

Translation and Adaptation Studies: More Interdisciplinary Reflections on Theories of Definition and Categorization

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Traduction et adaptation : un mariage de raison
Translation and Adaptation: A Sensible Union

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Résumé de l'article

Le présent article porte sur la façon dont les théories de la définition et certaines théories de catégorisation graduelle pourraient contribuer à distinguer la traduction et l'adaptation (filmique de textes littéraires), ainsi que les disciplines respectives qui étudient ces phénomènes. La première partie propose d'adopter les définitions du langage commun et de définir la traduction comme la reproduction correcte d'une expression verbale dans une autre langue naturelle, et l'adaptation comme un changement qui entraîne une amélioration. Ces définitions entraînent des implications de catégorisation. L'auteur discute de trois paramètres : alors que la définition de « traduction » implique un « non-changement », une « application sémiotique » et un « passage d'une langue naturelle à une autre », celle de l'« adaptation » implique un « changement », une « absence d'application sémiotique » et une « amélioration ». La deuxième partie étudie comment les théories de catégorisation peuvent contribuer à distinguer l'étude de la traduction et celle de l'adaptation filmique de textes littéraires. L'étude de la disciplinarisation concerne des paramètres épistémologiques et sociopolitiques. Parmi ceux-là, la spécificité médiatique, c'est-à-dire le paradigme linguistique versus film littéraire joue un rôle primordial. Parmi ceux-ci, l'auteur traite de la compétition entre les systèmes de valeurs romantique et classiciste.

Translation and Adaptation Studies: More Interdisciplinary Reflections on Theories of Definition and Categorization

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Abstract

This paper discusses how theories of definition and probabilistic theories of categorization could help distinguish between translation and (literary film) adaptation, and eventually between translation (TS) and (literary film) adaptation studies (LFAS). Part I suggests readopting the common parlance definition of “translation” as the accurate rendition of the meaning of a verbal expression in another natural language, and “adaptation” as change that leads to better fit. Readopting these common parlance definitions entails categorical implications. The author discusses three parameters: whereas “translation” represents an invariance-oriented, semiotically invested, cross-lingual phenomenon, “adaptation” refers to a variance-oriented phenomenon, which is not semiotically invested, and entails better fit. Part II discusses how theories of categorization could help distinguish between TS and LFAS. The study of the disciplinarization of knowledge involves epistemic and socio-political conditioners. This section concludes that medium specificity, i.e., the linguistic versus lit-film paradigm, plays a major role in separating TS from LFAS. Another player that deserves more attention is the Romantic as opposed to the Classicist value system.

Keywords: translation, adaptation, categorization, disciplinarization, epistemology

Résumé

Le présent article porte sur la façon dont les théories de la définition et certaines théories de catégorisation graduelle pourraient contribuer à distinguer la traduction et l'adaptation (filmique de textes littéraires), ainsi que les disciplines respectives qui étudient ces phénomènes. La première partie propose d'adopter les définitions du langage commun et de définir la traduction comme la reproduction correcte d'une expression verbale dans une autre langue naturelle,

et l'adaptation comme un changement qui entraîne une amélioration. Ces définitions entraînent des implications de catégorisation. L'auteur discute de trois paramètres : alors que la définition de « traduction » implique un « non-changement », une « application sémiotique » et un « passage d'une langue naturelle à une autre », celle de l'« adaptation » implique un « changement », une « absence d'application sémiotique » et une « amélioration ». La deuxième partie étudie comment les théories de catégorisation peuvent contribuer à distinguer l'étude de la traduction et celle de l'adaptation filmique de textes littéraires. L'étude de la disciplinarisation concerne des paramètres épistémologiques et sociopolitiques. Parmi ceux-là, la spécificité médiatique, c'est-à-dire le paradigme linguistique versus film littéraire joue un rôle primordial. Parmi ceux-ci, l'auteur traite de la compétition entre les systèmes de valeurs romantique et classiciste.

Mots-clés : traduction, adaptation, catégorisation, disciplinarisation, épistémologie

0. Introduction

This paper continues the debate about the interdisciplinary relations between translation and adaptation studies (henceforth respectively TS and AS). In a previous essay, I have argued that to name is to define and to categorize, and that therefore theories of definition and categorization might offer tools that help advance this debate (Cattrysse, 2014, p. 320). A short introduction into these theories led to some conclusions:

- Theories of definition distinguish between various types of definitions,¹ two of which might be useful in this debate: lexical and stipulative definitions. To explicitate whether a working definition is meant as a lexical or stipulative definition implicates the definer in the definition and thus avoids presenting the defined as if from a perspective-less perspective. This concurs with more recent theories of categorization (see below).
- In cognitive psychology, “to categorize” generally means to retain unique features of an individual instance as relevant for its membership of a class of similar items, and to discard other individual characteristics of that individual instance as irrelevant for that category membership (Minda, 2015, p. 66). Consequently, the word “category” refers to a set of items that share relevant

1. The word “definition” refers to a verbal statement that describes or explains the meaning of a term or an expression. A definition generally consists of a sentence. However, since definitions are presumed to preserve meaning, synonyms may serve as one-word definitions as well (Rey, 2013).

features. The nature and relevance of the shared features may be established individually or trans-individually for a shorter or longer period of time. It is important to note that more recent probabilistic theories of categorization (e.g., prototype theory, exemplar theory) have superseded the classical theory of categorization. Unlike the latter, the former account for the notion of gradient typicality effect. Some members may be seen as more typical of their category than others (Cattrysse, 2018). Lay-people, including translation and adaptation scholars, tend to continue adhering to the classical “all or nothing” theory of categorization.

- To the extent that to categorize involves retaining some features as relevant while discarding other features as irrelevant, to categorize implies to schematize. However, I suggest distinguishing between “to categorize” or “to schematize” and “to essentialize.” I hereafter understand “to essentialize” as to represent something as if from a perspective-less perspective. Whether that is possible remains a matter of contention between critical realists and relativists. However, if it is possible to avoid essentializing, humans like most living organisms cannot not categorize. It is in their evolutionary nature to do so. In spite of some drawbacks, categorizing presents multiple advantages which have to do mostly with economizing and optimizing our cognitive resources when interacting with the world.
- Following the critical realist point of view (POV) (see, e.g., Blackburn, 2006) and findings in cognitive studies, categories and their boundaries may emerge as more or less clear or blurred patterns or entities depending on multiple factors including a subject’s previous knowledge and experience, memory and memory retrieval, awareness, intention and focus or level of analytical detail, various cognitive mechanisms such as confirmation bias and belief perseverance, cognitive dissonance, and false consensus bias. Other factors are the salience (world-to-mind effect) (Tversky, 1977) or relevance (mind-to-world judgment) of the observed, which are related to its intrinsic characteristics in connection with the previous features, and the *ad hoc* spatio-temporal context of the observation. Consequently, subjects may adopt an unlimited number of perceptual POVs and perceive an unlimited number of different aspects of one object. As I explained elsewhere, this does

not entail an “anything goes”-theory (Cattrysse, 2014, pp. 56 and 182). Unlimited does not mean boundless. The unlimited number of POVs is still bounded by what exists in the world.²

- When stipulating definitions, one may prefer narrow over wide definitions since the former are more likely to reveal more homogeneous categories. More homogeneous categories are more likely to show clear rather than blurred category-boundaries. Clear-cut conceptual boundaries allow the analyst to better distinguish between categories, and to study borderline cases and varying degrees of category-membership. If everything can be called a translation or an adaptation, it is impossible to study the specifics of either one or even to distinguish them from each other and from what they are not. Since homogeneous categories and clear-cut boundaries enhance categorical distinction, they at once allow the analyst to perceive a greater variety of distinct items: e.g., one can study translations next to adaptations and other types of “text-processing” (Wienold, 1972).
- Sharp category-boundaries do not necessarily imply rigid boundaries. One may conceive of concepts and categories as both static and dynamic entities. Change is understood as a partial and sequential process. A pre-condition for the perception of change is the perception of an entity *to* change.

In what follows, I apply these guidelines to the study of translations and adaptations, and discuss some of the implications they entail for both TS and AS.

1. Definitions of “translation” and “adaptation”

This section looks at some lexical and stipulative definitions of “adaptation” and “translation.” Neither lexical nor stipulative definitions offer perfect solutions, but they do solve problems with essentializing definitions (Cattrysse, 2014, p. 112ff.). Lexical and stipulative definitions refer rather to two complementary avenues of research. We can embark on a historical study of how people on this planet have used the words “adaptation” and “translation” since the beginning of time. In that case, we look at language use and its referents as an object of study, and we examine what theory of definition calls the lexical definition

2. One way to understand this is to think of the set of even numbers which is at once unlimited and yet limited to the extent that the equally unlimited set of uneven numbers is not a part of it.

of a term (Gupta, 2015). We can also decide for ourselves, as a smaller or larger community of translation and adaptation scholars that here and now, we shall define the words “translation” and “adaptation” with reference to sets of phenomena X and Y, if and only if they display respectively a previously agreed upon set of features. In that case, we work with what theory of definition calls a stipulative definition.

1.1 Lexical definitions

I hereafter discuss two lexical definitions of “translation” and “adaptation” that are common in current Western everyday language, and two more that are often used in academic discourse. As will become clear, academic discourse deviates from common parlance. This is not unusual in itself. However, I hereafter assess the terminological differences on the basis of the aforementioned categorical guidelines.

In current Western common parlance, the word “translation” signifies “to render the accurate meaning of a verbal expression in another natural language.”³ Some people may admit that occasionally “translation” is used in a larger, metaphorical sense, but they will typically add that this is not translation “proper.” On the other hand, current Western translation scholars point to the cultural turn that took place in the 1970s and 1980s and inflated the concept “translation”, sometimes to the point of making it synonymous with “culture” (see, e.g., Trivedi, 2007), or even with “semiosis” (see, e.g., Torop, 2002; Gorrée, 2007; Marais and Kull, 2016). Hence, one may say that while common parlance applies a narrower conceptualization of translation-N, academic discourse alternates, often implicitly, between “translation-N” and a much wider conceptualization of “translation-W.” This explains how some translation scholars have argued that translating involves adapting.⁴ In support of this claim, they typically select strings of verbal text (e.g., words, sentences) where the translator was unable to “translate-N” and therefore had to “translate-W.” At this micro-level, “adaptation” is understood as “free translation,” where “free” refers to less invariance-orientedness

3. For fifteen years, I have asked this question to several hundreds of Dutch, French and English speaking students, and over the last three decades, many colleagues in TS and in non-TS have confirmed this assumption. See also Hermans (2013) and Gambier and van Doorslaer (2016b).

4. I refer for example to various speakers at two international conferences that dealt specifically with the topic of this essay. They took place in November 2017 at the University of Cyprus (November 10-12, 2017) and in May 2018 at the University of Regina (May 28-30, 2018).

with respect to the source materials. One may therefore rephrase the argument as follows: adaptation is (part of) translation-W because in translations-W adaptation and translation-N alternate as two distinct phenomena.

Today, Western common parlance uses the word “adaptation” to denote “change that leads to better fit.” That change is often understood to be intentional when dealing with manmade artefacts. “Better fit” may also reveal itself as an after-effect. This is how evolutionary biology distinguishes mutation, understood as random change, from adaptation understood as change that leads to better fit. Since change is key to adaptation, common parlance distinguishes adaptation very neatly from translation-N. Conversely, within the humanities, the word “adaptation” has emerged first and foremost within the field of literature-into-film studies. This does not imply that over the years, other types of (media) adaptations have not been studied. However, prominent publications, academic associations, and international conferences have claimed the name “adaptation studies” to refer to literature and film studies, and within that area the study of (mostly faithful) film adaptations of (mostly prestigious) literary texts, that is mostly novels and theater plays, has prevailed. Consequently, literary film scholars have both reduced and translationalized the common parlance sense of the word “adaptation.” Indeed, to say “adaptation studies” and to think “literary film adaptation studies” (LFAS) is to reduce the wider category of AS to the narrower category of LFAS; and to stress the importance of fidelity with respect to the filmed materials is to focus on translational invariance rather than on adaptational variance. A translational bias emerges also when critics state that some novels “resist adaptation” or that they are “unfilmable.” Such phrasings recall the traditional TS concept of “untranslatability” and its correlated invariance conditions. If one adopts the common parlance definition of “adaptation,” a text is only unfilmable if it cannot be changed to better fit the *ad hoc* film world.

In light of the following it is worth noting that when talking about literary film adaptations, as opposed to adaptation in general, laypeople have adopted this translational view (see, e.g., Hermansson, 2015; Johnson, 2017; Rowe, 2018). In doing so, they use the word “adaptation” in an inconsistent way. Whereas adaptation in general refers to change that leads to better fit, “film adaptation of literary texts” represents a translational process where fidelity plays an important role. Conversely, with respect to “translation,” common parlance as

well as non-TS scholarly language has *not* adopted the post-cultural turn's widening of the concept; it continues to interpret translation as translation-N. This may explain, at least in part, why in their respective disciplinary formation process, TS and LFAS have fought different battles (see below). Following this, TS has shown more interest in (LF)AS than vice versa; LFAS has until 2008 generally ignored TS as a strictly linguistic issue, and focused rather on literary and film studies.⁵

Lexical definitions have advantages, but they also have drawbacks (Cattrysse, 1990, p. 110ff.; 2014, p. 112ff.). Both remain under-investigated. Some of these drawbacks undermine arguments that were raised against stipulative definitions. For example, translation scholar Brian Mossop pleads against a stipulative definition and in favor of a lexical definition, like Toury's (1985, pp. 20–21) definition of “translation” as a phenomenon that is presented and/or perceived as a translation for whatever reason:

[A lexical definition] identifies a set of utterances which will then be investigated for their characteristics, rather than stipulating characteristics and then looking for utterances that satisfy the stipulation. (Mossop, 2017a, p. 330; underlining is mine).

The question that arises is: How to identify and select (or not) items without a previous mindset? Which set of utterances should we identify and select or not on what basis? This is a catch22, which results from the fact that our (perceptual and cognitive) interaction with the world consists of a two-way process: bottom-up (from world to mind) and top-down (from mind to world). When studying perception, knowledge and communication, we cannot omit either one of the two directions. Hence the top-down part of perception brings us to the next paragraph: stipulative definitions.

1.2 Stipulative definitions: misunderstandings

There remain a number of misunderstandings about stipulative definitions, which demand correcting. Firstly, unlike lexical definitions, stipulative definitions represent decrees, not assertions or statements of fact. For example, I can stipulate that for this essay, I invent the word “vorio!” to refer to phenomena that are both round and square. Decrees, like statements of value, trigger an “agree-disagree” mode of

5. Exceptions like my own work (see, e.g., Cattrysse, 1992b), and that of Gambier (see, e.g., 1992) and Bastin (see, e.g., 1993) confirm the rule.

interpretation. They do not elicit a “true-false” mode of interpretation the way statements of fact do. Everyone can agree or disagree with my proposal on whatever (factual and other) grounds they find persuasive, but no one can claim that this *is* a false statement. The same applies to stipulative definitions of “translation” or “adaptation.” Secondly, even if one disagrees with someone’s stipulative definition of say “adaptation” or “translation,” presenting a clear-cut definition first of how henceforth one is going to use a word avoids terminological confusion, especially if that confusion is largely based on the misconception that the term conveys a universally shared meaning. Thirdly, if one agrees on some stipulative definitions, they can help design a meta-language. This has been misunderstood as if to agree on a meta-language would prevent researchers from disagreeing with each other (see, e.g., Engberg in Chesterman *et al.*, 2003). On the contrary, it is only via a commonly shared semiotic code that communicators can signal their agreement or disagreement to each other. Fourthly, the aforementioned quote from Mossop about “stipulating characteristics and then looking for utterances that satisfy the stipulation” suggests that finding phenomena that satisfy the stipulation is the end of the investigation while in fact it is the beginning. Since it is impossible to study all at once, a stipulative definition of the object of study allows researchers to identify and select the relevant phenomena, to deselect the irrelevant ones, and then to start the study. There is of course the often-heard criticism that to look only for what one is looking for prevents one from finding interesting and unexpected stuff. I argue that this criticism can be countered in a number of ways. Firstly, finding what one was not looking for is as a rule uninteresting for the simple reason that one was not looking for it. If by way of exception it turns out to be relevant, then that is what it is: an exception. To mistake an exception for the rule is generally unwise. And finally, to consistently look for what one is not looking for sounds like a contradiction in terms which defeats its purpose.

1.3 Adopting common parlance definitions

A study of the lexical definitions of “translation” and “adaptation” shows that people have used these words in many different ways. Consequently, when starting a study, one may do well to either choose one definition out of the many that were made before or to create a working definition first. In this section, I look at how the aforementioned categorical guidelines may help select two stipulative

definitions out of the four lexical definitions described above. If we are to prefer narrow over wide categories, homogeneous over heterogeneous ones, and sharp over blurred category-boundaries, then the choice of the common parlance definition of translation-N, as opposed to the post-structuralist definition of translation-W, is an obvious one to make. This concurs with what some TS scholars have advocated (see, e.g., Trivedi, 2007; Mossop, 2017a). However, the choice of a working definition among the aforementioned lexical definitions of “adaptation” is less obvious. We saw that literary film scholars reduce and translationalize the common parlance concept of “adaptation.” In categorical terms, narrowing the category is a positive, but installing a translational bias blurs rather than sharpens the boundary between the invariance-oriented translational and the variance-seeking adaptational. Conversely, the common parlance definition of “adaptation” widens the semantic field of the word “adaptation,” which in categorical terms is a negative, but it offers at once a clearer category-boundary between invariance- and variance-oriented phenomena. This would concur with previous suggestions made in transfer theory (see, e.g., Göpferich, 2010). However, reinstating the common parlance definitions of “translation” and “adaptation” involves more categorical implications to consider.

1.4 Categorical implications

Clearly, laypeople do not develop everyday language according to theory of categorization. It should therefore not surprise that the common parlance definitions of “translation” and “adaptation” install a classification grid that is a-symmetrical. Let us repeat the categorical features of a common parlance definition of both terms:

- * translation-N = invariance-oriented + semiotically invested (i.e., natural language based) + cross-lingual
- * adaptation = variance-oriented + semiotically not invested + entailing better fit in the target context

Of the three divides, only the variance-invariance distinction opposes translation directly to adaptation, that is if variance and invariance are considered at a common level of analytical detail. The two additional divides do not: translation is said to apply to and across natural languages, but adaptation may be applied to and across natural languages as well, although it does not have to. Adaptation is said to entail better fit, but translations may also lead to better fit, although

they do not have to. Hence to adopt these common parlance definitions involve some categorical implications that deserve a closer look.

1.4.1 (In)variance conditions

The (in)variance conditions refer to (dis)similarity relations between the end-state and the initial state of an entity. At this stage, the purpose of the study is to identify and select only those phenomena that qualify as translational or adaptational, and to discard those that do not. Importantly, to decide on (in)variance does not end but start the investigation. After the what-question come the who, why, how, when and where-questions.

(Dis)similarity relations appear between two items in terms of patterns and categories. As indicated above, the emergence of patterns depends on a multitude of factors. From this it follows that one can compare two items along an unlimited number of dimensions. Two critics can therefore endlessly disagree on variance and invariance, based on the different perspectives they have taken. In a society, like our current Western society, where competition rules and individualism has been pushed to an atomic level, this has frequently become a natural reflex. However, in a different, less self-centered society, where the common good also matters, it is possible for two or more scholars to agree on a common POV, and to share definitions, analytical concepts and methods. This will allow researchers to build cohesive research communities, compare and verify or falsify research results, and disagree when need be. Since translations and cultural adaptations are manmade, an analyst may look at (dis)similarity relations in terms of context-dependent making conditions (e.g., authorial intentions), textual features, but also distributing and receivers' conditions (e.g., audience expectations and interpretations). Needless to say, each interpretation shall emerge as a result of the POV and contextual background(s) of the analyst(s).⁶

1.4.2 Semiotically invested versus not invested

In current Western everyday language translation-N is understood as a cross-lingual and therefore semiotically invested phenomenon. Conversely, the common word “adaptation” is not *a priori* linked with any form of expression. It applies to living organisms as well as inani-

6. For a more detailed discussion of the assessment of (dis)similarity relations, see, e.g., Chesterman (1998, p. 5ff.) with respect to TS and Cattrysse (2014, p. 264ff.) with respect to AS.

mate objects, both natural and manmade, such as natural language use, novels, theatre plays, movies, TV programs, games, music, paintings, sculpture, but also ideologies, politics, economics, football tactics, aerodynamics, square pegs for round holes, etc. This makes translation a more specific and adaptation a less specific category. In categorical terms, translation and adaptation sit at different levels of hierarchical representation of knowledge. If translation is considered at the basic level, adaptation occupies a superordinate level. Consequently, as indicated above, the “semiotically invested” feature as such does not oppose translation to adaptation. Rather translation finds its equivalent basic-level opposites in the applied types of adaptation mentioned above. Following this, AS as such exists only in name. As an overall field of study, it remains an empty category. Literary film scholars may call what they do “adaptation studies,” but to assume that findings which apply to LFAS automatically apply to the wider field of AS is unwarranted, and conclusions may represent hasty generalizations. For example, statements like “all adaptation exhibits intermediality” are false if one considers the summary, the elaboration, the simplification, the domestication, the foreignization, etc. as sub-types of change that entails better fit. Moreover, adaptation’s superordinate counterpart at the invariance-side of the divide represents an empty case too. This category does not even have a name. One could suggest the word “transfer” to refer to a semiotically not-invested invariance-oriented type of text processing, but transfer theory gave this term already a different meaning. One could also follow the post-1970s cultural turn in TS, and accept the inflated conceptualization of “translation-W” to extend beyond the linguistic paradigm. However, to turn “translation” into an umbrella term involves drawbacks that have been criticized before both within and outside TS (see, e.g., Trivedi, 2007; Gambier and van Doorslaer, 2016a; Mossop, 2017a; see also above).

1.4.3 Better fit?

The “better fit” feature adds to the a-symmetry of the classification grid. Whereas the aforesaid definition of translation-N is based on ontological characteristics, i.e., “what is”-features, “better fit” points to a function, i.e., “what for”-feature. As indicated above, functionality is not a necessary condition for an item to qualify as a translation. Translations may or may not lead to better fit. Consequently, the “better fit” condition does not distinguish as such between translation and adaptation. It does so only in combination with change.

At times, to define “better fit” may be easier said than done. The words refer to an effect that can be achieved in an unlimited number of ways, among which translation and adaptation represent only two. In evolutionary biology, “better fit” distinguishes the adaptation from the mutation when the changed persists in time, and thus enhances reproductive success. Scholars in cultural adaptation could apply a similar argument when looking for change that lasts in time and/or spreads in space, for example through agents that propagate the changed. Ideas developed in memetics could be useful here.⁷ One may study “better fit” from the maker’s POV (e.g., in terms of intentions), from the text’s POV (e.g., in terms of textual features), and from the receiver’s POV (e.g., in terms of intended or unintended effects). Again, to the three POVs, one should add the layer of the analyst’s POV. Finally, I point out that various common terms are already in use to signify more specific types of “better-fit.” I refer to terms such as “acculturation,” “foreignization,” “modernization,” “periodization,” “popularization,” and the like. To the extent that these terms specifically refer to change as opposed to maintenance, it makes sense to consider these practices as adaptational rather than translational. Also, to the fans of classifications, it may be of interest to note that these more specific types of “better fit” are semiotically not-invested. They refer to the adaptation of cultural values, which can be implemented in all sorts of media such as film, TV, “new” media, literature, sculpture, painting, music, etc.

1.5 What-questions versus what for-questions

The distinction between what things *are* (said to be) and what they *are for* remains an interesting but controversial one. The question pertains to the study of causation and theory of explanation. There may always be reasons for an event to happen or a situation to exist, but so far most people believe that sentient beings may also *have* reasons to think, feel or act.⁸ In order to discuss this distinction, Dennett (2018, p. 38ff.) distinguishes between *how come*-questions and *what for*-questions. Whereas the former refer to causation, the latter refer to intentions. I am not ready to open this box of Pandora yet. However, pending more expert input from analytical philosophers, I argue that if and when it is possible to make a distinction between what things *are* (said to

7. See Chesterman (1997) with respect to TS. For a more recent and challenging development of this idea, see e.g., Dennett (2018).

8. But see Sam Harris (2012) who argues that free will is an illusion.

be) and what they *are for*, i.e., what meaning(s) people assign to these things, that distinction may be useful. For example, when dealing with a common thing like a petrol pump, it may be easier for people to agree on what a petrol pump *is* on the basis of what it does and how it works. It is when they start discussing what a petrol pump *means* to people (e.g., how they interact with it) that opinions go in all directions: from a symbol of colonial imperialism to job security and a better future, to environmental pollution, etc.

Similarly, for a research community to agree on a stipulative definition of what translation and adaptation *are* (called)⁹ as opposed to what they *are for* or what they *mean* to different people offers a number of advantages. First off, as stated above, to agree on a stipulative definition of the phenomena one will call “translation” and “adaptation” provides scholars with a starting point; a common ground that will allow them to identify and select phenomena that qualify as translations and adaptations, and then to move on to study how translation and adaptation users, i.e., makers, distributors, receivers, have interacted and interact still semio-pragmatically with these phenomena in one or more particular time-space contexts. In other words, a shared working definition of what translation and adaptation are understood *to be* provides a common ground for researchers to compare and to verify or falsify research results on what they *are for*, i.e., what they *mean* or have meant to whom, when, where, how and why in a particular historical setting A or B.

From this it follows that things may *be* (categorized as) different (e.g., translations versus adaptations), yet take a similar position (e.g., more or less canonical) or play a similar role (e.g., innovating versus conservative) in their hosting environments. If translation is understood to aim at invariance with respect to its source materials and their contexts, it means that adequation with these source models and values is considered acceptable in the target context. In other words, if the analyst takes the target (con)text-oriented view, translations are about adopting rather than adapting source materials.¹⁰ How, i.e., at what specific levels of analysis, and why target contexts import exogenic features and/or values (e.g., to innovate or to continue), or, in other

9. A more accurate description might be: to agree on the ontological features phenomena must present in order to qualify as “translation” or “adaptation”; which is what stipulative definitions are about.

10. Conversely, a source (con)text oriented analytical viewpoint sees translation as an exporting strategy.

words, what the roles and positions are of the translated texts in their hosting environment represents then a subsequent research question that is to be investigated empirically. If adaptation means change that entails better fit, it implies that in order to become acceptable in the target context, the source materials needed changing, and again, the investigation may subsequently look into the how's and why's source materials needed adapting rather than adopting.¹¹ Translations and adaptations may thus be seen as distinct items (*what*-question), which are meant to or end-up producing similar effects (*what for*-question). Conversely, things may *be* (categorized as) the same, say for example adaptations, but take on different positions or play different roles in different historical settings (e.g., conservative now and here; innovating later and there), even though in the case of adaptations, the stipulative definition requires these functions and roles to remain within the boundaries of “better fit.”

2. TS, AS: one or two disciplines?

To classify translation and adaptation as objects of study is one thing, to delineate them in terms of professions and academic disciplines yet another, even if defining the former impacts the latter and vice versa. Practical restrictions force me to leave the classification of professions aside. To answer the question of whether TS and AS represent one or two, separate or overlapping disciplines, or whether they represent rather inter-disciplines or multi-disciplines, one needs to agree on a working definition of the word “discipline.” These questions lead to the study of the structuring of (mostly academic) knowledge and the study of science as a social practice.

2.1 Science as a social practice

Studies of science as a social practice appear already in the 1920s (see, e.g., Jasanoff, 2017, p. 175), even if they come under different names: the sociology of knowledge (Scheler, 1924; Mannheim, 1936), the sociology of scientific knowledge (SSK) (Merton, 1938, 1957), and more recently the field of policy theories (Frodeman, 2017, p. 5), science and technology studies (STS) (Jasanoff, 2017) and interdisciplinarity studies (IDS) (Frodeman, Klein, and Pacheco, 2017). I cannot even begin to describe this area of research. However, introductions to the field point out that these studies focus in varying degrees on the epistemic and socio-political aspects of (mostly academic) knowledge

11. These conclusions are as old to polysystem TS as they are new to LFAS.

production (see, e.g., Gieryn, 2001). An epistemic focus is knowledge-centered and builds on the philosophy of science. It concentrates on the (often intra-academic) production (research) and consumption (education) of cognitive content, and often assumes implicitly that knowledge formation is non-ideological. Typical questions are: What is knowledge? How can one improve it? How does structuring (academic) knowledge in terms of disciplines and other formats impact knowledge? To what extent do disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity help or hinder the maintenance or innovation of knowledge? Etc. A socio-political focus is agency-centered and builds on the sociology of science. It concentrates among other things on how both academic and non-academic people and institutions interact with (mostly academic) knowledge formation in terms of politics and rhetorics. Typical questions are: Whose knowledge counts, and for what purposes? What are a society's costs and benefits of knowledge production? What are its socio-political and economical accountability and relevance (e.g., the mostly economic efficacy of the STEM disciplines as opposed to the humanities)? What about the displacement of the university from the center of knowledge production and the upcoming competition in those areas from large corporations?

The distinction between epistemic and socio-political motives represents yet another interesting but controversial divide. As with all gradient distinctions, sometimes epistemic and socio-political values concur and appear to be indistinguishable, yet at other times, they may clearly find themselves at cross-purposes (see Cattrysse, 2014, pp. 337-341). There is anecdotal evidence in both TS and LFAS to suggest a more systematic empirical investigation of this issue. For example, within TS, scholars have discussed the use of English, French and German language barriers for ethnocentric, protectionist or imperialist purposes, respectively (see, e.g., Venuti, 1995; Snell-Hornby, 2006, pp. ix-x; Pym, 2010, p. 21). Others have criticized the Western ethnocentric bias in TS making it more difficult for non-Western views on translation to emerge (see, e.g., Tymoczko, 2014). Within LFAS, Murray (2012, pp. 65 and 95) has also criticized the use of "linguistic policing" to prevent information seeping in from foreign language-spheres. Other scholars have identified other tactics to promote one's career rather than the discipline, such as stealing old ideas from predecessors and presenting them as new and one's own, stealing major ideas from predecessors and citing the latter only to mention their minor points, misrepresenting opponents to

better attack them, ignoring instead of debating opponents, journals blocking the publication of opponents, or stalling publication for as long as possible, etc. (see, e.g., Elliott, 2013 and 2017; Cattrysse, 2014, pp. 339-341). Bibliographies are a good place to look for all sorts of Apartheid systems: translation scholars ignoring adaptation studies, and vice versa, Anglophone publications banning non-English studies, etc. Speaking for LFAS, Elliott claims that such tactics produce “a selective, distorted, sometimes mythological history of our field” (2013, p. 26), and that they are worse in LFAS than in other human disciplines (*ibid.*, p. 24). I concur with the former claim but doubt the latter. Similar tactics favoring personal or group-interests at the expense of knowledge building and disciplinary progress have been denounced elsewhere in the humanities.¹² To know instead of to guess or to assume to what extent such tactics have been detrimental to the progress of academic knowledge formation requires a systematic empirical study.

2.2 The compartmentalization of academic knowledge

The study of the compartmentalization of knowledge is part of the study of science as a social practice. The debate is both old and new (Turner, 2017, p. 9). Plato and Aristotle discuss already the pros and cons of specialization and partitioning knowledge, but when applied to the current organization of Western universities, faculties and departments, the word “discipline” refers to a more recent debate that is often traced back to the nineteenth century (Morin, 2003, p. 5). Today, IDS investigates the structuring of (mostly academic) knowledge in terms of disciplinarization and other types of knowledge formation (Turner, 2017). The need to structure knowledge emerges when the production, distribution and reception of knowledge about a set of topics becomes so vast that no single person can master it all. Academic disciplines may therefore be seen as “an organizational manifestation of the need for an academic division of labor” (Jacobs, 2017, p. 35). Whereas concepts such as “knowledge formation” suggest a non-ideological, knowledge-centered approach, Frodeman (2017, p. 3) points out that IDS examines this organization within a political economy of knowledge, where questions arise such as “who speaks and who gets listened to, and how [is] authority [...] distributed among the participants in a conversation” (*ibid.*, p. 5). As

12. See, e.g., Kramnick (2011) on academic tribe behavior with respect to the study of literary Darwinism.

the needs for knowledge change, both within and outside academia, one may expect its structuring to change with it. Hence, part of IDS consists in the never-ending process of mapping and remapping the continuous field of knowledge in terms of morphing, merging and splitting parts and wholes. Whether one should study these processes via synchronic snapshots of changing situations, for example through “spatial” maps and diagrams, or via diachronic narratives and histories that focus rather on temporal change (see, e.g., Leitch, 2017b, p. 9) remains a matter of contention. I have argued previously that one view does not exclude the other, and that the preference for one approach rather than the other is a function of the purpose of the investigation (see, e.g., Cattrysse, 2014, p. 149ff.). From this it follows that definitions and categorizing are also key to IDS. IDS scholars concur with probabilistic theories of categorization in more than one respect: they favor narrow over wide categories, and clear-cut over fuzzy category boundaries. For example, Jasanoff (2017, p. 184) asks how the upcoming discipline defines its relations to other disciplines, and how it asserts a stronger sense of its own boundaries and mission? IDS does not confuse clear-cut with rigid boundaries: static views alternate with dynamic ones. This is how today’s inter-discipline may become tomorrow’s intra-discipline (Klein, 2017).

2.3 How to define the word “discipline”?

There is no consensus about a definition of the word “discipline”. However, looking at how Western laypeople and experts currently use the word suggests a multi-featured category, where some features reoccur more often than others. Following the above, one can up to a point distinguish between epistemic and socio-political characteristics. Two common epistemic requirements are the coherence of a discipline’s subject matter, and the coherence of the research methods used to investigate this subject matter. However, for knowledge formation to gain disciplinary status there are also organizational conditions such as the institutionalization of a field of study (often a university with faculties and dedicated departments), funding opportunities, scholars with specific credentials doing research and teaching, student demands, degrees and diplomas (bachelor, master, doctoral), academic journals, conferences, learned associations, various academic tools such as historical surveys, meta-theoretical thinking, encyclopedias, textbooks, dictionaries, and bibliographies (Jacobs, 2013, p. 35; van Doorslaer, 2014, p. 22).

Since the category “discipline” holds various parameters, its delineation depends on which parameters are selected and what importance they are given. For example, if coherent subject matter were to prevail, narrow definitions of “translation” and “adaptation” would be more likely to produce homogeneous sets of objects of study, and therefore clearer disciplinary boundaries. This does not imply that one discipline could not cover more than one object of inquiry, but the more heterogeneous its subject matter, the weaker disciplinary boundaries would be likely to become. In addition, if coherent subject matter were to prevail, scholars applying a wide variety of research methods would stress their disciplinary boundaries less if these methods were applied to one or a coherent set of research topics. However, too great a variety of analytical concepts and methods may prevent scholars from communicating data with each other and thus create disciplinary fragmentation. This observation ushers in the socio-political parameters, which co-determine the disciplinarization process. They explain why some experts actually focus on the social organization of a field more than on the coherence of its subject matter (see, e.g., Jacobs, 2017, p. 35). Indeed, disciplinary coherence or fragmentation also depends on the same scholars and/institutions meeting at conferences, publishing together or not, referencing members from the in-group rather than the out-group, etc.

2.4 TS, AS and disciplinarization

If we look at the current Western organization of TS and LFAS through the lens of the organizational criteria discussed above in sections 2.1-2.3, both TS and LFAS show signs of an established discipline, even though LFAS still lacks dedicated departments studying and teaching literary film adaptation, and there is no equivalent for the professional translator in the field of film adaptation. If we focus rather on the epistemic features discussed in section 1.4, scholars seem to have organized themselves in distinct research communities on the basis of medium specificity, called “semiotic investment” above, rather than on the basis of the (in)variance-orientedness of their objects of study.

On the one hand, TS has fought a battle to cut itself free from linguistics and literary studies, even though some occasional stirrings suggest that that battle is not over yet.¹³ Still, TS has generally

13. See for example the debate around Mossop (2017a) in Pym (2017), Scarpa (2017), Katan (2017) and Mossop (2017b). See also Chesterman and Heltai (2017) on this.

studied translation as a cross-lingual phenomenon, even though the study of how people have interacted with translations and given them meanings has involved various other disciplines. The latter issues have challenged the traditional category-boundaries of the linguistic system, the definition of translation-N that was based on it, and thus the boundaries of TS as a discipline. They have led translation scholars to conclude that TS constitutes an inter- or a poly-discipline (Gambier and van Doorslaer, 2016b).

On the other hand, LFAS has been involved in a different battle, freeing itself from literary studies first, and then from film studies. The end-result of that fight also remains undecided. With the coming of Cultural Studies, various other forms of applied AS have emerged in the humanities as elements of existing (sub-)disciplines without acquiring a disciplinary identity themselves. In addition to the literature-into-film studies, scholars have investigated other types of cultural adaptation such as adaptations into novels, comic books, theater, radio, TV, new media, but also painting, sculpture, music, etc. (see, e.g., Edgerton, 1988). Moreover, other inter-art studies have examined adaptation (understood in a narrower translational sense) next to other types of media text processing. For example, intertextuality studies have never forgotten adaptation (Juvan, 2008; Orr, 2008), even though TS and LFAS have rarely returned the compliment. Social semiotics, media and intercultural communication studies have investigated adaptational phenomena in terms of multimodality (see, e.g., Kress, 2010), media (de)-convergence (Jenkins, 2008; Jin, 2013), transmediality, franchising, fan fiction and media producers, transfictionality (Saint-Gelais, 2011), media imperialism (Straubhaar, 1991), cultural transduction (Uribe-Jongbloed and Espinosa-Medina, 2014), acculturation as integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization (see, e.g., Jandt, 2007, p. 289ff.; Liu, Volčič, and Gallois, 2015, p. 210), and many more. Until recently, most of these research communities have remained self-centered, and unaware or oblivious of each other. Since most of these communities consider adaptation as a narrower category that is part of the wider field of intertextuality or intermediality, they seldomly claim the term “adaptation studies,” or explicitly reject it as an overall umbrella term. For example, the contributors in Gary R. Edgerton’s (1988) *Film and the Arts in Symbiosis* discuss the “symbiotic” relationships between film and various other arts including painting, photography, the graphic arts, literature, theater, music, radio, TV, video art and new media.

However, the subject index does not mention the word “adaptation.” Similarly, Jenkins’ (2008) seminal monograph on convergence culture deals predominantly with the flow of content across media platforms, and therefore includes also cross-media translation and processes of change that lead to better fit. However, the word “adaptation” does not appear in the index, nor does it figure in the glossary, which as part of an introductory textbook aims to explain basic terms.¹⁴ Studies about cultural economy (see, e.g., Straubhaar, 1991; Uribe-Jongbloed, and Espinosa-Medina, 2014; Uribe-Jongbloed, Espinosa-Medina, and Biddle, 2016) have also focused on adaptation in terms of cultural values without acknowledging LFAS. The awareness that adaptation is being studied outside the lit-film paradigm, and the subsequent understanding that therefore the label “adaptation studies” should apply to a wider study field have appeared only more recently among literary film scholars; see, e.g., various contributions in Leitch’s (2017c) *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies*) and in Cutchins’ *et al.* (2018) *The Routledge Companion to Adaptation*. Even less thought has been given to the fact that AS should be studied as part of intertextuality studies (but see, e.g., Cattrysse, 1991; or more recently Cardwell, 2018).

Hence, in spite of the postmodern resistance against the notion, the parameter of medium specificity has played the stronger role as a disciplinary separator so far.¹⁵ Translation scholars who claim that adaptation is part of TS have generally understood adaptation as cross-lingual adaptation and felt that the cross-media translation of novels into films pertains to a different field of expertise. Similarly, literary film scholars have, often unwittingly, studied literature-into-film as cross-media translation, but generally ignored TS as a mainly linguistic issue (see above).

2.5 Why does medium specificity overrule (in)variance-orientedness?

If both TS and LFAS have mainly worked within the confines of the linguistic and the lit-film paradigm respectively, they have done so for practical rather than theoretical reasons. Indeed, researchers’ fields of interest and expertise are limited. Most TS scholars have a primary

14. In a previous study, Jenkins (2003, n.p.) had already rejected the word “adaptation” as an umbrella term encompassing all types of text processing, stating that “we need a new model for co-creation-rather than adaptation-of content that crosses media.”

15. On medium specificity becoming intertwined with disciplinary specificity in media studies, see also Gray (2010, p. 812), Harrington (2017, p. 4), Evans (2020, p. 21).

education in language and literature studies. On average, they have no ambition to become experts in media studies. Similarly, most literary film scholars were trained in literary and/or film studies. Overall, they rarely aim to become linguistic experts. Exceptions confirm the rule, and when they occur, the work is labeled “inter-disciplinary.” Studies in biological adaptation or musicalization require specific training and expertise that is even further removed from the traditional linguistic and lit-film paradigm. We should therefore not be surprised that so far attempts to cross those (disciplinary) boundaries have been scarce.

However, when discussing the disciplinarization process of TS and AS in terms of medium specificity as opposed to (in)variance-orientedness, there is at least one other major (f)actor that deserves more attention. I refer to the art/not-art divide and the corollary distinction between what in a loose reference to Lotman’s (1977) aesthetics of opposition versus aesthetics of identity, I have called the Romantic and the Classicist value system (Cattrysse, 2014, pp. 214-216).¹⁶ Typically, critics assess art and not-art on different grounds, even if they disagree on what items to give artistic status. It is generally understood that since the Renaissance, the Romantic value system has gained dominance in Western art criticism (Becker, 2008, pp. 14-15), while the Classicist value system has often been left to judge not-art cultural phenomena. The art/not-art divide and the competing respective value systems appear in TS when literary TS takes precedence over non-literary TS (see above). The divide is less conspicuous in LFAS because its focus generally remains within the confines of the literary and cinematographic art worlds. However, it shows when looking at AS in the less art-oriented fields of media studies.¹⁷

The respective Romantic and Classicist parameters that are used to value cultural practices and products are commonly known. Whereas the Romantic bias values individual Auteur-ship, Originality, Uniqueness, and Artistic Freedom breaking or bending rules, the Classicist bias values craftsmanship achieving a previously agreed upon theoretical Ideal. Rules (e.g., accurateness) are seen as helping tools or

16. In addition, the art/not-art distinction generally comes with a preference for idiographic knowledge, common for example in the humanistic film studies, as opposed to nomothetic knowledge, common in the more science-oriented media studies (see, e.g., Krohn, 2017; Briggles and Christians, 2017). For practical reasons, I must leave this issue aside.

17. Once again, I see the art/not-art divide as a gradient binary scale where the two labels sit on either extreme of that scale.

challenges to show skills and expertise. Originality and Auteur-ship are non-issues, and so-called artistic freedom often masks incompetence. Besides the Romantic urge for discontinuity as opposed to the Classicist urge for continuity, both value systems promote different rather than opposed values. There may be ways for an assessment to combine both views, but we can neither perceive nor explain them if we have not previously distinguished both mental concepts.

Following this, originality and difference favor change over maintenance, or variance over invariance, and priority over belatedness. Consequently, TS opening up to variance-oriented phenomena such as adaptation fits the Romantic bias, and so does the persistent criticism against the fidelity discourse in LFAS. Similarly, the proposals to dialogize adaptation (see, e.g., Bruhn, 2013; Schober, 2013), and to confuse them with intertextuality erase directionality in an attempt to de-hierarchize pre-text/post-text relations, i.e., to avoid the Romantic reflex of judging priority and belatedness in terms of superiority and inferiority. It was the anxiety of influence that replaced influence studies and its so-called “source hunting” with “intertextuality studies” in the 1960s, where the word “intertextuality” was meant to refer to dynamic, complex and polycentric networks displaying simultaneous or consecutive, multi-directional, inter-discursive relations (Orr, 2008, pp. 15-16). The more recent term “intermediality” continues this view.

However, the Romantic view, like any other view, is partial and incomplete. It does not represent everyone’s value system, especially when dealing with not-art (e.g., industrial) cultural phenomena. Moreover, to reconceptualize one-directional translation and adaptation as multi-directional intertextuality is to confuse two distinct levels of analytical detail: the conception of translation/adaptation as a making-process versus the conception of translation/adaptation as an end-result, which takes positions and adopts functions in one or more specific time-space contexts. Contrary to what some Anglo-American lit-film scholars would have us believe,¹⁸ proposals to study translation and adaptation more systematically in terms of processes and products go back to the 1970s in TS (Toury, 1980) and to the mid-late 1980s in LFAS (Cattrysse, 1990, 1992a, 1992b). So do proposals to study translation and adaptation processes as one-directional, irreversible and goal-oriented (not to be confused with intentional) processes, and

18. See, e.g., Cardwell (2002), Hutcheon (2006), Emig (2012), Elliott (2017, p 691).

to study these processes as the single turns that constitute the very makeup of the aforesaid wider polycentric networks of translational, adaptational and other types of intertextual processing, understood as end-products now, entertaining multiple, dynamic and multi-directional relations with other expressions and sentient beings. Since then, scholars have developed various methods to study these relationships, for example in terms of (poly)-systems and networks (see, e.g., the work of Even-Zohar, Bourdieu, Latour, Castells). In other words, the question of whether translations or adaptations “are” one-directional or multi-directional depends among other things on whether one studies them as making-processes or as end-results. I can imagine the growing frustration among translation scholars when seeing proposals that were repeated for nearly half a century now, still being ignored or being called new and pioneering in the camp of LFAS (see, e.g., Elliott, 2017, p. 691), but I must concur with André Gide when quoted in Leitch (2017a, p. 708): “Everything has already been said; but since no one was listening, everything must be said again.”

One way to complement the critical disrespect for invariance and to avoid the confusion of analytical levels of detail is to restore the Classicist value system as a legitimate alternative on a par with the Romantic bias. On the Classicist view, variance is no longer intrinsically superior to invariance, priority and belatedness no longer automatically signify superiority and inferiority respectively, and the prejudice for or against one- and multi-directionality evaporates. Source-hunting is as valid a practice as target-hunting, and so are reverence to the past, the present and the future. Studies of intercultural communication show by the way that the latter preferences are actually mostly culture-dependent (see, e.g., Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998, p. 123ff.). Invariance-oriented phenomena such as the repetition, the imitation, the translation or the copy can then be studied as legitimate objects of study on a par with variance-oriented phenomena such as the adaptation. To achieve invariance (e.g., to translate correctly) may then finally be revealed again as an often daunting challenge, requiring professional expertise.

3. Conclusions

Following the above, theories of definition and categorization do help advance the debate about the interdisciplinary relations between TS and (LF)AS. By way of conclusion, I hereafter take away five lessons.

1. It is less difficult for one person to define “translation” or “adaptation” as objects of study than to convince colleagues to accept that definition. Perhaps as a first step forward, we may stop assuming that these everyday words share a universal meaning, and from now on start any discussion with an explicit working definition. If colleagues cannot agree, at least they can understand.

2. Widening the definitions of “translation” or “adaptation” to encompass other or all intertextual categories serve political, i.e., imperial, rather than epistemic goals. Conversely, narrow definitions serve epistemic goals, but may have political drawbacks. Table 1 summarizes the potential tensions between epistemic and political interests. Note that among the multiple parameters discussed above with respect to the process of disciplinarization, it involves a correlation between the definitional boundaries of the object(s) of inquiry and the disciplinary (i.e., organizational) boundaries.

Table 1

| <i>Definitions</i> | <i>Objects of study</i> | <i>Professions/Disciplines</i> |
|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Wide | Blurred muddle (negative) | Apparent coherence (positive) |
| Narrow | Rich diversity (positive) | Fragmentation (negative) |

From an epistemic POV, one may say that wide definitions such as “translation is semiosis” or “every expression is an adaptation” erase the distinctive features of a wide diversity of distinct types of text processing, and thereby lessen our knowledge about the specifics of these phenomena. Narrow definitions do the opposite. They reveal a rich variety of distinct types of text processing displaying more homogeneous categories and clearer category-boundaries. Note also that with respect to terminological economy, there is no epistemic need to inflate the concepts of translation or adaptation to study other or all intertextual categories. One can perfectly study these phenomena under different names (e.g., parody, pastiche, sequel, quote, etc.) both common parlance and ITS have used and studied for decades. In addition, from a categorical perspective, there is no need to inflate the name of one specific sub-category of text-processing (e.g. “translation” or “adaptation”) to signify the superordinate category of all types of

text-processing. Once more, there are perfectly good terms in place such as “intertextuality,” “interdiscursivity” or “intermediality” for that purpose.

From a political POV, one may conclude that to call all intertextual categories “translation” or “adaptation” may help justify translation or literary film scholars to invade and colonize new disciplinary territory, mostly that of intertextuality studies (ITS),¹⁹ and thus expand their academic turf. However, if today TS or LFAS scholars are allowed to promote their sub-category to the level of superordinate category, what is there to prevent researchers in other intertextual sub-categories (parody, sequel, quote, pastiche, ...) from doing the same tomorrow? Why would they not be allowed to claim that all expressions are sequels, parodies, quotes, etc.? When narrow definitions reveal a rich variety of intertextual categories as distinct objects of study, they may trigger disciplinary fragmentation, and thus weaken or endanger the discipline’s power position in a society. In the case of TS and LFAS, narrow definitions reissue the questions of disciplinary status, independence, and categorical hierarchy of mental representation (sub-discipline, discipline or trans-/inter-/multi-discipline). These questions rekindle the old debate about the relationship between TS and (LF)AS on the one hand, and ITS on the other. While some TS and LFAS scholars have warned their readership against the danger of ITS dissolving TS or LFAS,²⁰ it is the inflation of “translation” or “adaptation” rather that threatens to render ITS redundant.

3. Accepting that (e.g., categorical) patterns appear or disappear *inter alia* in accordance with the explicitated level of analytical detail involves a number of positive implications. Firstly, to involve the definer in a definition avoids essentialism, to be distinguished from schematizing. It is the former, not the latter that seems to

19. I prefer the term “intertextuality” to the more recent “intermediality” for example, in spite of the logocentric connotation of the former. To me, the word “medium” continues to signify a means to achieve something else. It thus refers rather to what Hjelmstev called the form of the expression, whether artistic or not. I prefer the semiotic definition of the word “text” as *any set of items that triggers semio-pragmatic interaction(s) with sentient beings in ways and for reasons to be investigated empirically*. I see no reason why intertextuality, like any other phenomenon, could not be studied from the POV of its becoming (as a making process) or its being or evolving (as an end-product).

20. See, e.g., Cardwell (2018, p. 9) on this.

cause problems. Secondly, it explains why and how at one level of analytical detail, certain occurrences of text processing may appear as translational, i.e., invariance-oriented, while at another level of analytical detail, they may appear as adaptational, i.e., variance-oriented. This is how the aforementioned speakers at the translation conferences explained how a translator may aim to produce a text that overall reproduces accurately the meaning of a source text in another language, and yet at other (e.g. lower) levels run into meso- or micro-instances of untranslatability where they are forced to alternate between various other types of text-processing, including variance-oriented (e.g., adaptational) processes. Film adaptors may find themselves in comparable situations where at one level they aim to reproduce filmically what (they thought) was written in the source novel, and at other levels they must apply other types of text processing. Once it is understood that invariance and variance appear and disappear according to the level of analysis one adopts, a subsequent set of questions arises: How many translational or adaptational parts does a whole need to present in order for that whole to qualify as a “translation” or an “adaptation”? Who decides when and where on the basis of which features, including not just text but also context features such as power relations?

4. If the delineation of professions and disciplines evolves along the criterion of medium specificity rather than the (in)variance-orientedness of the types of text processing they investigate, one should perhaps give them a different name; if only for academic purposes?²¹ A name that leaves aside the multifarious types of intertextual practices and products they perform or study, and puts medium specificity center stage. Indeed, to call a translator or a translation scholar someone who besides translating-N performs or studies many other types of text processing is confusing. The same is true when “adaptation” means at once translation, sequel, prequel, and many other types of interdiscursive practices or products. There are actually various terms that circulate already, and meet these requirements. I refer to nouns such as “novelization,” “theatricalization,” “musicalization,” or “gamification.” These words suggest a cross-medial transfer process, “novelization” suggests the passage from a non-novel into a novel, and classify categories of text processing according to the type of medium the process ends up with. The (in)variance-orientedness of

21. Some translation scholars have already suggested dropping the misleadingly narrowing term “translation” in TS (see, e.g., Delabastita, 2008, pp. 245–246).

the process is left unspecified. Hence, following this logic, one could replace the term “film adaptation” with a “filming,”²² a word that exists already in other languages such as Dutch (“verfilming”) and German (“Verfilmung”). Similarly, translators and translation scholars could find themselves a name that conveys the dealings with various kinds of text processing such as adaptation, summary, foreignization, periodization, etc., yet occurs within the confines of natural language use. However, as indicated above, these terms erase the diversity of interdiscursive practices, which constitutes the primary concern of ITS. If one accepts that at times, people assess cultural phenomena via a Classicist rather than a Romantic lens, ITS scholars may use both (in)variance-orientedness and medium specificity as parameters to classify types of text processing and groups of people making, using, and studying these phenomena.

5. To re-adopt the meaning of “adaptation” as not semiotically invested opens the door for researchers to cross various disciplinary borderlines, looking into differences and commonalities between cultural and natural types of adaptation (see, e.g., Boyd, Carroll, and Gottschall, 2010; Dennett, 2018), and so building a unity of knowledge (Wilson, 1998).

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22. “Filming” is less of a tongue twister than the previously suggested “filmicization” (Cattrysse, 2014, p. 320).

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