

Give me the splendid silent sun
 Give me the splendid silent sun with all his beams full-dazzling.
 Give me juicy autumnal fruit ripe and red from the orchard,
 Give me a field where the unmow'd grass grows,
 Give me an arbor, give me the trellis'd grape,
 Give me fresh corn and wheat, give me serene-moving animals teaching content,
 Give me nights perfectly quiet as on high plateaus west of the Mississippi, and I looking up
 at the stars,
 Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful flowers where I can walk undisturb'd,
 Give me for marriage a sweet-breath'd woman of whom I should never tire,
 Give me a perfect child, give me away aside from the noise of the world a rural domestic life,
 Give me to warble spontaneous songs recluse by myself, for my own ears only,
 Give me solitude, give me nature, give me again O Nature your primal sanities!
 These demanding to have them, (tired with ceaseless excitement, and rack'd by the war-strife.)
 These to procure incessantly asking, rising in cries from my heart,
 While yet incessantly asking still I adhere to my city,
 Day upon day, and year upon year O city, walking your streets,
 Where you hold me enchain'd a certain time refusing to give me up.
 Yet giving to make me gluttied, enrich'd of soul, you give me forever faces;
 (O I see what I sought to escape, confronting, reversing my cries,
 I see my own soul trampling down what it ask'd for.)

Datemi il fulgido sole silente

Datemi il fulgido sole silente, con tutti i suoi raggi in pieno splendore,

Datemi il frutto maturo d'autunno, così succoso e rosso nel pomario,

Datemi il prato ove cresce l'erba che non fu falciata,

Datemi il pergolato, datemi il grappolo pendulo dal graticcio,

Datemi il mais e grano novello, e animali che muovono sereni e insegnano contento,

*Datemi notti pienamente tranquille, come sugli alti pianori a Ovest del Mississippi, donde
 possa guardare le stelle,*

Datemi un giardino all'aurora balsamico, ricco di splendidi fiori, dove aggirarmi non disturbato,

Datemi in sposa una donna dal fiato soave, di cui non debba stancarmi mai,

Datemi un bimbo perfetto e, lungi dal rumore del mondo, una domestica vita rurale,

Datemi di gorgheggiare solingo liberi canti, soltanto per i miei orecchi,

Datemi la solitudine, datemi la Natura, e tu ridammi, Natura, la tua sanità primitiva.

*Queste cose per averle chiedendo (stanco dell'eccitamento che non ha tregua, torturato
 dalle battaglie della guerra),*

Senza posa chiedendo per ottenerle, con gridi che dal cuore mi sgorgano,

Mentre continuo a chiederle, resto tuttavia attaccato alla mia città,

Un giorno dopo l'altro, un anno dopo l'altro, o città, camminando per le tue strade,

Dove tu incatenato mi tieni per un certo tempo, rifiutando di rilasciarmi,

Mentre tuttavia mi dai da saziarmi, arricchire l'anima mia, mi dai sempre facce.

(Oh, vedo che cosa cercavo fuggire, e allora affronto, rinnego i miei gridi,

E vedo l'anima mia calpestare tutto ciò che prima chiedeva.)

Poets and writers can use or manipulate the sounds of language to reinforce their theme, evoke a certain impression or convey a certain message more effectively. If translators wish to specialise in literary translating then familiarity with stylistic features, including phonology, is a must.

4.4. Graphology

Meaning can also be encoded in visual symbols as writers can exploit the written medium to enhance their message. They can, for instance, alter the conventional patterns made by the words on a printed page: paragraph division in prose, line division in poetry, punctuation, italicization, spelling, capitalization, type size and type style.

At times, the visual element is actually fundamental to understanding and interpreting meaning, as the following poem illustrates.

she loves me
 she loves me not
 she loves
 she loves me
 she
 she loves

she

Emmett Williams

The theme of this poem can only be understood once the visual pattern has been deciphered. If we fill in the missing words from the daisy-stripping game "she loves me/she loves me not" some kind of picture begins to emerge. Since there are an even number of lines (eight) we learn that the answer the poet received was "she loves me not". An analysis of the principle by which the poet has chosen to delete words gives us a further clue to the theme. Each subsequent repetition of the base lines of the poem is diminished by one word – like the plucking of the daisy leaves.

she	loves	me	
she	loves	me	not
she	loves	(me)	
she	loves	me	(not)
she	(loves	me)	
she	loves	(me)	not)
(she	loves	me)	
she	(loves	me	not)

We could also interpret this as the lover becoming progressively more at a loss for words. Italian conventions and syntax make this poem difficult to translate without loss of effect. The Italian equivalent of the daisy-stripping game is *mi ama/ non mi ama*. This differs from the English in not having a specific personal subject pronoun and in being shorter (two and three words instead of three and four). The solution of specifying the personal pronoun *lei* would have an undesired emphatic effect. Another problem is posed by word order:

<i>lei</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>ama</i>	
<i>lei</i>	<i>non</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>ama</i>
<i>lei</i>	<i>mi</i>		
<i>lei</i>	<i>non</i>	<i>mi</i>	
<i>lei</i>			
<i>lei</i>	<i>non</i>		
<i>lei</i>			

The key word *ama* has disappeared from the poem much too early on, leaving a rather meaningless residue:

<i>lei</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>ama</i>	
<i>lei</i>	<i>non</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>ama</i>
<i>lei</i>	<i>mi</i>	(<i>ama</i>)	
<i>lei</i>	<i>non</i>	<i>mi</i>	(<i>ama</i>)
<i>lei</i>	(<i>mi</i>	<i>ama</i>)	
<i>lei</i>	<i>non</i>	(<i>mi</i>	<i>ama</i>)
(<i>lei</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>ama</i>)	
<i>lei</i>	(<i>non</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>ama</i>)

A further possibility is to change the word order to resemble the English: *lei ama me*. The drawback here is that *me* is given end focus and is placed in contrast with a putative someone else: *lei ama me e non Giovanni*.

Consider how the visual element contributes to overall textual meaning in the following well-known example from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and how the translator has attempted to maintain the same effect in Italian.

«Mine is a long and a sad tale!» said the Mouse, turning to Alice, and sighing.

«It is a long tail, certainly, said Alice, looking down with wonder at the Mouse's tail; «but why do you call it sad?» And she kept on puzzling about it while the Mouse was speaking, so that her idea of the tale was something like this: –

«Fury said to a
mouse, That he
met in the
house,
“Let us
both go to
law: I will
prosecute
you. – Come,
I’ll take no
denial; We
must have a
trial: For
really this
morning I’ve
nothing
to do.”
Said the
mouse to the
cur, “Such
a trial,
dear Sir,
With
no jury
or judge,
would be
wasting
our
breath.”
“I’ll be
judge, I’ll
be jury.”
Said
cunning
old Fury:
“I’ll
try the
whole
cause,
and
condemn
you
to
death.”»

Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

«La mia non è una di quelle storie senza capo né coda: è lunga e triste» disse il Topo con un sospiro, volgendosi verso Alice.

«Lo so che la coda è lunga» disse Alice, la quale non aveva capito bene. «Ma perché poi è triste?» E continuò a porsi questa domanda, mentre il topo parlava. Così non capì quasi niente del suo racconto, del quale le restarono impresse soltanto alcune parole:

«Fido disse a
un topolino
che trovò
nello stanzino:
“Sei chiamato
in tribunale
per aver
agitato male
Presto! E non
ti rifiutare,
che non ho
nulla da fare”
Disse il topo:
“Mio signore!
non avrà nes-
sun valore,
un processo
celebrato
senza Giudice
e Giurato.”
“Bene, il Giu-
dice son io”
disse il cane.
“E farò io
anche il
teste ed
il Giurato.
Così tutto
è siste-
mato. Giusta-
mente condan-
nato, tu
sarai
deco-
pilato.”»

Italian translation by Tommaso Giglio

Graphological effects can also be used to evoke a character's style of speech in dialogue. In the following text graphology renders the speech patterns of a Japanese person speaking English, especially the / and r sounds in free variation. The whole extract is, besides, based on the interplay of graphological and phonological features. A translation into Italian would need to create the same effect:

There is a knock at the door. "Ting," says a voice. "Cling cling," says the train. "Who?" says William. "You," says a voice. "What is it?" asks William. "A visit," says the voice. William goes and opens the door. The little oriental who met him stands there, in shortie pyjamas. "Bill Ting, your counsellor," he says. "You must close lindow. Water coming through floor into my loom downstairs." "I'm sorry," says William. "Also, offplint of article for loo to read. For English opinion"...
 "Ring," goes the telephone. "Ting," says a voice down the wire. "Lain still come in."
 "Leave me alone," says William. ... He stands in the puddle, he feels in a muddle. Somewhere below the typewriter clatters. He gets into bed, he puts down his head. The typewriter reaches the end of a line: "Ping," it says. He starts to weep, he goes to sleep.

(Malcolm Bradbury, *Composition*)

The stylistic effect a writer or poet wishes to convey may therefore be partially or wholly based on the way the text is presented. In other words, the verbal meaning of a text is reinforced and emphasized by means of the visual element.

4.5. Individual and Conventional Style

One aspect of style, therefore, refers to the author's individual choice of language. Ideas or concepts may be expressed in a number of ways and writers exercise a choice in determining how their message is to be formulated. In theory, the choice is limitless: writers can play with features of language at will to produce original texts. In practice, however, each discourse genre embodies certain principles and conventions that tend to restrict the writer's choice. Writers therefore confine their individual stylistic choices to those available within the genre. Even literary texts, where the author's freedom is virtually boundless may present stylistic conventions related, for instance, to period and micro-genre.

Since genres are "conventionalised forms of texts" (Kress 1985:19), they are closely connected to culture. Thus, the style that characterises a particular genre may differ from

one language to another. Works of criticism in Italian, for instance, tend to be rather more elaborate both syntactically and lexically than their English counterparts. Consider the following Italian and English translations of a text by Walter Benjamin originally written in German:

...bisogna richiamare l'attenzione sul fatto che certi concetti di relazione conservano tutto il loro significato, anzi forse il loro significato migliore, se non sono riferiti a priori esclusivamente all'uomo.

...it might be pointed out that certain concepts are best grasped if they are not associated, a priori, exclusively with man,

The translator needs to take both the individual and conventional aspects of style into account when reformulating the ST message in the TT and also to decide which of the two should take priority in that particular text if a choice needs to be made.

4.6. Nominal and Verbal Style

In Chapter 3 we discussed language variation in relation to the context of situation and we saw that a text's level of formality is largely dictated by the type of communicative event and the status of the participants. There is nonetheless a certain amount of room for personal choice and, on occasions, a text-producer deliberately uses different degrees of formality for stylistic effects. These stylistic variations need to be reflected in the TT.

In the field of technical and scientific discourse, for instance, formal style is characterised by a greater use of abstract noun forms derived from verbs than is generally to be found in everyday English, a phenomenon known as *nominalisation*. These abstract nouns usually have an -ion ending or they may be gerunds ending in -ing or infinitives. The difference between a form in -ing and the infinitive is that the former has more of an iterative meaning while the latter tends to foreground the singulative aspect of the action or event. All these abstract forms are likely to be followed by a weak verb such as *be*, *bring about*, *effect*, *imply*, *occur*.



The utilization of recently-introduced techniques has brought about a change in hospital procedure.

This has obvious advantages for translators whose native tongue is Italian as a large number of abstract nouns are Latin derivatives. Excessive use of abstract nouns, which generally means polysyllabic words, may however make the text seem heavy, complex and verbose. This is not acceptable in English scientific and technical texts with an informative function since clarity of expression is paramount.

... and the findings have led to increased understanding of the likely modes of transmission as well as the identification of persons at risk for infection.

By substituting some of the more cumbersome abstract nouns with verbs, that is by opting for a verbal style instead of a nominal one, translators can make their English text lighter, clearer and more concise.

... and from the findings we understand better how the infection is transmitted and how to identify persons at risk.

Although the degree of formality does shift slightly towards a more neutral level, the overall tenor of the text does not undergo any major changes.

A further reason for switching to verbalisation is that the frequent use of nominal forms instead of verbal ones tends to produce unnecessarily long sentences, which makes the pace of the prose dull and sluggish and can even lead to tortuous and convoluted syntax. A change from noun to verb style usually improves the overall effect of the sentence structure, making it more direct and specific.

Last but not least as far as stylistic choice is concerned, the use of nominal forms foregrounds the staticity of an action, while verbalisation highlights the dynamic aspect. Compare the following examples:

The utilization of recently-introduced techniques has brought about a change in hospital procedure.

Hospital procedure has changed since recent techniques were introduced.

Nominalisation is not restricted to scientific and technical discourse. Other discourse genres written in a formal tenor display similar characteristics in English.

The attractions of London are considerable. A variety of goods can be bought at extremely reasonable prices in the many large shops. Clothes and records are notable among the many bargains to be found. London's museums provide another focus of interest. The Science, Natural History, and Geographical Museums are grouped together in such a way that, with the benefit of their excellent catering facilities, an entire day may be devoted to their investigation. A beautiful city at any time, London is at its best in Autumn. While in the many parks, trees are shedding their leaves, people can be found just strolling at leisure or merely seated, observing the human traffic. Scarcely credible in the tameness or the squirrels which can be coaxed to eat even from people's hands. Evening and night-time activities are major attractions of the city. Cinemas are plentiful and relatively inexpensive while a visit to the theatre may be yet easier on the pocket. Discos cater for the needs of those who wish to prolong their evening. The closure of pubs at half past eleven is, however, to be regretted for this makes it difficult for the thirsty to alleviate their needs.

Neutral and informal English texts, on the other hand, contain far more verbal forms.

London's absolutely super: There are lots of lovely big shops and you can buy everything you want. All sorts of things are cheap, such as clothes and records for instance. There are lots of terrific museums too – the Science Museum, the Natural History Museum and the Geographical Museum are all together in one place which makes it really easy to go round them all in one day and of course they all have cafeterias so you can get a sandwich and a cup of coffee whenever you want. It's quite beautiful too – particularly now it's Autumn and all the leaves have started falling off the trees. There are parks everywhere and you go for walks in them or just sit down and enjoy watching all the people going by. There are squirrels which come and eat right out of your hand! You wouldn't believe how tame they are! There are so many things to do in the evening and at night. I've never seen so many cinemas – they aren't too expensive and sometimes the theatres are even cheaper. And after the cinema you can go to a disco and dance until the small hours. The only trouble is that the pubs all close at 11.00 so you can't get a drink late at night if you're thirsty.

In contrast, Italian is characterised by a more nominal style than English across various levels of formality.

Restò inoltre scoperto il problema della salvaguardia dei depositi bancari esposti al pericolo di volatilizzarsi a fronte della gran massa di perdite che ormai schiacciava i tre principali Istituti di credito.

(Valerio Castronovo, "E nacque l'IRI",
Ulisse 2000, n. 74, maggio 1990)

There was also another problem to be solved: how to protect bank deposits from the risk of disappearing into thin air as a result of the overwhelming losses which were threatening to bring down the three main banks.

Translating texts from Italian into English therefore gives rise to stylistic issues. How far should the style of the original be modified to cater for TL conventions? It is normally preferable to verbalise Italian ST nominal style in the English TT when the tenor of discourse is neutral or informal.

La fine della Sessione è prevista per le sei.
The Session is due to end at six o'clock.

Perché tanta fortuna intorno a questo libro?
Why did this book become so successful?

When the tenor of the Italian ST is formal, nominal forms are used in the English TT provided that textual comprehension is not compromised.

Constatazione amichevole di incidente – denuncia di sinistro
Non costituisce riconoscimento di responsabilità, ma un rilevamento delle identità delle persone e dei fatti per una più rapida definizione.

Agreed statement of facts on motor vehicle accident
Does NOT constitute an admission of liability, but a summary of identities and of the facts which will speed up the settlement of claims.

Any stylistic variation in the ST that is due to a deliberate choice on the part of the writer (a change in tenor) has to be carried over into the TT. In the following text, for instance, the writer wishes to foreground Michele's inability to write and to distinguish between the linguistic forms that express different tenors of discourse:

Londra, 8 dicembre '70

Cara mamma,
Per motivi che non mi sarebbe facile spiegare per lettera, ho rinunciato a venire a Roma, dopo qualche attimo di indecisione. Quando Osvaldo mi ha telefonato che il papà era morto, sono andato a vedere che aerei c'erano, ma poi non sono partito. So che avete detto a tutti i parenti che avevo la polmonite. Bene.

Ti ringrazio dei vestiti e dei soldi. La persona che me li ha portati, questo nipote della signora Peroni, non mi ha dato notizie di voi perché non vi conosceva, ma invece mi ha dato qualche notizia di Osvaldo e mi ha restituito il mio orologio, che mi ero scordato nella tasca di Osvaldo quel giorno all'aeroporto essendo andato in fretta a fare una doccia. Ditegli che lo ringrazio. Non gli scrivo direttamente per mancanza di tempo.

Lascio Londra e vado nel Sussex. Vado in casa d'un professore di glottologia. Devo lavare i piatti, accendere la caldaia dei termosifoni e portare a spasso dei cani. Per ora ho rinunciato a frequentare quella scuola di scultura. Preferisco i cani e i piatti.

Mi dispiace di non averti fatto le gabbie per i tuoi conigli, ma quando ritorno te le farò. Bacio te e le mie sorelle.

Michele.

(Natalia Ginzburg, *Caro Michele*)

4.7. Personal and Impersonal Style

Another option open to language users concerns personal and impersonal style. This may be either use-related, conditioned, that is by the field, tenor and mode of discourse, or user-related, a choice exercised by the text-producer. Discerning which of these is applicable in a specific ST is important for selecting the appropriate translation strategies.

If impersonal style depends on registral restrictions, translators will opt for equivalent conventional forms in the TL genre. Newspaper reports as well as scientific, technical, economic and legal discourse all contain varying degrees of impersonal language.

Il III comma dell'articolo 121 del Progetto Informale di negoziato adottato dalla III Conferenza delle Nazioni Unite sul diritto del mare, in una formulazione rimasta immutata attraverso le varie redazioni del Progetto, dispone: "Rocks which cannot sustain human habitation or economic life of their own shall have no exclusive zone or continental shelf". Tale norma, negando ad alcune categorie di isole una propria area di esclusiva giurisdizione, (useremo d'ora in poi questo termine per riferirci alla zona economica esclusiva ed alla piattaforma continentale e, più in generale, alla aree sottoposte al potere dello Stato costiere oltre i limiti del mare territoriale), introduce una deroga al regime giuridico dagli spazi marini intorno alle isole, regime caratterizzato dalla assimilazione, in linea di principio, dei territori insulari a quelli continentali.

È nostra intenzione sia individuare la reale portata della norma in parola, sia stabilire se ed in che senso essa abbia inciso o sia idonea ad incidere sul diritto internazionale generale.

Art. 121 paragraph 3 of the Informal Negotiating Text adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the sea states, in words that have remained unchanged throughout the Text's various draftings: "Rocks which cannot sustain human habitation or economic life of their own shall have no exclusive zone or continental shelf". In denying certain categories of islands their own area of exclusive jurisdiction (a term which will be used henceforth in the present study to mean the exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf as well as, more generally, the areas falling within the coastal State's jurisdiction beyond the limits of the territorial sea) the said rule introduces a derogation from the legal régime of marine spaces surrounding islands. According to such a régime islands and the mainland are in line of principle to be treated alike.

The present study aims at both singling out the actual scope of the rule under discussion and establishing whether and to what extent it has had or is liable to have an impact on general international law.

If, on the other hand, the choice between personal and impersonal forms is dictated not so much by contextual constraints as by the text-producer's preferences, translators need to assess the extent to which they can and should be reproduced in the TT.

Some British and American scientific style manuals, for instance, advocate that authors use *we* and the active voice (and thus a more personal tone) in scientific articles whenever the passive is likely to give rise to ambiguity, which the surrounding context does not help to clarify. Since the ultimate concern of translators is to maximise readability of informative texts, they will also need to be alert to suggestions such as these.

Approximately 200 surgical procedures are routinely carried out on an outpatient basis.

It might not be clear to the reader exactly who carried out the procedures, whether it was the authors of the research paper or some other team. A less ambiguous text could be obtained thus:

We routinely carry out approximately 200 surgical procedures on an outpatient basis.

4.8. Translating Style and Content

Stylistic variation is a component of a whole range of discourse areas and becomes more important as one moves from scientific discourse to literary prose and to poetry. Differences between literary and other kinds of discourse are not rigid: overlapping stylistic features are to be found in texts pertaining to literature, commerce, science and industry. Form is an integral part of expressive texts, like works of literature, and in a different way, of vocative texts, such as advertisements. It is of less significance in informative texts: scientific articles, technical reports, information leaflets.

How vital is it, therefore, to reproduce the ST form and style in the TT and to what extent is the translator justified in modifying the ST style in the TT in the interests of safeguarding clarity of content? The ideal solution would be to preserve both style and content in each and every text, but very much depends on discourse genre and the effects a ST writer wishes to achieve by means of stylistic variation and deviance. The extent to which stylistic variation is a fundamental component of the writer's message is the yardstick for deciding the extent to which it needs to be translated. When the form of the ST is closely bound to SL conventions, the best procedure with informative texts is to render the content according to TL norms. The ST style is thus adapted to enhance the content. Compare the

two different closures to letters cited below:

AugurandoLe un piacevole soggiorno e scusandoci per eventuali disagi, Le porgo i miei più cordiali saluti.

I wish you a pleasant stay and apologise for any inconvenience caused by the work which is in progress.

Yours sincerely,

This is also the procedure to adopt when the text has a vocative function. Since vocative texts are reader-oriented, translators should aim to make the TT as naturally-sounding as possible to the TL audience.

Constatazione amichevole di incidente automobilistico

Denuncia di sinistro

non irritiamoci

siamo cortesi

restiamo calmi

←vedere le istruzioni a tergo

European Accident Statement

don't get angry

be polite

keep calm

←see directions for use

In expressive texts, where there is maximum fusion of form and content, translators should attempt to maintain the "flavour" of the original. This entails paying attention to stylistic features and accounting for them in the TT.

In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, not yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort.

It had a perfectly round door like a porthole, painted green, with a shiny yellow brass knob in the exact middle. The door opened on to a tube-shaped hall like a tunnel: a very comfortable tunnel without smoke, with panelled walls, and floors tiled and carpeted, provided with polished chairs, and lots and lots of pegs for hats and coats – the hobbit was fond of visitors. The tunnel wound on and on, going fairly but not quite straight into the side of the hill – The Hill, as all people for many miles round called it – and many little round

doors opened out of it, first on one side and then on another.

(J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*)

In una caverna sotto terra viveva uno hobbit. Non era una caverna brutta, sporca, umida, piena di resti di vermi e di trasudo fetido, e neanche una caverna arida, spoglia, sabbiosa, con dentro niente per sedersi o da mangiare: era una caverna hobbit, cioè comodissima.

Aveva una porta perfettamente rotonda come un oblò, dipinta di verde, con un lucido pomello d'ottone proprio nel mezzo. La porta si apriva su un ingresso a forma di tubo, come un tunnel: un tunnel molto confortevole, senza fumo, con pareti foderate di legno e pavimento di piastrelle ricoperto di tappeti, fornito di sedie lucidate, e di un gran numero di attaccapanni per cappelli e cappotti: lo hobbit amava molto ricevere visite. Il tunnel si snodava, inoltrandosi profondamente anche se non in linea retta nel fianco della collina (o meglio la Collina, come era chiamata da tutta la gente per molte miglia all'intorno) e molte porticine rotonde si aprivano su di esso, prima da una parte e poi dall'altra.

(J.R.R. Tolkien, *Lo Hobbit*, translated by Elena Jeronimidis Conte)