Cécile Desoutter, Dorothee Heller & Michele Sala (eds)

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EUGENIA DAL FOVO

15. The Language of Interpreters on Television: Characteristics, Tendencies and Idiosyncrasies

> As you are reading these words, you are taking part in one of the wonders of the natural world. For you and I belong to a species with a remarkable ability; we can shape events in each other's brains with exquisite precision. I am not referring to telepathy or mind control or the obsessions of fringe science; even in the depictions of believers these are blunt instruments compared to ability that is uncontroversially present in every one of us. That ability is language. (Pinker 1994: 15)

This quote clearly underlines the connection between language and its general purpose, i.e. communication, as opposed to languages for special purposes (LSPs), which serve a specific communicative purpose, determined mainly by the context in which communication takes place and biased by such factors as situational specificities and the interlocutors involved. On the basis of this claim, and examining the specific contextual and situational aspects of interpreter-mediated communication on television, is it possible to identify an LSP of interpreting, a "language of interpreters working on television"? This is the question that will be addressed in this chapter by presenting a few attempts to answer it on the part of Interpreting Studies (IS) scholars, who applied the corpus-based approach to research in the field of television interpreting.

1. Setting the framework: language for special purposes

Studies on LSPs account for a long-standing and particularly rich field of research. The corpus-based approach has enabled analysts to

provide many definitions of LSPs, according to different perspectives and parameters. LSPs have been described mainly from a lexical point of view: Halliday (1978: 138-139), for instance, identifies LSPs through a very specific phenomenon, i.e. "foregrounding", namely "the phenomenon of linguistic highlighting, whereby some features of the language of a text stand out in some way". Cortelazzo (cf. 1990: 6) defines LSPs as languages that follow their own specific rules and symbols; more specifically, according to Gotti (1991), LSPs are languages that share communication conventions with a given general language and, at the same time, have conventions of their own that are not included in the set of linguistic features of that particular language[1]. The very denomination of LSPs, however, suggests that the difference between general language and LSPs may also be found in the use speakers make of them: the special purpose of LSPs might be ultimately defined as the use of language by professionals/experts when referring to typical aspects of their own professional field or domain of expertise (Gotti 2003).

In this respect the language used on television could in a way – and has been to some extent – be defined as an LSP, as it has its own rules and limitations, responding mainly to the imperatives and ethics of entertainment (cf. Katan/Straniero Sergio 2001, 2003; Straniero Sergio 2007). In this case, television context and setting are a pivotal defining aspect of a language whose specific purpose is ultimately being *telegenic*: according to Katan/Straniero Sergio's (2003) view, television making is almost invariably driven by a set of ideologies, mainly consumer capitalism and popular culture. Broadcasters' actions and decisions are heavily dependent on the viewer's opinion, whose "deadly click of the thumb" (Hartley 1992: 97), namely his/her switching to another channel, must be avoided in order to maintain a high level of viewing share. Viewers' expectations and subsequent appreciation of broadcast content are strongly related to the degree to which it satisfies their "'comfort factor': the degree to which the TV

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1   "[Q]uei linguaggi che, pur condividendo in generale le convenzioni comunicative di una data lingua, ne posseggono anche alcune che non sono comprese nel patrimonio linguistico comune" (Gotti 1991: 7).

audience is entertained" (Katan/Straniero Sergio 2003: 131). In the case of interpreter-mediated communication on television, viewers' entertainment requires the interpreter to use a language which is conversational and decent, faithful to the original speaker's register and yet marked by the interpreter's own distinctive informal and witty style. Furthermore,

> the viewer[s] will expect to stay within the safety of their own bubble, and will expect the interpreter to […] localize and appropriate the message, so that the interpreted event is transferred to within the safety and comfort of the viewer's cognitive bubble. (Katan/Straniero Sergio 2003: 134).

On the basis of the above-mentioned assumptions, the research question can now be reformulated as follows: given the specific linguistic constraints within which an interpreter on television has to perform his/her task, is it possible to identify recurring features *foregrounding* (Halliday 1978: 138-139) the language of interpreters on television? If this is the case, how can such features be identified?

2. Looking for a television interpreters' language: the corpus-based approach

The focus of the present chapter is communication mediated by an interpreter and, in particular, those lexical choices interpreters make to mediate communication when translating messages from one language to another in a specific context, i.e. television.

Interpreter-mediated communication, in very simple terms, means verbal re-expression of a message originally uttered in a given source language (SL) – be it general language or LSP – in a given target language (TL). Interpreters are producers of texts of which they are not the owners in semantic terms: their speaking turns and the message they express do not involve any sort of (or very little) "semantic autonomy" (Straniero Sergio, in press), and yet they are entitled to speaking turns within the communication structure as much

as any other participant. In taking part in communication, interpreters practice their profession, making the message intelligible for the other interlocutor(s). The use they make of language has the specific purpose of serving communication and has to enable them to do so within specific constraints and limitations, some of them very practical and common to all interpreting settings, such as time constraints for simultaneous interpreting, and others which are more context-specific, such as medium-related norms and requirements (e.g. entertainment in television settings, as already mentioned above, cf. Katan/Straniero Sergio 2003). In order to be able to make statements about what this language actually does consist of while maintaining an "evaluation-free and description-oriented" (Straniero Sergio 2012: 211) attitude, it is useful to resort to a corpus-based approach. As a matter of fact, being able to analyse all variables on a large scale may indeed help interpretration scholars identify "a number of regularities or recurring patterns in interpreters' translational behaviour" (Straniero Sergio, in press) – some sort of set of indicators of their recurring lexical choices that remain unvaried across television genres and over time – and ultimately identify the special language interpreters use on television, if any.

In the field of translation studies (TS), corpus-based TS (CTS) have so far produced a considerable amount of research work (among others, Baker 1996, 2004; Kenny 2001; Laviosa 2002; Olohan 2004; Anderman/Rogers 2008) with the aim of investigating "the nature of translated texts as mediated communicative events" (Baker 1993: 263). It is worth noting that, by identifying recurring elements that help define a text as "translated" on the basis of various factors – the most prominent being lexical aspects – researchers are able to study a translator's language behaviour and identify his/her own translational "thumbprint" (Baker 2000: 244).

Corpus-based Interpretation Studies (CIS) were born in order to pursue a very similar goal: "to search for regularities in interpreters' output and provide explanations for them" (Straniero Sergio/Falbo 2012: 15). More than a decade ago Shlesinger (1998: 487) wrote:

> many of the observations encountered in the literature on interpreting are based on sparse, often anecdotal data […]. The compilation of bilingual and

parallel corpora is indeed overdue, given the potential to use large, machine-readable corpora to arrive at global inferences about the interpreted text.

Nonetheless, since then, CIS "have remained in their infant stage" (Straniero Sergio/Falbo 2012: 9). This delay is, however, not surprising: making interpretation corpora electronically available to the scientific community requires going through a number of stages, some of which are common to CTS, such as corpus design and classification, whereas others are specific of oral texts and particularly onerous and time-consuming, such as transcription of spoken data. As Cencini/Aston (2002: 47) wrote, "Like all speech, interpreting dies on the air. In order to study it, we need to resurrect the corpse by recording and transcribing it, thereby transforming the corpse into a corpus". Some of the latest developments in CIS are illustrated in the works of Setton (2011) and Straniero Sergio/Falbo (2012). Both studies clearly illustrate the difficulties of applying the corpus-based approach to Interpretation Studies (IS), and yet underline as clearly the necessity of resorting to corpora in order to achieve "a higher degree of descriptive adequacy" (Granger 2003: 19), as opposed to the long-standing tradition of prescriptive and evaluation-oriented studies that has been a distinctive feature of research on interpreting in its early stage. In 3.1 some of the studies on interpreters' translational behaviour will be presented, which highlight the need for a description-oriented approach to the analysis. In 3.2 four studies conducted on the Television Interpreting Corpus (CorIT) will be illustrated, with the aim of addressing the research question through corpus-based research combined with a strictly description-oriented approach to the analysis.

3. Looking for a television interpreters' language through CIS: early studies vs. CorIT

CIS have been rapidly gaining momentum in the past few years, providing for a significant volume of investigations, focusing on various aspects of interpreters' output.

3.1. Corpus-based studies on the language of interpreters: state of the art

When studying language aspects, one of the major difficulties IS analysts have to face is limiting their observations to the interpreter's output as such, namely the interpreted text (IT). Indeed, the interpreting *product* (IT) can never be entirely isolated from the interpreting *process*, as recurring choices are frequently driven not only by external constraints and conditions, but also internal (conscious, deliberate) habits and decisional patterns. A few examples may clarify this point: when observing the occurrence of explicitation of place names in ITs, Baumgarten *et al.* (2008: 198) speak of a strategic dimension of interpreting and come to the conclusion that "explicitation is not a universal feature of interpreting but rather an option that may be more frequent in certain settings or interpreting modes". As Marzocchi (2005: 29) very insightfully puts it, "it may be the case that norms start their lifecycle as a strategy to cope with cognitive constraints in a given situation and are then internalized and generalized". Indeed, identifying recurring (universal) features frequently lead the researcher to define them as the result of on-line planning and self-monitoring activities performed by interpreters (see Tissi 2000, Petite 2005, Papa 2010). Another case in point are corpus-based studies on lexical density, lexical patterns and disfluencies conducted on EPIC (European Parliament Interpreting Corpus) by Russo *et al.* (cf. Bendazzoli/Sandrelli 2005, 2009; Sandrelli/ Bendazzoli 2005; Russo *et al.* 2006; Bendazzoli *et al.* 2011). Despite efforts to keep their analysis to a strictly observational level, on the basis of Laviosa's (1998) study on lexical density in the Translational English Corpus (TEC), results were inevitably classified using a mixture of descriptive (e.g. repetition) and evaluative (e.g. self-correction, explanation) definitions (cf. Russo *et al* 2006). Indeed, by describing an item or recurring feature of the IT as self-correction, for instance, the analyst ascribes to the interpreter a specific intention, thereby expressing an evaluation of the interpreter's choice, instead of simply defining the linguistic phenomenon as it appears in the IT. Nonetheless, the above-mentioned studies proved extremely useful in

order to assess the validity of the corpus-based approach to IS. Indeed, analyses of lexical patterns conducted on EPIC represent a successful endeavour to avoid a mere quality-assessment approach to IS, based on pre-established standards and shared expectations, in favour of a more neutral, evaluation-free and description-oriented perspective. This is also the main principle driving the case studies conducted on the Television Intepreting Corpus (CorIT, cf. Straniero Sergio/Falbo 2012).

3.2. Corpus-based studies on the language of interpreters: CorIT and the studies on interpreters' style.

CorIT is a collection of more than 2,700 recordings of interpretations delivered on Italian television in the last 50 years, from various foreign languages into Italian, in different interpreting modes[2] and within various communication settings and interaction types. It is an "open, multimedia, partially parallel spoken corpus" (Falbo 2009: 107). CorIT is currently being transcribed with the software WinPitch (cf. Martin 2005, 2009), in a way that provides access to its content as a whole, i.e. "making audio and video tracks available simultaneously, as a constant reminder of the multimedia dimension of the text, as opposed to a simple transcript" (Falbo 2012: 175).

CorIT represents an unprecedented opportunity to look for recurring features *foregrounding* the language television interpreters use, since, as Straniero Sergio (2012: 211) points out,

> What makes CorIT [...] significantly different from other interpreting-based corpora is the availability of a large number of simultaneous (SI) and/or consecutive interpretations (CI) delivered by the same interpreter over a period of 15-20 years.

This has led to a series of case studies conducted on CorIT items focusing on the translational behaviour of individual interpreters

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2   Simultaneous, consecutive, liaison, etc. (cf. Falbo 2012: 161).

working for Italian television, with the aim of identifying their individual characteristics, tendencies and idiosyncrasies through the language they use and aspects that define their own distinctive manner of interpreting on television, in other words, their own interpreting style. As already mentioned, so far IS have been concentrating mainly on the quality of interpreters' performances, only rarely focusing on interpreters' style. Unlike quality, style does not require any sort of evaluation of the interpreter's output. It is rather the sum of a series of indicators distinguishing one particular *modus interpretandi* from the others, indicators that are idiosyncratic and constantly present in time. Admittedly, even in those very few studies on style, such as Yagi (2000) and Van Besien/Meuleman (2008), quality and style are considered equivalent (Yagi 2000) and the definition of style still includes strategies alongside idiosyncratic traits (Van Besien/ Meuleman 2008). The analysis template applied to the following case studies on style conducted on CorIT, conversely, avoids any reference to quality, limiting any observation to those aspects of interpreters' output that are irrespective of their situational and contextual behaviour.

3.2.1. CorIT case study no.1: Using corpus evidence to discover style in interpreters' performances

Straniero Sergio's (2012) study focuses on the translational behaviour of three different interpreters, whose interpreting performances on television cover a period of 20 years of activity. Straniero Sergio identifies a series of distinctive features of each interpreter's output accounting for his or her *modus interpretandi*. Such indicators are defined "style indicators", namely language aspects "not subject to variation over time in individual interpreting performance" (Straniero Sergio 2012: 213). Selected style indicators are lexical choices and language use, interpreter-generated discourse markers (not present in the source texts), and décalage (segmentation of the input/output flow). The study includes the case of "the 'extraordinary' interpreter" (see Examples 1, 2, 3, 4), who uses the term *straordinario* (extraordinary) to translate 23 different terms of the English language over a period of 8 years, in various communicative situations (press

conferences, talk shows, presidential debates). Such lexical choice is considered a *passepartout*, namely a translational solution applied not just to specific words, but an entire semantic field.

(1)   **amazing** award
        [premio s**traordinario** davvero]
        (Academy Awards, 23.3.2003)

(2)   a **brilliant** script
        [un copione veramente **straordinario**]
        (Domenica in, Rai Uno, 15.12.1996)

(3)   You have done it in front of your home fans and you must be **delighted**
        [stavolta l'hai fatto di fronte ai tuoi tifosi: ed è stata forse una cosa
        straordinaria]
        (GP F1 Italia, Rai Uno, 10.9.2000)

(4)   they have done a **difficul**t job
        [hanno fatto un lavoro **straordinario**]
        (Serata TG1, 19.12.1998)

This and similar results obtained confirm the initial hypothesis, namely the presence of some distinctive features of each interpreter's output accounting for his or her style, thus signalling his or her recognisability. The very aim of Straniero Sergio's (2012) study might appear to be in contrast with that of the present chapter, as it focuses on "characteristics, habits and idiosyncrasies" and ultimately personal ways of using language "of an individual interpreter" (Straniero Sergio 2012: 211) instead of looking for recurrent features common to all interpreters' use of language. It is not, however, an entirely divergent course of analysis. In fact, aspects identified as style indicators in this study are selected on the basis on their diachronic frequency, extrapolated from interpretations carried out in different TV genres. This approach ensures that the resulting features are not dependent on any situational or contextual constraints and consequent application of *ad hoc* strategies, that is, they ultimately display that general character required to properly identify a "language of interpreters".

3.2.2. CorIT case study no.2: Television interpreter' style

Straniero Sergio's (2012) study was replicated by Trisciuzzi (2010)[3] in his unpublished master dissertation. Trisciuzzi applies Straniero Sergio's analysis template to two ITs delivered by two different interpreters working on television, namely the interpretation of two press conferences broadcast on Italian television. The first one is a press conference between former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and former US President Bill Clinton, that took place in Rome on June 2, 1995 for the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Italian capital city. Interpreters here work *in praesentia* (Falbo 2012: 163), sharing the *hic* and *nunc* with the primary interlocutors. The second one is the news-conference delivered by former US President George W. Bush at the White House on April 13, 2004, in which Bush disclosed a CIA report he received in 2001, five weeks before the 9/11 attack. Interpreters here work *in absentia* (Falbo 2012: 164), as they do not "participate directly in the event", not sharing the *hic* with the primary interlocutors, "who do not require any translation to communicate with each other" (Falbo 2012: 164). By analysing the two interpreters' lexical choices and use of discourse markers, Trisciuzzi identifies the personal style of each interpreter. Trisciuzzi's results confirm what emerged from Straniero Sergio's (2012) study: both interpreters' outputs display recurring features, irrespective of the different interpreting modes (*in praesentia* and *in absentia*) characterising the two press conferences.

3.2.3. CorIT case study no.3: Double Renditions in simultaneous interpreters' output

Straniero Sergio's (in press) study aims at describing structural, semantic and sequential features of 1,544 double renditions (DRs) found in the simultaneous interpretations (SIs) from English, French

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3   Trisciuzzi had access to Straniero Sergio's study before its publication in 2012, i.e. after its completion in 2010. Trisciuzzi's master dissertation is therefore subsequent to Straniero Sergio's study, despite the year of publication.

and Russian into Italian, delivered by 90 interpreters over a period of 25 years, for a total analysed output of 96 hours, 11 minutes and 40 seconds. The term "double renditions" (DRs) was introduced by Straniero Sergio in order to describe the phenomenon of interpreters producing more than one translated text (TT) equivalent for the same source text (ST) lexical unit. More specifically, DRs are identified as two equivalent semantic units produced one after another, with the same intonation contour and no pause longer than 3 seconds between the first and the second DR item(s), as in the example below[4]:

(5)   I saw the tears of the families whose lives were lost…
        [ho visto le lacrime **delle famiglie dei familiari** che hanno perso i loro cari…]
        *I saw the tears **of the families of the relatives** who lost their beloved*
        (Tg1, 12.10.2001)

The starting hypothesis is that "DRs are not only cognitive (i.e. peculiar to the nature of simultaneous interpreting), but also idiosyncratic (i.e. peculiar to an individual interpreter's behaviour)" (Straniero Sergio, in press). This phenomenon has already been observed in IS, and has been defined in several ways, such as expansion, repetition, explicitation, and self-repair. Each one of these definitions does not, however, suit the aim of Straniero Sergio's study, since, as in the case of previously mentioned studies on EPIC, they all describe different operations by ascribing different intentions to the interpreter. The term "double rendition", on the other hand, simply indicates the presence of two equivalents in the target text (TT), i.e. ST units rendered twice. A summary of the analysis and preliminary results is provided in the following paragraphs[5]. Possible combinations of DRs are: noun (6), verb (7), adj+noun (8), clause (9).

(6)   and we have taken some action so far

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4   Examples from CorIT transcripts consist of the ST excerpt, followed by the relevant TT portion and its glossed translation into English in *italics*. They do not display any punctuation, except those elements signaling specific aspects of spoken discourse, in line with the relevant transcription conventions adopted for CorIT (Falbo 2012).
5   For further details, reference should be made to Straniero Sergio's (in press).

[finora abbiamo adottato **delle misure degli interventi]**
so far we have adopted measures actions
(Tg1, 7.11.2008)

(7)   …to restore peace and justice
[...per **restaurare ripristinare** la pace e la giustizia]
…to reinstate to restore peace and justice
(Tg1, 17.1.1991)

(8)   …these people are having some sort of sexual affair
[…che queste persone ha- hanno **un rapporto sessuale una storia d'amore]**
…that those people have a sexual relationship a love story
(Tmc, 21.9.1998)

(9)   on ne peut pas dire des choses comme cela
[non si possono dire queste cose non si possono fare queste affermazioni]
you cannot say these things you cannot make these statements
(Tg3, 28.4.1988)

In addition to this, Straniero Sergio identifies 6 modalities or patterns of equivalents co-selected in the TT, on the basis of the semantic bond existing between them and in relation to the ST. These are not included in the present chapter. After presenting quantitative aspects of his analysis, Straniero Sergio focuses on the qualitative perspective, discussing results on the basis of the possible strategies they may correspond to. What is relevant to the present chapter is the following: DR variability does not appear to be related to ST textual features so much as to a single interpreter's style, "that is to say the habit of glossing and paraphrasing his or her target text" (Straniero Sergio, in press). In other words, DRs do not appear to serve the purpose of facilitating ST processing, nor of making utterances more intelligible for the audience, thereby confirming the initial "methodological assumption that the interpreter, through DR, reformulates not only the original speech (interlinguistic level), but also his or her speech (intralinguistic level), acting as a producer of synonymic and paraphrastic strings." Bearing in mind the observations previously made on the nature of ITs, namely that they are texts interpreters produce with very little semantic autonomy, the author concludes that:

the practice of retroactive elaboration, whereby alternatives are continuously provided, may even reveal a sort of self-complacency on the part of the interpreter, in showing off his or her linguistic skills. 'Playing with synonyms', then, would compensate the interpreter's lack of semantic autonomy, foregrounding his or her role as a producer of a text of which s/he is not the owner. (Straniero Sergio, in press)

3.2.4. CorIT case study no.4: The more the merrier? Teamwork and lexical variation in simultaneous interpretation on television

Dal Fovo's (2012) study is a corpus-based analysis conducted on interpretations of American presidential debates broadcast on Italian television. It was conducted on the CorIT sub-corpus 'Presidential Debates', and more specifically on the second Bush/Kerry debate held on October 9, 2004, and its two interpreted versions broadcast within two Italian *quoting broadcasts* (Falbo 2012: 174): SkyTG24 and TG5. Lexical variation is here referred to occurrences of one single term or lexical unit in the ST that are translated with more than one equivalent in the IT(s), either within the turn of one single interpreter or between two turns. Equivalents in the IT are analysed on the basis of their co-referential value as anaphoric referents (cf. Vanelli 1981, Simone 2001, Beccaria 2004) of their co-referring expression. The first occurrence of an equivalent in the IT is identified as the head of the anaphoric chain (HC). Such lexical units are divided into three main categories: single terms; noun groups; and culture-bound terms or noun groups. Equivalents appear in the forms of repetition/loanword (Tanskanen 2004); contextual synonym; hyponym; proform (Conte 1999); paraphrastic reformulation; substitution/sense reconstruction (Gile 1995; Wadensjö 1998; Straniero Sergio 2003); and double rendition (Straniero Sergio, in press).

The following examples illustrate lexical variation in the occurrences of the term "health care" and its IT equivalents. In the first passage (10) the same interpreter uses two different equivalents for the term "health care" within the same speaking turn (i.e. John Kerry's answer turn). The first occurrence of "health care" is translated by Kerry's interpreter (INK) as *assistenza sanitaria*, which is the formally closest alternative to the ST term and becomes the HC.

Later on, however, INK does not reiterate his first choice, selecting a contextual synonym instead: *copertura sanitaria*.

(10)   He can't come here and tell you that he's created **health care** for Americans because, what, we've got 5 million Americans who have lost their **health care**, 96,000 of them right here in Missouri.
[Non può venire qui e dirvi che ha creato nuovi lavori qui per voi americani son st(ati) persi non ha aiutato con **l'assistenza sanitaria** (.) ci sono cinque milioni di americani che hanno perso la **copertura sanitaria** (.) er molte di queste proprio qui nel Missouri]
*He cannot come here and tell you that he has created new jobs for you, Americans, they were lost he did not help with **health care** there are 5 million Americans who have lost their **health insurance**, many of them right here in Missouri.*
(SkyTG24, 9.10.2004)

The following question (11) is addressed to Kerry. The interpreter translating both mediator and journalists (INM) chooses repetition of the HC, in that he repeats "the unit in an identical form" (Tanskanen 2004: 94).

(11)   Senator Kerry, you've stated your concern for the rising cost of **health care**, yet you chose a vice presidential candidate who has made millions of dollars successfully suing medical professionals. How do you reconcile this with the voters?
[Senatore (.) Lei ha parlato delle sue preoccupazioni per i: i costi sempre più alti nell'**assistenza sanitaria** però il suo candidato vicepresidente e: (.) ha erm citato in giudizio er diversi medici e er industrie farmacologiche]
*Senator you expressed your concerns about increasing **health care** costs but your vice presidential candidate has been suing several doctors pharmacological industries*
(SkyTG24, 9.10.2004)

It would appear that, by doing so, INM is ratifying the HC put forward by INK, implicitly acknowledging his contribution, according to the principles of *lexical entrainment* (Brennan/Clark 1996: 1483) and *grounding* (see Clark/Brennan 1991). From a different perspective, the HC ratification may be seen as the result of "historical factors" (Brennan/Clark 1996: 1483), namely *recency* (Brennan/Clark 1996: 1483) of utterance of the lexical unit in terms of time: indeed, when an

equivalent is activated by previous use, it is more available in the interpreter's working memory, and has therefore higher chance of reappearing (see also Levelt/Kelter 1982).

This hypothesis is confirmed in the following turn (12), in which INK translates Kerry's "health care" almost always with the ratified HC.

(12) I have a plan to lower the cost of **health care** for you. I have a plan to cover all children. I have a plan to let you buy into the same **health care** senators and congressmen give themselves.
[il nostro piano invece abbatterà i piani dell'**assistenza sanitaria** per voi (.) per i vostri figli **l'assistenza sanitaria** per i vostri figli e anche avere lo stesso livello di **protezione** che abbiamo noi al Congresso (.)]
*Our plan, on the other hand, will dismantle **health care** plans for you for your children **health care** for your children and also have the same level of **protection** that we have at the Congress*
(SkyTG24, 9.10.2004)

What happens in the TG5 IT, however, disclaims this first explanation. As INK did in the SkyTG24 IT, Kerry's interpreter on TG5 (INK2), as well, selects the formally closest alternative to the ST term, which also becomes the HC (13).

(13) He can't come here and tell you that he's created **health care** for Americans because, what, we've got 5 million Americans who have lost their **health care**, 96,000 of them right here in Missouri.
[Vorrebbe: er appunto venirvi a dire che ha: creato nuovi: posti di lavoro ma non lo ha fatto er: cinque milioni di americani hanno er per:so cinque milioni di americani hanno perso l'**assistenza sanitaria** (.)]
He would like to come here to tell you that he created new jobs but he did not five million Americans have lost five million Americans have lost their **health care**. (TG5, 9.10.2004)

As we can see in (14), however, the INK2-produced HC is not ratified by the interpreter translating both mediator and journalists on TG5 (INM2).

(14) Senator Kerry, you've stated your concern for the rising cost of **health care**, yet you chose a vice presidential candidate who has made millions of dollars successfully suing medical professionals. How do you reconcile this with the voters?

> [Senatore Lei ha sottolineato le preoccupazioni per quanto riguarda la l'aumento dei costi della **sanità** tuttavia abbiamo avuto anche grandi cause nei confronti delle: dei medici che cosa mi dice a riguardo]
> *Senator you underlined your concerns about the increase in **health** costs but we had several lawsuits against doctors what do you have to say about this*
> (TG5, 9.10.2004)

In the passages that immediately follow (14), INK2's HC is not even reiterated by its own producer: INK2 keeps providing new alternatives in the form of contextual synonyms (*sistema sanitario nazionale; servizio sanitario nazionale*). In this case, a tendency to embedded correction (Jefferson 1987: 95) can be safely discarded, given the fact that the HC was indeed correct and perfectly acceptable.

Preliminary results show a clear tendency to variation in the interpreters' output, which results in greater lexical variation in the IT than in the ST. Occurrences of equivalents improving, worsening, or simply providing an acceptable alternative to the HC, respectively, are equally distributed throughout the analysed corpus. Interpreters were, however, expected to apply lexical variation in order to provide improving alternatives to the first occurrence, or simply repeat the latter or provide a contextual synonym, when correct. In other words, their lexical choices were expected to serve the purposes of communication exclusively, i.e. convey the message as clearly and as intelligibly as possible. Once again, such pragmatic function of language subsides in the face of a more specific (special?) and production-oriented purpose. What Straniero Sergio (in press) highlights in relation to DRs may as well be applied to the case of lexical variation: interpreters may indeed be constantly providing synonyms and alternatives for the sole purpose of foregrounding and ratifying their role of text producers.

4. Concluding remarks

At the stage we are now, it may appear that there can exist a special language interpreters use, which may resemble an "acquired

proficiency" (Straniero Sergio, in press), represented by a series of linguistic choices that are the result of application of strategies, respect of norms and reaction to limitations and constraints: in other words, the 'sum' of the individual choices that every interpreter makes and that are the operational result of a professional activity meant for serving a special purpose. On the other hand, some recurring features of the interpreters' output do not find any explanation in any of the above-mentioned aspects or functions; they have a "non-corrective, non-provisional, non-improving and non-explicating value" (Straniero Sergio, in press) and seem to reveal a deeper, perhaps less conscious level of language production, which exists before and beyond the purpose of the interpreting activity and yet can only exist in the output of interpreters at work. As Baker (2000) points out, translation – and, to some extent, interpreting, as well,

> has traditionally been viewed as a derivative rather than creative activity. The implication is that a translator cannot have, indeed should not have, a style of his or her own, the translator's task being simply to reproduce as closely as possible the style of the original. (Baker 2000: 244)

In fact, such claims have been amply disclaimed in the last decade. Interpreters do make a series of linguistic choices that make their output a text in its own right, the interpreted text, rather than a mere *transcodage* of the ST. This set of linguistic choices, the interpreter's thumbprint, are individual, and indicate a single interpreter's style. As shown in the studies illustrated in the present chapter, such a style does not necessarily respond to any communication purpose *per se*. This aspect is particularly evident in the context of television, where interpreters' visibility is much greater than in any other interpreting context (cf. Straniero Sergio 2007) and interpreters become fully-fledged elements of the media event they are interpreting.

How is style relevant to the research question the present chapter attempted to address? More specifically, is it possible to identify recurring features *foregrounding* the language of interpreters on television? Firstly, style in general is personal and idiosyncratic, and secondly, when it comes to interpreters, style really is first and foremost about language (lexical choices, discourse markers, etc.).

Stylistic features are recurrent in a single interpreter's output (Straniero Sergio 2012), over time (Straniero Sergio, in press), across-genres (Trisciuzzi 2010), and regardless of strategic translational choices (Dal Fovo 2012). They may therefore be considered elements that constitute an individual interpreter's very own language, which s/he develops for a special purpose, such as working on television:

> Tv interpreters are being encouraged, through the natural selection process, to enter the media habitus. Broadcasters expect interpreters not just to have the relevant linguistic skills, but also to be good performers. (Katan/Straniero Sergio 2003: 144)

Interpreters are required to make their lexical choices not merely on the basis of what their translational task requires, but also, and more importantly, focusing on the effect that the IT will have on the audience. Each interpreter working on television needs to develop his/her very own style, which results in his/her individual television interpreting language. The next research question that emerges from such conclusion is the following: is the development of a television interpreting style a shared feature of all television interpreters, thus suggesting the existence of a special use of language made by all interpreters working on television, an LSP of television interpreting? The following aspect is currently being investigated, following Straniero Sergio's (2012) suggestion about creating "a sort of identity card of […] individual interpreter[s], including [their] own typical features. To achieve this objective, correlations among different style indicators have to be found." Finding such shared patterns may eventually lead to the creation of an archive of profiles of interpreters working on television, across genres and throughout and may ultimately indicate the existence of an LSP of television interpreting.

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