali, che l'individuo ha bisogno di essere "riconosciuto" come assolutamente unico, assolutamente inconfondibile.

In a tribe of a few hundred people, the individuals are interchangeable.

It is in a world of billions of people, in which there are more encounters, more sexual experiences, that the individual needs to be "acknowledged" as being absolutely unique, absolutely unmistakable.

5.3.4. The *pseudo-cleft* sentence makes use of the *wh*-clause as subject to foreground another clause element.

What counts today is what people want.
Quello che oggi conta è ciò che vuole la gente.

5.3.5. A further way of foregrounding elements in a sentence offered by *left and right dislocation*.

Left dislocation indicates anticipated identification:

Enrico lo rivide il pomeriggio del giorno dopo, uscendo dalla bottega di Zaira.
– Ciao, – le disse. Si sforzava di apparire disinvolto.

Enrico she saw the following afternoon, as she was coming out of Zaira's shop.
"Hallo", he said to her. He tried hard to look relaxed.

Musa ideale, modella abituale, compagna virtuale, la donna pare essere la protagonista vera dell'arte di ogni tempo: dalla seducente Venere di Milo alle più edificanti Madonne di Piero la Francesca, dalle procaci bagnanti di Renoir, alle estenuate maliarde di Klimt, non c'è sosta nel ruolo "passivo" che essa ha sostenuto, tutto sommato, di buon grado. Ma, quanto a fare l'arte, è tutt'altro discorso.

(Fiorella Minervino, "Musa, modella, compagna, mai creatrice",
Il Corriere della Sera, 19 marzo 1981)

As the ideal muse, habitual model, virtual companion, women seem to be the real protagonists of art in every age: from the seductive Venus de Milo to the more edifying Madonnas of Piero della Francesca, from Renoir's provocative bathers to Klimt's weary temptresses, they have never failed to play a "passive" role, and quite willingly on the whole. **But as for producing art**, that is quite a different matter.

A proposito delle esigenze pratiche, va tenuto presente che la maggior parte delle attività umane si conserva e comunica attraverso la forma linguistica scritta ...

It should be borne in mind with reference to practical requirements that most human activities are preserved and communicated through the written linguistic form ...

The left-dislocated elements set the point of departure for the whole sentence and are thus marked themes. It is a convenient means of providing contextual or shared information to which the rheme or new information may then be added.

Right dislocation refers to postponed identification: a kind of substitute theme is used initially in the clause and refers cataphorically to the delayed theme, which is dislocated to the right, to the end of the clause.

Gustatelo qui il croissant caldo.
They were painted by me, these pictures.

Both left and right dislocation occur mainly in informal spoken discourse in both English and Italian:

Le terre Zia Teresina le lascerà a me.
That film, it was awful.

Volevano andare a Milano, loro.
It was awful, that film.

5.3.6. A further means of foregrounding certain elements in a clause is to exploit the potential of *end-focus*. According to the principle of end-focus anything that comes at the end of a clause will be interpreted as the focal element in written discourse. Writers can therefore juggle around with sentence elements so as to place semantically important information last, in end-focus position. Consider how the translator has succeeded in reproducing the end-focus Joyce gives the dead, which is crucial not only to the meaning of the story itself (*The Dead*), but also as the final word of the entire collection (*Dubliners*):

A few light taps upon the pane made him turn to the window. It had begun to snow again. He watched sleepily the flakes, silver and dark, falling obliquely against the lamplight. The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward. Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead.

(James Joyce, *The Dead*)

Un battere leggero sui vetri lo fece voltare verso la finestra. Aveva ripreso a nevicare. Assonnato guardava i fiocchi neri e argentei cadere di sbieco contro il lampione. Era venuto il momento di mettersi in viaggio verso l'ovest. I giornali dicevano il vero: c'era neve dappertutto in Irlanda. Neve cadeva su ogni punto dell'oscura pianura centrale, sulle colline senz'alberi; cadeva lieve sulle paludi di Allen e più a occidente cadeva lieve sulle fosche onde rabbiose dello Shannon. E anche là, su ogni angolo del cimitero deserto in cima alla collina dov'era sepolto Michael Furey. S'ammucchiava alta sulle croci contorte, sulle tombe, sulle punte del cancello e sui roveti spogli. E l'anima gli svanì lenta mentre udiva la neve cadere come scendesse la loro ultima ora, su tutti i vivi e i morti.

(James Joyce, *I morti*, translated by Franca Cancogni)

5.3.7. The *passive voice* is an important instrument of communication and not merely an alternative form of the active. Whether a writer chooses to use the active rather than the passive or vice-versa will influence the meaning conveyed to the reader. In the active construction it is the doer of the action who is the subject. When it is not important to emphasize or even mention the agent, the doer of the action, then the passive is used.

Penicillin was discovered in 1929.

The writer is interested above all in conveying the fact that penicillin was discovered in 1929; who discovered penicillin is not relevant in this context. The passive is thus a common feature of such discourse genres as scientific and technical writing where the focus is on the *findings* and not on the *finders*, as well as in newspaper reporting where the agent is often not known.

Sickle cell retinopathy was studied in a Brazilian population of 63 patients.

A man was found murdered in his home yesterday afternoon.

Writers can choose to use either an active or passive construction depending on which part of their statement they wish to foreground: the passive places the information focus on a happening, whereas the active focuses attention on who or what causes the happening.

The choice between active and passive voice is also conditioned by the thematic structure of the text and its communicative dynamism (see 5.4. below). Compare the following two examples:

Matthew picked these apples.
These apples were picked by Matthew.

In the active sentence apples is in rheme position, whereas in the passive construction focus is given to Matthew. Translators would use the former if they were already discussing Matthew (the theme) and then wanted to go on to a new topic, namely, that he picked the apples (rheme). They would prefer the latter if they were talking about apples (the theme) and wished to point out as new information that it was Matthew who picked them (the rheme).

Notice also the difference in meanings in the following alternatives which contain both a direct and an indirect object.

- 1a. We gave the participants in group 1 the quiz.
- 2a. We gave the quiz to the participants in group 1.

These are both active forms but the meaning conveyed is different. Example 1a shows the normal English construction of sentences containing a direct and an indirect object. In Example 2a the indirect object is postponed and is therefore given end focus: this sentence structure stresses the fact that it was the participants in group 1 who were given the quiz and not the other group or groups.

The corresponding passive constructions are:

- 1b. The participants in group 1 were given the quiz.
- 2b. The quiz was given to the participants in group 1.

Thus, the indirect object becomes the subject in Example 1b, which is the normal passive form. In Example 2b the direct object is the subject and end focus is given to "the participants in group 1".

The difference in meaning conveyed by the two passive forms is closely related to the communicative dynamism of the text and translators need to bear this in mind when trans-

lating from Italian. Once again the choice of which form to select depends on the overall text and how the information contained in it is arranged.

The effect of using the passive is also to create an objective, impersonal style, which contrasts with the more personalized form of the active construction.

Recent studies have detected a very alarming trend in the accumulation of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the waters of the oceans and their biomagnification to elevated levels in the tissues of such marine mammals as whales, dolphins and seals. The levels of PCBs found in the marine mammals are orders of magnitude greater than the levels found in terrestrial birds and mammals, including humans. In addition, it has been observed that the genetic make-up of marine mammals predisposes them to reproductive failure when exposed to even moderate levels of PCBs. There are about 1.2 million tonnes of PCBs in the world. Of that total, 31 per cent has been released to the environment (roughly 20 per cent is in the open ocean and 11 per cent in soil and terrestrial sediment). Sixty-five per cent of the world's PCBs are still in use, or in storage or deposited into landfills. If those PCBs are permitted to leak into the marine environment, then the extinction of marine mammals is inevitable. Although PCB releases into the environment are limited in most western countries, in developing countries such releases (particularly from phased out electrical equipment) are not well controlled. If the released PCBs entered the seas, they would probably prove sufficient to cause the extinction of a wide range of marine mammals, if not all.

(Joseph E. Cummins, "Extinction: The PCB Threat to Marine Mammals", *The Ecologist*, vol. 18, No.6, 1988).

"Nothing is real unless it is local": thus a characteristic snippet of wisdom from G.K. Chesterton and, in this sense, local government in many advanced countries during the twentieth century has become increasingly unreal and often nonexistent.

One might have supposed that most of the lessons of government in this period indicate a need for decreasing its strength and increasing its localisation. After all, its problems have not shrunk, they have grown, and grown to an enormous extent; and if we focus mainly on Britain, we see that nearly all the exercises of government in this period have proved to be demonstrable failures.

(John Papworth, "Non-Local Local Government and Local Power", *The Ecologist*, vol. 18, No.6, 1988).

5.3.8. Focus can be placed on the verb in English by means of the emphatic operators *do/did*. This kind of emphasis often implies a contrast, usually a refutation of a previous observation. It therefore relies on a previous statement in the co-text or on shared contextual information for its logical interpretation.

Nel discorso Ciccotto la vinceva lui, e le donne grasse, che non escono e se ne stanno alla finestra a rinfrescarsi, ci dicevano sulla porta di tornare a trovarle la domenica dopo.

Ci tornavamo. Ma a nostro gusto, uno o due mesi dopo.

(Cesare Pavese, *Le case*)

Ciccotto was always master of the conversation, and those fat women who don't go out and stand at the window to cool off told us at the door to come back to see them the following Sunday.

We did come back. But in our own good time, a month or two later.

Alternatively *do/did* may express emotive emphasis such as personal concern, reproach or even petulance, with no contrastive implications. These emphatic operators should be used sparingly in written texts for this purpose, however, as the overall effect might well sound over-emotional.

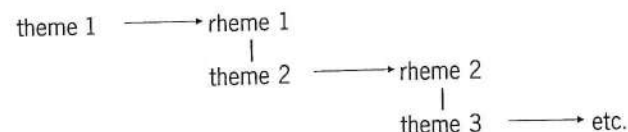
5.4. Thematic Progression

The theme/rheme division of a clause contributes to the development of communication since it serves to move the discourse forward. New information is converted into given information in successive clauses and as the text moves forward the known elements contribute less to the advancement of communication than the new ones. Together theme and rheme constitute the *communicative dynamism* of successive sentences in a text (Firbas 1964) with the theme carrying the lowest degree of communicative dynamism and the rheme propelling the communication forward. This functional organisation of the clause in terms of *theme* and *rheme* has come to be referred to as the *functional sentence perspective* or *FSP* approach (Firbas 1964, Danes 1974).

All texts move from theme to rheme in recognisable patterns. As the discourse progresses, previous themes or rhemes are re-employed to fit in with the overall thematic

structure and rhetorical purpose of the text. The choice and ordering of the theme and rheme in relation to superior text units (paragraphs, chapters) and the whole text is referred to as *thematic progression* (Danes 1974). One of the translator's aims is to interpret the thematic progression of the ST in relation to its overall meaning and function and then to reproduce it according to TL conventions in the TT. The most common patterns of thematic progression are described below. Examples a) to d) are from Danes (1974:118-120), while examples e) and f) are from James (1980:115-116).

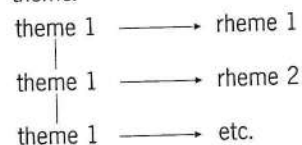
a) Linear thematisation of rhemes, the most basic and straightforward form of thematic progression.



The first of the antibiotics was discovered by Sir Alexander Fleming in 1928. He was busy at the time investigating a certain species of germ which is responsible for boils and other troubles.

The rheme of sentence 1 contains an element Sir Alexander Fleming which is taken up as the theme of sentence 2 (He).

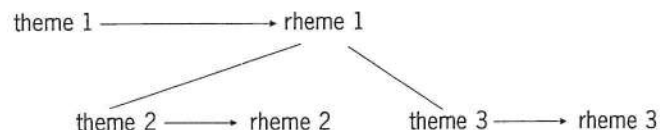
b) Thematic progression with a constant theme: subsequent themes are related to the first theme.



The Rousseauist especially feels an inner kinship with Prometheus and other Titans. He is fascinated by any form of insurgency ... He must show an elementary energy in his explosion against the established order and at the same time a boundless sympathy for the victims of it ... Further the Rousseauist is ever ready to discover beauty of soul in anyone who is under the reprobation of society.

The theme of sentence 1 is the same as the theme of sentence 2 and 3.

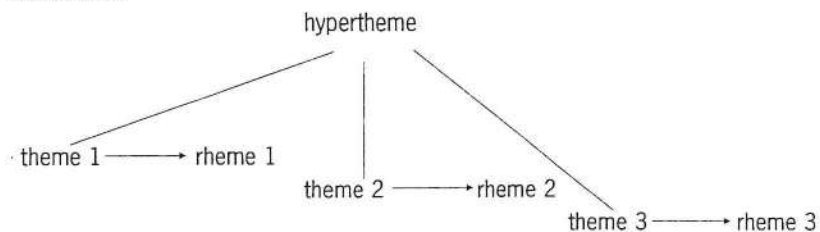
c) Thematic progression by means of a split rheme.



All substances can be divided into two classes: elementary substances and compounds. An elementary substance is a substance which consists of atoms of only one kind. ... A compound is a substance which consists of atoms of two or more kinds.

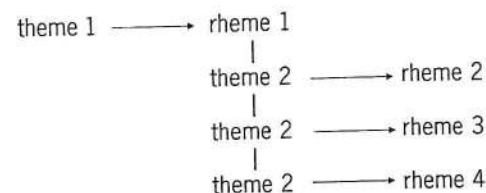
This third type of patterning is slightly more complex since the rheme of sentence 1 contains two elements which become the themes of the two subsequent sentences.

d) Thematic progression with subsequent themes derived from a *hypertheme* or *metatheme*.



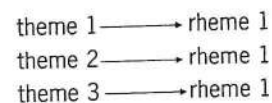
New Jersey is flat along the coast and southern portion; the north-western region is mountainous. The coastal climate is mild, but there is considerable cold in the mountain areas during the winter months. Summers are fairly hot. The leading industrial production includes chemicals, processed food, coal, petroleum, metals and electrical equipment. The most important cities are Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, Trenton, Camden. Vacation districts include Asbury Park, Lakewood, Cape May, and others.

e) Thematic progression with subsequent constant themes related to the first rheme.



Cats eat rats. Rats live in holes. Rats are bigger than mice. Rats are hard to catch.

f) Thematic progression with subsequent new themes related to a constant rheme.



Cats eat rats. Dogs eat rats. Snakes eat rats.

An author's decision systematically to foreground certain elements in the text is an important factor in translation. Each syntactic variation of theme and rheme is a strategic device on the part of the author to focus the reader's attention on some piece of information rather than another within the framework of the *whole* text. And it is the distribution of foregrounded elements in relation to the entire text that has to be taken into account in translation. Thematic sequencing is not a random occurrence: it depends very much on discourse genre and rhetorical purpose and it plays a fundamental role in text construction. Consider, for instance, the effect of the recurrent thematisation of *they* (introduced by Italian designers – *gli stilisti italiani*) in the following texts:

Gli stilisti italiani ora operano senza frontiere, hanno boutiques personali nelle più importanti e strategiche città del mondo, presentano le loro collezioni con degli appuntamenti che diventano eventi internazionali: sono il volto nuovo dell'Italia, sono noti, acclamati e ricercati. Qualcuno li ha battezzati i nuovi mecenati del rinascimento di fine secolo.

(Pia Soli, "Defilé che passione", *Arrivederci*, n. 22, 1991)

Italian designers are by now unaffected by national boundaries. **They** have their own boutiques in the biggest and most important cities in the world. The presentations of their collections have become international events of note. **They** are the new side of Italy. **They** are famous, acclaimed and sought after. **They** have been described as the new fin-de-siècle, Renaissance-style patrons.

The crucial point is that the way themes or rhemes are re-used in subsequent discourse depends on the writer's overall text-plan and audience-orientation. In advertisements there is a tendency to return to the same theme in successive clauses, usually the brand name:

Timotei is both mild to your hair and to your scalp – so mild you can wash your hair as often as you like. Timotei cleans your hair gently, leaving it soft and shiny, with a fresh smell of summer meadows.

A travel brochure systematically uses place adverbials as themes.

There are many exciting destinations you can choose from:

Rome, the eternal city on its seven hills, with a wealth of history and culture; the Colliseum, the Vatican City, the Trevi Fountains.

Florence, renowned for its breathtaking architecture and art. Picture yourself on the Ponte Vecchio!

Venice, perhaps the most romantic of all destinations. Take a gondola-taxi to your hotel, wander through the winding streets and emerge into the magnificence of St Mark's Square.

Milan, with its fashionable shops and the opera, La Scala.

The splendour of every part of the country will enchant you; it's yours to enjoy with ease and comfort when you travel to Italy with British Rail International.

The following Italian text and its English translation contain a spatial description and so spatial orientation of the reader is important. The writer highlights this fact through the systematic thematisation of adverbials:

Da due lati ci sono precipizi: ad Est il baratro buio che muore nel torrente Felizon. A Sud-Ovest una serie di pareti rocciose inaccessibili fino al greto del torrente Boite. Laggiù in basso arrivava da Ampezzo la strada che poi con stretti tornanti saliva rapidissima immettendosi nel castello, dominata da questo dal principio alla fine. Il tracciato attuale, scavato nella roccia, risale ai primi anni del secolo scorso, ma anche di questo parleremo più avanti. Le pareti rocciose sono state bucate da gallerie al tempo della prima guerra mondiale; in quel periodo scomparvero anche gli ultimi avanzi di costruzione che ancora emergavano dal terreno. Sul lato Nord, dove ora è cresciuto il bosco, c'era il castello, con le abitazioni per il capitano ed i soldati, una cappella, l'alloggio del cappellano, un cortile per le manovre d'armi. Nel centro del torrione era scavato un pozzo con grandiosa cisterna per l'acqua piovana che vi veniva convogliata attraverso canalette di legno e pietra dal dislivello dei tetti.

(Mario Ferruccio Belli, "Il castello dei Misteri", *Cortina Magazine*, n. 12, 1990)

On two sides of the castle there are precipices. To the east the dark abyss that disappears into the River Felizon and to the south-west a series of inaccessible rock faces which fall away to the shores of the Boite. From the valley, dominated by the castle above, came the road from Ampezzo, narrowing into a series of hairpin bends as it climbed steeply to arrive at the castle. The present road, carved out of the rock, dates back to the beginning of the last century, and the rock face is pitted with holes from the time of the first world war. Also during that period the last remnants of the building which were still standing finally disappeared.

On the north side, where a forest has now grown, stood the castle with the captain's and the soldiers' quarters, a chapel, lodgings for the chaplain and a courtyard for military manoeuvres. A huge tank dug into the centre of the keep caught rainwater which ran from the roofs down wooden and stone pipes.

The thematisation of time adverbials, on the other hand, has been observed as being characteristic of detective stories (Brown and Yule 1983).

5.5. Sentence Structure and Textuality

Further strategies that ST authors have at their disposal to create textuality are related to sentence structure and sequencing. Whether they choose to vary the structure of successive sentences and the sequence they give to main and dependent clauses within the sentence are prominent features of textuality. A different focus of information can be created by positioning clauses in the sentence, and sentences in the text in relation to the general text plan.

5.5.1. One device that ST authors can use to foreground elements of their message is known as *parallelism*. This refers to the use of parallel structures to highlight the functional relationship between different segments of discourse. Neighbouring sentences that share the same sentence pattern, usually endorsed lexically, give a strong impression of being connected since they are interpreted by the reader as one cohesive entity. The use of parallel structures therefore contributes towards textuality and reinforces the message being conveyed.

Proudly, the captain hoisted the flag. Softly, a bugle sounded.

How exciting it would be **to attend** a performance of *Hamlet* or *Romeo and Juliet* for the first time without having been painstakingly prepared beforehand. **To receive** one's own unadulterated impression, **to applaud or condemn** with as open a mind as the playgoers of Shakespeare's age. **How rewarding to read** a great novel for no better reason than the fun of wanting to know what was going to happen next.

Cavalcanti, soffermandosi su quanto si può cogliere "esteriormente" nei paesi arbëreshë, faceva riferimento, fra l'altro, "ai falò di Natale e a quelli dei primi tre giorni di maggio (Kaminet) a Civita; alle Vallje (balli popolari che uniscono alla coreutica tradizionale balcanica i movimenti avvolgenti ideati da Skanderberg per combattere i Turchi) del martedì di Pasqua a Civita, Frascineto, S. Basile; alle danze eseguite a Sofia d'Epiro nella prima domenica di maggio da gruppi folkloristici di diversa provenienza; ai balli e ai canti eseguiti il 29 luglio davanti alla chiesa di S. Anna tra Acquafredda e Lungro; al Mercato e alla festa di S. Domenico Corone, nella ricorrenza di S. Adriano; alla spettacolare liturgia per la celebrazione dei matrimoni (incoronazione degli sposi; passeggiata in cerchi di tutto il corteo per tre volte intorno all'altare, ecc.) e a quella di S. Giovanni Crisostomo, che si svolge a Lungro (sede della diocesi di tutte le parrocchie di rito bizantino) il 15 agosto di ogni anno".

(Luigi M. Lombardi Satriani, "Quando la Penisola diventa un'isola etnica", *Arrivederci*, n.2, 1990)

L'obiettivo dell'attuale presidente americano è lo stesso che si era prefissato allora Roosevelt: accrescere l'occupazione, espandere l'economia, ottenere un gettito fiscale elevato consentendo contemporaneamente al cittadino di vivere meglio.

The current American president's aim is the same as the one Roosevelt set himself in his time: to increase employment, boost the economy, get a high tax yield while at the same time enabling the citizen to live better.

Parallel structures are sometimes difficult to translate into another language without losing some of the effect created in the original. Consider the following French text (Cook 1989:15):

Le Général de Gaulle est mort. La France est veuve.

The parallelism lies in the repeated grammatical pattern *definite article + proper noun + copula + complement*. Translation into Italian is quite straightforward:

Il Generale de Gaulle è morto. La Francia è vedova.

The Italian TT also maintains the semantic link of the contrasted masculine and feminine forms, which reinforces the metaphor of the loss felt by a widow at the death of her husband. Neither of these effects can be wholly carried over into an English TT:

General de Gaulle is dead. France is a widow.

Grammatical parallelism is marred by the need for an indefinite article before *widow* and the omission of the gender-marked definite articles *le* and *la* diminish the impact of the deceased husband/bereaved wife metaphor.

5.5.2. Generally, however, successive sentences exhibit a variety of different structures. It is rare to find a whole text composed entirely of short simple sentences in any language, and English is no exception. Variation in sentence length and type allows the writer to express different degrees of emphasis and thus to focus the reader's attention on different elements of the message. Units within a sentence can be linked by means of *coordination* or *subordination*. But once again the choice is not an arbitrary one. In coordination the units are on the same syntactic level; they are independent and equal ranking.

... Il primo pensiero fu che finalmente assistevo alla edificazione di un castello scozzese completo di fantasmi. I fantasmi esistevano ma non erano ancora usciti dal loro sonno.

... My first thought was that I was finally witnessing the building of a Scottish castle, complete with ghosts. The ghosts existed but they had not yet been roused from sleep.

The two clauses *There ghosts existed* and *they had not yet been roused from sleep* are given equal weight and importance in the sentence. If one of the clauses is changed into a dependent clause, the two clauses are no longer autonomous. Only the main clause which contains the independent core idea can stand alone. The information contained in

the dependent clause becomes subordinated and depends for its meaning and interpretation on the information contained in the main clause.

Although the ghosts existed, they had not yet been roused from sleep.

Despite the fact that the ghosts existed, they had not yet been roused from sleep.

As important information is not placed in a subordinate clause in English, translators must be sure that the main point of an Italian ST sentence is actually placed in the main clause in the TT. The use of subordination is mistaken in the above example since important information (*The ghosts did actually exist*) has been downgraded to a concession clause (although the ghosts existed) which gives it the status of mere subordinate detail.

Main clauses should remain intact in English. They are not generally split up by dependent clauses, which are placed either before or after the main clause. This again differs from Italian conventions.

I colori del kilim, oltre ad essere l'elemento più affascinante, sono anche quello che maggiormente ci aiuta a determinare la datazione e la provenienza.

Besides being the most fascinating feature of a kilim, its colours are also what help us most to date it and establish its origins.

Il Signor Romualdo, informato di quello che accadeva da uno de quei contadini, già suo vecchio servitore, agitava supplichevole il braccio tremante, e piangeva e balbettava parole di disperato sgomento.

Informed of what was happening by one of those peasants, a former servant of his, Signor Romualdo shook his trembling arm beseechingly, cried and stammered out words in almost speechless desperation.

In English, sentences which begin with a subordination (periodic sentences) naturally tend to build-up expectation. The reader is kept in suspense until the full significance of the

sentence is revealed at the end by the main clause, which, in accordance with the principle of end-focus, contains important information. The longer the subordinate clause the greater the anticipation and emphasis created. Translators should only resort to this latter sequence of clauses if they actually intend to draw the reader along to an emphatic conclusion. Compare the two following passages:

Disponibile oggi in libreria in circa trenta edizioni; con alle spalle trascrizioni cinematografiche (leggendaria quella di Walt Disney) e televisive; tradotto in tutti i paesi del mondo, compreso nella lingua bantù e cinese, avendo annoverato, dopo la Bibbia, il maggior numero di copie vendute, "Pinocchio" troneggia da centosette anni nella nostra letteratura, povera di personaggi, occupando forse il secondo posto dopo il capolavoro nazionale, i manzoniani "Promessi Sposi".

(Pier Francesco Listri, "Carissimo Pinocchio", *Ulisse 2000*, n. 74, 1990).

Pinocchio has held pride of place in Italian literature for a hundred and seven years, second only to Manzoni's masterpiece, *The Betrothed*. Today it is on sale in thirty different editions, there have been film (Walt Disney's has become legendary) and television adaptations of the book, it has been translated into many languages including Bantu and Chinese, and has sold more copies than any other book except the Bible.

Since this is principally an informative text a number of changes have been made in the TT. The climax or suspense that is created in the Italian ST is not actually warranted in this text-type and would sound unnatural and excessively complex in English.

The following text concerns the psychological aspects of Eve, a character in Woody Allen's film *Interiors*:

... Inoltre, questo suo ricercare ordine cromatico e armonia negli interni in cui vive, corrisponde a una analoga ricerca d'ordine all'interno della propria mente malata e al proprio essere. Che questo altro non è, nella sua ragione più profonda, se non una proiezione dell'io, e l'arredamento una forma indiretta del culto personale, è da tempo stato affermato: Robert de Montesquieu sosteneva che un appartamento è il suo stato animo, "i mobili sono i miei sentimenti".

(Daniele Baroni, "Interiors", *Ottagono*, n. 54, 1974)

... Besides, this searching of hers for order in colours and harmony in the interiors in which she lives corresponds to a similar search for order within her own sick mind and in her very being. That deep down this is nothing but a projection of the self, and the interior design an indirect form of the cult of the self, has long been upheld: Robert de Montesquieu maintained that an apartment was his state of mind, "the pieces of furniture are my feelings".

The ST author has used this particular sentence pattern in conformity with the way he wishes to carry forward the text's information dynamism. The *that*-clause is at the same time a summary and a development of the point made in the previous sentence and therefore has to be in theme position. If the *that*-clause were postponed in the TT and its place filled by an anticipatory pronoun *it*, the information focus of the sentence would be entirely altered; the overall effect would thus be normalised and the function would shift from vocative to informative.

At times it is the text-type itself that conventionally requires periodic sentence structuring: texts like the abstracts of scientific journals, book reviews, legal documents.

To assess the feasibility of left ventricular assist without systematic heparinization, we used a commercially available (Sarns 3M) centrifugal pump with tubing set and cannulas ...
(*The Annals of Surgery*, vol. 52, No. 2, 1991:245)

If upon the death of a Life Insured there shall be no duly constituted personal representative or nominee or assignee of the Life Insured able and willing to give valid receipt for the sum payable such sum may in the discretion of the Committee of Management be paid to one or more of the next-of-kin of the Life Insured whose receipt shall effectually discharge the Society from all liability under this policy.

A more relaxed effect is created with loose sentences, when the main clause is placed at the beginning and the subordinate clause comes after it. Sentences constructed in this way appear easy and relaxed because the information they contain is easily assimilated: important information is given first, followed by background or supporting information.

Some lenses are made with extremely porous material so they hold a high water content or absorb extra oxygen.

In deciding how to sequence information in a sentence in the TT, translators should always consider the ST type: expressive texts will require translators to take account of what the ST author aimed to achieve by means of sentence structure and to reproduce this in the TT; vocative texts also need to be carefully assessed in this respect, with the fundamental difference, however, that the ST author's intended effect should be couched in a form that is in keeping with TL conventions; informative texts are the most flexible, since the translator's main concern is to convey the message through straightforward syntax.

In una valle chiusa da colline boschive, sorridente nei colori della primavera, s'ergevano una accanto all'altra due grandi case disadorne, pietra e calce. Parevano fatte dalla stessa mano, e anche i giardini chiusi da siepi, posti dinanzi a ciascuna di esse, erano della stessa dimensione e forma. Chi vi abitava non aveva però lo stesso destino.

(Italo Svevo, *La Madre*)

In a valley enclosed by wooded hills and radiant with the colours of spring, there stood side by side two large, roughly-finished houses, so much stone and mortar. They looked as if they had both been built by the same hand, and even the hedged gardens in front of them were the same size and shape. But those who lived there did not suffer similar fates.

Nel '79 la Honda, dopo uno stop durato più di dieci anni, torna nei Gran Premi, dove dominano i motori a due tempi, con una rivoluzionaria 500 quattro cilindri quattro tempi il cui motore ha pistoni ovali e ben 32 valvole e raggiunge lo stratosferico regime di 20.000 giri.

(Paolo Scalera, "Cento anni di brividi 'rossi'")

In 1979, after a pause lasting more than ten years, Honda returned to Grand Prix racing, where two-stroke engines dominated, with a revolutionary 500 four-cylinder, four-stroke machine with oval pistons and 32 valves; it reached the inconceivable level of 20,000 revs.

L'idea che l'autorità dello Stato si debba fondare sul diritto naturale per trovare legittimazione e consenso nella collettività, non è l'unica eredità che la cultura classica abbia trasmesso alla società medievale. Ma dalle epoche e dalle civiltà che lo precedettero, dalla stessa cultura greca (che pur aveva introdotto un atteggiamento più razionale nei confronti della natura) e dai misteri e culti orientali diffusi in periodo ellenistico nell'impero romano, il Medioevo ricevette anche un vasto repertorio di rituali magici e di scienze occulte.

(Valerio Castronovo, "Se tutto manca c'è sempre il mago", *La Repubblica*, 13 ottobre 1981).

The idea that State authority should be founded on natural law to become lawful and acceptable to the community is not the only legacy bequeathed to Medieval society by classical culture. The Middle Ages also received a vast repertory of magic rituals and occult sciences from the ages and civilisations that had come before it, from Greek culture itself (which had, however, introduced a more rational attitude towards nature) and from the oriental mysteries and cults which had spread in the Roman Empire in the Hellenistic period.

The use of excessively long and complex sentence structure is rarely acceptable in English. Yet, it is not unusual to come across an overcondensation of main, minor and supporting ideas in one sentence in translations from Italian into English. One reason is probably the difficulty a translator has in transferring the intricate sentence structure encountered in an Italian ST into an English TT. Consider the following example:

Il 15 ottobre 1815 Napoleone, prigioniero dell'Inghilterra e dell'oceano, arrivò verso mezzodì sul trealberi Northumberland nella rada di James-Town, il porticciolo di S. Elena...

Pochi mesi dopo, nella primavera del 1816, l'imperatrice sua moglie, Maria Luisa d'Austria, giungeva anch'essa alla sua terra d'esilio, un esilio dorato che il "caro papà", Francesco I, le aveva fatto ottenere dalle potenze della Coalizione come compenso al sacrificio che la ragion di Stato le aveva imposto. A soli 24 anni, infatti era stata ferita più volte nei sentimenti e nell'orgoglio: di donna e di austriaca quando, ossequiente alla politica di Metternich, dovette andar sposa, riluttante, a Napoleone (l'Orco, come le avevano insegnato a chiamarlo parenti, precettori e dame di compagnia a Schönbrunn, fin da quando il "parvenu d'Europa" era ancora generale di quella repubblica giacobina che aveva fatto cadere sotto la ghigliottina la testa della sua prozia Maria Antonietta), di moglie e di francese quando dovette abbandonarlo nella sventura (anche se, bisogna riconoscerlo, l'aveva fatto con molta ipocrisia e finta devozione), di madre quando fu costretta a lasciare a Vienna, separandosene per sempre senza essere riuscita ad assicurargli la successione al trono, il piccolo "re di Roma", tedescamente ribattezzato col nome di Franz, duca di Reichstad.

(Pier Maria Paoletti, *La Duchessa del buongoverno, Arrivederci*, n. 22, 1991)

A sequence such as this is not easy to handle: all this information cannot be packed into one sentence in English as it will hinder rather than enhance comprehension. The following example illustrates this point:

At about noon on 15 October 1815, as a prisoner of England on board the three-masted ship *Northumberland*, Napoleon arrived at Jamestown anchorage on the island of St. Helens, his land of exile...

A few months later, in the spring of 1816, his wife, the Empress Marie Louise of Hapsburg, also reached her land of exile, a golden exile which her "darling Daddy", Francis I, had been able to obtain for her from the Coalition Powers to compensate for the sacrifice which reasons of State had imposed on her. At just 24 years of age, her feelings and her pride had already been injured a number of times: as a woman and as an Austrian when, in deference to Metternich's policy, she was forced to marry Napoleon, (the "bogeyman", as her relatives, tutors and ladies-in-waiting in Schönbrunn had taught her to call him, when, as the "parvenu of Europe" he was still the general of the Jacobin Republic which had been responsible for having had her great-aunt Marie Antoinette's head cut off on the guillotine), as a wife and a Frenchwoman when she had to abandon Napoleon to his unfortunate destiny (even though it must be admitted that she had done so with a great deal of hypocrisy and feigned devotion), as a mother, when she was forced to leave the little "king of Rome" (later given the German name of Franz, Duke of Reichstad) in Vienna forever, without being able to guarantee his succession to the throne.

The meaning of this sentence in English is far from clear. It is altogether too complex and wordy and needs to be broken down into clearer and more straightforward syntax:

At about noon on 15 October 1815, as a prisoner of England on board the three-masted ship *Northumberland*, Napoleon arrived at Jamestown anchorage on the island of St. Helens, his land of exile...

A few months later, in the spring of 1816, his wife, the Empress Marie Louise of Hapsburg, also reached her land of exile. It was a golden exile which her "darling Daddy", Francis I, had been able to obtain for her from the Coalition Powers to compensate for the sacrifice which reasons of State had imposed on her. At just 24 years of age, her feelings and her pride had already been injured a number of times. She had suffered as a woman and as an Austrian when, in deference to Metternich's policy, she was forced to marry Napoleon, the "bogeyman". This was the name her relatives, tutors and ladies-in-waiting in Schonbrunn had taught her to call him, when, as the "parvenu of Europe" he was still the general of the Jacobin Republic, which had been responsible for having had her great-aunt Marie Antoinette's head cut off on the guillotine. She had suffered as a wife and a Frenchwoman when she had to abandon Napoleon to his unfortunate destiny, even though it must be admitted that she had done so with a great deal of hypocrisy and feigned devotion. She had suffered as a mother, when she was forced to leave the little "king of Rome" (later given the German name of Franz, Duke of Reichstad) in Vienna forever, without being able to guarantee his succession to the throne.

A useful rule of thumb for translators is to state the main idea of the sentence in the main clause and to use subordination for just that – subordinate information.

L'Harry's Bar, che fu aperto all'inizio degli anni Trenta da Giuseppe Cipriani e trae il nome da un giovane studente americano amante di Venezia, è stato reso celebre da Hemingway, con i famosi cocktails a base di champagne e succo di pesca, ma ha avuto tra i suoi clienti personalità e personaggi di prima grandezza, dalla regina d'Inghilterra a Goebbels, dall'Aga Khan a Orson Welles, da Humphrey Bogart ad Ava Gardner.

(Costanzo Costantini, "Quando la cultura nasceva nei Caffè")

Harry's Bar, which derives its name from a young American student in love with Venice, was opened in the early 1930s by Giuseppe Cipriani. It was made famous by Hemingway and the famous cocktails made of champagne and fresh peach juice. Harry's clientele has included world-famous personalities, from the Queen of England to Goebbels, from the Aga Khan to Orson Welles, Humphrey Bogart and Ava Gardner.

Splitting up sentences can, however, play havoc with thematisation and the overall coherence of a text. The translator needs constantly to make sure that the focus of information has not been subverted and that the theme is carried forward. Look what happens in the translation of the following text for example:

Sono passati esattamente vent'anni da quando, il 12 aprile 1961, Jurij Gagarin sulla minuscola navicella Vostok mise per la prima volta piede nello spazio. Il ricordo è ormai lontano, sopraffatto da un incalzare di avvenimenti astronautici che, agli inizi, appassionavano (chi non ha trascorso con ansia la notte del 21 luglio 1969 davanti al televisore per accompagnare idealmente Armstrong nella prima passeggiata sulla Luna?) ma poi, soprattutto negli ultimi anni, finivano quasi per non fare più notizia nemmeno sui giornali.

(Giovanni Caprara, "La navetta rilancia la corsa nel cosmo", *Il Corriere della Sera*, 11 aprile 1981)

Twenty years exactly have gone by since 12 April 1961 when, aboard his tiny space ship, Vostok, Yuri Gagarin first stepped into space. A host of space events have surpassed that moment, which seems far away by now. Excitement was aroused by these events at the beginning – was there anyone who did not spend the night of the 21 July 1969 anxiously watching the T.V. so as to be with Armstrong on his first moon walk? Later, however, especially in recent years, they ended up by almost not being newsworthy any longer, not even to the papers.

Here the overall discourse structure has been compromised due to subversion in theme and rheme elements in successive clauses with a resulting loss in communicative dynamism. The following text still has shorter sentences than the original but succeeds in maintaining thematic progression.

Exactly twenty years have gone by since 12 April 1961 when Yuri Gagarin ventured into space aboard his tiny space ship, Vostok. That moment seems far away by now, surpassed as it has been by a host of other space events. At the beginning these events were exciting – was there anyone who did not spend the night of the 21 July 1969 anxiously watching the T.V. so as to be with Armstrong on his first moon walk? Later, however, especially in recent years, they ended up by almost not being newsworthy any longer, not even to the papers.

5.5.3. Another problem area to look out for when translating from Italian into English is that of the *misrelated* or *dangling modifier*. This occurs when a modifying phrase, introduced by a present (-ing) or a past (-ed) participle, is unconnected to the word it modifies. Consider the following example:

Using a soft material which absorbs water and allows the eyes to gain the oxygen they need, soft lenses provide a high level of comfort.

According to English grammar, the modifying phrase using... should refer to the subject soft lenses. Present and past participles are verbs and, as such, take a subject. A participle is considered to belong to the noun/pronoun which precedes it. If there is no noun/pronoun in this position, the participle is considered to belong to the subject of the main verb, which in this particular case is provide. Obviously this is not what is intended. A participle linked in this way to the wrong noun/pronoun is said to be "misrelated". The result is that the past participle using is left "dangling" and the reader is unclear as to what it should modify. Now look at this corrected version:

Made of a soft material which absorbs water and allows the eyes to gain the oxygen they need, soft lenses provide a high level of comfort.

In the following example(s) notice the position of the subject and the -ing form.

The weather being fine, we went out.

Unlike Italian, the subject of the present participle precedes the -ing participle.

A fine anno, avendo Andy fatto il bravo nipote, lo zio l'ha portato in vacanza in Florida.

At the end of the year, Andy having been a good nephew, his uncle took him on holiday to Florida.

Often, however, English prefers a finite clause to a non-finite phrase:

At the end of the year, since Andy had been a good nephew, his uncle took him on holiday to Florida.

A useful hint for the sake of clarity is to keep modifiers as close as possible to what they modify.

5.6. Punctuation and Textuality

Punctuation gives the emphasis and expression to writing that pauses, intonation, gestures give to speech. It also contributes towards textuality as it signals the relationships that exist among words, groups of words and sentences. Although punctuation does not substitute logical word order and sentence sequencing, it does complement it. Translators cannot simply reproduce the punctuation of the ST in the TT. When reformulating sentences or clauses in an English TT from a particularly lengthy Italian ST sentence, for instance, translators will have to decide whether to use full stops, semicolons or colons. Their choice will depend not only on textual factors related to communicative dynamism but also on SL and TL conventions since the function of the various forms of punctuation does not always overlap in English and Italian.

5.6.1. The *full stop* is used in the same way as in Italian to mark off separate sentences, the only difference being, perhaps, that it is used more frequently in English. That is not to say, however, that all English writing is made up of short sentences. As we have seen, variation in sentence length and structure contributes to creating textual meaning and orient-

ing the reader.

L'estinzione dei dinosauri non ci scandalizza e ci appare magari in armonia con qualche misteriosa legge naturale che presiede alla nascita e alla morte delle specie; per i dinosauri, certo, è stata una calamità e le grida d'allarme sulle ferite che l'evoluzione tecnologica e industriale ha inferto e continua a inferire al nostro equilibrio ecologico sono ridicole se temono che una petrolchimica possa uccidere il grande Pan, ma forse non sono tanto ridicole se temono, più semplicemente, per la nostra sopravvivenza e per la nostra salute.

(Claudio Magris, "Al capezzale del Grande Bosco che muore",
Il Corriere della Sera, 15 marzo 1986).

The extinction of the dinosaurs does not perturb us unduly; it even seems in harmony with some mysterious natural law which governs the birth and death of all species. It was no doubt a disaster for the dinosaurs, the cries of alarm at the wounds that technological and industrial development has inflicted and continues to inflict upon the balance of our ecological system are ridiculous if they fear that an oil refinery might kill the great Pan. But these cries are perhaps not so ridiculous if, more simply, they express fear for our survival and our well-being.

Another difference between Italian and English that requires attention in translation is the use of full stops in expressing statistics. Decimal figures are indicated by a full stop in English and a comma in Italian:

3.5 (three point five) = three and a half

3,5 (tre virgola cinque) = tre e mezzo

On the contrary, English uses commas where Italian uses full stops:

8,531 = eight thousand, five hundred and thirty-one.

8.531 = ottomilacinquecentotrentuno

5.6.2. The semicolon stands between the full stop and the comma as a mark of pause and linkage. It indicates a weaker break than the full stop but a stronger break than a comma. The main function of the semicolon in English is to link coordinate clauses which are logically or grammatically related. It therefore stands for the conjunction and.

I came; I saw; I conquered.

It is also used to separate coordinate clauses joined by a connector like however when a weaker pause than a full stop is needed.

I had hoped there might be room for me; however, there wasn't.

The semicolon is used more frequently in Italian than in English, especially to signal a series of events which are not considered independent enough to be separated by full stops.

Cavalcanti, soffermandosi su quanto si può cogliere "esteriormente" nei paesi arbëreshë, faceva riferimento, fra l'altro, "ai falò di Natale e a quelli dei primi tre giorni di maggio (Kaminet) a Civita; alle Vallje (balli popolari che uniscono alla coreutica tradizionale balcanica i movimenti avvolgenti ideati da Skanderberg per combattere i Turchi) del martedì di Pasqua a Civita, Frasinetto, S. Basile; alle danze eseguite a Sofia d'Epiro nella prima domenica di maggio da gruppi folkloristici di diversa provenienza; ai balli e ai canti eseguiti il 29 luglio davanti alla chiesa di S. Anna tra Acquaformosa e Lungro; al Mercato e alla festa di S. Domenico Corone, nella ricorrenza di S. Adriano; alla spettacolare liturgia per la celebrazione dei matrimoni (incoronazione degli sposi; passeggiata in cerchi di tutto il corteo per tre volte intorno all'altare, ecc.) e a quella di S. Giovanni Crisostomo, che si svolge a Lungro (sede della diocesi di tutte le parrocchie di rito bizantino) il 15 agosto di ogni anno".

(Luigi M. Lombardi,
"Quando la Penisola diventa un'isola
etnica", *Arrivederci*, n. 2, 1990)

At other times Italian prefers a comma where English requires a semicolon. Let us look again at the example cited above:

L'estinzione dei dinosauri non ci scandalizza e ci appare magari in armonia con qualche misteriosa legge naturale che presiede alla nascita e alla morte delle specie; per i dinosauri, certo, è stata una calamità e le grida d'allarme sulle ferite che l'evoluzione tecnologica e industriale ha inferto e continua a inferire al nostro equilibrio ecologico sono ridicole se temono che una petrolchimica possa uccidere il grande Pan, ma forse non sono tanto ridicole se temono, più semplicemente, per la nostra sopravvivenza e per la nostra salute.

(Claudio Magris, "Al capezzale del Grande Bosco che muore", *Il Corriere della Sera*, 15 marzo 1986).

The extinction of the dinosaurs does not perturb us unduly; it even seems in harmony with some mysterious natural law which governs the birth and death of all species. It was no doubt a disaster for the dinosaurs, the cries of alarm at the wounds that technological and industrial development has inflicted and continues to inflict upon the balance of our ecological system are ridiculous if they fear that an oil refinery might kill the great Pan. But these cries are perhaps not so ridiculous if, more simply, they express fear for our survival and our well-being.

5.6.3. The *colon* differs from the semicolon in that it is not used for coordination. Its main function in English is to introduce a clause or phrase that explains, illustrates, amplifies, or in some way restates what has gone before. In this sense it stands for connectors such as that is, for example, in other words, in short, etc.

The sentence was poorly constructed: it lacked both unity and coherence.

Da quando s'era scoperta l'esistenza degli uccelli, le idee che regolavano il nostro mondo erano entrate in crisi. Quello che prima tutti credevano di capire, il modo semplice e regolare per cui le cose erano com'erano, non valeva più; ossia: questa non era altro che una delle innumerevoli possibilità; nessuno escludeva che le cose potessero andare in altri modi tutti diversi.

(Italo Calvino, *L'origine degli uccelli*)

Since the discovery of the existence of birds, the ideas which governed our world had undergone a crisis. Something which we had all thought we understood, the simple, steady rule by which things were the way they were, was no longer valid: or rather, this was only one of countless possibilities. No one could exclude the possibility of things happening in completely different ways.

A colon may also be used to introduce a list or a series if a collective term is first given.

My daughter finds all school subjects easy: English, History, Geography...

Another of its functions is to introduce a comment or explanation at the end of a sentence.

My name was not among the winners: I was not surprised.

These functions overlap fairly closely with Italian, the major difference being that English prefers a comma if the comment at the end of a sentence is not a clause but only a phrase; Italian can also have a colon.

Si tratta però di una lingua grezza: come il cinese.

It is a rudimentary language, like Chinese.

5.6.4. The *comma* separates elements of a sentence and helps to group words, phrases, and clauses for clarity. Although some uses of the comma are open to interpretation, a few firm rules can be given as regards English. The main rule is that commas should be used for a purpose: to help the reader to understand the meaning of the sentence. Unless a comma is needed to make the sense clearer, it is best to leave it out. Consider the following examples:

I am studying Italian literature and art.
(Italian art, probably)

I am studying Italian literature, and art.
(art in general, not just Italian art)

Would you like a glass of orange or coke with ice in it?
(the ice will be given with either)

Would you like a glass of orange, or coke with ice in it?
(the ice will be given only with the coke)

These could, of course, also have been formulated less ambiguously as:

I am studying art and Italian literature.

Would you like coke with ice in it or orange?

5.6.5. When translating direct speech, translators need to adhere to TL conventions as regards *speech marks*. Dashes (-) or parentheses («) to signal the beginning of direct speech are acceptable in Italian but not in English. The appropriate way to indicate the opening and closing of direct speech in English is by means of *inverted commas* (" ").

Compare the following two versions of a dialogue:

- *Cosa dicevi di Pieretto?*
- *Crederai mica, disse Oreste, che stanotte sia andato a dormire?*
- *Magari studia.*

"What were you saying about Pieretto?"

"You don't really think he's gone to bed tonight do you?", Oreste said.

"He might be studying".

5.7. Tense, Aspect and Textuality

One of the most important functions of the verb is to indicate the time at which actions take place. But the physical phenomenon of time and the grammatical category are only loosely related to each other so that there is no one-to-one correspondence between them. English actually has two different words to distinguish one from the other: *time* and *tense*. *Tense* refers to the relationship between the grammatical form of the verb and our concept of time. Languages have different numbers of tenses, subdividing past, present, and future time in various ways. In English, for instance, the present tense need not necessarily correspond to present time:

Oil floats on water (timeless statement).

and the past tense does not always refer to past time:

She said he was arriving that evening.

This lack of identity between time and tense is not the only factor that translators have to take into account. They also need to be aware of how tense interacts with aspect to influence meaning. The choice of tenses and aspect depends on writers' attitudes towards

what they are writing about and on their perspective on events: whether, that is, they wish to foreground certain elements of their message. It is thus closely linked to the way writers aim to organise the thematic progression of their text. Last but not least, the choice of one tense as opposed to another is also subject to overall discourse constraints. Verb tense and aspect should always satisfy two conditions in any written text: appropriateness and consistency.

One of the problems posed by translating into English is the choice of the appropriate narrative tense. The choice is mainly between the *past tense* and the *present tense*. This is strictly linked to the perspective writers have on the events they are describing or narrating. In English the past tense is used for an action or event completed in the definite and known past and is the normal tense in prose narratives.

Charles washed and shaved, and thought about Charles. He was clearly not cut out to be a rake; but nor had he had much training in remorseful pessimism. Had not Mr Freeman himself said that two years might pass before any decision as to his future need be taken? Much could happen in two years. Charles did not actually say to himself, "My uncle may die"; but the idea hovered on the fringes of his mind. And then the carnal aspect of the previous night's experience reminded him that legitimate pleasures in that direction would soon be his to enjoy. For now he must abstain. And that child - how many of life's shortcomings children must make up for! Sam returned with the tea - and with two letters. Life became a road again. He saw at once that the top envelope had been double postmarked; posted in Exeter and forwarded to Kensington from the White Lion in Lyme Regis. The other came direct from Lyme. He hesitated, then to allay suspicion picked up a paperknife and went to the window.

(John Fowles, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*)

Quaranta anni (1951-1991) spesi bene quelli della moda italiana per costruire le basi dei suoi grattacieli internazionali! Tutto è cominciato il 12 febbraio del 1951 quando il marchese Giovan Battista Giorgini aprì i saloni della sua villa Torriggiani a Firenze ai primi compratori americani che scorrazzavano per l'Europa alla ricerca del buono e del bello che questa poteva dar loro. Convinse un pugno di sarti italiani a trasformarsi in "creatori", proprio come i loro più famosi colleghi parigini, e indisse la prima sfilata di "alta moda italiana". Un successo senza precedenti, grazie a cinque giornaliste presenti l'indomani il mondo sapeva che anche l'Italia si era svegliata e non lasciava più tutti gli spazi alla haute couture di Parigi.

(Pia Soli, "Defilé, che passione", *Arrivederci*, n. 22, 1991)

From 1951 to 1991: forty years well spent by the Italian fashion industry in laying the foundations of its international empire! It all began on 12 February 1951 when the Marchese Giovan Battista Giorgini threw open the salons of his Villa Torriggiani in Florence to the first American buyers, who were scouring Europe for all the fine and beautiful things it had to offer. He persuaded a handful of Italian tailors to turn themselves into "couturiers", just like their famous Parisian colleagues, and announced the first fashion show of "Italian haute couture." It was an unparalleled success and, thanks to the presence of five journalists, the following day the whole world knew that Italy too had awakened and was not about to let Parisian haute couture rule the roost unchallenged.

If writers choose to narrate their story, or part of it, in the present tense, they generally have a reason for doing so. The narration or description of past events in the present tense creates a sense of immediacy. It is as though the narrator is describing the events as they happen, with the result that the reader feels more directly involved. A change from the past to the present tense in a text may occur, for example, when the narrator describes actions which are physically and emotionally very close to him. The sense of immediacy this creates is appropriate to the intensity of emotion which the narrator feels.

The gloomy taint that was in the Murdstone blood, darkened the Murdstone religion, which was austere and wrathful. I have thought, since, that its assuming character was a necessary consequence of Mr Murdstone's firmness, which wouldn't allow him to let anybody off from the utmost weight of the severest penalties he could find any excuse for. Be this as it may, I well remember the tremendous visages with which we used to go to church, and the changed air of the place. Again, the dreaded Sunday comes round, and I file into the old pew first, like a guarded captive brought to a condemned service. Again, Miss Murdstone, in a black velvet gown, that looks as if it had been made out of a pall, follows close upon me; then my mother; then her husband. There is no Peggotty now, as in the old time. Again, I listen to Miss Murdstone mumbling the responses, and emphasizing all the dread words with a cruel relish. Again, I catch rare glimpses of my mother, moving her lips timidly between the two, with one of them muttering at each ear like low thunder. Again, I wonder with a sudden fear whether it is likely that our good old clergyman can be wrong, and Mr and Miss Murdstone right, and that all the angels in Heaven can be destroying angels. Again, if I move a finger or relax a muscle of my face, Miss Murdstone pokes me with her prayer-book, and makes my side ache.

(Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*)

Discourse segments featuring the historic present may also contain shifts from the simple to the progressive aspect: this signals a particularly strong focus on actions and a break in the time sequence. Translators should be aware of the stylistic effect of such shifts and use them appropriately.

... Il bob scarlato si ferma. Uno dei bobisti è sbattuto fuori.
È immobile, bocconi sulla pista, braccia aperte, gambe divaricate. È la stessa figura, esatta a parte il colore rosso, dell'astronauta. Non si muove.
Arriva gente. Si curvano su di lui. Qualcuno lo alza per il casco. Lo riaccompagna giù.
La voce dello speaker dice: "È un cinese".
E in sovrainpressione sul video appare il nome.

(Mario Soldati, "Video-brivido per un bobista",
Il Corriere della Sera, 2 febbraio 1981)

... The scarlet bobsleigh comes to a halt. One of the two riders is thrown out.
He's motionless, lying spread-eagled, face down on the run. Except for the colour red, the figure looks just like an astronaut. He doesn't move.
People are running up. They are bending over him. Someone is lifting him up by his helmet. They are putting it down again.
The commentator's voice announces: "He's Chinese".
And his name comes up over the picture on the screen.

On the whole, English is rather stricter than Italian in the consistent use of narrative tenses and it is not possible to switch backwards and forwards from the past to the present tense unless a change in point of view or significance is desired.

Basta, una di quelle mattine, che era di domenica, telefonai ad Ines che sarei venuto a prenderla per andare al mare; avvertendo che volevo star solo con lei: volevo parlarle del fidanzamento. Contento e leggero, discesi al garage sotto casa mia, tirai fuori la mia bella bicolore grigia e blu e per prima cosa andai dal benzinaro, all'angolo di via Candia, dove mi feci fare il servizio completo: benzina, acqua, olio, gomme, perfino l'acqua distillata della batteria, nonché una ripulita al vetro del parabrezza. Salgo, metto la prima, passo alla seconda, ingrano la terza, finalmente faccio tutto viale Giulio Cesare in quarta: una mera-viglia. La macchina non correva, addirittura si beveva la strada; con il motore che faceva un ronzio d'amore come le api a primavera su un prato fiorito. Ma come svoltai in piazza della Libertà vidi da lontano che Ines non era sola.

(Alberto Moravia, *Il sorpasso*)

Enough of all that, one of those mornings, a Sunday, I phoned Ines to say that I would be coming to take her to the seaside; telling her that I wanted to be alone with her. I wanted to talk to her about our engagement. Happily and light-heartedly I went down to the garage below my house, got out my beautiful two-tone, blue and grey car and first of all went to the petrol station at the corner of Via Candia, where I had a complete check done: petrol, water, oil, tyres, even the distilled water in the battery, and had the windscreen cleaned as well. I got in, put her into first, moved into second, engaged third and finally went down the whole of Viale Giulio Cesare in fourth - marvellous. The car wasn't running, it was really drinking the street up; and the engine was humming with love, like bees in spring over a flowery meadow. But, as I turned into the Piazza della Libertà, I saw from a distance that Ines wasn't alone.

The past, and to a lesser extent the present, are therefore the dominant tenses used to establish long sequences in a written text in both Italian and English. However, the English past tense covers a whole range of meanings that include the Italian *passato remoto*, *passato prossimo* and *imperfetto*. In addition, the functions and meanings of the English *past tense* and *present perfect* do not overlap with those of the Italian *passato remoto* and *passato prossimo*. Apart from regional preferences, the two past tenses in standard Italian express differences in time distance of when the action or event took place with respect to the present: remote past (*passato remoto*) or recent past (*passato prossimo*). The distinguishing feature between the English *past tense* and *present perfect*, on the other hand, is whether the action or event is seen as referring to the "then and there" or to the "here and now".

Abbastanza bruscamente, anche se in modo un po' generico, nella seconda metà del Settecento, la gente comincia a lavarsi. L'idea che siano le arie a condurre i morbi persiste, ma insieme nasce quel concetto squisitamente nostro e moderno, che è l'igiene. Chi ha viaggiato in Africa e in Asia ha imparato che la presenza dell'uomo bianco è indicata in modo indubitabile dal sorgere di alberghi e rest-houses destinate alla sosta: a differenza degli uomini e donne del terzo mondo, il bianco ha bisogno di docce e gabinetti.

(Giorgio Manganelli, "Anche gli odori sono ideologia", *Il Corriere della Sera*)

Quite suddenly, even if somewhat generically, in the second half of the eighteenth century, people began to wash themselves. The idea that it was the air that spread diseases persisted but at the same time there came into being that peculiarly modern concept of ours which is hygiene. Anyone who has travelled in Africa and Asia has learned that the white man's presence is undeniably signalled by the appearance of hotels and rest-houses meant for brief stops. Unlike the men and women of the Third World, the white man needs showers and toilets.

The applications of the present perfect are more restricted in English than in Italian and translators face a major problem in deciding on the appropriate tense to use to give the reader the right perspective on events. In English shifts in perspective created by the present perfect in contrast with the past simple is linked to certain discourse types. The present perfect is used, for instance, to topicalise certain news of current relevance in newspaper and television broadcasts and the past tense is used for the narrative.

Five years of bitter argument over a scientific fraud have finally forced the resignation of the president of Rockefeller University in New York, the Nobel prizewinner David Baltimore. Baltimore, then at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was a co-author of a paper published in 1986 which has since spawned two investigations by the National Institute of Health and four congressional hearings. The final verdict was that the paper contained fabricated data of which Baltimore had been unaware, but that he had erred in failing to take the allegations of fraud seriously enough, and in attitude towards the enquiries.

In May this year, Baltimore apologised to the research worker who made the original allegation of fraud, and who lost her job as a result. On Monday, he finally conceded that the affair had done him too much damage to continue as president of Rockefeller University, one of the most prestigious research centres in America.

(Nigel Hawkes, "False mouse genes sink scientist", *The Times*, December 4, 1991)

Shifts in tense and aspect choices are also frequently to be encountered in academic texts, where they reflect shifts in point of view or standpoint.

The technique of painting in oil was developed, permitting a much greater brilliance and subtlety in colour and modelling. These techniques were first exploited fully in the Netherlands, by painters like the Van Eycks, and in Italy; by 1500 the three giants of the High Renaissance were already at the beginning or in the middle of their careers - Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Michelangelo. But about that time England was, in matters of material civilization as of geography, on the fringe of Europe. Except for rare moments in history she has always tended not to initiate, in matters of art, but to tag along some way behind. But it is also very difficult to formulate any valid judgement of what painting was going on in England at this time, because so much of it was subsequently deliberately destroyed by the Puritans. What is left suggests that a somewhat out-of-date imitation of Netherlandish painting was fashionable, but it is also clear that the English aristocracy had not yet acquired the habit of decorating the walls and cabinets of great private houses with paintings. Apart from religious paintings, such pictures as there were, were functional, and they were probably mainly portraits.

(David Piper, *English Painting 1500-1880*)

The Italian *imperfetto* covers the functions of the English *past tense* and the iterative marked forms would and used to, as well as the *progressive past tense*. When translating the *imperfetto* into English, translators must decide whether a general contrast is implied between past and present states or habits (used to), whether a repetitive action is foregrounded (would, but only with dynamic verbs), or whether the iterative meaning is unmarked (*past tense*). Consider the following text:

Erano i Dalla Carretta con i loro ospiti, un piccolo museo archeologico di lunghi scialli scuri, di cappellini barocchi, di calze e nappe canonicali, di facce slavate; gente noiosa che veniva lì una volta l'anno, per convenienza, a sedersi in giro e a guardarsi un tratto in viso senza saper che dire; dopo di che un vecchio servitore in giacchetta bigia entrava molto dignitosamente portando il caffè e i pandoli che il cavalleresco Beneto serviva con i suoi scherzetti sempre uguali, di cui la compagnia rideva regolarmente ogni anno sullo stesso tono e sulla stessa misura. Perdere un bel tramonto di novembre per costoro! Bianca non li poteva soffrire, le toglievano il respiro.

(Antonio Fogazzaro, *Un'idea di Ermes Torranza*)

Used to would not normally be appropriate in narrative texts since the contrast between past and present would seem like interference on the part of the author. It is best to opt for the past as the narrative tense with occasional use of would to foreground the iterative nature of the actions and events.

It was the Dalla Carretta family with their guests, a little archaeological museum of long black shawls, of over-ornamented bonnets, of ecclesiastical stockings and tassels, of insipid faces: pestiferous people who came once a year, as a matter of propriety, to sit in a circle and look at each other for a while without knowing what to say; after which an old servant in a grey jacket would come in very decorously to bring the coffee and cakes which the gallant Beneto would serve, together with his little jokes which were always the same, and at which the company laughed regularly every year in the same key and rhythm. To miss a beautiful November sunset for those people! Bianca could not stand them; they made it impossible for her to breathe.

(Antonio Fogazzaro, *An Idea of Hermes Torranza's*, translated by Robert A. Hall, Jr)

An alternative strategy with texts of this kind is to establish the iterative meaning with a marked form and then to continue with the *simple past*.

The English *progressive past tense* also translates the Italian *imperfetto*, but once again it is at times better rendered by the *simple past tense*, especially in narrative and descriptive texts.

In the Bottling Room all was harmonious bustle and ordered activity. Flaps of fresh sow's peritoneum ready to cut to the proper size came shooting up in little lifts from the Organ Store in the sub-basement. Whizz and then, click! the lift-hatches flew open; the Bottle-Liner had only to reach out a hand, take the flap, insert, smooth-down, and before the lined bottle had had time to travel out of reach along the endless band, whizz, click! another flap of peritoneum had shot up from the depths, ready to be slipped into yet another bottle, the next of that slow interminable procession on the band.

(Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*)

Nella Sala di imbottigliamento, tutto era agitazione armoniosa e attività ordinata. Strisce di peritoneo di scrofa fresco, già tagliate nelle dimensioni volute, salivano in piccoli montacarichi, dal Deposito degli Organi situato nel sottosuolo. Un brusio e poi, click! si spalancavano gli sportelli del montacarichi; l'addetto non aveva che da allungare la mano, prendere la striscia, introdurla nel flacone, distenderla, e prima che il flacone foderato di peritoneo avesse il tempo di allontanarsi di molto sul nastro in movimento, altro brusio, click!, una nuova striscia di peritoneo era salita dalle profondità dell'edificio, per essere introdotta in un altro flacone seguente nella interminabile processione sul nastro.

(Aldous Huxley, *Il mondo nuovo*
translated by Lorenzo Gigli and Luciano Bianciardi)

In some cases the *past tense* can be used to continue the narrative after the *progressive past* has set the scene. In the following example, however, the *past tense* distinguishes a permanent feature of a scene from the temporary action or event, expressed by the *progressive past*.

A line of headstones stood in front of her. A man was kneeling beside one of them.

The *simple past* and *progressive past* can both be used throughout the text to give different perspectives on events: the *simple past* can be used to carry the narrative forward while the *progressive past* slows it down to enable the reader to linger over background details and description.

From her dim crimson cellar Lenina Crowne shot up seventeen storeys, turned to the right as she stepped out of the lift, walked down a long corridor and, opening the door marked GIRLS' DRESSING-ROOM, plunged into a deafening chaos of arms and bosoms and underclothing. Torrents of hot water were splashing into or gurgling out of a hundred baths. Rumbling and hissing, eighty vibro-vacuum massage machines were simultaneously kneading and sucking the firm and sunburnt flesh of eighty superb female specimens. Everyone was talking at the top of her voice. A Synthetic Music machine was warbling out a super-comet solo.

(Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*)

Dall'ombra livida del sottosuolo, Lenina Crowne fu sbalzata su di diciassette piani, girò a destra uscendo dall'ascensore, percorse un lungo corridoio e, aperta una porta su cui stava scritto "Sala di Toiletta Femminile", piombò in un caos abbacinante di braccia, di seni e di biancheria intima. Torrenti di acqua calda entravano scrosciando in cento vasche da bagno e ne uscivano gorgogliando. Ronfando e sibilando, ottanta apparecchi di vibromassaggio aspirante stavano simultaneamente lavorando e succhiando le sode abbronzate carni di ottanta superbi tipi di donne. E ognuna di esse parlava a voce alta. Una macchina di Musica Sintetica stava eseguendo un a solo di super-cornetta.

(Aldous Huxley, *Il mondo nuovo*,
translated by Lorenzo Gigli and Luciano Biancardi)

One distinction between *simple* and *progressive past tenses* which translators need to be alert to when faced with the *imperfetto* in Italian is the signalling of parallel actions. Two simple aspects are required when the actions are dependent on each other:

La nostra angoscia cresceva a misura che i tedeschi avanzavano.

(Natalia Ginzburg, *Lessico familiare*)

Our anxiety grew as the Germans advanced.

Two progressive aspects should be used when the actions are independent of each other:

While Susan was studying, her sister was enjoying herself on the beach.

The *past perfect* tense expresses an action completed before a known time or event in the past. It may be used to comment on findings that precede those described in the text. This is also true in longer pieces of discourse when it is necessary to describe accurately when events occurred in relation to each other. It is far more frequent in Italian than it is in English, however. English tends to avoid series of sentences all in the *past perfect*: once it has been established that the events being described are previous to another event, then it is normal in English to continue the narrative in the *simple past*.

Before the day of the concert, the organizers **had made** elaborate preparations. They **distributed** leaflets to every house in the district; they **arranged** for hundreds of stewards; they even **made** announcements on the local radio.

(Norman Coe, *A Learner's Grammar of English*)

Da ragazzo una volta su un piccolo nevaio delle Dolomiti era scivolato, provando una sensazione strana. La superficie infatti non era liscia ma, forse a motivo del disgelo, tutta a piccole concavità. Scivolando giù a velocità sempre più forte, Antonio urtava via via contro i bordi delle infossature e ne restava sbalottolato malamente.

(Dino Buzzati, *Un amore*)

As a boy he **had** once **slipped** over on a little snow-field in the Dolomites. The sensation **was** strange since the surface **wasn't** smooth; it **was** full of little hollows, due to the thaw, perhaps. Sliding down faster and faster, Antonio **kept** bumping against the edges of the holes and **was thrown about** quite nastily.

Consistency in the use of tense and aspect an important feature of *indirect discourse*. If the reporting verb is in the present or present perfect tense, there is no change in the tenses of the verbs in the reported clause in English. If, instead, the reporting verb is in the past, the tenses in the reported clauses undergo a *backshift*. In other words, the tenses of the verbs shift back one. Thus:

Direct speech

simple present
progressive present
present perfect
simple past
future
conditional
conditional perfect
past perfect

Indirect speech

simple past
progressive past
past perfect
conditional
no change
no change
no change.



The same concept of backshifting applies to expressions of time and place:

now	then
here	there.

It is very important to note when translating from English into Italian that the conditional remains unchanged in indirect discourse. A hypothetical condition conveys the speaker's or writer's attitude towards the possible fulfilment of the condition: there may be the implication that either the condition will not be fulfilled because of future conditions or that it is not fulfilled because of present conditions or that it was not fulfilled because of past conditions.

1. If he changed his options, he'd be a more likeable person.
2. They would be here with us if they had the time.
3. If you had listened to me, you wouldn't have made so many mistakes.

(Sidney Greenbaum and Randolph Quirk,
A Student's Grammar of the English Language)

In indirect discourse the first two of these merge stay the same, as does the third. This is done to retain the differences in meaning.

1. They explained to him that if he changed his options, he'd be a more likeable person.
2. They wanted us to know that they would be here with us if they had the time.
3. She told him that if he had listened to her, he wouldn't have made so many mistakes.

This also holds true for translating the *future-in-the-past*: no perfective forms are used in English unless, of course, a past conditional or modal will have are reported. Compare the following examples:

I'll get it for you.
She said she would get it for him.

They will have seen the film by now.
We thought they would have seen the film by then.

They would have known the answer.
We thought they would have known the answer.

Particular attention is needed when the *future-in-the-past* or *conditionals* occur in the course of a text with a past-time narrative frame without explicit reporting verbs, as the backshift rules of indirect discourse still apply.

Il progetto della traduzione meccanica è entrato oggi in una fase di attesa e meditazione; ma vent'anni fa certe esigenze pratiche ed un certo superficiale ottimismo avevano portato a ritenere che la realizzazione non sarebbe stata lontana.

(Bruna Zonta e M. Vittoria Giuliani,
"La traduzione meccanica", *Pensiero e Linguaggio*)

The machine translation project has now entered a phase of expectation and meditation; but twenty years ago practical demands and a certain superficial optimism had led to the belief that it would soon be realised.

Si pensava che il polmone nativo enfisematoso sarebbe andato incontro ad una progressiva sovradistensione comprimendo il polmone trapiantato ed ostacolandone in tal modo la buona funzionalità.

(G. Pezzuoli et al. "Il trapianto di polmone singolo nel trattamento delle broncopneumopatie croniche ostruttive in fase terminale", *Chirurgia*, vol. 4, n. 10, 1991)

It was thought that the native emphysematous lung could become progressively overinflated and compress the transplanted lung, thus impairing its function.

Over long stretches of narrative there may also be a mingling of indirect discourse, direct speech, free direct speech and free indirect speech depending on the perspective the author wishes to foreground.

Si rivolgeva a lui senza esitazione, fiduciosa di lui. L'uomo tarchiato ne fu quasi offeso. Ella gli chiese con la sua voce di donna che rimane molte ore e molti giorni in silenzio, che vive sempre fra pensieri piccini, che è rimasta piccina con tutti i suoi anni: "E dove andate voi?" I viaggi, la gente che si interrogava in viaggio un tempo, gli tornarono alla mente; gli tornò alla mente Ulisse in qualche parte dei libri antichi in cui si interrogavano i viaggiatori, di dove venite, dove andate, una curiosità da gente antica che nei viaggi vedeva qualcosa di straordinario, in cui viaggiava gente singolare e avventurosa, non come ora che uno va da una città all'altra, scende dal treno, mette il piede come se fosse in casa sua riconoscendo le piazze e le strade, senza stupore.

(Corrado Alvaro, *I giocattoli rotti*)

She turned to him without hesitation, trusting in him. The stocky man was almost offended at this. She asked him, with that voice of a woman who remains many hours and many days in silence, who always lives with little thoughts, who has remained little despite all her years: "And where are you going?" The trips and the people whom one used to question on journeys in olden times, came back to his mind: he thought again of Ulysses in some part of the old books where they questioned travellers - where do you come from, where are you going - a curiosity like that of ancient people who saw something extraordinary in trips, when unusual and venturesome people used to travel, not like now when one goes from one city to another, gets off the train and sets down his foot as if he were at home, recognizing the squares and the streets, without amazement.

Backshifting does not occur in English when the time-reference of the original discourse is valid at the time of reporting, especially if it refers to a "timeless" state or a universal truth.

Copernicus maintained that all planets move round the sun.

Backshifting the *past tense* is optional when two co-occur.

She said she was just leaving when the parcel arrived.

The way writers arrange words, clauses and sentences textually is directly related to the meaning they wish to convey. Whatever choice is made will have an effect on the readers and their response to the written communication. Textual organisation is therefore an important component of translation, which aims to convey the same overall meaning in the TT as the ST and to create an equivalent response in the TL readership.

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CHAPTER 6

Grammar and Textuality

- 6.1. Coherence and Cohesion
- 6.2. Coherence
- 6.3. Cohesion
- 6.4. Reference
- 6.5. Substitution
- 6.6. Ellipsis
- 6.7. Conjunction

Languages have various resources for giving unity to a text apart from thematic structure and information focus. For a text to be a unified stretch of language, for it to "hang together" both conceptually and linguistically, it also needs to be coherent and cohesive. *Coherent* because it must have continuity of sense and *cohesive* because the sentences that make up the text must be linked to each other to make up a unified whole. In this Chapter we shall examine some of the grammatical devices that writers have at their disposal in both English and Italian to make a text coherent and cohesive and how these concepts are related to translation; in Chapter 7 we shall consider the relationships that exist between lexical items within the same language and across languages both in and out of context.

6.1. Coherence and Cohesion

As we saw in Chapter 2, people communicate not in grammatical units, but in semantic units. The basic distinction between a grammatical unit and a unit of meaning is that the former refers to a formal level of language (how sentences are organised into texts) and the latter to a functional level (how people put language to meaningful use). Although a single sentence of a text is almost always a complete grammatical unit, it is seldom semantically complete. It gets its meaning either from the situation in which it is set (the context) or from the other linguistic elements surrounding it (the co-text). We have already discussed how these factors come into play when the translator has to choose between translating *Alt* as Stop or Halt, or *Pronto* as Hello or Ready? (Chapter 3). Let us now look at a further example:

"Please don't do that while I'm trying to work", she begged.

Do and that may, on the one hand, refer to the extra-linguistic situation or *context*: for instance, to a persistent habit the addressee has of whistling to himself, which is not explicitly stated in the surrounding text. On the other hand, the referent may be recoverable from the linguistic environment or *co-text*.

True to his nature, James started whistling to himself as soon as she settled down to her work. "Please don't do that while I'm trying to work", she begged.

Here, do and that clearly refer back within the co-text to started whistling to himself. In the former case interpretation is said to be *exophoric* since reference is made to the context *outside* the text; in the latter it is *endophoric*, reference *within* the text. Endophoric reference may be further sub-classified into *anaphoric* (backward) and *cataphoric* (forward) reference since the linguistic units of a text occur in succession and may thus either precede or follow their linguistic referent. These types of reference and their relevance to translation will be examined more closely in the section on "Reference" below (6.5).

The above text constitutes a meaningful and integrated whole for two main reasons. It is pragmatically *coherent* in that it reflects real-world experience: people whistling to themselves while one is trying to work tends to be irritating and the reaction of the disturbed party is logically in tune with what might have been expected. It is *cohesive* in that certain elements of meaning can only be interpreted with reference to others within the co-text. The requirement for coherence, therefore, is that a text should hang together conceptually: in other words, it should make sense and not consist of a jumble of sentences. The requirement for cohesion is that a text should be interrelated grammatically and lexically: in other words, it should contain linguistic devices that link elements within the co-text through relations in meaning.

Together coherence and cohesion contribute towards creating textuality: that property of texts which distinguishes it from a random sequence of unconnected sentences. They turn separate clauses and sentences into connected discourse, signalling the relationships between ideas, and making obvious the meaning the speaker or writer is trying to communicate. An understanding of *how* a text hangs together, how it constitutes an integrated whole (how it coheres in terms of coherence and cohesion), is essential information for translators in interpreting the ST and recreating its overall communicative purpose in the TT. Written communication in particular entails a high degree of interdependence between the organising and the linking of ideas. The translator therefore needs to be familiar with ways of organising the content clearly (coherence) and connecting ideas and information across sentences to develop a topic (cohesion).

6.2. Coherence

Coherence, as we said earlier, refers to the organisation of meanings in relation to one another. The elements of a text correspond to the natural, real-world order of events or sequences. Although various meaningful sequences are possible depending on the function of the text, there must be a logical transition from one sentence to another for a text to be coherent and achieve its overall purpose.

They can be time ordered sequences (narrative texts):

Civico Museo Navale Didattico

Al Museo Navale diedero vita il 18 marzo 1922 i marinai milanesi in congedo dell'Unione Marinara Italiana – ora primo Gruppo Marinai d'Italia – «in primis» il Contrammiraglio Filippo Camperio e il Comandante Federico Jarach, che raccolsero e ordinarono nella sede della «villa reale» cimeli e modelli navali donati dalla Marina, da arsenali, da compagnie di navigazione, da privati, oppure acquistati. Con rogito notarile 16 aprile 1932, tale raccolta veniva donata al Comune di Milano e assumeva il nome di Civico Museo Navale Didattico. Essa in precedenza era stata sistemata nei sotterranei del Castello Sforzesco, dove rimase sino al novembre 1952 per trasferirsi poi nelle sale e gallerie dell'ex-convento olivetano di via S. Vittore, nel medesimo complesso architettonico dove ha sede pure il Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Tecnica. A tutto il 30 settembre 1969 le raccolte museologiche annoverano 3422 numeri registrati. Taluni numeri raggruppano due o più pezzi.

*(Milano. Musei, Pinacoteche, Raccolte d'Arte,
Ente Provinciale per il Turismo Milano. Edizione italiana, 1986)*

This museum was founded on March 18, 1922 by a group of retired Milanese seamen belonging to the Italian Seaman's Union - now the first Seaman's Group of Italy, notably Rear Admiral Filippo Camerio and Captain Federico Jarach, who collected and arranged in the "Villa Reale" relics and model ships donated by the navy, shipyards, shipping companies and private individuals, or purchased. Through a notarial deed dated April 16, 1932, this collection was donated to the Municipality of Milan and became the Museo Navale Didattico. Formerly situated in the cellars of the Sforza Castle, in November 1952 it was transferred to the premises of the former Olivetan monastery on Via S. Vittore, the same architectural complex that houses the National Museum of Science and Technology. On September 30, 1969 the museum had 3,422 items, some of them consisting of two or more pieces.

(Milano. Museums, Picture Galleries, Art Collections,
Azienda di Promozione Turistica del Milanese. English edition, 1990)

or they can be ordered according to a cause-effect sequence:

È diventato difficile definire i compiti del giornalista. Si veda con quanto imbarazzo logico lo fa la recente sentenza della Corte Costituzionale, che gli nega il diritto della riservatezza circa le sue fonti di informazione. Il succo della sentenza è che la situazione del giornalista è diversa da quella del sacerdote e dell'avvocato, perché a quest'ultimo qualcuno va ad offrire un'informazione riservata a tutela del proprio onore o della propria coscienza, mentre al giornalista qualcuno va ad offrire un'informazione affinché diventi pubblica. Se così stessero le cose, bisognerebbe domandarsi se è incriminabile un giornalista a cui un criminale va a riferire un'informazione riservata che lui, il giornalista, decide di non pubblicare. La mancanza di pubblicazione esimerebbe il giornalista dal suo dovere di palesare la fonte? E cosa accade se il complice di una rapina va al sacerdote e, pentito, gli consegna metà del malloppo perché sia restituita alla vittima? Se il sacerdote va a consegnare il malloppo alla polizia è tenuto a rivelare la propria fonte? Eppure il fatto è ormai pubblico, e la giustizia ha interesse a individuare i complici non pentiti, e a recuperare l'altra metà del malloppo. Dunque non è la pubblicità del fatto che rende diversi i vari ruoli.

(Umberto Eco, "E tu che fai? Faccio notizia", *L'Espresso*, 22 febbraio 1981)

It has become difficult to define a journalist's duties. Consider, for instance, the awkward logic followed by the Constitutional Court in its recent judgement, in which it denies him the right to keep his sources confidential. The gist of the judgement is that the situation in which a journalist finds himself differs from that of a priest and a lawyer. People go to the latter two to give confidential information in order to safeguard their honour and conscience, while they go to a journalist with information so that it may become public. If this were so, the question would have to be asked whether a journalist can be prosecuted for deciding not to publish confidential information that a criminal has given him. Would the fact that the journalist does not publish the information exempt him from his duty to reveal his source? And what happens if an accomplice in a robbery goes to the priest and, repentant, hands over half the loot so that it may be given back to the victim? If the priest goes to hand in the loot to the police is he bound to reveal his source? Yet the fact has by then become public, and the law is interested in identifying the unrepentant accomplices and recovering the other half of the loot. Thus, it is not publicising the fact that makes the various roles different.

or they can be ordered according to argumentative discussion

L'estinzione dei dinosauri non ci scandalizza e ci appare magari in armonia con qualche misteriosa legge naturale che presiede alla nascita e alla morte delle specie: per i dinosauri, certo, è stata una calamità e le grida d'allarme sulle ferite che l'evoluzione tecnologica e industriale ha inferto e continua a inferire al nostro equilibrio ecologico sono ridicole se temono che una petrolchimica possa uccidere il grande Pan, ma forse non sono tanto ridicole se temono, più semplicemente, per la nostra sopravvivenza e per la nostra salute.

(Claudio Magris, "Al capezzale del Grande Bosco che muore",
Il Corriere della Sera, 15 marzo 1986)

The extinction of the dinosaurs does not perturb us unduly; it even seems in harmony with some mysterious natural law which governs the birth and death of all species. It was no doubt a disaster for the dinosaurs, the cries of alarm at the wounds that technological and industrial development has inflicted and continues to inflict upon the balance of our ecological system are ridiculous if they fear that an oil refinery might kill the great Pan. But these cries are perhaps not so ridiculous if, more simply, they express fear for our survival and our well-being.

In all these cases sentences appear in a fixed order to ensure clarity of meaning. The sequence of coherence relations generally remains constant from ST to TT, and thus the same order is likely to be upheld in translation. However, when the logical transition is *not* clear the translator must privilege the functional over the formal aspect and clarify it. Unless lack of coherence is a deliberately intended feature of the ST, the translator will have to work out the logical connection in the sequence of sentences and make it explicit in the TT. Translators are very often called upon to translate badly-written texts. It is an inescapable fact, however, that while incoherence in a text written by the original author will be ascribed to that author, the responsibility for any incoherence in a translated text will be laid solely and squarely at the translator's door.

Cos'è un'autocritica della lingua? Semplicemente questo, a mio parere: guardarci un po' allo specchio (sia pure metaforicamente) quando pronunciamo certe parole con troppa facilità o precipitazione annesse al nostro vocabolario, forse anche a causa dell'ossessionante bla-bla che ci sovrasta e circonda. Oppure, con un rapido esame di coscienza, controllando (nell'atto di pronunciarle) se proprio siamo sicuri di quel che vogliamo dire o, inversamente della loro rispondenza a quel che noi stessi intenderemmo dire.

(Giovanni Giudici, *L'Espresso*, 25 gennaio 1981)

What is language self-criticism? Simply this, in my opinion: having a look at ourselves in the mirror (even if metaphorically) whenever we utter certain words too lightly or hastily – words that have been tagged onto our vocabulary, among other things, perhaps, as a result of the incessant babbling that goes on all around us. Or we could take a swift look at our conscience just as we're uttering the words to check whether we are really sure of what we want to say, or whether the words themselves are actually saying what we mean.

Essentially, the translator's task is to decide what the writer is aiming to *achieve* with the piece of discourse and what he or she does in fact achieve. The text should be evaluated according to its functionality, therefore, which means its overall communicative purpose.

6.3. Cohesion

The coherent organisation of ideas in written communication is closely connected to the way meaning is related across sentence boundaries either implicitly or explicitly. The possibilities that exist in language for setting up relations that make a text hang together are called *cohesive devices*. Whenever some element in the text is dependent for its interpretation on another, a cohesive tie is set up between the presupposing and the presupposed items. These ties can be either grammatical or lexical and may span long passages of intervening text. By forming a network of references, cohesive ties make a text a unified whole. The occurrence of various cohesively-related items in a text leads to a cohesive chain and the closer the relationship between different chains in a text, the more cohesive and coherent the text. Although the conceptual relationships of coherence (cause-effect, temporal, etc.) are most probably universal and very similar in Italian and English, the cohesive devices that activate and signal such relationships are likely to differ from language to language.

Grammatical cohesion denotes the surface marking of intersentential semantic relations. It includes such cohesive devices as *reference*, *substitution*, *ellipsis* and *conjunction*. The relevance of grammatical cohesion to translation lies in the fact that different languages have preferences for certain sets of devices for creating textual cohesion over others. Let us now look at some grammatical devices in English and see how they contribute towards textuality, paying particular attention to those devices which often prove troublesome to Italian/English translation.

6.4. Reference

Referential and deictic links are the backbone of text cohesion. Reference items in English include *personal pronouns* (he, she, it, they, etc.), the *definite article* (the), *deictics* (this, that, these, those, here, there, etc.), and such items as *same*, *different*, *other*, *else*, *such*, etc. The following texts illustrate these types of reference in both English and Italian.

La nonna ed io passammo da via de' Magazzini a via del Corno, nell'autunno del '26. Eravamo rimasti noi due "soli sulla faccia della terra", come lei diceva; e via de' Magazzini, al centro della città, aveva, con gli anni, conferito un nuovo valore alle sue case, gli appartamenti erano stati venduti uno ad uno. Un commerciante e sua moglie avevano acquistato quello in cui noi abitavamo: venivano da Torino e la casa gli serviva, stavano in albergo nell'attesa; progettavano di cambiare piacito, di alzare un tramezzo per il bagno, fra ingresso e cucina; offersero una buonauscita che la nonna rifiutò. Lo sfratto venne prorogato di tre mesi.

(Vasco Pratolini, *Lo sgombero*)

Grandmother and I moved from via de' Magazzini to via del Corno, in the autumn of '26. The two of us had been left "alone on the face of the earth", as she used to say; and via de' Magazzini, in the centre of the city, had, with the passing of the years, bestowed a new value on its buildings, and one by one the apartments had been sold. A business man and his wife had bought the one in which we were living: they came from Turin and needed the house, for meanwhile they were living in a hotel; they were planning to renew the flooring, to put up a partition for the bathroom, between the entrance and the kitchen; they offered us compensation money which grandmother refused. The eviction order was suspended for three months.

The items in italics refer in some way to others: she refers to the Grandmother and us to Grandmother and I introduced in the opening lines; similarly, they refers back to a businessman and his wife and its to Via de' Magazzini. In other words, the referents for she, us, they and its are recoverable by looking back in the text. This type of reference within the text is called *anaphoric* and contributes most prominently to creating textuality, making, that is, a text a unified whole and not merely a collection of random sentences.

There is, however, another type of reference in this text: to establish the referent of the city, for instance, the author assumes that readers share a world that is independent of the text, where cities are typically made up of streets (with names), buildings and apartments; readers are also expected to know that houses have flooring, bathrooms, entrances and kitchens and that an eviction order is served on tenants when owners wish to repossess it. This kind of reference outside the text is called *exaphoric reference* and can be either to the immediate context or to an assumed, shared world between the writer and the reader.

A further type of textual reference is illustrated in the following text:

Da ragazzo una volta su un piccolo nevaio delle Dolomiti era scivolato, provando una sensazione strana. La superficie infatti non era liscia ma, forse a motivo del disgelo, tutta a piccole concavità. Scivolando giù a velocità sempre più forte, Antonio urtava via via contro i bordi delle infossature e ne restava sballottolato malamente.

(Dino Buzzati, *Un amore*)

As a boy he had once slipped over on a little snow-field in the Dolomites. The sensation was strange since the surface wasn't smooth; it was full of little hollows, due to the thaw, perhaps. Sliding down faster and faster, Antonio kept bumping against the edges of the holes and was thrown about quite nastily.

Here the identity of a boy and he is revealed later on in the text. This anticipatory kind of reference is called *cataphoric*.

Although the use of reference items largely overlap in Italian and English, important differences do exist. We shall be looking at some of these in the following sections.

6.4.1. Translating *singular personal pronouns with generic reference* has become somewhat problematic in English. This is because there is a growing tendency to avoid what is considered as being sexist language. English already possesses a number of nouns which are not explicitly gender-specific although they do tend to conjure up conventional or stereotype connotations: translator, writer, doctor, nurse, teacher, shop-assistant, petrol-pump attendant, pilot, secretary, and so on. Recent additions to the English language are such non-sexist terms like headperson (instead of headmaster and headmistress), chairperson, refuse collector, to name but a few. The problem that still remains unresolved is what to do when generic personal pronoun reference is required.

The translator has to acquire the technique of transferring smoothly between the two basic translation processes: comprehension, which may involve interpretation, and formulation, which may involve recreation (Fig. 5).

He has to have a sharp eye for oppositions, contrasts and emphases ... in the original, and, if it is a non-literary text, he has to know how to accentuate these in his own version.

(Peter Newmark, *Approaches to Translation*)

Il traduttore deve acquisire la tecnica per muoversi con facilità fra i due procedimenti fondamentali: la comprensione, che può richiedere un'interpretazione, e la formulazione, che può richiedere una ricreazione (fig. 5).

Deve individuare le opposizioni, i contrasti e l'enfasi ... presenti nell'originale e, se affronta un testo non letterario, deve sapere come accentuare questi aspetti nella sua versione.

(Peter Newmark, *La traduzione, problemi e metodi*, translated by Flavia Frangini)

One possible solution is to use a plural noun and consequently a plural personal pronoun.

Translators have to acquire the technique of transferring smoothly between the two basic translation processes: comprehension, which may involve interpretation, and formulation, which may involve recreation (Fig. 5).

They have to have a sharp eye for oppositions, contrasts and emphases ... in the original, and, if it is a non-literary text, they have to know how to accentuate these in their own version.

An even trickier problem is posed by personal pronouns referring to the partitives (someone, somebody, anyone, anybody) and the personal indefinites (everyone, everybody, no one, nobody), especially when the gender is either unknown or inclusive.

Someone is ringing the doorbell. I'd better let (?) in.

Traditionally, the masculine he/him/his was used as the unmarked form, covering both masculine and feminine reference, but this has recently been criticised as sexually biased. In formal writing the coordination he or she is used. In informal speech the way round the dilemma is to use the gender-neutral they, which very neatly does away with the male/female distinction. Unfortunately, this solution is still considered unacceptable in formal written discourse where number concord is still quite strictly adhered to: a plural pronoun cannot grammatically refer to a singular subject.

Chi ama prendere il sole, da un po' di anni a questa parte si espone ai dardeggianti raggi con un certo timore.

In recent years whoever loves sunbathing has become increasingly hesitant about exposing themselves to the glare of strong sunlight.

Caution should also be exercised when translating *lo* into English since it is both a neuter and a masculine 3rd person singular pronoun.

*... Il bob scarlato si ferma. Uno dei bobisti è sbattuto fuori.
È immobile, bocconi sulla pista, braccia aperte, gambe divaricate. È la stessa figura,
esatta a parte il colore rosso, dell'astronauta. Non si muove.
Arriva gente. Si curvano su di lui. Qualcuno lo alza per il casco. Lo riaccompagna giù.
La voce dello speaker dice: "È un cinese".
E in sovraimpressione sul video appare il nome.
(Mario Soldati, "Video-brivido per un bobista", *Il Corriere della Sera*)*

... The scarlet bobsleigh comes to a halt. One of the two riders is thrown out. He's motionless, lying spread-eagled, face down on the run. Except for the colour red, the figure looks just like an astronaut. He doesn't move. People are running up. They are bending over him. Someone is lifting him up by his helmet. They are putting it down again. The commentator's voice announces: "He's Chinese". And his name comes up over the picture on the screen.

6.4.2. A frequent cause of ambiguity in meaning is due to the misuse of the pronoun we. We can function in two different ways: it can be either reader-excluding or reader-including. If the author of the ST is stating a personal opinion or one that does not involve the reader in any way, then the use of we is clearly reader-excluding. The difference between Italian and English is the frequency with which this function of we is to be found: it is not only much less used in English but is also a rather more marked form. As always

discourse genre is an important factor. The following informative texts illustrate this point:

Chi ama prendere il sole, da un po' di anni a questa parte si espone ai dardeggianti raggi con un certo timore. Non diciamo che evita di abbronzarsi – come si fa a rinunciare alla tintarella? – ma si spoglia senza lo slancio di un tempo, del tempo felice in cui il sole era consigliato senza riserve. L'equazione sole-salute è stata infatti messa in dubbio, anzi negata: molti medici sono dell'opinione che l'esposizione (eccessiva) al sole rappresenti un fattore di rischio per la pelle: rischio di rughe, macchie e, peggio, di cancro.

(Giovanni Maria Pace, "Amico Sole", *Ulisse 2000*, n. 74, 1990)

In recent years sun lovers have become increasingly hesitant about exposing themselves to the glare of strong sunlight. They have not actually stopped sunbathing – no one wants to give up that flattering tan – but people no longer strip off with the carefree abandon of the days when sunshine was simply assumed to be good for you. The sunshine-health equation has been questioned and eventually refuted altogether. A number of doctors maintain that excessive exposure to sunlight is harmful to the skin and a possible cause of wrinkles, blemishes and, worst of all, cancer.

Although this informative text is written in a relatively informal tenor and the author is quite a well-known journalist in the medical field, there is no reason to reproduce the reader-excluding we of the Italian ST in the English TT. In the following informative text the significance of what the two scientists have succeeded in doing justifies focus being placed on them with the use of we.

A cogliere la mela del biblico albero della conoscenza furono, il 25 aprile 1953, le mani di un bizzarro fisico inglese convertito alla ricerca biologica, Francis Crick, e di un giovane indisordinato americano, zoologo pentito, James Watson: entrambi estrosi outsiders della biologia molecolare e invadenti ospiti di quell'austero tempio della scienza che erano (e sono) i laboratori dell'Università di Cambridge.

Il frutto proibito lo scodellarono sulle pagine di Nature, la più prestigiosa rivista scientifica del mondo: "Desideriamo proporre una struttura per il sale dell'acido desossiribonucleico (Dna). ... questa struttura possiede alcune caratteristiche insolite di considerevole interesse biologico. ... Non è sfuggito alla nostra attenzione che lo specifico appaiamento da noi ipotizzato suggerisce immediatamente un possibile meccanismo di duplicazione del materiale genetico ...".

(Franco Praticco "Non diciamo sciocchezze", *La Repubblica*, 26 maggio 1987)

The hands which, on the 25th April 1953, picked the apple from the Biblical tree of knowledge, belonged to a rather eccentric English physicist, a convert to biological research, Francis Crick, and to a young undisciplined American, a repentant zoologist, James Watson, both brilliant outsiders in molecular biology and undesired guests in that austere temple of science which the laboratories of the University of Cambridge were and still are. The forbidden fruit was dished up in the pages of *Nature*, the most prestigious scientific journal in the world: 'We wish to propose a structure for deoxyribonucleic acid salt (DNA). ... the structure possesses certain characteristics of considerable biological interest. ... It has not escaped our attention that the specific coupling which we have hypothesized suggests an immediate possibility of a possible duplication mechanism of the genetic material...'

What is The Body Shop?

'We make and sell our own naturally-based products which cleanse, polish and protect the skin and hair. This is The Body Shop in a nutshell. But it's by no means the whole story. I started the Body Shop in Brighton, England in 1976. There are now over 600 branches of The Body Shop in 40 countries from Norway to New Zealand. We're trading in 20 languages and we're still growing.

Che cos'è The Body Shop?

Per le migliaia di persone in tutto il mondo che vi entrano ogni settimana, The Body Shop è semplicemente, il negozio di loro scelta per comperare i prodotti per la cura della pelle e dei capelli. Queste persone adorano l'esperienza: i profumi, la disposizione, i suoni, l'atmosfera... Amano e hanno fiducia nei prodotti perché hanno trovato che sono molto buoni.

«SE CI SI SENTE UN PO' GIU' E FUORI PIOVE, SEMBRA QUASI ESTATE QUANDO SI ENTRA IN UNO DEI NEGOZI» UN CLIENTE DEL BODY SHOP

The Body Shop è il negozio del centro. Ma è anche una compagnia internazionale con sede nel West Sussex, in Inghilterra. Noi facciamo ricerche, sviluppiamo, produciamo, distribuiamo e in fine vendiamo prodotti per uomini e donne di tutte le età.

L'atteggiamento del Body Shop è diverso da quello della normale industria cosmetica. Noi preferiamo seguire la strada della salute e del benessere piuttosto che il percorso difficile verso la «bellezza». Non esistono immagini di donne ideali nei nostri negozi o nei nostri opuscoli.

Reader-excluding we is, however, used quite naturally in vocative texts, such as adverts, to establish a more personal and confidential tone.

GRAZIE AI SUOI COMMENTI POSSIAMO MIGLIORARE**THANKS TO YOUR COMMENTS WE CAN IMPROVE**

1. *Vi è stata consegnata rapidamente la vettura?*
Was your car delivered quickly?
2. *Il servizio è stato efficiente e cortese?*
Was the service courteous and efficient?
3. *Era pulita la Vs. auto?*
Was your car clean?
4. *Era in buone condizioni meccaniche?*
Was your car in good mechanical condition?
5. *La prossima volta che noleggerà un'auto, la noleggerà all'AVIS?*
The next time you need to rent a car, will you rent from AVIS?
6. *Avete dei suggerimenti da dirci?*
Do you have any suggestions to make?

If, on the other hand, the ST author wishes to involve the readers, in some way, for instance, to persuade them to accept the reliability or truth of a statement, then the use of *we* is meant to be reader-including. It is to be found in both English and Italian, especially in texts that have a vocative function and in such discourse genres as polemical writings, propaganda and adverts.

In natura i rifiuti non esistono

L'ecosistema globale che noi chiamiamo Natura è il prodotto di una trasformazione evolutiva durata almeno tre miliardi di anni, che ha modificato completamente la superficie dell'intero pianeta Terra. Sappiamo che all'inizio della storia biologica, sulla Terra c'erano solo mari privi di vita ed una superficie completamente deserta, al confronto della quale l'odierno Sahara sembrerebbe una piazza affollata. Quella potente centrale chimica che noi chiamiamo vita ne ha modificato la superficie a propria immagine ed in funzione delle proprie necessità.

None of us can now dispute that our industrial activities, particularly in the post World War II era, have caused substantial changes to the environment. Our pollutants in the atmosphere, waterways and soil have pushed many recycling, cleansing mechanisms to the limit, overwhelming buffering capacity as in the soils of Southern Sweden, or, in some areas, actually causing trees to become covered in an algal slime. The millions of motor vehicles on the roads, feedlots, monoculture farming with its heavy inputs in terms of fossil fuel energy and imported chemicals, the wave of tree-felling, particularly in the Tropics, all are evidence of mankind's obsession in bringing the entire wealth of the planet into its domain. We are in the throes of trying to create a new Earth, with Nature, as we know it, banished to a few sanctuaries, conceived more as museum pieces than as essential components in the intricate dynamic of planetary regulation.

(Peter Bunyard, "Gaia: The Implications for Industrialised Societies", *The Ecologist*, vol. 18, No. 6, 1988)

Le lingue che parliamo da svegli ci dividono; mentre la lingua che parliamo nel sogno ci unisce. Si tratta però di una lingua grezza: come il cinese.

Non mi meraviglierei però che un giorno si scoprisse che le idee primarie della vita (le quali parlano nei nostri sogni) costituiscono qualcosa in cui tutti gli uomini possono riconoscersi parlati da una lingua unica.

(Franco Fornari, "Freud e la lingua cinese", *Corriere della Sera*, 21 maggio 1985)

The languages we speak when we are awake divide us, while the language we speak in our dreams unites us. But it is a rudimentary language, like Chinese.

I would not be surprised, however, if one day it were discovered that the primary ideas of life (which speak in our dreams) constitute something in which all men can recognize themselves as being "spoken" by one common language.

Informative texts are generally objective and focus on the message; writers, therefore, tend to avoid overusing the reader-including form of *we*.

What is unusual in any kind of English discourse genre, however, is for the inclusive and exclusive *we* to co-occur in the same sentence.

In consideration of what we have said so far, we see that much still remains to be done.

The first use of *we* is reader-excluding. The second is reader-including. This could be re-written more appropriately as:

In consideration of what has been said so far, there is clearly much still to be done.

It is important for translators to distinguish which of the uses of *we* is intended by the ST author, whether reader-excluding or reader-including. If it is misunderstood, they run the risk of altering the communicative function of the text: what was intended as an informative text in the SL, for instance, becomes a vocative text in the TL.

Museo del Duomo

La visita del nostro Duomo merita di essere completata con quella del Museo, allestito accanto ad esso. Si tratta d'una raccolta modernamente sistemata, di particolare importanza non solo perché offre i dati più interessanti della vita quasi sei volte secolare del monumento, ma perché permette di cogliere più da vicino molti elementi che sfuggono in un così grandioso complesso.

(Milano. *Musei, Pinacoteche, Raccolte d'Arte*,
Ente Provinciale per il Turismo Milano. Edizione italiana, 1986)

Museo del Duomo

Your visit to our cathedral, the Duomo, deserves to be crowned with one to the Museum which is located on the right hand side street. The collection has been arranged according to the most modern criteria and is of great importance, not only because it gives us the most interesting information about the Cathedral's six-century long history but allows us to see details which would otherwise escape our notice in the immensity of the cathedral itself.

(Milano. *Museums, Picture Galleries, Art Collections*,
Azienda di Promozione Turistica del Milanese. English edition, 1990)

6.4.3. *They* can function as both a personal and an impersonal pronoun in English. Ambiguity may arise if the two co-occur in a text. Consider the following example:

They (1) have found and published some of Cavour's love letters. Others, especially those written late in life, were destroyed by his heirs who bought them after his death at a high price, because **they** (2) thought that their indelicacy of language, if generally known, would damage his reputation. Much later in the 1890s, when **they** (3) discovered another collection of his correspondence in Vienna, King Humbert found the money to purchase them after bribing their Austrian owner with an Italian title; **they** (4) said **they** (5) were very shocking, and the king agreed after reading them that **they** (6) too should be burnt.

(adapted from Denis Mack Smith, "Cavour and Women")

Inconsistency in reference of the personal pronoun *they* is confusing. The *they* (1), (3) and (4) refer outside the text to "people" in general; *they* (2) refers anaphorically to heirs but the way the text is written makes the actual referent ambiguous; *they* (5) and (6) are anaphorical references to letters but the overuse of the third person plural pronoun has made the overall meaning obscure. Paradoxically, instead of creating cohesion and textual clarity the anaphoric relationships lead to ambiguity. A feature of Italian grammar is the non-obligatory use of subject personal reference items, and this induces the reader to make more extensive use of decoding strategies. In this case, the fact that English has a more explicit means of expressing reference actually makes decoding more difficult: the text falls short of the reader's expectation since the meaning of the reference items are not unequivocally recoverable from their intended referents.

Now compare the original version:

Some of Cavour's love letters have been found and published. Others, especially those written late in life, were destroyed by his heirs who bought them after his death at a high price; because it was thought that their indelicacy of language, if generally known, would damage his reputation. Much later in the 1890s, when another collection of his correspondence surfaced in Vienna, King Humbert found the money to purchase them after bribing their Austrian owner with an Italian title; they were said to be very shocking, and the king agreed after reading them that they too should be burnt.

(Denis Mack Smith, "Cavour and Women")

and the Italian translation:

Alcune delle missive amorose di Cavour sono state pubblicate; altre, in particolare quelle scritte in età matura, vennero distrutte dagli eredi che le avevano comprate a caro prezzo dopo la sua morte, poiché si ritenne che il linguaggio sconveniente in esse usato, se reso noto, avrebbe nuociuto alla reputazione del parente scomparso. Quando, nell'ultimo decennio del secolo scorso, saltò fuori a Vienna un'altra raccolta di lettere, re Umberto trovò i mezzi per acquistarle corrompendo il proprietario austriaco con un titolo nobiliare italiano; sembra che il loro contenuto fosse sconvolgente e, dopo averle lette, il re acconsentì a far bruciare anche quelle.

6.4.4. An added problem in translating from Italian into English is that the Italian impersonal form *si* can be rendered in English by the personal pronouns *one*, *you*, *we*, and *they*, as well as by the *passive voice* and, fairly infrequently, by *people*. We have already seen that the *passive voice* entails changes in thematisation and can therefore be used only when it is in keeping with the overall discourse structure and thematic progression.

One and *you* present differences in tenor: *one* is suited to formal discourse, while *you* is used informally.

... people no longer strip off with the carefree abandon of the days when sunshine was simply assumed to be good for you.

... people no longer strip off with the carefree abandon of the days when sunshine was simply assumed to be good for one.

One and *you* include the addresser and addressee, *they* excludes both.

... people no longer strip off with the carefree abandon of the days when sunshine was simply assumed to be good for them.

6.4.5. Further pitfalls for translators are to be found in the flexible use of pro-forms that characterises the English language. Forms such as *this*, *that* and *it* are not marked for gender, only for number and they can refer to discourse segments of various sizes and

natures: a word, a noun phrase, a clause, a sentence, a paragraph or an entire situation or thought not expressly stated in the text. Little wonder, therefore, if ambiguity ensues when they are used without proper attention to their function in a text: namely, that of clarifying meaning across sentence boundaries.

È difficile o impossibile dire se un abnorme e sproporzionato sviluppo della tecnica possa distruggere la natura o se anch'esso sia, come il terremoto e le piaghe d'Egitto, una manifestazione della natura stessa, della sua vitalità.

(Claudio Magris, "Al capezzale del Grande Bosco che muore", *Il Corriere della Sera*, 15 marzo 1986)

It is difficult, if not impossible, to say whether the abnormal over-development of technology could destroy nature, or whether it too is, like earthquakes and the plagues of Egypt, a manifestation of nature itself and of its vitality.

Il trapianto di polmone doppio presenta tuttavia alcuni svantaggi rispetto al trapianto di polmone singolo: è gravato da una più alta mortalità operatoria, richiede una perfetta funzionalità cardiaca e pertanto può essere eseguito in pazienti relativamente giovani (non oltre 50 anni) in confronto a quelli che possono essere sottoposti al trapianto di polmone singolo (fino a 60 anni). Questo esclude un gran numero di pazienti affetti da enfisema polmonare che è una malattia dell'età avanzata.

(G. Pezzuoli et al., "Il trapianto di polmone singolo nel trattamento delle broncopneumopatie croniche ostruttive in fase terminale", *Chirurgia*, vol. 4, n. 10)

However, double lung transplantation also has its disadvantages: the operative mortality is higher than in single lung transplantation and it can only be performed in patients with almost perfect lung function. Furthermore, the age limit for double lung transplants is lower than for single: 50 as compared to 60 years. **This** excludes a number of possible candidates since emphysematous patients are often over 50.

Come scrive Olivier Blanc, non erano innocenti i banchieri e gli speculatori o gli "emigrati" che complottavano con gli eserciti stranieri per schiacciare la Francia. "La speculazione assestò terribili colpi alla giovane Repubblica. Veniva esercitata a tutti i livelli: dal semplice cambio di un assegnato da cento lire al cinquanta per cento del suo valore fin nei posti più alti dell'amministrazione, in particolare nei contratti stipulati tra l'amministrazione e le compagnie di trasporti militari".

(Lucio Villari, "Aspettando la ghigliottina", *La Repubblica*, 13 ottobre 1985)

As Olivier Blanc writes, there was nothing innocent about the bankers and speculators or the emigrés who plotted with foreign armies to crush France. "Speculation dealt a terrible blow to the young Republic. It went on at all levels, from the mere changing of a hundred-lira bill at fifty per cent its value, to the highest posts of the administration, especially in contracts drawn up between the administration and the military transport companies.

Translators also need to decide whether to opt for this, that or it in a particular context. Although the difference in use is still a matter of speculation and research, some guidelines can be suggested. If seen from a functional perspective, the formal reference items serve to foreground certain discourse elements rather than others. When an element of a text constitutes the writer's focus of attention, pronominal reference back to it is generally made with it. Other references can at the same time be downgraded to marginal non-focal status by the use of the demonstrative *that*.

And the living room was a very small room with two windows that wouldn't open and things like that. And *it* looked nice. *It* had a beautiful brick wall.
You entered into a tiny little hallway and the kitchen was off *that*.

(Michael McCarthy, *Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers*)

Furthermore, while it generally refers anaphorically to an already topicalised entity, this can be used to create new topic focus.

In una tribù di poche centinaia di persone gli individui sono interscambiabili. È in un mondo di miliardi di persone, in cui ci sono più incontri, più esperienze sessuali, che l'individuo ha bisogno di essere "riconosciuto" come assolutamente unico, assolutamente inconfondibile.

Questo, all'inizio della vita, glielo dà l'amore della madre, questo, nella vita adulta, glielo dà l'innamoramento.

(Francesco Alberoni, "Perché l'amore eterno è sempre più difficile", *Il Corriere della Sera*, 18 settembre 1981)

In a tribe of a few hundred people, the individuals are interchangeable. It is in a world of billions of people, in which there are more encounters, more sexual experiences, that individuals need to be "acknowledged" as being absolutely unique, absolutely unmistakable. **This** they get at the beginning of life from a mother's love; in adult life they get **it** from falling in love.

6.4.6. The difference in *deictic reference* between *this/these* and *that/those* is that the former refer to the "here and now" while the later refer to the "there and then". *This/these* are thus more relevant to the immediate situation than *that/those*. Consequently *this/these* are used more readily for cataphoric reference and *that/those* for anaphoric reference.

This is an announcement: will Mr Stanton please go to the information desk.

And **that** was the nine o'clock news.

Con quattro chilometri si può unire l'aeroporto di Linate, che oggi ha una utenza di venticinque-trenta mila passeggeri al giorno, al resto della città, mettendo fine ai disagi della gente e alle lotte campanilistiche che hanno sempre visto affrontarsi i tassisti di Milano e quelli di Peschiera Borromeo per la spartizione del mercato.

(*Follow Me*, 20 giugno 1991)

With four more kilometers Linate airport, which today serves 25-30,000 passengers a day, can be linked up with the city, thus putting an end to travellers' inconvenience and to conflicts of interests such as those that have pitted Milanese taxi drivers against **those** from Peschiera Borromeo for a share of the passenger market.

Since the use of these deictic forms does not always overlap in Italian and English, caution should be taken to ensure what kind of reference is intended. Consider the following Italian texts and the English translations.

Giorgio era nato al Canto delle Rondini, nel cuore del nostro Quartiere. Egli aveva abitato, ragazzo, un ultimo piano: fu l'unico di noi a godersi il cielo aperto ad ogni risveglio. Forse per questo i suoi occhi erano celesti.

(Vasco Pratolini, "La casa sui tetti", from Edvige Schulte, *Cinquanta passi da tradurre in inglese*)

Giorgio was born at the Canto delle Rondini, in the heart of our Quarter. As a boy, he had lived on the top floor; he was the only one of us who could enjoy looking at the open sky every time he woke up. Perhaps **that's** why he had blue eyes.

- D. *Il tuo più bel libro?*
 R. *Quello in cui c'è più me stesso: "Lo smeraldo".*
 D. *E "America primo amore"?*
 R. *Oh, anche questo! ...*
 D. *In che senso dici che l'arte nasce dall'amore?*
 R. *Ho detto questo?*

(Roberto Gervaso, "Intervista a Mario Soldati", *La mosca al naso*)

- Q. What's your best book?
 A. The one where there's most of me: "Lo smeraldo".
 Q. And what about "America primo amore"?
 A. Oh, **that** one, too! ...
 Q. In what sense do you mean that art springs from love?
 A. Did I say **that**?

In informal texts, this/these tend to be associated with speaker's approval and that/those with disapproval.

Why on earth is **this** sensible girl going out with **that** oaf, I ask myself?

Nel discorso Ciccotto la vinceva lui, e le donne grasse, che non escono e se ne stanno alla finestra a rinfrescarsi, ci dicevano sulla porta di tornare a trovarle la domenica dopo.

Ci tornavamo. Ma a nostro gusto, uno due mesi dopo.

(Cesare Pavese, *Le case*)

Ciccotto was always master of the conversation, and **those** fat women who don't go out and stand at the window to cool off told us at the door to come back to see them the following Sunday.

We did come back. But in our own good time, a month or two later.

Notice, too, expressions like the following, in which Italian has *questo*, while English uses **that**:

<i>questo non è vero</i>	that's not true
<i>questo è strano</i>	that's strange
<i>questo è ridicolo</i>	that's ridiculous

... in the Grail legend the hero cures the king's sterility. In the Freudian version the old guy gets wasted by his kids. Which seems to me more true to life."

"So **that's** why you keep jogging?"

(David Lodge, *Small World*)

... nella leggenda del Graal l'eroe cura la sterilità del re. Nella versione freudiana il vecchio viene annientato dalla sua progenie, il che mi sembra molto più consono alla vita.
"Ed è per questo che lei continua a fare jogging?"

6.4.7. This/these and that/those can also be used as determiners.

Come scrive Olivier Blanc, non erano innocenti i banchieri e gli speculatori o gli "emigrati" che complottavano con gli eserciti stranieri per schiacciare la Francia. "La speculazione assestò terribili colpi alla giovane Repubblica. Veniva esercitata a tutti i livelli: dal semplice cambio di un assegno da cento lire al cinquanta per cento del suo valore (...) fin nei posti più alti dell'amministrazione, in particolare nei contratti stipulati tra l'amministrazione e le compagnie di trasporti militari". Mediatori occulti di queste operazioni erano spesso insospettabili professionisti (notai, avvocati, finanziari) che avevano obblighi di fedeltà alla Repubblica e la cui punizione doveva quindi essere, secondo i giacobini, un esempio di "giustizia rivoluzionaria".

Robespierre fu in prima linea in questa lotta per la sopravvivenza della Francia, ma non si deve attribuire a lui la totale responsabilità delle condanne a morte.

(Lucio Villari, "Aspettando la ghigliottina", *La Repubblica*, 13 ottobre 1985)

As Olivier Blanc writes, there was nothing innocent about the bankers and speculators or the emigrés who plotted with foreign armies to crush France. "Speculation dealt a terrible blow to the young Republic. It went on at all levels, from the mere changing of a hundred-lira bill at fifty per cent its value, to the highest posts of the administration, especially in contracts stipulated between the administration and the military transport companies. The secret mediators of **these operations** were often members of the professional classes, men above suspicion (notaries, lawyers, financiers) who were under obligation of loyalty to the Republic, and whose punishment was thus to be, according to the Jacobins, an example of "revolutionary justice".

Robespierre was in the front line in **this struggle** to save France, even though he should not be held solely responsible for the death sentences.

Giova ricordare che nel dicembre 1974, poco tempo dopo che il fenomeno della "desertificazione" si era manifestato in tutta la sua gravità ..., l'ONU decise di organizzare un convegno scientifico per chiedere a studiosi di diverse discipline di rispondere a questi quesiti fondamentali: la rapida e inesorabile avanzata del deserto si deve considerare come il sintomo di un mutamento del clima nel nostro pianeta? È possibile arrestare questo fenomeno che nel solo Sahel ha provocato la morte di centinaia di migliaia di persone nel volgere di pochi anni?

(Mario Pinna, "Perché i deserti stanno mangiando la terra?", *Il Corriere della Sera, Scienza e Tecnologia*, 21 febbraio 1981)

It should be remembered that in December 1974, shortly after it became apparent just how serious the "desertification" phenomenon was ..., UNO decided to organize a scientific meeting to ask experts in various disciplines to answer **these fundamental questions**: is the desert's swift and relentless advancement to be considered a sign of a change in the earth's climate? Is it possible to stop **this phenomenon**, which in the Sahel alone has caused hundreds of thousands of people to die within the space of only a few years.

This is, of course, very much like Italian except that there is not always total overlap in use. Unlike Italian, English frequently substitutes the definite article **the** as a form of anaphoric or cataphoric reference for both **this** and **that**. When substitution is possible, **the** functions as the unmarked form and **this** and **that** as the marked forms.

"Desideriamo proporre una struttura per il sale dell'acido desossiribonucleico (Dna). ... questa struttura possiede alcune caratteristiche insolite di considerevole interesse biologico. ... Non è sfuggito alla nostra attenzione che lo specifico appaiamento da noi ipotizzato suggerisce immediatamente un possibile meccanismo di duplicazione del materiale genetico ...".

(Franco Pratico, "Non diciamo sciocchezze", *La Repubblica*, 26 maggio 1987)

"We wish to propose a structure for deoxyribonucleic acid salt (DNA). ... **the** structure possesses certain characteristics of considerable biological interest. ... It has not escaped our attention that the specific coupling which we have hypothesized suggests an immediate possibility of a possible duplication mechanism of the genetic material...".

While the anaphoric function of the is quite normal, its cataphoric function is typically associated with such discourse genres as news stories or novels (especially the opening lines) since the main function of cataphoric reference is to arouse the reader's interest and attention.

There was no air conditioning in the admitting department on the main floor, and **the** girl at the desk reaching for her fifteenth kleenex that morning, dabbed her face and decided it was time for a change. **Miss Smithson**, at twenty-six, was already chief clerk in Admitting.

6.4.8. The use of *articles* does not overlap in English and Italian. There are three possible choices of article in English: the indefinite article (a/an), the definite article (the) and "zero" article. The choice of article depends on the noun it modifies and the type of reference: whether it is specific or generic, anaphoric or cataphoric.

Type of reference:

Type of noun	Specific	Generic
<i>Count singular</i>	the	a/an
<i>Count plural</i>	the	zero
<i>Uncount</i>	the	zero.

The main dilemma facing translators is deciding between the and *zero article* when using uncount nouns and plural count nouns since the borderline between specific and generic reference is not always absolutely clear-cut. Generic reference coincides with unshared, new information, presented for the first time: it is mainly associated to cataphora, forward-looking reference.

Money is the root of all **evil**, or rather, as George Bernard Shaw once said: "The lack of **money** is the root of all **evil**."

Specific reference refers to information shared by both addresser and addressee and generally coincides with either anaphoric or exophoric reference. The definite article in English indicates that a noun phrase has *definite* reference. This definiteness comes from the fact that the addressee and addresser share knowledge as a result either of co-textual

factors or situational ones (i.e. knowledge of the world or shared experience). It is therefore used for specific reference. Consider the following texts:

... Il mio primo pensiero fu che finalmente assistevo alla edificazione di un castello scozzese completo di fantasmi. I fantasmi esistevano, ma non erano ancora usciti dal loro sonno.
(Giorgio Manganelli, *Corriere della Sera*, 17 ottobre 1981)

... My first thought was that I was finally witnessing the building of a Scottish castle, complete with ghosts. **The** ghosts existed but they had not yet been roused from sleep.

Now consider the various forms of reference in the text below:

People came and people went, in and out of the Museum, and no one ever stopped to glance at the unassuming inscription written in small distinct letters at the entrance to the second hall. But James was not one to let the words pass unnoticed.

6.5. Substitution

Both substitution and ellipsis are highly dependent on context as the substituted and omitted elements are recoverable from other elements in the discourse. Substitution can be used at various levels – nominal, verbal, clausal – and is a more frequent type of cohesion in English than it is in Italian. There, for instance, is no form in Italian which corresponds entirely to the nominal substitutes for singular or plural count nouns one/ones.

Look at those apples! The red **ones** look good. Would you like **one**?
Guarda quelle mele. Quelle rosse sembrano buone. Ne vorresti una?

Italian uses demonstrative reference (*quelle rosse*) for the plural and *ne + una* for the singular. *Ne* is used for the indefinite partitive in Italian:

Ho molte mele, ne vuoi?
I've got lots of apples. Do you want **some**?

Ne can be used as a substitute for a noun phrase which functions as a direct object, but not for one which functions as a subject. No such restrictions apply in English. Compare the following examples:

Ho visto i tuoi orologi / ne ho visto uno.

but not:

Hanno telefonato i tuoi cugini. Ne ha telefonato uno.

English one of them can be substituted in both sentences:

I saw your watches / I saw **one of them**.
Your cousins phoned / **One of them** phoned.

However, *ne* can be used with intransitive verbs and *essere*:

Sono arrivati i tuoi cugini / Ne è arrivato uno.
Your cousins have arrived / **One of them** has arrived.

Difficulties might arise in translation in distinguishing between the use of *lo* as a co-referential pronoun (it) and as a substitute (one). In English one refers anaphorically to an *indefinite* antecedent, while it refers to a *definite* antecedent.

Have you ever seen an elephant?
Yes, I saw **one** in India.

Did you see the elephant?
Yes, I saw **it**.

Definiteness may, in some instances, vary from one language to another, however: in Italian *si ha la febbre*, whereas in English you have a temperature. Thus while the above examples could be translated quite straightforwardly into Italian as:

Hai mai visto un elefante?
Sì, *ne ho visto uno in India.*

Hai visto l'elefante?
Sì, *l'ho visto.*

the following cannot:

Cancer still can't be entirely cured and people quite rightly fear **it**.

There's a friend of mine who's terrified of getting ill. If someone even has a **cold**, he tries to steer clear of him. He just can't bear the idea of catching **one**.

Il cancro è ancora una malattia poco curabile e la gente giustamente lo teme.

Ho un amico che ha il terrore di ammalarsi. Se qualcuno ha un semplice raffreddore, gli gira alla larga. Non può sopportare la sola idea di prenderlo.

Co-reference is a semantic relation that sets up a bond of cross-reference between two items that refer to the *same* thing. In *substitution* there is always some significant difference between the presupposing item and the presupposed. While the personal pronoun it is appropriate in the first example, where the relation is one of identity of reference, in the second example the pro-form one is needed. In Italian both items are expressed by *lo* (*lo teme* and *prenderlo*).

Although Italian has a kind of verbal substitute form (*fare*), its function does not overlap with the English *do*. Ellipsis is often used instead.

Franco sta imbiancando la casa. So che lo fa ogni quattro anni.
Frank's painting his house. I know he **does** it every four years.

Chi ha parlato?
Lui.
Who spoke?
He did.

Clausal substitution in English is expressed by *so* and *not*, in Italian by *lo*, *si* or *no*.

Milan Football Club is going to win the championship. All the experts say *so*.
Il Milan vincerà il campionato. Tutti gli esperti lo dicono.

Lucy hasn't found a job yet. She told me *so* yesterday.
Lucy non ha ancora trovato un impiego. Me l'ha detto ieri.

Has Mark arrived yet?
I think *so*.

È arrivato Marco?
Credo di sì.

6.6. Ellipsis

Like substitution, ellipsis can be of three types: nominal, verbal and clausal. In nominal ellipsis it is often the headword which is omitted in English, whereas Italian requires demonstrative reference.

Edward liked the white plates; I preferred the pink.
A Edoardo piacevano i piatti bianchi; io preferivo quelli rosa.

Verbal ellipsis in English may take the form of repetition of an element of the verbal group, whereas Italian elides the entire verbal group, as in:

Will anyone be going?
Pamela will, I believe.

Sai se qualcuno andrà?
Pamela, credo.

Alternatively, ellipsis may have a contrastive function, which in English will involve a change of auxiliary; Italian has substitution with *fare*:

Has he moved?
Ha cambiato casa?

No, but he will soon.
No, ma lo farà presto.

English allows whole stretches of clausal elements to be omitted, while Italian requires some kind of substitute form, usually of the main verb and an object pronoun.

She said she would retire as soon as she could and she has.
Disse che sarebbe andata in pensione appena possibile e lo ha fatto.

6.7. Conjunction

Conjunctions signal the logical relationship between sentences and therefore contribute to textual sequencing. Conjunctive relations may be explicit (consequently, or rather, for instance, in short, in fact, however, moreover, etc.) or implicit, and will therefore have to be inferred. The presence or absence of explicit conjunctions is an important variable to take into account when translating texts since it may be a distinguishing feature of discourse types. The role of conjunction is to create a logically articulated discourse that can be easily followed by the reader. If explicit linking devices are used, little is left to the reader's interpretation: the devices serve as signposts to guide the reader along, logical step after logical step. This is a typical feature of scientific and legal texts, or instructions, for instance, where the writer is at pains to leave little or nothing to the reader's personal interpretation.

In discourse genres with a predominantly informative function, translators should apply TL conventions regarding linking devices in the TT. In other words, they should ask themselves what kind of linkage is conventionally used in the TL for a particular text-type to ensure that the message is conveyed clearly and straightforwardly?

Shirley was blonde, had a neat little figure, and by the time she was two she moved her legs so well to the beat of music that Gertrude, her mother enrolled her in dancing school. One day a talent scout for Educational Pictures turned up at the school looking for children for a series of shorts called Baby Burlesks. When he noticed a little girl hiding under a piano he told the head of the school. "That's the kid I want." And so little Shirley was launched on her career. Not long after she was chosen from two hundred children for a bit part in 20th Century Fox's *Baby Take a Bow*. Her part was very short but it was enough to win the hearts of the American public. A new star had been born. Shirley was given a hundred-and-fifty-dollar-a-week contract and, in 1934, made eight movies. But the role that turned her into a household name was *Little Miss Marker*, her second movie. From then on she always played the little orphan whose wisdom and courage turned cold, indifferent, venal adults into better people. She was the epitome of those American values that had been lost but which the American public, in the wake of the Depression, desperately needed to find again.

(Gino Gullace, "Goldilocks",
Ulisse 2000, n. 63, 1989)

Shirley era bionda, ben proporzionata e a due anni muoveva così bene le gambe al ritmo della musica che Gertrude, sua madre, la iscrisse a una scuola di danza. Qui un giorno arrivò uno scout della compagnia cinematografica «Educational Picture» in cerca di bambini per una serie di cortometraggi intitolati Baby Burlesks. Quando vide una bambina nascosta sotto un pianoforte, disse alla direttrice della scuola: «Voglio quella lì». E così la piccola Shirley iniziò la carriera. Poco dopo, infatti, fu scelta tra 200 bambini per una partecina nel film Piccola stella della Twenty Century Fox. La sua apparizione fu molto breve, ma bastò per conquistare il nuovo cuore dell'America. Nasceva così una nuova stella Shirley ebbe un contratto da 150 dollari la settimana e durante il 1934, fece otto film. Il film che fissò in modo definitivo il ruolo della piccola stella fu il secondo, intitolato Little Miss Marker. Da allora svolse sempre, durante la sua infanzia, la parte della piccola orfana che con la sua saggezza e il suo coraggio trasforma in meglio gli adulti freddi, venali, indifferenti. In lei risaltavano, insomma, alcune antiche virtù americane ormai scomparse ma di cui gli americani, sconvolti dalla crisi economica, sentivano forte il bisogno.

In expressive texts conjunction is generally a stylistic feature of the ST and the same effect should be aimed for as far as possible in the TT. Compare the following texts:

Aveva creduto, sì, a prima giunta, esserne guardata severamente; ma poi raccontò loro tante e tante cose che ogni freddezza fra le vecchie piante e lei ne fu tolta. Due mesi dopo il suo ritorno, quand'ella vide, un lucido giorno di novembre, che le ultime brine e il gran vento del dì innanzi le aveva spogliate di foglie sin quasi alla vetta, quei tremoli pennacchi giallo-rossicci le misero una malinconia da non dire; sentì che i pioppi la salutavano da lontano come amici fedeli, prossimi a venir meno, a perder la parola ed i sensi.

(Antonio Fogazzaro, *Un'idea di Ermes Torranza*)

She had indeed believed, at first, that they looked sternly at her; but then she told them so many things that all coolness between her and the old trees disappeared. Two months after her return, when she saw on a bright November day, that the last frosts and the strong wind of the previous day had robbed them of their leaves almost to their summits, those quivering reddish-yellow tree-tops caused her an inexpressible melancholy. She felt that the poplars were saying farewell to her from afar off like faithful friends who were about to pass away, to lose their power of speech and feeling.

E lui, d'altra parte, non avrebbe trovato chi gli desse ragione. Come paragonare una donna che era stata per ottantasei anni esempio di nobiltà e saggezza, di austerità e di modestia, di carità, con un uomo divenuto a poco a poco il ricettacolo di tutti i vizi; che rimasto erede giovanissimo aveva dilapidato la propria fortuna, e fatto sparire in un batter d'occhio varie piccole eredità che la provvidenza gli aveva lasciato cadere per trattenerlo sull'orlo dell'abisso. E ora, settantenne, si trovava ridotto alla mendicizia vivendo delle non laute offerte di qualche lontano parente o amico, di quelli che non gli avevano tolto il saluto e voltate le spalle, ancora disposti ad ascoltarlo pochi istanti nella via, o a leggere le sue lamentose richieste... Se poi osava spingersi fino alle soglie degli amici di un tempo, le trovava senza scampo consegnate... E ammeso che il caso fortunato gli facesse incontrare un vecchio amico caritatevole che con garbo gli lasciava scivolare cinquanta lire nella tasca della giacchetta, non pensava di farne tesoro o darle in acconto all'albergatore per il debito che pendeva sempre, ma chiamava un tassì, e dopo essersi fermato e fatto aspettare per un aperitivo dava l'indirizzo di una fra le migliori trattorie dove ostentando indifferenza scansava con abilità il saluto di qualche vecchio conoscente che a sua volta si domandava: "Ha fatto un'altra eredità?"

(Aldo Palazzeschi, *Bistino e il Signor Marchese*)

And he, for that matter, would not have found anyone to consider him right. How could one compare a woman who had been for eighty-six years an example of nobility and wisdom, of austerity and modesty, of charity, with a man who had become little by little a sink of all iniquities; who, having inherited it as a very young man, had squandered his own fortune, and had dissipated in the twinkling of an eye several little inheritances which Providence had let fall his way to hold him back on the edge of the abyss. And now, seventy-ish, he was reduced to beggary, living on the niggardly bounty of some distant relative or friend among those who had not rejected him and turned their backs on him and who were still willing to listen to him for a few moments in the street or to read his plaintive requests... And if he dared to go to the doors of his former friends, he found them inescapably blocked,... And even if a lucky chance caused him to meet some charitable old friend who would tactfully slip fifty lire into his waistcoat pocket, he did not think of setting it aside or of giving it on account to his landlord for the debt which was always hanging over him, but he would call a taxi, and after stopping and having the taxi wait while he had an apéritif, he would give the address of one of the best restaurants, where, affecting indifference, he would skilfully avoid the greeting of some old acquaintance, who would, in his turn, wonder: "Has he come into another inheritance?"

L'uomo premette col piede sulla maniglia che apriva lo sportello. Il fragore del treno, minaccioso, il vento nauseabondo di vecchio fumo invasero il vagone. L'uomo credette di aver udito un grido, subito travolto dal rumore di scarpe rotte. Egli calcolò mentalmente lo stupore di quella donna precipitata nel vuoto. Non se ne sarebbe neppure resa conto. Non ne sarebbe forse rimasta stupita. L'uomo si scostò e si addossò alla parete sentendo sotto di sé il baratro. Quando il treno uscì dalla galleria, la donna apparve aggrappata senza stupore al finestrino spalancato.

(Corrado Alvaro, *I giocattoli rotti*)

The man pushed down with his foot on the handle which opened the door. The roar of the train, menacing, and the sickening blast of old smoke rushed into the car. The man thought he heard a cry, immediately overwhelmed by the noise of broken shoes. He estimated in his mind the astonishment of that woman hurled into the void. She would not even have realized it. She perhaps would not even have been amazed by it. The man moved away and stood with his back to the wall, feeling the abyss beneath him. When the train came out of the tunnel, the woman appeared, clutching, without surprise, at the wide-open door.

The first Italian text contains overt linkage; the second makes ample use of *and*, the least cohesive conjunction since it leaves the reader to infer the relationship that holds between two or more ideas; the last has implicit linkage and leaves the logical relationships deliberately vague and thus open to the reader's interpretation.

The relevance of conjunction to translation lies in the fact that it contributes towards creating discourse. Translators need to identify what type of conjunctive relations are set up and what function they serve in the text. Once they have established this, they will have to find how those relations are realised in the TL and translate them accordingly. This may not always be as straightforward as it seems. Consider the following text, for example:

Da quando s'era scoperta l'esistenza degli uccelli, le idee che regolavano il nostro mondo erano entrate in crisi. Quello che prima tutti credevano di capire, il modo semplice e regolare per cui le cose erano com'erano, non valeva più; ossia: questa non era altro che una delle innumerevoli possibilità; nessuno escludeva che le cose potessero andare in altri modi tutti diversi.

(Italo Calvino, *L'origine degli uccelli*)

The conjunction *ossia* can have either an appositive or a clarificative function in Italian; it can, therefore, be translated into English as that is or or rather. In the above text *ossia* functions as a clarificative conjunction since it is used to introduce a clause that explains more clearly and specifically what the author has just stated; it is not a reformulation of his previous statement. Thus:

Since the discovery of the existence of birds, the ideas which governed our world had undergone a crisis. Something which we had all thought we understood, the simple, steady rule by which things were the way they were, was no longer valid: **or rather**, this was only one of countless possibilities. No one could exclude the possibility of things happening in completely different ways.

The use of conjunctions is also linked to the tenor of discourse. There are linking devices like *anyway*, *anyhow*, *what is more*, *all the same*, which are used mainly in informal discourse, those like *therefore*, *furthermore*, *nevertheless* and *nonetheless*, which characterise more formal texts, and *besides* and *however* that are relatively neutral. Consider the linking devices chosen in the English translation of the following fairly informal text:

Sapevo che mia madre, venendo a stabilirsi in città, aveva detto a tutti che ci veniva più che altro per stare accanto a me, per vigilare un poco su di me, per vedere che andassi ben coperta e mi nutrissi bene. E poi a una ragazza sola in una città, potevan succedere ogni sorta di cose. Fin da quando aveva comperato la casa, mia madre m'aveva mostrato la stanza che contava dare a me. Ma io subito le avevo risposto abbastanza recisamente che intendevo seguire a vivere con la mia amica e non pensavo a rientrare in famiglia. D'altronde, quella casa era troppo lontana e ci voleva un'ora per raggiungere il centro. Mia madre non aveva insistito. Ero fra le poche persone che riuscivano a intimidirla. Non osava mai opporsi alle mie decisioni. Tuttavia aveva voluto ugualmente che nella casa ci fosse una stanza per me.

(Natalia Ginzburg, *Valentino*)

I knew that my mother, moving as she was into town, had told everybody that she had come more than anything else to be near me, to look after me a bit, and to see that I wore warm clothes and ate properly. **And, anyway**, a girl living all alone in a town, anything might happen to her. From the moment she had bought the house, my mother had shown me the room she meant me to have. But I had immediately answered back rather shortly that I was going to go on living with my friend and that I wasn't thinking of going back to live at home. **Besides**, the house was too far away and it took an hour to get to the centre. My mother had not insisted. I was one of the few people who managed to intimidate her. She never dared to go against my decisions. **However**, she had wanted there to be a room for me in the house all the same.

Coherence and cohesion are two of the basic factors of textuality. They contribute towards making a text a unified whole and not just a random collection of content-related sentences. Each sentence not only follows on from another in logical sequences but also contains formal devices that signal how they are related. The translator's task is to identify these sequences and relations in the ST and reproduce them by means of pragmatically-equivalent TL devices in the TT. In this Chapter we discussed grammatical relations and how they are realised, in the next we shall be looking at lexical aspects of textuality.

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