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Translating Zola's L'Assommoir: a stylistic approach

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TRANSLATING ZOLA'S *L'ASSOMMOIR*:

A STYLISTIC APPROACH

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Abstract

Ian Keith Tulloch, *Translating Zola's 'L'Assommoir': a Stylistic Approach*
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In the following thesis, we will be applying a number of linguistic, stylistic and
critical techniques with a view to elucidating the phenomenon of literary translation. Our
corpus will be drawn almost exclusively from Emile Zola's late nineteenth-century
French classic, *L'Assommoir*, and seven English-language translations thereof: the focus
of the thesis throughout being upon the analysis of concrete examples. Our aim is thus to
arrive at a substantial body of analytical knowledge through the exploration of translation
in practice rather than through a series of secondary commentaries upon other works of
translation theory. Reference will, of course, be made to such works when appropriate.

One of the principal premises of the thesis is that linguistic techniques can indeed
be applied to a corpus of literary text without sacrificing traditional critical judgement or
the possibility of rational evaluation. Accordingly, we will be concerned to formulate
reasoned and explicit parameters of assessment throughout the course of our analysis. In
particular, we will be seeking to illuminate the various facets of what we call 'literary
texture' and how these might be rendered in translation. In certain cases, one rendering
may be preferred to another, although no attempt will be made to rank the respective
translations by order of merit in overall terms. Occasionally, we will also be hazarding
our own versions when those drawn from the corpus prove to be unsatisfactory.
Similarly, a 'proposed translation' is offered at the conclusion of every major passage
studied. These translations are, of course, to be considered as open and heuristic
explorations rather than prescriptive or definitive corrections.

Our thesis will be divided into seven main chapters, each one of which is
designed to illustrate the phenomenon of literary translation from a slightly different
angle. In the first one of these, we map out the basic methodological template of the
thesis. In the second, we examine various aspects of the decision making process

involved in 'choosing the right word'. This lengthy second chapter is then followed by an analysis of the postulate that translations tend to be more periphrastic and explicit than originals. We then move onto the thorny terrain of prose rhythm, examining how the particular beat and pressure of the original text might be made to resonate within the echo chamber of another language. In the fifth and sixth chapters, we consider the difficulties involved in transcribing the specificity of colloquial language and slang into both written and translated form. Our study concludes with an exploration of Zola's *écriture artiste*, paying particular attention to the way in which the translators render the various figurative torques and twists characterising this highly aesthetic style of description. It is to be hoped that our thesis will be of interest both to students of translation in general and to Zola scholars in particular.

I hereby declare that all work contained in this thesis not otherwise referenced is to be considered my own.

<u>Acknowledgements</u>

Many thanks go to the staff in the School of Modern European Languages at the University of Durham, many of whom have helped me greatly in the preparation of this thesis. My special thanks and gratitude, of course, go to my supervisor, Professor David Baguley, who has guided this project throughout with a patience and attentiveness often beyond the call of duty.

Thanks also to my Dad, Mr Malcolm Tulloch, who was good enough to lodge and feed me for a while upon my return to Wearside.

And finally, a very special debt of love to my wife, María-Angélica Fierro, whom I was lucky enough to meet whilst writing the thesis.

A note on presentation

In order to facilitate basic presentational clarity, all sequences from the corpus (including single-item ones) are quoted both in italics and in single speech marks. Individual components included in the bracketed representations of the semantic representation of given lexical items are placed in single speech marks, but not italics. Similarly, sequences of text projected for exploratory reasons but not issuing directly from the corpus are also generally not italicised. Proposed translations, however, are.

Certain functional-grammar concepts are deliberately capitalised (e.g. Subject, Predicator, adverbial Adjunct). Although the reader might find this a little eccentric, it is to be hoped that the rationale for this will become clear.

An attributive relationship obtaining between two lexical items is occasionally represented by means of two slashes (e.g. *'la table // rouge'*); a relationship of predication by three (e.g. *'il /// étudiait'*).

A relationship of direct lexical equivalence is signalled by means of '=' (e.g. *'ordinateur'* (= *'computer'*)); a relationship of clear but not complete semantic derivation by means of an arrow (e.g. *'elle'* (= *'she'*) *s'était assoupie* (< *'lay in a doze'*) *au lit* (= *'in bed'*)*'*). Arrows are also used to map logical or implicative entailments (e.g. *'sa colère soufflait comme une tempête'* > *'sa colère* (avait tendance à s'éclater de la même manière qu') *une tempête'*.

The frequently quoted French literary periodical *Les Cahiers naturalistes* is abbreviated to *CN* in footnotes.

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<u>Introduction</u>

In his essay 'Some Problems of Style in Translation from French', Leonard Tancock offers us a short, theoretical reflection about the literary translator's art. He begins by tackling the perennial problem of how the translator might reconcile the translation of 'style' with that of 'content':

> His task is twofold: first he must translate, that is to say communicate the exact meaning of his French text, and secondly he has to give his English reader some impression of the flavour of that text, for no literary work is tasteless, like a glass of distilled water; it has its peculiar aroma, or consistency or texture, which the translator must try to transmit.[i]

In the following thesis, we will be attempting to analyse some of the ways in which this dual imperative is realised in the course of a concrete piece of literary translation. It will soon become apparent, of course, that the 'exact meaning' of any one, constituent lexical item within a literary text can in no way be considered independently of the 'peculiar aroma, or consistency, or texture' of the whole, given that the former is as much a product of developing stylistic and thematic context as the sum of any abstract set of definitional criteria. The literary translator must thus seek to recreate, not only the basic lexical composition of the original text, but also something of its unique quiddity and texture. This will involve a particular attentiveness to the reproduction of basic lexical motifs and patterns of recurrence, as well as the various figurative twists and torques that go to make up a distinctive authorial style.

If attentiveness to what Tancock calls the 'texture' of the original remains the fundamental and guiding ethical imperative informing the practice of literary translation, then such an attitude can also be seen to imply a willingness to explore interpretative difficulty and ambiguity upon certain occasions. Not only is the literary translator required to transmit a basic 'message', composed of clearly determinable lexico-semantic units, but also to make his own text resonate with the figurative density and complexity of the original work. This requirement is, of course, easier to formulate in theory than to

apply in practice, and, in many ways, we seem to be little further down the road in our reflections than Alexander Fraser Tytler, who, in 1790, formulated the following three propositions as guiding precepts of a theoretically adequate translation practice:

> (i) That translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work;
>
> (ii) That the style and manner of writing should be of the same character as that of the original;
>
> (iii) That translations should have all the ease of original composition;[ii]

At first glance, it is hard not concur with Tytler's precepts, although his enumerative formulation tends to obscure the potential incompatibility obtaining between the second and the third of these: translating in the 'style and manner' of the original by no means guaranteeing 'ease' of comprehension for the reader. Therein lies the rub. Indeed, Tytler himself only seems to be capable of squaring this particular analytical circle by means of an appeal to what might appear to be an almost utopian synthesis: a good translation being seen as nothing less than one 'in which the merit of the original work is so completely transfused into another language as to be distinctly apprehended, and as strongly felt, by a native of the country to which that language belongs, as it is by those who speak the language of the original work'.[iii] As we shall see, this romantic conception of the reader's experience being 'transfused' from one culture into another continues to influence contemporary thinking about translation.

Appeals to the transfusion of personal experience and cultural awareness, of course, have their own merit as philosophical rallying calls, designed to spur on the beleaguered and often anonymous literary translator in his or her task. Nevertheless, the knotty business of transposing words from one language into another remains to be analysed in more concrete terms, and it is precisely such a business that we hope to be concerned with in the course of this thesis. In order to focus our attention in the keenest and most precise way possible, we have chosen to undertake a highly limited corpus study, composed of seven English language translations of Emile Zola's *L'Assommoir*, six of which were written in British English, and one of which in American English.

The choice of one particular novel in the constitution of our corpus might well need to be justified for the reader who is used to seeing the translation of poetry as the *nec plus ultra* of literary translation. Indeed, although the latter almost certainly represents the densest and most intractable kind of encounter that the literary translator is likely to have in the course of his or her career, prose translation can also be seen to throw up its own unique configuration of problems and difficulties.[iv] Not least of which is the challenge of rendering the delicate weft and weave of different registers and styles typically to be found within the modern novel. What better host, then, than the latter to receive the foreign and the historically distant within its midst? In the light of this reflection, the distinguished French translation theorist Antoine Berman shows no hesitation in embracing the novel as *the* privileged medium through which the eloquence of unfamiliar voices might begin to be heard:

> La prose littéraire se caractérise en premier lieu par le fait qu'elle capte, condense, et entremêle tout l'espace polylangagier d'une communauté. Elle mobilise et active la totalité des "langues co-existant dans une langue" [...]. De là qu'au point de vue de la forme, ce cosmos langagier qu'est la prose, et au premier chef le roman, se caractérise par une certaine *informité,* qui résulte de l'énorme brassage de langues opéré dans l'oeuvre. Elle est caractéristique de *la grande prose.*[v]

Nowhere could this definition of *la grande prose* be more applicable than to Zola's *L'Assommoir*, an absolutely prodigious novel in terms of its capacity to absorb and to articulate the diverse accents and inflections of a given linguistic community, i.e. that of the artisan class of the Goutte d'Or district of Paris in the mid-nineteenth century. Its narrative voices are both numerous and cleverly counterpointed, with 'popular' and 'spoken' forms being made to resonate with densely wrought passages of 'painterly' description (the latter often being referred to as *l'écriture artiste* in critical reflections about the period). The novel also displays a remarkable dexterity in its management of descriptive tone, ranging from the comic and the burlesque through to the pathetic and the tragic, with some very subtle characterisation and plotting in between. In terms of its laminate depth of register and sheer diversity of exposition, *L'Assommoir* might be said

to be a thoroughly 'polylogical' novel, and, as such, it presents a very particular kind of challenge to the translator: a test not only of his/her capacity to render different voices and styles, but also to manage their co-existence as a diversely articulated polylanguage within the body of the text as a whole.

The translations we have chosen to analyse are the following:[vi]

(i) Ernest Vizetelly, *The Dram Shop* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1897) - Vizetelly's translation constitutes a substantial updating of an earlier one produced by Vizetelly and Co. in 1884, and was undertaken with a view to popularising some of the 'wholesome lessons against drink, sloth and ignorance with which the work abounds'.[vii] In accordance with this highly moralised slant, many of the more openly demotic scatological and sexual references have been either excised or refined, and the text can be said to represent a thoroughly 'cleaned up' version of the original. No doubt an example of ethnocentric translation *par excellence*![viii] Nevertheless, despite the extensive bowdlerisation undertaken in its pages, Vizetelly's translation is also more than competent in parts, and we will be as much interested in it for the solutions it proposes to localised stylistic problems as in setting it up as some kind of puritanical Aunt Sally in the interests of a punchy ideological *critique*.

(ii) Arthur Symons, *Drunkard* (London: Elek, 1958) - Symons's translation was first published in 1894 under the elitist auspices of the Lutetian Society[ix], and, in many ways, it remains a benchmark for contemporary translators. Symons himself, of course, was a notable Symbolist poet of the day, and his own personal aesthetic seemed to owe more to Mallarmé than to Zola. Nevertheless, his translation remains free of any unnecessary obliquity or smuggling in of Symbolist references, and it might be said, quite simply, to be the product of someone who knew how to write a good line of literary English. In many places, it reproduces the stylistic texture of the original with considerable rhythmical felicity, although, perhaps almost inevitably, remaining stronger in the rendering of the 'painterly' descriptive passages than of the more colloquial ones.

No text written over a hundred years ago could remain completely unblemished by what would strike the modern ear as 'quaint' or 'dated' modes of expression, and

Symons's translation proves to be no exception to this very literary kind of 'built-in obsolescence'. In this light, Nicholas White's highly discreet editing and 'modernizing' of the text for Everyman, in 1995, furnishes an interesting example of the contemporary scholar's role in the 'maintenance' of an old and worthy translation. Nevertheless, the question might still be raised: given that no editor has yet deemed it fit to 'modernise' Zola's original text, should one seek to do so with a translation that was written barely a generation after it?

(iii) Gerard Hopkins, *The Dram Shop* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1951) - At the time of publication, Hopkins was one of the leading French to English literary translators of his day, having produced a notable translation of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* only two years previously.[x] He can almost certainly be seen as the most out and out target-orientated translator of the seven we have selected to study, having produced a highly literate but also a highly adapted version of *L'Assommoir*: Zola seen more through the prism of Thackeray and Meredith, perhaps, than any more *naturaliste*-inspired peer. In terms of sheer dating, Hopkins's translation seems to have suffered more than any of the others in our corpus of study, including Vizetelly's. Nevertheless, it remains an interesting specimen of its type (a thoroughly 'written' translation), and we will be hoping to do justice to its stylistic ingenuity as well as its somewhat overweening eloquence.

(iv) Atwood H. Townsend, *L'Assommoir* (New York: New American Library, 1962) - this is the only American-language version included in our corpus, and, as such, it provides an interesting counterpoint to the other six, British English translations. Moreover, this detail appears to be far from gratuitous, given that Townsend can be seen to have a marked penchant for Faulkneresque passages of 'Southern' eloquence in some of his renderings. His treatment of Zola's use of argot and slang is also worked through some distinctively American idioms and influences, and attains a more than appropriate degree of colloquial vigour in places.

(v) Leonard Tancock, *L'Assommoir (The Dram Shop)* (London: Penguin Classics, 1970) – this version has gained a certain degree of notoriety as the 'cockney' translation, with Tancock attempting to render the *langue verte* argot of Zola's Parisian artisans in his own rather eclectic brand of London-inflected British English slang. More Alf Garnett than Eugène Sue, Tancock's translation does nevertheless contain many passages of literary merit, and rarely commits anything resembling a gross lexical error or an unnecessary omission. Furthermore, Tancock's own reflections upon literary translation are never less than interesting, and he was certainly one of the most ingenious exponents of this craft from the mid-twentieth century period in England.

(vi) Margaret Mauldon, *L'Assommoir* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995) – Margaret Mauldon's 'World Classics' translation is perhaps the most stylistically innovatory of the seven we have studied, given that it frequently includes fairly radical changes in basic lexical composition and sentence structure without incurring unnecessary loss of meaning. In this respect, it certainly furnishes good copy for our study, being replete with the kinds of transpositions and modulations that we have particularly chosen to focus upon here. Her translation of Zola's argot, however, is somewhat marred by the over-expletive rendering of terms which, in the original, are demotic without being blatantly rude or offensive.

(vii) Robin Buss, *L'Assommoir (The Dram Shop)* (London: Penguin Classics, 2000) – Buss was directly commissioned by Penguin to produce an updated translation of Zola's classic in response to what was seen as the datedness of Tancock's version.[xi] Buss proves himself to be an adept translator when it comes to solving certain apparently intractable technical difficulties, and his translation is almost completely unmarked by 'howlers' of any kind. Although thoroughly competent in most respects, this translation cannot, however, be said to have resolved the difficulties regarding the translation of working-class slang which Tancock's translation so notably brought to light. Moreover, in many places, his rendering of register is thoroughly unconvincing, again more redolent of the Public School slang into which Arthur Symons tended to lapse than the brawling, boozing, bantering argot of the Parisian workingman in the mid-nineteenth century.[xii]

Having ushered the principal players onto the stage, we will now seek to develop some basic analytical tools with a view to setting them to work on our corpus. The basic analytical thrust of the thesis will be a linguistic one, aimed at formulating a close and detailed elucidation of the lexico-grammatical and syntactical issues involved in the practice of literary translation. In this respect, it might be said to situate itself within a paradigm of study which significantly pre-dates the much-vaunted 'cultural turn' of the early nineteen-eighties[xiii]. Although such a methodological bias might appear at first glance to be somewhat reactionary in orientation, its informing impulse can nevertheless be seen to be one engaging with the numerous theoretical debates which have emerged through and beyond this discipline-defining epistemological shift. Indeed it might be said that the comparatively new discipline of Translation Studies, for all the radical modifications in scope and direction generated within it over the past generation, remains a thoroughly broad church. It is with such comprehensiveness in mind that we have forged our own analytical tools.

Our decision to adopt an essentially micro-analytical focus is founded upon the premise that the basic unit of translation is the sentence-string or sequence rather than the whole text. The adoption of such a priority, however, is in no way intended to suggest that the nature and genre of the particular text-at-hand does not function as an operative factor in the way in which particular strings are translated: rather, what we are suggesting is that such influence can only be concretely identified in relation to such strings. In the words of Eugene Nida, these may be seen as the 'meaningful mouthfuls' in terms of which the translator proceeds. Indeed it is thus, over the course of a progressive and cumulative series of translation choices, that he will begin to sketch the basic contours of what we have tentatively defined as 'literary texture'. Moreover, it is precisely with reference to the re-creation of such texture that we have chosen to formulate our own notion of the literary translator's fidelity: a faithfulness to be conceived more in terms of the re-creation of a particular mode of signifying than any strictly identifiable homology or 'equivalence' at the level of lexis or grammar. In concrete terms, such re-creation might involve the duplication of a particular kind of figurative conceit or a carefully crafted shift in discursive register; or perhaps the delicate recasting of an elusive prosodic

rhythm. Although the precise lexical co-ordinates of such re-creation are likely to vary, we would nevertheless expect the kind of signifying work carried out in the translating text to be broadly similar to that to be found in the translated text.

Broadly similar! Therein, of course, lies the perennial rub, and it is only to the extent that our chosen analytical tools enable us identify some of the precise ways in which such broad similarity might be conceived that we will have been successful in this thesis. We will thus be looking carefully at a considerable range of different micro-linguistic phenomena (i.e. lexical choice, explication and omission, connotation and register, tropes and allusions, idioms and similes, rhythms and cadences) with a view to elucidating how the notion of literary texture might be defined and, concomitantly, how the postulated norm of fidelity to the re-creation of such texture might be understood. In short, we will be seeking to move hermeneutically outward from a technical and descriptive approach to a more expansive and prescriptively orientated one. Thus, in some ways, we might be said to be retracing the pioneering steps of Eugene Nida, whose own proto-science of translation sought to enlist the service of a simplified, generative grammar with a view to helping the Bible translator achieve a near-equivalence of reader response in the target culture. In contrast to Nida's project, however, our own will be placing considerably greater emphasis upon the reproduction of the stylistic contour of the original source text, even if this is to be achieved at the cost of a certain degree of interpretative difficulty for the target reader. In this sense, our project might be said to be an explicitly source-orientated one.

Within the English-speaking tradition, it is probably the translation theorist (and practitioner) Lawrence Venuti who has furnished the most original and trenchant critique of the assumption that all literary translation should adhere to the concordant norms of clarity, accessibility and smoothness. In place of such ideologically slanted 'domestication', Venuti advocates a conscious and deliberate strategy of 'foreignisation', by virtue of which the native asperities of the source text might come, in turn, to inform the stylistic texture of the target text[xiv]. This conception of literary translation as a contrived resistance to, and subversion of, prevailing target culture norms is also to be found in the work of the French literary theorist, Henri Meschonnic, who advocates a policy of 'decentering' ('*décentrement*') in place of the 'annexation' ('*annexion*')[xv] he

sees as being practised by most contemporary, literary translators. Accordingly, in the course of this thesis, we will also be endeavouring to explore the resonance that this kind of critique might have with our own emphasis upon stylistic fidelity. Both of the above writers, of course, would be likely to object fairly vigorously, and upon grounds of ideological principle, to the concept of 'fidelity'. Nevertheless, it becomes hard to comprehend how their own, clearly affirmed prescriptions and precepts do not, in some way, presuppose such a notion, albeit conceived of in highly political terms. Indeed, in what sense might 'foreignised' or 'decentered' translations be considered preferable to 'domesticating' or 'annexing' ones other than in terms of their fidelity to a higher, dialectical principle of textual subversion?

Perhaps the source-orientated theorist who would have been least resistant to this notion of fidelity would have been Meschonnic's erstwhile pupil, the late Antoine Berman. According to Berman, translation in the West has been a largely 'hypertextual' ('*hypertextuelle*'[xvi]) and 'ethnocentric' affair since Classical times. Both of these concepts seem to bear very close affinities with Meschonnic's 'annexation', suggesting the exercise of a degree of cultural appropriation by the target culture with respect to the source text such that the latter comes to be transformed in its very materiality, its basic mode of signification. This may be carried out through the use of procedures such as variation, pastiche, aesthetic heightening, stylistic homogenisation, unconscious parodying, misplaced textual borrowing, etc. Paradoxically, by following such procedures, translations are likely to become both more and less coherent than the texts they purport to render: more so by virtue of their newly acquired but nevertheless inappropriate stylistic consistency ('*systematicité*'[xvii]); less so by virtue of the inevitably arbitrary and conventional quality of the latter. The most critical consequence of this privileging of familiar and readily accessible cultural forms is that the potentially enriching strangeness and unfamiliarity of the source text is thereby effaced.

> Ethnocentrique signifiera ici; qui ramène tout à sa propre culture, à ses normes et valeurs, et considère ce qui est situé en dehors de celle-ci - L'Etranger - comme négatif ou tout juste bon à être annexé, adapté, pour accroître la richesse de cette culture.

Hypertextuel renvoie à tout texte s'engendrant par imitation, parodie, pastiche, adaptation, plagiat, ou toute autre espèce de transformation formelle, à partir d'un autre texte *déjà* existant [...].

La traduction ethnocentrique est nécessairement hypertextuelle, et la traduction hypertextuelle nécessairement ethnocentrique[xviii].

For Berman, the conditioning parameters of this tenacious and deeply rooted 'tradition' can only be exposed through a concerted act of analytical reflection (*'une analytique de la traduction'*[xix]). This will involve the enumeration and criticism of various 'distorting tendencies' (*'tendances déformantes'*[xx]) that can be seen to be operative in the perpetuation of ethnocentric 'hypertextuality' (*'hypertextualité'*[xxi]) as the basic modality of Western translation. These include:

...la rationalisation, la clarification, l'allongement, l'ennoblissement, et la vulgarisation, l'appauvrissement quantitative, l'homogénéisation, la destruction des rythmes, la destruction des réseaux signifiants sous-jacents, la destruction des systematismes textuels, la destruction (ou l'exotisation) des réseaux langagiers vernaculaires, la destruction des locutions et idiotismes, l'effacement des superpositions de langues[xxii].

The degree to which these phenomena are to be considered pernicious will, to a large extent, be dependent upon how pervasively they appear within a given body of translation. The more systematic they become as a procedure, the more distorting their effects are likely to be. However, in as much as they all tend toward the taming of the irreducible otherness of the original text, they can basically be considered to be negative in their import regarding the ethical validity of translation as a cultural practice.

Indeed, for Berman, it is precisely this ethical import which furnishes the translator with his most essential and abiding motivation. In seeking to render a foreign work, he must aim to receive the very 'corporality' (*'corporéité charnelle'*[xxiii]) of the latter into his own tongue.

Or, la traduction, de par sa visée de fidélité, appartient originairement à la dimension éthique. Elle est, dans son essence même, animée du *désir d'ouvrir L'Etranger à son propre espace de langue.* Cela ne veut nullement dire qu'historiquement, il en ait été souvent ainsi. Au contraire, la visée appropriatrice et annexionniste qui caractérise l'Occident a presque toujours étouffé la vocation éthique de la traduction. La "logique du même" l'a presque toujours emporté. Il n'empêche que l'acte de traduire relève d'une autre logique, celle de l'éthique. C'est pourqoui, reprenant la belle expression d'un troubadour, nous disons que la traduction est, dans son essence, l' "auberge du lointain"[xxiv].

Berman goes on to demonstrate how Chateaubriand (translating *Paradise Lost*) Hölderlin (translating the Greeks) and Klossowski (translating the *Aeneid*) each managed to carry over the '*réalité charnelle, tangible, vivante*[xxv]' of the translated language into their own respective translations, thus re-creating the original as oeuvre. What emerges from these demonstrations is a common willingness on the part of the translators to stretch the syntactical and lexical resources of their own language to the very limit in an effort to render the texture of the original. In doing so, they also served to rejuvenate and revivify their own tongues, finding layers and strata within hitherto unexplored or unexpressed. This striving toward renewal represents a kind of ulterior fidelity, not only to the nature of particular works written in particular languages, but also to the transforming potential immanent within language itself. Through the realisation of this transforming potential, the act of translation unveils a newly totalised picture of the 'world' (*le "monde"*) to the native reader: the 'foreign' coming to function as a primary catalyser of revelation.

Je disais: ouvrir L'Etranger à son propre espace de langue. Ouvrir est plus que communiquer: c'est révéler, manifester. On a dit que la traduction est "la communication d'une communication". Mais elle est plus. Elle est, dans le domaine des oeuvres (qui nous concerne ici), *la manifestation d'une manifestation.* Pourquoi? Parce que la seule définition possible d'une oeuvre ne

peut se faire qu'en termes de manifestation. Dans une oeuvre, c'est le "monde"
qui, à chaque fois d'une façon autre, est manifestée dans sa
totalité[xxvi].

This projection of translation as a kind of revelation unmistakably gestures toward Walter
Benjamin's notion of a 'pure language'[xxvii], to be revealed within the interstices of
particular translations. Although such speculation clearly reaches beyond the scope of our
own problematic in this thesis, we will nevertheless be hoping to remain attentive to the
ways in which Zola's translators open up the resources of the English language in order
to accommodate the very foreignness of his text within the texture of their own.
L'Assommoir will doubtless remain irreducibly alien in terms of the native, English prose
tradition. Nevertheless, it is to be hoped that the lineaments of the former may be made to
reveal themselves within the cast of the latter. Such is the challenge of literary
translation!

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[i] Leonard Tancock, 'Some Problems of Style in Translation from French', reprinted in A.H. Smith, *Aspects of Translation* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1957), p. 29.

[ii] Alexander Fraser Tytler, *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (London: Dent, 1907 [1790]), p. 9.

[iii] Tytler, p. 10.

[iv] Wolfram Wilss recognises something of this intractability when he writes that 'in dealing with literary texts, the science of translation is confronted with a most complicated subject-matter, because they refuse to be dealt with in a methodologically rigorous manner [...]. The decisive frame of reference for literary translation is not an optimal input-output relationship, but semantic, metaphorical and stylistic creativity', *The Science of Translation: problems and methods* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1982), p. 126. We hope to demonstrate in this thesis that the analysis of 'metaphorical and stylistic creativity' is not necessarily incompatible with a modicum of interpretative and linguistic rigour.

[v] Antoine Berman, 'La traduction et la lettre - ou l'auberge du lointain', in *Les Tours de Babel* (Paris: TER, 1985), pp. 49-150 (p. 66).

[vi] For an informed and evaluative commentary on the various English language translations of *L'Assommoir*, see Joy Newton's note on Zola in the *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English*, vol. 2, ed. by Olive Class (London: Fitzroy Dearburn, 2000), pp. 1517 – 1519. Similar information can also be found in David Baguley's bibliography, 'Les Oeuvres de Zola traduites en anglais', *CN*, 40 (1970), 195-209.

[vii] Ernest Vizetelly quoted in W:E. Holburn, *Zola in England, 1893-1903* (Doctoral thesis granted by the University of Illinois, 1952), p. 80.

[viii] Geoff Woollen provides a brief but precisely documented account of the way in which Vizetelly made 'the French author's novels comprehensible to a British readership as 'an interactive and updatable translation process.' Special reference is made to Vizetelly's footnoting of *La Débâcle* and *Lourdes*. See 'Ernest Vizetelly's Annotations of Zola, 1: A Footnote War', *Bulletin of the Emile Zola Society*, 8 (August 1994), 17-19, and 'II: "Fermez les Lourdes!" ' 11 (August 1995), 13-18.

[ix] The Lutetian Society's explicit aim was 'to issue to its members translations of such master-pieces of fiction by Continental authors as are unprocurable in England in an unmutilated rendering. These translations will be the work of scholars'. Quoted in Nicholas White's 'Note on the Text' to the Everyman Edition of Arthur Symons's translation of *L'Assommoir*.

[x] In the preface to her study of this translation, Jacqueline Guillemin-Flescher comments that 'Hopkins sacrifie souvent le style de Flaubert au profit des tendances dominantes dans la langue anglaise'. This remark is wholly in keeping with what we have found to be the case in our own study. Jacqueline Guillemin–Flescher, *Syntaxe comparée du français et de l'anglais* (Gap: Ophrys, 1981), p. X.

[xi] Buss himself gives a short account of this in his article 'Simple Spades or Bloody Shovels? On Translating Colloquial Speech in *L'Assommoir*', *Bulletin of the Emile Zola Society*, 27 (April 2003), 24-29.

[xii]Alfred Delvau, in his preface (VIII) to his *Dictionnaire de la langue verte* (Paris: Dentu, 1866, 1867) described the argot, which he had so imaginatively if not assiduously researched, in the following terms: 'J'en conviens sans effort, c'est une langue sanglante et impie, le *cant*, l'argot des voleurs et des assassins; une langue triviale et cynique, brutale et impitoyable, athée aussi, féroce aussi, le *slang*, l'argot des faubouriens et des filles, des voyous et des soldats, des artistes et des ouvriers.'

[xiii] This 'cultural turn' was uncompromisingly instigated by Susan Bassnett in her highly influential textbook, *Translation Studies* (London: Routledge, 1980). In this work, Bassnett lost little time in dismissing what she saw as the irrelevance of much linguistically inspired research into the phenomenon of translation. For a recapitulation and review of her position some eighteen years hence, see Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, 'Why are we in Translation Studies?', in *Constructing Cultures: Essays in Literary Translation* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1998).

[xiv] See Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: a History of Translation* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 1-42, for a detailed explanation of these critical concepts.

[xv] See 'Propositions pour une poétique de la traduction', in *Pour la poétique II* (Paris: Seuil, 1973), (pp. 207-209).

[xvi] Berman, p. 59.

[xvii] Berman, p. 52.

[xviii] Berman, p. 49.

[xix] Berman, p. 65.

[xx] Berman, p. 68.

[xxi] Berman, p. 54.

[xxii] Berman, p. 68.

[xxiii] Berman, p. 90.

[xxiv] Berman, p. 89.

[xxv] Berman, p. 89.

[xxvi] Berman, p. 89.

[xxvii] 'Rather, for the sake of a pure language, a free translation bases the text on its own language. It is the task of the translator to release in his own language that pure language which is under the spell of another, to liberate the language imprisoned in a work in his re-creation of that work.' Walter Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator', in *Illuminations*, tr. and ed. by Harry Zorn (London: Pimlico, 1990 [1970]).

Chapter 1: Questions to Answer, Concepts to Define

A Passage for Study

> *Gervaise avait attendu Lantier jusqu'à deux heures du matin. Puis, toute*
> *frissonnante d'être restée en camisole à l'air vif de la fenêtre, elle s'était*
> *assoupie, jetée en travers du lit, fiévreuse, les joues trempées de larmes. Depuis*
> *huit jours, au sortir du* Veau à deux têtes, *où ils mangeaient, il l'envoyait se*
> *coucher avec les enfants et ne reparaissait que tard dans la nuit, en racontant*
> *qu'il cherchait du travail. Ce soir-là, pendant qu'elle guettait son retour, elle*
> *croyait l'avoir vu entrer au bal du Grand-Balcon, dont les dix fenêtres flambantes*
> *éclairaient d'une nappe d'incendie la coulée noire des boulevards extérieurs; et,*
> *derrière lui, elle avait aperçu la petite Adèle, une brunisseuse qui dînait à leur*
> *restaurant, marchant à cinq ou six pas, les mains ballantes comme si elle venait*
> *de lui quitter le bras pour ne pas passer ensemble sous la clarté crue des globes*
> *de la porte* (ZOLA, p. 601)[i]

In this opening passage of *L'Assommoir*, the reader is presented with an introductory
tableau of the young Gervaise as she lies sprawling across her bed, dishevelled and
distressed, after having waited in vain for the return of her lover, Auguste Lantier. The
events narrated in this opening passage are represented within a double temporal frame of
retrospection, composed alternatively of those immediately preceding the tableau (*'elle
avait attendu'*; *'elle s'était assoupie'*; *'elle croyait l'avoir vu'*; *'elle avait aperçu'*) and
those forming a more general context of action over the course of the previous eight days
(*'il l'envoyait coucher'* [...] *'et ne reparaissait que tard'*, *'une brunisseuse qui dînait'*).
The former frame is marked through the use of pluperfect forms; the latter through the
use of imperfective ones.

Moreover, even at this inceptive stage in its development, the narrative begins to
filter through the uncertain perceptions and uneasy expectations of the heroine herself as

the reader is made aware of whom she has been waiting for by the window, and what she thinks she may have seen as she does so: glimpsed visions of possible infidelity amidst the nocturnal shadows of the outlying boulevards; the whole scene fleetingly lit by a gaudy column of light from the emptying dance hall. A certain mood of disappointed hope is thus set against a backdrop of desultory and fragmented illumination, and we are left with little choice but to await a steadier form of clarity and the coming of the day.

Glimpses of the prevailing style of the novel also begin to adumbrate themselves: the second sentence opening itself out in the form of a long adverbial Adjunct group before reaching the main Predicate clause, only to unwind across a further sequence of Adjunct groups; the fourth sentence representing the play of light upon the boulevard by means of a densely wrought syntactic figure. Clearly, we are in the presence of writing which has its own 'very peculiar aroma', to take up Tancock's image again. Accordingly, the potential translator will need to exercise more than a modicum of creative flair as well as an extensive knowledge of the French language in order to do justice to such writing. With a view to simplifying matters as much as possible in the opening pages of our own study, we will begin by examining a series of fairly basic theoretical questions, all of which have proven, in one way or another, to be recurrent ones within the field of translation studies. Reference will be made throughout to the above passage.

Labelling sentence structure

If we are to account for the translation process in coherent analytical terms, we will almost certainly need a workable paradigm of description to apply to the various components and structures contained within any given textual sequence. The paradigm employed in the course of this study will be largely based upon that elaborated by M.A.K Halliday in *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*,[ii] albeit differing from it in certain detailed respects. For example, if we take the opening sentence of *L'Assommoir*, we might envisage the following threefold breakdown:

(i) *Gervaise* (SUBJECT) *avait attendu* (PREDICATOR) *Lantier* (COMPLEMENT) *jusqu'à deux heures du matin* (ADJUNCT)

(ii) *Gervaise* (THEME) *avait attendu Lantier jusqu'à deux heures du matin* (RHEME)

(iii) *Gervaise* (ACTOR) *avait attendu* (ACTION) *Lantier* (GOAL) *jusqu'à deux heures du matin* (TEMPORAL BOUNDARY)

The first of these breakdowns might be said to correspond to the transitive level of syntactic description. At this level, the various parts of the sentence are labelled in terms of the arguments of the predicative verb used in the main clause of the sentence. In the case of the verb *'attendre'*, which is realised in pluperfect tense form in the above sentence, its basic transitive valence might be represented in the following way: x(P)y. Put in simpler terms, this formulaic representation conveys the implication that one normally waits for 'something' or 'somebody' rather than simply waiting. Consequently, in sentences where the verb *'attendre'* is used to form the Predicator, we would also expect to find both a Subject and a Complement (although the latter is not absolutely obligatory in all cases). In the above sentence, of course, it is the proper name *'Lantier'* which fills the Complement slot opened up by the transitive valence of the Predicator *'avait attendu'*. In addition to this, we also find an Adjunct group (i.e. *'jusqu'à deux heures du matin'*) specifying 'when' the waiting actually took place. Although the information furnished by this Adjunct group is potentially important for our understanding of the text to follow, the group itself is not structurally required by the transitive valence of the Predicator in the way that the Complement group is.

The second of our breakdowns represents the thematic level of description: the Theme element corresponding to 'what is being talked or written about' and the Rheme element corresponding to 'what is being said or written about it'. Although the Theme can normally be seen to coincide with the Subject of the sentence, we can also envisage cases of marked Theme,[iii] in which another element in the transitive structure is raised into the Theme slot, e.g. **'C'était Lantier** que Gervaise attendait jusqu'à deux heures du matin' (with the Complement forming a marked Theme) or 'C'était à deux heures du **matin** que Gervaise attendait Lantier' (with the Adjunct forming a marked Theme). This

kind of clefting device is by no means impossible in English prose, but it is less commonly to be found than in French prose. Moreover, this disparity might well have a bearing upon how the English language translator goes about tackling the rendering of such a structure.

The third level of description corresponds to a functional mapping of the various roles and relationships implied by the constituent parts of the sentence and the way in which the latter can be seen to represent given Entities and Actors, Processes and Actions, etc. This level can be seen as a more contingent and interpretatively variable one than the other two in the sense that our understanding of these various functional roles depends critically upon our naïve or intuitive reading of the sentence at hand. For example, in our mapping of the above sentence, we have suggested that the nominal item '*Lantier*' represents the Goal of the Action represented by '*avait attendu*'. This seems to be an appropriate labelling given that the latter is as much characterised by the supposed mental orientation of the Actor as any distinct series of physical movements or gestures. However, if we change the sentence to 'Gervaise avait caressé Lantier jusqu'à deux heures du matin', the person represented by 'Lantier' might now be said to be the Recipient of the Action, rather than its Goal, given that caresses are directly administered to someone rather than orientated towards them. Similarly, if we changed the sentence to 'Gervaise avait attendu Lantier dans le salon', the sentence-final adverbial group 'dans le salon' can now be seen to represent what we shall call a Site specification, rather than a Temporal Boundary, as in the original sentence. Clearly, the whole issue of functional mapping is a complicated one and we will need to be careful, in the course of our study, to ensure that we do not fall into the trap of labelling gratuitously without any real analytical gain.

Does the minimal translation unit exist?

The answer to the above question would, on an intuitive level, appear to be 'yes it does', and that this can broadly be seen to correspond to what has traditionally been defined as the 'word', i.e. the minimum orthographic grouping of letters separated from other such

groupings by means of a space. Moreover, this intuition would seem to be confirmed by the enthymematic expression 'word-for-word translation', which strongly implies that single and discrete word units can be translated from one language into another in a relationship of direct, one-to-one correlation. However, even the most cursory glance at a sequence of translated text would normally be sufficient to dissipate the illusion that such a transparent and uncomplicated form of translation might be possible. For example, if we look at Atwood Townsend's translation of the opening sentence of *L'Assommoir*, examined above, we notice that he uses a verb + preposition sequence in the rendering of the auxiliary + verb Predicator (*'avait attendu'* > *'waited up'*), and then a single word for the double word, nominal group *'deux heures'* in his rendering of the sentence-final temporal Adjunct (*'jusqu'à deux heures du matin'* > *'until two in the morning'*). The complete text and translation of this sequence read as follows:

> *Gervaise **avait attendu** Lantier jusqu'à **deux heures** du matin*
> *Gervaise **waited up** for Lantier until **two** in the morning*

All this would appear to be small change in the complex currency of real world translation. Nevertheless, we might still wish to conclude from this apparently trivial demonstration that 'words' are unreliable indicators of what is actually likely to be translated into what as we go about the business of translating.[iv] Moreover, this whole business has a tendency to become more complicated as soon as we begin to tackle sequences of text in which the very shape of the sentence itself needs to change in translated form. For example, if we take the second sentence of Zola's opening passage, in conjunction with Leonard Tancock's translation of it, we notice that there has been a significant rearrangement of basic sentence elements in the latter:

> *Puis, toute frissonnante d'être restée en camisole à l'air vif de la fenêtre, elle s'était assoupie, jetée en travers du lit, fiévreuse, les joues trempées de larmes. Then, shivering from staying in the cold air from the window in her underclothes, she had fallen across the bed in a feverish sleep, her cheeks wet with tears.*

The first change we note is that Tancock translates the Head of the adjectival group '*toute frissonnante d'être restée en camisole à l'air vif de la fenêtre*' without including the adverbial modification to be found in the original. This might be seen as a significant loss of nuance, given that the adverbial Modifier '*toute*' functions as a marker of intensity with respect to the attribution of '*frissonnante*' to '*elle*'. Bearing this in mind, a translation along the lines of '*all shivery*' or '*shivering all over*' may have been preferable.

The second change concerns the translation of the core predicate structure '*elle s'était assoupie*'. In Tancock's rendering, we find no direct, verbal equivalent of the Predicator '*s'était assoupie*'. Indeed, we note that, in this case, the Predicator seems to be derived from the adjectival Head of the apposed Adjunct group '*jetée en travers du lit*' (> '***had fallen** across the bed*'). Where we do find something resembling the original Predicator is within the second of the two adverbial groups adjunctive upon the core predicate structure, i.e. '*in a feverish sleep*'. Clearly, it would be difficult to maintain that '*sleep*' furnishes an equivalent of '*s'était assoupie*' in any direct, 'word-for-word' sense, given that the former belongs to a different grammatical form-class to the latter. In an effort to account for this, we might wish to say that the lexical item functioning as the Predicator in the original has been transposed into nominal form in translation ('*s'était assoupie*' > '*sleep*').[v] Although this kind of descriptive move begins to offer considerably more analytical purchase upon the phenomenon at hand than any simple mapping in terms of equivalences,[vi] we are still left in something of a dilemma with respect to how we are to identify one lexical item as a transposition of another? One possible resolution of this problem might be to introduce a second level of analysis, dealing not so much with individual words or lexical items as what they can be seen to represent. In order to do this, we might formulate a short definition or notional paraphrase of the transposed lexical item and then a similar one of the transposing lexical item. Having done this, we would then hope to be in a position to identify points of probable intersection in the respective meaning structures of the two items. Turning once again to our example, we would like to suggest the following notional paraphrase:

'*s'était assoupie*' > 'had fallen into a state of **light sleep**'

     '*sleep*'   > 'the state of **sleep**'

From the above projection, it becomes clear that both the transposed and the transposing lexical items contain the notion of 'sleep' in their respective semantic representations: the verbal form representing the passage into such a state, and the nominal form representing the state itself. On the basis of this correspondence, we might confidently assert that the notion of 'sleep' has been transposed from verbal into nominal form ('*s'était assoupie*' > '*sleep*'). In postulating a distinctively semantic level of analysis in this way, we have thus effectively moved our descriptive paradigm some way from the idea that given lexical items can be directly transposed into each other from the medium of one language to another. In doing so, we are effectively claiming that any kind of analysis formulated in terms of 'transpositions' tends necessarily to presuppose certain assumptions about the meaning of the respective lexical items involved in the transposing operation.[vii] Accordingly, in the above example, our reference to the notion of 'sleep' served to make explicit the kinds of assumption that we had been making about the meaning of '*s'était assoupie*' and '*sleep*' respectively.

    A third and concomitant change to be noted in Tancock's translation of Zola's original sentence is the lexicalisation of the feature 'feverish' as an adjectival Modifier of the newly created nominal item '*sleep*'. In the original, this feature is lexicalised in the form of an apposed, single item, adjectival group, incident upon the Subject pronoun '*elle*'. This change in syntactic incidence, in conjunction with the changes analysed above, can be seen to facilitate the production of a more integrated sentence structure in translation than that to be found in the original: the former containing only one preposed and one postposed descriptive Adjunct in apposition; the latter one preposed and three postposed descriptive Adjuncts in apposition. Concomitantly, the lexical weighting of the main predicate clause in the target text sequence becomes significantly heavier than that to be found in the original one (compare '*elle s'était assoupie*' with '*she had fallen across the bed into a feverish sleep*'), thus making the former somewhat more 'middle-heavy' in stylistic terms. An important consequence of this syntactic redistribution is that the prosodic shape of Zola's original sentence becomes almost unrecognisable in Tancock's rendering: the slow, progressively phased rhythmical descent of '*jetée en*

travers du lit (7), *fiévreuse* (4), *les joues trempées de larmes* (7)' following the short, pivotal peak of '*elle s'était assoupie*' being brutally contracted into the perfunctory '*her cheeks wet with tears*'.[viii] All of which threatens to have a decisive and potentially distorting effect upon the overall texture of the work produced in translation.

Making judgements about acceptability

One of the chief premises of this study is that one can indeed make coherent judgements about the appropriateness of particular translations without falling into the trap of anecdotal fault-finding or empty prescriptivism. Moreover, it is to be hoped that the kind of model we have begun to elaborate here will enable us to define in precisely which terms we are judging particular renderings to be either acceptable or unacceptable in given cases.[ix] In our analysis above, for example, we firstly proceeded to break down and label some of the basic structural changes that had taken place in the passage from text to translation, following which we then expanded our terms of reference a little by making somewhat broader judgements about the stylistic fidelity of the latter. This kind of tacking between the particular and the general will constitute our basic *modus operandi* throughout.

Although professional, literary translators do sometimes produce blatant 'howlers', the kinds of error that we find in their work are more likely to result from sins of omission or distortion than outright misprision. For example, in Buss's rendering of the second sentence of the passage, we find the following:

> [...]; *then, shivering all over, because she had been standing in her shift in the cold air from the window, she slumped down across the bed, in a fever, her cheeks wet with tears.*

At first glance, this rendering seems to be broadly respectful of the basic shape and meaning of the original sentence. However, we note that there are now only two apposed descriptive Adjuncts in sequence-final position, in contrast to the three to be found in the

original: the core semantic components of the third being lexicalised within the main predicate clause (*'elle/jetée en travers du lit'* > 'she/thrown across the bed' > *'she slumped across the bed'*). An important consequence of this integrating move is that the notion of 'sleep', which we found to be a core one in the semantic representation of *'s'était assoupie',* seems to have been somewhat occluded. A defender of Buss's rendering would probably wish to claim that this notion might easily be retrieved from context, with the action signified by the Predicator *'slumped'* necessarily implying some kind of temporary (or perhaps not quite so temporary) loss of consciousness. Moreover, given the fact that the 'slumping' was described as taking place across a bed, the reader would automatically be inclined to infer a lapse into sleep, according to this argument. In this way, the meaning of *'s'était assoupie'* could be inferentially read into the target text, despite the absence of any explicit lexicalisation. Clearly, the defensibility of Buss's 'omission' is negotiable on this point. Although we have not been able to resolve this particular debate about acceptability in any conclusive way, it is to be hoped that our analysis has clarified the terms of the discussion a little. In certain cases, of course, we can be a little more decisive in our evaluations:

> *Ce soir-là, pendant qu'elle guettait son retour, **elle croyait l'avoir vu entrer** au bal du Grand-Balcon [...].*
> *This particular evening, while Gervaise had been watching from the window for his return, **she was convinced she had seen him entering** the Grand-Balcon dance hall,[...]. (TOWNSEND)*

In this case, Townsend's rendering of the Predication constitutes a slight but nevertheless unmistakable distortion in nuance, with *'she was convinced she had seen* (x)' implying that the Subject holds a conviction that she has, in fact, seen (x) strong enough to belie any subsequent refutation. By contrast, the kind of belief implied by the original Predication *'elle croyait l'avoir vu'* seems to be an altogether more uncertain kind of affair: one actively countenancing the possibility of doubt and refutation if not thoroughly embracing it.[x] This contrastive nuance can be brought out by means of the following entailment test:

> Elle croyait l'avoir vu entrer au bal du Grand-Balcon, mais elle n'était pas sûre.
> [?] She was convinced she had seen him entering the Grand-Balcon, but she was
> not sure.

More or less the same kind of point might be made by means of back translation. This analytical technique involves translating the 'suspect' rendering back into the original language and then comparing the back-translated text with the original proper.[xi] In this case, Townsend's rendering would probably back-translate as 'elle était (nettement) persuadée/convaincue qu'elle l'avait vu entrer au Grand-Balcon, [...]'as opposed to '*elle croyait l'avoir vu*, [...]': a disparity which would again tend to indicate that a potentially significant shift in meaning has taken place in the passage from text to translation. Accordingly, we might wish to conclude that Townsend's translation is unacceptable on the grounds that it over-emphasises the modal force of the belief held by the Subject. Bearing this in mind, a rendering along the lines of 'she thought she had seen him go into the ball, [...]' would almost certainly have been more appropriate.

The margins of choice

Every step in the execution of a translation involves a subtle but nevertheless inevitable process of selection and filtering: the translator having to decide, in each particular case, whether to lexicalise given notions and features and what importance the latter will assume in his/her own text in relation to that which they may have had in the original. The exercise of such choice, of course, always takes place within fairly closely defined parameters. Moreover, structural disparities obtaining between the source and target languages can often be seen to trigger minor readjustments and shifts in textual density and pressure. For example, one highly characteristic feature of modern French prose is the use of the imperfect tense to signal an iterative framing of the Action or Process thereby conceptualised, as in the following case[xii]:

*Depuis huit jours, au sortir du Veaux à deux têtes, où ils **mangeaient**, il*

*l'**envoyait** se coucher avec les enfants et ne **reparaissait** que tard dans la nuit, en*

racontant qu'il cherchait du travail.

For a week past, as soon as they had come out of the 'Veau à Deux Tetes', where

*they **took** their meals, he **had packed** her off to bed with the children; and he*

***would come back** later on in the night.*

*For the past week, when they came out of the Veau à Deux Tetes where they **used***

***to eat**, he had **sent** her **off** to bed with the children and **did not come back** until*

late at night, claiming that he had been looking for work.

In the above sentence, we find three verb forms in the imperfect tense, each of which signals iteration in its respective semantic representation. However, whereas the first one signals unbounded iteration, the second and third signal leftward-bounded iteration. By this, we mean that, in the second and third cases, the iterative reading is valid only within the period of time delimited by the temporal Adjunct *'Depuis huit jours'* (in the first case, it can be seen as being generally valid, or least valid for an unspecified period of time). Moreover, in this respect, it will be interesting to determine to what degree and in what way this aspectual feature is lexicalised by the verb forms used in the translations.

Perhaps the first thing to note is that, in stark contrast to the French language, English does not tend to signal iteration by means of any one, single morphological form. This structural dissymmetry is reflected in the variety of forms used to translate the imperfect in the above example. The unbounded iteration of *'où ils mangeaient'* is rendered by means of a preterit in Townsend's translation (*'where they **took** their meals'*) and through the more explicitly marked *'where they **used** to eat'* in Buss's version: the latter also clearly signalling the temporal feature 'occurring in the past'. Both Symons and Buss translate the second in pluperfect form, thus aligning the aspectual framing of the action in terms of the temporal indication furnished by the Adjunct *'For a week past/For the past week'*. The third is translated by means of 'WOULD + verbal base form' in Symons' rendering (*'and he **would** come back later'*); in Buss's, by means of a negated preterit (*'and **did not come back**'*).

The use of such a variety of aspecto-temporal forms to translate one single form in the original not only represents a structural dissymmetry between the two languages but also a sensitive area of choice for the English language translator to negotiate. Given that no one form can be seen to frame iteration in the same way as the imperfect in French, he/she is constrained to choose between the different forms and degrees of iterative marking available, and also to ensure that the various forms chosen are suitably concordant. For example, with respect to the above, although Buss's co-ordination of a pluperfect with a negated preterit form would almost certainly be acceptable in spoken English, its acceptability in terms of the prescriptive canons of written English prose would perhaps be a little more problematic. Clearly, such issues can only serve to compound the number of potentially significant ramifications issuing from each and every translation choice made.[xiii]

In many cases, variable translation choice is as much likely to be triggered by basic differences in lexical phrasing and word ordering obtaining between the source and target languages as any major structural dissymmetry. For example, in rendering the locative Complement '*au bal du Grand-Balcon*', we note that, although all of our corpus translators choose to retain the original French name of the ballroom, the attributive structure which they use to link 'name' to 'place' differs. Indeed, no less than four of them choose to re-arrange the 'nominal Head + Qualifier' structure to be found in the original. Tancock uses 'name' to modify 'place' ('*into the 'Grand Balcon' dance hall*'), additionally opting to hedge the former in single speech marks. Buss goes one stage further, using both attributive apposition and a footnote: the latter no doubt designed to furnish as much information as might be deemed necessary in the context of the target culture for the reader to understand the original allusion in all of its cultural and connotative import ('*into the Grand Balcon, the dance hall*': the footnote reading '*a famous dance-hall on the Boulevard de la Chapelle*'). Mauldon uses the same modifying structure as Tancock, dropping the single speech marks but adding a footnote along the same lines as the one supplied by Buss. Townsend also uses the same noun-based modifying structure as Tancock and Mauldon ('*the Grand-Balcon dance hall*'), albeit doing so without recourse to either speech marks or footnote. Clearly, what all of these various renderings are designed to do is to cast an apparently simple nominal

lexicalisation into a more 'naturally' idiomatic form in English. However, of the four renderings considered, only Townsend's imposes a completely unmarked form of lexicalisation: the other three, by contrast, signalling the irreducible 'foreignness' of the retained name in one way or another. Given that the Grand-Balcon ballroom plays no further role in the narrative, the importance of such explicit textual marking might seem to be questionable in this case.

Clearly, if analytical justice is to be done to such subtle shifts in textual organisation, an appropriate and flexibly applicable battery of concepts will be needed. One such concept is that of modulation.

The apparent ubiquity of modulation

This concept was first formulated within the context of translation studies by Vinay and Darbelnet, who defined it as 'une variation dans le message, obtenue en changeant de point de vue, d'éclairage. Elle se justifie quand on s'aperçoit que la traduction littérale où même transposée aboutit à un énoncé grammaticalement correct, mais qui se heurte au génie de la langue'.[xiv] Indeed, as we have already seen, changes in basic conceptualisation and perspective are absolutely integral to the practice of creative, literary translation, constituting one of its principle modes of engagement with the original text. Furthermore, although we might find Vinay and Darbelnet's notion of '[le] génie de la langue' somewhat reified today, we would probably have few qualms about accepting a reformulation in terms of 'idiomatic acceptability' or 'literary fluency'. The essential methodological utility of the concept thus remains intact.

Vinay and Darbelnet also elaborate a potentially useful, subsidiary distinction between 'la modulation libre' and ' la modulation figée': the latter referring to shifts in conceptualisation motivated by more or less frozen lexical constraints operating within the target language; the former to more stylistically or creatively motivated changes. We find an example of each in Arthur Symons's rendering of the following:

'Puis, toute frissonnante d'être restée en camisole à l'air vif de la fenêtre, [...]'

*'Then, **chilly** from having stayed by the **open** window in her white bodice, […]'*

In rendering '*frissonnante*' as '*chilly*', Symons can be seen to conceptualise Gervaise's inner state metonymically in relation to the 'chill' night air that can be supposed to have induced it. The original adjectival item is also conceptualised metonymically, albeit in a rather different way, in relation to the external symptoms betokening Gervaise' inner state, i.e. 'les frissons' > '*frissonnante*'. This discreet conceptual recasting of an apparently simple adjectival attribution would at first seem to present itself as a completely 'transparent' lexical equivalence: '*all shivery*' offering perhaps the only convincing alternative. Accordingly, we would be inclined to classify Symons' rendering as an example of 'fixed modulation', i.e. one motivated directly by differences in lexical structure obtaining between the two languages.

On the other hand, his rendering of the locative Adjunct '*à l'air vif*' in terms of the 'openness' of the window which allows the chill air to pass can be seen as a more lexically unconstrained and creative kind of move, i.e. 'free modulation'. Indeed, in this case, there would appear to be little in the lexical structure of the English language to prevent a more direct lexicalisation of the notion of 'air ('cold').

The analytical utility of the concept of modulation might well be said to come into its own when applied to openly figurative sequences of text, i.e.

*'Elle croyait l'avoir vu entrer au bal du Grand-Balcon, dont les dix fenêtres flambantes éclairaient d'une nappe d'incendie **la coulée noire des boulevards extérieurs**.'*

The closing nominal group of this sequence represents an interesting example of a syntactic figure: the nominal item which functions as the attribuand ('*des boulevards extérieurs*') syntactically qualifying the corresponding item functioning as an attribute ('*la coulée noire*'):

'*La coulée noire* (HEAD) *des boulevards extérieurs* (QUALIFIER)'
'*La coulée noire* (ATTRIBUTE) *des boulevards extérieurs* (ATTRIBUAND)'

Similarly, we might wish to unpack the underlying logic of the figure by means of the following series of paraphrase-based transformations, i.e. '*les boulevards extérieurs* (qui avaient un aspect visuel comme) *une coulée noire*' > '*la coulée noire* (qui était l'aspect visuel) *des boulevards extérieurs*' > '*la coulée noire des boulevards extérieurs*'. In this light, it is interesting to note that all of our corpus translators choose to retain the basic syntactic structure of the original figure (i.e. the x of y): the significant variation occurring around the rendering of the qualified nominal group item, '*la coulée noire*'. Buss, for example, renders this item as '*the black stream*', thus clearly incorporating the notion of a 'flowing element' (< '*coulée*') into the latter's semantic representation (streams being seen typically to 'flow'). Other renderings are perhaps less successful in this respect, however. For example, Tancock's '*black trench*' modulates directly from the notion of a 'flowing element' to that of a 'narrow, linear, man-made depression within an escarpment', the latter forming a vector through which the former might be seen to flow (i.e. 'contained' > 'container'). Townsend's '*black gulley*' can be seen to derive from a similar kind of modulation. In this case, however, the 'depression within an escarpment' is more likely to be formed naturally as a result of the downward progress of a stream or river. Mauldon's '*black expanse*' and Symons's '*black line*' also occlude the notion of a 'flowing element' to an unacceptable extent: both versions modulating from a kinetic to a spatial conception of what the outer boulevards might look like to the naked eye. Clearly, such modulations are not only unconstrained but also potentially distorting in terms of the figurative expression of the original image. Accordingly, we might conclude that only Buss's rendering is entirely successful of the five quoted. More generally, although the kinds of modulations we have been examining may seem to be of only minor significance when considered in isolation, their cumulative effect can nevertheless be seen to be far greater when taken as a whole: each modulation representing not only a creative adaptation of the original text but also a necessary departure from it.

The translator as explicator

Translation is undoubtedly something of a doubly articulated activity: the translator initially coming to formulate a naïve or hermeneutically primary understanding of the original text, and then attempting to re-articulate this understanding in terms of the constitutive structures of his/her own language. This process of interpretative duplication often produces a text in translation which is considerably more explicit than the original one. Traces of explication can be found in almost any translated text, constituting indices of what might be seen as a natural tendency on the part of the translator. In simple, pragmatic terms, we might define this procedure as the rendering of the contextual textual. Vinay and Darbelnet furnish the following definition: 'EXPLICITATION: procédé qui consiste à introduire dans LA des précisions qui restent implicites dans LD, mais qui se dégagent du contexte ou de la situation.'[xv]

Turning to our passage, we find two clear cases of explication. The first concerns the various renderings of '*la petite Adèle, une brunisseuse*'. For example, both Tancock and Mauldon choose to make explicit the fact that the apposed nominal group '*une brunisseuse*' specifically designates '*la petite Adèle*' in relation to what she does for a living. They do this by adjoining a supplementary prepositional group '*by trade*' to the apposed nominal group ('*young Adèle, a polisher by trade*,' (TANCOCK); '*little Adèle, a polisher by trade*,' (MAULDON)). Buss is even more explicit, furnishing the reader with a full, explicatory relative clause linking 'name' with 'profession' ('*Adèle, who worked as a polisher*'). Ultimately, however, this move would not appear to be required by any obvious structural or idiomatic constraint operating within the English language: an observation borne out by the acceptability of Symons's direct and unexplicated rendering, '*little Adèle, the metal polisher*'.

Our second example concerns the translation of the purposive Adjunct clause concluding the following sequence:

'[…], *elle avait aperçu la petite Adèle* […] *marchant à cinq ou six pas, les mains ballantes comme si elle venait de lui quitter le bras **pour ne pas passer ensemble sous la clarté crue des globes de la porte.***'

Significantly, we note a tendency on the part of the translators to make explicit the 'reason' for the departing couple not wishing to pass together beneath the harsh light of the door-lamps: this being that they do not wish to be seen doing so. This can be clearly observed, for example, in both Mauldon's rendering (*'so that they **wouldn't be seen** passing together beneath the glaring lights of the doorway'*) and Townsend's (*'so that they **would not be seen** together beneath the harsh brilliance of the entrance lights'*). In the original, the reader is left to infer this reason from the developing narrative context. Indeed, if an adulterous couple are suddenly seen to break off their embrace, it would seem to be an obvious inference to make in terms of what we can be assumed to know about the behaviour of adulterous couples that they are doing so precisely in order to avoid being seen. Moreover, the grounds for such an inference become automatically stronger in the above case, given that the narrative has already begun to focalise clearly through the eyes of the apparently betrayed wife, Gervaise.

Having dwelt at some length upon the phenomenon of explication, it would nevertheless be erroneous to suggest that the translator seeks to expand or to explicate his/her text in all cases. Indeed, we often find examples of the converse phenomenon, with the translator condensing the lexical composition of the original through the use of a reduced number of items. This phenomenon might be referred to as condensation.[xvi] An example of this would be Mauldon's translation of '***la clarté crue** des globes de la porte*' as '*the **bright** lights of the doorway*': the qualified nominal group of the original being both transposed ('*la clarté crue*' > '*bright*': noun > adjective) and condensed (triple item, nominal group > single item, adjectival group). This move certainly has the merit of producing an economical and concise rendering. However, it also has the effect of somewhat adulterating the stylistic texture of the sequence: the thematic prominence of the notion of 'light' ('bright', 'harsh') (< '*la clarté crue*') being significantly reduced as a consequence. Moreover, given the recurrence of abstract nominal forms representing very precise sensory (and, in particular, visual) phenomena within the pages of *L'Assommoir*,

such an apparently innocuous change would appear to be far from insignificant with respect to the merits of the translation as a whole.[xvii] Accordingly, a direct rendering along the lines of '*the harsh glow of the globe lights*' (BUSS) might be judged to be more convincing.

Moving towards a wider debate

In the course of the above analysis, we have been tacking continuously between a meticulously descriptive approach to the phenomenon of literary translation and a more normative and prescriptively based one. This precarious move from 'what is going on' to 'what should be going on' may, of course, need some justification in the eyes of the sceptical reader who believes that such potentially gratuitous swerves into judgemental prescription can only serve to impugn one's own analytical objectivity. Nevertheless, it might equally well be argued that even the most architectonically grounded translation theory tends to smuggle in value judgements about what kind of text is suitable for which reading public, and what kinds of interpretative appreciation the latter is likely to bestow upon the former, etc. Moreover, given the fact that we, as analysts, are all writing about and evaluating particular translations within determinate and evolving cultural horizons, it remains perennially difficult for us to break out of the pattern of our own established assumptions and presuppositions. In this sense, any analyst writing texts about texts seems destined to retrace the hermeneutic circle anew.

Better then to be explicit about the kinds of synthetic *a priori* that we might be attempting to smuggle into our own analyses than to cower behind a façade of blanket objectivity. As students of translation, we are all ultimately readers of texts. No sooner have we opened the pages of a given text and begun to read than we become immersed in a complex and continuous dialectic of interpretation and re-interpretation, meaning and counter-meaning, such that we could no more hope to take any definitive or transcendent distance from what we are reading than we could from the stream of our own thoughts.[xviii] As readers, we become thoroughly and inextricably immersed in the world opened up by the text. We are constantly invited to take up attitudes, challenged into

responses, provoked into feeling; only imperfectly aware of the ways in which the complex patterns of meaning developed therein are being made to reverberate within our own horizon of linguistic awareness. If this is true for the reader, then *a fortiori* how much more so for the translator, who not only has to process and to respond to the meanings he/she finds in the original text but also to re-formulate them within a wholly new and often resistant linguistic medium. In doing so, he/she is required to reproduce not only 'exact meaning' but also 'texture'.

In many ways, of course, it becomes strictly impossible to extricate a kernel of 'exact meaning' from the dense warp and weft of 'texture' constituting a literary narrative. Moreover, when we begin to make claims about the 'adulteration of the original texture', we are also inevitably implying that the meaning of the original text (whether it be 'exact' or not) has, in some way, been changed. For example, with reference to our analysis of Mauldon's rendering of '*la clarté crue des globes de la porte*' as '*the bright lights of the doorway*', it would have been hard to sustain the argument that the translator had successfully managed to reproduce the 'exact meaning' of the original, only to fail to reproduce its 'texture' at some secondary level of articulation. Clearly, such a distinction only holds up in strictly provisional terms. Ultimately, the important thing seems to be to recognise that we are making claims, not only about the translator's understanding and reformulation of the original text, but also about our own understanding of the latter in relation to the former. Accordingly, what we are essentially claiming in this particular case is that (i) the original representation of the notion of 'bright light' in nominal form is far from being gratuitous when taken in the context of the narrator's apparent penchant for placing luminous descriptive parentheses within the descending gloom of the narrative proper; (ii) the translator's failure to reproduce this form, when such a possibility seems nevertheless to be offered by the idiomatic resources of her own language, constitutes a significant error of nuance. If the first claim might be said to rely upon evidence of a predominantly interpretative kind (demonstrable in the form of further quotations from the text exemplifying this penchant), then the second one seems to impose itself with something of the force of an entailment. This entailment is far from being a strict one, however, given that it remains contingent upon our acceptance of a subsidiary claim which is also of a broadly interpretative order, i.e. concerning the

availability of the corresponding nominal form within the 'idiomatic resources' of the translator's own language. Clearly, much depends upon the acceptance of this subsidiary claim if we are to substantiate our main one concerning the unacceptability of Mauldon's jettisoning of the syntactic form of the original.[xix] In this case, of course, the translation of Robin Buss seems to furnish us with adequate *de facto* grounds for supposing that the corresponding nominal form is indeed a legitimate one in English. In other cases, such grounds are likely to be more contestable. Therein lies the hermeneutic rub.

A significant degree of demonstrative weight thus seems to rest upon our apparently innocuous claim regarding the idiomatic resources of the target language. Indeed, the sceptic might wish to push our argument one stage closer to infinite regress by raising doubts as to exactly who is to sit in judgement upon the matter of what is to be considered idiomatically acceptable and what is not. The standard answer to this question, from the linguist's point of view, would no doubt be formulated in terms of 'the native speaker', or perhaps 'the linguistic community'. However, despite the intuitively convincing nature of this postulate, further doubts might still be raised as to who decides what the 'native speaker' or the 'linguistic community' thinks in any given case. Ultimately, the final arbiter would appear to be none other than the analyst him/herself, with the latter forced to appeal, for independent evidence, to the very constituency of which he/she is likely to take him/herself to be the most reliable representative, i.e. the 'native speaker', 'the linguistic community', etc. Clearly, the risks of vicious circularity here are considerable.

Fortunately, these risks can, to a certain extent, be reduced by means of recourse to the comparative method. As suggested above, the presence of one or more translations duplicating the basic syntactic structure of the original, in any given case, tends to furnish reasonably strong, pragmatic grounds for supposing that such a structure does indeed represent an available option within the idiomatic resources of the target language. Of course, the possibility remains that the translator has been, in some way, unduly impressed and influenced by the structures of the source language, and thus misled into believing that these structures are readily available in the target language when in fact they are not. This possibility clearly places the burden of ultimate evaluation back upon the shoulders of the analyst or the critic, upon whom it becomes incumbent to decide

whether the translator's duplication of a given form or structure is to be considered as idiomatic or not. Moreover, in order to do this, he/she is likely to rely, precisely, upon his/her own intuitions *qua* 'native speaker', or member of the target 'linguistic community'. All of which tends to thrust us back into the same kind of epistemological circularity that we have been trying to avoid by means of our appeal to the comparative method. Clearly, the latter can only be seen as a provisional guarantor of validity at best, and, at worst, a convenient means of bolstering one's own pre-established conclusions. In the light of this observation, it is to be hoped that the risks of the latter might be significantly reduced through the use of a clearly determined, comparative corpus of the kind we have attempted to establish in this study.

Ultimately, we would perhaps do better to embrace the kind of circularity that we have been endeavouring to argue against here than to reject it outright, even to the extent of affirming it as the necessary condition of our own enterprise. Moreover, it is to be hoped that such circularity need not necessarily be a vicious one, provided that we are able to clarify and to expand the horizon of understanding within which both translator and reader are constrained to move in the course of their ongoing engagement with the original text. In many ways, this represents nothing less than the hermeneutic wager itself: a wager that the interpreter of texts can no more hope to avoid than to annul.

[i] All translation quotes from the following page references: Tancock, p. 23; Buss, p. 5; Mauldon, p. 5; Symons, p. 13; Townsend, p. 7.

[ii] M.A.K. Halliday, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 2nd edn. (London: Edward Arnold, 1994 [1983]).

[iii] Halliday defines a marked Theme as anything which appears in the Theme slot other than the Subject, the most usual form of marked Theme being constituted by an adverbial group and the least likely by a Complement (i.e. a nominal group that is not functioning as a Subject). For a more detailed discussion of his understanding of this concept, see Halliday (1994), p. 44.

[iv] Henceforth, in this study, we will be referring to lexical items, groups and clauses rather than words.

[v] This is more or less the kind of approach adopted by Vinay and Darbelnet, who define 'la transposition' as 'le procédé qui consiste à remplacer une partie du discours par une autre sans changer le sens du message'. The primitive example they give of this device is the transposition 'du verbe subordonnée en substantif' within the transformation 'il a annoncé qu'il reviendrait' > 'il a annoncé son retour', p. 50.

[vi] 'Equivalence' has proved to be a wonderful 'catch-all' concept throughout the development of Translation Studies. The danger with such amenable polyvalence, of course, is that it ceases to identify any one particular phenomenon with any degree of specificity. Theodore Savory would seem to fall precisely into this trap when he comments upon the dilemma of lexical choice in the following way: 'The translator of the word thus chosen has to decide on the nearest equivalent, taking into consideration the probable thoughts of the author, the probable feelings of the author's readers and of his own readers, and of the period of history in which the author lived', *The Art of Translation* (London: Cape, 1957), p. 25.

[vii] J. C. Catford, in his short but highly influential *A Linguistic Theory of Translation: an Essay in Applied Linguistics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), furnishes an unequivocal refutation of the idea that translation choices can be defined in terms of 'meaning'. According to Catford, the most important parameter operating in translation procedure is that of 'textual equivalence': 'a textual equivalent [...] is any TL [target language] form which is observed to be the equivalent of a given SL [source language] form (text or portion of text). The discovery of textual equivalents is based on the authority of a competent bilingual informant or translation', p. 27. Nevertheless, it remains uncertain as to how such 'equivalence' is to be identified or expressed other than in terms explicitly formulated in relation to presupposed or implied structures of meaning. Catford's postulate is thus not without a certain circularity.

[viii] Henri Meschonnic is at pains to point out the organic connection between prosodic rhythm and generic profile in his short but perceptive commentary upon this opening passage: 'Les phrases du paragraphe sont en masse croissante. La "forme" sur laquelle Zola insistait inclut une progression des phrases, autant que leur construction, leurs débuts adverbiaux (*Puis, Depuis huit jours, Ce soir-là*) et les équilibres quasi-métriques du discours descriptif. Le "peindre" ("peindre la déchéance fatale d'une famille ouvrière , dans le

milieu empesté de nos faubourgs") passe par cette "forme". Le naturalisme est un formalisme', *Critique du rythme: anthropologie historique du langage* (Paris: Verdier, 1982), p. 517.

[ix] See Juliana House, *A Model for Translation Quality Assessment* (Turr: Tübingen, 1977) for an interesting attempt to combine the rigorous methods of discourse analysis with an openly evaluative approach. The following study owes House's work much in basic orientation, if not in corpus and method.

[x] Degrees and modes of focalised belief on the part of the characters can of course be highly influential upon the reader's perception of events too. Indeed, as Michel Butor suggests 'le roman est le lieu par excellence d'expérimentation sur le changement des croyances, de la destruction de certaines. En vous montrant la chose d'une manière, vous avez cru ceci ou cela, comme tel personnage; quand on vous a montré tel autre aspect, vous avez avec lui changé votre façon de voir', 'Emile Zola: romancier expérimental et la flamme bleue', in *Répertoire IV* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1974), p. 262.

[xi] Peter Newmark defends the validity of the back-translation technique, but places fairly rigorous limits upon the kinds of context in which this can be used: 'The validity of literal translation can sometimes be established by the back-translation test: e.g. (crudely), a 'black frame' should translate back centrally as *un cadre noir, ein schwarzer Rahmen*, etc. The back-translation test is not valid in the case of SL or TL lexical gaps: thus 'a murky street', 'a bright vision' (or *une personne maladive*) will not translate back satisfactorily', *A Textbook of Translation* (London: Prentice Hall, 1988), p. 74. For a wider conception of back-translation as the recovery of 'integrity of form' in lost originals, see Marylin Gaddis Rose, 'Back-Translating to Recover Form', *Babel*, 31 (1985), 6-12.

[xii] ' **"L'imparfait d'habitude"** est associé, comme le présent, à un complément marquant la répétition du procès (aspect itératif)', *Grammaire méthodique du français*, ed. by Martin Riegel, Jean-Cristophe Pellat and René Rioul (Paris: PUF, 1994), p. 308.

[xiii] This conception of the translation process as a series of forking paths would seem to be very much in keeping with Jiry Levi's suggestion that 'one of the possible approaches to translation theory is to take into account all subsequent decisions contingent upon a given choice, and hence to trace the order of precedence for the solving of different problems and the resulting degree of importance of various elements in the literary work', 'Translation as a Decision Process', in *To Honor Roman Jakobson II* (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), pp. 1171-1182, (p. 1172).

[xiv] Vinay and Darbelnet, p. 51.

[xv] Vinay and Darbelnet, p. 9.

[xvi] Vinay and Darbelnet use 'concentration': 'terme qui exprime la concentration de plusieurs signifiés sur un plus petit nombre de signifiants, ou même sur un seul', p. 7.

[xvii] See Chapter Seven of this study.

[xviii] *Pace* Husserl!

[xix] Xosé Rosales Sequeiros ties judgements about acceptability strictly in with the likely or prevailing expectations of the target culture ('audience'), suggesting that 'the degree of interpretative resemblance judged to be acceptable can vary from context to context. Moreover, the expectations raised by a translator in the audience play an important part as to whether the translation is successful or not. A mismatch between what the translation provides and what the audience expects may cause communication difficulties and, in consequence, low acceptability judgements', 'Degrees of Acceptability in Literary Translation', *Babel*, 44 (1998), 1-13 (p. 8). Although we accept Sequeiros's postulate concerning the relativity of equivalence parameters here, we would nevertheless suggest that this particular conception leaves little scope for the target culture reader to be positively challenged.

Chapter 2: Lexical Choices

Introduction

In our introductory section, 'Questions to answer, concepts to define', we attempted to construct a model of the translation process in terms of the lexicalisation of particular structures of meaning, with the emphasis being as much upon the construal and reformulation of these structures on the part of the translator as any one-for-one mapping of lexical equivalents from the source to the target language. In the following chapter, we will be attempting to develop this approach with reference to the way in which individual lexical items come to lexicalise particular meanings within specific narrative contexts. Our corpus of examples will be drawn from the whole of *L'Assommoir*.

A little more about the treachery of words

As we have already suggested, the meanings of words rarely pass from one language to another without submitting to the pressure of both co-text and context. In this sense, even the most innocuous of words will sometimes find itself translated in a variety of different ways, with the respective translators choosing to construe the co-textual and contextual pressure informing its usage diversely. Such variety is clearly to be found in the following corpus example, which involves the rendering of an apparently simple piece of reported speech:

(i) *Virginie trouva le mot: elle regarda la pièce, close et tendue de mousseline, et déclara que c'était gentil.* (ZOLA, p. 762)

As the perfidious Virginie casts her gaze around Gervaise's new apartment, she utters a slippery little banality to compliment the way in which it has been arranged. Nothing too

overstated, nothing too specific, just one word: '*gentil*'. This word can be seen to function not so much a *mot juste* as a *mot passe-partout*, given that it seems to fit almost any and every situation demanding an uncomplicated note of social approval. It is perhaps the perfect word for Virginie to use in order to dissimulate her insincerity before her erstwhile combatant in pails! The narrator's irony is thus subtle but nevertheless unmistakable when he suggests that she had found '*le mot*'. How then to translate this banality other than with a banality in equal measure?[i] As we shall discover, although our corpus translators seem to agree upon the need for pointed banality, they nevertheless come up with rather different solutions in order to render this conversational tone.

For example, Tancock's '*refined*' (p. 212) is probably a little too specifically complimentary, as it appears to refer to a particular property of the room (i.e. its 'refinement') rather than its general aspect. Other renderings are perhaps slightly more successful in capturing the catch-all compliment sense of '*gentil*', as it is used in this context: Symons' '*cosy*' (p. 200) is suitably bland; Townsend's adverbially intensified '*really cosy*' (p. 236) even more so; Mauldon's '*classy*' (p. 210) immediately seems to reflect the cut-price snobbery of the utterer; Buss's '*lovely*' (p. 206) expresses general aesthetic approval without making any particular commitment about the exact criteria prompting this approval; Vizetelly's '*pretty*' (p.198) does something rather similar; finally, Hopkins's use of colloquially marked intensification in '*ever*' (p. 215) '*so pretty*' seems to signal almost exactly the right note of ingratiating complaisance.

The variety of lexical choice to be found in this case would appear to demonstrate, above all, that word usage is as much a function of context as any direct or unilaterally defined dictionary meaning: this context being diversely construable in accordance with particular interpretative needs and perspectives. With respect to our own problematic, the complexity of the interaction between situation and lexical choice threatens to become greater in cases in which the translator is required to construe a specific context of utterance. In such contexts, a whole compound of unspoken or tacitly assumed implication is likely to be present behind the apparent simplicity of the utterance itself, and this will need to be alluded to if not directly rendered by the translator. Following Paul Grice,[ii] we will henceforth refer to this compound of sub-logical contextual implications and entailments as implicature. We will also be extending the application of

this concept to more descriptive narrative as well as conversationally based sequences such as the above.

If contextual factors can often be seen to play an important role in determining our interpretative construal of particular lexical items, then the immediate co-textual insertion of the latter within a given syntagmatic chain is also likely to prove decisive in certain cases. Moreover, the influence of the co-text will also need to be factored into our analytical mapping of the semantic content of these lexical items if we are to do justice to the frequent complexity of their construal.

(ii) *La cour lui appartenait, retentissant du tapage des petits souliers se culbutant à la débandade, du cri perçant des voix qui **s'enflaient** chaque fois que la bande reprenait son vol.* (ZOLA. p. 715)

*The yard was their kingdom, echoing with the clatter of little shoes frantically tumbling around and the high screech of voices that **rang out** whenever the swarm resumed its flight.* (BUSS, p. 152)

*The court, too, belonged to it; it resounded with the clatter of little shoes going hurry-skurry, the shrieks which **went up** every time the flock took flight.* (SYMONS, p.148)

*The courtyard was her kingdom, which often echoed with the clatter of little shoes in a helter-skelter stampede, with piercing cries **swelling** to a crescendo each time the band took off again.* (TOWNSEND, p.174)

In this example, we find a Predicator carrying a distinctively figurative nuance (i.e. '*s'enflaient*') functioning within a Relative clause qualifying the nominal group item, '*des voix*'. This is quite a striking lexical choice in the sense that one would normally expect to find 'montaient' used as Predicator in this instance rather than '*s'enflaient*'. In this respect, the former might be said to constitute the stylistically unmarked form of verbal predication, with the latter constituting a more stylistically marked variant. The verb 'enfler', of course, normally refers to the expansion of a determinate physical mass

in space, and the use here of the reflexive form '*s'enflaient*' seems to imply that the 'piercing cries of the voices' not only sounded out within the hitherto unoccupied courtyard but also, in some way, 'filled up' its emptiness with their shrill resonance. In summary, we might say that the choice of '*s'enflaient*' as a Predicator to '*des voix*' clearly indexes the notion of 'expansion' into the semantic representation of the former in a way in which the use of the more usual collocate 'montaient' would not have done. This lexical choice can thus be said to be not only stylistically marked but also figuratively significant.

In this light, it will be interesting to note to what degree the corpus translators show themselves to be sensitive to the stylistic marking of Zola's original lexical choice when tackling this sequence. Firstly, Buss's '*voices that rang out*' furnishes a Predicator which seems to collocate smoothly with the nominal item in the Subject slot, '*voices*', albeit remaining strictly within a domain of 'acoustic effects' in terms of its semantic representation (i.e. 'ring out' = (to MAKE)'a loud, resonant noise' ('through tintinnabulation or vocal emission')). Similarly, Symons's '*shrieks which went up*' also furnishes a Predicator collocating smoothly with a nominal item signifying 'vocal emission'. Moreover, in its privileging of the notion of 'ascent', the choice of '*went up*' would also seem to correspond, broadly, to what we identified above as the most stylistically unmarked form of collocation for predications of this kind, i.e. 'du cri perçant des voix qui montaient'. However, given that the original source text sequence was seen to be stylistically marked in relation to the latter, its rendering in this case by means of the unmarked form would appear to be less than wholly satisfactory. By contrast, Townsend's '*with piercing cries swelling*' furnishes a participial Predicator which not only collocates smoothly with the nominal item in the Subject slot signifying 'vocal emission' but also successfully incorporates the notion of 'expansion' into its semantic representation. In this respect, it would appear to reproduce the figurative texture of the original more faithfully than the renderings of either Buss or Symons.

In this example, Zola's use of '*s'enflaient*' in conjunction with '*des voix*' might be said to constitute a borderline case of figurative predication: one functioning as much by virtue of catachresis as any genuine collocational incompatibility obtaining between Subject and Predicator. In many cases, however, the reader needs to do a considerably

greater amount of interpretative work in order to make sense of the apparently anomalous
yoking together of lexical items which, at first glance, appear to be collocationally
incompatible with one other. Moreover, it is precisely this kind of interpretative work
which enables the reader to move from the stage of simply registering simple
collocational incompatibility to that of understanding what often turn out to be complex
and stylistically textured syntactical figures:

(iii) *La nuit **dormait**, sans une haleine, **pâmée** par la grosse chaleur.*

(ZOLA, p. 670)

*The night was breathlessly still **as though it had drowsed off** in the great heat*

(TANCOCK, p. 104)

*The night, **swooning** in the heat, slept without a breath.* (BUSS, p. 91)

In this example, we find a highly interesting use of figurative predication, followed up
and reinforced by figurative attribution. (i.e. '*La /// nuit dormait*' and '*La nuit // pâmée*'
respectively). In both cases, the lexical item upon which both the Predicator and Attribute
are incident is '*La nuit*', a nominal group signifying what is essentially an abstract,
constructive notion,[iii] i.e. a determinate period within the diurnal cycle. It is precisely this
feature which makes it an unlikely collocate of '*dormait*' and '*pâmée*', given that the
former is normally predicated of a Subject referring to a living entity, and the latter is
derived from a verbal base-form, 'pâmer', which, when conjugated, would normally be
predicated of a Subject referring to a human being. Accordingly, an analyst operating
within a generative framework would probably be inclined to explain this in terms of the
Predicator '*dormait*' selecting the feature '+ Human' in the Subject slot and the adjectival
participle '*pâmée*' making an almost identical kind of selection in the Attribuand slot.[iv]

In more traditional literary critical terms, what we have defined as Zola's
'syntactical figure' might be described, quite simply, as an 'image', with the night
portrayed as some kind of somnolent creature, held breathless in the suspension of its
own weary feint toward sleep: the night seen to be sleeping just as we sleep through the

night. Moreover, this image, although structurally complex, becomes instantly accessible to any reader culturally familiar with the device of figurative personification. In this light, it will be interesting to note how the translators seek to code this device into their own renderings.

In Tancock's version, the notion of the night having feinted breathlessly into 'somnolence' (= '*dormait*'), or even a 'temporary state of unconsciousness' (= '*pâmée*'), is lexicalised only once as '*drowsed*' within the structure of a lexically expanded comparative clause (i.e. '*as though it had **drowsed off** in the great heat*'). This lexical expansion has the effect of expounding Zola's subtle syntactic figure in baldly explicit and somewhat simplified form, a move which can only be seen as deleterious to the stylistic texture of the original. By contrast, Buss's rendering manages to preserve the figurative predication of the original (i.e. '*La nuit /// dormait*' > '*The night /// slept*'), with only minor transposition taking place around the notion of a 'state of unconsciousness' ('temporary'), i.e. '*La nuit // pâmée*' > '*The night swooning*': adjectival participle > verbal participle. In this light, Buss's rendering would appear to be the stronger of the two quoted.

This example thus raises important questions about how to translate sequences of literary prose in which the figurative conception of the original text seems to be coded into the very syntax of the source language itself. Given the evident complexity of the matter, one can perhaps sympathise with Tancock's apparent wish here to unpack the constitutive terms of Zola's syntactic figure in as clear a way as possible by simply stating the grounds of the comparison upon which it was based. Nevertheless, sympathy does not necessarily imply justification in all cases, and our contention remains, in this thesis, that the translator should seek to render not only the conceptual co-ordinates of the original figure but also the specific stylistic texture through which it is expressed.[v] Moreover, Buss's translation, in this instance, has the merit of doing precisely this.

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If words had shadows?

If all of the individual lexical items appearing in a spontaneously composed textual sequence displayed the kind of transparency of function and usage enjoyed by logical symbols or mathematical integers, the task of prescribing the way in which these items should be translated in any given case would be relatively easy. Moreover, machine translation programmers would probably be well upon their way to solving the many lexical paradoxes and conundrums which seem to litter their path. Unfortunately, things are rarely that simple in the realm of ordinary, everyday linguistic usage, and this might be said to be true *a fortiori* in the case of literary usage. Indeed, as we have already discovered in the course of our study, lexical items used in literary texts often seem to reveal a degree of semantic density and variability across context that defies easy analysis. Not only are they possessed of their own particular form of transparency, but also their necessary areas of shade and ambiguity.

Linguists in search of methodological purity have, of course, frequently sought to circumvent the more penumbral areas of personal association and contextual meaning adhering to certain kinds of lexical usage. In their seminal article, 'The structure of a semantic theory', for example, Jerrold Katz and Jerry Fodor[vi] famously attempted to formulate a generatively-inspired model of semantic representation, in which the meaning of particular lexemes was to be mapped out in terms of a bipartite distinction between 'markers' and 'distinguishers': the former referring to converse pairs of semantic atoms which could be used to disambiguate lexical usages in given instances; the latter to the more idiosyncratic features of primary definition remaining once the process of semantic mapping by means of markers had been saturated. In order to demonstrate their theory, Katz and Fodor expatiated at length upon the disambiguation of the nominal lexeme 'bachelor', whose semantic representation was shown to open out into four different paths, one of which would be more or less intuitively selected by the interlocutor or

reader during the process of message reception, according to the needs of context. The respective mappings might be paraphrased as follows:

(i) Following the marker paths (+ 'Human') and (+ 'Male'), there are two clearly distinct lexical usages available, which, accordingly, can be identified by one of the following two distinguishers: either (who has never married) or (young knight serving under the standard of another knight). Given that the second distinguisher seems to require a highly specific discursive context (perhaps that of a medieval *épopée*, for example), we would normally expect the first one to be selected.

(ii) Following the marker path (+ 'Human'), but then neglecting to select between the secondary markers (+ 'Male') or (+ 'Female'), we arrive at the distinguisher ('who has the first or lowest academic degree').

(iii) Following the marker path (+ 'Animal') and then ('Male'), we arrive at the distinguisher ('young fur seal when without a mate during the breeding time').

This model, by virtue of its clarity and rigour, would certainly appear to be an effective one in terms of distinguishing between the various usages to be found in clear-cut cases of homonymy and polysemy. Nevertheless, it is perhaps by no means insignificant that the semantic representation of the lexeme concerned is taken to be effectively exhausted once the preliminary process of clarification has been achieved. This limitation need not, of course, bother the lexicographer seeking to instil a further degree of rigour into his own working procedures. For the student of translation, however, the absence, in the model, of any conceptual means of mapping what we have referred to as the more penumbral areas of meaning threatens to become a real problem. For example, with reference to Fodor and Katz' oft-quoted example, let us suppose the following textual sequence:

*Bob was an incorrigible **bachelor**, who would no more think of giving up his **bachelor** ways than he would of emigrating to China.*

Perhaps the first thing to note is that we find the lexical item '*bachelor*' used, not once, but twice within the sequence: firstly, as the Head of a nominal group in the predicative Complement slot; secondly, as a nominal Attribute. In both of these cases, the first of the four marker paths identified by Fodor and Katz (i.e. + 'Human' + 'Male' ('who has never married')) can almost certainly be seen to be the most the appropriate one. However, the range of potentially meaningful associations likely to be coded into the semantic representation of '*bachelor*' by the message receptor here would appear to be far greater than that covered by the rather perfunctory paraphrase furnished by Fodor and Katz. We might thus wish to accommodate these associations into our own model by expanding the initial semantic representation in the following way: '*bachelor*' = + 'Human' + 'Male' (+ 'who has never married' (+ 'uncomfortable with the demands of family life' + 'desirous of solitude punctuated only by the undemanding company of male peers and/or casual sexual encounters', etc.)). Clearly, although the notional paraphrases included in our secondary bracketing are very far from constituting distinctive features in any strict sense of the term, they do nevertheless represent part of our pragmatic understanding of the lexical item '*bachelor*' as it is used in contexts such as the above. Moreover, our understanding of this item as representing, not only a distinct social status, but also the stable and indeed stubbornly ingrained set of character traits associated with this status, is more than reinforced, in this instance, as a result of its modification by means of the adjectival Attribute, '*incorrigible*'. Similarly, the repetition of this item, in the form of a nominal Attribute to '*ways*', can only serve to confirm our understanding of it in terms of both social status and an ingrained set of character traits. We might thus wish to paraphrase '*bachelor ways*' as 'the habits of an adult male who is uncomfortable with the demands of family life, and desirous of a solitude punctuated only by the undemanding company of male peers, etc.' Some of the terms in our expansion of the semantic representation of '*bachelor*', as used in the above sequence, may, of course, be contestable. We might wish to argue, for example, that not all bachelors are necessarily 'desirous of solitude'. Nevertheless, our paraphrase can still be defended on the grounds that those particular bachelors who are seen to be exemplary of the type designated by the nominal item '*bachelor*' are, as a general rule, much more likely to be desirous of

solitude than company. Furthermore, a similar kind of defence might be offered of the other notional paraphrases included in our expanded semantic representation. Again, we would wish to emphasise that the postulated grounds of validity with respect to these notional paraphrases are of an interpretative rather a strictly logical or empirical order.

The sceptical reader, of course, will probably wish to know, at this point in the argument, what kind of analytical utility our expanded semantic representation of the lexical item '*bachelor*' may have regarding possible translations of the textual sequence within which we have inserted it. Clearly, we need to demonstrate that the notional paraphrases included in our expanded semantic representation are not only pragmatically adequate in interpretative terms but also analytically pertinent with respect to any potential variance obtaining in the choice of lexical item to be used in translation. Moreover, such a demonstration would seem to be particularly revealing in the above case, given that all languages rooted within a culture in which marriage constitutes a basic and fundamental form of social organisation are likely to contain an 'equivalent' item clearly lexicalising the non-expanded semantic representation postulated by Fodor and Katz (i.e. + 'Human' + 'Male' + ('who has never married'). In French, for example, this would almost certainly be '*célibataire*'. We might thus plausibly suggest the following translation, in French, of the above sequence:

> *Bob était un* **célibataire** *indécrottable, qui ne renoncerait pas plus à ses manies de* **célibataire** *qu'il irait habiter en Chine.*

This translation would certainly seem, at first glance, to be a reasonable one, with the lexical item '*célibataire*' used twice in more or less the same way as '*bachelor*': the sole difference being that, in the second instance, it qualifies rather than modifies (i.e. '(x) *de célibataire*' rather than '*célibataire* (x)'). Accordingly, if we accept Katz and Fodor's non-expanded semantic representation as being a sufficient one with respect to the double use of '*bachelor*' in the original textual sequence, our translating sequence would appear to be more then adequate, given that '*célibataire*' can be seen to lexicalise this semantic representation in much the same way as the original English item. However, if we factor in the notional paraphrases included in the secondary bracketing of our expanded

semantic representation, we might legitimately begin to question whether the use of the lexical item *'célibataire'*, in French, would serve to carry over this complex of associated nuances in quite the same way. The ultimate answer to this question would probably be that the French item could indeed be made to yield the same complex of nuances, albeit with a greater degree of contextual prompting. Furthermore, we would probably also wish to point out that the French language offers a more colloquial lexical variant which not only readily incorporates these nuances into its own semantic representation but actually requires them in order to be fully understood, i.e. *'vieux garçon'*. Bearing this in mind, a translation including the latter item at least once would seem to be a wholly appropriate one in this context, e.g.

> *Bob est un **célibataire** indécrottable, qui ne renoncerait pas plus à ses manies de **vieux garçon** qu'il irait habiter en Chine.*

In the above translation, we chose the unmarked lexical item *'célibataire'* in the predicative Complement slot in order to lexicalise the basic notional space covered by the non-expanded semantic representation of the original item *'bachelor'*, and then sought to code in the notions included in the secondary bracketing of the expanded semantic representation through the choice of the colloquial variant *'vieux garçon'* – with the latter functioning as the nominal item within the structure of the prepositional group qualifying *'manies'*. This solution also had the virtue of enabling us to avoid the unnecessary repetition of either lexical variant (repetition normally being seen as a somewhat greater solecism within the context of French prose than in English). Furthermore, we were able to lexicalise clearly and unambiguously, in French translation, the full range of associative nuances implied by the repeated use of the lexical item *'bachelor'* within the specific context furnished by the original textual sequence. In this respect, of course, we were in some ways fortunate to have a lexical variant available within the lexicon of the French language which so clearly enabled us to do this, i.e. *'vieux garçon'*.

In conclusion, it would seem that, although Katz and Fodor's non-expanded semantic representation was seen to be adequate in terms of distinguishing between the different uses of a given lexical item at a paradigmatic level, it was perhaps less so when

it came to identifying the kinds of contextually inferable and associative meanings which are likely to be coded into our understanding of this item following its insertion within a particular textual sequence. This was clearly shown to be the case in the above example with respect to our culturally modulated understanding of *'bachelor'*, which proved to be a decisive factor in our choice of lexical item in the translating sequence (i.e. *'bachelor'* > *'célibataire'*; *'bachelor'* > *'vieux garçon'*). With a view to factoring in this associative penumbra into our semantic representation of the chosen item, we proposed an expanded semantic representation, supplemented by a system of secondary bracketing which included notional paraphrases of the more contingent and contextually inferable meanings that might be seen to influence lexical choice in translation. This system of primary, secondary (and even tertiary) bracketing will continue to be used throughout the thesis as a means of mapping core meanings in relation to more peripheral ones, with the main emphasis being upon the interpretative construal of these meanings in context.[vii] We will also be particularly concerned with the way in which the influence of the immediate co-text serves to code in certain kinds of associative or peripheral meaning into the semantic representation of given lexical items in certain instances (e.g. the use of the attributive Modifier *'incorrigible'* serving to reinforce our reading of *'bachelor'* as '+ Human' + 'Male' ('who has never married' ('uncomfortable with the demands of family life, and desirous of solitude, etc.'))). Henceforth, in terms of the analytical model that we are attempting to elaborate here, we will refer to this process as indexing in, with the presence of lexical item y within the co-text being seen to index in certain supplementary notions or features into the semantic representation of lexical item x. We will also be hoping to demonstrate the importance of such a process to the creation of a specifically literary texture within a work of prose.

(i) *L'odeur de l'atelier, ces ouvrières en sueur qui tapaient les fers de leurs bras nus, tout ce coin pareil à une **alcôve** où trainaît le déballage des dames du quartier* (ZOLA, p. 792)

In this sequence, we find a highly textured use of *'alcôve'*, placed within the context of a vivid and detailed description of Gervaise' cramped but colourful laundry-room. The semantic representation of *'alcôve'* could probably be mapped in terms of the following core features, i.e. 'a small recess appended to a larger room' ('used to sleep in'). In addition to this, we might wish to factor in features such as 'obscure', 'secret', 'a place for sensuality and indulgence', etc. Moreover, the latter would seem to be particularly appropriate in the light of the co-text furnished above, given the presence of other details evoking the sensuality of the scene depicted, such as the naked arms of the washerwomen, the odour of the room flush with their sweat, the strewn underwear. To use an interesting term formulated by the French structuralist school, the lexical items and groups used to signify these details might be said to be generative of a distinctive isotopy[viii] within the textual sequence as a whole (i.e. *'odeur'*; *'en sueur'*; *'bras nus'*; *'alcôve'*; *'déballage'* > 'sensuality'). By this, what we are essentially suggesting is that the potential inclusion of the notion of 'sensuality' within the semantic representation of each one of these co-textually proximate lexical items or groups serves to reinforce the likelihood that the reader will in fact construe this notion in his/her interpretation of their respective meanings.

The crucial question raised by this reflection for the translator, of course, is whether the cognate lexical item in English (i.e. 'alcove') can actually be made to signify the notion of 'sensuality' in quite the same way, even when inserted within a textual sequence favourable to the creation of an isotopy.[ix] Casting a brief glance over the solutions offered by our corpus translators, the answer to this would appear to be largely negative. Of the seven translations consulted, only that of Symons resorts to direct cognate equivalence (*'like an **alcove** heaped up with the litter of all the women'* (p. 233); the others deploying diverse textual strategies in order to convey the relevant penumbra of associative nuance. Mauldon, for example, furnishes a lexical variant which can be seen to be either metonymic or superordinate in relation to the original item, but which is nevertheless likely to inscribe itself more readily within an isotopy of 'sensuality' for the English language reader than the cognate item. Tancock also includes the lexical item *'bedroom'* in his translation (*'**the bedroom atmosphere**, littered with the underclothes of the ladies'* (p. 245)) using it as a nominal Modifier, attributive of the inserted nominal

Head item '*atmosphere*'. This addition seems to serve an essentially explicatory function, implying that the locative referent denoted by the category 'bedroom' can be seen as a place where a certain kind of sensuality might typically be enjoyed. Furthermore, it would perhaps not be entirely fanciful to see this allusion as working through a process of what we shall call phantom collocation: the lexical item '*atmosphere*' projecting a collocative range which would include the potential use of such attributive Modifiers as 'sensual', 'sexy', and 'heady', etc. These supplementary adjectival items can be seen to index themselves into the implicature of the text in the form of virtual Modifiers. Accordingly, for '*bedroom atmosphere*', we might easily infer '**sexy** bedroom atmosphere', '**sensual** bedroom atmosphere', '**heady** bedroom atmosphere' etc.: these inferred items signifying the relevant isotopy in more explicit terms than those actually used in the text itself. Returning to the translations, Townsend's rendering, to a certain extent, resembles that of Tancock, albeit using '*bedroom*' more complexly as a normative exemplum of 'warmth' in relation to which the temperature of the '*corner*' is compared ('*the corner **warm as a bedroom** where intimate garments of neighbourhood ladies were scattered*' (p. 275)). Hopkins also includes '*bedroom*' within the context of a more lexically expanded rendering, in which it functions as the nominal item within a prepositional group qualifying a further, inserted nominal item, '*intimate appearance*'. The addition of the latter serves to lexicalise the notion of 'sensuality' in explicit terms, as well as furnishing a syntactic context in relation to which this notion might also be indexed into the semantic representation of '*bedroom*' ('*The smell of the workshop* [...] *gave to the place **the intimate appearance of a bedroom**'* (p. 225). Finally, in contrast to the above, Buss's solution to the problem is both neat and economical: the choice of '*boudoir*' clearly signifying the isotopy of 'sensuality' without resort to periphrasis ('*and the whole place like **a boudoir** littered with the underwear of women*').

In conclusion, the rendering of '*alcôve*' in this example would appear to be a revealing one, demonstrating the ways in which the translators were prepared to use lexical expansion and explication as a means of ensuring that the secondary features included within the semantic representation of the original item were clearly lexicalised in translation. Moreover, given the fact that these features were seen to be strongly isotopic with the rest of the sequence, their occlusion would almost certainly have

resulted in a rendering inadequate to the semantic depth of the original.[x] Nevertheless, deploying a whole battery of words in order to eke out a simple nuance would perhaps ultimately appear to be a risky strategy from the point of view of rendering literary texture. It was for this reason that we were inclined to prefer Buss's direct and economical 'borrowing' from the lexicon of classical French prose to some of the more periphrastic solutions offered.

In the case of '*alcôve*', the associative penumbra of 'sensuality' seemed to adhere to the core meaning like an aura around a flame, with the translators attempting to reflect something of both in their own translations. In the following example, we will be concerned to examine the way in which narrative co-text and context can be seen to exercise a particular influence upon the reader's construal of a particular lexical item, such that an interior and specific meaning comes to be elicited from a more general and embracing one.

(ii) *Quand les étincelles piquaient ses mains tendres, elle ne les retirait pas, elle* **jouissait** *au contraire de cette pluie de feu qui lui cinglait la peau.*

(ZOLA, p. 747)

Here, we are given a vivid description of Gervaise exulting in the fire of sparks that shower forth from Goujet's forge. The undertones of sublimated sexual desire in all this sparking and gushing are, of course, unmistakable for any reader versed in even the most superficial smattering of post-Freudian hermeneutics. Moreover, it is hard to believe that Zola was not exploiting these nuances in a completely conscious a way as a writer, seeking to express through obliquity and symbolism what a less censorship-conscious twentieth-century writer might have done through explicit flights of openly erotic description. However, rather than entering into a detailed discussion of this delicate and historically evolving relationship between allusive and explicit narrative artifice, it is perhaps sufficient for our purposes here to note the way in which the more general sense of '*jouissait*' interacts with its specifically sexual sense in the text, and how the translators seek to render this interaction in translation.

Le Petit Robert defines the principal meaning of '*jouir*' as 'avoir du plaisir'; '*jouir* (*de*) is defined as 'tirer plaisir, agrément, profit (de qqch)'. We are then presented with a list of synonyms: 'Apprécier, goûter, savourer; profiter de'. The second sense is the proprietorial one (which need not concern us here). The third sense is the sexual one 'Eprouver le plaisir sexuel (orgasme)'.[xi] Returning to our example, it seems clear that Zola is using '*jouissait*' to suggest that Gervaise is taking a genuinely physical and sensual pleasure in the contact of the sparks. And, given the closeted and suppressed physical attraction undoubtedly existing between the heroine and the virile but introverted smith, we have every reason to infer more than a hint of the explicitly sexual meaning too. Not only are the sparks causing her pleasure, they are also awakening within her something akin to physical rapture. Clearly, this represents a complex package of nuances for the translators to carry over, and we are again able to note that various different slants are taken.

Firstly, it would seem that the translator might be somewhat hampered by the apparent absence, within the English lexicon, of any one verbal item signifying both physical pleasure in general and sexual pleasure in particular. Consequently, he/she will probably have to resort to either (i) privileging the general sense over the specific one (or *vice versa*); or (ii) using lexical periphrasis and explication in an attempt to include both senses. Buss's '*when sparks pricked her soft hands, she did not move them away but, on the contrary, **took pleasure** in this rain of fire,* [...]' (p. 187) clearly privileges the general sense over the specific one, although the use of '*took pleasure*' can by no means be said to exclude a subsidiary sexual meaning (perhaps by virtue of its resonance with the idiom 'to take one's pleasure'). Mauldon's '*she'd **delight** in the fiery rain*' (p. 190) also privileges the general 'taking of pleasure' over any more specifically sexual sense that this notion may imply. Moreover, the use of '*delight*' would seem to suggest an inward and intensely felt pleasure as much spiritual as sensual, in which respect Mauldon's choice of Predicator would not appear to be wholly appropriate. Vizetelly's '*She **enjoyed** the rain of fire*' (p. 179) (which would back-translate as '*la pluie du feu lui faisait plaisir*') also seems to steer too prudently away from the notion of a distinctively physical pleasure. On the other hand, Hopkins's '*she'd **love to feel** them tingling on her flesh*' (p. 195) has the merit of re-introducing the notion of sensory touch and feeling back into the

rendering. Nevertheless, it still appears a little understated in relation to the original. Tancock's '*but rather she **rejoiced** in this shower of fire*' (p. 194) also seems to strike the wrong note, given that the use of the Predicator '***rejoiced***' unambiguously privileges the verbal expression of the pleasure felt by the character over any descriptive representation of the feeling itself. Unfortunately, there is no suggestion in the original text that Gervaise actually utters or enunciates anything relating to what she is inwardly feeling. Symons's '*she **gloated** over the rain that lashed her skin*' (p. 181) also constitutes a highly problematic rendering: the use of the Predicator '***gloated***' implying that some kind of maliciously egotistical enjoyment of a given pleasure is being expressed, at the expense, moreover, of those who have not been fortunate enough to experience such a pleasure themselves. Clearly, there is nothing so self-consciously smug as this going on in the scene being described here. Furthermore, it might be said that, although other characters in Zola's novel are more than prone to bouts of gloating and smugness (e.g. Virginie, Lantier, the Lorilleux, the Boches), his basically good-hearted heroine is unlikely to be represented in this way.

In conclusion, it might be said that our translators tended to err on the side of the general rather than the particular in their respective renderings of the complex crosshatch of meanings implied by the use of '*jouissait*' in the original. As a consequence, none of them were able to allude to the specifically sexual side of pleasure-taking with quite the same directness as was achieved in the latter. Although we might wish to plead in their favour by drawing attention to the lexical insufficiencies of the English language in this instance, we would nevertheless have preferred a rendering which left the reader in no doubt as to the erotic charge conducted by the flailing hail of sparks issuing from the smitten smith's forge. Something along the lines of '*When the sparks stung her tender hands, she didn't withdraw them but, rather, **pleasured and thrilled** amidst the fiery rain lashing her skin*'. In offering this rendering, we have, perhaps regrettably, had to resort to periphrasis in order to fully lexicalise the notion of a distinctively vibrant and physical pleasure. Nevertheless, this would seem to be a price worth paying, given the need to avoid unnecessary understatement or unduly decorous euphemism (*pace* Vizetelly and Tancock).

In the course of this section, we have thus moved from the suggestion that words do indeed have shadows to the more complex matter of charting their specific penumbral projections in given instances. Our interest in this exercise, of course, was motivated primarily by a wish to show exactly what kind of structured patterns of associative meaning the translators needed to incorporate into their own renderings in order to do full justice to the semantic depth and texture of the original. Given the inevitable catches and snarls which tend to emerge whenever we attempt to draw the sense of one language through the skein of another, this proved to be a process often fraught with difficulty and potential error. In response to these perils, the translators were as much required to show tact as technical expertise in their efforts to deal with the lexical lacunae and associative asymmetries complicating their task. Unfortunately, this endeavour proved to be one availing only of approximate solutions and imperfect successes in the cases that we examined above. Moreover, these limitations appeared to be more or less endemic to the translation process as a whole.

In our cautious proffering of judgements and recommendations, we suggested that the translator should attempt to render, not only the full range of meanings associated with the use of a particular lexical item within a given context but also to do so in as concise and condensed a way as possible whenever appropriate. This concern to respect the texture of the original led us to eschew solutions relying upon extensive periphrasis or elaborate explication, especially in cases in which the latter appeared to be used as a means of extracting every conceivable nuance to be found within the original text. It thus remained our contention that what had been expressed economically in the source text should also be done so in the target text. However, despite the apparently rigorous nature of this prescription, we nevertheless allowed ourselves, when making one particular recommendation, to expand a little around the edges of a secondary meaning in order to draw out its boldest contour in translation. Clearly, there can be no such thing as a fixed or unbreakable rule in translation studies. Thus are we obliged to shuffle crabwise in our search for lucidity as much as any humble crustacean to the sea.

Words as signifiers of worlds

As we have found in the previous section, any given sequence within a passage of literary prose is likely to be traversed by a delicate tracery of cross-references and associative nuances. This dense textual reticulation serves to communicate, not only the bare co-ordinates of a simple and unambiguous linear narrative but also the lineaments of an imaginary fictional world. Fictional worlds are, of course, rarely, if ever, mere abstract projections of the author's imagination, but rather can be seen to recompose themselves around the known features of a world which is likely to be contemporary with the author's own experience, or at least accessible to him by means of historical documentation and research. Moreover, with reference to *L'Assommoir*, we can be confident that Zola was as much able to refer to his own lived experience as any dry ream of documentary and dictionary evidence in the recomposition of the world that we find within its pages.[xii]

Literary worlds are thus spun around people and places, and the one that we find recomposed within Zola's crepuscular narrative of personal self-abasement and financial ruin can be seen to be very much rooted in the Parisian artisan milieu of the mid-nineteenth century. The setting of the novel is, of course, communicated explicitly to the reader through 'scenic indications': we know that the novel is set in the Goutte d'Or district of Paris, with the action of the initial chapter taking place in 1851 when the heroine, Gervaise, was just twenty-two. More importantly, we find that the whole discursive texture of the novel appears to be thoroughly steeped in the accents and inflections of popular speech: brushstroke-fine passages of literary description being blended in seamlessly with popular demotic and colloquial elements. The latter often manifest themselves in the form of simple variants upon what would be a more orthodox or stylistically unmarked, lexical item. For example, when the narrator describes the gliding progress of the impish Nana in the following terms, we cannot help but feel that the kind of language characteristic of the young girl herself is being, in some way, simulated or grafted onto the narrative discourse proper:

the dusty boulevards of north-eastern Paris at the time of the novel's composition. As has now been widely documented, of course, Zola gleaned the title of his novel from the popular name for these sleazy and boisterous hangouts, which would normally be full of work-battered Parisian artisans drinking themselves into a stupor. *A propos*, the imaginative and somewhat quixotic lexicographer, Alfred Delvau, furnishes us with the following explanation of the precise origins and nature of the *Assommoir*:

> *L'Assommoir,* s.m. Nom d'un cabaret de Belleville, qui est devenu celui de tous les cabarets de bas étage, où le peuple boit des liquides frelatés qui le tuent, - sans remarquer l'éloquence sinistre de cette métaphore, que les voleurs russes semblent lui avoir empruntée, en la retournant, pour désigner un gourdin sous le nom de *vin de champagne.*[xiii]

The 'sinister eloquence' of this metaphor becomes nothing less than a rhetorical seal upon the fatidic plunge into self-abasement which seems to afflict all of the central characters as the novel progresses: each one inevitably submitting to the harsh and degrading blows of a reality which assails and crushes all the more with every attempt to escape its brutal monotony. Often exhausted and stupefied by the rigours of long, unrelenting shifts of labour, they nibble or tipple or flirt or fantasize in order to afford themselves a little release. However, these apparently insignificant vices, in turn, become agents of oppression, with the nibbling and the tippling degenerating into recurrent bingeing; the flirting and the fantasising into cynical adultery or promiscuous and unfeeling sensuality. Thus, even the intimate little pleasures of life promising temporary succour become rapidly hypertrophied into something altogether more deleterious and decadent: nothing less than fruitless seeds of addiction and decline. Intimations of pleasure there certainly are amidst the clamour and grime of Zola's Goutte d'Or. Nevertheless, pleasure quickly curdles in this dull and dreary realm of petty woes: the devouring worm never far from the flowering bud. La vie comme une somme de peines; qui assomme: la vie qui se consomme à coups de prunes; qui se consomme à L'Assommoir; la vie comme L'Assommoir[xiv]...the chain of figurative expansions and displacements ramifying from this eponymous and echoing archi-lexeme are indeed

prodigious, ceaselessly proliferating throughout the narrative like some sort of malign signature. As Jacques Dubois comments:

> Au registre intimiste s'oppose le registre du mal, de la misère et de l'angoisse: les assommoirs. Pour le roman de Gervaise, Emile Zola a élu un titre étonnamment "pluriel", au sens où le terme qui le constitue autorise un déploiement polysémique que le texte ne fera qu'activer. Il est ainsi permis au lecteur de généraliser la valeur du mot "l'assommoir", et de l'étendre de proche en proche, et par contamination à tous les "monstres" qui peuplent le récit et l'univers mental de l'héroïne.[xv]

Never was a title more thematically significant than Zola's multiply layered lexical pun. Moreover, the chances of finding a single lexical item in English to cover this supple signifier would seem to be remote indeed, in which light it is perhaps little surprising to find that no less than five of our corpus translations were simply published under the original title. The two exceptions to this are those of Vizetelly and Hopkins, both of which were entitled *The Dram Shop*: an option privileging the core signification of *L'Assommoir* as referring to 'a modest drinking establishment ('frequented by the labouring classes' ('in the mid-to-late nineteenth century'))'. This English language 'equivalent' nevertheless seems to fall somewhat short in terms of the sheer violence and brutality connoted by the original titular term: the baleful pun upon being 'knocked out' ('assommer' > *L'Assommoir*) by the contents served within the establishments thereby denoted being regrettably lost along the way. Moreover, it would be hard to see how this loss could be avoided, other than by shifting the reference from 'drinking establishments' almost entirely with a view to privileging the paranomastically hatched violence of the original title. Something, perhaps, along the lines of *Under the cosh* or *Knocked Out*: neither of which, unfortunately, would appear to be as spirited, or indeed as spirituous, as the punch packed by *L'Assommoir*. Clearly, the perennial problem of rendering figurative texture presents itself to the translators from the very outset in this highly idiosyncratic and revealing case, i.e. from the very moment they begin to reflect upon a title which might strike the reader in the same way as the percussive pun opening the original work.

The slang designation founding Zola's title is, of course, something of a metonymy in its own right, with *L 'Assommoir* referring both to the turbulent and imposing distilling devices dominating the aspect of these lugubrious drinking parlours, and, by figurative extension, to the establishments themselves. For example, in the following sequence, we find the latter designated, quite simply, by means of the eponymous lexical item of the novel:

(i) *Le jour avait grandi, une clarté louche éclairait **L'Assommoir** dont le patron éteignait le gaz.* (ZOLA, p. 804)

In translating this sequence, the point of principal difficulty would again appear to be in the rendering of *L'Assommoir*. In this context, of course, it becomes clear that it refers almost exclusively to 'a modest drinking establishment' ('frequented by the labouring classes' ('in the mid-to-late nineteenth century'))' The most difficult feature to render of the above would almost certainly be the diachronic indication included in the secondary bracketing. Moreover, a convincing rendering of the latter would appear to be of by no means negligible importance, given the need to situate the target text historically in accordance with the chronological setting of the original narrative.

In response to this challenge, Tancock opts for the commonplace lexical item '*pub*' (p. 258), the usage of which, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, does in fact date from the nineteenth-century, from which time it has functioned as an abbreviated form of 'public house'. However, given the fact that this abbreviation is still in contemporary usage (whereas the term *Assommoir* very definitely is not), its stylistic marking in terms of period and place would appear to be less than clearly defined. Indeed, the same criticism might be made of Townsend's and Symons's rendering, '*bar*' (p. 291; p. 246), which seems to be even less clearly marked with respect to any specifically historical usage. Less satisfactory still, Vizetelly and Mauldon simply borrow the original term '*L'Assommoir*' (p. 245; p. 260), without making any attempt to find an appropriate equivalent in English, having presumably deemed the complex of associated nuances surrounding the French item to be technically untranslatable, and thus better left alone.[xvi]

On the other hand, Buss's '*the gin palace*' (p. 256) does have the merit of being clearly situated in terms of usage, i.e. within a working-class milieu and during the mid-to-late nineteenth century period. Hopkins's '*the dram shop*' (p. 271) is similarly appropriate in this respect. Despite the inevitable loss of the implication that these 'drinking establishments' are places where people go to 'knock themselves out', the renderings of Buss and Hopkins do nevertheless have the merit of preserving period authenticity without resorting to any unlikely borrowings from the French original.

In conclusion, the rendering of the keystone lexical item, *L'Assommoir*, might well be seen as a strategically vital one in terms of the general orientation of the translation as a whole. Not only does it set the tone with respect to the latter, it also provides a benchmark in terms of how far a particular translator might be prepared to go in finding lexical variants within his/her own language possessed of a specificity and resonance equal to those used in the original. Clearly, the execution of these kinds of choices is highly significant when it comes to the recomposition of a particular kind of literary world, rooted and grounded within a particular milieu, rendered and textured in a particular style. In this light, not even the most apparently innocuous slip into approximate equivalence or more or less accurate generality on the part of the translator can hope to pass without adulterating the textured and world-rendering composition of the original.

The Perils of Designation

Literary worlds are not only blessed with their own specific contour and topography, but also thoroughly populated and peopled. Moreover, Zola's *L'Assommoir* certainly seems to be animated with its own highly distinctive cast: a veritable human bestiary of types and characters, all of them loving and lusting and loafing, boozing and brawling and bantering through the various hardships of life. In sociological terms, the world of the novel would seem to be hermetically sealed, given that all of these characters belong to the artisan or the petit-bourgeois commercial class typified by Coupeau and Gervaise respectively in the early part of the novel (even the wealthy landlord, Marescot, is, in fact,

a horny-handed son of toil). One particular consequence of this apparent homogeneity is
that the social categories corresponding to the artisan/petit-bourgeois view of the world
also become thoroughly rooted into the discourse of the narrative proper: the latter often
borrowing the kinds of commonplace and enthymematic socio-cultural *topoi* that might
be seen to be typical of the characters themselves. One such example of this might be the
following:

(i) *Coupeau voulut le rattraper. Plus souvent qu'il se laissât mécaniser par un*
paletot!. (ZOLA, p. 895)

This short sequence forms part of a longer passage in which Coupeau vows not to let
himself be insulted by a sharply dressed young man in an overcoat. In referring to this
incident, the narrative borrows heavily from what might be assumed to be Coupeau's
own discourse upon the matter (this is signalled textually through the use of the items
'*mécaniser*' and '*paletot*'): the young man himself being referred to, quite simply, as '*un
paletot*'. This is a fine example of the classical figure of synecdoche: the part (in this case,
the most conspicuous and characteristic item of clothing) being taken for the whole (i.e.
an instantly recognisable social type: the young man on the make).[xvii]

Once again, we find that the use of figure in the original triggers a significant
degree of explication on the part of the translators. Moreover, this would seem to be
something bordering upon a constraint in this instance, given that the translator risks
flirting with the absurd in opting for a direct lexical translation ('*paletot*' > '*overcoat*').
In support of this suggestion, Mauldon's attempt to render the original figure through the
use of a similarly bare synecdoche strikes a distinctly surreal note ('*He wasn't going to
stand for being put down by an overcoat*' (p. 380)). Tancock also attempts to carry over
the synecdoche but makes the function of the 'part' as an identifier of 'social type' more
explicit by adding an attributive Modifier ('*He wasn't going to be taken down by a posh
coat*', p. 369). Buss's translation explicates the social typification even more clearly by
means of lexical expansion and periphrasis. ('*It wasn't often that he let himself be
insulted by a stuck-up type in a topcoat*', p. 373). Although this version certainly lacks

the concision of the original, it nevertheless succeeds in rendering all of the key features included within 'a young man' ('dressed in an overcoat' ('aspiring social status')), doing so, moreover, without jettisoning idiomatic congruity. Hopkins's translation also involves a considerable degree of expansion and explication, albeit of the kind serving to distort rather than to clarify the original implicature of the text: *'He wasn't going to be insulted by a **dirty little tyke like that'*** (p. 401) not only obscuring the idea that the 'overcoat' was the young man's distinguishing feature, but also, rather improbably, ascribing to him the property of 'dirtiness' rather than 'elegance'. Unfortunately, there would appear to be few grounds for this kind of inference in the original text.

In the following example, we encounter a similar kind of figurative designation, with the nominal group *'les corbeaux'* being used as a colloquially marked lexical variant of 'prêtres'.[xviii] In this case, the mechanism can be seen to be a fully metaphorical one, involving both synecdoche and condensed comparison:

(ii) ' *il se fâcha, il accusa les **corbeaux** de brûler chez eux des herbes du diable'*

(ZOLA, p. 849)

(priests wear **black** surplices) + (crows have **black** feathers) ergo (priests have a **black** aspect similar to that of crows) > (priests = crows).

Although the figurative mechanism lying behind the designation of 'les prêtres' as *'les corbeaux'* is fairly clear, the translator is nevertheless required to find a way of making the English language reader do the same kind of figurative work that the French language reader would have automatically done in this particular case. Again, given the lack of any culturally rooted enthymematic connection between 'priests' and 'crows' in the English language, we might well expect a simple, personified reference to 'crows' to make little sense here: an intuition perhaps confirmed by the apparent obscurity of Symons's *'he accused the "**crows**" of burning* [...]'(p. 301). In this light, it is little surprising to find the translators resorting to explicatory procedures. Tancock, for example, re-explicates the first of the presuppositions implicit in the articulation of the figure mapped above, and

then uses the Complement group thereof as the designating term of a new synecdoche, culturally adapted to the idiomatic requirements of the English language reader (*'and he accused the **black-coats** of burning* [...]', (p. 314)). Mauldon makes a similar reference to *'black-coats'* (p. 319). Buss also translates along the same lines: his reference to *'black surplices'* (p. 314) establishing a more exclusively defined, phantom collocation with the professional milieu of the 'priesthood'. On the other hand, Townsend attempts to solve the problem by recourse to a periphrasis which involves (i) the re-lexicalisation of the suppressed feature 'black'; (ii) the addition of an 'identifying' nominal group in apposition to the initial designation (*'he angrily criticised those **black crows, the priests**'* (p. 357). This has the merit of preserving the figurative force of the original designation without obliging the English language reader to do a greater amount of interpretative work than his/her idiomatic resources may allow.

In many cases, figurative designation can be seen to work on the basis of a presupposition of likeness, with the more orthodox or unmarked referent being retrievable from the co-text. This textual mechanism can be seen clearly in the following example:

(iii) *Elle jetait des regards obliques sur **la machine à soûler**, derrière elle. **Cette sacrée marmite**, ronde comme un ventre de **chaudronnière grasse**,*[...].

(ZOLA, p. 368)

*And she glances sideways at **the drinking machine** behind her. **The blessed object**, round as **a publican's belly**, [...].* (SYMONS, p. 324)

*She glanced back at **the intoxicator** behind her. **That darned cooking-pot**, bulging like the belly of a **plump, boiler-maker's wife** [...].* (BUSS, p. 339)

In the above sequence, we note the use of an unmarked designation, followed up by an exclamatory and figurative one referring to the same referent (i.e. *'la machine à soûler'* > *'cette sacrée marmite'*). The second designation, of course, is thoroughly inflected with oral marking (both by virtue of the use of the demonstrative *'cette'* and the affectionately pejorative nuance conveyed by the attributive Modifier *'sacré'*). Furthermore, the

anaphoric relationship between the two might be said to presuppose the following comparative logic in condensed form:

'the drinking machine (= '*machine à soûler*') is round and shiny like a large cooking-pot (= 'une marmite')' ergo 'the drinking machine' = 'a large cooking-pot' ergo '*la machine à soûler*' > '*cette sacrée marmite*'.[xix]

Turning to the two translations quoted, we note a contrastive variation of potential significance in the respective renderings of Symons and Buss. In the former, the anaphoric chain is established by means of a generalising, superordinate substitution (i.e. '*the drinking machine*' > '*the blessed object*'), which results in the condensed, comparative logic presupposed by the original being simply occluded. It is for this reason that we prefer the latter, with the clear reference to '*that darned cooking-pot*' serving to preserve the figurative articulation of the original. Moreover, there would appear to be little justification for circumventing this kind of figurative work when the lexical resources needed to execute it are available in the target language, as is clearly the case here.

In addition to this point, we also note an interesting slant upon the rendering of '*chaudronnière grasse*': Buss choosing to retain the original lexicalisation of 'boiler-maker' (i.e. '*chaudronnièr(e)*' > '*boilermaker's(wife))*' and Symons opting to displace the reference in favour of a more readily accessible collocation with '*belly*' (i.e. '*ventre*'/'*chaudronnière*' > '*belly*'/'*publican*'). Buss can thus be said to be more source-orientated in his translation strategy than Symons in this instance.

Figurative or colloquial modes of designation can also play an important role within a more general strategy of characterisation. This is nowhere more evident than in the narrator's frequently oblique and colloquially slanted allusions to the nefarious presence of Auguste Lantier, whom we have already encountered slipping through the shadows with his erstwhile mistress in the opening passages:

(iv) *Cet animal de chapelier*[xx] *qui n'allait jamais jusqu'au bout*. (ZOLA, p. 302)

In the above example, we find yet another pejorative allusion to the egregious Lantier. This allusion is framed within the torque of an inverted syntactic figure: the discursive referent being designated by the nominal item within the prepositional group structure ('(x) *de* **chapelier**'), and the attributive feature being lexicalised as the Head item within the qualified nominal group ('*Cet* **animal** *de* (x)').[xxi] Accordingly, the condensed comparative logic presupposed by this figure might be mapped out in the following way:

> 'ce *chapelier* rusé' > 'ce *chapelier*, qui est, dans sa façon de se comporter, rusé comme un *animal*' > '*Cet animal* (rusé) *de chapelier* (qui est rusé comme cet *animal* rusé)' > '*Cet animal de chapelier*'

Our understanding of this condensed logic is, of course, already heavily influenced by what we have already learnt about the character of Lantier during the course of the narrative. Not only do we know that he is invariably crafty in the execution of his various self-interested machinations, but also that this craft is often exercised in the pursuit of very primitive, animal pleasures (i.e. food, shelter, and sex).[xxii] Although these nuances would appear to be fairly clear ones, the translators nevertheless need to ensure that the feature 'crafty' is clearly lexicalised in translation. For example, a direct lexical rendering along the lines of '*that animal of a hatter*' would probably run the risk of inducing the target culture reader to privilege the feature 'bestial' over that of 'crafty': a construal which would seem to be barely appropriate as a characterisation of the wily and dapper dissimulator, Auguste Lantier.[xxiii] No doubt with a view to avoiding this pitfall, Tancock attempts to duplicate the syntactic structure of the original, albeit doing so by virtue of considerable lexical adaptation ('*that* **artful sod** *of a Lantier*', p. 255). Unfortunately, the resulting figure reads somewhat incongruously, playing upon the collocational expectation generated by the use of the attributive Modifier '*artful*' (> 'dodger'), only to disappoint it with the bathetic '*sod*'. More regrettably still, Buss inflects the attributive modification too starkly toward a register of outright pejoration with '*That* **bastard** *Lantier*' (p. 253) (B.T. '*ce salaud, Lantier*'). By contrast, Mauldon's nominal apposition neatly integrates the feature 'crafty' within a more modulated register of pejoration

('*Lantier, **cunning bugger** that he was*', p. 257). Townsend's '*That **rascal** Lantier*' (p. 288) also seems to be appropriate, given that the attributive Modifier clearly lexicalises the feature 'crafty'. In a similar vein, Vizetelly's rendering successfully duplicates the structure of the original group ('*that **rogue** of a hatter*', p. 242): the nominal Head of the qualified group also appropriately lexicalising the feature 'crafty'. Clearly, there seems to be a tendency here on the part of all of the translators to avoid the pitfalls of privileging the feature 'animal-like' over that of 'crafty' by exclusively lexicalising the latter at the expense of the former. This is perhaps regrettable, given the fact that the one feature is construed as a property of the other in the original: Lantier being seen to be 'crafty' in the way that an animal is, and in pursuit of much the same ends too. By way of remedy, we would thus like to propose the following translation: '*Lantier, **cunning old fox** that he was*'.

In certain cases, quick brushstroke characterisation can be achieved by means of direct allusion, with the name of an historical persona exemplary of a distinctive socio-cultural or psychological type being used to designate a particular character within the narrative. This device can be clearly seen in the narrator's description of Nana's ageing but amorous pursuer:

(v) '*Il la salua poliment, sans répondre, en vieux **rocantin** habitué aux rebuffades des parents.*' (ZOLA, p. 881)

In French literary discourse, '*rocantin*' is more or less synonymous with 'séducteur'. Indeed the emphasis, in this particular sequence, certainly seems to be upon the sleazier side of seduction, as is revealed when the latter is exercised as an act of compulsion rather than one of amorous solicitation.[xxiv] Turning to our translations, we again note that the apparent absence, in this instance, of any readily available cultural equivalent in English seems to trigger both modulation and explication. Tancock, for example, gives us the periphrastic '*an old hand at seduction*' (p. 353); Buss's '*ageing dandy*' (p. 356) perhaps privileges the feature 'elegant' a little too much over that of 'seducer'; Mauldon's '*he, the old goat that he was*' (p. 362), in turn, privileges outright lubricity

over seductive intent. Alternatively, Symons's translation refers somewhat euphemistically to '*an old practitioner*' (p. 339), the reader being left to decide exactly what he may have been a practitioner of! More convincingly, Townsend's '*an old roué*' (p. 403) furnishes an appropriate literary variant which not only clearly lexicalises the feature 'seducer' but also has the merit of deriving directly from the French lexicon itself. Given that the English language reader is more than likely to be familiar with this term, its use here would appear to represent a wholly legitimate example of linguistic borrowing. By contrast, Vizetelly's '*an old rogue*' (p. 340) seems to be a little too general, if not a little too genteel, to carry over the rather sharper nuance of 'seducer' ('old'). Perhaps '*ageing Lothario*' would have been a stronger rendering, given that it also exploits an allusion to a literary character in order to designate a specific socio-cultural type?

The problem of rendering allusions of a culturally specific nature is, of course, a recurrent one for all literary translators. Moreover, the pages of *L'Assommoir* are veritably strewn with allusions of precisely this nature:

(vi) *Et voilà un voleur de patron qui marquait à la fourchette. On n'était pourtant pas à Bondy.*[xxv] (ZOLA, p. 870)

In the above sequence, we note that the discursive texture of the sequence is vigorously colloquial, with the lexical composition thereof seeming to issue almost directly from the mouths of the disgruntled boozers themselves as they emerge from Père Colombe's lugubrious drinking parlour. Only the tense specifications are changed in accordance with the temporal framing of the narrative (i.e. 'voilà un patron qui marque' > *qui marquait*'; "on n'**est** pourtant pas' > *on n'était pourtant pas*). The main stumbling block for the translators here would appear to be in the rendering of the complex of nuances surrounding the allusion to '*Bondy*'. Back in the mid-nineteenth century, Bondy was still an area of woodland, lying just beyond the outskirts of Paris. It was also known as a place where people were famously waylaid and robbed. Although Père Colombe's subtle juggling with the price of drinks does not quite represent highway robbery, the charge

from the grouchy tipplers is nevertheless clear: he has been roundly swindling them! Once the initial allusion to '*Bondy*' is understood, the ironic force of what is being said thus becomes unmistakable.

Turning to our translations, we note the presence of what might be called a dual strategy in the face of this problem. On the one hand, for example, Tancock simply apposes the nominal epithet '*the robber*' (attributive of '*Colombe*') at the end of the sequence ('*and that twister Colombe who was overcharging, **the robber**'*, p. 340). Mauldon's rendering is even more uncompromising in its attribution of disreputability to Père Colombe's drinking house ('*The thief of a landlord had padded the bill! What a **shit-house** of a place!*', p. 348). Indeed, any reference to such notions as 'woods' or 'highwaymen' is completely occluded in this rather too demotic rendering. More satisfactorily, Townsend sketches in the essential attributes of the cursed wood, albeit without making any direct reference to the wood itself ('*He was a crook of a bartender who added up all wrong, After all, this wasn't supposed to be **a gangsters' hangout**'*, p. 387).

On the other hand, we note that three of our translators do, in fact, make a direct reference to '*Bondy*'. Vizetelly offers a direct lexical translation, without either explication or periphrasis ('*They were not at **Bondy**, surely?*', p. 323). Given the fact that such a reference is unlikely to be understood by the English language reader, this would appear to be unsatisfactory. Buss also offers a direct lexical translation ('*They weren't in **Bondy** after all*', p. 341), but has the scruple of furnishing a footnote by way of explanation (i.e. '*Bondy: a forest celebrated for its highwaymen*'). In a similar vein to his contemporary, Vizetelly, Symons also offers a direct lexical translation, unsupplemented by either footnote or further explanation ('*the old thief was totting up the account all wrong. After all, one wasn't at **Bondy**'*, p. 326). This lack is, however, remedied by Symons's contemporary editor, Nicholas White, who not only supplies an explanatory footnote along the same lines as that given by Buss (i.e. '*Parisians enjoyed taking a stroll in the woods at Bondy, but the name nevertheless had connotations of criminality and danger*') but also edits the rather stilted use of the third person general '*one*' to '*After all, **they** weren't at **Bondy**'* (WHITE, p. 318).

This particular dilemma would indeed appear to be a difficult one to resolve without incurring a certain degree of loss in translation: either loss of fluency resulting from the interruption in the reading process necessitated by the checking of a footnote, or loss of the pithy, allusive texture of the original resulting from the occlusion of its rather barbed geographical reference. In this light, Townsend's compromise solution would perhaps appear to be the most convincing way of squaring this particular circle, serving to explicate the most important of the associated nuances suggested by the original allusion without recourse to any distracting textual appendages.

Toward the close of the novel, we find several, highly specific cultural allusions in the description of Coupeau's final, frenetic demise. For example, as he leaps about in the throws of *delirium tremens*, he is described as '*Un vrai chienlit*[xxvi] *de La Courtille*' (p. 931). '*La Courtille*' was a particularly boisterous carnival to be found in the outlying *faubourgs* of north-eastern Paris. In rendering this sequence, both Buss and Mauldon offer more or less direct lexical translations (i.e. '*like a carnival figure from La Courtille*' (p. 416) and '*A proper carnival masker from La Courtille*' (p. 425) respectively). Buss also furnishes a footnote with a view to explaining to the English language reader what '*La Courtille*' actually was (i.e. '*a part of the Belleville district known for its cabarets and dance-halls*'). The two Victorian translators, Symons and Vizetelly, both draw upon the topos suggesting that this particular street fair was usually frequented by street-wise ruffians (the former giving us '*A regular street rough from La Courtille*'(p. 395); the latter, '*He looked like a regular guy of the Faubourgs*' (p. 395)). Taking a rather different tack, Townsend and Hopkins choose to privilege features pertaining to the physical comportment typically associated with the '*chienlit de la Courtille*' (i.e. 'frenetic and disarticulated movement'): both of them doing so by means of parallel or displaced allusion to the ejaculatory 'jumping jack' figure of popular mythology ('*a jumping jack in his ragged smock*' (TOWNSEND, p. 471); *a proper Jack-in-the-Box* (HOPKINS, p. 449)).

In rendering this particular allusion, the translators thus seem to be following one of three strategies: (i) direct lexical translation (with or without supplementary explanation by means of a footnote); (ii) an explicatory rendering of the socio-cultural associations evoked by the allusion; or (iii) a displaced allusion (i.e. '*chienlit*' > '*Jack-in-*

the-Box') serving to evoke certain important behavioural features typically associated with the kind of character alluded to in the original (e.g. 'frenetic and disarticulated movement'). Given that the immediately preceding co-text informs us that 'Coupeau was dancing and screaming' (*'Là-dedans, Coupeau dansait et gueulait'*), there would appear to be fairly solid, pragmatic grounds for supposing that the narrator is comparing Coupeau to a 'carnival masker at La Courtille' principally by virtue of the 'frenetic and disarticulated movement' exemplified by the latter. In which case, the third of the three options outlined above would certainly appear to be the strongest one. Moreover, the *'jumping jack/Jack-in-the-Box'* option also has the merit of clearly lexicalising the feature 'amusing', thus enabling the translated text to articulate itself around the contrastive antithesis 'apparently funny'/'but not really funny at all' in the same way as the original. The full passage reads as follows:

> *Là-dedans, Coupeau dansait et gueulait.* **Un vrai chienlit** *de la Courtille, avec sa blouse en lambeaux et ses membres qui battaient l'air;* **mais un chienlit pas drôle, oh!** *non,* **un chienlit dont le chahut effrayant vous faisait dresser tout le poils du corps.**

On the other hand, the carrying over of this discursive effect would appear to be somewhat thwarted by the privileging of the second option. In Symons's rendering, for example, the attempt to integrate *'a regular street rough'* as the thematic reference around which the contradiction between 'apparently amusing' and 'not amusing at all' is to be articulated becomes highly problematic, simply by virtue of the fact that street ruffians are rarely amusing in any situation, particularly if one encounters them on a dark night!

> *And there Coupeau danced and yelled.* **A regular street rough** *of La Courtille, with his blouse in tatters, and his legs fighting the air;* **but a street rough, not amusing at all,** *oh no,* **a street rough whose frightful chahut made your hair stand on end.** (SYMONS)

Contextual and co-textual factors can thus be seen to play an important role in determining which of the potentially relevant semantic features evoked by a given allusion should be lexicalised in any given case.[xxvii] In the above, for example, it might be argued that, in the original text, the allusion to '*La Courtille*' is of somewhat incidental significance compared to that of the thematic progression established by the anaphoric chain '*Un vrai chienlit*' > '*un chienlit pas drôle*' > '*non, un chienlit dont le chahut effrayant*'. A similar dispensability might be argued of the allusion to the local madhouse '*Chaillot*' in the following sequence:

> (vi) *Lorsqu'elle ne parlait plus, elle prenait tout de suite la tête d'un ahuri de* **Chaillot**, *les yeux grand ouverts.*

Turning to our translations, it is perhaps interesting to note that the three most contemporary of our translators (i.e. Buss, Mauldon and Tancock) choose to retain the original allusion; the other four (i.e. Townsend, Hopkins, Symons and Vizetelly) dispensing with it altogether. An example of the former would be Buss's '*when she stopped speaking, her face immediately adopted the expression of a madwoman from* **Chaillot**, *with staring eyes*' (p. 419); an example of the latter, Townsend's '*When she wasn't talking, her great staring eyes gave the appearance of an asylum inmate herself*' (p. 474). The importance given to the retention of this piece of local colour on the part of the contemporary translators would tend to suggest a present-day trend toward the reproduction of period and place authenticity, with their late-Victorian/mid-twentieth century counterparts taking a rather more pragmatic line in this respect. Equally significant is the fact that none of them takes the option of rendering '*Chaillot*' by means of a culturally recognisable equivalent. The principal reason for this may well be that any such equivalent is likely to be of purely local renown.

If associatively loaded allusions to particular places or institutions in the original can be seen to cause problems for the translators, then the use of similarly loaded allusions to specific cultural rites and practices are equally apt to prove troublesome. For example, when the narrator exhorts the reader to join in the fun at witnessing the

spectacle of Coupeau's *delirium tremens*, the latter is mockingly described in terms of a particular French dance (*'Il faut voir sauter ce rigodon des soûlards'*(ZOLA. p. 931)). The rigadoon (= *'rigodon'*) is a wild, flailing jig of Provençal origin, dating from the seventeenth-century. Moreover, it would seem to be precisely the frenetic aspect of this gig which furnishes the ground of the figure here, i.e. *'rigodon'* = 'a dance' ('composed of **wild and flailing movements'**); *'delirium tremens'* = 'a state of alcoholic withdrawal' ('often involving **wild and flailing movements'**) ergo *'rigodon'* > **'wild and flailing movements'** < *'des soûlards'*.

The principal dilemma for the translator, in this instance, would appear to be whether to risk smuggling in a direct allusion to the *'rigodon'* itself, or whether to find a variant which would be likely to be more accessible to the target-culture reader. Moreover, this case would seem to be a particularly borderline one, given the fact that the exuberant Mediterranean gig would probably be known to at least some of the English language readership of the novel (although not, of course, by as great a proportion as of the original French one). Turning to our corpus translators, we note that only two of them risk the former option: Tancock and Vizetelly translating almost directly (i.e. *'rigodon des soûlards'* = *'drunkard's rigodon'* (p. 409; p. 395). Alternatively, Buss, Townsend and Hopkins opt for clarity over specificity by choosing a superordinate term (i.e. 'rigodoon' = 'a kind of dance' ergo 'drunkard's rigodoon' > *'drunkard's dance'* (p. 416; p. 471; p. 450). Symons also lexicalises the notion of 'dance' by means of what might be seen as a transposed item of superordinate scope, i.e. *rigodon* (n.) > 'dance' > *'danced'* (v.) (*'you have to see the real thing **danced** by a real drunkard'* (p. 395). The repetition of the attributive Modifier *'real'* also serves to inflect the sequence with a vague but nevertheless unmistakably emphatic nuance, which discursively signals the apparent authenticity of what is being described. Regrettably, the notion of 'wild and flailing movements' is somewhat occluded by these changes. Finally, it is perhaps Mauldon who offers the most convincing rendering upon this occasion (*'you really have to see a drunk **hopping** through that jig'* (p. 425): the use of the participial Predicator *'hopping'*, followed by the nominal item *'that jig'* in the Complement slot, serving to lexicalise the notion of 'wild and flailing movements' in clear and unambiguous terms (with the generic singular *'a drunk'* assuming the role of Agent).

If the presence of cultural allusion at the level of single item, lexical choice can be seen to trigger significant variation in translation, this would seem to be the case *a fortiori* with respect to sequence-length idiomatic constructions.

(vii) *Nana renifla, se grisait lorsqu'elle sentait à côté d'elle une fille **qui avait déjà vu le loup**.* (ZOLA, p. 877)

In this sequence, for example, we find a deliciously euphemistic idiom referring to carnal knowledge. In view of the censorious pressure which Ernest Vizetelly exercised upon himself, we are perhaps little surprised to discover that he simply omits such an unabashed allusion to sexual experience in his own, heavily expurgated version of the text. By contrast, his contemporary, Arthur Symons, seems to commit a somewhat different peccadillo (i.e. false literalism) in furnishing a direct lexical translation of the original French idiom ('*Nana sniffed and gloated when she found herself side by side with someone **who had already seen the wolf*** (p.355)). Although the astute English language reader might well be able to infer that some kind of allusion to sexuality is being made here (wolves being typically carnal and rapacious creatures), this formulation would nevertheless seem to lack all clarity as a recognisable and culturally accessible idiom. In this light, it would doubtless be preferable to find an equivalent of the original formulation, alluding to the acquisition of carnal knowledge with more or less the same degree of indirection. Townsend's '*a girl who had been around*' (p. 398), for example, corresponds to this requirement without any misleading reference to the spotting of wolves. On the other hand, Hopkins's '*one of the girls next to her who had already **'been through the hoop'*** (p. 377) reads a little quaintly to someone picking up his mid-century translation fifty years hence. If allusion indeed there be to one's first sexual experiences in this oblique and hedged formulation, it would seem to suggest above all that this existential rite of passage is to be apprehended as a potentially painful trial or ordeal.[xxviii] One strongly suspects that the sensually curious girls at the Titreville workshop would not have had so grave or timorous a view of such matters. In a rather different register, Buss's '*a girl **who had already tasted the forbidden fruit***' (p. 352) strikes a distinctly

biblical note: a nuance wholly absent from the original. More positively, Tancock and Mauldon's '*a girl **who'd/had already lost her cherry**'* (p. 349; p. 358) almost certainly provides the contemporary reader with the most readily accessible equivalent of the idiomatic formulation to be found in the original, at least in terms of the lexicon of British English.[xxix]

In conclusion, it would seem that this example demonstrates nothing if not the importance of translating the whole idiom as a discrete and unitary item of meaning. Unfortunately, this simple affirmation concerning 'what' is to be translated does very little to instruct us in terms of 'how' such units are to be translated in given instances. Ultimately, such decisions are likely to be taken in accordance with what the translator feels to be the appropriately equivalent idiom in his/her own language. In this respect, the translation of apparently 'frozen' idiomatic formulations such as the one above would appear to be very much an interpretative affair, subject to the subtle shifts and realignments in the distribution of linguistic resources available to the individual translator at any one time. Of course, what is sauce for the goose is not necessarily sauce for the gander; what strikes one generation of translators as being 'appropriate' or 'equivalent' might not necessarily do so to another.

As the narrative of *L'Assommoir* develops, the use of idioms comparing the behaviour of the characters to that of animals becomes progressively greater, with the once boisterous and spirited cast beginning to wallow in their own degradation. One such idiom is the following, short simile, comparing Coupeau's state of intoxication to that of a songbird:

> (viii) *Coupeau, **soûl comme une grive**, commencait à viauper et disait que c'était le chagrin.* (ZOLA, p. 842)

Coupeau, drunk as a thrush? At first glance, it is perhaps hard to see why this particular animal should be seen to be exemplary of 'drunkenness'. This may be because its song is taken to be wittering and incoherent like that of a drunkard's speech? In any case, the association would appear to owe as much to convention as any natural logic: a

convention, moreover, inscribed peculiarly (and probably exclusively) within the idiomatic strata of the French language as it was spoken within the mid-to-late nineteenth-century period. Given this peculiarity, the English-language translators must manage how they will, hoping to find a formulation which carries over as many of the relevant features of the original idiom as possible without unnecessarily courting the absurd. Tancock and Symons both opt for '*drunk as a lord*' (p. 305; p. 291). Although this rendering has the merit of being instantly recognisable to a British English reader, it might nevertheless be criticised on the grounds that it fails to carry over the feature 'animal-like' in the same way as the original. Given the thematic salience of the latter, this would appear to be of by no means negligible stylistic importance. On the other hand, Buss's '*already drunk as a newt*' (p. 304) does successfully lexicalise the feature 'animal-like', although the full demotic thrust of this idiom might have better brought out had he used 'pissed' instead of '*drunk*'.[xxx] Along the same lines, Mauldon's '*drunk as an owl*' (p. 310) appropriately selects a species of bird as the comparative exemplum, albeit one connoting more 'wisdom' than 'drunkenness' to a native English speaker. Townsend jettisons the simile form of the original but retains the feature 'animal-like' by virtue of his allusion to Coupeau being '*already soused to the gills*' (p. 346) ('gills' = 'the breathing apparatus of fish'; 'fish' = 'a sub-genera of animal' ergo 'if (x) has gills to be soused to, then he is, in some respect, animal-like'). Although Vizetelly's translation also lexicalises the feature 'animal-like', '*drunk as a pig*' (p. 291) would nevertheless seem to read a little incongruously as an idiomatic collocation. Indeed, in terms of the enthymematic logic evoked by the figure of the 'pig', one can readily countenance being 'as fat as a pig' or as 'greedy as a pig', but as drunk as one?

In conclusion, it would seem that Zola's use of culturally charged designation and allusion triggers the use of a number of different compensatory strategies on the part of the translators as a means of carrying over the principal notions and features evoked by the original designation or allusion. Moreover, a direct borrowing of the original form of designation or allusion was seen to be more or less otiose in the majority of the cases that we examined above, with too great a burden being placed upon the cultural knowledge of the target culture reader when this occurred. In such cases, the original item was more convincingly 'dropped' from the target text, to be replaced either by a cultural equivalent

(e.g. '*avait déjà vu le loup*' > '*who had already lost her cherry*') or a more general paraphrase (e.g. '*ahuri de Chaillot*' > '*inmate of a local asylum*'; '*Bondy*' > '*a gangsters' hangout*').[xxxi] In certain cases, a direct rendering of the original designating item was included in the target text, but only within the context of an explicatory periphrasis (e.g. '*paletot*' > '*stuck-up type in a topcoat*'). Some of the more successful translations were seen to be those which lexicalised all of the key notions and features evoked by the original designation or allusion, albeit without repeating the latter itself (e.g. '*chienlit de La Courtille*' > '*Jack in the box*'; '*Rigodon des soûlards*' > '*a drunk hopping through that jig*'). We also placed considerable emphasis upon the need not to depart too dramatically from the original mode of signification. Indeed, the more closely the translating sequence was seen to duplicate the latter, the more successful it was considered to be. In certain cases, we offered remedial translations designed to reconcile these potentially conflicting parameters. This was done with varying degrees of success. For example, our rendering of '*Cet animal de Lantier*' as '*Lantier, cunning old fox that he was*' successfully lexicalised the two core features implied by the original designation (i.e. 'craft' ('of an animal kind')), albeit without duplicating the original, syntactically figurative mode of signification. On the other hand, our translation of '*vieux rocantin*' as '*ageing Lothario*' had the merit both of rendering the core features of the original item (i.e. 'seducer' ('old' ('cynical'))) and also of duplicating its basic mode of signification (i.e. designation by means of literary allusion). In this respect, the first remedial translation might be said to have been partially successful, the second, fully so.

More about syntactic figuration

Syntactic figuration is likely to play an important role in any creative language practice. Moreover, it is no surprise to find that the pages of *L'Assommoir* are thoroughly inflected with figures of this kind.[xxxii] Syntactic figures result from the use of a particular lexical item within the context of a given syntactic group or predicative sequence which either directly contradicts or, in some way, deviates from the collocational expectations typically generated by the use of one (or several) of the other items within that same

group or sequence. This kind of deviance is often used to create what have traditionally been called 'images' (although this term has probably become somewhat too generalised to retain any real analytical precision). The genetic connection between syntactic figure and literary image can be clearly seen in the following sequence:

(i) *Elle s'accoutumait à l'ombre, voyait des enfoncements où des hommes immobiles réglaient **la danse haletante des volants**.* (ZOLA, p. 732)

Once again, there seems to be a considerable degree of structural condensation involved in the articulation of this apparently simple figure. This might be unpacked in the following way:

la danse haletante (THEME) *des volants* (RHEME)

The first structurally significant aspect of the figure is the promotion of the nominal group '*la danse haletante*' into a position of thematic salience within the informational profile of the sequence as a whole (which can also, in syntactic terms, be classified as a nominal group). This might be demonstrated contrastively in relation to a less condensed and more explicit sequential variation such as the following:

les volants (THEME) qui tournaient dans **une danse haletante** (RHEME)

The promotion of '*la danse haletante*' into a position of thematic salience also has an important influence upon what kind of functional logic we are likely to read into the sequence. This can be shown by comparing the actual sequence from *L'Assommoir* with the less condensed and more explicit variation:

la danse haletante (PROCESS) *des volants* (MEDIUM)
les volants (ACTOR) qui tournaient (ACTION) dans une danse haletante
(MANNER)

If we accept the validity of the above mapping, it would seem that what the promotion of *'danse haletante'* into a position of thematic salience actually does is to sharpen the reader's apprehension of what is being described in sensory-perceptive terms, with the latter being perceived as an interaction between a particular kind of 'Process' and the apparent 'Medium' within which this Process can be seen to take place. By contrast, the less condensed and more explicit sequential variation articulates itself in terms of a primarily agentive logic, with a specific 'Action' being predicated of a specific 'Actor'.[xxxiii]

In this light, it is perhaps little surprising to find that the privileging of this sensory-perceptive mode of apprehension furnishes the ground upon which the figurative articulation of the sequence is to be developed. This development might be broken down into two stages: (i) the visual impression generated by the movement of the flywheels (= *'les volants'*) is compared to that generated by the movement of a dance (= *'la danse'*); (ii) the auditory impression generated by the movement of the flywheels is compared to that generated by the breathless panting of an animal or human being (> *'haletante'*):

(i) *'des volants'* > 'rapid, rotating movement' < *'la danse'*

(ii) *'des volants'* > 'rapid, rotating movement' ('giving off a whirring sound' ('like that of panting breath')) < *'la danse (haletante)'*

Turning to our corpus, it will be interesting to see to what extent this finely articulated figurative logic is reproduced in translated form. In this respect, for example, Tancock's *'where men stood motionless, regulating **the panting flywheels**'* strikes us as being inadequate, given that the *'panting'* is attributed directly to the *'flywheels'* rather than their 'rapid, rotating movement'. This particular loss would appear to be the result of negligence rather than any inherent limitation in the lexical resources offered by the English language, however, given that options such as *'panting dance of the flywheels'* (SYMONS, p.164) and *'breathless dance of the flywheels'* (BUSS, p. 169) prove themselves to be equally possible in this instance. Moreover, both of the latter options have the merit of simplicity, carrying over the figurative logic of the original by means of

direct lexical translation, with only slight variation occurring around the lexicalisation of the notion of being 'out of breath', i.e. *'breathless'/'panting'* (+ 'Human'/+ 'Animal').

In conclusion, it would seem that the rendering of a complexly mediated syntactic figure need not necessarily pose a problem for the translators provided that (i) the lexical resources necessary to render it in the target language are available; (ii) the original syntactical structure generative of the figure is not too difficult to accommodate in the target language. Fortunately, in the above example, both of these conditions would appear to have been adequately met. In certain cases, however, their fulfilment becomes altogether more problematic, as can be seen with reference to the following sequence:

(ii) *Les rues étaient **jaunes**, une petite pluie tombait; mais ils avaient déjà trop chaud à l'intérieur pour sentir ce léger arrosage sur leurs **abattis**.*

(ZOLA, p. 805)

Two interesting lexical choices would seem to arise from the above sequence: firstly, in the rendering of the adjectival item *'jaune'*, which is used to describe the mist-laden streets, and secondly, in the rendering of the nominal plural *'abattis'*, which is used to refer to the drink-mellowed bodies of the drunkards as they amble along from bar to bar.

The first of these two choices would appear to be a relatively simple one in execution, involving little more than the rendering of a primary colour term in the predicative adjective slot. Despite this apparent simplicity, however, the use of *'jaune'* in this context seems to trigger a certain degree of explication on the part of the translators, possibly resulting from the need to avoid the contrastive implication that the streets were simply 'yellow' as opposed to any other colour (for example, 'green' or 'blue', etc.). Thus, we have various indications of what kind of 'yellow' the streets were. For example, Tancock's rendering is inflected with a certain mood of sadness by virtue of the addition of the adjectival item *'dismal'*, inserted as an attributive Modifier to *'yellow'* within the sequence *'The streets were a **dismal** yellow'* (p. 260). Alternatively, in the translations of Mauldon and Vizetelly, the colour ascription '(x) was colour (y)' is seen to be of only approximate validity, the colour item in the predicative adjective slot being qualified by

the attenuating suffix '-ish' (*'The streets were a yellowish colour'* (MAULDON, p. 262); *'the streets were yellowish'* (VIZETELLY, p. 247)). Finally, we note that Townsend opts to reorganise the functional logic of the original sequence to a considerably greater extent than any of the above, replacing the basic predicative ascription of colour with an existential formulation according to which it is not so much the streets themselves which are seen to be 'yellow' or 'yellowish' as the mist in which they are shrouded (*'There was a yellowish haze in the streets'* (p. 293)). Although the original text does not refer directly to *'haze'* (= 'brume'), Townsend's explication would nevertheless appear to be broadly in keeping with the prevailing visual logic of the sequence, with the drizzle at nightfall forming a crepuscular backdrop to the boozers' progress.

The second translation choice involves the rendering of another idiomatically frozen synecdoche, which, in this instance, can be seen to facilitate a dysphoric lexical substitution along the following lines:

('ce léger arrosage **sur leurs corps**') > ('ce léger arrosage sur **les parties de leurs corps**') > (*'ce léger arrosage sur leurs **abattis**'*)

According to this reading, *'abattis'* is being used here principally in its figurative and popular sense to signify 'les bras et les jambes'.[xxxiv] However, this secondary sense would also seem to be heavily inflected by the primary and non-figurative signification of the lexeme (i.e. 'abattis' = 'les abats de volaille'): a semantic inflection strongly reinforced in this instance by the lugubrious drink-sodden atmosphere of the scene being depicted throughout the passage. Accordingly, *'abattis'* becomes isotopic with *'jaune'* in terms of the syntagmatically articulated logic of the sequence, with the secondary feature 'decadent' being strongly indexed into the respective semantic representations of both of these items by virtue of context. Moreover, given the extent to which the isotopy 'decadent' turns into a starkly dominant one as the narrative of *L'Assommoir* develops, the thematic resonance established by means of this isotopic linking would appear to be far from gratuitous.

Zola's use of this little piece of chicken-house slang here is thus a carefully placed one. Although the secondary, figurative and popular signification of *'abattis'* is clearly

privileged here, more than a hint of the rather cadaverous and decadent associations adhering to the primary or core signification also seems to be evoked. This textual effect can thus be seen to be dependent upon a particular and perhaps somewhat fortuitous piece of lexical extension to be found within the lexicon of nineteenth-century, colloquial French. Given that the translators are unlikely to be able to draw upon an equivalently polysemic item within the lexicon of the English language, it would perhaps be unreasonable to expect them to duplicate this textual effect integrally. We would, however, expect them to lexicalise the notion of 'corporeality' in at least basic terms, with a view to gesturing toward the kind of effect that Zola was able to achieve in the original. Five of our corpus translations do, in fact, include a clear lexicalisation of this notion in their respective versions, although there is considerable variation in the kind of synecdoche employed to achieve this. Mauldon and Vizetelly, for example, both render 'abattis' as 'limbs', thus furnishing a superordinate term regrouping 'arms and legs' within one classificatory category. Hopkins's translation also refers clearly to the 'corporeality' of the boozers, albeit displacing the referential focus from 'arms and legs' to 'hands and faces'. Similarly, although Buss's rendering of 'abattis' as 'extremities' certainly captures something of the colloquial feel of the original, the latter would nevertheless appear to be more general in its denotative scope than the former, referring equally well to 'fingers', 'nose' or 'feet' as 'arms and legs'. Finally, Tancock's rendering, 'carcasses', has the merit of lexicalising the notions of both 'corporeality' and 'decadence' in equal measure, thus clearly inscribing itself within the isotopy generated by the syntagmatic recurrence of the latter notion throughout the text. In this respect, it would appear to be the most satisfactory of the five renderings quoted.

In the pages of *L'Assommoir*, Zola proved himself to be particularly adept at sharpening the barbed edge of colloquial speech with a view to creating certain stylistic effects, as we discovered above. In the following example, he can be seen to exploit a rich seam of popular idioms featuring 'crever de (+ Complement denoting 'Cause')'[xxxv] in order to extract a somewhat sinister paradox:

(iii) *C'était son milieu, il **crevait d'aise** parmi les jupes, se fourrant au plus épais des femmes.* (ZOLA, p. 792)

This sequence vividly describes the lazy sensuality of Lantier as he insinuates his way into the favours of the washerwomen, doing so, it would seem, almost to the point of amniotic immersion (*'se fourrant au plus épais des femmes'*). However, there is something altogether less comforting evoked by the predication *'il /// **crevait d'aise'***, with the Predicator clearly inscribing itself within the isotopy of 'decadence' that we identified above. There is also more than a touch of the absurd in this particular conceit, given that one does not normally perish of sensual wallowing of the kind that Lantier is indulging in here. Nevertheless, what the narrator does seem to be suggesting is that something akin to morbid inertia can result from over-indulgence in such an apparently innocent vice. This pointed paradox would thus appear to be a deliberately crafted one, generated, as in previous cases, by virtue of a calculated deviation from conventional collocational expectations:

'crever de (+ 'nominal item denoting malign agent or state (e.g. 'faim', 'chagrin')') > *'crever d'* (+ 'nominal item denoting an apparently beneficial state (i.e. *'aise'*)').

In this light, it is perhaps somewhat disappointing that no less than six of the translations occlude the figurative twist implied by Zola's paradoxical predication. For example, Buss gives us *'he **was happiest'*** (p. 241); Mauldon, *'he **adored'*** (p. 246); Symons, *'he **was perfectly happy'*** (p. 233); Townsend, *'the atmosphere **suited** him* (p. 275)'. None of these options, however, adequately renders the sting of the original. Once again, it would appear that only Tancock is prepared to grasp the nettle, as it were, by duplicating something of the paradoxical structure of *'crevait d'aise'* in his own rendering, *'he **was thrilled to death'*** (p. 245). This rendering works by means of a calculated distortion of the idiom 'he was thrilled to bits' and, as such, it constitutes an interesting attempt to appropriate the idiomatic resources of the target language with a view to recreating a particular rhetorical effect.[xxxvi]

As we have already discovered in the course of our study, this kind of effect is by no means an isolated one. Indeed, Zola might be said to have created a veritable stylistic leitmotif out of the yoking together of various subtly dissonant lexical items in the course of the narrative. In the following sequence, we find another example of this technique, with the isotopy of 'disease' once again being exploited to full effect:

> (iv) *Cependant, au milieu de **cette coqueluche de tendresse** pour Lantier, Gervaise, les premières semaines, vécut dans un grand trouble.* (ZOLA, p. 785)

In this sequence, describing the insidious spread of affection for the ingratiating hatter upon his return to the Goutte d'Or, we find another interesting example of syntactic figuration, developed within the structure of the nominal group, *'cette coqueluche de tendresse'*. This figurative articulation again seems to work by means of structural inversion, with the Theme function normally fulfilled by the Head item being assumed, in this case, by the nominal item within the qualifying prepositional group (i.e. *'cette coqueluche de **tendresse**'*). In simpler terms, we might say that the key thematic notion is not so much the 'scarlet fever' (= *'coqueluche'*) to which the quality of 'tenderness' (= *'tendresse'*) might be attributed, as the 'tenderness' itself, which is seen to be spreading through the female constituency of the neighbourhood as rampantly as an epidemic of 'scarlet fever'.[xxxvii] The grounds of the figure are thus broadly comparative:

> 'la *coqueluche*' ('une maladie qui a tendance à **se propager rapidement (avec des conséquences néfastes)**')
>
> 'la *tendresse* pour Lantier' ('un béguin qui **s'est propagé rapidement (avec des conséquences néfastes)**') >
>
> *'cette coqueluche'* > **'propagation rapide (avec des conséquences néfastes)'** < *'de tendresse'*

Clearly, a particularly ill-fated kind of 'tenderness' is being suggested here: one threatening potentially perverse or malign consequences for those among whom it

flourishes. Accordingly, more than a hint of this unexpected backlash would appear to be mirrored in Zola's rather paradoxical yoking together of modally euphoric and dysphoric items (i.e. '*tendresse*' and '*coqueluche*' respectively). Turning to our corpus translations, it would perhaps be unreasonable to expect our translators to render Zola's subtle twisting of collocational expectations in quite such a syntactically condensed form, particularly given the comparative rarity, in English, of the '(x) of (y)' nominal in relation to the incidence of the equivalent '(x) de (y)' structure in the French language. On the other hand, we might at least expect them to lexicalise the notion of 'disease' ('highly contagious') in explicit terms, given the salience of the latter in the original. Unfortunately, only two of our translators actually do this: Tancock offering '*general epidemic of affection*' (p. 237) and Buss '*this rash of affection for Lantier* '(p. 233) (both versions also felicitously duplicating the 'Qualified – Qualifier' nominal form of the original). By contrast, the other translators seem to settle for solutions resembling mere paraphrase, e.g. '*Lantier came into favour on all sides*' (SYMONS, p. 224); '*Lantier was inspiring this warm regard all around* (MAULDON, p. 237); '*the extraordinary partiality for Lantier which others displayed*' (VIZETELLY, p. 223). Similarly, Hopkins reveals his penchant for broad-brushstroke adaptation by offering '*with all this welcoming of the prodigal going on around her*' (p. 245). Although interesting and allegorically suggestive, the ironically laudatory biblical allusion structuring the sequence nevertheless represents too great a shift from the composite terms of the original figure to be entirely adequate. Moreover, the implied analogy between Lantier and the prodigal son also seems to be a somewhat tenuous one, given that the former is not so much gathered back into a family fold in which he was once known and loved as welcomed as a charming stranger into a milieu that he had only fleetingly and obscurely frequented some ten years previously.

Zola's use of certain thematically salient lexical items in contexts in which they begin to generate figuratively productive dissonance constitutes an important part of the disturbing choral flow of the whole narrative. This can be clearly seen in the following sequence, describing the terrible whisper of poverty to be heard droning along the staircases and corridors of Gervaise's tenement:

(v) *On pleurait à tous les étages, **une musique de malheur ronflant** le long de l'escalier et des corridors.* (ZOLA, p. 851)

The plaintive sound filling the staircases is described memorably as '*une musique de malheur*', its whining drone mimicked onomatopoeically, perhaps, by the alliteration upon the repeated, voiced bilabial consonant, *m*. Of our seven corpus translators, only Symons attempts to duplicate the alliteration ('*a music of misery*'); the others tending to opt for more specific lexical variants in order to render '*musique*'. The trigger for this would appear to be the need to lexicalise the notion of 'sound' ('continuous') in such a way as to make it more compatible with the dolorous atmosphere evoked by the use of such items as '*pleurait*', '*malheur* and '*ronflant*' in the original sequence. Hopkins's rendering, '*the moan of poverty*', for example, makes this requirement very clear. Alternatively, Tancock and Buss both privilege the feature 'vocal' in their respective versions ('*a song of woe*' (TANCOCK, p. 317); '*a chorus of misery*' (BUSS, p. 317)). Translating along similar lines, Mauldon adds a distinctly funereal nuance to her own rendering ('*a dirge of misfortune*', p. 322-3), thus accentuating the dysphoric tone of the whole sequence. Townsend's '***lamentations***' (p. 360) has a similar effect. Finally, we note that, although Vizetelly opts for a direct lexical translation of '*musique*' (= '*music*'), he also explicitly lexicalises the feature 'dolorous' in the form of an attributive Modifier ('*a **doleful music** of distress* '(p. 303)).

Returning to the original sequence, we note that the collocation of the participial Predicator '*ronflant*' with the nominal group in the Subject slot of the clause, '*une musique de malheur*', also seems to generate a particular kind of figurative pressure, given the fact that it becomes hard to conceive of any kind of 'snoring' which exemplifies the properties of 'melody, harmony, rhythm and acoustic conformation' to a degree sufficient to classify as '*musique*' (whether it be one of 'ill fortune' or not). One particular consequence of this figuratively pressured collocation is that we are likely to select the feature 'low, intermittently rhythmical sound' when construing the meaning of '*ronflant*' but not 'vocal and nasal emission produced during sleep'. Accordingly, this process of semantic selection and occlusion is also reflected in the way this item is

rendered in translation: Tancock's 'moaning' and Mauldon's 'groaning' both privileging the former feature at the expense of the latter. On the other hand, Buss's choice of 'swelling' to render 'ronflant' seems to suggest something altogether more euphoric than the insidious drone of poverty to be heard whining through the dusty stairwell neighbouring Gervaise's hovel. Vizetelly's 'resounding' might also be taxed with the same criticism.

The pages of L'Assommoir can be seen to be veritably littered with figuratively and colloquially textured descriptions of the daily grind and degradation of life as it is lived within the oppressive tenements of the Goutte d'Or. The following sequence, for example, is shot through with figure and metaphor portraying the soul-consuming squalor and misery experienced by the Parisian pauper class in the mid-nineteenth century:

(vi) *Par moments, des danses s'élevaient, des larmes de femmes, des plaintes de mioches affamés, des familles qui se mangeaient pour tromper leur estomac.*

(ZOLA, p. 853)

Firstly, we note that the nominal group in the Subject slot 'des danses' seems to refer more to a 'turbulent eruption of sound' than anything resembling 'a choreographed visual spectacle', as various wailings and bawlings are to be heard striking up in ragged cacophony. Accordingly, this figurative shift from the domain of visual to that of acoustic phenomena is diversely reflected in our corpus translations. For example, Townsend's 'a kind of music' (p. 363) clearly inscribes itself within the latter domain, although one is perhaps not entirely sure 'what kind' of music is being referred to here. Fortunately, in this respect, some of the other translations are a little more specific. For example, Mauldon and Symons also privilege the domain of acoustic phenomena, with both clearly lexicalising the notion of 'sound' ('noisy' ('emanating from the prosecution of a dispute or an argument')): 'you could hear a row going on' (MAULDON, p. 326); 'there was a bit of a row' (SYMONS, p. 306). Similarly, Tancock's 'some shindy' (p. 319) also picks up upon this notion, albeit in a more colloquial way. Taking a rather different angle of approach, Buss attempts to lexicalise the notion of 'spectacle' superordinately

categorising '*des danses*' with his rather fanciful '*an **orchestra** would strike up*' (p. 320). Indeed this rendering would seem to lend itself only with difficulty to the kind of figurative work being asked of it here. Finally, Vizetelly's '*a noise of **drubbing***' (p. 305) alludes explicitly to the domestic violence that can be presumed to accompany the noisy squabbling to be heard from the landing. Although there is no direct textual reference to such violence in the original, there would nevertheless appear to be strong contextual support for this reading, given the harrowing nature of the scene being depicted. Hopkins errs even further on the side of hyperbolic dysphoria with '*Now and again this **peace of the tomb** was broken by **sounds of violence***' (p. 342).

The rendering of the colloquially inflected variant of 'enfants' (> '*mioches*') also requires a little sensitivity on the part of the translators with respect to textual register. Unfortunately, Tancock and Buss both fail to produce a similarly inflected lexical variant: the former settling for '*starving **children***' and the latter for '*a hungry **child***'. Vizetelly and Hopkins both offer '*hungry **brats***', which gets a little closer to the kind of register required, as does Mauldon's '*kids*'. On the other hand, Townsend's '*youngsters*' (B.T. 'les jeunes') is probably just a little too general, if not a little too genteel, to pass muster.

The closing group of the sequence, '*des familles qui **se mangeaient** pour tromper leur estomac*', can also be seen to be highly figurative in conception. Read literally, this would seem to point to autophagy and cannibalism in the face of extreme hunger! A more metaphorical reading would tend to suggest 'persistent quarrelling and bickering' (> '*se mangeaient*') as a means of distracting themselves (> '*se tromper*') from their alimentary plight (> '*leur estomac*'). Ultimately, perhaps neither reading is to be excluded, given that Zola seems to be subtly grafting the second one onto the first in order to imply that the diversionary squabbling of the latter might ultimately degenerate into the atavism of the former if left unchecked. All of this black punning, of course, constitutes a somewhat difficult trick to pull off for the translator.

In this light, it is perhaps unsurprising to find that both Mauldon and Hopkins offer simple paraphrases of the second reading, largely uninflected by any punning around the notions of 'quarrelling' and 'consumption' ('*when families **went at each other** as a way of **forgetting their hunger***' (MAULDON); '*families seeking to find **in violence a momentary forgetfulness** of hunger* '(HOPKINS). Tancock attempts to get a little

closer to the idea that persistent domestic squabbling might be seen as a kind of mutual evisceration (*'families tearing each other to pieces to try to forget their horror'*). The notion of 'hunger', however, is almost completely occluded in this rendering. On the other hand, Vizetelly opts for a direct lexical translation of *'pour tromper leur estomac'* (i.e. *'it was only a family going for one another just to deceive their stomachs'*). This rendering does not appear to be very convincing, however, and the reason for this is probably that the notion of 'consumption' is not lexicalised with a sufficient degree of clarity in the first part of the sequence to enable the reader to make any sense of the rather unusual phrasing of the second part. More convincingly, Townsend's translation succeeds in grafting the notion of 'quarrelling' onto that of 'consumption' by means of a contrastive opposition between the reality of the latter and the frustrated simulation of it (*'families snapping at each other instead of eating'*). A similar kind of punning structure can also be found in Buss's version: the notion of 'consumption' being grafted figuratively onto that of 'quarrelling' in much the same way as in the original (*'a family devouring itself to ward off the pangs'*). Symons's *'families who went at each other tooth and nail as a way of forgetting their hunger'* also reproduces something of this punning structure, albeit in a more tortuous fashion: the *'tooth and nail'* with which the families are seen metaphorically to be going for each other perhaps alluding analogically to the action of 'jaws' working upon food (*'tooth and nail'* > 'sharp, pointed, penetrative' < 'jaws').

Thus, the translators seem to be diversely successful in their renderings of the complex punning structure animating the original text. Nevertheless, the respective translations of Townsend and Buss demonstrate the possibility of doing precisely this with only minor displacement of the notional co-ordinates of the original pun. In the following case, the need to duplicate a particular pun becomes all the greater, given that the latter is supposedly coined by one of the characters herself (although it might equally well have issued from the narrator's own perspective upon events). The target of the pun is once again the egregious Lantier:

(vii) *Au bout d'un mois, il voulut mettre toute la cuisine à l'huile. Comme disait Clémence, en le blaguant, la tache d'huile reparaissait quand même chez ce sacré Provençal.* (ZOLA, p. 793)

According to Clemence's *bon mot*, the allusion to the re-appearing 'oil stain', although ostensibly referring to the semantic domain of 'cooking' being thematised at this point in the narrative, also serves quite blatantly to suggest the moral turpitude of he upon whom it is seen to reappear, i.e. *'ce sacré Provençal'*. The translators once again seem to handle this complex cross-referencing of domains quite skilfully, with two kinds of option predominating. The first one involves the structuring of the sequence around the notion of the 'unintended re-apparition' of the oil/moral stain. One such example of this would be Tancock's *'the grease-spots always showed on this blooming Provençal'* (p. 245). The second involves a somewhat greater departure from the lexical composition of the original, with the pun being structured around the notion of the 'indelibility' of the oil/moral stain (e.g. *'in a confounded Provençal like him you could never wash away the oil stains'* (TOWNSEND, p. 276). Of the seven corpus translations researched, only Hopkins's translation differs significantly from this pattern: the pun around the notion of 'oil' *qua* cooking ingredient/symptom of moral turpitude being completely reorganised to suggest that Lantier was, in fact, a man of hidden riches! (*'scratch a man from Provence, and you always strike oil'* (p. 256)). Undoubtedly, this rendering appropriately conveys the idea that there was something imperfectly concealed within Lantier's shady personality just waiting to resurface, Nevertheless, it remains uncertain as to whether the notion of 'striking oil' might be made to suggest the revelation of moral turpitude in quite the same way as the 'unintended re-apparition of a grease-stain'. Indeed, in this respect, Hopkins's translation would appear to lend itself to an altogether more laudatory reading than that licensed by Clémence's caustic barb in the original.

The narrator's punning at the expense of what is perhaps the only unambiguously malign character in the novel is certainly a sustained exercise, involving a number of variously derisive and ironic textual strategies aimed at letting the 'grease-stains' show through his apparently charming exterior. Frequently, the creation of such textual effects

can be seen to hang upon little more than the pregnant use of a single lexical item. This is clearly so in the following sequence:

(viii) *Et Lantier [...] se confectionna une énorme tartine de fromage de Brie; il se renversait, il la mangeait **dévotement**, le sang sous la peau, brûlant d'une joie sournoise, clignant les yeux pour **guigner** tour à tour Gervaise et Virginie.*
(ZOLA, p. 842)

In this description, we thus find the gluttonous Lantier tucking into a large Brie sandwich: an activity which he is described as pursuing 'devotedly' (= '*dévotement*'). The choice of adverbial item here would appear to be inflected with more than a hint of irony, given that this item can normally be seen to collocate with a predicating verb signifying activity of a distinctively religious or spiritual kind. Lantier, of course, is anything but devout in the way he manipulates people and situations to secure his own parasitical ends. Indeed, the only devotion he would really appear to be capable of showing is to the gratification of his own sensual needs (and this would no doubt include the consumption of large, Brie sandwiches!). What Lantier thus seems to be doing is eating, not so much with 'devotion' as with 'secret delectation'. The use of '*dévotement*' here can thus be said to be doubly displaced, both in terms of the immediate contextual logic of the events represented in the sequence (Lantier is not engaged in religious activity) and of the broader narrative context as a whole (he can, in no sense, be seen as a religious or spiritual character).

For the translators, the problem here would appear to be to find a way of accommodating this irony without suggesting that Lantier was actually eating like a priest or a monk ([?] '*he ate it **devoutly**'). Once again, we find a number of different approaches in response to this problem. Tancock, for example, privileges the notion of 'sensual delectation' in his rendering, albeit without creating any ironic undercurrent of allusion to religious attitudes or behaviour ('*Lantier [...] leaned backwards and consumed it **voluptuously**'* (p. 304)); Symons takes a rather similar angle of approach with '*eating it **luxuriously**'* (p. 291). Hopkins chooses to explicate the element of gloating self-satisfaction in Lantier's behaviour, which, although legitimately inferable from context, is

by no means necessarily implied by the use of '*dévotement*' in the original ('*He leaned back* [...] *red-faced and glowing with a sort of triumph*', (p. 234). Taking a slightly different tack, Townsend emphasises the mental effort which the greedy hatter might have brought to the task of consuming the sandwich, describing him as eating it with '*assiduous concentration*' (p. 345). More simply, Mauldon informs us that he '*ate with concentration*' (p. 309-10). Finally, it is Buss's version which probably comes closest to capturing the ironical tone inflecting the original, the notions of 'devotion' and 'attentiveness' being lexicalised in equal measure: '*he leaned back, eating with pious concentration*' (p. 304).

Returning to the original, Zola's use of the colloquial verb form '*guigner*' also seems to be interesting, implying a subtle ambiguity which is to a certain extent reflected in the translations. The core signification of the lexeme 'guigner' would appear to be 'to contract one (or possibly both) of the eyes'. Additionally, two closely related secondary significations can be seen to derive directly from this core one, i.e. (i) 'to give somebody a signal by contracting one of the eyes'; (ii) 'to covet something surreptitiously with a slight contraction of the eyes'. Clearly, all of these significations are united by the criterial notion of the 'contraction of the eyes', with both of the secondary significations imputing psychological motive to this gesture. Moreover, with respect to the usage above, signification (ii) would appear to be strongly indicated by several, prominent co-textual items in the sequence, all of which are orientated toward the notion of 'covetousness' (i.e. '*se confectionna*' > '*mangeait dévotement*' > '*le sang sous la peau*' > '*brûlant d'une joie sournoise*' > '*guigner*').

Despite the strong contextual support for signification (ii), however, we find that the notion of 'covetousness' is, at best, only imperfectly lexicalised in our corpus translations. For example, Tancock privileges the notion of 'control' over that of 'covetousness' in his choice of Predicator in '*he surveyed first Gervaise, then Virginie through half-closed eyes*'. In a rather similar way, Townsend privileges the notion of 'calculation' in his choice of both adverbial item and participial Predicator in '*he narrowed his eyes speculatively, measuring first Gervaise, then Virginie*'. Taking a rather different approach, Buss infers from the use, in the original, of the adverbial marker '*tour à tour*' that Lantier was alternately '*closing one eye, then the other, as he*

weighed up first Gervaise, then Virginie'. In a more summary vein, Symons offers a condensed version which clearly albeit inappropriately privileges signification (i), i.e. *'while he **winked** now at Gervaise, now at Virginie'*. Mauldon portrays Lantier *'**half closing his eyes** and **surreptitiously watching** first Gervaise then Lantier'*: a rendering which at least has the merit of explicating the covert nature of Lantier's contracted gaze, if not its dissimulated ardour. Perhaps something along the lines of *'squinting a little so that he could **have a crafty little letch**, first at Gervaise, then at Virginie'* may have been better.

Ambiguities such as the above frequently threaten to present traps to the unwary translator, often passing unnoticed or leading to subtle misprisions which are unlikely to be picked up by the reader. In the following case, for example, there would appear to be a strong temptation to translate an apparently simple 'colour' adjective in direct terms when a more modulated rendering may, in fact, be preferable:

(ix) *Bien sûr, il disait ces choses en matière de rigolade, mais Gervaise n'en devenait pas moins **verte**, parce qu'il la fouilla de ses petits yeux gris, comme s'il avait voulu lui entrer les paroles avec une vrille.* (ZOLA, p. 846)

In this sequence, the narrator tells us how Gervaise would become puce with discomfort in response to Lantier's penetrating scrutiny. Although there are several ways of describing facial pallor in English (e.g. 'puce', 'peaky', 'pale', 'livid', etc.), it is interesting to note that the majority of the corpus translators pass over these options in favour of a representation of physical gesture as an outward manifestation of psychological unease. Typical of this approach is Tancock's *'that didn't prevent Gervaise from **squirming**'* (p. 310) and Buss's *'but even so Gervaise **shrank away from him**'* (p. 311). This modulation is presumably triggered by the need to avoid what might be considered to be a misleading or culturally obscure use of the adjectival item *'green'* which, when used in this context, would appear to mean little more than that the attribuand was about to vomit. Indeed, it is precisely this unfortunate implication which seems to be generated by Townsend's use of direct lexical translation in this instance

('*Gervaise turned green just the same*' (p. 352-3). Vizetelly also has Gervaise turning '*green*' in his version, albeit specifying by means of adverbial adjunction what the supposed emotional cause of this physical transformation might actually have been ('*she turned green with terror*' (p.). However, the somewhat hyperbolic ascription of the state of '*terror*' to Gervaise whenever subject to the scrutiny of her erstwhile lover does not seem to tally with what we know of her rather weary acceptance of his all-too-familiar foibles upon other occasions. Although she is undoubtedly discomforted by his malign curiosity, she is unlikely to be 'terror-stricken'. In this respect, Mauldon's '*but that didn't stop Gervaise turning a sickly green*' (p. 315) would appear to be a little closer to the mark. Nevertheless, a further modulation of the 'colour' attribution may still be preferable. Accordingly, we would be inclined to recommend something along the lines of '*Gervaise wouldn't fail to turn livid with discomfort*'.

The error identified above might be said to be little more than a matter of a skewed nuance. In the following example, we find another case of lexical ambiguity which seems to induce the translators into making a more serious kind of misprision:

(x) *Et dans ce grouillement de vermines aux museaux roses débarbouillés chaque fois qu'il pleuvait, on en voyait de grands, l'air ficelle, de gros, ventrus déjà comme des hommes.* (ZOLA, p. 719)

We include the following sequence in our corpus because it seems to provide an interesting example of outright lexical error. If the attribute 'ficelle' is ascribed to someone, then it tends to suggest that they are of a 'crafty' or 'devious' disposition. *Le Petit Robert* gives us the following definition: '*Adj.* (1792) *Vieilli.* Malin, retors'. Tancock renders this signification correctly when he translates as '*there were big ones, very artful-looking*' (p. 161); Symons also furnishes an adequate rendering along these lines with '*there were big ones, tricky*' (p. 148). All of the other translators, however, seem to be induced by the syntactic proximity of '*grands*' into a finding a thematically appropriate collocate for this attributive item, and this, in turn, leads them to neglect the feature 'crafty'. It is perhaps understandable, of course, that they should be so misled,

given that the primary or core signification of 'ficelle' is 'une corde' (= 'a piece of string'): something which, by definition, is long and thin like a tall, gangly youth! Examples of this error include Townsend's '*there were tall ones **thin as a string**'* (p. 173), Mauldon's '*there were tall ones **like bean poles**'* (p. 154) and Buss's '*there were some **tall, stringy ones**'* (p. 151). Unfortunately, a plausible and contextually appropriate translation is not always the correct one.

Concluding remarks

If the corpus of examples examined above may, at first glance, seem to have been somewhat heteroclite in nature, then it is to be hoped that they have all, in their various ways, demonstrated the importance of making appropriate lexical choices at thematically significant points in the text. In our analyses of these various examples, we took pains to emphasise that the translator should seek, not only to reproduce the basic substratum of meaning conveyed by the original but also something of its tone and texture, its basic mode of signification. Moreover, in each of the examples studied, the meeting of this requirement was seen to involve a variety of different strategies and devices, many of which revolved around detailed points of textual articulation. Although a condensed summary of these would undoubtedly be difficult to formulate, the following prescriptive parameters might nevertheless be tentatively drawn:

(i)   In cases where the use of certain lexical items was seen to be stylistically marked in the original, we suggested that the translator opt for a usage displaying an equivalent degree of stylistic marking in his/her own rendering.

(ii)   In cases where there appeared to be a complex projection of secondary or associated notions and features indexed into the semantic representation of a given lexical item by virtue of contextual and co-textual influence, we

suggested that the translator attempt to lexicalise these secondary notions and features in his/her own text, if possible without unnecessary resort to lexical expansion or periphrasis.

(iii) In cases where the use of a given lexical item was seen to be isotopic with other items in the co-text, we suggested the translator also seek to lexicalise the isotopically recurring notion or feature thereby signified, preferably by using a lexical item from the same grammatical form-class.

(iv) In cases where two or more significations of a given lexeme were seen to be exploited within a given usage, we suggested that the translator lexicalise all of the relevant notions and features included in the semantic representation of these two significations. We also proposed that this be done in a form which at least respected if not actually duplicated that of the original.

(v) In cases where a specific punning structure was seen to be developed in the original, we suggested that the translator seek to duplicate the notional co-ordinates of this pun as closely as possible, or at least the basic punning mode of the original in such a way as might be compatible with the idiomatic resources of the target language.

(vi) In cases in which a particular syntactic figure was seen to be articulated in the original, we suggested that the translator seek to duplicate the structural and notional co-ordinates of this figure as far as possible, or, failing this, the basic figurative mode of signification in such a way as might be compatible with the idiomatic resources of the target language.

(vii) Although specific cultural allusions were found to be difficult to import into the target text, we noted the importance of lexicalising the most salient notions and features thereby signified, if possible by means of an equivalently allusive form.

(viii) Clause or sequence-length idioms were seen to be exocentric formulations requiring translation as a single semantic unit, rather than in terms of their component lexical parts.

These parameters have, of course, been drawn up in an explicitly prescriptive way with a view to determining how we might begin to elaborate a workable and ethically informed practice of literary translation. In drawing them up in this way, we have thus sought to be as explicit as possible about the kinds of analytical prejudice and intellectual objective informing our own approach to this field. Moreover, it is to be hoped that our analyses have served to elucidate and, to a certain extent, to confirm the presuppositions that we have brought to our study, or at least to reorientate them in a positive and applicable way.

In this chapter, we have been principally concerned to examine ways in which the translations studied have, to a certain degree, fallen short of the kind of textual density and richness exemplified by the original. In the following chapter, we will be developing certain remarks made in our opening chapter 'Questions to answer, concepts to define' concerning the translator's role as exegete and explicator of the original text. In this role, he/she will often be seen to have done not so much too little as too much.

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[i] Nida makes an interesting link between the use of lexical items carrying a strong 'emotive meaning' and the kinds of distancing strategy favoured by modernist novelists, commenting that 'Some communications are, of course, purposely mixed in emotive meanings, as in the expression of irony and sarcasm, e.g. *charming rascal, damnably sweet,* and *damnably attractive.* Some commentators simply want to shock

receptors, while others, including a number of existentialist novelists, communicate some of their theme of "absurdity" by the lack of match in the meaning of words', Eugene Nida, *Towards a Science of Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 1964).

[ii] See the reflections of various papers, notably in H.P. Grice 'Logic and Conversation', in P. Cole and J.L Morgan (eds), *Syntax and Semantics,* vol. 3: Speech Acts (New York Academic Press, 1975), pp. 41-58.

[iii] For an explanation of the difference between a 'constructive' and a 'substantive' definition (the former corresponding to socially or cognitively projected meanings, the latter to the 'hard objects of the natural world', see Dwight Bolinger, 'The Atomisation of Meaning', *Language,* 41 (1965), 555-573 (p. 568).

[iv] An interesting application of semantic marker theory is to be found in Samuel R. Levin, *The Semantics of Metaphor* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1977). Levin is particularly illuminating about the way in which apparently anomalous sentences come to be reconstrued by means of a structured re-organisation of the relationship obtaining between inherent properties and selectional restrictions with respect to both Subject and Predicate. The operations included in this kind of feature transferral are basically logical ones, involving various permutations of conjunction and disjunction.

[v] Henri Meschonnic sees the apparently endemic effacement of signifying links and figurative networks in the passage from text to translation as part of a wider strategy of cultural annexation: 'Cela serait peu si cela n'etait les indices d'un réseau qui a sa cohérence méthodologique: omissions, rajouts, déplacements immotivés, non-concordance, non-consistance, changements du marqué et du non-marqué; linguistique et esthétique du mot seul, mises en echec par la chaîne syntagmatique; archaïsme; calque; inversions et destruction constante des rapports métaphoriques', 'On appelle cela traduire Celan', in *Pour la poétique II* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), pp. 368-404, (p. 391).

[vi] Jerrold Fodor and Jerry Katz, 'The Structure of a Semantic Theory', in *Language,* 39 (1963), 170 –210.

[vii] John Lyons has suggested the possibility of a more flexible application of componential analysis, based around the determination of core semantic traits: 'there is another way of looking at componential analysis, which makes it less obviously defective. That is, to take it, not as a technique for the representation of all the sense (and nothing but the sense) of lexemes, but as a way of formalizing that part of their **prototypical,** nuclear or focal sense which they share with other lexemes', *Linguistic Semantics: an Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 116.

[viii] The reflections of Francois Rastier have been immensely helpful in the determination of this rather slippery conceptual field. Rastier attempts to circumvent the kinds of theoretical problem implied by the projection of semantically distinctive sèmes and semantically non-distinctive connotèmes or virtuèmes (*pace* Bernard Pottier) by postulating a more conceptually fluid model in which contextually inferable semes ('sèmes afférents') can be indexed into the semantic representation ('sémantème') of a given lexical item in accordance with the discursive and syntagmatic context within which the latter finds itself (this process is referred to as 'assimilation'). This indexing in of contextually inferable sèmes may occur at the expense of other specific sèmes present within the original semantic representation (i.e. through a process of 'dissimilation'). Similarly, the iteration of certain specific sèmes belonging to the same macrosemantic domain or dimension will be seen to productive of a textual isotopy: a process, in turn, assuring the cohesion and interpretability of the resulting text. Rastier draws the following conclusions in relation to the realisation of given sèmes within given contexts:

(i)   Tout sème peut être actualisé en contexte
(ii)   Tout sème n'est actualisé qu'en fonction du contexte
(iii)   Aucun sème n'est actualisé en tout contexte

François Rastier, *La Sémantique Interprétative* (Paris: PUF, 1987), p. 82.

[ix] Walter Benjamin seems to be alluding cryptically to this phenomenon when he suggests that 'While all individual elements of foreign languages – words, sentences, structure – are mutually exclusive, these languages supplement one another in their intentions. Without distinguishing the *Brot* and *pain* 'intend' the same object, but the modes of this intention are not the same. It is owing to these modes that the word Brot means something different to a German than the word pain to a Frenchman, that these words are not interchangeable for them, that, in fact, they strive to exclude each other', 'The task of the translator' in *Illuminations,* ed. by Hannah Arendt, tr. by Harry Zorn (London: Cape, 1970), p. 74.

[x] Gerardo Vazquez–Ayora points out that the translator's vigilance will inevitably be sollicited by the fact that isotopies can manifest themselves at any level of grammatical articulation within the text: 'The

important point for the translator is that the isotopy can underlie a linguistic sequence of a lower, equal or higher rank than the sentence. It can appear at any level of the text', 'On the Notion of an Analytical Unit of Translation', *Babel*, 28 (1982), 70-81, (p. 75).

[xi] See Joseph L. Malone, 'Source Language Polysemy and the Problem of Translation', *Babel*, 25 (1979), 207-209, for an interesting discussion of the different kinds and degrees of polysemy affecting the translation process.

[xii] See Henri Mitterand, *Zola, Tome II. L'homme de 'Germinal'. 1871-1993* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), pp. 291-311, for a detailed description of the way in which Zola conducted his various researches before embarking upon the composition of *L'Assommoir.*

[xiii] Delvau, p. 16. In his idiosyncratic portrayal of the fecklessly nonchalant worker, Denis Poulot offers the following definition: 'le distillateur, débitant de liquide, ainsi nommé à cause de l'excellence de ses produits qui vous assomme rapidement un individu', *Question sociale. Le sublime, ou le travailleur comme il est en 1970 et ce qu'il peut être* (Paris: Lacroix and Verboeckoven, 1870).

14. The reader must be warned...the word-play is entirely our own here! See W. Terence Gordon, 'Translating Word-Play', *Babel*, 33 (1986), 146-150, for an interesting discussion of this issue with respect to Joyce.

[xv] Jacques Dubois, *L'Assommoir de Zola*, 2nd edn. (Paris: Belin, 1993), p. 51.

[xvi] David Baguley rightly suggests that this kind of 'borrowed' response to what is admittedly a thorny translation problem functions implicitly as an admission of failure. See 'Après Babil: L'intraduisible dans *L'Assommoir'*, in *La Traduction: l'universitaire et le praticien*, ed. by A. Thomas and J. Flamand (Ottawa: Editions de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1984), pp. 181-190 (p. 190).

[xvii] Marianne Lederer regards the synecdoche as a kind of archi-figure with respect to translation; different languages being seen to make different figurative cuts into the referential continuum: 'Les synecdoches, qu'il suffit de connaître au niveaux des mots et des expressions toute faites, doivent être créés pour établir des équivalences, pour trouver les mots qui, dans la langue d'arrivée désigneront pareillement l'idée, le fait, l'émotion désignés dans la langue originelle, [...]', *La Traduction aujourd'hui: le modèle interprétatif* (Paris: Hachette, 1994), p. 59.

[xviii] Delvau gives a typically colourful definition of this variant: 'Frère de la doctrine chrétienne, - dans l'argot des faubouriens, qui ont été frappé de l'analogie d'allures qu'il y a entre ces honnêtes instituteurs de l'enfance et l'oiseau du prophète Elie', Delvau, p. 100. Littré (1897) furnishes us with a somewhat less speculative definition: 'Nom donné quelquefois par dénigrement aux prêtres à cause de leurs vêtements noirs'.

[xix] Kelly Benoudis Basilio does not hesitate to see the malefic presence of the alambic as clear textual metonymy of the sheer mechanical fate overwhelming Gervaise as the narrative progresses: 'Car l'alambic, à lui seul, dira tout, et c'est pourquoi Gervaise lui vouera une haine si horrifiée, en même temps qu'il lui inspirera une terreur presque sacrée', *Le Mécanique et le vivant: la métonymie chez Zola* (Geneva: Droz, 1993), p. 168. For his part, F.W.J. Hemmings also acknowledges this symbolism, albeit with a certain degree of qualification: 'The distillery, with its adjoining tavern, has often been quoted as the materialization of the curse of drink; but in fact Zola gives it relatively little prominence, and only when Gervaise is tempted to drown her miseries in alcohol (chapter x)', *Emile Zola* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 117.

[xx] This condensed typification of Lantier would seem to be a good example of what John C. Lapp calls 'le trait descriptif': 'le terme *trait* suggérant non seulement une simple caractéristique, mais aussi une certaine rapidité, et une économie. Chose remarquable, ce trait descriptif est utilisé aussi bien pour les personnages secondaires que pour ceux qui occupent une place centrale', 'Zola et le trait descriptif', *CN*, 42 (1971), 23-32 (p. 23).

[xxi] Martine Léonard sees this kind of syntactic structure (which is, moreover, a recurrent one in the pages of *L'Assommoir*) as 'un moule commode pour l'insertion d'éléments péjoratifs, appartenant à la langue parlée, dans une phrase écrite, de type affirmatif. La souplesse avec laquelle il l'utilise lui permet d'adapter le prédéterminant selon les besoins du texte: ainsi, du démonstratif, qui comporte le maximum d'affectivité, on a toute une gamme d'expressions plus ou moins reliées au langage des personnages', *'L'Assommoir*, langage de l "autre"', in *Etudes françaises* 10, 1 (1974), 40-50 (p. 46).

[xxii] Rita Schober comments on the figurative resonance that Zola elicits from animal motifs in the following terms: 'homme – animal – chose, ce qui veut dire que les hommes peuvent être comparés ou plutôt réduits au rang des animaux et des choses, comme les choses peuvent être animées et souvent même identifiées

aux animaux et aux hommes', 'Observations sur quelques procédés stylistiques de Zola', *CN* (1964), 149-173 (p. 152).

[xxiii] Cathérine Kerbrat-Orecchioni writes pertinently about this kind of cumulative freighting of proper name with connotative weight over the course of their multiple recurrences within the pages of a given novel, suggesting that 'les noms propres connotent dans la mesure ou à chacune de leur occurrence, ils suscitent l'émergence de toutes les informations encyclopédiques que l'on possède sur la personne où l'objet dénoté, encyclopédique, c'est bien le mot: ces informations sont de nature référentielle, et leur nombre peut être quasiment infini [...]. Les informations se cumulent, s'accumulent, font boule de neige, et le noyau connotatif, ce noyau qui n'a cessé de s'enfler au cours de la diachronie textuelle, ne se stabilise enfin qu'avec le dernier mot du texte', Cathérine Kerbrat-Orecchioni, *La Connotation* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1977),

[xxiv] Delvau is economical in his definition here: '*Rocantin*, s.m. vieillard libertin', p. 400.

[xxv] According to Henri Mitterand's summary but nevertheless useful glossary in the Pléiade edition (Paris: Gallimard, 1960-66), 1598-99, Bondy was 'le village où était alors le dépotoir de Paris'.

[xxvi] In the wake of empty lecture halls and flying paving stones, de Gaulle was famously heard to exclaim 'Alors, ces étudiants, toujours la chienlit!' (18th May, 1968). According to Mitterand's Pléiade glossary, '(*à la*) *chienlit*' was an 'exclamation injurieuse dont les voyous et les faubouriens poursuivent les masques, dans les jours de carnaval', p. 158.

[xxvii] Newmark sees this kind of semantic selection procedure as an important element in the translation of all metaphorical and figurative language: 'If the metaphor is redundant or otiose there is a case for its deletion, together with its sense component, provided the SL text is not authoritative or 'expressive' (that is, primarily an expression of the writer's personality). A decision of this nature can only be made after the translator has weighed up what he thinks more important and what less important in the text in relation to its intention. Such criteria can only be set up specifically for each text on an informal basis', 'The Translation of Metaphor', *Babel*, 26 (1980), 93-100 (p. 97).

[xxviii] Partridge (p. 568) dates this expression back to the nineteenth-century, suggesting that it referred specifically to a passage 'through the debtor's insolvency court' and, more generally, to any kind of unpleasant experience ('having a bad time of it'). By the early twentieth-century, it also acquired the signification 'female pudendum'. Hopkins's use of this idiom would thus seem to be combining these two usages in an interesting synthesis! By the mid-twentieth century, however, this idiom had become obsolete, and it is perhaps little surprising that we, as late-twentieth century readers, find it a little obscure.

[xxix] Partridge informs us that 'cherry' was used figuratively to refer to 'young girl' in the latter half of the nineteenth-century, and then meronymically to the 'hymen' (late-nineteenth/twentieth century). Following these lexical extensions, it quickly became a synecdoche for 'virginity'.

[xxx] Partridge dates this formulation from World War II.

[xxxi] There are, of course, cases when cultural adaptation courts absurdity. For example, J.B. Phillips rendering of the biblical idiom 'they gave each other a holy kiss' as 'they greeted one another with a hearty handshake' has long since passed into the lore of translation studies, thanks to Eugene Nida (1964), p. 160.

[xxxii] Menachen Dagut and Kirsten Mason conducted a lively debate within the pages of *Babel* concerning the translation of literary metaphor: the former advocating that the translator should aim to reproduce the 'cultural and lexical resonances' of the original metaphor to an optimum degree within the limits of the target language; the latter that any coherent theory of metaphor in translation remains strictly impossible, given the particularities of each case. See Menachem Dagut, 'Can metaphor be translated?', *Babel*, 22 (1976), 21-33, and 'More about the translatability of metaphor', *Babel*, 33 (1987), 77-83; Kirsten Mason, 'Metaphor and Translation', *Babel*, 28 (1982), 140-149.

[xxxiii] See Halliday (1994), pp.161-174, for an interesting discussion of the difference between ergative and non-ergative readings of transitive structures. Halliday proposes the former as a 'core' articulation between a Medium and a Process, which may or may not be complemented by further transitive roles such as Cause, Agent, Beneficiary, Recipient, etc. Examples of this include 'The Boat (MEDIUM) sailed (PROCESS' > 'Mary (AGENT) sailed (PROCESS) the boat (MEDIUM); 'The cloth (MEDIUM) tore (PROCESS) > 'Mary (AGENT) tore (PROCESS) the cloth (MEDIUM)'. This kind of analytical reading would seem to be a potentially important one for the study of nominalised representations of Process-based phenomena of the kind that we frequently find within Zola's prose.

[xxxiv] Delvau also readily associates 'abattis' with corporeal extremities, suggesting a distinctively pejorative note in the process: 's.m. pl. Le pied et la main, - l'homme étant considéré par l'homme, son frère, comme

une volaille. *Avoir des abattis canailles*, avoir des extrémités massives, grosses mains et larges pieds, qui témoignent éloquemment d'une origine plébéienne', Delvau, p. 1.

[xxxv] i.e. 'crever de rire', 'crever de faim', 'crever de froid', etc.

[xxxvi] Tancock himself has written of the desirability of extracting the subtle twist or unexpected rhetorical effect from the idiomatic resources of the target language: 'More difficult to discuss, because impossible to illustrate adequately without long extracts, are characteristic tricks of style and favourite constructions, particularly when the point of them is to shock slightly or arrest attention by the unexpected, and an English rendering ought therefore to be slightly strange or unidiomatic to produce a comparable effect', 'On Translating Zola', in *Balzac and the Nineteenth-Century. Studies in French Literature presented to Herbert J. Hunt* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1972), pp. 377-389 (p. 383).

[xxxvii] Jean Borie discerns within the oeuvre of Zola 'l'existence d'une obsession du corps, de ses malaises, de sa pathologie', *Zola et les mythes, ou de la nausée au salut* (Paris: Seuil, 1971), p. 2
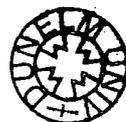
Chapter 3: The Translator as Explicator

Introduction

In our opening chapter, 'Questions to Answer, Concepts to Define', the phenomenon of 'explication' was introduced with a view to determining some of the ways in which the translator might be inclined to render the contextual textual.[i] This phenomenon certainly seems to be a pervasive one in most kinds of translation practice, presumably motivated by a wish on the part of the translator to give the target reader more explicit information concerning what is being referred or alluded to in the original text. The reason for this may be an assumed deficit in the reader's cultural or linguistic knowledge, or a simple desire to express clearly in the target text what may have been only imperfectly or obscurely articulated in the original. Indeed, certain translation theorists have gone as far as to suggest that the phenomenon of explication may be something of a natural tropism on the part of the translator, and this would seem to be as much true of the literary translator as any other kind. For example, Eugene Nida justifies this tendency in the following way:

> Though one does not and should not carry everything over from one language to another in the process of translating, there is a tendency, nevertheless, toward gain in linguistic forms and loss in meaning. The gain results from the fact that we normally assume that everything in the original must be rendered in some way or another, and also because, in addition to what occurs in the source text, certain obligatory features of the receptor language must be introduced. Furthermore, while the original author can assume a good deal of background information on the part of his audience [...], the translator cannot make the same assumption, since the audience receiving the translation more often than not represents a very different cultural setting. Accordingly, if the message is to be meaningful, a certain number of semantic elements must be added to provide a message with a roughly equivalent communication load.[ii]

According to this conception, the translator is not only obliged to render every meaningful unit of information that he/she may have interpretatively construed in the original, but also to integrate any further target language elements that may be needed in order to assure the fluency of the text in translation. Thus, the latter is seen to operate in a perpetual state of surplus, with the translator forever augmenting and elaborating upon its basic structures in order to secure the basic clarity of the 'message'. To use Nida's rather mechanistic formulation, the orientating goal of this process of augmentation and elaboration is 'to provide a message with a roughly equivalent information load'.

For certain translation theorists, however, such a tacking on of extra 'semantic elements' in the interests of clarity is more likely to distort the status of the original *qua* text than to lead to any further increment of comprehension on the part of the target culture reader. Henri Meschonnic, for example, is typically scathing about Nida's use of information theory to justify a translation practice relying heavily upon the technique of explication:

> Le message originel est toujours supposé *passer* par le canal du décodeur d'origine, avec seulement un accroissement dans la charge de communication pour le décodeur de la langue d'arrivée, d'où l'allongement nécessaire en traduction pour retrouver la même redondance qu'à l'origine. Mais cette référence à la théorie de la communication ne tient pas compte du statut d'un texte dans sa langue au moment de son apparition. Lui aussi réduit d'abord sa redondance.[iii]

Meschonnic's principal theoretical concern, in formulating this criticism, is precisely to foster a respect for the text as a specific and historically conditioned moment of intervention within a given *langue-culture*: one whose basic mode of signification and status as a creative act of praxis on the part of the subject should be respected by the translator at all times. According to this perspective, the recourse to systematic procedures of explication (*allongement nécessaire*) can only serve to distort the delicate balance between clarity and obscurity established by the original text.

Meschonnic's erstwhile collaborator, Antoine Berman, has also suggested that the drive toward clarity (*la clarification*) on the part of the translator can be seen as part of a wider strategy of rationalisation, in which *l'indéfini* comes progressively to be replaced by *le défini*. Although this wish to bring into light what had hitherto remained obscure can perhaps be seen as the abiding ethical motive informing each and every act of literary translation, the dynamic of illumination thus engendered is by no means an entirely productive one in all cases: the carefully shaded chiaroscuro of the original sometimes finding itself scorched into unnecessary brilliance. Commenting Galway Kinnel's maxim that 'The translation should always be a little clearer than the original', Berman affirms:

> Certes, la clarification est inhérente à la traduction, dans la mesure où *tout* acte de traduire est explicitant. Mais cela peut signifier deux choses bien différentes. L'explicitation peut être la manifestation de quelque chose qui n'est pas apparent, mais celé ou réprimé, dans l'original. La traduction, par son propre mouvement, met au jour cet élément [...] mais, en un sens négatif, vise à rendre 'clair' ce qui ne l'est pas et ne veut pas l'être dans l'original. Le passage de la polysémie à la monosémie est un mode de clarification. La traduction paraphrasante ou explicative, un autre.[iv]

Thus, the phenomenon of explication would appear to be very much a double-edged sword: on the one hand, serving to draw out hidden or repressed depths of meaning from the original text; on the other, threatening to deprive it of its essential reticence. Indeed, much of what Berman is referring to here is already familiar to us through our analyses of various types of lexical choice in Chapter Two, in the course of which we encountered several examples of 'le passage de la polysémie à la monosémie', and also many renderings which were seen to be 'paraphrasantes ou explicatives'. Although our approach to the use of such devices in our corpus texts was broadly critical, we were nevertheless concerned to demonstrate the kinds of lexical and idiomatic constraint that may have influenced the translator in his/her recourse to these in specific instances. Similarly, in this chapter, we will be analysing nine, highly specific examples of

explication with a view to determining some of the more general parameters which are likely to be brought into play.

Analysis

(i) [...] *il avait un rire **de poulie mal graissée**, hochant la tête, les yeux attendris, fixés sur la machine à soûler.* (ZOLA, p. 632)

[...] *he gave a laugh **like a rusty chain going over a pulley** and shook his head with a loving glance at the liquor factory.* (BUSS, p. 42)

[...] *he had a laugh **resembling the noise of a pulley that wants greasing**, as he wagged his head and looked tenderly at the fuddling machine.* (VIZETELLY, p. 36)

In this sequence, the raucous and somewhat creepy laugh of Coupeau's drinking pal, Boit-sans-soif, is compared to a 'badly greased pulley'; the comparative dimension of this conceit being coded into the text by means of a simple, prepositional group, '*de poulie mal graissée*', which qualifies the Head item '*rire*' within the framework of an embracing nominal group structure, 'an (x) de (y)'. As we have already noted in our previous chapter, the use of the latter structure in this way seems to be a much more natural and frequent one in the context of French than in English prose. Accordingly, we are little surprised to find that its use here triggers a certain degree of reorganisation on the part of the translators: a direct lexical translation along the lines of '*he had the laugh of a badly greased pulley*' lending itself only to a 'classifier- classified' reading in English (i.e. one inferring that his 'laugh' was of the kind that only 'badly greased pulleys' have). The relationship implied here between the 'laugh' and the 'badly greased pulley' is, of course, a far less closely determined than this, being one of partial analogy rather than strict classification. Moreover, what is being compared is not so much the 'laugh' of Boit-sans-soif and that of the pulley, as the sound generated by the emission of the former in relation to that generated by the movement of the latter (both of which can

be described by means of the features 'high-pitched', 'uneven', 'unpleasantly resonant', etc.).

In this light, it is interesting to note that all seven of our corpus translators choose to explicate the precise, comparative implicature of the original formulation, doing so through the insertion of the preposition '*like*'. For example, the translation of Robin Buss (quoted above) provides a good illustration of this tendency, not only articulating itself around the '(x) like a (y)' structure but also including further explicatory nuances regarding the mechanism of the pulley which generates of the sound to which Boit-sans-soif's laughter is compared (i.e. '***like a rusty chain** going over a pulley*'). This secondary explication also involves a basic conceptual modulation from 'cause' to 'consequence', i.e. 'a pulley' ('which has not been oiled') (= '*mal graissée*') > 'a pulley' ('whose chain sounds rusty when going over it'). By contrast, the explication involved in Vizetelly's translation (also quoted above) would seem to be of a somewhat simpler order, involving (i) the insertion of an explicit marker of comparison; (ii) the lexicalisation of the acoustic domain furnishing the sensory-conceptual ground of the comparison (i.e. '*a laugh resembling the noise of a pulley that wants greasing*').

In both of these cases, it would seem that, although the basic trigger for the use of explicatory procedures was structural (i.e. the lack of any one, polyvalent nominal group structure in English capable of doing the kind of figurative work that an 'un (x) de (y)' structure can do in French), its motivating dynamic was nevertheless essentially discursive: the translators seeking to make clearer to the target culture reader precisely in what sense (x) might be related to (y).[v] Indeed, as we have already seen in Chapter 2, the tendency on the part of the translator to explicate all of the meanings that he/she may have construed in his/her reading of a given sequence of text would appear to be a pervasive one, the focus often being upon the unpacking of associative nuances adhering to one particular lexical usage. Such is clearly the case in the following example:

(ii) *Elle aimait les grands lits **cette gamine**; elle s'étalait, elle se roulait.*

(ZOLA, p. 842)

The little miss liked large beds in which she could stretch out and roll around. (BUSS, p. 305)

*She liked big beds, **the little rogue**; beds that she could roll about in.* (SYMONS, p. 249)

The diminutive little baggage had a liking for beds. (HOPKINS, p.325)

This sequence alludes to the precocity of Nana's predilection for 'big beds', with the narrator exercising a typically mordant irony at the expense of a nascent character flaw. The important translation choice involved here would appear to be in the rendering of the 'epithet' nominal group, *'cette gamine'*: the translator having to decide to what extent the various secondary and associative features included in the semantic representation of *'gamine'* should, in fact, be lexicalised.

Perhaps the first thing to note is that the lexeme 'gamine' seems to have enjoyed a varied evolution within the history of the French language, initially being coined as a derivative of 'gamin' (= 'apprentice'). In contemporary understanding, of course, we would tend to map out its semantic representation in such a way as to occlude all reference to the domain of 'professions' from which it originally derived, whilst, at the same time, including a number of secondary and associative features descriptive of personality traits in addition to the core classificatory ones carried over from its original signification, i.e. 'human female' ('adolescent' ('cheeky', 'naughty', 'precocious', 'playful')). Moreover, it is interesting to note that, although these secondary and associative features are not criterial to the nominal use of 'gamine' in the same way that the core classificatory ones are, they effectively become so to its adjectival use.[vi] This can perhaps be demonstrated by means of the following acceptability test, in which the features 'cheeky', 'naughty', 'precocious' and 'playful' are implicitly contradicted by co-textual items included in both of the two projected sequences; contrastive variation occurring around the use of nominal and adjectival forms of 'gamine' respectively:

(i)   C'était une **gamine** triste et molle, totalement sans esprit

(i) [?] C'était une fille **gamine**, triste et molle, totalement sans esprit

In the first sequence, the nominal use of 'gamine' in conjunction with the attributive items 'triste', 'molle' and 'sans esprit', although perhaps a little counter-intuitive, can nevertheless be considered to be broadly acceptable, provided that we reduce the semantic representation of the former to its core criterial features in our interpretative construal of its meaning (i.e. 'human female' ('adolescent'). In the second one, however, the adjectival use of 'gamine', in conjunction with these items, would appear to be openly paradoxical, thus suggesting that the contradicted features have become effectively criterial in this case. The conclusion we might draw from this test is that, although the features 'cheeky', 'naughty', 'precocious' and 'playful' are only fully criterial with respect to 'gamine' in its adjectival use, they are also likely to be construed in the semantic representation of its nominal use too. In this sense, they might be said to be criterial features in the former case, and typical features in the latter.[vii]

Returning to our corpus sequence, it would seem that both the criterial (i.e. 'human female' ('adolescent')) and the typical features (i.e. 'cheeky', 'naughty', 'precocious' and 'playful') pertaining to the nominal use of 'gamine' might be incorporated into our interpretative construal of its meaning in this case without too much difficulty. Not only is Nana manifestly galloping toward a full-flushed adolescence at this particular point in the narrative, she is also doing so with a fair degree of 'cheekiness', 'naughtiness', 'precociousness' and 'playfulness'. Similarly, with respect to a possible rendering of this sequence in translation, it might be said that an adequate lexicalisation of both the criterial and the typical features would represent something close to a thematic requirement here. The three corpus translators quoted above can be seen to be variously sensitive to this requirement in their respective renderings.

Buss's translation, for example, is more than adequate in this respect: the expression '*The little miss*' being typically used to refer to recalcitrant young ladies of a wilful and wayward disposition. Symons's '*the little rogue*' also fully lexicalises the features 'cheeky' and 'naughty', albeit privileging them a little too strongly at the expense of the criterial 'human female' ('adolescent'). What is, however, striking in Symons's translation is the way in which he manages to duplicate the anaphoric *reprise* of the original ('*elle*' > '*cette gamine*'; '*she*' > '*the little rogue*'). Finally, we include Hopkins' translation as an example of what would appear to be misplaced explication:

the features 'cheeky' and 'naughty' being inflected toward an altogether more negative pole of discursive evaluation (i.e. 'cheeky' > 'insolent'; 'naughty' > 'contemptible'). Although suitably colloquial in register, '*diminutive little baggage*' not only reads as a thoroughly dust-laden and dated expression fifty years hence, but also as an unnecessarily pejorative and demeaning one. By contrast, the narrator's attitude to Nana, in the original text, would seem to be more one of affectionate irony than outright contempt. Furthermore, the pleonasm implied by the modifying structure of this 'epithet' nominal group (i.e. '*diminutive*' = '*little*') would seem to be a rhetorical contrivance entirely of Hopkins's own invention.[viii]

In conclusion, this example would appear, once again, to demonstrate the importance of lexicalising certain associated features construable within the semantic representation of a given lexical item when rendering the latter in translation. Although we have considered these associated features to be technically secondary to the core or criterial ones in definitional terms, they can nevertheless often be seen to recur within the range of potential semantic representations embraced by the corresponding lexeme. This might be said to be the case *a fortiori* when there are discursive indicators present in the co-text supportive of their construal in specific instances. In the following example, we find an interesting interpretative double take upon what seems to be an apparently simple piece of modal marking in the original text: one, moreover, raising important questions about the rendering of irony and implicature in translation:

(iii) *Justement, M. Marescot, **exaspéré, l'air malheureux**, écartait ses dix doigts dans une crampe d'avare.* (ZOLA, p. 699)

*Mr Marescot, **now in a state of unhappy exasperation**, was spreading his ten fingers with the cramped movement of a miser whose money is being snatched from him.* (HOPKINS, p. 161)

*Thereupon M. Marescot, **exasperated and looking very pained**, spreading his fingers like a miser clutching the gold that was being snatched from him, gave in to Gervaise* [...]. (TANCOCK, p. 138)

In this sequence, portraying the feigned misery of the miserly landlord, M. Marescot, we find what might be seen as a fairly typical piece of descriptive elaboration, composed of a single item, adjectival group and an attributively functioning nominal group, intercalated between the Subject and the Predicator. These two groups are co-ordinated asyndetically with one another, i.e. by means of simple, punctuated apposition rather through the inclusion of any explicit markers of conjunction. Moreover, both of them can also be seen as elided copular clauses, i.e. '*M. Marescot* (était) *exaspéré*, (avait) *l'air malheureux*'. In the latter case, the ascription of the state denoted by the adjectival item '*malheureux*' to the attribuand '*Marescot*' is explicitly filtered by virtue of the use of the modal operator, '*l'air*', which effectively serves to limit the discursive validity of the ascription to the domain of 'outward appearance'. The immediate implication of this modal filtering for our reading of the above sequence is that we are invited to infer that Marescot may not actually be 'unhappy' at all, but rather only feigning such a state in order to secure his own ends. Once again, the narrator's irony is subtle but nevertheless unmistakable in this instance: an effect which clearly needs to be rendered in translation.

Turning to Hopkins's translation, we find that the features 'exasperated' and 'unhappy' are lexicalised in such a way as to explicitly attribute the latter as a property of the former ('*unhappy*'//'*exasperation*'). Although this minor syntactic rearrangement would seem, at first glance, to be a relatively innocuous one, it can nevertheless be seen to eliminate the effect of selective modal filtering that we noted above: both features now being ascribable within the same domain of discursive validity. Unfortunately, this will probably lead the reader to infer that Marescot is, at one and the same time, both genuinely 'unhappy' and genuinely 'exasperated': an inference which would appear to be contradictory with respect to the original, given the precisely distributed effect of modal filtering that we found therein (compare '*M. Marescot, exaspéré, l'air malheureux*' with 'M. Marescot, l'air exaspéré et malheureux '). Moreover, this apparently inappropriate inference is reinforced by the affirmation, in Hopkins's text, that Marescot was, in fact, in a '*state of unhappy exasperation*': an explication which would tend to obscure the implication of any potential disparity obtaining between what the character might actually be feeling (i.e. his 'real' state) and what he wishes his interlocutor to believe that

he was feeling (i.e. his 'feigned' state). There would thus appear to be little scope here for any suggestion of feigning, and this is clearly inadequate.

By contrast, Tancock's rendering of this nuance would appear to be altogether more satisfactory: the crucial effect of modal filtering unmistakably signalled by the use of the participial Predicator '*looking*' to introduce the second of the two adjectival groups in the co-ordinated couplet '*exasperated and* **looking** *very pained*'. Accordingly, the reader is now given strong textual grounds for inferring that Marescot may not actually be '*very pained*' at all, but rather simply putting on or otherwise giving off the appearance of being so.

If the problem posed by the rendering of the above sequence can be seen to lend itself to an apparently simple solution, then that posed by the following would appear to be an altogether more complicated affair, revolving around the negotiation of basic structural differences between the two languages:

(iv) *Et Gervaise,* **agourmandie,** *s'abandonnait à cette excuse.* (ZOLA, p. 750)

Gervaise, **her love of food increasing,** *seized on this excuse for letting herself drift.* (TANCOCK, p.197)

Gervaise, **who was greedy by nature,** *was only too glad to snatch at this excuse.* (HOPKINS, p.199)

And Gervaise, **greedier than ever,** *readily went along with this excuse.*

(BUSS, p. 191)

In this sequence, the narrator makes a clear allusion to the beginnings of Gervaise's progressive slide into an habitual state of greediness and sloth. This is done by means of a simple intercalation, with the single item, adjectival group '*agourmandie*' sandwiched between Subject and Predicator. This item represents a complex derivation from the adjectival lexeme 'gourmand' with supplementary information about the gender of the attribuand (i.e. '*agourmandie*' = 'feminine') and the aspectual framing of the state thereby denoted (i.e. '*agourmandie*' = 'inchoative', 'augmentative') being clearly coded

into its affixation. In particular, the aspectual information coded into the latter would appear to be far from redundant with respect to a possible rendering of this sequence in translation: the 'greed' of Gervaise being framed, not so much as a permanent character trait as one which she is gradually acquiring over time.[ix] Moreover, it would by no means appear to be easy to convey this nuance with such economy in English, given the lack of morphological resources in the latter enabling one to signal inchoation in adjectival form. We would thus be little surprised to find the translators resorting to a certain degree of explicatory periphrasis in order to render the full range of meanings lexicalised by the original item.[x]

In Tancock's translation, for example, we find that the notion of 'greed' ('gradually acquired over time') is rendered by means of a complete sub-clause, composed of a thematic nominal group item in the Subject slot and a rhematic participial item in the Predicator slot, i.e. '*her love of food increasing*'. By contrast, Buss's rendering is a little more condensed, retaining the adjectival form of the original but using a compensatory, comparative structure (i.e. '*greedier than ever*') to suggest that there had been a gradual progression from a normative to a superlative state of 'greediness' in the attribuand's disposition. Indeed, given that Gervaise seems to have had a strong liking for the odd tasty morsel from the very outset of the narrative, there would appear to be strong contextual support for this assumption. On the other hand, in Hopkins's translation, the aspectual framing signalled above is simply abandoned in favour of a permanent-state attribution: '*Gervaise, who was greedy by nature*' explicitly attributing to Gervaise's '*nature*' the feature 'greed' as a stable property thereof. This is not only inadequate but also directly contradictory in relation to the information furnished by the original text.

The conclusion to be drawn from the above analysis is that a certain degree of periphrasis is sometimes necessary in cases in which structural deficiencies in the target language simply do not enable the complex of nuances signalled by the original to be conveyed with such lexical precision or economy as in the source language. In many cases, of course, the kinds of constraint triggering explication or periphrasis are likely to be of a looser and more discursive order than this, issuing perhaps from differences in the way in which the respective lexicons of the source and target languages come to

articulate particular areas of cultural perception and experience. This can be clearly shown in the following example:

(v) *Ca se passait très haut en elle, au-dessus de **toutes les saletés** dont Virginie guettait le feu dans son visage.* (ZOLA, p. 745)

*All of these thoughts took place in her on some high plane far above **any base desires** that Virginie was trying to see reflected in her face.* (BUSS, p. 186)

*It was a feeling far above **all carnal thoughts,** such as Virginie was ever watching for, upon her burning face.* (VIZETELLY, p. 177)

In this sequence, the narrator confirms to us that the platonic purity of Gervaise's passion for Goujet far transcends the prurient suspicions of her rival, Virginie. Indeed, the allusion to the notion of 'erotic fantasies' by means of the dysphoric euphemism '*saletés*' confers upon the sequence an unmistakable air of popular puritanism: a tonality which certainly needs to be rendered in translation. In this light, it is perhaps interesting to note that both of the translators quoted above choose to lexicalise the notion of 'erotic fantasies' in more explicit terms than those to be found in the original: Vizetelly inserting an attributive Modifier to this effect in '*carnal thoughts*', and Buss a nominal Head item fulfilling much the same function in '*base desires*'. Other translations in our corpus also explicate in much the same way as that of Buss in this instance, with the particular modifying item chosen clearly indexing in the feature 'abject' into our likely construal of the resulting nominal group, e.g. '*degrading passions*' (TANCOCK, p. 192); '*low passions*' (TOWNSEND, p. 212). Accordingly, it might be said that although all of these renderings successfully carry over the dysphoric tonality of the original, they nevertheless fail to do so with the same degree of euphemistic economy as that employed in the latter. As in the previous example, the recourse to explicatory periphrasis would again appear to be hard to avoid, although the reasons for this are probably more lexical than structural in this case. In which light, a single item rendering of 'erotic fantasies' is not altogether to

be excluded, e.g. '*All of this was happening on a higher plane, way above all the filth that Virginie was trying to detect in the blush of her face*'.

(vi) [...] *le chat d'une voisine* [...] *croqua les os de l'oie, acheva d'enterrer la bête, avec **le petit bruit** de ses dents fines.* (ZOLA, p. 782)

[...] *a neighbour's cat* [...] *was gnawing the bones of the goose and completed the burial of the bird, with **the little sound** of its sharp teeth.* (BUSS, p. 229)

[...] *a neighbour's cat* [...] *crunched the goose-bones, and, finally, gave the carcass honourable burial to the **scrabbling music** of its small sharp teeth.* (HOPKINS, p. 240)

[...] *a neighbour's cat* [...] *crunched up the bones of the goose, **quietly gnawing away** with its tiny teeth until it finally finished it off.* (MAULDON, p. 232)

This descriptive passage forms a neat, anti-climactic little coda to the preceding narration of the festivities *chez* Gervaise. The translation of the qualified nominal group in '*le petit bruit de ses dents fines*' is particularly interesting in the light of the claim that English tends to dispose of a more nuanced and detailed range of lexemes denoting sensations and, in particular, sounds than French.[xi] The lexeme '*bruit*' is, of course, a superordinate term denoting a whole domain of acoustic phenomena, in which respect it has maximum referential scope and minimal feature specification in relation to the hyponyms included within its lexical range.

Turning to the translations quoted above, we note that Buss stays very close to the original in his version by duplicating the degree of semantic generality to be found therein ('*bruit*' = '*sound*'). By contrast, Mauldon reorganises the sequence to a considerably greater extent, transposing the notion of 'sound' ('low volume') from nominal into participial verb form ('*petit bruit*' > '*gnawing away*') and then re-indexing the feature 'low volume' by means of the adverbial Modifier '*quietly*': the latter serving the same attenuating function as the adjectival Modifier '*petit*' in the original. Moreover, this version can certainly be seen as an explicated one, with our interpretative construal

of the semantic representation of '*gnawing away*' likely to include the supplementary features 'produced by rapid, intensive mastication' ('characteristic of rodents') in addition to the basic feature specification 'sound' ('low volume'). In this way, the target reader is informed, not only of 'what level of sound' is being produced by the cat's consumption of the remains of the goose but also 'what kind of sound'. Hopkins's translation can be considered to be even more explicatory than Mauldon's by virtue of the choice of the Head item '*music*', which is lexically hyponymous in relation to 'sound' (= '*bruit*'). This item is, in turn, modified by the participial adjective '*scrabbling*', which produces a somewhat paradoxical collocation: the features that we would tend to construe in the semantic representation of the latter, i.e. 'sound' ('low volume', 'uneven' ('produced by the excavation of rodents')) serving to occlude many of those that we would correspondingly construe in that of the former, i.e. 'regular', 'melodic', 'rhythmical', etc. Indeed, in the light of this incongruity, it might be pointed out that 'scrabbling noise' would have carried over almost exactly the same range of nuances as '*scrabbling music*', whilst, at the same time, remaining closer to the lexical composition of the original. Clearly, not all kinds of explication have the merit of clarifying the target reader's understanding of the translated text. This would particularly seem to be the case when the translator chooses to lexicalise features which, although potentially inferable from the original sequence, can nevertheless be seen to be generative of rhetorical effects largely alien to the latter (e.g. the hint of paradox adhering to Hopkins's '*scrabbling music*').

In the following example, we again find that structural factors play an important role in triggering the resort to explicatory procedures on the part of the translator:

(vii) *Elles étaient l'une et l'autre ruisselantes de la tête aux pieds, les corsages plaqués aux épaules, les jupes collant sur les reins, **maigries, roidies, grelottantes,** s'égouttant de tous les côtés, ainsi que les parapluies pendant une averse.* (ZOLA, p. 619)

*Both women were streaming with water from head to foot, their bodices clinging to their shoulders and skirts stuck to their haunches, **made thinner and stiffer, shivering** and streaming with water in all directions like umbrellas in a downpour.* (BUSS, p. 27)

*Both were streaming from head to foot, their bodices plastered down on their shoulders, their skirts glued to their waists; **they seemed to have shrunk up and stiffened out, they were shivering** with cold, and the drops ran out of them on all sides like umbrellas in the rain.* (SYMONS, p. 33)

This long, descriptively elaborate sequence describes the aftermath of the first round of the bucket throwing in the battle of the washhouse. The rhythmical pivot of the sequence seems to revolve around the presence of the three apposed adjectival items, '*maigries, roidies, grelottantes*', which can be found intercalated between two descriptive nominal groups and a participial clause. All three of these apposed adjectival items can be seen to be attributive of the two female combatants, Virginie and Gervaise. However, from the translator's point of view, the possibility of retaining this apposition in the neat, rhythmically condensed form in which it is to be found in the original sequence would appear to be somewhat vitiated by the fact that there are no morphological resources within the structure of the English adjectival system (in contrast to that of the French one) signalling gender agreement between attribute and attribuand.[xii] This possibility is further reduced by the fact that such information is unlikely to be retrievable by virtue of proximity alone in this particular case should the syntagmatic distance between attribute and attribuand established by the intercalated structure of the original be preserved in translation. Moreover, even in the French original, a potential ambiguity is generated regarding the attributive status of the second of the three apposed adjectival items, '*roidies*', which, at least in strictly grammatical terms, could equally well be attributive of '*jupes*' as '*Elles*'. Fortunately, this ambiguity is likely to be pragmatically resolved in our actual reading of the sequence by virtue of the co-ordination of '*roidies*' with '*grelottantes*' (which is exclusively attributable to an attribuand denoting a human referent) and '*maigries*' (which is almost certainly attributable to an attribuand denoting either a human or an animal referent). Nevertheless, despite these firm pragmatic

indicators, we can fully expect the English-language translators to furnish more lexically explicit information concerning the relationship between the states attributed and the persons to whom these states are attributed, and this would indeed appear to be the case in the corpus translations quoted above.

Buss, for example, chooses to explicate the factitive dimension implied by the original attribution (‘*made thinner and stiffer*’), although it is perhaps still not entirely clear from this whether it was the ‘*bodices*’ and ‘*skirts*’ which were so rendered or the ‘*women*’ themselves. Given that the nominal group in the Subject slot, ‘*both women*’, can be seen to be thematic in relation to the rest of the sequence, the latter reading would seem to be strongly favoured by context in this instance. This reading is reinforced, as in the original, by the syntagmatic contiguity of a participial Predicator (i.e. ‘*trembling*’) collocating exclusively with a nominal item in the Subject slot referring to an animate entity. Turning to Symons’s translation, we note that the reader is left in no doubt as to ‘who’ or ‘what’ was ‘diminished’ or ‘stiffened’ thanks to the judicious use of transposition and cohesive marking to be found therein. Firstly, we note that the transposition of the notions of ‘(MADE) thin’ and ‘(MADE) stiff’ from adjectival into verbal form, complete with the addition of modal framing (i.e. ‘*they seemed to have shrunk up* (< ‘*maigries*’) *and stiffened out* (< ‘*roidies*’)’), enables Symons to make explicit to the English-language reader the presupposition on the part of the narrator that the changes undergone by the women were more a matter of surface appearance than physical reality. Indeed, according to the prevailing logic of events, Virginie and Gervaise were almost certainly no thinner or stiffer than before the onset of the water fight; rather it was their drenched appearance that made them appear so. Furthermore, with respect to the thematic continuity of the sequence, the anaphoric re-inscription of the reference to the two combatants within three different clausal Subject slots has the effect of fully eliminating any residual ambiguity that may have been generated by a more lexically reduced version (i.e. ‘*Both were streaming*’…‘*they seemed to have shrunk up*’ … ‘*they were shivering*’, etc.). It would thus seem that the explicatory markers included in Symons’s translation have a clear textual rationale in this case, serving to clarify the attributive and thematic links obtaining between the different groups and sub-clauses of the sequence. Moreover, such compensatory clarification would appear to be far from

redundant in this case, given the sheer paucity of morphological indicators to this effect offered by the structural resources of the English language.

In the following example, we again find that the absence of morphologically signalled agreement within the English adjectival system can generate target text ambiguity in certain cases when the lexical composition of the original is closely duplicated:

(viii) *Mais un soir, se trouvant tout seul avec elle, il la poussa devant lui sans dire une parole, l'accula* **tremblante** *contre le mur, au fond de la boutique* [...].

(ZOLA, p. 795)

But, one evening, when he found himself alone with her, he pushed her in front of him to the end of the shop without saying a word, backing her **trembling** *up against a wall, then tried to kiss her.* (BUSS, p. 246)

But one evening, when they were alone together, he pushed her across the room, pinned her, **trembling,** *against the back wall, and tried to put his arms around her.* (HOPKINS, p. 260)

One evening, however, when he found himself alone with her, he pushed her before him up to the wall at the rear of the shop, **where she stood trembling** *as he tried to kiss her.* (MAULDON, p. 250)

In this sequence, we find a description of Lantier's first attempt to reconquer Gervaise. As in the previous example, we note that the morphological agreement of the participial adjective '*tremblante*' with the anaphoric chain of pronouns leading back to '*Gervaise*' (i.e. '*l*' > '*la*' > '*elle*' > '*Gervaise*') enables the reader to establish the attributive relationship fairly easily. In English, the establishment of this relationship in the absence of direct syntagmatic contiguity becomes a little problematic due to the reduced morphological marking of its adjectival system. However, the role of syntagmatic contiguity does, to a certain extent, assist the reader in establishing the incidence of given attributive items. Buss, for example, relies exclusively upon this factor in his translation,

although the possibility that '*he*' (i.e. Lantier) was, in fact, '*trembling*' is by no means technically excluded in this instance. Furthermore, it would seem that a more liberal use of punctuation would actually have served to clarify the syntactic incidence obtaining in the sequence. Indeed, Hopkins employs a comma break in precisely this way, establishing a relationship of appositive attribution between the pronominal item '*her*' and the participial item '*trembling*'. Mauldon chooses a more interventionist solution to the problem, promoting this attributive information into a relative clause (i.e. '*l*' // '*tremblante*' > '*where she stood trembling*') within which the Predicator '*stood trembling*' is clearly predicated of the pronominal item '*she*'. The principal syntactical role of this relative clause is, in turn, to qualify the locative Adjunct, '*at the rear of the shop*' (= '*au fond de la boutique*'), such that the latter comes clearly to represent the Site of the Process, '*stood trembling*'. Thus, by virtue of these explicatory procedures, little or no doubt remains as to 'who' was 'trembling' or 'where'. Nevertheless, it might be said that this clarification is achieved only at the expense of a considerable increase in the lexical weighting of the sequence. This would not appear to represent a serious drawback, however, given the strictly diegetic function of the latter in this case.

In many cases, of course, the weighting of particular discursive and rhetorical effects can be very difficult to gauge in precise terms. When such difficulties arise, it becomes incumbent upon the translator to decide just how far he/she wishes to tip the delicate balance established in the original between implicative and affirmative modes of expression in favour of the latter. Nowhere would this appear to be more pertinent than in the translation of sequences involving euphemism and understatement. Indeed, reticence would appear to be very much the better part of accuracy in the rendering of the following sequence:

(ix) *Le soir, après son dîner, une fois tous les dix jours, il se risquait, s'installait;* **et il n'était guère causeur,** *la bouche cousue, les yeux sur Gervaise* [...].

(ZOLA, p. 717)

*Once every ten days, in the evening when he had had dinner, he would dare to come there and settle in, **and he hardly said a word,** keeping his lip buttoned and his eyes fixed on Gervaise* [...]. (BUSS, p. 149)

*In the evening after dinner, once every ten days or so, he ventured in and installed himself; **and he never talked,** sat with his mouth sealed, his eyes fixed on Gervaise* [...]. (SYMONS, p. 146)

In this passage, we are told of the adoring taciturnity of the stalwart Goujet. The narrator's way of presenting this information is essentially litotic: '*il n'était guère causeur*' quite happily lending itself to a reinterpretation along the lines of 'il était plutôt silencieux' or even 'il n'était pas causeur du tout'. The question raised, of course, by all forms of litotic expression is just how far we are licensed by situational or narrative context to cancel out the attenuating discursive markers and to read in a propositional statement of unambiguously affirmative or negative value? Indeed, with reference to this example, the degree of Goujet's loquacity would appear to be in genuine doubt. Is the narrator implying that he spoke very little, or in fact not at all? The following descriptive detail '*la bouche cousue*' would probably support the latter inference. Symons's '*and he never talked*', for example, clearly privileges this latter inference, completely dispensing with any hint of rhetorical attenuation in the process. Buss's '*and he hardly said a word*', on the other hand, does successfully duplicate the litotic implicature to be found in the original, and it is for this reason that we would be inclined to prefer his translation to that of Symons. We would nevertheless wish to propose '*he wasn't much of a talker*' as a translation combining the merits of both lexical accuracy and idiomatic fluency.

Concluding remarks

In the majority of examples examined above, we found that there were clearly identifiable structural or idiomatic triggers motivating the recourse to explication on the part of the translators, with this device being used to fill in genuine lacunae in the expressive possibilities afforded by the English language. In examples (iv), (vii), and

(viii), for example, the motivating factor was seen to be directly structural, issuing from the need to compensate for morphological deficiencies in the English adjectival system. On the other hand, in examples (ii), (v), and (vi), the trigger was found to be more of a lexical order, with the translators attempting to convey the full range of secondary features associated with the use of a given item in the original. To the extent that such explication was achieved without generating rhetorical effects alien to the discursive texture of the latter, it was seen to be broadly justifiable as a means of clarifying nuances which may otherwise have remained obscure to the target culture reader. However, we also noted that there seemed to be a somewhat thin line between legitimate explication and unnecessary rhetorical embellishment in certain cases (see examples (ii), (vii)): the latter undoubtedly proving to be distortional of the basic mode of signification characterising the original text.

Ultimately, it would seem that the device of explication is something of a double-edged sword within the context of literary translation: one which clarifies but, at the same time, risks distorting what it brings to light, elaborating and expanding upon the composition of the original, but doing so only at the price of reducing the native allusiveness of the latter to a state of bland exposition. All of which tends to suggest that the literary translator should be guided as much by the dictates of reticence as anything else. *Soit* !

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[i] George Steiner would certainly seem to be the of view that this is a tendency inherent in all translation practice when he suggests that 'the mechanics of translation are primarily explicative, they explicate (or, strictly speaking, 'explicitate') and make graphic as much as they can of the semantic inherence of the original. The translator seeks to exhibit 'what is already there'', George Steiner, *After Babel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 277.

[ii] Nida (1964), p. 174.

[iii] Henri Meschonnic, 'D'une linguistique à la poétique', in *Pour la Poétique II* (Gallimard: Paris, 1973) p. 335.

[iv] Berman (1985), p. 70.

[v] Joseph L. Malone appositely suggests that the absence of clear structural options in the target language often produces improvisation on the part of the translator, if not downright 'verbosity'! 'In particular, in looking back on translations from dense to loose organisation […], I have often come to suspect that the relative looseness in the target organisation is often symptomatic of what might be called OPEN-ENDNESS OF TRANSLATION CHOICES. That is, when the translators lack a prefabricated target element and hence must devise nonce trajectional plans while in the very act of translating, all else being equal they will tend to synthesise a response in the form of a combination of target elements, a procedure tending to produce verbosity', *The Science of Linguistics in the Art of Translation: some tools from linguistics for the analysis and practice of translation* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1988), p. 62.

[vi] D.A.Cruse furnishes a gradeable cline of semantic traits, ranging from 'criterial' through 'expected', 'possible' and 'unexpected' down to 'excluded'. Accordingly, fully criterial features can be established by means of logical entailment tests (e.g. 'it's a dog' > 'it s an animal'), with other traits being factored into the semantic representation of a particular item by virtue of the contextual relations established by its particular usages. This gradeable and contextually-based model lends itself well to the consideration of translation-orientated problems concerning lexical construal and choice. See D.A Cruse, *Lexical Semantics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

[vii] *Le Petit Robert* furnishes us with the following definition: '1. Vx. *N. m.* Petit garçon qui servait d'aide, de commissionaire à un artisan, un commerçant, etc. 2. (1804). Vx petit garçon ou petite fille 'qui passe son temps à polissonner dans les rues' (LAVEAUX) 3. *Mod.* Garçon, fille jeune et espiègle: *adj.* V. **Espiègle, mutin.** *Air, ton, esprit gamin. Gaieté gamine.* Par ext '*Un petit chapeau de cuir, sportif et gamin.* (COLETTE) 4. *Fam.* Enfant, adolescent(e). **V. Gosse.** *Une gamine de onze ans.* Adj. *Elle est encore gamine. – Pop.* (marquant la filiation) Fils, Fille encore jeune, [...].

[viii] Hopkins's fairly flagrant piece of over-writing might seem to be a good example of what Berman calls 'l'ennoblissement', i.e. the distortion of a natural, textual register in favour of rhetorical elegance or poetic licence. Berman describes the phenomenon in the following way: 'La rhétorisation embellisante consiste à produire des phrases 'élégantes' en utilisant pour ainsi dire l'original comme matière première. L'ennoblissement n'est donc qu'une ré-écriture, un 'exercice de style' à partir (et aux dépens) de l'original', Berman, pp. 72-73.

[ix]Jacqueline Guillemin-Flescher notes a marked tendency, when translating from French into English, to transpose what she calls 'juxtaposed' ('juxtaposés') adjectival groups into verbal predicate groups, thus clearly explicating not only the Process leading up to the resultative State signified by the original adjectival item ('la continuité du processus') but also the relationship between two temporal boundaries (i.e. those coinciding with the beginning and the end of the aforementioned Process respectively (le parcours temporel entre deux repères)). See pp. 98-103.

[x] Hilaire Belloc's warning that the translator should not seek to duplicate the exact sentence-length of the original too rigorously would seem to be more than apposite in this particular case, given the prevailing structural constraints bearing upon the latter. Elucidating what he sees as a general maxim, Belloc suggests that 'Nearly always must a translation be of greater length than the original. Nor is the reason hard to find. Unless you could get a more or less satisfactory equivalent - and we have seen how hard *that* is - you are compelled to expand. In each idiomatic term a whole phrase is packed and the term must be unpacked if we would put its meaning into our own tongue, when there is no general close corresponding single term by which to express it', Hilaire Belloc, *On Translation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931), p. 23.

[xi] Even though claims of this kind are hard to quantify, or indeed to verify in any absolute terms, Vinay and Darbelnet are nevertheless quite happy to affirm the following: 'Mais c'est surtout dans le domaine des perceptions auditives et visuelles que s'affirme la supériorité de l'anglais pour le détail des notations [...]. 'Grincement' est plus précis que 'bruit', mais il fait figure de terme général en face des équivalents anglais: 'grating' (d'une clef), 'screeching' (d'un crayon d'ardoise), 'squeaking' (d'un levier de pompe)', Vinay and Darbelnet, p. 60. The kind of lexical specification offered by the translators in their rendering of '*petit bruit*' in the above case would certainly appear to confirm Vinay and Darbelnet's intuition.

[xii] That different languages express the same kind of information in different ways has, of course, now become something of a commonplace in translation theory. The most cogent expression of this hypothesis probably remains that of Roman Jakobson in his essay 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation', in *On Translation*, ed. by Reuban Brower , 2nd edn (Cambridge: Harvard, 1966), pp. 232-240 (p. 236): 'Languages differ essentially in what they *must* convey and not in what they *may* convey. In its cognitive function, language is minimally dependent on the grammatical pattern because the definition of our experience stands in complementary relation to metalinguistic operations – the cognitive level of language not only admits but directly requires recoding interpretation, i.e. translation'. With respect to the above example, it might be said that the morphological structure of the French language is capable of encoding information concerning attribution which, in English, must be lexicalised in order to be made explicit in given cases of potential ambiguity.

Chapter 4: Translating Rhythm

Introduction

Prose can rarely be seen to be metrical in any clearly identifiable way.[i] Nevertheless, all good prose would seem to be possessed of its own distinctive pressure and rhythm. Indeed, the latter almost certainly represents one of the more constitutive and defining features of what one might wish to call personal, authorial 'style'. Moreover, as we have already seen, the reproduction of such an idiosyncratic rhythm and pressure within the framework of another language rapidly becomes something of a *nec plus ultra* in terms of creative challenges confronting the literary translator.[ii] If raw outlines of plot and meaning can be captured without difficulty, then how much more complicated would appear to be the task of recreating, within the alienating medium of a foreign tongue, the very quiddity and texture of an original prose style? Clearly, such conundrums are easier to pose in theory than to solve in practice.

Indeed, the very concept of prose rhythm would seem to be one which defies easy definition when examined through the finely focussed lenses of prosodic analysis: This kind of rhythm is certainly not metrical in any sustained or coherent way and yet, by the same token, it is unlikely to be completely random or gratuitous either. In an attempt to do justice to this equivocal metrical status in the course of the following chapter, we will occasionally be referring to certain sequences as 'quasi-anapaestic' or 'quasi-iambic'. By this, we mean that the sequence of prose thus referred to is considered to manifest something of the same rhythmical distribution of stressed and unstressed syllables as that of a line of anapaestic or iambic verse. The extent to which such an effect is likely to be sustained within a sequence of prose, of course, will be strictly limited in relation to that of a sequence of verse. Moreover, the use of such beat-orientated scansion can immediately be seen to lend itself more readily to the accento-syllabic articulation of English prosody than that of its strictly syllabic French counterpart. Accordingly, such terminology will be restricted to the analysis of sequences of English translation. Alternatively, when referring to sequences in the French original, we will be casting our

analysis more in terms of syllabically counted rhythmical groups and particular forms of cadence (i.e. symmetrical cadence, *cadence mineure* and *cadence majeure*).[iii] Both of these forms of analysis are developed fairly liberally from the tradition of French stylistics.[iv] Furthermore, both require us to make certain assumptions about the way in which the written sequence of text to which they are applied would be likely to be articulated in spoken utterance: the former presupposing certain patterns of apparently normative syllabic pronunciation; the latter, certain patterns relating to melody and pitch.[v]

In addition to these more traditional concepts, we will also be introducing those of 'introductory frame' and 'recapitulatory tail', both of which are orientated toward the description of basic sentence shape. For example, if we were to take the sequence

> *Jean étudiait dans le bureau.*

we might reasonably describe this as a simple sentence, composed of a main predicate clause and nothing else. Alternatively, if we were to add the following concessive Adjunct to the sequence, i.e.

> **Malgré sa fatigue,** *Jean étudiait dans le bureau.*

we might be said to have created an introductory frame in relation to the information presented in the main, predicate clause. Further commentary upon this information might also be added in the form of a recapitulatory tail such as the following:

> *Malgré sa fatigue, Jean étudiait dans le bureau,* **et tout cela pour avoir son diplôme à la fin de l'année.**

Moreover, the sheer length of the purposive, infinitival clause composing this recapitulatory tail would seem to confer upon the whole sequence a distinctive cadence: the melodic rise occurring through the articulation of both the introductory frame (6 syllables) and the main predicate clause (8 syllables), and the corresponding fall

occurring through that of the recapitulatory tail (16 syllables). Although the basic shape of this cadence would appear to be a symmetrical one, we might also legitimately qualify it under the label of *cadence majeure*, given that a slightly greater number of syllables would normally be articulated after the melodic peak than before it. Had the opposite been the case, we would have qualified it as a case of *cadence mineure*.[vi]

In English prose, the creation of melodic articulation and cadence is likely to be less important than in French prose. Nevertheless, it might be observed that the basic shape of the French sequence (quoted above) seems to reproduce itself very neatly in an English-language context, with the ordering of the introductory frame, the main, predicate clause and the re-capitulatory tail proving to be identical in the following, normatively structured sequence:

> *Despite feeling tired, John was studying in the office, and all of this so that he might pass his examination at the end of the year.*

Now let us suppose the following adaptation of the original sequence:

> *Jean, **fatigué, las, voire un peu désabusé**, étudiait dans le bureau, et tout cela pour avoir son diplôme à la fin de l'année.*

In this new sequence, we find that the introductory frame is replaced by an asyndetically co-ordinated series of adjectival groups, intercalated between the Subject and the Predicator. As a consequence of these changes, the nominal item in the Subject slot, '*Jean*', comes to assume a significantly greater thematic prominence in the new sequence than that which it enjoyed in the old one. Furthermore, the information conveyed by the asyndetically co-ordinated series of adjectival groups in this new sequence, although very similar to that conveyed by the introductory frame in the old one, appears to be considerably more developed in terms of nuance than the latter. Significant changes can also be noted with respect to the cadence of the new sequence: a preliminary melodic peak being reached upon the final item of the intercalated series (i.e. '*désabusé*'), only to be followed by something of a plateau until the concluding fall over the recapitulatory tail

is reached. Thus, although the intercalated series might be considered to be strictly incidental in syntactical terms, its role in the rhythmical articulation of the sequence can nevertheless be seen to be pivotal. All of which also tends to confer a considerable degree of salience upon the semantic information thereby conveyed. In English, however, we find that this kind of intercalated structure can be integrated only with considerable difficulty into an idiomatic sequence of descriptive prose, i.e.

> *John, **tired, weary, even a little disillusioned**, was studying in the office, and all this so that he might pass his examination at the end of the year.*

Although this sequence is by no means entirely unacceptable, the more natural tendency would almost certainly be to convey the information presented in the intercalated clause by means of a sentence-initial, participial clause Adjunct, i.e.

> ***Despite feeling tired and weary, even a little disillusioned**, John was studying in the office, and all this so that he might pass his examination at the end of the year.*

This second sequence can thus be seen to differ considerably from the original French one in both shape and rhythm. These differences occur principally by virtue of the following idiomatic adaptations: (i) the restitution of hypotactic conjunction between the newly created first clause and the second one (i.e. *Despite* (A), (B)); (ii) the restitution of orthodox, co-ordinated conjunction between the first and second of the adjectival items included within this first clause; (iii) the restoration of syntagmatic proximity between the Subject and the Predicator of the second clause. The net result of these adaptations is the production of a sequence, in English, which is more syntactically integrated and semantically explicit than the original French one, albeit less rhythmically varied and condensed. From an evaluative perspective, one might say that there have been losses and gains on both sides of the equation.

Moreover, these contrastive differences are by no means of negligible importance with respect to the general study of French-English translation, given the frequency with which this kind of adjectival intercalation can be seen to recur within French discourse.

This can be clearly illustrated by means of the following example, drawn from the milieu of sports journalism:

> *Les Olympiens retrouvent le stade Vélodrome, cet après-midi, où ils affronteront Bastia. En cas de victoire face aux Corses, **libérés et imprévisibles**, ils pourraient en effet s'installer de nouveau en tête de L1. (La Provence, 29 April 2003)*

In this sequence, we find the valiant Corsicans from Bastia described as being '*libérés et imprévisibles*'. This feature-attribution can be contextually understood by virtue of the fact that their solid albeit unspectacular mid-table position leaves them with few competitive stakes left to play for as the football season draws to a close. Footballing considerations aside, it is interesting to note that this feature-attribution is assured within the sequence by means of two conjunctively co-ordinated, single item, adjectival groups, intercalated between the attribuand (i.e. '*Corses*') and the following predicate clause. This highly condensed structure of intercalated adjectival attribution is also likely to require a considerable amount of pragmatic inference from context in order to be fully understood by the reader. This requirement is highlighted by the slight rupture in the melodic articulation of the sequence brought about by the intercalation, which serves to confer upon the items thus intercalated a significant degree of rhythmical prominence. Moreover, in this respect, there would seem to be strong parallels between this sequence and the one quoted above concerning John's laboured study. Accordingly, it will also be interesting to explore to what degree of facility this particular intercalation might be reproduced in English:

> *This afternoon, Manchester United will be back at Old Trafford, where they will be taking on Tottenham. Should they beat the Londoners, **freed and unpredictable**, they might well find themselves back on top of the Premier League.*

Intuitively, the production of a sequence such as the above within the context of a piece of English sports journalism would appear to be unorthodox in the extreme! Among other

doubts, the reader is now likely to be uncertain as to whether it is Manchester United or Tottenham who are to be considered '*freed and unpredictable*': this ambiguity perhaps indicating that simple, adjectival apposition remains insufficient as a means of guaranteeing attributive cohesion in English. More generally, the prevailing expectation would probably be that more explicit, discursive information be furnished concerning the way in which the two attributive items are to be construed. Ultimately, all of these factors would seem to favour the production of a sequence which is both syntactically integrated and semantically explicit to a far greater degree than the above (as indeed was the case in the previous example), e.g.

> *This afternoon, Manchester United will be back at Old Trafford, where they will be taking on Tottenham. Should they beat the Londoners, **who are now free of any real competitive concerns and whose form is likely to be unpredictable**, they might well find themselves back on top of the Premier League.*

The resulting sequence, of course, proves to be significantly more explicatory and periphrastic then the original one, with a full seventeen items included in the newly created intercalated clause in relation to the three that we find in the original, intercalated adjectival group structure! Although a certain amount of editorial paring-down might be envisaged with respect to the above, the overall discursive tendency would nevertheless seem to be clear, i.e. one orientated toward textual organisation and explication rather than contextually orientated condensation.

Analysis 1

To what extent might similar reflections be made *a fortiori* about literary discourse? As we have already discovered in previous chapters, the pages of *L'Assommoir* can be seen veritably to abound with examples of the kind of adjectival intercalation encountered above. Indeed, such is their abundance that this descriptive technique might be considered to be one of *the* defining features of Zola's own prose style. For example, in

the following sequence, we find three asyndetically co-ordinated, single item adjectival groups, neatly intercalated between Subject and participial Predicator:

(i) *C'était un homme de cinquante-cinq ans, **fort, osseux, décoré**, étalant ses mains immenses d'ancien ouvrier.* (ZOLA, p. 698)

*He was a man of fifty-five, **large, bony, decorated**, with the hands of an old workman.* (SYMONS, p. 124)

*Aged fifty-five, he was a **big man** with a **bony frame** and **sported a decoration in his buttonhole**, and he made much use of his huge working-men's hands.* (TANCOCK, p. 136)

The cadence to be found in Zola's original sequence would again seem to shape itself around an intercalated series of adjectives: a clear, melodic rise occurring in the articulation of the opening, existential clause, to be followed by a melodic plateau of slightly higher pitch over the intercalated series, and a subsequent fall over the articulation of the concluding participial clause. The progressive syllabic expansion of the intercalated series itself can also be seen to sustain this effect of peak and plateau, i.e. '*fort* (1)*, osseux* (2)*, décoré* (3)').

In Symons's translation, the asyndetic co-ordination and intercalated positioning of the original, adjectival series is reproduced in its entirety. Although this might be seen as an interesting attempt to render the basic shape and structure of the original, it nevertheless remains uncertain as to what extent such a rendering, in English, would be capable of generating an effect of cadence either comparable or equivalent to that generated in the original French.[vii] Indeed, one important factor contributing to this disparity may well be that variations in articulatory pitch and volume tend to occur in relation to the distribution of stressed and unstressed syllables within a typical English string of spoken utterance; in French, such variation occurs almost exclusively as a function of syllabic progression and sequence positioning. Accordingly, unless the intercalated series in the English sequence can be heard to articulate itself around a distinctively rhythmical distribution of stresses, it remains unlikely that any effect of

cadence equivalent to that to be found in the French original will be generated. Unfortunately, in Symons's rendering, no such rhythmical distribution occurs:

> *He was a **man** (1 / 4) of **fifty-five** (2 / 4), **large** (1 / 1), **bony** (1 / 2), **decorated** (2 / 4), with the **hands** (1 / 3) of an **old workman** (2 / 5).*

In contrast to that of Symons, Tancock's rendering includes a number of basic structural changes, all of which seem to be orientated toward the production of a more idiomatically adapted sequence of text in translation. In particular, we find a significantly different pattern of syntactical incidence resulting from the adjectival distribution of the new sequence (i.e. (i) *'fort'* > *'big man'* (appositive attribution> direct attributive modification of a nominal Head item); *'osseux'* > *'bony frame'* (appositive attribution > direct attributive modification of an inserted and explicatory nominal Head item); *'décoré'* > *'and sported a decoration in his buttonhole'* (appositive attribution > predicate clause structure conjunctively co-ordinated with a preceding copular clause). All of these changes serve to produce a sequence of text which is considerably more integrated, in syntactic terms, than the original one (or indeed that of Symons). Nevertheless, much of the cadence and sheer rhythmical economy of Zola's sequence is lost within the resulting periphrasis.

Bearing in mind the respective limitations of both of these approaches, a translation charting a middle course between the two may have been a better option, e.g.

> *He was a man of fifty-five, burly and bony, sporting a decoration in his button-hole, with huge, spread-out, ex-workingman's hands.*

Although we resort to conjunctive rather than asyndetic co-ordination in this rendering, the two adjectival items thus co-ordinated are nevertheless retained in intercalated positioning. Moreover, a certain degree of rhythmical accentuation is also attained by virtue of the alliteration and end-rhyme obtaining between these two items (i.e. *'burly and bony'*). In this way, any undue effect of prosodic flatness is avoided.[viii] On the other hand, we also seek to explicate the use of *'décoré'* for the English-language reader by

means of periphrastic transposition (i.e. '*décoré*' > '*sporting a decoration in his buttonhole*': single item, adjectival group > adjunctive participial clause). Ultimately, the former translation choice might be seen as compensatory, substituting one rhythmical effect for another, and the latter, explicatory, defining the precise context in which a particular item is to be understood.

One clear trend beginning to emerge from our various analyses is that the maintenance of a strictly intercalated structure with respect to adjectival positioning tends to become highly problematic, in English, when there are several such items to be inserted in this way. In the following example, we find that the intercalation of two, single item adjectival groups between Subject and Predicator, in the original sequence, triggers significant reorganisation in translation.

(ii) *Lalie, **affolée, hurlante**, sautait aux quatre angles de la pièce, se pelotonnait par terre, se collait contre les murs* [...]. (ZOLA, p. 858)

*Lalie, **terrified, was screaming** and leaping from one corner of the room to the other, flattening herself against the floor, pressing herself to the walls;* [...] (BUSS, p. 327)

*Lalie, **crazed and screaming with pain**, leapt into the corners of the room, curled into a ball onto the floor, clung to the walls;* [...]. (MAULDON, p. 332)

Again, a distinct elevation in melodic pitch can be projected over the intercalated couplet of adjectival items here. This elevation in pitch also forms something of a sub-cadence in its own right: the rise occurring over the articulation of '*affolé*' and the corresponding fall occurring over that of '*hurlante*'. Additionally, the trisyllabic composition of both of these items serves to confer upon the sub-cadence a complementary symmetry.

Unfortunately, the fact that such micro-stylistic effects depend upon the articulation of pitch and cadence rather than any particular distribution of rhythmical stresses tends to make their transposition into an English-language context somewhat problematic. For example, a sequence along the lines of '*Lalie, **terrified, screaming**, leapt from one corner of the room to the other, pressing herself against the walls* [...]' would probably give the

reader the impression of being simply cluttered rather than specifically cadenced. In response to this potential pitfall, Buss contrives what might be seen as a compromise between source-text-orientated fidelity and target-language-orientated reorganisation. His rendering maintains a single, adjectival item (i.e. 'terrified' (= 'affolé')) in intercalated position and then transposes the notion of '(TO EMIT) a loud vocal emission' from adjectival into verbal form (i.e. 'hurlante' > 'was screaming'), the latter being co-ordinated with a second such form within a lexically expanded Predicator slot. Nevertheless, the overall fluency of the resulting sequence might still be regarded as questionable: the prevailing, idiomatic pressure being to place the intercalated, adjectival item in sentence-initial position, i.e. 'Terrified, Lalie was screaming and leaping from one corner to the other [...].'

Mauldon's rendering also retains something of the intercalated structure of the original, albeit in expanded form, with the single item adjectival group 'crazed' being conjunctively co-ordinated with a rank-shifted participial clause functioning adjectivally (i.e. 'screaming with pain' (< 'hurlante'). Although this lexically expanded and explicatory rendering lacks the rhythmical economy of the original, it nevertheless establishes its own kind of fluency as a result of the regular distribution of three stressed syllables over the articulation of the second, third and fourth punctuation groups respectively (i.e. '*Lalie* (1 / 2), **crazed and screaming with pain** (3 / 6), **leapt** into the **corners of the room** (3 / 9), **curled** into a **ball** on the **floor** (3 / 8), [...]). Accordingly, Mauldon might be said to have used the native, prosodic resources of her own language to good compensatory effect here.

Throughout the pages of *L'Assommoir*, intercalation is used not only as a device for structuring adjectival attribution but also as a means of achieving stylistically marked effects of highlighting and emphasis. For example, the intercalation of an apparently insignificant Adjunct can often serve to confer upon the detail thus conveyed a sudden or unexpected relief against a backdrop of developing description.[ix] Indeed, Jean-Louis Vissière goes as far as to see this kind of calculated thwarting of normative syntactic expectation as one of *the* defining stylistic leitmotifs of '*la phrase impressionniste*':

La phrase impressionniste de Huysmans, des Goncourt, de Maupassant, et aussi de Flaubert et de Hugo, cherche à saisir au vol la sensation, elle bouscule les règles de la rhétorique traditionnelle, elle est toujours en équilibre instable, sautillante, nerveuse. En termes techniques, c'est une phrase où les compléments circonstanciels brisent le déroulement monotone de la phrase classique: sujet, verbe – complement ou attribut, et introduisent à chaque fois une attente, un suspens, quand le sujet se trouve séparé du verbe, ou le verbe de l'attribut.[x]

Zola, of course, drew freely, throughout the composition of his oeuvre, upon the prose-rhythm techniques pioneered by his *réaliste* and *naturaliste* peers. Indeed, his cultivation of certain figures based upon 'syntactic suspense' would seem to be on a par with all but the most contrived inversions proffered by the Goncourts in this respect. This can be clearly seen in the following example, describing a ramshackle dance-hall orchestra:

(iii) *L'orchestre, **de ses instruments de cuivre fêlés**, jouait furieusement un quadrille, une tempête dont la salle tremblait.* (ZOLA, p. 896)

*The band was furiously blowing a quadrille **on its cracked brass instruments**; it was like a storm shaking the hall,* [...]. (TANCOCK, p. 369)
*The orchestra, **with its cracked brass**, played away furiously at a quadrille, a tempest which shook the very roof* [...]. (SYMONS, p. 355)
***The cracked brass of the band started up** a raucous quadrille, making such a din that the whole place shook.* (HOPKINS, p. 413)

In the original sequence, we find the adverbial Adjunct '*de ses instruments de cuivre fêlés*' firmly intercalated between the Subject and the Predicator: this fracture in the syntagmatic ordering of the sequence perhaps obliquely reflecting the cracked and battered brass of the orchestra (!). Indeed regardless of the interpretative legitimacy of this imputation of syntactic mimesis, the key translation choice almost certainly remains whether or not to reproduce the intercalation in the translating sequence.

Of the three translators quoted, Symons comes closest to reproducing the original intercalation, using a short, comitative prepositional group to identify the 'Part' > 'Whole' relationship obtaining between the '*cracked brass*' and the '*orchestra*'. Although such identification would not appear to be illegitimate in itself, it does, however, serve to weaken the functional relationship implied in the original between 'Process' (i.e. '*jouait furieusement*') and 'Instrument' (i.e. '*de ses instruments de cuivre fêlé*'). On the other hand, in Tancock's translation, the 'Process'–'Instrument' relationship is clearly indicated, albeit within the context of a structure in which the 'Instrumental' Adjunct necessarily follows the Predicator (compare Tancock's actual sequence with [?] '*The band, **on its cracked brass instruments**, played furiously away at a quadrille;* [...]').[xi] Once again, there would appear to be greater resistance to intercalation in English than in French. Finally, Hopkins's solution to the problem is worth quoting in the light of its sheer ingenuity. Although there is no hint of the original intercalation remaining in the ordering of his sequence, in functional terms '*The cracked brass*' actually becomes the direct Agent of the Process '*started up a raucous quadrille*', doing so by virtue of its syntactic positioning as the qualified nominal group item within the embracing nominal group structure '((*The cracked brass*) *of the band*)'.

If our analysis of the above sequence suggests that Zola's organisation of sequence structure is rarely likely to be neutral, then a glance at the stakes involved in the translation of the following sequence would seem only to confirm this hypothesis:

(iv) *Tout le monde s'embrassait, s'entassait dans la chambre, au milieu des trois fourneaux de la coquille, d'où montait une chaleur d'asphyxie.* (ZOLA, p. 755)

*They all **kissed each other and cluttered up the room** with its three stoves and its roasting shield, the heat of which was overpowering.* (TANCOCK, p. 204)
*All these folk **kissed each other, crowding into the room** where the heat from the three stoves was asphyxiating.* (MAULDON, p. 202)

In this sequence, describing the disordered promiscuity of the guests as they tumble into Gervaise's small, living quarters, we find that asyndetic co-ordination can also be used to

conjoin two verbal items functioning within the same Predicator slot. However, in English, pairings of syntagmatically proximal items belonging to the same grammatical form-class would appear to lend themselves only with difficulty to conjunctive juxtaposition of this kind: the natural tendency being to co-ordinate them by means of 'and'. Indeed, turning to our quoted translations, we note that Tancock does precisely this; Mauldon, by contrast, choosing to sequence the two verbal items within a 'predicate clause + participial clause' structure. Both of these translation choices, however, can be seen to be orientated toward the production of a more normative pattern of predicate sequencing than would have otherwise been the case had the asyndetic co-ordination of the original been retained. Moreover, this would appear to be a perfectly legitimate move to make if we consider the essential aim of the translator to be to render a good, readable literary 'copy' of the original text, unencumbered by any of the latter's more idiosyncratic or peculiar stylistic features. On the other hand, an unforgiving stylist might still wish to claim that the asyndetic co-ordination employed by Zola is far from being a gratuitous or dispensable feature of the text in this particular case: a clearly discernable effect of stylistic mimesis being created by the way in which the 'piling up' of the two verbal items in the Predicator slot mirrors the spatial disposition of the guests as they tumble merrily into Gervaise's exiguous parlour. Although interpretative details of this kind might appear, at first glance, to be of strictly minimal importance to the working translator, stylistic considerations formulated at this level of specificity can nevertheless be seen to play an important role in determining the reader's overall appreciation of literary texture. In this respect, they can be glossed over by the translator only at the risk of considerable simplification or distortion. Furthermore, bearing in mind such considerations, a translation along the lines of '*Everyone kissed each other, piled into the bedroom, negotiating their way between the three stoves, from which emanated a suffocating heat,* [...]' would perhaps not appear to be such a bad one after all: the minor deviation from normative expectations concerning the way in which verbal groups are to be sequenced in English serving to alert the reader to the presence of a potentially significant stylistic effect.[xii]

Although the stakes involved in the above example were by no means easy to determine for the translator, the whole issue of co-ordination and rhythmical phrasing

would seem to become considerably more complicated in cases in which the composite groups of the co-ordinated structure belong to different form-classes. This can be clearly seen in the following example, describing Gervaise's return to her prodigal lover's bed:

(v) ***Doucement, sans pousser un cri, glacée et prudente,*** *la blanchisseuse revînt dans la chambre de Lantier.* (ZOLA, p. 828)

Quietly, without crying out, but cautious and icy cold, *the laundress went back to Lantier's room.* (BUSS, p. 287)

Very quietly, without letting any cry escape her, shivering with cold, *Gervaise* ***cautiously*** *made her way back to Lantier's room.* (TANCOCK, p. 288)

Chilled to the bone and moving cautiously, *Gervaise returned softly to Lantier's room.* (MAULDON, p. 292)

Quietly, without a cry, frozen and cautious, *Gervaise went back to Lantier's room.* (SYMONS, p. 275)

In many ways, this might be seen as a more structurally complex sequence than those already encountered in this chapter, albeit one possessed of much of the same kind of fractured, asyndetically co-ordinated rhythm as many of the latter. The long, introductory frame is composed of an opening, single-item adverbial group, asyndetically co-ordinated with a longer prepositional group functioning adverbially, which is in turn asyndetically co-ordinated with a conjunctively co-ordinated couplet of single item adjectival groups. Concomitantly, the sheer length of this introductory frame serves to create a pronounced effect of *cadence mineure*: the attainment of the melodic peak being postponed until the articulation of the penultimate syllable of '*prudente*'. This melodic postponement also maps onto the syntactic deferral of the main predicate clause. The whole sequence would thus seem to be articulated around a kind of a double deferral, which might plausibly be seen to reflect the narrative suspense generated by Gervaise's slow and cautious re-entry into Lantier's bed. Accordingly, we would also expect the translations to reflect this doubly-articulated figure in their own rhythmical composition and structure.

Indeed, although all of the translations can be seen to include something of the slow, cumulative build-up of descriptive detail featuring in the introductory frame of the original sequence, they nevertheless do so with varying degrees of rhythmical felicity. The introductory frame in Buss's rendering, for example, articulates itself around a series of rhythmical groups featuring a progressively higher ratio of stressed to unstressed syllables (i.e. '*Quietly* (1 / 3), *without crying **out*** (2 / 5), *but **cautious** and **icy cold*** (3 / 7), [...].)[xiii] This carefully modulated increase in rhythmical density would seem to be a more than appropriate way of reproducing the kind of syntactic suspense that we noted in the original. The introductory frame in Symons's rendering also articulates itself around a progressive increase in the number of syllables composing each successive rhythmical group, although this occurs without the concomitant increase in rhythmical density that we noted in that of Buss's sequence (i.e. '*Quietly* (1 / 3), *without a **cry*** (2 / 4), *frozen and cautious* (2 / 5), [...].) Alternatively, Tancock's introductory frame includes a strongly weighted middle group, intercalated between two considerably shorter ones (i.e. *Very quietly* (2 / 5), *without **letting** any **cry** escape her* (4 / 10), *shivering with **cold*** (2 / 5), [...]). Although this particular introductory frame might seem to be somewhat 'middle-heavy', it can nevertheless be seen to articulate itself around a consistently even ratio of stressed to unstressed syllables. From a semantic point of view, however, the occlusion of the feature 'prudent' is to be regretted. Finally, of the four translations quoted, that of Mauldon almost certainly includes the greatest number of changes, the most noteworthy of which are (i) the inclusion of only two, conjunctively co-ordinated Adjuncts within the introductory frame; (ii) the placing of the 'manner' Adjunct '*softly*' within a less thematically salient position than that enjoyed by '*Doucement*' in the original. Both of these changes seem to favour the production of a more normatively patterned form of sequence organisation than would have been the case had the triple, sequence-initial adjunction of the original been retained. What the sequence gains in idiomatic fluency, however, it loses in rhythmical peculiarity. This loss might be judged to be either regrettable or insignificant, depending on one's perspective upon such matters.

In the following sequence, describing the disordered progress of the wedding-guests as they amble through the Louvre, we find another interesting example of the

asyndetic co-ordination of items from different form-classes within an introductory frame:

(vi) ***Les jambes cassées, s'abandonnant***, *la noce faisait un vacarme énorme, laissant dans sa course le ventre de Madame Goudron.* (ZOLA, p. 660)

Dead beat and all hope abandoned, *they kicked up a hell of a din as they wandered on, leaving Madame Goudron and her belly far in the rear.* (TANCOCK, p. 91)

With leaden legs, abandoning all propriety, *the party made an enormous din, leaving Madame Goudron and her belly far behind.* (BUSS, p. 78)

Exhausted, hopeless, *they dragged on, kicking up an enormous din, and outdistancing Madame Goudron who had dropped, with her big belly, to the rear.* (HOPKINS, p. 78)

Again, there would appear to be more than a hint of syntactic mimesis involved in the construction of this sequence, with the rather broken-rhythmical texture created by the asyndetic co-ordination of the sequence-initial Adjuncts in some way mirroring the halting progress of the wedding guests. On the other hand, the rather strange juxtaposition of nominal and verbal forms seems to be compensated for by an unmistakable effect of cadence: this being generated by the successive rise and fall in the melodic articulation of '*Les jambes cassées*' (5 syllables) and '*s'abandonnant*' (4 syllables) respectively.[xiv] Thus is the formal incongruity of the construction to a certain extent offset by its melodic shape. Moreover, in this light, it will be interesting to note just to what degree the translators prove to be sensitive to this delicately cross-grained stylistic effect in their own renderings.

Buss stays fairly close to the lexical composition of the original, albeit resorting to periphrasis in the rendering of the second of the sentence-initial Adjuncts (i.e. '*s'abandonnant*' > '*abandoning all propriety*'). Unfortunately, this move serves to adulterate the effect of symmetry and cadence that we noted in the latter: the articulation of the second, lexically expanded Adjunct proving to be long and arrhythmic in relation

to that of the first, which is effectively short and iambic (i.e. '*With leaden legs* (2 / 4), *abandoning all propriety* (3 / 9), [...]'). By contrast, Tancock attempts to smooth over any potential incongruity accruing in the construction of the introductory frame by opting for a more orthodox, conjunctive mode of co-ordination between the two composite Adjuncts. Although by no means strictly metrical, the prosodic articulation of the resulting sequence is nevertheless a clearly defined one: the first two rhythmical groups containing a quasi-spondaic double stress and the third, a single medial one (i.e. '*Dead beat* (2 / 2), *and all hope* (2 / 3) *abandoned* (1 / 3), [...]'). Hopkins (perhaps somewhat uncharacteristically!) proves to be the most source-orientated of the three translators quoted. His rendering accurately duplicates the asyndetic co-ordination to be found in the original introductory frame, albeit using items from the same grammatical form-class to do so (i.e. '*Exhausted* (1 / 3), *hopeless* (1 / 2),'). Although this might be seen as a worthy attempt to reproduce the shape of the original sequence, there is, however, little of the latter's cadence or symmetry in evidence to counterbalance the inevitable incongruity incurred. In this light, a rendering drawing, to good compensatory effect, upon the natural rhythmical resources of the English language may have been a better option here: something perhaps along the lines of '*Weak-legged and broken-willed, the wedding party began to kick up an enormous racket, leaving Madame Goudron and her belly far behind.*'

In the following sequence, Zola can again be seen to develop descriptive detail with concision through the concatenation of a series of asyndetically co-ordinated Adjuncts. In this case, the concatenation occurs within the context of an elaborative tail, with the information thereby conveyed assuming a considerable degree of rhematic focus as a consequence:[xv]

(vii) *Maintenant, Gervaise, à genoux par terre, sanglotait de façon continue,* **barbouillée de ses larmes, aveuglée, hébétée.** (ZOLA, p. 688)

Now Gervaise, kneeling on the floor, was sobbing continually, **her face smeared with tears, blinded and dazed.** (BUSS, p. 115)

*Gervaise, now, was kneeling on the floor in a daze, sobbing continually, **blinded by the tears streaming down her face**.* (MAULDON, p. 116)

*Gervaise was on her knees, sobbing. It seemed that she would never stop. **Her face was blotched with crying, her eyes blinded with tears**.* (HOPKINS, p. 107)

In rhythmical terms, the composition of this elaborative tail is also interesting in the sense that it effectively serves to duplicate the *cadence mineure* established in the articulation of the main predicate clause, i.e.

> *Maintenant* (3), *Gervaise* (3), *à genoux* (3) *par **terre*** (3),
>
> *sanglotait* (3) *de façon* (3) *continue* (3),
>
> *barbouillée* (3) *de ses **larm**es* (4),
>
> *aveuglée* (3), *hébétée* (3).

In the first cadence, we find that the melodic rise occurs over the articulation of a series of four, tri-syllabic rhythmical groups, peaking upon the final syllable thereof, '*terre*', only to fall again over a further series of three, tri-syllabic rhythmical groups; in the second cadence, the melodic rise begins over an initial tri-syllabic group, continuing over a second, quadri-syllabic group until the peak upon the penultimate syllable thereof, '*larm-*', only to fall again over a further series of two tri-syllabic groups. In this way, the second cadence comes to reproduce *in nuce* the shape of the first one. The rhythmical phrasing of Zola's sequence would thus seem to be a carefully crafted one: the cadence articulated over the elaborative tail forming a kind of melodic counterweight to that articulated over the main predicate clause. Clearly the translators will need to capture something of this careful crafting of syllabic distribution and cadence if they are to avoid distorting the specific rhythmical contour of the original. The means by which they are likely to do this, of course, will almost certainly draw more upon the rhythmical resources of their own language than upon those of French.

This can be clearly seen in Buss's rendering, for example, in which we find a progressive reduction in rhythmical density over the articulation of the main predicate clause, followed by something of a prosodic *reprise* over that of the elaborative tail (i.e.

'*Now Gervaise* (2 / 4), *kneeling on the floor* (2 / 5), *was sobbing continually* (2 / 8), *her face smeared with tears* (3 / 6), *blinded and dazed* (2 / 4).' By contrast, in Mauldon's rendering, the fact that the punctuation used in the main predicate clause is largely arrhythmic, and that of the elaborative tail, completely non-existent, makes the identification of any discernable pattern of rhythmical phrasing considerably more problematic. Hopkins's rendering also poses similar problems, although it is by no means without its prosodic merits. Firstly, it might be noted that the expansion of the adverbial Adjunct '*de façon continue*' into a full and complete sentence-length sequence (> '*It seemed she would never stop*') has the effect of dramatically increasing the thematic salience of the information thereby conveyed, as well as suggesting an unmistakable attitude of disapproval on the part of the narrator. Unfortunately, much of the continuity and cadence of the original sequence is also lost as a result of this reorganisation. Similarly, the elaborative tail is also expanded into a full, sentence-length sequence, complete with explicatory information about what was 'blinded' (i.e. '*aveuglée*' > '*her eyes blinded*') and 'blotched' (i.e. '*barbouillée*' > '*her face blotched*'). Nevertheless, in sheer rhythmical terms, the resulting sequence would appear to be felicitous: the clause-initial repetition of the possessive pronoun '*her*', in tandem with the alliterative echo established between '*blinded*' and '*blotched*', serving to accentuate the overall rhythmical symmetry thereof (i.e. '*Her face was blotched with crying* (3 / 7), *her eyes blinded with tears* (3 / 6)').[xvi] Ultimately, however, the failure to integrate such fluency within a more continuous sequence of text would seem to be regrettable.

Although the use of repetition as a compensatory rhythmical device would appear to be broadly acceptable in the above sequence, the translator would probably be well advised not to use it as an all-purpose solution to every kind of stylistic problem, lest it become little more than an incongruously marked tic. On the other hand, the use of clearly marked repetition in the original text would seem, in most cases, to invite an equivalent use of the same device in translation. This can be clearly seen in the following two examples:

(viii) *Et rien d'autre, rien qu'un ruban rose noué autour de ses cheveux blonds, un ruban dont les bouts s'envolaient sur sa nuque.* (ZOLA, p. 871)

> *And **that was all**, except **a pink ribbon** round her fair hair, with the ends floating loose at the back of the neck.* (TANCOCK, p. 342)
>
> *And **nothing** more, **nothing** except **a pink ribbon** tied around her blonde hair, **a ribbon** the ends of which fluttered around the back of her neck.* (BUSS, p. 344)

This first sequence is taken from the lyrical crescendo of the narrator's tribute to Nana's burgeoning charms. Moreover, this movement toward descriptive climax is clearly reflected in the rhythmical marking of the whole sequence: in particular, the double repetition of '*rien*' and '*ruban*' respectively serving to create a strong alliterative paradigm around the item-initial 'r's. The general melodic curve of the sequence is also shaped into a distinct *cadence mineure*: a gradual rise articulating itself over the successive syllabic expansions and contractions of '*Et rien d'autre* (5), *rien qu'un ruban rose* (6) *noué autour* (4) *de ses cheveux **blonds*** (5)', only to fall again over the syllabically even progression of '*un ruban* (3) *dont les bouts* (3) *s'envolaient* (3) *sur sa nuque* (4)'.

Given the importance of such rhythmical accentuation to the general climactic movement of the text at this point, it is perhaps a little disappointing to find that Tancock's rendering includes neither the repetition nor the alliteration, nor indeed anything of the cadence texturing the original sequence. Fortunately, Buss's rendering does a little better in this respect. Significantly, both of the repetitions are accurately reproduced, albeit without alliterative accentuation in this case (i.e. '***nothing** more*' – '***nothing** except*'; '*a pink **ribbon***' – '*a **ribbon***'). In addition, we also find something of the cadence of the original, with a clear rhythmical break induced by the comma punctuating '*hair*'.

In the following example, despite the marked shift in register, there would nevertheless appear to be rather similar stakes involved in stylistic terms:

> (ix) *Il riait comme **un cul**, le trou de la bouche arrondi, et les joues tellement bouffies qu'elles lui cachait le nez; **un vrai cul**, enfin.* (ZOLA, p. 907)

*He was laughing like **a backside**, with his mouth like a round hole and cheeks so blown out that his eyes had disappeared - yes, **a real arse**.* (TANCOCK, p. 383)
*He was laughing like **an arsehole**, his mouth round and his cheeks so puffed out that they hid his nose – **a real arsehole**, in fact.* (BUSS, p. 388)

In this scabrous description of the smugly amused caretaker, Boche, we find the narrator mockingly comparing his face to…well, yes, precisely! The analogy is simply and explicitly affirmed by means of a 'comparative' prepositional group (i.e. *'comme un cul'*) adjunctive upon the core predicate structure *'il riait'*. It is then summarily re-affirmed at the end of the sequence in the form of a short, recapitulatory tail (i.e. *'un vrai cul, enfin'*).

Turning to our translations, it is perhaps interesting to note that both of them include a more accentuated punctuation break (i.e. a dash) between the main body of the sequence and the short, recapitulative tail. There is, however, an important difference in the way in which the recapitulated notion is re-lexicalised within the respective translations: Tancock's rendering modulating from what might be called a 'polite' lexical variant to a more uncompromisingly 'vulgar' one (i.e. **'backside'** > **'a real arse'**); Buss's structuring itself around the simple repetition of an equally vulgar, compound variant (i.e. **'an arsehole'** > **'a real arsehole'**). Given the fact that the original text also seems to rely upon the simplicity of the latter device in order to generate its singularly derisive effect, there would appear to be strong *a posteriori* (!) grounds for preferring Buss's rendering in this case.

Analysis II

In the course of the chapter thus far, we have chosen to concentrate upon a series of discrete, illustrative sequences. Nevertheless, it is perhaps important not to lose sight of the fact that the rhythm of a text can be seen to establish itself cumulatively and progressively over whole paragraphs, if not pages. With a view to exploring how the rhythmical figure comes to emerge from the finely meshed carpet of individual prosodic

effects, we will now turn our attention to a longer passage, taken from the opening pages of Chapter 1. This passage describes the variegated panorama of working Paris as it unfolds before the watchful and restless gaze of our anxious heroine:

Quand elle levait les yeux au-dessus de cette muraille grise et interminable qui entourait la ville d'une bande de désert, elle apercevait une grande lueur, une poussière de soleil, pleine déjà du grondement matinal de Paris. Mais c'était toujours à la barrière Poissonnière qu'elle revenait, le cou tendu, s'étourdissant à voir couler, entre les deux pavillons trapus de l'octroi, le flot ininterrompu d'hommes, de bêtes, de charrettes, qui descendait des hauteurs de Montmartre et de La Chapelle.

Il y avait là un piétinement de troupeau, une foule que de brusques arrêts étalaient en mares sur la chaussée, un défilé sans fin d'ouvriers allant au travail, leurs outils sur le dos, leur pain sous le bras; et la cohue s'engouffrait dans Paris où elle se noyait, continuellement. (ZOLA, p. 603-3)

When she looked up beyond the endless grey wall that circled the city with its strip of wasteland, she saw a great glow, a sprinkling of sunlight, already humming with the early-morning sounds of Paris. But her gaze always returned to the Barrière Poissonnière and she craned her neck, bemused by the sight of the uninterrupted stream of men, animals and carts pouring down from the heights of Montmartre and La Chapelle between the two squat tollbooths at the entrance to the city.

It was like the tramping of a herd of animals, this crowd that would suddenly halt, then spill out in pools across the roadway, this endless procession of labourers on their way to work, carrying their tools on their backs and a loaf of bread under their arms, a throng that poured past, to be sucked into Paris, unceasingly. (BUSS, p. 6-7)

When she raised her eyes above this grey interminable wall, framing the city with a strip of desert, she saw a broad glimmer, a dusty cloud of sunlight, out of which

rose the hum of Paris in the morning. But her eyes turned back instinctively to the
Poissonnière tollgate; she leaned out, dizzy with the unending flood that passed
between the two squat sheds of the excise – men, beasts and carts, coming down
from the heights of Montmartre and La Chapelle.

There was a trampling, as of a herd in motion, a concourse of people
scattered over the roadway by a sudden block, an endless file of men going to
work, their tools on their back, their bread under their arm; and the whole pack
plunged ceaselessly into the depths of Paris.
(SYMONS, p. 14-15)

From the very outset of the passage, we find a clear rhythmical articulation around the
series of complex nominal groups composing the first passage, i.e.

Quand elle levait les yeux (6) au-delà de cette muraille (7) grise et interminable
(7) qui entourait la ville (6) d'une bande de désert (5), elle apercevait (5) une
grande lueur (5), une poussière de soleil (7), pleine déjà (3) du grondement
matinal (8) de Paris (3).

Buss also manages to capture something of this articulation in his own rendering: a strong
accentuation of the rhythmical texture of the sequence being created around the double
alliteration of '*a great glow*' and '*a sprinkling of sunlight*' respectively. His unnecessary
transposition of the notion of 'vibration' ('low-pitched') (i.e. '*grondement*' > '*humming*':
noun > verb)' is perhaps less convincing however, given the undoubted stylistic
importance of nominal forms denoting sensory qualities in Zola's prose[xvii]:

*When she **looked up** (2 / 4) **beyond the endless grey wall** (4 / 7) circling the city*
*(2 / 5) with its **strip** of wasteland (2 / 6), she **saw a great glow** (3 / 5), a **sprinkling***
*of sunlight (3 / 6) already **humm**ing (2 / 5) with the **early** -**morn**ing (2 / 6) **sounds***
*of **Paris** (2 / 4).*

Thus we find a strong paradigm of rhythmical groups based around a (2 / 4), a (2 / 5) or a (2 / 6) ratio of stressed to unstressed syllables, with a full seven of the nine groups composing this sequence clearly included in this range. By contrast, Symons's rendering is manifestly less consistent in this respect:

> *When she raised her eyes* (2 / 5) *above this grey interminable wall* (4 / 9), *framing the city* (2 / 5) *with a strip of desert* (2 / 6), *she saw a broad glimmer* (3 / 6), *a dusty cloud of sunlight* (4 / 7), *out of which rose* (1 / 4) *the hum of Paris* (2 / 5) *in the morning* (1 / 4).

The principal reason for this loss in rhythmical texture would appear to be the inclusion of groups featuring a low density of stresses in their syllabic composition. For example, the choice of the Latinate adjectival item '*interminable*', although lexically identical to the equivalent item in the original, would nevertheless seem to be less suited than Buss's more Germanic '*endless*' to the maintenance of a clear, stress-orientated rhythm in English prose. Similarly, the conjunctive explication of the relationship between the visual referent of the penultimate clause and the acoustic referent of the final one (i.e. '(x), *out of which rose* (y)') inevitably serves to dilute the rhythmical texture of the latter.[xviii] On the other hand, the nominal lexicalisation of the notion of 'vibration ('low pitched') (> '*hum*') would not only appear to be appropriate in stylistic terms but also convincing in rhythmical ones: the distribution of stressed to unstressed syllables in the articulation of the resulting group proving to be an alternate one.

'*C'était toujours à la barrière Poissonnière qu'elle revenait,*' – in the rendering of this sequence, it is interesting to note that neither of the translators retains the marked Theme structure of the original: the item in the Complement slot '*Poissonnière tollgate*' (= '*barrière Poissonnière*') returning to an unmarked position following the Predicator. Moreover, the restitution of this more orthodox form of syntagmatic ordering would seem principally to be triggered, in English, by the idiomatic pressure prevailing therein to explicate the visual Agent implicit in the original predication (i.e. '*But her gaze always*

returned to the Poissonnière tollgate' (BUSS); *'But her eyes turned back instinctively to the Poissonnière tollgate'* (SYMONS)).[xix]

le cou tendu, – in their respective renderings, both of the translators effectively increase the lexical weighting and discursive salience of the information conveyed by this short, intercalated, attributively functioning nominal group, doing so by virtue of the promotion of the latter into a full, predicate clause (i.e. *'and she craned her neck'* (BUSS); *'she leaned out'* (SYMONS)).

's'étourdissant à voir couler (8), *entre les deux pavillons* (7) *trapus de l'octroi* (5), *le flot ininterrompu* (7) *d'hommes* (2), *de bêtes* (3), *de charrettes* (4), *qui descendait* (4) *de Montmartre* (4) *et de La Chapelle* (6).'[xx] – In this extended participial clause sequence, we find a complexly cross-hatched structuring of constituent groups and clauses which might be represented in the following way:

Elle [...] *s'étourdissant à voir* (x)

(x) = (y(R)) (P) (z)

(y) = *'le flot ininterrompu d'hommes, de bêtes, de charrettes'*

(R) = *'qui descendait des hauteurs de Montmartre et de La Chapelle'*

(P) = *'couler'*

(z) = *'entre les deux pavillons trapus de l'octroi.'*

Correspondingly, the syntactic mapping of the functions enumerated above might be represented as follows:

(x) = an infinitival clause, rank-shifted into the Complement slot incident upon the infinitival Predicator *'voir'*;

(y) = a complex nominal group in the Subject slot of the infinitival clause predication (y(R)) (P) (z);

(R) = a rank-shifted predicate clause qualifying (y) in the form of a relative clause;

(P) = an infinitival Predicator;

(z) = a prepositional group functioning as a locative Adjunct.

In the actual discursive ordering of the sequence, of course, these functions can be seen to succeed each other in the following order:

Elle [...] *s'étourdissant à voir* (x);

(x) = ((P), (z), (y (R)).

There would thus seem to a marked disparity between the formal structure of syntactic incidence subtending (x) and the actual, discursive ordering through which (x) is realised in Zola's sequence. This disparity can be seen to be brought about principally by the following factors: (i) the inversion of (P) with (y (R)), which is automatically triggered by the rank-shifting of the whole '(y (R)) (P) (z)' structure within the Complement slot represented by (x); (ii) the stylistically motivated intercalation of (z) between (P) and (y (R)). This discursive re-ordering also has important consequences with respect to the rhythmical articulation of the sequence. In particular, the intercalation of (z) serves to create a preliminary melodic peak upon the final syllable of this adjunctive sequence (i.e. '*entre les deux pavillons* (7) *trapus de l'octroi* (5)', to be followed by a slight dip and further rise over (y), and then a final fall over (R) (i.e. '*le flot ininterrompu* (7) *d'hommes* (2), *de bêtes* (3), *de charrettes* (4), *qui descendait* (4) *de Montmartre* (4) *et de La Chapelle* (6)'). Again, the basic shape of this melodic articulation might be classified as *cadence mineure*.

Buss's rendering of this sequence involves a number of important structural changes. These include: (i) a double transposition around the participial sequence '*s'étourdissant* (> '*bemused*': verb > adj.) *à voir* (> '*at the sight*': verb > noun)'; (ii) the indexing of the notion of 'flowing movement' into the semantic representation of the participial Predicator incident upon (y) (i.e. '*pouring down*' (< '*descendait*' + '*couler*'); (iii) the restoration of the locative Adjunct (z) to a more normatively placed sequence-final position. Although few criticisms could be levelled against these changes on the grounds of lexical inaccuracy, the rhythmical fluency of the whole sequence would

nevertheless appear to be somewhat impaired by the lack of any punctuation or phrasing separating its composite groups and clauses (compare the use of six punctuating items in the original text to that of only two in Buss's translation).[xxi] Moreover, there would also appear to be few clearly discernable prosodic effects to compensate for this absence (apart from perhaps the almost omomatopoeic densification of prosodic stresses in the articulation of the penultimate group in *'bemused by the sight* (2 / 5) *of the uninterrupted stream* (2 / 8) *of men, animals and carts* (3 / 7) *pouring down from the heights* (3 / 6) *of Montmartre and La Chapelle* (2 / 9) *between the two squat tollbooths* (5 / 7) *at the entrance* (1 / 4) *of the city* (1 / 4)'.

Symons also makes a number of important changes to the basic organisation of the sequence, the most notable of these being the splitting up of the lexical components of (y) into two, syntactically discrete and syntagmatically disjoined nominal groups (i.e. *'le flot ininterrompu'* (> *'the unending flood'*) *d'hommes, de bêtes, de charrettes* (> *'men, beasts and carts'*). The first of these is then qualified by a relative clause including a locative Adjunct corresponding to (z); the second predicated by a participial clause corresponding to (R). Both of the resulting sequences are separated from each other by means of the strongly disjunctive punctuating item, the dash. Firstly, from a semantic point of view, one might regret the loss of the isotopy of 'flowing movement': this notion being lexicalised only once in Symons's rendering though the use of the nominal item *'flood'* (compare with the double lexicalisation to be found both in the original (i.e. *'couler'* > *'flot'*) and in the rendering of Buss (i.e. *'stream'* > *'pouring down'*). In rhythmical terms, however, the result would appear to be a felicitous one, with an almost even distribution of syllables emerging in the articulation of both sequences (i.e. nine stressed syllables to twenty unstressed ones in the first sequence; eight stressed to nineteen unstressed ones in the second: *'dizzy* (1 / 2) *with the unending flood* (2 / 6) *that passed* (1 / 2) *between the two squat sheds* (4 / 6) *of the excise* (1 / 4) *– men, beasts and carts* (3 / 4), *coming down* (2 / 3) *from the heights* (1 / 3) *of Montmartre and La Chapelle'* (2 / 9)). Thus does the rhythmical tension of the sequence slowly unwind across the second series of groups: the ratio of stressed to unstressed syllables being progressively reduced as the latter draws to a close.

'*Il y avait là* (5) *un piétinement* (5) *de troupeau* (3),' – this bare, presentative formulation conveys an implicit analogy, the grounds of which might be paraphrased in the following, comparative terms: '*il y avait là* (quelque chose qui se déplacait comme) *un piétinement de troupeau*'.[xxii] In this light, it is interesting to note that both of the translators choose to explicate the comparative grounds underlying the analogy (i.e. '*it was **like** the tramping of a herd of animals*' (BUSS); '*There was a trampling, **as of a** herd in motion*' (SYMONS)). In rhythmical terms, Buss's shorter, unbroken sequence would appear to render the shape of the original more closely than Symons's longer, punctuated one. Similarly, in lexical terms, the 'Action' nominal '*piétinement*' (= 'footfall' ('heavy', 'continuous' ('determined', 'relentless'))) is more accurately rendered by Buss's '*tramping*' than Symons's '*trampling*': the latter tending to suggest that something was being actively compacted beneath the 'footfall' (see the difference, in French, between the nominal form '(le) piétinement (de)' and the verbal form 'piétiner (sur + Complement)').

'*une foule* (3) *que de brusques arrêts* (6) *étalaient en mares* (5) *sur la chaussée,* (4)'[xxiii] – in structural terms, this sequence might be mapped out in three ways: (i) in relation to the nominal Head item '*foule*'; (ii) in relation to the Predicator '*étalaient*'; (iii) in relation to the informational profile of the sequence:

> (i) *une* (DETERMINER) *foule* (HEAD) *que de brusques arrêts étalaient en mares sur la chaussée,* (QUALIFIER)
> (ii) *une foule* (COMPLEMENT) *que* (RELATIVE) *de brusques arrêts* (SUBJECT) *étalaient* (PREDICATOR) *en mares* (MANNER ADJUNCT) *sur la chaussée,* (LOCATIVE ADJUNCT).
> (iii) *Une foule* (THEME) *que de brusques arrêts étalaient en mares sur la chaussée,* (RHEME)

Firstly, we note that, of the three structures mapped out above, only the third is perfectly preserved in the two translations, with both Buss and Symons placing a direct lexical equivalent of '*une foule*' in the sequence-initial, Theme slot. This would seem to

represent something close to a discursive requirement in this instance, given the need to specify the actual source of the cattle-tramping motion introduced in the first clausal sequence, and to do so, moreover, in as close to sequence-initial position as possible in the second clause lest further ambiguity accrue. Regarding the choice of lexical item used to fulfil this function, Symons's translation reveals a comparatively rare symptom of datedness: '*a concourse of people*' proving not only to be periphrastic in relation to '*une foule*' but also unnecessarily formal in register. By contrast, Buss's rendering is marked only by the use of the thematically saturated demonstrative '*this*' to determine the nominal Head item '*crowd*'.

Secondly, we note that neither of the translators chooses to qualify the nominal Head item by means of the relative clause structure used in the original. This is almost certainly triggered by the need to position '*a concourse of people*' / '*this crowd*' as the Subject of the predication to follow. In the French original, '*une foule*' can effectively be seen to function as a Complement in relation to the predication '*de brusques arrêts ///
étalaient* (y) *en mares.*' In English, however, there would appear to be considerably greater resistance to the placing of abstract nominal items such as '*de brusques arrêts*' in the Subject slot unless they can be seen to fulfil a clearly agentive role within the functional logic of the sequence (which is not the case here). Accordingly, Symons places '*A concourse of people*' as the agentive Subject of the Predicator '*scattered*', with the notion of 'arrest' (which continues to be lexicalised in nominal form) being shifted from the Subject slot of the relative clause predication into an 'instrumental' Adjunct role (i.e. '(x) *que de brusques arrêts* (P)(y)' > '(x)(P)(y) *by a sudden block*'). Buss re-organises the basic structure of the sequence to a still greater extent, transposing the notion of 'arrest' from nominal into verbal form (i.e. '*de brusques arrêts*' > '*would suddenly halt*') such that the latter comes to form the first of two temporally co-ordinated verbal groups in the Predicator slot. These changes, although serving to loosen the implied causal link between the initial 'arrest' and the subsequent 'scattering' into one of simple consecution, can nevertheless be seen to preserve much of the basic syntagmatic ordering of the original:

this crowd (< une foule) would suddenly halt (< que de brusques arrêts), then spill

out (< étalaient) in pools (< en mares) across the roadway (< sur la chaussée)

Thus, despite the significant changes brought about in the syntactical incidence of the sequence in Buss's translation, the successive arrangement of its composite lexical elements remains almost identical to that to be found in Zola's text.

'*un défilé* (4) *sans fin* (2) *d'ouvriers* (3) *allant au travail* (5),'[xxiv] – the translation of this participial clause sequence is largely unproblematic. However, we note with interest that Symons's choice of short monosyllabic lexical items tends to produce a more or less even distribution of stressed and unstressed syllables in the rhythmical articulation of the sequence, whereas Buss's choice of longer, tri-syllabic variant generates a quasi-anapaestic rhythm (compare '*an end / less file / of men / going / to work,*' (SYMONS) with '*this end / less process / ion of lab / ourers go / ing to work /,*' (BUSS)

'*leurs outils* (3) *sur le dos* (3), *leur pain* (2) *sur le bras* (3),' – once again, we note that Buss produces a more lexically expanded and syllabically weighted sequence than does Symons. Conversely, the latter seems to produce a more rhythmically balanced rendering: the two asyndetically co-ordinated nominal groups neatly dividing themselves into corresponding rhythmical groups, each of which can be seen to contain two stressed syllables (compare '*their tools* (1 / 2) *on their backs* (1 / 3), *their bread* (1 / 2) *under their arm* (1 / 4),' (SYMONS) with '*carrying their tools* (2 / 5) *on their backs* (1 /3) *and a loaf of bread* (2 / 5) *under their arm* (1 / 4),' (BUSS)).

'*Et la cohue* (4) *s'engouffrait* (3) *dans Paris* (3), *où elle se noyait* (5), continuellement* (6).' – this concluding sequence seems, with appropriate finality, to compose itself around an isotopy of 'disappearance', doing so as a result of the semantic intersection obtaining between the verbal items in both the Predicator slot of the main clause (i.e. '*s'engouffrait*' = '(+ PAST) to **disappear**' ('in a precipitous manner' ('into a vehicle or building'))) and that of the relative clause (i.e. '*se noyait*' = '(+ PAST) to **disappear**' ('into a substantial body of water' ('with fatal consequences'))). In

rhythmical terms, the articulation would seem to be one of *cadence majeure*: the melodic rise occurring over a progression of three short rhythmical groups, peaking upon *'Paris'*, only to fall again over a series of two longer rhythmical groups, the last of which is articulated upon an apposed, single-item, adverbial Adjunct, *'continuellement'*. [xxv] Moreover, the rhythmical break created by this apposition, in tandem with the dying melodic fall upon the final adverbial suffix, serves to create a distinct effect of diminuendo at the very close of the sequence: the whole descriptive tableau shading off into an apparently endless continuity of marching workers.

In this light, it is interesting to note that, in Symons's rendering, the adverbial item *'continuously'* (= *'continuellement'*) is placed in a more syntagmatically orthodox position between Predicator and locative Adjunct (i.e. *'and the **whole pack** (2 / 4) **plunged ceaselessly** (2 / 4) into the **depths** (1 / 4) of **Paris** (1 / 3).'* As a consequence, much of the diminuendo finessing the original is lost, although the loss of this effect is perhaps compensated for, to a certain extent, by the reduction in rhythmical density occurring over the final two groups in relation to the first two. By contrast, in Buss's rendering, the sentence-final apposition concluding the original sequence is indeed retained (i.e. *'a **throng** (1 / 2) that **poured past** (2 / 3), to be **sucked** (1 / 3) into **Paris** (1 / 4), continuously* (1 / 5)). Accordingly, the diminuendo of the original is also felicitously reproduced by this choice: an effect reinforced by the progressive reduction in rhythmical density occurring over the final three groups.

An evaluation of the translations

Symons produces a translation which is both rhythmically and descriptively fluent, the only obviously dated lexical item included being *'a concourse of people'* (< *'une foule'*). He also risks the use of items which are strictly or loosely cognate with those to be found in the original (e.g. *'interminable'* =' *interminable'*; *'défilé'* > *'file'*), thus apparently seeking to strike up lexical echoes between French and English within the more Latinate etymological strata of the latter. Despite the manifestly source-orientated penchant informing the execution of these lexical choices, however, his text also displays a

countervailing tendency toward discursive reorganisation: the most striking example of the latter being the disjunctive punctuation of the sequence beginning '*men, beasts and carts* [...]' in order to redistribute the long and cumulative sequence of clauses closing the first paragraph of the original passage.

Buss's translation is almost beyond reproach in terms of the lexical accuracy with which he renders Zola's text. Furthermore, his prose is often alliteratively and stylistically felicitous (e.g. '*a great glow*', '*a sprinkling of sunlight*'): his attempt to capture the diminuendo of the final sequence proving to be particularly apposite. Despite these merits, however, his text also betrays an occasional tendency to skew what seem to be potentially accessible rhythmical effects: this being most notably revealed in (i) the absence of appropriate punctuation in the closing sequences of the first paragraph; (ii) the periphrasis unnecessarily expanding the sequence which describes the way in which the tramping workers carry bread and kit.

Proposed translation

When she raised her eyes above the unending wall that circled the city with its strip of wasteland, she noticed a great gleam of light, flush with sun-dust, and filled with the hum of Paris in the morning. Nevertheless, she would always crane her neck back round to the Poissonnière toll-gate, dizzy with the sight of the unending flood of men, beasts and carts, squeezing between the squat turrets as they streamed down from the heights of Montmartre and La Chapelle.

There was a cattle-like tramp of feet, a halting crowd scattered in pools across the roadway, an endless file of men going to work, their bread under their arms and their tools on their back; and thus did the throng pour past into Paris, to be swamped, continually.

Concluding remarks

The various features and facets characterising the phenomenon of prose rhythm would thus seem to be elusive indeed. Moreover, it is to be hoped that our various analyses have not erred by imposing too crude or too arbitrary a template upon some of the more fleetingly configured patterns identified. The fact that many of these patterns can be seen (or heard) barely to sustain themselves beyond the scope of a single syntactic group or clause would seem to derive directly from the inherently changeable and polyphonic nature of prose itself. No sooner does one clearly identifiable prosodic paradigm emerge than it tends to mutate into something altogether different. Ultimately, in the face of such slipperiness, the would-be analyst of prose rhythm can only envy the intellectual securities enjoyed by the traditional, critical dissector of verse-metrics.

Despite these limitations, however, it nevertheless became possible, in the course of our analysis, to make certain reasonably secure generalisations about the nature of prose rhythm in both English and French. In particular, we found that the vast majority of the rhythmical effects identified in our French corpus were based upon specific articulations of syllabic grouping and melodic cadence; on the other hand, in our English examples, such effects were found to be more directly attributable to specific patterns of stressed and unstressed syllable distribution. Moreover, in this light, it is perhaps little surprising to note that few cases if any were identified in which complete, rhythmical isomorphy was found to obtain between the two languages. Correspondingly, many of the sequences examined in English translation were found to include rhythmical features that were broadly compensatory in relation to the French original.

Throughout the development of this chapter, we paid particular attention to sequences in which a significant number of syntagmatically juxtaposed, adjunctive items had been asyndetically co-ordinated with one another in extraposition to the main predicate clause. Having noted that this form of co-ordination seemed to be generally more characteristic of French than English discourse, we then went on to analyse some of the specific and indeed highly idiosyncratic uses to which Zola put this device in the

pages of *L'Assommoir*. In particular, we found that its use had important repercussions upon the melodic articulation of the accommodating sequence: the bow of the latter's basic curve often being inflected or deviated or otherwise interrupted by the resulting accumulation of apparently incidental lexical material. Certain asyndetically co-ordinated sequences were also found to be possessed of their own distinctive sub-cadence: an effect which tended to offset at least some of the potential incongruity accruing as a result of such concatenation. Furthermore, in three particular cases, we discerned something resembling clear syntactic mimesis: the packing and stacking of given items within the overall syntagmatic ordering of the sequence serving to re-figure certain clearly lexicalised, descriptive phenomena relating to the notions of 'delay' or 'deferral' or 'obstruction'. Thus, generalising from these cases, Zola's use of asyndetic co-ordination seemed to be invested with an unmistakable stylistic resonance.

Furthermore, the use of asyndetic co-ordination in *L'Assommoir* also appeared to furnish something of a test case with respect to the translator's willingness to reproduce the basic syntactic and rhythmical shape of the original sequence without resort to discursive reorganisation. Rarely, however, was this device reproduced in its entirety in English translation: the dominant tendency being to furnish a sequence of text in which the corresponding items were presented in a more syntactically integrated and semantically explicit way. In particular, the resort to a more orthodox form of conjunctive co-ordination proved to be a frequent one. Indeed, such recourse was often found to lead to the procurement of a distinctively English-language based range of rhythmical effects, articulated around the patterned distribution of stressed and unstressed syllables. Moreover, the fact that such effects were procured by means of carefully modulated re-organisation rather than precise textual reproduction inevitably served to raise a number of more general questions about the nature of stylistic compensation in literary translation practice.

Ultimately, it would seem that one could no more hope to reproduce the exact rhythm of a particular language through the prosodic medium of another than one could to reproduce the exact timbre of a particular voice through mimicry. Not only are individual languages characterised by specific rhythms, they are also intimately defined by them. Moreover, it is precisely (and paradoxically) through the exploration and

appropriation of such rhythms that individual authors come to assume the distinctive

timbre of their own textual 'voice'. Accordingly, the stylistic mimicry of the translator

would seem destined to remain as much an approximate art as that of his vocal

counterpart. Certain shapes can be captured in silhouette, certain cadences in echo: all

gesturing toward the very irreducibility of rhythm itself.

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[i] Prose rhythm has proved to be a particularly slippery phenomenon to define over the years. A whole school of French stylistic criticism, from Marcel Cressot to Georges Molinié, has made considerable progress in this direction, with the emphasis tending to be upon the identification of various cadence patterns and rhythmical groups. In the English language tradition of criticism, however, this issue has been largely neglected since George Saintsbury's monumental *A History of English Prose Rhythm* (London: Macmillan, 1922). Unfortunately, this work, although magnificently written, does very little to establish a prosodic methodology specifically applicable to written prose, contenting itself with an often rather contrived and over-elaborate adaptation of traditional Greek versification techniques.

[ii] Antoine Berman neatly identifies some of the features inherent in the articulation of a specifically prose rhythm, and the importance of the latter to the practice of literary translation, when he suggests that 'Le roman, la lettre, l'essai, ne sont pas moins rythmiques que la poésie. Ils sont même multiplicité entrelacée de rythmes. La masse de la prose étant ainsi en mouvement, la traduction a du mal (heureusement) à briser cette tension rythmique. D'où vient que, même 'mal' traduit, un roman continue à nous entraîner. Cependent, la déformation peut affecter considérablement la rythmique, par exemple en s'attaquant à la *ponctuation*', Berman, p. 76.

[iii] See Henri Morier's majestic *Dictionnaire de poétique et de rhétorique* (Paris: PUF, 1961), pp. 875-922 (note on 'Période') for a highly sophisticated exposition of the way in which syllabic grouping and syntax map onto particular effects of cadence and melodic peaking in French prose.

[iv] See Bibliography under the rubric 'Stylistics' for a wider listing of some of these works.

[v] Georges Molinié has perhaps most notably sought to project experimental phenomena relating to variations in spoken melody and pitch to an understanding of a specifically prose rhythm. It is above all from his definition of cadence that we take our own understanding of this term: 'D'abord, la question de la mélodie, où l'on va retrouver des points déjà rencontrés. Il s'agit, on le sait, de la ligne des notes sur lesquelles est prononcée une phrase: l'enregistrement de cette ligne est d'ailleurs le seul moyen expérimental incontestable pour identifier une unité dite phrase [...]: celle-ci (la cadence) est dite majeure quand l'inflexion mélodique décrit une courbe telle que la première partie de la phrase, celle qui couvre la première tendance mélodique, la protase, est plus courte que la deuxième partie de la phrase, celle qui couvre la tendance mélodique inverse de la première, l'apodose – le point d'articulation où se renverse l'orientation de la ligne mélodique s'appelant acme; la cadence est mineure quand l'apodose est plus courte que la protase, elle est neutre quand la protase et l'apodose sont à peu près égale', *La Stylistique* (Paris: PUF, 1993), p. 106.

[vi] Marcel Cressot defines these two cadences in terms of 'masses croissantes' and 'décroissantes' respectively, identifying the latter as the most stylistically marked form: 'Bien caractéristique aussi de la phrase française, la tendance à sérier la phrase par masses croissantes pour une raison à la fois logique et musicale. Mettre un mot court après une masse d'une certaine importance, c'est l'exposer à passer inaperçu, ce qui peut nuire à la clarté [...]. A cette disposition par masses croissantes, on donne le nom de cadence majeure. C'est précisément parce que cette cadence est bien dans nos habitudes, que la cadence contraire, ou mineure, à la mode vers 1880, permet parfois des effets saisissants', *Le Style et ses techniques*

(Paris: PUF, 1947), p. 203. Molinié also sees the *cadence majeure* as 'non-marquée' and the *cadence majeure* as 'marquée', p. 106.

[vii] Claude Demanuelli adds a cautionary note in suggesting that a particular form of source text punctuation must always be read within a wider discursive context by the translator: 'On ne saurait "traduire" sans l'avoir préalablement decodé, elle, aussi bien que la littérature à laquelle elle est indissociablement liée. Cette traduction, comme toute activité traduisante, consiste donc, dans un premier temps, à évaluer la situation référentielle, dans un second, la pertinence de la ponctuation retenue par rapport à celle-ci [...]', *Points de repère: approche interlinguistique de la ponctuation français-anglais* (Saint Etienne, 1987), p. 267.

[viii] The use of recursive co-ordination also presents itself as an option for the translator in response to an asyndetically co-ordinated concatenation of adjectival items. Indeed, the rhythmical properties of this form of co-ordination are clearly displayed in the following rendering by Margaret Mauldon: '*Ceux qui savaient son age, quarante ans sonnés, avaient un petit frisson lorsqu'il passait* [...] *courbé, vacillant, vieux comme les rues.*' > '*Those who knew his age, just forty, would give a little shiver when he went by, bent and doddery and old as the streets.*' (MAULDON, p. 386).

[ix] It is interesting to note that Zola himself regarded the impressionist school as one which privileged the overall perceptual and aesthetic effect over the particular detail: 'Je crois qu'il faut entendre par des peintres impressionnistes des peintres qui peignent la réalité et qui se piquent de donner l'impression même de la nature, qu'ils n'étudient pas dans ses détails, mais dans son ensemble', 'Notes Parisiennes. Une exposition: les peintres impressionnistes' (1877), in *Emile Zola: écrits sur l'art*, ed. by Jean-Pierre Leduc-Adine (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), p. 358.

[x] Jean-Louis Vissière, 'L'Art de la phrase dans *L'Assommoir*', *CN*, 11, (1958), 455-464, (p. 455).

[xi] This particular adjunctive shift on the part of Tancock would seem to bear out the claim of Guillemin-Flescher (p. 125) that 'l'ordre le plus naturel, en anglais, est, de façon générale, **la droite** de la principale. En effet, un complément adverbial qui précède la proposition principale, en retarde l'identification. Un complément qui la suit ne disloque ni retarde cette identification. Ici encore, il s'agit de transpositions relatives à la structure de départ. Si, en anglais, **la postposition** est généralement préférable à **l'antéposition, l'antéposition** est en revanche préférable à **l'imbrication**. Elle retarde, en effet, l'introduction de la **proposition principale**, mais ne la disloque pas. C'est pourquoi certaines imbrications pourront donner lieu, en anglais, à des antépositions [...].

[xii] Henri Meschonnic has been trenchantly critical of the notion that the literary translator should produce a work systematically effacing all traces of its own production. In opposition to what he sees as this inherently ideological conception of 'transparence', he opposes that of the translation as active cultural 'décentrement' by virtue of which the 'langue-culture' of the source text comes to be challenged in all of its basic propositions and structures. Although we share his view, in this thesis, that the translation should seek to duplicate the mode of signification animating the original text, we nevertheless feel that rational, and indeed eminently linguistic criteria can be furnished with a view to determining the legitimacy of particular forms of stylistic marking and compensation. Moreover, in contradistinction to his view that the concept of 'fidelité' is inherently ideological, we seek to elaborate a wider range of parameters in terms of which the latter may be understood. See, 'Proposition pour une poétique de la traduction' in *Pour la poétique II* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), for Meschonnic's most cogent elaboration of these issues.

[xiii] The fact that Buss chooses to explicate the functional relationship between the second and third of these adjunctive groups would seem to back up Guillemin-Flescher's claim that 'Il est rare qu'en anglais, on puisse maintenir ainsi une série de juxtapositions. Il faudra généralement marquer la relation, tout au moins entre deux des propositions', p. 141.

[xiv] Another example of Zola's penchant for the asyndetic co-ordination of items from different form-classes is provided by the following sequence: '*Ce louchon d'Augustine avait un chant de poule, la bouche ouverte, suffoquant.*' Again, there would seem to be a distinct effect of cadence articulated across this short, elaborative tail, with the peak being reached upon '*ver-*'. The prevailing tendency among the translators is to furnish a more lexically expanded and explicatory rendering, e.g. '*Cross-eyed Augustine cackled like a hen, with her mouth open, gasping for breath.*' (BUSS, p. 139)

[xv] To use the terminology of the Czech functional grammarian, Jan Firbas, the lexical items coming toward the end of the sequence can be seen to enjoy a greater degree of 'communicative dynamism' than those occurring earlier therein. This postulate can be seen to be normatively applicable to most communication contexts (including literary ones), if not universally valid for all of them. See Firbas, ' On the Interplay of

Prosodic and non-Prosodic Means of Functional Sentence Perspective' in *The Prague School of Linguistics and Language Teaching*, ed. by Vilim Fried (Oxford, 1972), pp. 77-94.

[xvi] Symons furnishes us with another interesting example of the use of repetition (in this case adverbial) as a means of organising a series of intercalated Adjuncts into clearly defined rhythmical groups: *'Puis, assis contre la vitrine, toujours en paletot, rasé et peigné, il causa poliment* [...].' > *'Then he would seat himself next to the window, always in his overcoat, always shaved and combed; and he would talk politely,* (...).' (SYMONS, p. 223).

[xvii] See Chapter Seven for a further exploration of this issue.

[xviii] Meschonnic is highly critical of arbitrary changes in the conjunctive paradigm through which the original text is articulated: 'Ainsi, dans une dominance linguistique-culturelle subordonnante, un texte peut installer une contre-dominance paratactique (Hemingway), une traduction-traduction ne le peut pas et ne l'ose pas', Meschonnic (1973), p. 310.

[xix] See Guillemin-Flescher, p. 205-206, for an interesting discussion of the way in which English language translators tend to restore transitively selected feature compatibility between the Subject and Predicator in the translation of 'perceptual' representations such as *'son regard, qu'elle promenait autour d'elle* (...).'

[xx] Richard B. Grant suggests that these seething agglomerations of flowing, streaming, swarming humanity to be found within Zola's oeuvre are symbolic constituents of a wider, architectural design: 'Comme exemple du rythme cyclique dans *L'Assommoir,* on peut prendre l'arrivée des ouvriers qui descendent des hauteurs de Montmartre et de La Chapelle pour travailler à Paris. Là encore, il y a une idée du flux et du reflux éternel, là encore, nous voyons l'humanité comme une masse, à une grande distance', 'Un aspect négligé du style de Zola', *CN,* 42 (1971), 13-21, (p. 19).

[xxi] Pascal Quignard comments appositely upon the importance of punctuation to the rhythm of the text in the following aphorism: 'Aussi entend-on parler de la ponctuation comme d'une sorte de cadence ou, plutôt, de "mouvement d'exécution". Ce n'est pas un air, une mélodie: mais un rythme, qui est abstrait, qui chiffre la promptitude ou la lenteur, solfiant les groupes des mots, décidant des valeurs', *Petits traités,* Vol. 1 (Paris: Maeght, 1990), p. 160.

[xxii] Simone Bonnafous comments perceptively on the figurative resonance that this kind of vocabulary assumes in the course of the narrative: 'Par ce vocabulaire de "piétinement" et du "troupeau", Zola semble donc rendre l'état d'esprit des ouvriers, après les journées de 1848, leur lassitude, leur soumission. Ne trahit-il pas aussi une angoisse plus personnelle?', 'Recherches sur le lexique de *L'Assommoir*', *CN,* 55 (1981), 52-62, (p. 55). Maarten van Buuren sees similar symbolic associations lying behind the use of this recurrent descriptive motif: 'La Métaphore du troupeau est accompagnée fréquemment des mêmes motifs: ignorance, docilité, mais le trait qui est pertinent est celui de la soumission', *"Les Rougon Macquart" d'Emile Zola: de la métaphore au mythe* (Paris: José Corti, 1986) p. 39.

[xxiii] Marcel Cressot reminds us that he belongs to a more prescriptive school of stylistic study than is perhaps prevalent today when he includes this sequence within a list of stylistic 'slips' ('fautes de ton'). Little evidence is presented to support this conclusion other than his own analytical intuition. 'La langue de *L'Assommoir*', *Le Français moderne* VIII, 3 (June-July 1940), 207-222, (pp. 216-217).

[xxiv] Vissière (p. 458) sees the whole sequence from *'Il y avait un piétinement de troupeau'* to *'leur pain sous leur bras'* as an example of ' "**l'essayage de termes**" qui apporte une précision plus grande, mais aboutit souvent à l'alignement des synonymes, procédé oratoire assez voyant'. This critical concept was originally coined by Marcel Cressot in his meticulous study of syntactic and lexical patterning in the work of Huysmans, referring above all to 'les hésitations de la pensée, les insuffisances ou les dépassements d'expression, les retouches, tout ce qui représente une disposition de moment', *La Phrase et le vocabulaire de J.-K. Huysmans* (Paris: Slaktine, 1975 [1938]), p. 133.

[xxv] Shades of M. Flaubert here, perhaps! Ferdinand Brunot offers the following austere judgement upon such usage: 'Les adverbes en *-ment,* si lourds, n'ont jamais passé pour des beautés littéraires. Quelques grands écrivains du XIXième siècle sont cependant arrivés à en tirer parti, par la place qu'ils leur ont donné [...]. Flaubert a souvent, lui aussi, de semblables trouvailles', *La Pensée et la langue,* 3rd edn (Paris: Masson, 1936), p. 600.

Chapter 5: Uses and Abuses of Slang

Introduction

Robin Buss's suggestion, in his translator's note to *L'Assommoir*, that argotic and slang forms constitute a kind of 'anti-translation'[i] would seem to be an appropriate one, given that these highly localised linguistic phenomena can be seen to breach the boundaries of their own natural constituency of usage only with considerable difficulty and strain. If particular languages can be seen to consolidate and democratise their most abiding morphological and lexical forms by virtue of their of dissemination through the medium of the written word, then argotic and slang forms, by contrast, would seem to resist such consolidation precisely by virtue of their refractory relationship to this medium. Moreover, the fact that these forms are so inextricably rooted within particular communities of people, in particular places, at particular times, tends to render the possibility of their transposition into another linguistic medium not only problematic but more than a little paradoxical. Indeed, one might well ask, as Antoine Berman does in 'L'auberge du lointain', how the *lunfardo* argot of Argentinean Spanish[ii] could possibly be translated into another tongue, given the very particular linguistic and cultural context surrounding the emergence of this distinctively metropolitan form of speech. One could perhaps imagine translating it into 'cockney' English (which has the merit of being metropolitan, working-class and loosely port-based) and this would presumably 'do' as a broadly equivalent argotic form. Nevertheless, the whole tenor and tone of this borrowed form is likely to be significantly different from that characterising the original one. Indeed, for the prospective translator, there would ultimately appear to be little way around this necessary fact of socio-linguistic irreducibility.

Zola's *L'Assommoir*, of course, represents what can, in many ways, be seen as a pioneering attempt[iii] to integrate argotic forms of speech into the very texture of a literary narrative: an innovation perhaps contrived with a view to bringing the reader into a more authentic and continuous contact with the projected words and thoughts of the novel's characters than would have otherwise been the case had these been relayed

exclusively by means of direct speech and conventional dialogue. The composition of this *naturaliste* classic would thus seem to be very much a hybrid enterprise, forged from the grafting of artisan vernacular onto the literary *koiné* of modern French prose. Indeed, Zola's studied utilisation of the *langue verte* argot of the mid-nineteenth century Parisian labouring classes has long since entered into critical lore, thanks to the work of such stylistically orientated French critics such as Marguerite Lips, Marcel Cressot and Henri Mitterand. Moreover, although Zola undoubtedly was an assiduous user of documentary evidence, primary texts and extensive written notes, his creative re-appropriation of such material would seem to have been less than wholly 'scientific' in validity, given the unavoidable heterogeneity of these primary sources in relation to the kinds of empirical evidence furnished by the stricter investigative procedures of the laboratory.[iv] Similarly, the mediation of direct, personal experience would almost certainly have played an important role in determining Zola's appreciation of what constituted the appropriate argotic form for a given character in a given situation.

Zola' recomposition of working-class, Parisian speech forms within the nevertheless thoroughly written narrative of *L'Assommoir* can thus be seen as something of a translation in itself, deriving from a creative amalgam of sources and influences, the diversity of which is wholly at odds with the compact and unreflective density of the original linguistic phenomenon.[v] Although approximately situated in the artisan milieu of the French capital in the 1850's, these speech forms also bear the traces of a more scattered provenance, with clearly discernable hints of the Provençal and the down-at-heel *bohème* being evoked by certain idioms and turns of phrase. Nevertheless, over the course of the narrative, they do finally seem to acquire something of the coherence of a genuine vernacular, albeit one successively compiled and re-worked in the interests of a purely fictional representation.

In this light, the relationship of the translator to Zola's imaginatively contrived vernacular would appear to be a doubly displaced one: both geographically, in terms of the original milieu from which the latter might be supposed to have emerged; and linguistically, in terms of the more or less nationally standardised Gallic tongue of which it might be said to have formed a localised offshoot. Moreover, this double displacement would seem to impose fairly severe limits upon the translator's pretension

to accuracy: the necessarily mediated quality of his/her own practice being starkly highlighted, in this case, by the manifest heterogeneity of the forms which are to be brought into a relationship of provisional equivalence with one other in order to secure its pragmatic validity. In practical terms, the translator would thus seem to be faced with one of four options when tackling Zola's fictionally recomposed version of *langue verte*:

(i) to reproduce a comparable form of nineteenth-century, metropolitan argot, deriving from a clearly working-class or popular milieu;

(ii) to use a more readily accessible, contemporary variant of this kind of argot, characterised by the same streetwise vividness and imagery;

(iii) to invent his/her own kind of argot, based upon recognisable forms to be found in either contemporary or historical usage;

(iv) to use a creative amalgam of known and recognisable forms of argot within the target language in order to give the reader something of the 'feel' of the oral texture of Zola's original text.

Clearly, the pursuit of the first option would involve an enormous amount of philological reconstruction and research on the part of the translator, with the resulting text inevitably courting commercial rejection given the burden of comprehension that is likely to be placed upon the shoulders of the contemporary, target culture reader. On the other hand, the pursuit of the second option would certainly appear to be a more commercially plausible one, under the proviso that the target culture reader be assumed to be broadly familiar with the contemporary argotic variant chosen. Unfortunately, this can by no means be taken for granted. For example, if one decided to render Zola's *langue verte* in the slang of the Glaswegian shipyards, this would certainly seem to be an appropriate choice in terms of register and vigour of expression. However, the potentially decisive risk, in commercial terms, would be that that this form of slang is simply not 'metropolitan' enough to be confidently understood by anybody born further than fifty miles south of Govan. Moreover, this risk would be only partly reduced by the choice of a variant drawn from Britain's incontestably largest city, London. Indeed, what price the paranomastic pleasures of cockney rhyming slang to the poor reader from New Dehli or

New York? Perhaps the only solution to this dilemma would be to have a 'cockney' translation for the British reader and a 'Bronx' translation for the American one? But then again, how would the parochial soul from Manchester or Memphis fare with all this? Perhaps one could have a cotton-spinning version for the former, and a cotton-picking one for the latter? The risks of vicious regress attendant upon this kind of speculation are, of course, manifest, and need not be laboured further here. They do, however, serve to highlight the fact that no one, single dialect form is likely to be known to a sufficient degree of depth, by a sufficient number of people, to be entirely adequate to the commercial purposes typically motivating the commissioning of a French classic in translation. Indeed, for a publishing house such as Penguin (the commissioners of the translations of both Tancock and Buss), the prospective target culture readership would almost certainly be seen to encompass the whole of the British Isles, and very possibly other markets too, such as those to be found in the English-speaking Commonwealth. All of which would tend to imply that some kind of compromise might be necessary in the recomposition of the argotic forms to be included in the new text.

In this light, the third option, which would effectively be to reconstruct one's own argot form from scratch *à la Clockwork Orange*, would seem to be not only artistically unjustified (Zola did not use an invented argot but rather a recomposed one) but also commercially unviable, given the potential obscurity of such a project. All of which tends to leave the fourth option as the only really workable one for the prospective literary translator, who, in the normal course of events, would be expected to produce a freshly orientated version of the original text, capable of 'travelling' at ease throughout the whole length and breadth of the linguistic constituency to be marketed. Moreover, given that pure argotic forms tend to be reluctant travellers, a certain degree of mixing and matching would probably be necessary once the initial boundaries of derivation and usage had been breached. Indeed, if we turn to the various 'Translator's Notes' included in our respective corpus translations, we find that it is precisely this sort of unabashed pragmatism which seems to prevail in the stated intentions of these experienced practitioners with respect to their own approach to translating slang.

Ernest Vizetelly's introduction to his own 1897 translation[vi] furnishes a revealingly puritanical slant upon the whole business of translating the argot to be found

in *L'Assommoir*. This task is seen through a prism of moral priorities that seem to be wholly typical of the Victorian educator, if not necessarily of the Victorian writer. Although Vizetelly is perfectly prepared to acknowledge that Zola's strictly 'philological experiment' is of both 'keen and abiding interest', he nevertheless shows not the slightest compunction in dismissing the importance of such an experiment to the prospective translator. Indeed, his views are nothing if not trenchant upon this point:

> Whatever philological importance and interest may attach to the original, must largely disappear in a translation, particularly when, as in the present case, this translation has been made, not for philological purposes, but chiefly to diffuse the wholesome lessons against drink, sloth, and ignorance with which the work abounds.

Despite this wholesale engagement of Zola's novel for purposes that may not have been entirely inherent in its own conception, Vizetelly is also careful not to dismiss entirely the use of the argot featured therein. Indeed, in this respect, he claims to have 'endeavoured to preserve some of the spirit of the original by giving the words and thoughts of the various characters in a more or less slangy form, whilst seeking milder expletives and less coarseness of expression than will be found in the French work'. Vizetelly's translation of Zola's philologically inspired experiment is thus avowedly a matter of deliberate compromises and wilful adulterations, the proscriptive hand of self-censorship never slow to intervene in the rendering of some of the apparently more salacious terms. No attempt is made to reproduce the texture of the argot-strewn discourse of the original simply by virtue of the fact that any such attempt would be manifestly incompatible with the kind of moral lessons that Vizetelly wishes his readers to draw from the text. Such a blatant annexation of the original work, of course, is likely to strike the modern student of translation as nothing less than anathema. Nevertheless, one should perhaps be residually grateful to Zola's unflinchingly earnest moral interpreter for laying out the stakes of the translation debate so clearly.

In a perceptive 'Translator's Note', Gerard Hopkins refers to the 'problem of slang' as being the 'translator's bane', appropriately pointing out that the text of

L'Assommoir 'fairly bristles with it'. Hopkins is perfectly open about his reluctance to use what he calls the method of 'equivalents', suggesting that his 'own particular jargon may not, strictly, be traceable to any class of society in any precise period' (which would seem to correspond fairly closely to what we outlined above as being option four). He also freely acknowledges that the translator's task seems to be compounded, in this instance, by the historical specificity of the argot used, suggesting that 'only an Eric Partridge, only a Michael Sadleir, could have the necessary knowledge of the slum talk of the Second Empire'. By way of compensation for this apparently necessary ignorance on the part of the translator, Hopkins introduces a set of broadly sociological categories in order to determine the speech of his characters: the various registers ranging from 'the moderately well-behaved language of the middle-classes (Goujet, the mature Lantier) to the uneducated, proletarian slang of Coupeau. This sliding scale of colloquial discourse would seem to be all very well in terms of apportioning speech-patterns to the various characters: However, where it can perhaps be seen to fall down is in the structuring and texturing of the very narrative discourse itself with argotic speech: an area in which Hopkins's own translation would seem to be less than wholly convincing, as we have already seen. Ultimately, Hopkins would have perhaps been able to promote a more convincing solution to what he sees as an intractably linguistic problem if he had followed his own intuition and set his text veritably 'bristling' with the 'argot of the industrial slums'.

In his prefatory remarks, Leonard Tancock[vii] almost completely dismisses the possibility of translating argot for argot, pointing out that these highly mutable forms have a tendency to follow their own law of built-in obsolescence. As a consequence, an exclusive reliance upon any one such form would inevitably serve to condemn the resulting translation to a strictly limited span of relevance, bounded principally by the precarious durability of the chosen form itself:

> The translation of slang and swearing in general is self-defeating in that the more exactly it hits off the tone of the original in the slang of the moment when the translator is doing it, the less durable it is likely to be simply because the 'in' or 'with it' expression by its very nature never lasts and becomes incomprehensible

in a very short time. On the other hand, a translation must speak the language of its own time, and any attempt to reproduce 'period' slang or popular language is bound to produce effects as grotesque as 'Merry, thou art a scurvy knave.'[viii]

The translator would thus seem to be caught in something of a double bind: on the one hand, consigned to impotence when it comes to reviving a target language slang contemporary with that of the original; on the other, obliged to steer clear of the faddish modernity of a television-imbued contemporary slang. Given that the narrative of *L'Assommoir* transcribes, not only a simple, linear tale of events but also 'a world of bonnets and shawls, voluminous petticoats, fichus, frock coats and top hats', the rendering of this narrative in translation should also be seen to adhere as closely as possible to the distinctive shape and texture of this characteristically nineteenth-century environment. Nevertheless, as Tancock is keen to insist, 'the original effect of shock and violence of language must in some measure be produced'. In order to guarantee this vitality of impact in the translating medium, however, he seems content to rely upon little more than the kind of loose amalgam of broadly contemporary slang forms that we outlined in option four:

> The only solution seemed to me to be to use popular speech as timeless as I could make it, sprinkled fairly freely with the obvious and equally timeless swear-words and obscenities, with our friends the four-letter words in evidence. My rendering is therefore unavoidably 'free' in this respect, since one can only hope to reproduce the sort of language comparable people might use in pubs or off their guard.[ix]

The 'solution' that Tancock proposes here would thus appear to rest upon the assumption that a certain 'timeless' layer of 'popular speech' can effectively be isolated from the more transient and mutable forms that pass through common currency. Of what this timeless popular speech might actually be composed, however, he gives little indication, other than to suggest that it be suitably spiced up with unguarded language and expletives of the kind that people might freely make when relaxed! Doubtless these deliberately

vulgar accretions are designed to ensure that the timeless, popular speech to be used in lieu of any specific argot nevertheless remains capable of generating a certain degree of 'shock and violence'. Unfortunately, this 'shock- em with the 'F' word' strategy occasionally leads to results which fall little short of the risible, as Robin Buss points out in the prefatory note to his own translation of *L'Assommoir*:

> In dealing with Zola's slang, he (Tancock) opts for a mainly British and Cockney language that has already dated after some thirty years, and he tends actually to exaggerate the crudity of some expressions that Zola uses – so Coupeau's remark: *'Tu as l'air d'une nourrice'* becomes, in Tancock's English: 'You look like a fucking nurse.'[x]

Indeed, as Buss rightly suggests, although a certain post-Lady Chatterley/post-Lord Chamberlain *frisson* may well have been procured on behalf of the British reader by the use of such peppery interjections at the beginning of the nineteen-seventies, transgressive effects of this kind were quickly seen to subside into banality by dint of over-exposure, as their use became commonplace in succeeding years. Consequently, a less abrasive or self-consciously burlesque approach would seem to be required for the potentially more *blasé* generation to be found encountering the novel some thirty years hence. Moreover, it is with an avowedly humanistic bias that Buss goes about trying to rectify some of the more blatant mid-century excesses marring Tancock's translation. In his own 'Note on the Translation', Buss also eschews the possibility of translating *L'Assommoir* into any one specific slang, suggesting that it would be 'pointless, even if one has the necessary expertise, to transfer the text from one language that the English-reader does not understand into another that most English-speaking readers will not understand'. He also points out that the grounding of Zola's argot within a highly particular world – 'of Parisian localities, wine-drinking, foods and so on' – tends to exclude the possibility of any easy displacement of this world into another, very differently grounded, argotic form. The slang of the Glaswegian shipyard worker, for example, is unlikely to contain the nuanced variety of terms denoting different kinds of wine that we find in Zola's text. In response to these inevitable incompatibilities, Buss settles for 'comprehensibility and

readability' as his chief criteria in translating Zola's slang, with the resulting text to be spiced with 'enough colloquial language to convey the feel of the original'. In short, he would seem to be proposing a kind of watered-down version of option four, a strong emphasis being placed upon ease of reception on the part of the English-speaking reader.

Writing in her own 'Note on the Translation',[xi] Margaret Mauldon declares that, in contrast to the French original, 'an English version should not need an English slang dictionary'. Furthermore, her stated criteria of composition seem to be remarkably similar to those outlined by Buss: the principal aim being to produce for the benefit of the English-language reader 'a clearer, more accessible 'read', using slang that is not, as in the French original, outmoded or obscure'. Mauldon goes on to elucidate the two basic stages constitutive of her own translation practice in this respect: (i) a precise (and, if necessary, extensively researched) identification of the meaning of the original, French term; (ii) the search for 'an English equivalent of the French, which, while still in current use, would preferably not be of recent vintage and would, ideally, convey the vigour of the original without introducing incompatible English or American cultural connotations'. Again, this delicately-balanced negotiation between vernacular 'vigour' and generality of access would by no means appear to be an easy one to carry out for the translator, especially when faced with such a complexly grounded and linguistically idiosyncratic text as L'Assommoir. Indeed, if the latter can be seen to be peculiarly and deliberately taxing in some of the demands it makes upon its readers, then the natural tendency of the commercial literary translator would seem to be, a contrario, to draw back from such uncompromising experimentalism. 'Translation', states Mauldon, 'inevitably involves compromise, and I am aware that in seeking greater intelligibility I may have sacrificed, in my version, some of Zola's pungent stylistic vitality'. Whether the 'inevitability' of such 'compromise' is commercially or linguistically determined, however, she does not specify.

The bias of the translators toward the norms of clarity of expression and ease of comprehension is thus rendered totally explicit in the course of these justificatory reflections, with the corresponding advocacy of a broad and inclusive approach to the translation of Zola's argot being similarly orientated toward the facilitation of the task for the English-speaking reader. Moreover, one suspects that their respective publishing-

house editors would have been unlikely to demur. Nevertheless, aesthetically purist doubts remain, in the wake of so much prefatory apologia, concerning the extent to which the rugged stylistic texture of the original may actually have to be smoothed over in order to ensure ease of textual reception in translation. With a view to elucidating this matter a little further, we will now turn our attention to a small number of corpus examples, followed by a somewhat longer passage of colloquially inflected, descriptive language:

Analysis I

(i) *Elle disait cela pour se rassurer, car à certaines heures, malgré son* **taf**, *elle gardait toujours son béguin épouvanté.* (ZOLA, p. 856)

In this sequence, drawn from the passage describing Gervaise's morbid crush upon Bazouge, the undertaker, we find an interesting lexical variant of 'peur', i.e. *'taf'*. Moreover, the evidently colloquial nature of this variant is likely to strike the reader all the more by virtue of its insertion within an apparently conventional piece of descriptive prose. Its impact would seem to be further accentuated by a sulphurous hint of the underworld milieu in which it enjoyed its principal currency. Apropos, Alfred Delvau furnishes us with the following definition in his *Dictionnaire de la langue verte*: *'taf*, s.m. Peur, - dans l'argot des voleurs, *Avoir le taf*, Avoir peur. *Coller le taf*. Faire peur'.[xii]

Accordingly, one would, at the very least, expect the translator to include a similarly marked, colloquial variant of 'fear' (= 'peur') in his/her own rendering with a view to reproducing something of the effect of casual incongruity generated by the use of *'taf'* in the original sequence. Turning to our corpus translations, however, we are disappointed to find that this discursively significant piece of colloquial marking has been almost uniformly omitted: Tancock gives us *'in spite of her scare'* (p. 332); Buss *'in spite of her fear'* (p. 323); Vizetelly and Townsend *'in spite of her fright'* (p. 308; p. 366); Hopkins *'in spite of her terror'* (p. 345); Mauldon the more periphrastic *'in spite of the panic she'd been in'* (p. 328). Not only are these renderings singularly unevocative with respect to the shady world of brigandage that Delvau identifies as being the milieu of

origin for '*taf*', they also fail to suggest anything of the kind of streetwise borrowing of such terms that may have been prevalent among the artisan classes in the mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, nowhere is the English-language reader challenged into asking himself what kind of language is being used in the narrative at this point, or indeed what kind of relationship this language may have to the register of usage typically employed by its characters. Given that the discursive composition of the original text seems to pose precisely such a challenge to its no doubt less than criminally inclined reader, this would seem to be a significant omission on the part of the translators.

On a slightly more positive note, Arthur Symons probably comes closest to finding a genuinely colloquial, lexical variant of 'fear' with '*despite the funk she'd been in*' (p. 309). The *OED* gives us the following definition of '*funk*': 'to be in a state of panic or depression'. The register is described as 'informal'. Although we still seem to be some way off the 'argot des voleurs' identified by Delvau with respect to '*taf*', this rendering does, nevertheless, successfully inscribe itself within a genuinely spoken register, albeit not a distinctively popular one. It also has a slight redolence of the archaic without being in any way obscure or absurd to the modern reader. Given these fortuitous merits, it is hard to see why Nicholas White, Symons's contemporary editor, chooses to 'update' the Everyman version by replacing '*funk*' with '*frenzy*' (p. 301): a variant which is not only completely unmarked with regard to register but also seems to indicate more an outwardly manifest state of turmoil than an inwardly felt sensation of fear (re:' *taf*).

(ii) *Il fallait traverser Paris, et sa gigue restait en retard.* (ZOLA, p. 930)

In this short sequence, describing Gervaise's weary pilgrimage across Paris,[xiii] we find a colloquially marked variant of 'leg' (= 'jambe') in the form of '*gigue*'. Again, Delvau situates this firmly, albeit schematically, in the register of 'l'argot du peuple, qui s'en sert pour danser la '*gigue*' ou la faire danser aux gens qui les ennuient'.[xiv] The semantic structure of the lexeme '*gigue*' is thus essentially metonymic: it can be used to refer either to the 'wild, celtic dance' described by Delvau (its diachronically primary signification), or to the 'legs' which feature so prominently in the execution of this dance

(i.e. its slang signification). Clearly, it is the second signification which is unambiguously selected by the narrative context in this case.

Regrettably, all seven of our corpus translators struggle to find a colloquially marked variant of 'leg'. Tancock and Mauldon simply give us '*her leg*' (p. 408; p. 429); Hopkins '*her legs*' (p. 449). Vizetelly, Townsend and Symons insert the adjectival item '*lame*' (p. 349; p. 470; p. 395) as an attributive Modifier to '*leg*', thus clearly lexicalising the most contextually significant feature pertaining to Gervaise's ailing limb. Buss resorts to even further lexical expansion in an effort to inflect his rendering with something of the colloquial nuance suggested by '*gigue*', changing the determining form to the more emphatic, demonstrative article (i.e. 'the' > '*that*'), and then qualifying '*leg*' by means of the possessive, prepositional group structure '*of hers*' (p. 416). In this way, he manages to formulate a clearly marked, discursive perspective upon the referent (i.e. one of weariness and exasperation), doing so in such a way as to suggest the kind of attitude that Gervaise herself might be supposed to have had toward her troublesome leg. Nevertheless, one still feels that the discursive texture of the original would have been more accurately reflected had a single item, colloquial variant of 'leg' been used in this translation: something along the lines of '*that dodgy pin of hers*' or '*that dodgy stick of hers*'. Even more convincing, perhaps, would have been the use of a variant that clearly invites the notion of 'dancing' to be construed in its semantic representation, although, admittedly, none readily springs to the mind of the present writer.

> (iii) *Coupeau cria qu'il était chez lui, qu'il **emmiellait** les voisins.*
>
> (ZOLA, p. 766)

In this sequence, Coupeau is captured showing his disdain for any possible interference in the sumptuous feast being enjoyed *chez lui* from his potentially quarrelsome neighbours. In doing so, our bibulous hero is indirectly reported by the narrator as having used the euphemistically vulgar verb 'emmieller'. *Le Petit Robert* informs us that the principal meaning of this verb, qualified as 'vieux', is 'adoucir, édulcorer'. A second, popular

definition is also given: se substitue par plaisanterie à *emmerder*'. Clearly, it is exactly this kind of substitution that Coupeau is making here.

Accordingly, what seems to be required from the translators, in this case, is a lexical marked expression of contempt which is both colloquially vulgar and a shade euphemistic. In stark opposition to this requirement, Tancock's '*so balls to the neighbours*' (p. 216) is bluntly direct in its expression of contempt; Buss's '*to hell with the neighbours*' (p. 210) only slightly less so. On the other hand, Mauldon's translation strikes a more decorous, albeit equally contemptuous note with '*he didn't give a spit about the neighbours*' (p. 214). Similarly, Symons's and Townsend's '*He didn't give a damn for the neighbours*' (p. 203; p. 240) can be seen to maintain broadly the right kind of balance between vulgarity and euphemism. Less successfully, Vizetelly's '*he did not care a button for the neighbours*' (p. 202) errs too much on the side of euphemism, with this dainty little idiom conveying a tone that seems to be more one of childish petulance than mature contempt.

(iv) *On appelait les camarades qui avaient l'air bon zig.* (ZOLA, p.769)

In this sequence, the barely discriminating camaraderie of the revellers at the Coupeaus' feast is, once again, evoked by means of the subtle appropriation of lexical fragments from the characters' own discourse. For example, in this case, one might suppose that the implied transformation from direct speech to free indirect style occurs along the following lines: 'appelez-le, il a l'air bon zig' > '*on appelait les camarades qui avaient l'air bon zig*'. Indeed, the use here of the argotic, lexical item '*zig*' can be seen to initiate the reader, not only into the discursive universe of the mid-nineteenth century, Parisian *faubourgs*, but also, by extension, into the very mind-set of those designated by this item, i.e. the boozy and work-shy companions typically to be found frequenting these bar-strewn neighbourhoods. By way of confirmation, Delvau furnishes us with the following definition: 'ami, camarade de bouteille – dans l'argot des faubouriens, qui font allusion aux zigzags du Lundi soir. *Bonne zigue – homme joyeux* – mauvais mari peut-être, ou mauvais fils ou mauvais père, mais bon ami de cabaret ou de débauche'.[xv]

Unfortunately, the translations offered in our corpus again fall far short of reproducing the very precise control of register implied by the use of '*zig*' in the original. Tancock's translation includes the somewhat vague '*pals who looked **alright**'*(p. 219); Buss the equally vague and inappropriately formal '*any acquaintance who looked like a **decent sort*** (p. 214). Mauldon's '*mates who seemed like **nice chaps**'* (p. 218) stiffens uncomfortably from a popular into a civilised register over the length of the same clause; similarly, '*(those) acquaintances who looked like **good fellows**'* (p. 207; p. 244) from Symons and Townsend respectively, evokes a genteel register far removed from the kind of boisterous banter likely to be heard amid the racket of the Coupeaus' feast. Even more incongruously, Vizetelly's '*the **right sort**'* (p. 205) smacks of the exclusive milieu of the Garrick Club rather than the inclusive hospitality of the little washhouse apartment. Clearly, it would seem that the translators' manipulation of register, in this instance, is about as discriminating as that of Coupeau's selection of his guests! Accordingly, with a view to targeting the kind of register required a little more accurately, we would suggest the following remedial translation: '*they would beckon in any **likely lads that fancied a drink or two**.*' Although this rendering might well be criticised on the grounds that it proves to be distinctly periphrastic in relation to the original, it can nevertheless be seen to have the compensatory merit of capturing most of the nuances that we identified in the latter with respect to the use of '*zig*'.

(v) *Devant la porte, on l'**engueula**, on l'appela **fripouille**.* (ZOLA, p. 870)

In this sequence, we encounter the boozers haranguing the unscrupulous purveyor of spirits, the enigmatic Père Colombe, as they find themselves ejected from his insalubrious premises. Once again, two of the lexical variants employed in what is ostensibly a sequence of non-reported narration can, in fact, be ascribed very clearly to the spoken register of the boozers themselves, i.e. '*engueula*' (= 'to reproach someone' ('with anger or verbal force')) and '*fripouille*' (= 'one who operates unscrupulously in his/her own interest'). By way of further definition, the former can be seen as a colloquial variant of 'réprimander'; the latter as a less formal or literary variant of 'crapule'.

Turning to our translators, they can be seen to plunder the colloquial resources of the English language with varying degrees of success. Tancock's '*they bawled at him and called him a shit*' (p. 340) renders the demotic force of the original with an added increment of vulgarity: '*bawled*' signifying that some kind of 'reproach' had been delivered, and this with both 'anger' and 'verbal force'; '*a shit*' implying that the person thereby designated can be considered, among other things, to have been thoroughly 'unscrupulous'. Buss's '*they were yelling at him, calling him swindler*' (p. 341) is significantly more subdued in tone than Tancock's rendering: a modulation which would seem to be wholly consistent with the criticisms made by the former translator with respect to the latter's occasional recourse to gratuitous bursts of vulgarity. Moreover, given the lexical appropriateness of both '*yelling*' (= ' to shout' ('with anger ('in a spirit of reproach'))) and '*swindler*' (= 'one who operates unscrupulously in his/her own interests'), Buss's deliberate toning down in register here would appear to be a legitimate one, executed without undue semantic loss. Mauldon, for her part, does not hesitate to insert a vulgar and emphatically pejorative adjectival item into the slot attributively modifying '*swindler*' (i.e. '*they jeered at him from outside, calling him a bloody swindler*' (p.348): a move which would tend to suggest that her own approach to the use of vulgarisms has more affinity with that of Tancock than that of Buss. Symons's '*they slanged him and called him a blackguard*' (p. 326) suffers from an unfortunate effect of dating, which is compounded by the fact that the register thereby evoked would, even in 1894, undoubtedly have been one more redolent of the officers' mess than the dram shops of the East End of London. White's editing of this passage, however, is grossly ill-advised: he leaves '*blackguard*' intact, but modernises '*slanged him*' to '*slagged him off*' (p. 318), thus producing a truly dissonant clash of registers. Townsend's '*From in front of the door, they jawed at him, called him a thief*' (p. 387) strikes a suitably rugged, colloquial note by virtue of '*jawed*', although one might wish to criticise the choice of '*thief*' as a rendering of '*fripouille*' on the grounds that the notion of 'larceny' is unlikely to be construed into our semantic representation of the latter (compare '*fripouille*' = 'one who operates unscrupulously in his/her own interests' with *thief* = one who secures his/her own interests by committing larceny'). Finally, Vizetelly's '*from outside the door, they railed at him, and called him a scoundrel*' (p. 327) would seem to be more or less

appropriate in terms of the limits of the register within which he expressly allowed himself to translate.

> (vi) *Il trouva la **cambuse** triste, depuis que le **camarade** n'était plus là.*
>
> (ZOLA, p. 846)

In this sequence, Coupeau laments over the absence of Lantier as he and Gervaise settle into their newly reduced quarters. Once again, Zola's use of *'cambuse'* to designate the latter would appear to be a highly pointed one, as a glance at the dictionaries tends to confirm. *Littré* informs us that this term was originally used to designate the place where one used to distribute shipping rations (this place, no doubt, being somewhat exiguous, like the Coupeaus' new dwelling). We are also furnished with a secondary, popular meaning in the light of which the use of this lexical item within the narrative context of *L'Assommoir* becomes potentially isotopic with the theme of 'alcohol' (i.e. 'très populairement se dit, par dénigrement, d'un cabaret de bas étage ou d'une maison mal tenue. Quelle cambuse! C'est une vraie cambuse'). The appropriateness of the latter definition to the Coupeaus' newly reduced circumstances need hardly be stressed. Furthermore, the inscription of this ostensibly descriptive sequence within the spoken discourse of the characters is more than reinforced by the use of the familiar variant of 'ami' (> *'camarade'*).

Turning to our translations, we again find that only approximate attempts are made to reproduce either the lexical specificity of the original items used or, indeed, their isotopic resonance within the context of the original narrative. Tancock's *'he found the **set-up** depressing now that his mate wasn't there'* (p. 340) does succeed in striking a vaguely colloquial register, although a certain degree of contextual inference is required on the part of the reader in order to construe the features 'disordered', 'squalid', or 'exiguous' into the semantic representation of *'set-up'*. More negatively, Buss's *'he found it depressing now that his **friend** was no longer there'* (p. 311) would seem to be barely adequate in terms of register: both the anaphoric generality of the impersonal, third-person pronoun *'it'* and the lexically unmarked status of *'friend'* serving to neutralise the specific colloquial inflection of the original text to an unacceptable degree.

Mauldon's '*He found the place depressing now his mate was no longer there*' (p. 316) would also seem to err on the side of generality, although it does include a colloquial variant of 'friend' as a rendering of '*camarade*'. On the other hand, Symons's '*He found the crib a bit dreary, since his pal was there no more*' (p. 298) reproduces the precise allusion to 'a small room in a ship' (> '*crib*')[xvi] by way of reference to the Coupeaus' narrow and exiguous quarters, and this would seem to be a mirror the rhetorical function of '*cambuse*' almost exactly. Similarly, Townsend's '*he felt that their dump was too dreary now that their old pal didn't visit them any more*' (p. 353) can be seen to strike an unambiguously colloquial register, with the feature 'squalid' likely to be privileged in the semantic representation of '*dump*'. Vizetelly's '*he considered the nest a sad place now that his comrade no longer shared it*' (p. 297) also gestures toward a colloquial register, albeit with mixed results: the use of '*comrade*' as a direct homonymic equivalent of '*camarade*' proving to be more than apt; the use of '*nest*' to render '*cambuse*' somewhat less so, given the positive, secondary features that are likely to be construed in the semantic representation of the former (i.e. 'homely', 'comfortable', 'warm', etc.) at the expense of the more negatively slanted ones readily pertaining to the semantic representation of the latter (i.e. 'exiguous', 'bare', 'squalid'). Finally, Hopkins's '*it was gloomy up there in the attics when a chap hadn't got a pal*' (p. 332) would seem to play a little too fast and loose with the precise meaning of the original text, given that Coupeau is not so much missing the company of his pals in general as that of one pal in particular, none other than the mercurial Auguste Lantier. Hopkins's use of the periphrastic, locative Adjunct '*up there in the attics*' to render '*cambuse*' (= 'dwelling' ('exiguous', 'bare', 'squalid')) might also be taxed with lack of specificity: the secondary features pertaining to the semantic representation of the latter construable within that of '*attics*' only on the basis of a considerable degree of inferential work on the part of the reader.

> (vii) *Ce n'était pas lui qu'elle cherchait, les coudes à l'air, la margoulette enfarinée, c'était son ancien marlou.* (ZOLA, p. 760)

At this point in the text, the discourse of the narrative can be seen to weave itself very closely in with the thoughts and reflections of Coupeau, whose suspicions have evidently been aroused by Gervaise's newly awakened coquetry. Two lexical items within this sequence immediately strike the reader by virtue of their colloquial verve, i.e. '*margoulette*' and '*marlou*'. At first glance, the former would seem to be fairly simple to decodify, constituting a strongly marked lexical variant of 'bouche'. However, we are perhaps little surprised to find an unmistakably alcoholic resonance echoing in the wake of this apparently innocent usage, with '*margoulette*' referring, not only to a simple, labial aperture but also, more specifically, to one which has been thoroughly doused in liquor. At least according to the following definition, furnished by Delvau: 'La bouche, considérée comme avaloir. '*Rincer la margoulette à quelqu'un*, Lui payer à boire'.[xvii] Once again, Zola' choice of argotic item here would appear to be a highly pointed one, gesturing specifically toward the milieu of the boozers, as well as more generally toward that of the class to which they belong. Indeed, reformulating this phenomenon in more technical terms, we might say that the use of '*margoulette*', in this instance, serves to reinforce the developing isotopy of 'alcohol' within the narrative.

The sense of '*marlou*' is perhaps a little more slippery for the translator to determine. *Le Petit Robert* gives us the following, summary indication: '*pop*. Souteneur' Delvau, however, seems to find the features pertaining to this primary, role-identifying signification (= 'male' ('organiser of a ring of prostitution')) less important than those evoking another kind of character-type, i.e. the trickster ('malin, rusé, expert aux choses de la vie').[xviii] Certainly, the latter definition would seem to fit the character of Lantier perfectly, given his shady and manipulative dealings at the expense of others over the course of the narrative. On the other hand, it would also seem to be the case that, although Lantier has not directly forced Gervaise to prostitute herself, one of the unintended consequences of the precipitous personal decline issuing from his malign influence upon her life is that she is, in fact, driven to do so. In his potentially ambiguous use of '*marlou*' here, Zola would thus appear to be exploiting the intersection between these two closely related significations in order to extract yet another brutal irony at the expense of the egotistical Lantier, both trickster by trade and pimp by dramatic implication.

All of this subtle semantic interplay and allusion can, in no small measure, be seen to complicate the task of the translators. Tancock's *'No, it wasn't him she was looking for, with her elbows in the air and her face all powdered, no, it was her old boy-friend'* (p. 209-10) would seem to be somewhat tame in relation to the carefully targeted acidity of the original. With regard to the use of *'face'*, this can be seen as a generalising synecdoche of 'mouth' (= *'margoulette'*); with regard to the use of *'boy-friend'*, only the feature 'male' is fully carried over from either of the two significations that we identified in relation to *'marlou'*. Moreover, neither item used in this translation would appear to be evocative of any particular kind of argot or slang. Buss's *'He wasn't the one she was looking for, with her bare elbows and her powdered face, it was her old pimp'* (p. 204) also includes the same generalising synecdoche to be found in Tancock's translation (i.e. *'margoulette'* = 'mouth' > *'face'*). Moreover, the first signification identified with respect to *'marlou'* (i.e. 'male' ('organiser of a ring of prostitution') is clearly privileged in this rendering. Townsend and Symons also privilege this first signification, although both offer a somewhat different treatment of the nominal group *'la margoulette enfarinée'*. The former's *'She hadn't really been looking for him, with her elbows in the air and flour all over her mouth; she'd been after that pimp of hers'* (p. 223) confers strong thematic salience upon the nominal item *'flour'*, which is reconstituted by means of direct lexical transposition from the stem of the derived adjectival item *'enfarinée'*. The problem with this transposition, however, is that it is perhaps not entirely clear what is meant by *'flour all over her mouth'* in an English-language context: an obscurity which would tend to explain the recourse to generalising synecdoche preferred by Tancock and Buss in this instance. Similarly, Symons opts to displace the anatomical referent implied by the use of *'margoulette'* in the original (i.e. 'mouth' > *'cheeks'*), no doubt with a view to securing a fluent collocation with the adjectival Modifier *'powdered'* (< *'enfarinée'*): *'it wasn't him she was looking for, with her fly-away get-up and her powdered cheeks, it was that old pimp of hers'* (p. 197). To a similar end, Vizetelly also opts for generalising synecdoche in his translation: *'And he coarsely declared that it wasn't he, himself, that she had come to look for, with bare arms and powdered face. Oh! No indeed, it was her old bully that she wanted'* (p. 196). Less justifiably, the choice of *bully* would appear to correspond neither to the first nor to the second signification that we identified with respect to

'*marlou*'. What it does do, however, is to explicitly lexicalise some of the features that might typically be associated with the behaviour of a pimp (i.e. 'repeated aggressiveness' 'brutality', 'a readiness to intimidate', etc.), albeit without actually shocking the reader through any direct allusion to such an immoral profession. Hopkins's '*it wasn't him she had been looking for, with her arms all naked and her snout covered in flour* [...] *it was her old boyfriend she was after*' (p. 213) tones things down in a very similar way. The most striking and eccentric element in this translation, however, would undoubtedly seem to be the use of '*snout*' to render '*margoulette*': a lexical choice which not only serves to modulate the anatomical referent of the latter by means of generalising synecdoche (i.e. 'mouth' > 'mouth and nose'), but also to index the feature 'animal-like' into our semantic representation thereof. Unfortunately, there would appear to be little warrant for this interpretation to be found in the original, given that Gervaise is principally being berated here by Coupeau on account of her coquetry rather than her sensuality. Mauldon's '*It wasn't him, Coupeau, she was looking for, with her arms bare and her mug all powdered, it was her old fancy man*' (p. 207) has the merit of clearly lexicalising the anatomical domain of 'face' without sacrificing the more specific reference to 'mouth': '*mug*' being used to refer to both with apparently equal facility. On the other hand, the choice of '*fancy man*' would seem to be less than wholly adequate, given that it does not fully lexicalise any of the features pertaining to the two interrelated significations that we identified in relation to '*marlou*' (other than the gender-specifying 'male'). Finally, by way of suggestion, something along the lines of '*that crafty old pimp of a boyfriend*' would have perhaps covered most of the semantic ground opened up in the original by means of this subtle use of argot, doing so, moreover, in such a way as to clarify the referential focus of the initial allusion (i.e. Lantier, the ex-boyfriend). This rendering may be a little periphrastic and explicatory for some tastes, however.

(viii) *Tous les trois se livraient à leur **petite cuisine**, se **culottaient** et **couchotaient** ensemble **à la papa**, sans empêcher les voisins de dormir.*

(ZOLA, p. 794)

In this sequence, the Coupeaus and Lantier are portrayed going about the everyday business of their peculiarly passionless *ménage à trois*. Once again, there are several indices of spoken discourse to be found in this descriptive narrative sequence, i.e. the hypocoristic use of '*petite*' to modify '*cuisine*', the 'vulgar' suffixation of '*couchotaient*', the use of the argotic adverbial idiom '*à la papa*'. Indeed, the use of the verbal items '*se culottaient*' and '*se couchotaient*' would, in terms of register, seem to lie somewhere between innuendo and direct sexual allusion, with an unmistakable air of good, old-fashioned 'naughtiness' being generated by this shaft of proletarian ribaldry. Little surprise, then, that Vizetelly chooses to omit this sequence altogether! By contrast, Tancock's '*They all **got up to their little games together, got pissed together, hopped into bed together just like a happy family**, and didn't keep the neighbours awake*' (p. 248) seems to strike just the right note of unabashed colloquial vitality upon this occasion: the slide into vulgarity with '*got pissed together*' more than justified by the casual slanginess of the register to be found in the original. Conversely, Buss's toning down of this register in the interests of a more humanist-orientated reading would seem to domesticate the barely-veiled explicitness of Zola's text to an unnecessary degree: '*All three of them **mucked in together, looked after each other and hopped into bed with one another**, but they didn't keep the neighbours awake*' (p. 245). Moreover, his failure to lexicalise the notion of 'drinking alcohol' ('to excess') would appear to be less than wholly innocuous in the context of a narrative in which this notion can be seen to be strongly isotopic. Fortunately, Mauldon's rendering is more direct in this respect: '*The three of them **went in for their little games, getting plastered, then bedding down together nice and old-fashioned like**, without keeping the neighbours awake*' (p. 249). Her rendering of '*à la papa*' as '*nice and old-fashioned like*' is also an interesting one, in the sense that she seems to have inferred the feature 'traditional' (< '*old-fashioned*') from the allusion to 'paternity' (< '*papa*'). The important notion to be retained from this idiom, however, would appear to be more one of blithe casualness than cosy traditionalism, as is suggested, for example, in the following, summary paraphrase from *Le Petit Robert*: 'sans hâte, sans peine, sans risques'. Symons also skews the emphasis a little in his own rendering of this idiom, privileging the notion of 'friendship' over that of 'casualness': '*All three **did their bit of cooking together, drank together, and slept together, in the**

friendliest way, without keeping the neighbours awake' (p. 236). More positively, the rendering of the whole sequence remains undistorted by the intervention of any inappropriate scruples or decorum on the part of the translator: an alcoholic or a sexual spade being clearly referred to as such, albeit in a resolutely neutral rather than a distinctively slangy tone. In much the same way as Mauldon and Symons, Townsend also seems to draw a rather approximate inference from his reading of '*à la papa'*, given that he has the three protagonists '*sleeping together like a nice little family'* (p. 279) (i.e. '*papa'* > '*family'*). More appropriately, Hopkins's '*the three of them kept themselves to themselves, and if there was a good deal of quiet boozing and sharing of beds, the neighbours weren't kept awake'* (p. 258) can be seen to privilege the notion of 'discretion'. Moreover, this would seem to be a legitimate piece of emphasis in the light of the concluding detail of the sequence. The use of '*boozing'* also gives a suitably colloquial inflection to the sequence. For our part, we would be inclined to recommend a translation containing three or four distinctively colloquial elements (as in the original sequence), with a clear lexicalisation of the notion of 'casualness' also to be found therein. Something, perhaps, along the following lines: '*All three got up to their little games, getting boozed up and then hitting the hay together as cool as you like, without causing the neighbours to lose a wink of sleep.*

Analysis II

Throughout the pages of *L'Assommoir*, little flecks and threads of argot can be seen to weave themselves into the texture of Zola's prose, yielding provisionally to more literary flourishes only to re-emerge in sharper definition as the narrative progresses. This dialectical thread of weave and counter-weave can be clearly discerned in the following passage, describing the burgeoning feminine charms of the fifteen year-old Nana:

Nana grandissait, devenait garce. A quinze ans elle avait poussé comme un veau, très blanche de chair, très grasse, si dodue même qu'on aurait dit une pelote. Oui,

c'était ca, quinze ans, toutes ses dents et pas de corset. Une vraie frimousse de margot, trempée dans du lait, une peau veloutée de pêche, un nez drôle, un bec rose, des quinquets luisants auxquels les hommes avait envie d'allumer leur pipe. Son tas de cheveux blonds, couleur d'avoine fraîche, semblait lui avoir jeté de la poudre d'or sur les tempes, des taches de rousseur, qui lui mettait là une couronne de soleil. Ah! une jolie pépée, comme disait les Lorilleux, une morveuse qu'on aurait encore dû moucher et dont les grosses épaules avaient les rondeurs pleines, l'odeur mûre d'une femme faite. (ZOLA, p. 870)

Nana was growing up and becoming quite a piece. At fifteen she had shot up like a beanstalk, had a lovely white skin, and had filled out and was plump as a pincushion. Yes, that's how she was at fifteen, fully developed and no corset, with a real magpie face, milky complexion and skin as velvety as a peach, a saucy little nose and rosebud lips, with peepers shining so brightly that men wanted to light their pipes at them. A mass of air hair like ripe oats seemed to frame her forehead in a cloud of gold dust, a reddish gold crowning her with sunshine. Oh yes, a proper floosie, as the Lorilleux remarked, a kid who still ought to be spanked, but whose well developed body had the full roundness and ripe odour of a mature woman. (TANCOCK, p. 340)

Nana grew; she was now a strapping wench. At fifteen, she had shot up like a calf; she was very white-skinned, very full-fleshed, as plump as a pin-cushion. Truly, she was fine and fresh and blooming, as blithe as a bird, as white as milk, a skin as downy as a peach, a funny little nose, a rosy mouth, and peepers that you would like to light your pipe at. Her great mass of blonde hair, the colour of new - -mown hay, powdered her forehead with gold, a reddish gold which shone there like a crown of sunlight. A fine doll, as the Lorilleux said, a mere chit of a thing, and yet with plump round shoulders, the ripe odour, of a grown woman. (SYMONS, p. 327)

The quoted passage, coming as it does at the beginning of Chapter XI, neatly encapsulates what might be seen as the infiltration of the 'voice of the quarter' into the narrative proper, with the latter becoming increasingly bound up in the various rumblings and rumours to be heard circulating around the Goutte d'Or with respect to the blighted affairs of the Coupeau family. In terms of its style, this whole passage is veritably steeped in oral forms, particularly in its opening four sentences, all of which bear strong traces of colloquial speech in their lexical composition. The passage then modulates into a more expansive and painterly mode of description from '*Son tas de cheveux blonds*' to '*couronne de soleil*', only to burst afresh into vulgar expostulation as the uncompromising reflections of the Lorilleux apropos of Nana are recounted. The final, two clauses then recapitulate appreciatively upon the fully-fledged, physical womanliness of the Coupeaus' still emotionally naïve young daughter.

Our selected passage would thus appear to be a wonderfully effusive hybrid of colloquial and literary forms, with the natural sensuality and metaphorical verve of popular speech being carefully exploited to produce a mood of sustained lyricism. Indeed, it is precisely in the light of this hybrid quality that we have, in particular, chosen to examine the translations of Tancock and Symons, given that the former might be seen broadly to exemplify the colloquial approach to translating Zola, and the latter the literary one (this typification is, of course, nothing if not a loose and instantly revisable one!).

'*Nana grandissait, devenait garce.*' – something of the shorter, more clipped style of spoken discourse is instantly signalled here by the asyndetic co-ordination of the two Predicators, with the use of the nominal Predicate '*garce*' serving to launch the description upon an affectionately pejorative footing. *Le Petit Robert*[xix] informs us that this lexical item, which was used as a simple, feminine derivative of 'gars' up until the nineteenth-century, tended henceforth to acquire the signification 'Fille de mauvaise vie' in vulgar usage (or, in a softer, more familiar register, 'femme dont on a à se déplaire pour quelque raison'). Zola's choice of lexical item to describe the adolescent Nana would thus, once again, appear to be a distinctly double-edged one, with the softer signification applying itself readily to her wilful behaviour as a teenager, and the harder, more vulgar one, presciently to her slide into the abyss of concubinage and prostitution as

an adult. Clearly, the translators will need to show due sensitivity to these nuances in their respective renderings.

Firstly, we note that Symons's use of the semi-colon to punctuate the opening two Predicators serves to reproduce the clipped, spoken rhythm of the original to a greater extent than Tancock's use of orthodox, conjunctive co-ordination. Regarding the translation of '*garce*', we find that the feature 'nubile' is clearly privileged by the two translators: Tancock opting for '*quite a piece*' and Symons '*a strapping wench*'. Although both renderings are unmistakably colloquial in register, that furnished by Symons would appear to be preferable for two reasons: firstly '*wench*' can be seen to refer more clearly to a specifically young woman than '*piece*', and, secondly, its lexemic range also encompasses the signification 'prostitute', which, although undoubtedly archaic in usage, would probably remain accessible to the modern reader by virtue of cultural association ('*wench*' being used to refer typically to women of easy morals, etc.).[xx]

'*A quinze ans, elle avait poussé comme un veau,*' – in this sequence, the translators are faced with an idiomatic simile, the principal burden of choice here being whether to render the term of comparison (i.e. '*veau*') literally or to modulate with a view to producing a more idiomatic formulation in English. Symons chooses the former option (i.e. '*veau*' = '*calf*'), Tancock the latter one (i.e. '*shot up like a beanstalk*'). Despite the instantly recognisable quality of this idiom for the English-language reader, there would nevertheless appear to be certain problems concomitant upon this choice: '*shot up like a beanstalk*' implying, above all, that an inordinate growth in height had been undergone by the beneficiary of the process, rather than the general filling and fleshing out that one would normally associate with a healthy, female adolescent of Nana's age.

'*très blanche de chair, très grasse,*' – in the rendering of the first of these ascriptions, Tancock chooses to modulate from the notion of 'flesh' (= '*chair*') to that of '*skin*', thus introducing a more natural Head item collocate for the adjectival Modifier, '*white*'. This core, attributive collocation is, in turn, modified by the valorising Intensifier '*lovely*'. For his part, Symons expands the terms of this ascription into a full, copular

clause structure in which the bearer of the feature ascribed by the predicative adjective is anaphorically re-thematised in the Subject slot (i.e. (*'Nana'* >) *'she was very white-skinned'*).

The second ascription is also discursively valorised in such a way as to avoid any suggestion that Nana may have been unbecomingly plump or podgy (i.e. *'and had filled out'* (TANCOCK); *'very full-fleshed'* (SYMONS)). Modern-day obsessions with the apparent virtues of feminine slenderness were, of course, largely alien to Zola's time, and the contemporary translator will probably need to be careful not to skew the rendering of *'grasse'* through what might be seen as an inappropriately slanted cultural frame.

'Si dodue même qu'on aurait dit une pelote.' - this sequence introduces a second, comparative formulation which serves to modalise the superlative value of the attribution *elle/si dodue* in a characteristically colloquial way (i.e. (x), si (A) *qu'on aurait dit* (y)). Tancock and Symons choose to adapt and condense this formulation in identical fashion, the principal change being to modulate the term of comparison in the interests of securing a more recognisably idiomatic simile for the English-language reader (i.e. *'plump* (= *'dodue'*) *as a* (*'pelote'* = 'ball of wool' >) *pincushion'*).

'Oui, c'était ca, quinze ans, toutes ses dents et pas de corset.' - in this sequence, the inclusive, nominal group categorisation *'toutes ses dents'* functions as a metonymic lexicalisation of the notion of 'secondary sexual characteristics': a euphemistic effect coyly but unmistakably reinforced by the bald allusion to the fact that Nana still wore no corset. Tancock renders this notion with just a touch of elliptical euphemism (i.e. *'fully developed'*), although the figurative displacement to be found in the original is not reproduced. On the other hand, Symons can be seen to make an altogether more significant departure from the latter by virtue of his euphoric and lyrically effusive rendering *'she was fine and fresh and blooming'*. Symons's basic claim to fidelity might be defended on the grounds that each one of the co-ordinated, predicative adjectival items composing the rhematic focus of his sequence is clearly isotopic with the textually prominent notions of 'youth' and 'beauty'. Nevertheless, the overall lexical composition of this rendering would seem to bear little resemblance to that of the original, in the light

of which we might wish to classify it as an example of 'free translation'. Indeed, although the whole sequence is rendered with a genuinely poetical felicity, thanks to the alliteration upon the labio-dental fricatives and the almost perfect trochaic meter, it conveys barely anything of the rhetorical interplay between decorous euphemism and coy explicitness that we find in the original. On these grounds alone, it would appear to be less than wholly adequate.

'*Une vraie frimousse de margot,*' – both the Head and Qualifying items in this qualified nominal group sequence exemplify Zola's use of argot in what might be seen as a lexically challenging way for the translators. Regarding '*frimousse*', *Le Petit Robert* identifies the referent quite simply as 'visage enfantin'; Delvau more simply still as 'visage – dans l'argot des faubouriens.'[xxi] On the other hand, the semantic structure of '*margot*' is perhaps a little more complex. *Le Petit Robert*[xxii] attests this item as a lexical variant of 'pie' (= 'magpie'), dating its usage from about 1680; additionally, Delvau furnishes us with the following signification: 'femme ou fille qui a jeté son bonnet et sa pudeur par-dessus les moulins'.[xxiii] Again, the latter would appear to represent a prefiguratively accurate description of the adolescent Nana as we find her portrayed here, blossoming into a state of incipient sensual corruption.

In the light of this ambiguity, it is interesting to note that Tancock chooses to privilege the first, ornithologically-based signification of '*margot*' in his rendering of this sequence (i.e. '*a real magpie face*'). This would appear to be less than wholly adequate, however, given that the English-language reader is unlikely to construe any of the features (i.e. 'moral depravity', 'sexual promiscuity', 'wantonness', etc.) pertaining to the second, and thematically prefigurative signification of the original item in his own semantic representation of '*magpie*'. The choice of the Head item '*face*' would also seem to lack colloquial marking in relation to '*frimousse*'. With greater disregard still for any kind of colloquial marking, Symons once again offers a free translation of the original with '*as blithe as a bird*': this short, comparative sequence lyrically phrased by the alliteration upon the sounded bilabial plosives beginning each rhythmically prominent word. We do, however, find a shadowy acknowledgement of the lexical composition of the original in the form of the animal-class superordinate of 'magpie' (i.e. '*bird*'). On the

other hand, no attempt is made to lexicalise the notion of 'face' (< '*frimousse*'), and this can only be seen as an unacceptable semantic loss.

'*trempée dans du lait*,' – Tancock lexicalises the feature 'milk-like' adjectivally in the form of an attributive Modifier of an inserted Head item (i.e. '*milky complexion*'). Alternatively, Symons uses '*milk*' as the term of comparison defining the superlative value of the colour quality 'whiteness' (i.e. '*as white as milk*').

'*une peau veloutée de pêche*,' – both translators choose to explicate the comparative signification implicit in the use of the qualifying prepositional group within this nominal group sequence (i.e. '*de pêche*' > '***as a peach***').

'*un nez drôle*,' – the attributive item '*drôle*' is used in a clearly hypocoristic sense here, and this is reflected in both renderings of this nominal group sequence by the insertion of '*little*' into their respective modifying structures (i.e. '*a saucy **little** nose*' (TANCOCK); '*a funny **little** nose*' (SYMONS).

'*un bec rose*,' – the Head item of this group can be seen as a colloquially marked variant of 'bouche' (= 'mouth'), with the normative feature expectation '+ Animal, - Human' being cancelled out by the descriptive context in this instance. Tancock renders the composite items of the group by means of a double meronymic displacement (i.e. '*rose*/rose' > 'the buds of a rose' > '*rosebud*'; '*bec*' > 'bouche/mouth' > '*lips*'). Neither of the resulting items is colloquially marked, however. In his rendering, Symons uses the morphologically realised, adjectival form of 'rose' (i.e. '*rosy*') to modify a colloquially unmarked Head item '*mouth*'. Again, the loss of register in both of these translations would appear to be appreciable.

'*des quinquets luisants auxquels les hommes avaient envie d'allumer leur pipe.*' – in this sequence, we find another colloquially marked variant signifying a part of the body (i.e. '*quinquets*' = 'les yeux'/'eyes'). According to the testimony of Delvau, this usage can be seen to derive directly from the 'argot des faubouriens'.[xxiv] Fortunately, both

Tancock and Symons succeed in finding a similarly marked, colloquial variant of 'eyes' in the form of *'peepers'*. Moreover, the choice of this item would appear to be a highly appropriate one, given that its principal period of usage can be seen to date from the nineteenth to the early twentieth-century period, most commonly in association with the pugilistic milieu.[xxv] Although the social marking is by no means exact here, there would nevertheless appear to be a sufficient analogy between the rough and ready world of boxing and that of the Goutte d'Or to make the slight transfer in setting more than convincing.

'*Son tas de cheveux blonds, couleur d'avoine fraîche, semblait lui avoir jeté de la poudre d'or sur les tempes,*' – in this sequence, the portrayal of Nana dilates into an unrestrainedly lyrical mode. Although there is no explicitly colloquial language to be found in this sequence, the benefactive use of the indirect object, third-person pronoun '*lui*' nevertheless continues to gesture firmly toward a spoken register. Tancock opts for a somewhat static depiction of the relationship between Nana's luxuriant blond hair and her forehead, with the former seen to '*frame*' the latter '*in a cloud of gold-dust*'. On the other hand, Symons manages to create a more kinetic depiction, with the blond hair portrayed as having '*powdered her forehead with gold*'. The latter is contrived principally by means of the transposition of the notion of 'powder' from nominal into verbal form (i.e. '*poudre*' = 'powder' > '*powdered*').

'*Des taches de rousseur,*' – Both Tancock and Symons offer identical translations at this point in the passage (i.e. '*a reddish gold*'). Nevertheless, this rendering, which privileges the colour specification lexicalised by '*rousseur*', would appear to be based upon the erroneous assumption that the composite lexical items of the original, exocentric nominal group constitute independent signifiers. The use of this group would, of course, in almost all descriptive contexts relating to the physical characteristics of a human being, invite the direct lexical translation '*taches de rousseur*' = '*freckles*'.

'*qui lui mettaient là une couronne de soleil.*' – Zola's use of '*mettait/mettaient*' throughout the pages of *L'Assommoir* would appear to be a highly idiosyncratic one[xxvi]: its principal function being to signify the way in which certain physical phenomena can be seen to produce particular configurations of light and shade within the sensory-perceptual field of the observer. For example, in the lyrical sequence quoted above, the aureole of golden light gilding Nana's temples is portrayed as having been 'set there' (< '*mettaient*') by the freckly shadows cast by the tousled abundance of her blond hair. When faced with the task of rendering such a complexly conceived, descriptive logic, it is perhaps little surprising that both Tancock and Symons opt for a Predicator which invites the construal of a more clearly determined semantic representation than would have otherwise been the case had any of the more direct lexical equivalents of '*mettaient*', such as 'set' or 'put', been chosen (i.e. '*crowning her with sunshine*' (TANCOCK); '*which shone there like a crown of sunlight*' (SYMONS)). What these renderings gain in clarity, however, they perhaps lose in idiosyncrasy.

'*Ah! une jolie pépée, comme disaient les Lorilleux,*' – in the light of all of this resplendent physical gorgeousness, the reported appreciation of the Lorilleux, although not altogether unflattering, would nevertheless appear to be somewhat understated! Delvau identifies '*pépée*' as a synonym of 'poupée – dans l'argot des faubouriens'[xxvii]: *Le Petit Robert* concurs, furnishing as a secondary signification 'femme, jeune fille'. In his rendering of this reporting sequence, Tancock leans a little further upon the pejorative nuance implicit in the Lorilleux' original designation, having them refer to Nana as '*a proper floosie*'. Indeed, if the French reader might be likely to construe the secondary feature 'attractive' into his semantic representation of '*pépée*', then the English-language reader would, by the same token, be almost certain to construe that of 'sexually promiscuous' into his semantic representation of '*floosie*'. A glance at Eric Partridge's understanding of this item, for example, would seem only to confirm this hunch: 'good time girl, a tart, an enthusiastic amateur or even a prostitute'.[xxviii] Partridge also clearly identifies its milieu of origin as being that of the Royal Navy during the early part of the Second World War, its initial usage dating some sixty-five years after the first publication of *L'Assommoir*. Tancock's appropriation of this casual piece of marine slang might thus

be seen as a distinctly anachronistic one in strictly chronological terms, serving to produce a thoroughly twentieth-century rendering of what is undoubtedly a thoroughly nineteenth-century text. By contrast, Symons opts to exploit the core signification of '*pépée*' in having the Lorilleux refer to Nana as '*a real doll*'. In many ways, this solution would appear to be a simpler one than that adopted by Tancock, producing a rendering which nevertheless carries just about enough colloquial marking to give the English-language reader a feel for the kind of register employed in the original text.

'*une morveuse qu'on aurait dû moucher,*' – the use of the further designation '*morveuse*' to refer to Nana here (we are still firmly within the discourse of the Lorilleux) would seem to contrast almost bathetically with what we have just learnt of her burgeoning and blossoming physical charms. *Le Petit Robert* locates the core signification of this item as a veterinary one, with an easy figurative extension from animals to human beings facilitated by virtue of the potentially common feature ascription 'atteint de la morve' (= 'stricken with a runny nose'). In common experience, of course, children are more likely to suffer from this condition than adults, which would almost certainly explain how '*morveuse*' came to refer, in a more or less pejorative way, to minors in general. Indeed, *Le Petit Robert* (a veritable adept of Zola quotations) furnishes nothing less than the above sequence as its quoted example of this transferred signification! Moreover, with respect to Nana, she would seem to be anything but a snotty-nosed little brat if we are to give credence to the terms in which she is portrayed here, fully resplendent at the very threshold of young womanhood. The Lorilleux reported allusion to her as a '*morveuse*' would thus appear to be little more than a cheap bit of neighbourhood slander, thrown in by the narrator for comic, or, at least, contrastive effect. Accordingly, we might expect the translators to reproduce something of the malice of this comment in their own translations.

In this light, it is perhaps interesting to note that neither of the translations lexicalises the feature 'stricken with a runny nose' in explicit terms, although a clear note of pejoration and diminution is sounded in both. Tancock shifts the image of redress from that of a snotty-nosed brat having its nose wiped on its behalf to that of a kid '*who still ought to be spanked*'; Symons simply refers to '*a mere chit of a thing*'. Regarding the use

of '*chit*', there would again appear to be a hint of duosemy in the lexemic range of this colloquial item, with two closely interrelated significations being included therein: (i) 'a small, young woman'; (ii) 'an impudent or arrogant young woman'.[xxix] Clearly, only the second signification would be fully applicable to the strapping and buxom young lady that is Nana. Unfortunately, in Symons's rendering, the use of the diminutive Modifier '*mere*', in conjunction with that of '*chit*' in the modified Head slot, inevitably serves to invite the construal of the feature 'small' into the semantic representation of the latter, the result being that the first signification is the one more likely to be privileged. This is clearly inadequate, given that, by this stage in the narrative, Nana would seem to be nothing if not a thoroughly striking physical presence.

'*et dont les grosses épaules avaient les rondeurs pleines, l'odeur mûre d'une femme faite.*' – in this closing flourish, the temporary burst of malice reflecting the thoughts of the Lorilleux is quickly dissipated as the text moves back into a mood of fully-fledged and sensuous appreciation. Once again, the basic syntactic architecture of the sequence can be seen to be a formal and literary-descriptive one (as testified by the use of '*dont*' in the relative pronoun slot), with the lexical composition of the sequence shading unmistakably into a colloquial register (i.e. '*grosses épaules*'; '*rondeurs pleines*'; '*odeur mûre*'; '*femme faite*').[xxx] Interestingly, Tancock seems to interpret the original reference to Nana's broad shoulders (i.e. '*grosses épaules*') as a meronymic euphemism for her '*well developed body*', which may well be a legitimate reading. Nevertheless, the question remains as to what extent the translator is creatively licensed to restore the original referent of a supposed euphemism in his/her own text. More pragmatically, Symons, having aired a reference to Nana as '*a mere chit of a thing*', finds himself obliged to insert a concessive marker (i.e. '*yet*') into his text as it modulates into a more positive and celebratory description of the young girl's fulsome physical shape.

Evaluation of the translations

Tancock manages to produce a text in which many of the composite lexical items bear a clear and unmistakable colloquial marking, and, in this respect, it might be seen as a worthy attempt to reproduce something of the register to be found in the original. Nevertheless, the pattern of colloquial marking established in the translating text is clearly not applied with the same degree of consistency as is that to be found in Zola's original one, with the result that certain of the lexical and rhetorical effects generated by the latter are either glossed over or slightly distorted in the former (see our commentary on the rendering of '*garce*'; '*poussé comme un veau*'; '*frimousse de margot*'; '*un bec rose*'). Tancock also seems to rely upon the use of broadly recognisable popular forms, drawn from a variety of different sources, such that no one single milieu or time or setting comes to be clearly evoked over the course of their cumulative textual inscription. '*Peepers*', for example, was seen to be drawn from the pugilistic milieu of the late nineteenth-century; '*floosie*' from naval circles during the Second World War.

Symons dips into a colloquial register in the opening sequence, only to abandon it in favour of a more aesthetically heightened and rhythmically textured rendering as the description progresses. This flight into lyricism is not without its costs, however, as many of the notions and features lexicalised by the original text are simply dropped in the interests of poetical paraphrase (see our commentary upon '*oui, c'était ça*' to '*une frimousse de margot*'). On the other hand, when Symons does succeed in consolidating his translation around the lexical composition of the French text, many of his colloquially marked lexical choices can be seen to be either appropriate or interesting, covering much of the same semantic ground as that opened up by the corresponding use of such forms in the original (see our commentary upon the rendering of '*garce*' (> '*wench*'), '*quinquets*' (> '*peepers*'),.'*pépée*' (> '*fine doll*'), '*morveuse*' (> '*chit*'). Unfortunately, despite their individual interest or appropriateness, the lexical items chosen do not really combine to convey the impression of an authentically working-class milieu. In this respect, Symons's translation might be criticised upon much the same grounds as that of Tancock.

Proposed Translation

Nana had grown into a real little tart. At fifteen, she had shot up like a colt, very fair-skinned and full-fleshed, as plump as a pudding, you might say. Yes, that was Nana, fully teethed and not a hint of a corset. She had a real, slutty little face that looked as if it had been dipped in milk, skin as downy as a peach, a funny little nose, a rosy kisser, and peepers so shiny that any man would fancy lighting his pipe there. Her great stack of blond hair, the colour of newly-mown hay, seemed to have peppered her temples with freckly golden powder, crowning her thus with golden sunlight. Oh! She was a real doll, alright, as the Lorilleux used to say, a snotty nosed little brat who still needed her nose blowing for her, and whose well-sculpted shoulders had assumed the round fullness and the ripe odour of a grown woman.

Concluding remarks

If none of our translators can be seen to have resolved the problem of how to translate the rich vein of argot to be found within the pages of Zola's *L'Assommoir*, then they can at least be claimed not to have been completely insensitive to its challenge either. In this respect, all of them seem to have been practitioners of what, in our introductory remarks, we defined as option four. Moreover, this communality of approach is perhaps little surprising, given the fact that they were all also (with the exception of Arthur Symons) undoubtedly working within the limits of fairly strictly defined, commercial publishing-house requirements. In this light, it would have surely ill behoven them to squander time burrowing away in dictionaries of English argot and slang, perhaps with a view to unearthing some kind of pure, unadulterated version of nineteenth-century proletarian vernacular.[xxxi] Indeed, as we have already commented, Zola's own version of such vernacular was nothing if not a thoroughly adulterated one, recomposed and re-transcribed in accordance with his own documentary resources and imaginative priorities. Little surprise, then, that the characteristic burr and brogue of authentic spoken argot

finds such slight resonance within the distant echo chamber of the translating text: the latter functioning at a doubly displaced remove from the naturally-evolved composition of the originating form

Ultimately, however, the failure on the part of the translators to settle into a coherent and clearly grounded pattern of colloquial marking can be seen to have been a costly one. Indeed, in all too many instances, we found that they seemed to have satisfied themselves with rendering, in simple, unmarked lexical form, sequences which bore strong and unmistakable traces of oral marking in the original. In other instances, genuinely colloquial forms were indeed used, albeit often without any particular thread or precision. Clearly, with respect to the translation of *L'Assommoir*, the appeal to an apparently 'timeless' slang, readily accessible to any fluent English-language speaker, proves to be something of a chimera, masking the inevitability of making specific lexical choices, within specific constraints, and under specific influences. Such limitations are, of course, nothing if not thoroughly endemic to each and every act of creative discourse, and one could no more hope to unshackle oneself of them than to be freed of one's own, native linguistic affiliations. Nevertheless, the strong suspicion remains that the translators could have exploited the bounded horizon of their own discursive possibilities with a little more method, if not a little more daring. Concretely, this would have involved (i) using colloquially marked language in all cases in which this is to be found in the original; (ii) drawing as much as possible upon vocabulary current in both nineteenth-century and contemporary spoken usage; (iii) formulating a series of lexical choices from within one, consistently-evoked socio-geographical register, whether it be 'British-English' and 'proletarian', 'American-English' and 'proletarian', or indeed any other of the plausible combinations of marketable national constituency and popular usage that might be projected.

The need to conjugate such variables, of course, stems partly from the fact that one is discussing the translation of a work that has long been firmly established in the canon of 'European Classics'. Inevitably, the translation of such a work brings with it a huge baggage of expectation concerning potential readership and marketability, as well as the kind of accessibility and universality of appeal that this work may be assumed to have. Moreover, one can certainly conjecture that Zola himself may have also envisaged

a healthy readership for his novel as it reached completion toward the mid-eighteen-seventies. Nevertheless, there is no sense in which he can be said to have been self-consciously composing a 'Classic'. Indeed, as we know from his preface, he was more inclined to think of his text in terms of 'un travail purement philologique, que je crois d'un vif intéret historique et social'.[xxxii] It would thus seem to be incumbent upon any translator wishing to take this stated authorial intention at face value to incorporate no small measure of concerted philological work into his own text. Whether this is to be done through the contrived method of dictionary research, or a more spontaneous re-working of directly encountered, vernacular forms, would probably depend upon the lived experience and professional inclination of the individual translator. That this work need be done, however, there would appear to be little doubt.

Ultimately, if one were to filter out some of the more imposing commercial considerations weighing upon the translation of Zola's 'Classic', there would appear to be no strong *a priori* reason why a translation of equal philological specificity and precision should not be attempted. Indeed, many a novel has been written in fairly uncompromisingly transposed argotic form, and sold (albeit, generally, not as well as would a 'Classic'). Suffice, then, to choose one's argotic mount and to ride with it. Anyone for a translation of *L'Assommoir* written in the slang of the Wearside shipyards?

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[i] Buss, 'Translator's Note' xxx-xxxi.

[ii] Berman would be seeming to subscribe firmly to the view that argots are technically untranslatable when he suggests that 'L'exotisation peut rejoindre la vulgarisation en rendant un vernaculaire étranger par un vernaculaire local: l'argot de Paris traduit le *lunfardo* de Buenos-Aires, le 'parler normand' celui des paysans russes ou italiens. Malheureusement, le vernaculaire ne peut pas être traduit dans un autre vernaculaire. *Seuls les koinés, les langues 'cultivées' peuvent s'entretraduire*', Berman, p. 79.

[iii] Yves Chevrel points out that this attempt was never really to be repeated within Zola's oeuvre: 'si le romancier de *L'Assommoir* commet - une fois ! - une incartade à ses principes en allant puiser un vocabulaire argotique chez Delvau et chez Poulot, celui de *Nana* demeure indifférent à l'observation de Céard qui lui signale que l'Isaac du *Sacrifice d'Abraham* (*Nana*, chap. IV) doit dire "*Ja* papa" et non "*Oui* papa", puisque la chose est contée en langage alsacien', *Le Naturalisme* (Paris: PUF, 1982), p. 150.

[iv] Cressot suggests that Zola drew upon Delvau more as a mnemonic aid than a primary source in the composition of his 'philological experiment': 'Il y a relevé une liste de près de 650 mots, dont il utilisera moins de 400. En revanche, il en utilise des centaines qu'il a jugé utile de faire figurer sur ces notes. Mais en relevant cette liste, Zola se constituait non pas une lexique, ce qu'il impliquerait qu'il ignorait ces termes, mais une manière d'aide-mémoire, ce qui est autre chose. Il a parcouru Delvau, moins pour y apprendre des termes nouveaux que pour recenser un vocabulaire qui sommeillait dans son inconscient', Cressot (1940), p. 211.

[v] The *dossier préparatoire* (archived in the Bibliotèque Nationale de France, Département des manuscrits, Nouvelles acquisitions françaises, no. 10271) (folio 1-216) includes some fourteen sheets taken from Alfred Delvau, *Dictionnaire de la langue verte. Argots parisiens comparés* (Paris: Dentu, 1866) and a further sixteen from Denis Poulot's vivid documentary of the Parisian worker, *Question sociale. Le*

sublime, ou le travailleur comme il est en 1870, et ce qu'il peut être (Paris: Lacroix et Verboeckoven, 1870). Zola's use of these was probably as much mnemonic as anything else.

[vi] See Vizetelly, 'Introduction', viii.

[vii] Tancock, 'Introduction', p. 17-18.

[viii] Tancock, p. 18.

[ix] Tancock, p. 18.

[x] See Buss, 'Introduction', xxiii.

[xi] See Mauldon, 'Note on the Translation', pp. xlvii-xlviii.

[xii] Delvau, p. 460.

[xiii] Michel Serres sees poor Gervaise limping her way along to the blank purity of death: 'D'où Gervaise, blanchisseuse boiteuse, comme la Teuse, mais qui boit, et ainsi de suite, jusqu'au blanc, mais jusqu'au blanc du mort', *Feux et signaux de brume. Zola* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1975), p. 289.

[xiv] Delvau, p. 226.

[xv] Delvau, p. 566.

[xvi] Eric Partridge, p. 269, finds among the numerous significations of '*crib*' 'caboose' and 'brothel'. The partial homonymy that the former establishes with '*cambuse*' would tend to suggest communality of derivation.

[xvii] Delvau, p. 300.

[xviii] Delvau, p. 301.

[xix] *Le Petit Robert*, p. 849.

[xx] The *OED* furnishes the following two significations: (i) '*archaic or humorous* a girl or young woman'; (ii) *archaic* a prostitute.

[xxi] Delvau, p. 211.

[xxii] *Le Petit Robert*, p. 1154.

[xxiii] Delvau, p. 300.

[xxiv] Delvau, p. 405.

[xxv] See Partridge, p. 865.

[xxvi] See Chapter 7, Analysis I, for a further exploration of this issue.

[xxvii] Delvau, p. 361.

[xxviii] Partridge, p. 409.

[xxix] See the *OED*, p. 248.

[xxx] Ken George comments perceptively upon Zola's propensity to shift dramatically from one discursive register to another when he suggests that 'Zola shows his remarkable gifts as a wordsmith in moving by degrees from sociologically neutral, unmarked forms to powerful, highly motivated forms, thus representing by properly lexical means the thematic development', 'The Language of Alcohol in *L'Assommoir*', *French Studies*, 52 (1998), 437-49 (p. 445).

[xxxi] Baguley (1984) appositely points out that the translator of a text as concretely grounded as *l'Assommoir* would, in an ideal world, need to be blessed with a polyvalent range of scholarly attributes: 'un texte comme *L'Assommoir*, tout orienté qu'il est vers le contexte culturel, véhiculant tant d'informations précises sur le travail, les loisirs et les réalités matérielles de l'existence ouvrière au milieu du dix-neuvième siècle, opère des déplacements à divers niveaux: géographique, historique, socio-économique. Chez le traducteur du roman réaliste surtout, le philologue doit se doubler d'un ethnologue', p. 183.

[xxxii] Emile Zola, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol 3, ed. by Henri Mitterand (Paris: Fasquelle, 1967), pp. 599-600.

Chapter 6: Translating Free Indirect Style

Introduction

As we discovered in the last chapter, colloquial forms of speech thoroughly pervade the narrative of *L'Assommoir*, constituting one of its most striking and ineffaceable features. These colloquialisms are not just scattered at random within the architecture of an altogether more structured and 'written' form of discourse. Rather they are woven into its very fabric and texture: a constant and developing thread within a wider pattern of narrative movement. One of the principal ways in which the tautness and coherence of this narrative interweaving is guaranteed is by means of a technique which has become widely known as 'free indirect style' ('style indirect libre'). Indeed, Zola's text itself might be said not only to have drawn heavily upon this technique but also to have advanced its scope of application right up to the very threshold of Modernism proper. What then is free indirect style?

Perhaps the first thing to note about this procedure is that it continues to elude any exhaustive, formal definition in terms of strict, grammatical parameters of usage.[i] The principal reason for this elusiveness, according to Charles Bally, the Swiss linguist who pioneered theoretical reflection in this area, is that free indirect style remains, first and foremost, a figure of thought (*'une figure de pensée'*) rather than a linguistic form (*'une forme linguistique'*). More precisely, it might be seen as a technique enabling the author to reduce the difference between the discourse of the narrator (*'le rapporteur de l'énoncé'*) and that of the character whose discourse is being reported (*'le sujet de l'énoncé'*). In his 1914 article, 'Figures de pensée et formes linguistiques',[ii] Bally seemed initially to identify the primary dynamic of such reduction in terms of a tendency within modern French literary prose to excise redundant, declarative predicates (e.g. *il dit, il pensa*, etc.) and cumbersome conjunctive pronouns (e.g. *qui, que,* etc.). Referring to a corpus of examples drawn almost exclusively from 18th- and 19th-Century French prose, he goes on to demonstrate how the discourse of the character can come to be represented

within the ongoing flow of the narrator's discourse, despite the absence of any explicit, direct speech markers serving to introduce it therein. Moreover, although the kind of language used within such a representation is likely to reflect the lexical composition of direct speech fairly closely, the formal syntactical mould within which this language is to be cast will almost certainly borrow more heavily from the paradigm of indirect speech. Thus, the character himself will continue to be referred to in the third-person, with the principal tense-forms being the conditional and the imperfect, rather than the present, the future or, more significantly, the past historic. In this way, the written discourse of the narrator is brought closer to the words and thoughts of the characters themselves. This *rapprochement* is achieved, however, without incurring any undue sacrifice of the necessary tension and distance remaining between the two modes of expression.

In his 1912 article, 'Le style indirect libre en français moderne',[iii] Bally had already begun develop his analysis of some of the more characteristic applications of this polyvalent stylistic device. In the course of this article, he clearly differs from the idea that free indirect style should be defined in terms of strict, formal parameters, going as far as to suggest that 'cette forme d'expression jouit d'une liberté syntaxique presque absolue'.[iv] Accordingly, the only way in which this form of expression can really be determined is in relation to the various discursive clues (*indices*) informing the analyst of its presence. As well as the transposed temporal and pronominal markers mentioned above, these clues also include the use of colloquial language of the kind that might typically be identified with the mental universe of the character himself. In this way, literary language can be seen to enter into a relationship of asymptotic contact with its spoken counterpart, at one and the same time both liberated from traditional stylistic constraints and yet destined to re-affirm its identity as writing. Thus, for Bally,

> le style indirect libre dérive d'une tendance toujours plus accentuée de la langue littéraire à se rapprocher des procédés de la langue parlée; dans le cas particulier, cette tendance se manifeste par le besoin de supprimer autant que possible les signes extérieurs de la subordination et à rendre la pensée avec toute la fidélité possible; mais d'autre part, comme le style indirect libre donne l'impression très nette d'un procédé littéraire, c'est une preuve de plus de la différence qui existera

toujours entre l'écrit et le parlé, même (et surtout) dans les cas où le premier cherche à imiter le second.[v]

Consequently, the tendency of modern literature toward the use of ever freer and more authentically thought-based modes of expression can be seen as a product of its ongoing, dialectical engagement with other non-written forms of discourse:

> Comme le phénomène étudié ici devient toujours plus fréquent à mesure qu'on se rapproche de l'époque contemporaine, on peut y voir une preuve de l'émancipation toujours plus grande du style littéraire, et une marque particulière qu'il s'adjuge pour se différencier de la langue parlée, tout en réussissant, par ce procédé, à rendre les nuances les plus délicates de la pensée.[vi]

Although Bally's suggestion that free indirect style can be used to render 'the most delicate nuances of thought' almost certainly alludes more to the Flaubertian project than anything else, it would also seem to lend itself readily to Zola's particular innovations in 'subjective' narrative technique. Indeed, throughout the narrative of *L'Assommoir*, the use of free indirect style can be seen to serve a crucial, integrating function: on the one hand, furnishing a representation of the spoken discourse of the characters, and, on the other, a representation of their inner world of thoughts and reflections. This dually articulated function also seems to be possessed of a distinctive distribution over the course of the narrative, with the representation of Gervaise's thoughts gradually coming to feature more and more heavily as the final, sordid *dénouement* approaches. In the following passage, for example, taken from the beginning of Chapter XII, we find an extended exploration of Gervaise's state of exasperated resignation as she contemplates the prospect of imminent expulsion.[vii] The passage is quoted in its entirety, along with the translations of both Tancock and Symons.

Analysis

Que d'embêtements! A quoi bon se mettre dans tous ses états et se turlupiner la cervelle? Si elle avait pu pioncer au moins! Mais sa pétaudière de cambuse lui trottait par la tête. M. Marescot, le propriétaire, était venu lui-même, la veille, leur dire qu'il les expulserait, s'ils n'avaient pas payé les deux termes arriérés dans les huit jours. Eh bien, ils les expulserait, ils ne seraient certainement pas plus mal sur le pavé! Voyez-vous ce sagouin, avec son pardessus et ses gants de laine, qui montait leur parler des termes comme s'ils avaient eu un boursicot caché quelque part! Nom d'un chien! Au lieu de se serrer le gaviot, elle aurait commencé par se coller quelque chose dans les badigoinces! Vrai, elle le trouvait trop rossard, cet entripaillé, elle l'avait où vous savez, et profondément encore! C'était comme sa bête brute de Coupeau, qui ne pouvait plus rentrer sans lui tomber sur le casaquin: elle le mettait dans le même endroit que le propriétaire. A cette heure, son endroit devait être bigrement large, car elle y envoyait tout le monde, tant elle aurait voulu se débarrasser du monde et de la vie. Elle devenait un vrai grenier à coups de poing. Coupeau avait un gourdin qu'il appelait son éventail à bourrique; et il éventait la bourgeoise, fallait voir! Des suées abominables, dont elle sortait en nage. Elle, pas trop bonne non plus, mordait et griffait. Alors, on se trépignait dans la chambre vide, des peignées à se faire passer le goût du pain. Mais elle finissait par se ficher des dégelées comme du reste. Coupeau pouvait faire la Saint-Lundi des semaines entières, tirer des bordées qui duraient des mois, rentrer fou de boisson et vouloir la réguiser, elle s'était habituée, elle le trouvait tannant, pas davantage. Et c'était ces jours-là, qu'elle l'avait dans le derrière. Oui, dans le derrière, son cochon d'homme! Dans le derrière, les Lorilleux, les Boche et les Poisson! dans le derrière, le quartier qui la méprisait! Tout Paris y entrait, et elle l'y enfonçait d'une tape, avec un geste de suprême indifférence, heureuse et vengée pourtant de le fourrer là.

What a nuisance it all was! What was the use of working herself up into a state, and worrying her brain for nothing? If she could only get a wink of sleep! But the thought of her rotten crib went over and over in her head. M. Marescot, the landlord, had come himself the day before to tell them that they would be turned out if they did not pay up the

last two quarters within a week. Well, let them be turned out, they would certainly be no worse off in the streets. But here was this hulking brute in his great-coat and his woollen gloves, coming up to talk to them about their quarter's rent, as if they had a mine of gold somewhere about. Damn him! If instead of patting his own stomach he had only stuffed a little something into theirs! He was really too big a brute, with his pot-belly; she wished him to hell. And there was her old fool of a Coupeau, who could not come in now without giving her a tanning; she sent him after the landlord. By this time, she could have peopled hell, she sent everyone packing off there, she only wanted to be rid of them and life together. She had now become a regular boxing-booth. Coupeau had a cudgel which he called his fancy fan. And he fanned the poor woman like anything, leaving her all in a sweat. And she was not too amiable herself either, would bite and scratch. Then there was a hurly-burly in the empty room, dressing and drubbings enough to turn your stomach. But at last she got used to this too, as to all the rest. Coupeau might make Holy Monday for weeks together, might go on the booze for whole months, might come in mad-drunk and batter her as much as he pleased, she was used to it now, it was a bore, that was all. And it was on days like this that she wished him to hell. Yes, to hell, her bloody fool of a man! to hell, the Lorilleux, the Boches, and the Poissons! to hell the whole lot of them, who looked down on her! To hell with all Paris! And she gave herself a sounding whack, with a gesture of infinite contempt and disgust. (SYMONS, p. 166)

What a peck of troubles! What was the use of getting all worked up and cudgelling your brains? If only she could have taken forty winks, but the thought of her pigsty of a home kept galloping through her head. Monsieur Marescot had come in person the day before and said he would turn them out if they hadn't paid up the two quarters in arrears within a week. All right, he could turn them out, they wouldn't be any worse off in the street, and that was a certain fact! Did you ever see anything like that old gorilla with his overcoat and woollen gloves coming up and talking about quarters' rents as though they had a nest-egg hidden somewhere! Golly, if she had she would have started by putting something into her insides instead of tightening her belt! She found that pot-bellied old fool too tiresome, she really did, and she consigned him to you know where, and well up there too! The same with her stupid brute of a Coupeau, who couldn't come home now

without pitching into her – she put him in the same place as the landlord. Just then that place of hers must have been pretty capacious, for she sent everyone there, so anxious was she to get rid of them all and of life itself. She was becoming a real punch-ball. Coupeau had a cudgel that he called a his arse-fan, and he fanned his old woman with it something terrible, you should see, and it left her all in a sweat. None too gentle herself, she bit and scratched. And they would go at it hammer and tongs round the bare room, fights that almost made them forget they were hungry: But in the end she got as bored with the thrashings as everything else. Coupeau could take a day off for weeks on end or just go on the booze for months, come home crazy with drink and clobber her, she had got used to it and found him a nuisance, that was all. And those were the days when she just shoved him up her arse too. Yes, up her arse with the swine, up her arse with the Lorilleux, Boches and Poissons, up her arse with the whole bloody neighbourhood that despised her! All Paris went up there, and she shoved them all up with a good wallop in a gesture of supreme indifference, happy and having her revenge by shoving them all up there. (TANCOCK, p. 180-181)

This lucidly embittered volley of vulgarity and disdain would appear to take the narrator's engagement with the thought processes of his heroine far beyond any of the more subtle shafts of ironic identification conjured up by Flaubert within the pages of *Madame Bovary*. Indeed, as has frequently been suggested, the thorough immersion of the narrative discourse within these projected thought-processes might be said to bear far more affinity with the now definitive stream-of-consciousness monologue to be found in Joyce's *Ulysses* than with anything written by Zola's *realiste* precursor.[viii] Nevertheless, the final step toward complete identification between narration and thought-process is ultimately declined: the former retaining some of its more conventional prerogatives as a coherently selective representation of the latter is contrived.[ix] In short, we are still very much in the realm of free indirect style rather than stream of consciousness proper, as the presence of the following indices clearly attests:

(i)   the systematic use of transposed verbal tense forms (i.e. present simple > imperfect, imperfect > past perfect, future > conditional);

(ii) the suppression of all declarative Predicators which might have otherwise been used to introduce sequences representing the discourse of Gervaise;

(iii) the retention of a third-person singular system of pronominal deixis in sequences which might have otherwise been seen to represent Gervaise's discourse;

(iv) the use of short, ejaculatory sequences as conjunctive markers in tandem with a simple, barely co-ordinated system of sentence and clause conjunction;

(v) the use of sequences including a high degree of colloquial marking in tandem with more formally constructed ones, the use of which, in turn, might be seen to bolster the coherence of the passage as a whole.

Turning now to the central problematic of our study, it would seem that all but the first of these parameters might, in principle, be potentially applicable within an English prose context. With a view to identifying the precise terms of this applicability in closer focus, we will now proceed to make a detailed comparative analysis of the passage in translation.

'*Que d'embêtements! A quoi bon se mettre dans tous ses états et se turlupiner la cervelle?*' – in this sequence, we find a short, exclamatory expression of exasperation, followed by a longer, self-probing, rhetorical question, both of which immediately serve to establish the rhythm of the passage to follow. Neither of the translators encounters any difficulty in reproducing the basic 'exclamatory-interrogatory' form of the sequence, although we note that Tancock's lexical choices are more idiosyncratic and distinctive than those of Symons (i.e. '*What a peck of troubles*' (TANCOCK)/'*what a nuisance*' (SYMONS); '*cudgelling her brains*' (TANCOCK)/'*worrying her brains*' (SYMONS)). Moreover, given that the use of '*se turlupiner*'[x] in the original serves to inscribe the narrative discourse of the latter within a clearly colloquial register, we would expect the translators to begin to elaborate a similar system of colloquial marking in their own texts.[xi] In this light, '*fretting*' may have been a more appropriate option.

'*Si elle avait pu pioncer au moins!*' – the strong colloquial marking of the narrative discourse continues with the use of '*pioncer*' (= 'sleep' (+ COLL.)). This marking is reinforced by the use of the rhetorical tag '*au moins*'. Moreover, we also find a key double-transposition signalling the entry of this discourse into FIS proper (i.e. '*si je pouvais pioncer*' > '*si elle avait pu pioncer*': first-person singular pronoun > third-person singular pronoun; imperfect past > pluperfect past (within a past conditional protasis)). Although the transposition into third-person-singular pronominal form (i.e. '*I*' > '*she*') can clearly be duplicated without any intervening complications in English, we find that the use of the second transposing form, that of the pluperfect, is avoided in both translations: Tancock opting for the perfect conditional form '*If only she could have taken forty winks*' and Symons for the second conditional '*If only she could get a wink of sleep*'. In the case of the former, this absence would not appear to undermine the overall acceptability of the translation, given that a clear transposition from the lexical composition of direct speech is still involved in its production (i.e. '*If only I could take* [...]' > '*If only she could have taken* [...]'). In the case of the latter, however, the absence of any identifiable sub-structure of transposition would appear to disqualify it as an authentic piece of FIS. The unacceptability of this omission is further reinforced by the availability of options such as '*If only she had been able to get a wink of sleep*'.

'*Mais sa pétaudière de cambuse lui trottait par la tête.*' – this sequence resumes the perfunctory narrative of explanation serving to guide the reader through the welter of FIS interjections and exclamations littering the text. Although it might thus technically be said to constitute part of the narrative proper, its 'contamination' by items issuing directly from Gervaise's own lexicon is nevertheless unmistakable (i.e. '*pétaudière*', '*cambuse*'). Indeed, regarding the rendering of the nominal group '*sa pétaudière de cambuse*', neither of the translators really succeeds in lexicalising the feature 'tumultuous' implied by the use of the Head item '*pétaudière*'[xii]: Tancock privileging the notion of 'squalor' in '*her pig-sty of a home*' and Symons that of 'decadence' in '*her rotten crib*'. Interestingly, Tancock's choice of Predicator (i.e. '*kept galloping*') also lexicalises the notion of 'equine ambulation' ('slow') potentially implied by the use of '*trottait*' in the original. However, it might also be argued that this lexicalisation produces something of an over-

translation, given that the complete Predicate construction '(x) *lui trottait par la tête*' can be seen to signify little more than '(x) preoccupied him/her ('unduly')' in the French original.

'*M. Marescot, le propriétaire, était venu lui-même, la veille, leur dire qu'ils les expulserait, s'ils n'avaient pas payés les deux termes arriérés dans les huits jours.*' – the whole of the above sequence can also be ascribed to the narrative proper, and this is clearly signalled by the use of the orthodox diegetic temporal marker '*la veille*'. The second clause also features a sequence of orthodox indirect speech, complete with two of the more common tense transpositions (i.e. future > conditional; past perfect > pluperfect). In translation, we find slight variation around the second of these transpositions, with Tancock's text duplicating the use of the pluperfect form and that of Symons employing a simple, negated preterit. In structural terms, this variation implies that the reported clause of the latter would be based upon a present conditional protasis in direct speech (i.e. '*If you **don't pay** your rent* [...]'), and that of the former upon a perfect conditional one (i.e. *if you **haven't paid** your rent* [...]'). Undoubtedly, it is the structure of the former which corresponds more closely to that of the original.

'*Eh bien! il les expulserait, ils ne seraient certainement pas plus mal sur le pavé!*' – in this sequence, the narrative discourse enters into full FIS mode once again as the thoughts of Gervaise in response to Marescot's threats of expulsion are represented. The discursive indices of this transition include (i) the use of the oral, conjunctive marker '*Eh bien*', which signals an attitude of resignation on the part of the utterer in relation to the prepositional content of the utterance to follow; (ii) pronominal and tense transpositions typical of the move from direct to indirect speech (i.e. '*il **nous** expulsera, **nous** ne serons pas plus mal sur le pavé*' > '*il **les** expulserait, **ils** ne seraient pas plus mal sur le pavé*': first-person plural, direct object pronoun > third-person plural, direct object pronoun; third-person singular, future > third-person singular, conditional; first-person plural, future > third-person plural, conditional); (iii) the use of a characteristically colloquial form of adverbial marking (compare '*ils ne seraient **certainement** pas plus mal* [...]' with '***Certes**, ils ne seraient pas plus mal* [...]').

Both of the translations begin with appropriately nuanced, conjunctive markers ('*Well*' (SYMONS); '*All right*' (TANCOCK)). Tancock's sequence can also be seen to constitute a full FIS transposition from direct speech (i.e. '*Alright, he can turn us out, we won't be any worse off in the streets*' > '*Alright, he could turn them out, they wouldn't be any worse off in the street*'). On the other hand, the relationship of Symons's optatively formulated '*Well, let them be turned out, they would certainly be no worse off in the streets*' to any clearly defined sub-structure of direct speech would seem to be more difficult to formulate (the latter might possibly be re-transposed as '*Well, turn us out then, we will be no worse off in the streets*'). Similarly, with regard to the rendering of '*certainement*', the oral marking in Tancock's recapitulatory Adjunct clause '*and that was a certain fact*' would appear to be much clearer than Symons's discreet use of '*certainly*' within the main predicate clause structure.

'*Voyez-vous ce sagouin, avec son pardessus et ses gants de laine, qui montait leur parler des termes comme s'ils avaient eu un boursicot caché quelque part!*' – the rhetorical address to an imaginary interlocutor ('*voyez-vous* (x)') signals the continuation of FIS, with the clear colloquial marking of the items '*sagouin*' and '*boursicot*' serving to reinforce this continuity. Once again, Tancock's '*Did you ever see anything like that old gorilla*' would appear to re-produce the rhetorical structure of the original more accurately than Symons's '*but here was this hulking brute*'. The rendering of the pejoratively designating item '*sagouin*' is also interesting: the principal translation requirement here being to privilege the figuratively derived, argotic signification 'homme mal propre, grossier'[xiii] without altogether occluding the feature 'bestial' implied by its primary signification. In this respect, Tancock's '*old gorilla*' probably succeeds a little better than Symons's '*hulking brute*'. Similarly, Tancock's rendering of '*boursicot*' as '*nest-egg*' captures the modest, domestic scale of the money likely to have been accumulated more neatly than does Symons's hyperbolic '*mine of gold*'.

'*Nom d'un chien! Au lieu de se serrer le gaviot, elle aurait commencé par se coller quelque chose dans les badigoinces!*' – the exclamatory interjection launching this sequence keeps the narrative firmly within FIS mode, as does the use of argotic lexical

variants such as '*gaviot*' (= 'gosier') and '*badigoinces*' (= 'levres', 'bouche'). Regarding the exclamatory interjection, neither of the renderings would appear to be entirely satisfactory: Tancock's '*golly*' being (uncharacteristically!) tame, and Symons's acidic '*damn him*' focussing too much upon Marescot rather than the general situation. Regarding the infinitival Predicate group '*se serrer le gaviot*',[xiv] Tancock appropriately modulates the anatomical referent of the item in the Complement slot in accordance with prevailing idiomatic requirements (i.e. '*instead of tightening her belt*' ('throat' > 'waist')). A similar modulation also occurs in the rendering of '*badigoinces*' (i.e. '*she would have started by putting something into her insides*' ('mouth' > 'intestines')). For his part, Symons adapts the lexical composition of the original text to a considerably greater degree than Tancock by continuing to thematise the hypothetical actions of Marescot rather than those of Gervaise (i.e. '*if instead of patting his own stomach* (< [?] '*au lieu de se serrer le gaviot*') *he had only put something into theirs*' (< [?] '*elle aurait commencé par se coller quelque chose dans les badigoinces*'). In our view, however, this adaptation brings about too great a departure from the original text.

'*Vrai, elle le trouvait trop rossard, cet entripaillé,*' – the use of the clipped, confirmatory Conjunct '*Vrai*', followed by the inclusion of further colloquially marked language (i.e. '*rossard*', '*entripaillé*'), continues the exposition of the narrative in FIS. Interestingly, we find that Tancock again opts for an apposed, and lexically expanded Adjunct clause as a means of rendering the modal nuance implied by use of the sentence-initial Conjunct in the original (i.e. '*Vrai*, (x)(P)(y)' > '(x)(P)(y), *she really did*'). Alternatively, Symons again prefers to lexicalise this nuance within the main Predicate clause structure (i.e. '(x)(P) *really* (y)'). Conversely, in the rendering of the apposed 'epithet' nominal group '*cet entripaillé*', we find that it is Symons who retains the original appositive structure, albeit within the context of a more idiomatic, comitative formulation (i.e. '(x)(P)(y), *with his pot-belly*'). Tancock, by contrast, lexicalises the feature 'ventripotent' within the main Predicate clause structure (i.e. '(x)(P) *that pot-bellied* (y)'). In both cases, it would seem that the bare, appositive structure of the original requires a certain degree of idiomatic readaptation. In addition to this, both translations also bring about the occlusion of the core feature 'malign' in their respective

renderings of the predicative adjectival item '*rossard*. Tancock's '*she found that pot-bellied old fool too tiresome*' simply implying that Marescot was 'tedious', and Symons's '*He was a really big brute*' inappropriately re-lexicalising the feature 'bestial'.

'*Elle l'avait où vous savez, et profondément encore!*' – the continued address to a imaginary interlocutor ('*où vous savez*'), in tandem with the emphatic adverbial Adjunct in co-ordinated apposition ('*et profondément encore*'), maintains the narrative discourse in FIS. Tancock's '*she consigned him to you know where, and well up there too*' again seems to capture the rhetorical mode of euphemistic allusion more successfully than Symons's general, all-purpose expression of contempt, '*she wished him to hell.*' Nevertheless, one might wish to question the use of the rather too formal Predicator '*consigned*', for which there would appear to be no equivalent in the very simply predicated structure of the original (i.e. '*elle l' avait* (x)').

'*C'était comme sa bête brute de Coupeau, qui ne pouvait plus rentrer sans lui tomber sur le casaquin:*' – this sequence adopts a slightly more orthodox mode of narrative exposition, complete with marked Theme extrapositioning ('*c'était comme* (x)') and orthodox, relative conjunction ('*qui ne pouvait plus* (P)'). Nevertheless, the language featuring in this exposition remains clearly marked by that of the heroine herself (i.e. '*sa bête brute de Coupeau*; *sans lui tomber sur le casaquin*'). Indeed, with respect to the pejoratively designating '*sa bête brute de Coupeau*', it is interesting to note that both of the translators choose to retain the qualified nominal group structure of the original (i.e. '*her stupid brute of a Coupeau*' (TANCOCK); '*old fool of a Coupeau*' (SYMONS): an option which might be said to run a little against the grain of idiomatic expectation given the ready availability of more familiar structures such as '*And then there was Coupeau, that stupid brute of hers*'. On the other hand, with respect to '*sans lui tomber sur le casaquin*',[xv] both of the translators come up with suitably vigorous idioms lexicalising the notion of 'physical assault' (i.e. '*who couldn't come home now without pitching into her.*'(TANCOCK);'*who could not come in now without giving her a tanning.*'(SYMONS))

'elle le mettait dans le même endroit que le propriétaire.' – the thread of contemptuous allusion continues with this euphemistic suggestion that Gervaise would also like to stick Coupeau up her backside along with Marescot! Indeed, each time that this scatological sentiment is reiterated within the narrative, it becomes clear that the latter has re-entered full flush into FIS mode proper, with the indices of transposition from the corresponding sequence of direct speech being fairly easy to determine in each case (with reference to the above, for example, these would be. '**Je** le mets [...]' > *'elle le mettait* [...]': first-person singular pronoun > third-person singular pronoun; present > imperfect). Tancock's '*- she put him in the same place as the landlord*' follows the lexical composition of the original a little more closely than Symons's '*she sent him after the landlord*', with the latter's choice of Predicator undoubtedly determined by the fact that the elided Complement would be likely to refer, at least in terms of the thematic logic established by this particular translation, to a quasi-geographical place (i.e. *'hell'*) rather than to an anatomical one.

'A cette heure, son endroit devait être bigrement large, car elle y envoyait tout le monde, tant elle aurait voulu se débarrasser du monde et de la vie.' – in this sequence, the narrative assumes an altogether more conventional mode of exposition, with many of the key syntactic and structural indices pointing toward the articulation of formal, written discourse (i.e. *'A cette heure'* (compare with use of '*maintenant*' that we may have found in a sequence of FIS), '*car*', '*tant*'). Conversely, the only clear marker of oral discourse to be found therein is the use of the emphatic adverbial marker '*bigrement*'. Tancock's '*Just then that place of hers must have been pretty **capacious**, for she sent everybody there, so anxious was she to get rid of them all and of life itself*' stays reasonably close to the lexical composition of the original. One might, however, wish to question the over-formal use of '*capacious*' at a point in the sequence at which the oral marking thereof should perhaps have been more clearly in evidence (compare '*bigrement large*' with '*pretty capacious*'). Turning to Symons's translation, it is interesting to note that his continued use of the euphemistically modulated reference to '*hell*' also obliges him to modulate the feature-ascribing predication of the original, i.e. '*By this time **she could have peopled hell*** (< [?] '*son endroit devait être bigrement large*'), *she sent everyone*

packing off there, she only wanted to be rid of them and life together'. Moreover, this rendering might also be criticised on the grounds that the conjunctive articulation of its composite clause elements is considerably slacker than that to be found in the original. Granting Symons's initial conceptualisation of the state of affairs narrated, we might thus wish to propose the following sequence by way of remedy: *'By this time she could have peopled hell, for she had sent everybody packing off there, so **much did** she want to be rid of **both** them and **of** life **itself***.

'Elle devenait un vrai grenier à coups de poing.' - the nominal group in the Complement slot of this sequence can again be seen to borrow heavily from what might be assumed to be Gervaise's own discourse. Delvau informs us that the idiom *'grenier à coups de poing'* is normally used, in popular argot, to signify 'une femme d'ivrogne'.[xvi] Neither Symons nor Tancock picks up upon this specific nuance, although the general implication that the person thereby referred to be considered a victim of casual violence is clearly rendered (*'She had now become **a regular boxing-booth'*** (SYMONS); *'She was becoming **a real punch-ball** '*(TANCOCK)).

'Coupeau avait un gourdin qu'il appelait son éventail à bourrique;' – in this sequence, we are introduced to an item featuring regularly in Coupeau's drink-addled discursive universe: the grotesque *'eventail à bourrique'*.[xvii] The declared idiosyncrasy of this designation notwithstanding, it is difficult to see why neither of the translators chooses a more or less direct lexical rendering here along the lines of *'donkey-fan'* or *'ass-fan'*. Indeed, in this respect, Symons's *'fancy fan'* would appear to completely miss the specificity of the feature lexicalised by the prepositional Qualifier '(x) *à bourrique'* in the original nominal group. On the other hand, Tancock's *'arse-fan'* strikes an unlikely note of homonymy with *'ass-fan'*, albeit doing so in such a way as to suggest a somewhat different function for this strange instrument of chastisement!

'Et il éventait la bourgeoise, fallait voir!' – at this point, the narrative re-enters into full FIS mode (i.e. *'bourgeoise'*, *'fallait voir!'*). Moreover, in this case, the spoken discourse filtered through this mode would seem to be less attributable to Gervaise than

to the general, gossip-mongering 'voice of the quarter'. Coupeau's own, euphemistic term for his cudgel is also anaphorically re-lexicalised in the form of a verbal cognate (i.e. *'éventail'* > *'et il éventait'*). In their respective renderings, both of the translators successfully pick up upon this thematic *reprise* (i.e. *'fan'* > *'and he fanned* (y)'). However, with respect to the translation of *'bourgeoise'* (= (COLL.) 'wife'), Tancock's *'old woman'* can be seen to lexicalise the core features construable within the semantic representation of the original item more accurately than Symons's *'poor woman'*. Similarly, the former's *'you should see'* reproduces the interpellative rhetorical structure of the emphatic clause Adjunct *'fallait voir'* more successfully than the latter's *'like anything'*.

'des suées abominables, dont elle sortait en nage.' – this sequence would seem to situate itself on the very threshold between spoken and formal narrative discourse. On the one hand, the bare, un-co-ordinated juxtaposition of the nominal group *'des suées abominables'* with the preceding sequence of clauses establishes a direct and syntactically unmediated relationship between cause and consequence (compare the actual sequence with a more conventionally structured one along the lines of *'et il éventait la bourgeoise à fond, ce qui provoquait des suées abominables'*). On the other hand, the use of the relative pronoun *'dont'* establishes an altogether more structured form of syntactic articulation of the kind typically employed in orthodox narrative exposition.[xviii] Once again, it becomes incumbent upon the translators to try and capture something of this almost contradictory straddling of different modes of discourse within the space of a single sentence. Unfortunately, the fact that both of them opt for what are essentially condensed paraphrases of the above sequence tends to leave little scope for modulation from one discursive mode to another (i.e. *'leaving her all in a sweat'* (SYMONS); *'and it left her all in a sweat'* (SYMONS)). As a consequence, another potentially significant textual effect is lost.

'Elle, pas trop bonne non plus, mordait et griffait.' – in this instance, the oral marking of the sequence is clearly signalled by the adjectival Adjunct group *'pas trop bonne non plus'*, which is parenthetically intercalated between the Subject-pronoun and

the two co-ordinated verbal items in the Predicator slot. As above, this understated depreciation of Gervaise' combative reactions to her husband's brutality would appear to be more readily attributable to the 'voice of the quarter' than to the heroine.[xix] Turning to the translations, it is interesting to note that in neither case is the intercalated structure of the original retained: Symons inserting a copular Predicator in order to assure the appropriate feature-attribution with respect to the referent of the Subject-pronoun (i.e. '*she **was** not too amiable either, would bite and scratch*'), and Tancock preposing an adjectival Adjunct, lexically equivalent to that of the original, in sequence-initial position (i.e. '***None too gentle herself**, she bit and scratched*'). Moreover, Symons's choice of '*amiable*' in the predicative adjective slot would also seem to furnish a good example of his tendency to render items belonging to a popular, spoken register in terms more redolent of a genteel milieu.

'*Alors, on se trépignait dans la chambre vide, des peignées à se faire passer le goût du pain*' – in this instance, the conjunctive '*Alors*' opening the sequence would seem to be operating more as a quasi-oral marker denoting pragmatic, logical consecution than as a formal, narrative one denoting temporal simultaneity: the chief expressive function of the former being to signal that the utterer is about to elaborate upon the consequences of what has just been related. This inflection toward a spoken mode of address is confirmed by the use of further colloquially marked language such as '*se trépignait*' (= ('COLL.') 'to deliver violent blows' ('to one another')) and '*peignées*' (= ('COLL') 'violent blows' ('involving successive grabs at the recipient's hair').[xx] Somewhat paradoxically, it is precisely in the rendering of such blunt language that Symons seems to reveal his penchant not only for the decorous turn of phrase but also the decorative one: '*Then there was a **hurly-burly** in the empty room, **dressings and drubbings** enough to turn your stomach*'. For example, although the reduplicated onomatopoeia of '*hurly-burly*' (= 'profusion of activity' ('noisy', 'boisterous')) might well impress by virtue of its linguistic verve, one cannot be altogether so sure that its use here would enable the English-language reader to retrieve the notion of 'violent blows' so conspicuously lexicalised in the original sequence.[xxi] Further poetical elaboration is offered in the form of the alliteration and end-rhyme of '*dressings and drubbings*'.

Although the second of these items does adequately lexicalise the notion of 'violent blows', the overall effect of rhetorical heightening brought about by this elaboration can nevertheless be seen to distort the clipped colloquialism of the original. On a more positive note, Tancock's '*And they **would go at it hammer and tongs** round the bare room, **fights** that almost made them forget they were hungry*' certainly has the merit of lexicalising the isotopy of 'violent blows' without ambiguity. However, the verbal idiom '*would go at it hammer and tongs*' might be said to risk a certain degree of unnecessary periphrasis in relation to '*se trépignait*'. Similarly, the suggestion that the '*fights*' were so intense that they '*almost made them forget they were hungry*' would appear to be a conceit issuing largely from the translator's own invention (the original suggests little more than that these thrashings were nauseous in their vulgarity).

'*Mais elle finissait par se ficher des dégelées comme du reste.*' – the use of the argotic item '*dégelées*', in this sequence, furnishes a further lexicalisation of the isotopy of 'violent blows'.[xxii] Similarly, the use of the infinitival Predicator '*se ficher de* (x)' adds an extra nuance of what might be called 'polite colloquialism' (compare with the more formal '*Mais elle finissait par devenir **indifférente aux** dégelées* [...]', or indeed the more vulgar '*A la fin, elle se foutait des dégelées*'). With regard to the main predicating idiom in this sequence, Symons's '*But at last she **got used to this** too, as to all the rest*' would seem to verge upon outright mistranslation (B.T. '*Mais elle finissait par s'habituer aux dégelées* [...]') as well as failing to fully re-lexicalise the isotopy of 'violent blows' (compare '*dégelées*' with '*this*'). Tancock's '*But in the end **she got bored** with the **thrashings** as with everything else*' also flirts with a similar kind of error (B.T. '*Mais, à la fin, **elle s'ennuyait des** dégelées comme du reste*').

'*Coupeau pouvait faire la Saint-Lundi des semaines entières, tirer des bordées qui duraient des mois,*' - the narrative continues to hover on the edge of full FIS here, with the inclusion of the popular idioms '*faire la Saint-Lundi*' and '*tirer des bordées*' gesturing strongly toward how Gervaise herself might be inclined to conceive of her husband's recalcitrance in the face of work. Both of the translators opt for the readily available idiom '[to] *go on the booze*' in translating the latter. The translation of the

former seems to pose considerably greater problems, however, given the apparent absence, in English, of any one, condensed, idiomatic formula signifying 'a Monday taken off work' ('in order to prolong the pleasures of the weekend'). Symons's '*might take a **Holy-Monday** for weeks together*' simply transplants the compound nominal structure and religious connotation of the original idiom, although it is not altogether sure that '*Holy-Monday*' would mean anything more to the English-language reader, in this instance, than what can be clearly inferred from context. On the other hand, Tancock 's '*could take **a day** off for weeks on end*' offers a more explicit, albeit a less idiomatically coloured solution to the problem, with the reader left in little doubt as to the rather paradoxical nature of this unnaturally prolonged '*day-off*'. No allusion is made, however, to 'Monday' (= '*-Lundi*'), and this would seem to represent a real semantic loss, given the ominous symbolism of the latter for any indolent soul preferring weekends to work!

'*rentrer fou de boisson et vouloir la réguiser,*' – the use of the argotic, verbal item '*réguiser*'[xxiii] continues to lexicalise the isotopy of 'violent blows' introduced into the text by the series '*lui tomber sur le casaquin – un vrai grenier à coups de poing – éventail à bourrique – éventait* (fig.) *– mordait et griffait – se trépignait.*' Both of the translators produce colloquial variants appropriately lexicalising this isotopy ('*come home crazy with drink and **clobber** her*' (TANCOCK); '*might come in mad-drunk and **batter** her as much as he pleased*' (SYMONS)). Both '*clobber*' and '*batter*', however, would seem to be somewhat less exclusively argotic in register than '*réguiser.*'

'*elle s'était habituée, elle le trouvait tannant, pas davantage.*' – the narrative again weaves in and out of colloquial mode in the course of this sequence: the first clause constituting a lexically unmarked, narrative outline of Gervaise's attitude toward her husband; the second a clear, FIS transposition of how she herself might be likely to express this attitude ('*je le trouve tannant*' > '*elle le trouvait tannant*'), and the final, adverbial group a curious hybrid of short, orally structured, rhetorical adjunction and formally orientated, lexical composition ('*pas plus*' > '*pas davantage*'). Symons's '*she was used to it now, it was a bore, that was all*' handles the first and the third of these sequence-elements fairly satisfactorily: the second, however, would appear to be

completely mistranslated, given that the pronominal articulation of the original sequence clearly indicates that it was Coupeau in particular rather than the situation in general that Gervaise found annoying (i.e. '*Coupeau* […], *elle s* (-)*'était habituée, elle le trouvait tannant*, […], *qu'elle l'avait dans le derrière, son cochon d'homme*).[xxiv] Fortunately, Tancock's '*she had got used to it and found him a nuisance, that was all*' represents a considerable improvement in this respect. On the other hand, one might wish to criticise the restitution of an orthodox conjunctive mode of co-ordination (i.e. '(x) and (y)') between the first and second of the above clauses in the light of the more truncated juxtapositions characterising the original text.

'*et c'était ces jours-là qu'elle l'avait dans le derrière. Oui, dans le derrière, son cochon d'homme! Dans le derrière, les Lorilleux, les Boche et les Poisson! dans le derrière, le quartier qui la méprisait!*' – with this volley of scatological curses, the narrative enters into a sustained climax of identification with Gervaise's own discursive point of view. As in other cases, however, this identification is by no means total or complete, with the various indices of FIS continuing to frame the heroine's discourse within a wider structure of narrative exposition. These indices include (i) the use of the formal temporal marker '*ces jours-là*'; (ii) the evidence of a clearly traceable, structural transposition from direct speech (e.g. '*je l'ai dans le derrière*' > '*elle l'avait dans le derrière*'); (iii) the use of short, exclamatory sequences in conjunction with more structured forms of discourse (i.e. '*dans le derrière, le quartier qui la méprisait!*'). Perhaps the most striking thing to note about the translation of Symons is that he continues his euphemistic modulation of the comminatory leitmotif '*dans le derrière*' (> '*Yes, to hell* […] *to hell,*' […]). By contrast, Tancock's '*And those were the days when she just shoved him up her arse too. Yes, up her arse* […] *up her arse,*[…]' is uncompromisingly explicit in its designation of the anatomical region in which the whole world was apparently to be consigned. The rendering of the formal temporal marker '*ces jours-là*' also produces contrastive variation between the two translations: Symons's choice of the proximal deictic '*days like this*' serving to align the discourse in terms of the projected perspective of the utterer, and Tancock's distal '*And those were the days*' situating this discourse within a more diegetical frame of reference. Concordantly,

Symons's choice of *'**looked down on** her'* (= *'la méprisait'*) might be associated more readily with colloquial discourse than Tancock's *'**despised** her'*. In this instance, however, the use of such colloquial inflection is by no means necessarily implied by the lexical composition of the original, and it may well be that the reproduction of index (iii) (above) is better served by Tancock's more formal choice of verbal item than Symons's phrasal verb.

'Tout Paris y entrait, et elle l'y enfonçait d'une tape, avec un geste de suprême indifférence, heureuse et vengée pourtant de le fourrer là.' – the in-weaving of orally inflected items within a framework of formally structured discourse reaches almost ironical proportions in this paragraph-closing sequence: the casual colloquialism of *'d'une tape'*[xxv] and *'de le **fourrer là**'* contrasting markedly in register with the syntactic formality of *'l' y enfonçait'* and the carefully weighted, adverbial qualification of *'heureuse et vengée **pourtant**'*. Tancock once again finds little problem in sprinkling his discourse with casual colloquialism, i.e. *'All Paris went up there, and she **shoved** them all up with a good **wallop** in a gesture of supreme indifference, happy and having her revenge by **shoving** them all there'*. However, there are certain reservations that one might wish to draw about the resulting rendering, e.g. concerning the way in which the simple repetition *'shoved - shoving'* has the effect of occluding the carefully graded modulation in register brought about by the para-synonymic shift from *'enfonçait'* to *'fourrer'* in the original.[xxvi] Similarly, the yoking together of the single-item adjectival group *'happy'* with the periphrastic participial clause *'having her revenge'* (< *'vengée'*) can be seen to ride somewhat roughshod over the bathetically counterpointed cadence of *'heureuse* (3) *et vengée* (3) *pourtant* (2) / *de le fourrer là'* (5). Symons's *'[…] to hell with all Paris. And she gave herself a sounding **whack**, with a gesture of infinite contempt and disgust'* almost certainly reproduces the simple but sharp clash of registers to be found in the original more successfully than Tancock's rendering. Indeed, the reproduction of this effect would seem to be facilitated here by the sheer economy of the former in relation to the latter. Nevertheless, this economy is not achieved without a certain degree of semantic loss. In particular, Symons's euphemistic occlusion of all reference to anatomy in turn obliges him to circumvent the double lexicalisation of the Process *'(x) applies

pressure to (y) such that (y) enters firmly into (z)' (< *'enfonçait'* – *'fourrer'*). Similarly, the feature 'revenged' (= *'vengée'*) is not clearly lexicalised.

Evaluation of the translations

Symons's translation can be seen to border upon adaptation throughout the rendering of this particular paragraph.[xxvii] Indeed, several of his lexical choices would appear to represent little more than half-accurate approximations of those to be found in the original (e.g. *'boursicot'* > *'mine of gold'*; *'éventail à bourrique'* > *'fancy fan'*; *'se trépignait'* > *'hurly-burly'*; *'Saint-Lundi* > *'Holy Monday'*; *'elle le trouvait tannant'* > *'it was a bore'*). The most flagrant of these approximations, of course, is the euphemistic modulation of the narrator/heroine's repeated allusions to people being shoved up *'le derrière'* in terms of them being sent to *'hell'*. Although this slight shift in lexical emphasis (doubtless undertaken in the interests of decorum) might initially seem to be an innocuous one, it nevertheless leads to considerable textual distortion as the vituperative crescendo of the paragraph is reached: the descriptive absurdity of the original allusion lending itself to a far wider range of comic effects than the simple evocation of *'hell'*. Symons's poetical predilection for alliteration is also strongly in evidence in this passage (i.e. *'too **b**ig a **b**rute*; ***b**oxing-**b**ooth*; ***f**ancy **f**an*; ***h**urly-**b**urly*; ***d**ressings and **d**rubbings*). Despite the fluency and rhythmical distinctiveness of these individual alliterative touches, however, their systematic accumulation over the course of the whole paragraph nevertheless threatens to undermine the general effect of colloquial simplicity and directness required here.

Tancock's translation is considerably more accurate, in strictly lexical terms, than that of Symons, and this is perhaps exemplified by the way in which the scatological allusion animating the original text is uncompromisingly rendered in the former. Something close to a recognisable system of colloquial marking is also established within Tancock's text. Unfortunately, the coherence of this system is somewhat vitiated by the continual slippage from a genteel register (e.g. *'pioncer'* > *'forty winks'*; *'boursicot'* > *'nest-egg'*; *'nom d'un chien'* > *'Golly'*; *'entripaillé'* > *'pot-bellied old fool'*; *'bigrement

large' > 'capacious'; 'tannant' > 'a nuisance') to a more full-bloodedly vulgar one
(*'éventail à bourrique' > 'arse-fan'; 'dans le derrière' > 'up her arse'*). Similarly, a
slight tendency toward over-translation can also be discerned (i.e. *'lui trottait par la tête'*
> **'kept galloping** *through her head'; 'le quartier' > 'the whole **bloody** neighbourhood';
'vengée' > **'having her** revenge'*). Despite these failings, however, Tancock's translation
represents a worthy attempt to render the combative vigour and vulgarity of the original.

Proposed Translation

*Nothing but hassle! What's the use of getting into such a state and fretting yourself silly.
If only she'd been able to get a wink of sleep! But all the goings-on in her crappy little
crib kept going through her mind. Monsieur Marescot, the owner, had been round
himself the previous evening to tell them that he would be chucking them out if they
hadn't paid the two quarters' rent outstanding by the end of the following week. Well,
then, he could kick them out for all they cared, they certainly wouldn't be any worse off
in the streets! Have you seen that hulking brute, with his overcoat and his woollen gloves,
coming up to talk to them about quarters' rents as if they had a little nest-egg hidden
somewhere! Christ! Instead of keeping her gob shut, she would have started off by
sticking something down her gullet. No kidding, she found that pot-bellied old git too
mean by half, she stuck him up you know where, and right up there too! Same with
Coupeau, that stupid brute of hers, who couldn't even come back home without laying
into her. She stuck him up in the same place as the owner. Right then, this spot must have
been bloody huge, because she stuck everyone up there, so much did she want rid of the
world and of life itself. She was becoming a real battered-up old drunkard's wife.
Coupeau had a cudgel that he called his donkey's fan, and boy did he fan his missus with
it, you should have seen! Terrible, cold sweats from which she'd emerge drenched. She
wasn't too nice either, would bite and scratch. Then there'd be stamping and thrashing in
the empty room, beatings enough to put you off your food! But she ended up by not giving
a damn about the scraps just like all the rest. Coupeau could skive off work all he liked,
go on benders that lasted for months, come home crazy with drink and want to set about*

her again, she'd got used to it all, it got on her tits, that's all. And it was on days like this
that she would shove him right up her arse. Yes, up her arse, her pig of a husband, up her
arse the Lorilleux, the Boches and the Poissons! Up her arse, the neighbours who
despised her! All of Paris went up there, she shoved it up with a good slap, with a gesture
of supreme indifference, happy and yet vindicated to have stuffed it there.

Concluding remarks

There would seem to be little doubt that free indirect style can be reproduced in English
without incurring too many constraints, although the various indices betraying the use of
this form are perhaps a little less clearly identifiable than in French. One of the principal
reasons for this would appear to be that the preterit tends to function as a kind of all-
purpose, past historical tense-form in the context of English literary narrative, with the
frequency of other tense-forms, such as the pluperfect (i.e. 'had + -ed') or the progressive
past (i.e. 'was +-ing'), being correspondingly reduced. The frequency of the pluperfect
form (i.e. 'avait + past participle') within French narrative discourse, of course, can serve
as an important index of FIS, and it is by no means insignificant that neither of the
translators renders the first such usage in our chosen paragraph by means of the
corresponding 'had + -ed' form (see our commentary on '*si elle avait pu pioncer au*
moins!'). Similarly, in the rendering of the pluperfect in the hypothetical conditional
clause '*comme s'ils avaient eu un boursicot caché quelque part* [...]' neither of the
translators opts for what might be seen as the corresponding '*as if they'd had* [...]'
clause. Ultimately, *de facto* evidence of this kind of resistance to one of the most
important transposing forms within French FIS would appear to confirm our hypothesis
concerning the relative fuzziness of FIS indices within English narrative discourse.

In this light, it is also interesting to examine the translation of conditional tense-
forms. For example, both of the translators include transpositions corresponding to that of
the future of direct speech into the conditional of indirect speech in their respective
renderings of '*qu'il les expulserait*'. However, in the FIS resumption of this clause (i.e.
'*Eh bien, il les expulserait*') the bare conditional is repeated in neither of the translations:

Tancock specifying that '*he could expel them*' and Symons resorting to the optative '*let them be turned out*'. The subsequent conditional in '*ils ne seraient certainement pas plus mal* [...]' is, however, rendered in both cases. Moreover, this would appear to be connected with the fact that the resultant clause forms a natural apodosis in relation to the protasis of the first clause. Thus, it would seem that whereas the French author is likely to encounter little idiomatic resistance to the concatenation of conditional clauses in his structuring of FIS narrative, his English-language counterpart is correspondingly likely to find that these need to be placed at structurally apposite points in the text (compare the basic acceptability of such concatenation in the original text with the potential awkwardness, in English, of [?] '*Well, he would expel them then, they wouldn't be any worse of on the pavements*').

The translation of certain past conditionals also reveals something of the same selectiveness and variability. For example, in the rendering of '*elle aurait commencé par se coller quelque chose dans les badigoinces!*' Tancock opts for a direct reproduction of the past conditional form (i.e. '*she would have started* [...]'): Symons, on the other hand, modulates the entire logic of the sequence without including this form at all (see analysis). Similarly, in the rendering of '*car elle y envoyait tout le monde, tant elle aurait voulu se débarrasser du monde et de la vie*', we find that both of the translators avoid the reproduction of this past conditional form (i.e. '*so anxious was she to get rid of them all* [...]' (TANCOCK); '*she wanted to be rid of them* [...]' (SYMONS)). The conclusion that might be drawn from this omission is that the recourse to past conditional forms is likely to be considerably less frequent in English than in French: a disparity that will inevitably have a considerable bearing upon the clarity of FIS indices in the former.

It is, of course, the use of the imperfect past that will nearly always constitute the principal grammatical index of FIS in a French text. In our quoted passage, for example, there are no less than twenty-five imperfects and no past simples: evidence enough, if such were needed, that this tense form is capable of substituting itself almost *in toto* as the dominant marker of aspecto-temporal articulation within a given passage of literary narrative.[xxviii] Moreover, the absence of the past simple would seem to be nothing less than logical in this particular case, given the fact the narrative does not really advance along any coherent axis of chronological development at all. Rather, what is being

presented here is a series of interlocking discourses about a particular situation: firstly, that of Gervaise, articulating a certain perspective in response to her direct experience of this situation; secondly, that of the voice of the quarter, relating common knowledge about the latter; and thirdly, that of the narrator, filtering both of these discourses in terms of the explanatory requirements of the narrative as a whole.[xxix] This interlocking distribution of discursive roles also has an interesting effect upon the kind of aspectual value that a particular imperfect is likely to acquire in any given case. Accordingly, when the latter is seen to feature in a sequence of text strongly characteristic of Gervaise's own discourse, then the aspectual value thus acquired is likely to derive purely from its function as a 'present > past' transposing device (e.g. *'Vrai, elle le trouvait trop rossard'*). On the other hand, when the voice of the quarter emerges through the FIS, the imperfects seem to acquire a distinctively iterative value, with the reader being informed about a series of events seen to be more or less chronic in their persistence (e.g. *'elle, pas trop bonne non plus, mordait et griffait'*). Moreover, this aspectual shift will almost certainly be of considerable significance with respect to the translation of the passage into English, given the fact that that it is likely to trigger at least one variation in verbal form in relation to the near-statistical equivalence that one might expect to prevail between the respective uses of the imperfect and the preterit in the two texts. In Tancock's translation, for example, we find the following sequence of verbal forms co-extending with the FIS representation of the voice of the quarter:

> *She **was becoming** (x)…Coupeau had (x)… he called (x) … he fanned (x)… it left her (x) …she bit and scratched…they **would go at it hammer and tongs**…she got as bored with (x).*

The initial use of the past-progressive form *'was becoming'* signals that the interval of time represented is of a sufficiently broad scope to encompass the conceptualisation of a gradual change in the state of (x) within its boundaries. Despite the reversion back to the dominant, preterit form in the following five Predicator slots, this interval of time continues to remain pertinent in the conceptualisation of the respective states and actions thereby represented. In the seventh Predicator slot, the potential iteration implied by this

interval is explicitly lexicalised in the form of 'WOULD + base verb' (i.e. *'would go at it hammer and tongs'*). The narrative then reverts back to the preterit once again. Thus, we have two variant verbal forms, each bearing clear aspecto-temporal marking and set off against a series of unmarked preterits. Despite the fact that both of these variant forms occur only once, they can nevertheless be seen to be determinant with respect to the aspectual framing of the sequence as a whole. This kind of verbal marking, of course, contrasts significantly with that to be found in the French original, where there is strictly no variation in the use of the imperfect regarding the aspectual framing of progressive or iterated action. Moreover, in this light, it is interesting to note that Symons's translation also reveals a contrastive pattern of aspecto-temporal variation, albeit a somewhat different one from that to be found in the translation of Tancock:

> She **had become** now (x) ...*Coupeau had* (x) ... *he called* (x)...*he fanned*
> (x)...*leaving* (x)...*she was none too* (x)...**would bite and scratch**... *there was a*
> *hurly-burly*...*she got used to* (x)...

The initial aspecto-temporal variation in this sequence of Predicators occurs in the use of the pluperfect form *'had become'*. The use of the pluperfect in this instance, however, would appear to be less appropriate than Tancock's corresponding use of the past-progressive for two reasons: firstly, the original predication *'elle devenait'* is not pluperfective, and secondly, the interval of time needed for a clear implication of iteration to emerge with respect to the succeeding preterits is less clearly conceptualised by the pluperfective than by the progressive form. Following this initial variation, we then find preterits in four of the five succeeding Predicator slots (the third of these being an '-ING' participle). This series is, in turn, followed by the single use of the 'WOULD + base verb' form (i.e. *'would bite and scratch'*). The preterit then re-imposes itself as the dominant verbal form in the succeeding two Predicator slots. Again, it might perhaps be suggested that this transition is not altogether successfully negotiated, given that the 'Conjunct + singular existential clause' structure of *'Then there **was a** hurly-burly'* tends to invite a punctual reading of the copular Predicator. This reading would, of course, contrast sharply with the iterative one implied by both the preceding predicate clause

'*would* bite *and scratch*' and the succeeding, pluralized nominal group '*dressings and drubbings enough to turn your stomach.*' Accordingly, a further use of the 'WOULD + base form' may have been preferable here, producing a sequence along the lines of '*she was none too amiable either, **would** bite and scratch. Then there **would** be a hurly-burly in the empty room, dressings and drubbings* [...]'. Clearly, there are no simple rules determining exactly when a particular form of aspecto-temporal variation should be employed in exactly which kind of case. Rather, the most important parameter informing the recourse such variation would appear to be that textual cohesion be maintained throughout the length of the sequence concerned.

More generally, although the statistically dominant trend remains that an English preterit will translate a French imperfect, it is altogether less sure that the former will lend itself to such a distinctively polyvalent mode of functioning as the latter. The principal reason for this would appear to be that whereas the imperfect functions as a discursively marked form in relation to the unmarked, past simple of chronological narrative, the preterit is, in itself, a discursively unmarked form which might equally well be used to translate either the past simple or the imperfect.[xxx] As such, it functions as a more than serviceable aspecto-temporal device for transposing the present of direct speech into the past of indirect or free indirect speech (this can be clearly seen, for example, in the rendering of the FIS discourse relating to Gervaise). What it fails to do, however, is to render certain 'subjective nuances'[xxxi] pertaining to the use of the imperfect which seem directly to reflect the discursive universe of a speaking subject. Indeed, it is precisely in such cases that we would be likely to find the recourse to more discursively marked forms of variation on the part of the English-language translator. For example, the use of the 'WOULD + base verb' form in the translations of both Tancock and Symons can be seen to frame the resulting predication not only in terms of the implied iteration of the action thereby represented but also in terms of the discursive perspective of the voice of the quarter in relation to this iteration. Furthermore, the recourse to explicitly modal forms within the context of a predominantly narrative discourse will probably need to be fairly strictly calibrated according to the requirements of textual cohesion, as we have already suggested in the previous paragraph. By way of negative confirmation, it is perhaps ultimately the failure of Symons to apply such calibration consistently in his

rendering of the above passage that serves to generate a certain impression of stylistic clumsiness in the progression from one clause-sequence to the next.

On the other hand, the rendering of the kinds of short, exclamatory sequence and interjection characteristically animating Zola's FIS can perhaps be seen to be an altogether less structurally complex affair. Nevertheless, it might be said that neither of the translators seems to attain the precise measure of this technique in their respective renderings: Symons tending to reduce the distinctive, rhetorical profile of certain adjunctive exclamations to the point where they cease to be noticeable, and Tancock, by contrast, preferring to embellish them periphrastically such that they come to assume an even greater stylistic prominence in translation than in the original (see our analysis of '*et profondément encore*'; '*fallait voir*'). Clearly, these apparent tendencies (or defects, if one wishes to be judgemental) are more a function of individual predilection than any inherent set of constraints operating within the respective structures of the two languages.

Regarding the use of spoken language, it is again interesting to note that whereas Zola's text is liberally sprinkled with items which might be said to bear the stamp of an authentically argotic provenance, both of the translations feature language which is recognisably colloquial without being, in any way, impenetrably slang. The impenetrability of Zola's slang would, of course, seem to be a strictly relative affair: the emerging context of the FIS discourse normally serving to guide the reader toward an accurate construal of the meaning of apparently obscure argotic items in the absence of any prior familiarity. Had he not known, for example, exactly what the idiom '*lui tomber sur le casaquin*' meant before reading *L'Assommoir*, then the ongoing description of drunkenness and brutality framing its usage, in our chosen passage, would probably have been enough to enlighten him on this point. Moreover, the reader of the two translations would seem to be even less challenged than the reader of the original in this respect, given that he is unlikely to encounter any lexical item, in either text, with which he does not have a prior familiarity. Indeed, as we have already suggested in our chapter upon 'Uses and Abuses of Slang', this toning-down of oral marking in the passage from text to translation would seem to be an almost endemic feature of the whole enterprise, resulting from the various and often concerted pressures which can be seen to bear upon the translator as he executes his project. Although not necessarily pernicious in itself, it does,

however, lead to fairly flagrant slippages in register, usually from 'popular' to 'cultivated', in the translations of both Tancock (e.g. *'Nom d'un chien'* > *'Golly'*; *'bigrement large'* > *'pretty capacious'*) and Symons (e.g. *'Elle, pas trop **bonne** non plus'* > *'And she was not too **amiable** either'*). Regrettably, such slippages can only serve to confuse the projected identification of a given passage of FIS with a particular character or voice on the part of the reader of the translation. In this respect, they might be considered to be not only inaccurate but also potentially distorting.

Another consequence of the potential reduction in the gap between spoken and written discourse in these translations is that the singular range of contrasts fissuring the original text is likely to be less clearly rendered in the former. For example, neither of the translations reproduces the sudden and striking shift from 'oral' parataxis to 'written' hypotaxis to be found in the sequence *'et il éventait la bourgeoise, fallait voir! des suées abominables, **dont** elle sortait en nage.'* Similarly, little justice is done to the subtle interweaving of 'oral' and 'written' modes around the para-synonymic reprise of *'l'y enfonçait'* by *'le fourrer là'* in the final sequence. Although these effects may appear to be subtle ones, they nevertheless play an important role in bolstering the position of the general narrator, who is thus able to signal his own perspective upon events through counterpoint and bathos.[xxxii]

In the course of this chapter, we have concentrated our attention both upon the various structural indices signalling the entry of a French literary narrative into FIS, and upon how they come to be rendered in English translation. Moreover, in many respects, it would seem that French is a language particularly suited to the elaboration of FIS precisely by virtue of certain structural features inhering in its morpho-syntactical composition (e.g.. the clearly marked distinction between 'oral' and 'written' forms of pronominalisation and deixis, the availability of the imperfect as a form of 'subjective' marking). Although these structural factors may well facilitate the elaboration of a convincing piece of FIS discourse, however, they by no means exhaust its wider fictional and narrative possibilities. Indeed, ultimately, Bally's assertion that FIS can be seen as a *'figure de pensée'* rather than a *'figure de langue'* remains a potentially liberating one for the literary translator, who is thereby freed to transcribe this precarious act of narrative

ventriloquism in accordance with the constitutive and sustaining resources of his own language.

[i] Most notably, Ann Banfield (*Unspeakable sentences: narration and representation in the language of fiction* (London: Routledge, Kegan and Paul, 1982)) has attempted to formulate what might be called a macro-grammatical or 'universal grammar' model of the representation of speech and thought in narrative discourse. This model principally postulates that the advent of written narration brought about the conditions in which 'SELF' could be separated from 'NOW' and 'SPEAKER', such that the interpersonal, deictic system could be displaced into a strictly third-person, past-tense representational system. See, in particular, Chapter 6 'The historical development of narrative style' for an extended treatment of some of the linguistic issues underlying the theorisation of FIS.

[ii] *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift*, IV (1914), 405-422.

[iii] *Germanisch- Romanische Monatsschrift*, VI (1912), 549-556, 597-606.

[iv] Bally (1912), p. 601.

[v] Bally (1912), p. 604.

[vi] Bally (1912), p. 604-605.

[vii] See Dubois (1993) for a detailed discussion of the way in which the use of *le style indirect libre* serves as a technique of integration within the texturing of the narrative, and also of the way in which Zola's progressively more frequent deployment of this device structures the *mise en relief* of the characters' own viewpoint upon events, particularly that of Gervaise, pp. 121-145.

[viii] Whilst recognising the extent of Zola's innovations in this domain, Bally also proves himself to be highly critical of what he sees as certain abuses of *style indirect libre*, particularly in the later work of the former's oeuvre: 'Personne plus que Zola n'a usé – et abusé – du procédé qui consiste à faire passer tous les événements par le cerveau de ses personnages, à ne décrire les paysages que par leurs yeux, à n'énoncer des idées personnelles que par leur bouche. Dans ses derniers romans, ce n'est plus une manière: c'est un tic, une obsession. [...]: au lieu d'avoir devant nous un auteur qui se substitue à ses personnages et parle pour eux, nous le voyons faire l'impossible pour se cacher derrière eux. Zola est le style indirect libre en chair et en os', (1912), p. 417.

[ix] See Dubois, pp. 154-158, for an interesting treatment of Zola's use of free indirect style and the 'stream of consciousness' technique of the Modernists who succeeded him (i.e. Dujardin, Joyce).

[x] 'Agacer, ennuyer quelqu'un, se moquer de lui – dans l'argot du peuple', Delvau, p. 491.

[xi] Charles Bally's scrupulous pupil, Marguerite Lips, writing a decade and a half after the initial interventions of her *maître*, does not hesitate to see the use of argot as one of *the* defining characteristics of *style indirect libre*. She also delivers a little shaft of criticism against Zola's apparently over-systematic use of such a technique (thus perhaps missing the whole point about the latter's *'expérience philologique'*!): 'L'usage de l'argot est particulièrement significatif. Quels que soient les effets visés dans chaque cas, l'argot est là pour classer le parleur et le distinguer nettement du rapporteur. Le style indirect pur donne trop peu de place à ces effets, surtout en excluant la syntaxe qui leur est propre. Le style indirect libre fait au contraire, comme le direct, un large emploi des effets par évocation. Ce procédé devient même chez Zola une sorte de cliché', *Le Style indirect libre* (Paris: Payot, 1926), p. 69.

[xii] 'Endroit tumultueux [...] dans l'argot des bourgeois', Delvau, p. 235.

[xiii] Delvau, p. 437.

[xiv] Delvau also attests the following non-reflexive signification: *'se serrer le gaviot à quelqu'un*: l'étrangler, l'étouffer', p. 223.

[xv] *'Sauter ou tomber sur le casaquin à quelqu'un*. Battre quelqu'un, le rouer de coups', Delvau, p. 77.

[xvi] Delvau, p. 239.

[xvii] 'Bâton, dans l'argot des faubouriens', Delvau, p. 173.

[xviii] Roy Pascal furnishes a strong refutation of the idea that the use of FIS constitutes a radical 'subjectivisation' of the 19th Century novel. In particular, he emphasises the fact that the general narrator is always likely to remain present in the syntactic architecture of the narrative: 'Critics have indeed often maintained that the use of free indirect speech permits the reader to experience fully and exclusively in terms of, and from the perspective of, the character, the subject. But this is not the case. [...]. The narrator

is always effectively present in free indirect speech, even if only through the syntax of the passage, the shape and relationship of sentences, and the structure and design of a story; usually, of course, he appears as the objective describer of external events and scenes and of psychological processes, and as a moral commentator', *The Dual Voice: Free indirect speech and its functioning in the nineteenth-century European novel* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977), p. 137.

[xix] Jean Kaempfer suggests that this carefully modulated polyphony can lead to radical uncertainty on the part of the reader: 'qui parle? L'auteur, les personnages, la rumeur idéologique? La polyphonie est souvent difficile à réduire aux différentes voix qui la composent; celles-ci se brouillent, se chevauchent, entraînent dans leur confusion non seulement la distinction formelle entre narration et récit, mais également l'opposition substantielle de l'action et de la description', *Emile Zola, d'un naturalisme pervers* (Paris: José Corti, 1988), pp. 123-124.

[xx] Delvau is careful to specify this specific reference to hair in the following attestation: 'coups échangés, - dans l'argot des faubouriens, qui se prennent souvent aux cheveux', p. 360.

[xxi] Hélène Chuquet and Michel Paillard go as far as to see 'le parallélisme prosodique' as one of the most characteristic modes of rhetorical emphasis in English discourse: 'Ce facteur prosodique, associé au recours privilégié à la co-ordination, joue un rôle considérable en anglais depuis la langue la plus courante (*pay and display, bed and breakfast*) jusqu'à la rhétorique du discours en public (*it has been the government's constant care...*) ou aux titres d'articles où il fait partie des règles du genre', *Approche linguistique à la traduction: Anglais-Français* (Gap: Ophrys, 1987), p. 29.

[xxii] 'Coups donnés ou reçus, - dans l'argot des faubouriens', Delvau, p. 133.

[xxiii] Delvau focuses upon the signification of the passive form in the following attestation: 'Etre battu, ou ruiné, ou volé, ou condamné à mort par La Faculté ou par le Jury. Argot des faubouriens et des voyous', p. 417.

[xxiv] Eugene A. Nida stresses the importance to such factors in the maintenance of overall textual cohesion: 'Cohesion can be measured by the degree to which the units of a text flow smoothly from one to another, but cohesion is not simply a matter of the conjunctions which serve to mark transitions between clauses, sentences and paragraphs. It also involves the appropriate use of pronouns and deictic markers [...]', 'The Role of Rhetoric in Verbal Communications', *Babel*, 36 (1990), 143-153 (p. 148).

[xxv] 'Coup de la main, à plat ou fermée. Argot du peuple', Delvau, p. 462.

[xxvi] See Robert E. Longacre, 'Items in Context: Their Bearing on Translation Theory', *Language*, 34 (1958), 482-491, for an interesting discussion of the way in which cohesive lexical variation is either duplicated or flattened out into repetition within the translated text.

[xxvii] Nicholas White suggests that there was no small measure of paradox in the fact that such an avowedly Symbolist poet found himself translating such an uncompromisingly crude Naturalist novel (and for an elitist readership at that!). Nevertheless, his claim that 'at one level *L'Assommoir* was properly untranslatable, as Zola had used the free indirect style to absorb the speech of the urban proletariat into the texture of his narrative' is perhaps a little too strong, given the ready availability of corresponding forms within the English language. See '*Fin-de siècle* Exchanges: Arthur Symons, Translator of Emile Zola', *Bulletin of the Emile Zola Society*, 12 (December 1995), 11-19 (pp. 13-14).

[xxviii] See Harald Weinrich, *Les Temps*, tr. by Michèle Lacoste (Paris: Seuil, 1973) for an interesting treatment of the apparent interchangeability of the *passé simple* and the *imparfait* in accordance with the needs of narrative foregrounding and backgrounding. For a wider treatment of these and other related grammatical issues from a strictly linguistic point of view, see Christian Touratier, *Le Système verbal français: description morphologique et morphématique* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1996).

[xxix] Martine Léonard (1974) goes as far as to suggest that the narrator's ambivalent relationship to the discourse of the characters is developed to such an extent that the very status of the narrative as a coherent discourse is compromised. Nevertheless, it would seem clear to this reader that the narrative functions, advances and plays upon an increasingly powerful register of effects, without needing the seal of an ersatz 'engagement social' to secure its own authority.

[xxx] See Anne Trévise, *Le Prétérit, ce passé pas si simple* (Paris: Erasmus, 1990), for an interesting discussion of this polyvalence.

[xxxi] See Bally, 1914, pp. 600-603, for an extended explanation of this author's understanding of these 'subjective' nuances. Some eight years previously, no less a commentator than Marcel Proust had furnished the following highly impressionistic appreciation of the values of the imperfect: 'J'avoue que certain emploi de l'imparfait de l'indicatif – de ce temps cruel qui nous présente la vie comme quelque chose

d'éphémère à la fois et de passif, qui, au moment même où il retrace nos actions, les frappe d'illusion, les anéantit dans le passé sans nous laisser comme le parfait, la consolation de l'activité – est resté pour moi une source inépuisable de mystérieuses tristesses', 'Pastiches et mélanges' in *Contre Sainte-Beuve* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), pp. 7-207 (p. 170).

[xxxii] Marcel Cressot comments upon the delicacy with which *le style indirect libre* creates a narrative discourse which is, at one and the same time, both fractured and annealed: ostentatiously parading its affinities with popular speech and yet, at the same time, dissimulating these within an altogether more formal framework of construction: 'L'outil magique qui permettait d'assourdir le heurt entre le récit et le dialogue, qui maintiendrait le personnage toujours présent à l'esprit du lecteur, c'était le style indirect, mais à la condition d'exploiter toutes les possibilités dont beaucoup étaient insoupconnées. Il ne suffisait plus de ramener les temps à l'imparfait, de mettre les sujets à la troisième personne, il fallait avoir l'intuition de ces petits riens qui, d'une façon presque impalpable, ramènent au personnage', Cressot (1940), p. 215.

Chapter 7: The Rendering of Zola's Painterly Prose

Introduction

If it remains true that Flaubert was more the master of the subtle and unexpected switch in register; the pointed irony, the sudden, bathetic fall, then Zola was no less the master of his own particular range of stylistic effects.[i] As Henri Mitterand points out:

> *Sa conscience du style* est moins aiguë, surtout moins maladive que celle de Flaubert. Mais elle est réelle. Il a défini ses goûts dans plusieurs articles critiques, notamment dans ceux qu'il a consacrés aux styles romantiques et à l'écriture artiste. Il refuse l'incorrection, les clichés, les recettes de la rhétorique conventionnelle. Il tente d'autre part de réagir contre les tics de l'impressionnisme littéraire – dix ans avant la "Préface" de *Pierre et Jean* de Maupassant.[ii]

'L'impressionnisme littéraire' that Mitterand is referring to here is no doubt little more than the cumulative battery of tics and procedures developed by the Goncourt brothers in the course of their fervent elaboration of a style that was to become known as *l'écriture artiste*. Zola's own style was, of course, formulated very much in the wake of the florid divagations and intricate involutions inaugurated by the Goncourts in their search for descriptive purity. Indeed, many of the passages of descriptive prose to be found within the pages of *L'Assommoir* can be seen to be characterised by a similar attention to sensory-perceptual detail: the glint and scatter of early-morning daylight reflected in the murk of a puddle, a bold shaft of illumination striking through the leaden depths of a stairwell, the dazzle of golden rays bursting from a cloud-flecked sky.[iii] In the context of this deeply pessimistic novel, the descriptive elaboration of such detail can serve only to counterpoint and to deepen our awareness of the apparent gloom pervading the narrative as it progresses toward its final, sordid *dénouement*. Amidst the darkness of the tenements, the vividness of a colour-burst in the washhouse: amidst the coarseness of

inebriation and betrayal, the delicacy of light upon shade. And around it all, the great metropolis of Paris, stretching out its serried ranks of buildings and streets.

This impressionistic focus upon luminescence and colour can be seen to constitute one of the key stylistic motifs texturing the narrative of *L'Assommoir*. In this light, even the name of the district in which it was set, La Goutte d'Or, would appear to be far from gratuitous, suggesting yet another vivid little *pointilliste* effect. Zola's 1874 novel, although by no means an exclusively impressionistic one *per se*, would seem nevertheless to bear the stamp of the period in which it was written. All of which presents a considerable challenge to the translators, who must seek to render not only a complex series of interpenetrating stylistic motifs but also a whole phenomenology of literary expression.[iv] With a view to examining how they set about doing this, we will now turn our attention to two densely wrought passages of visually based description. The first is taken from within a paragraph describing the bustle of Gervaise's new workshop.

Analysis I

A cette heure, le soleil tombait d'aplomb sur la devanture, le trottoir renvoyait une réverbération ardente, dont les grandes moires dansaient au plafond de la boutique; et ce coup de lumière, bleui par le reflet du papier des étagères et de la vitrine, mettait au-dessus de l'établi un jour aveuglant, comme une poussière de soleil tamisée dans des linges fins. (ZOLA, p. 705)

At that time of day the sun came straight down into the shop window and the pavement shimmered and baked, sending dancing patterns up on to the ceiling. This blazing light, slightly blue from the reflection of the papers on the shelves, in the window, was quite blinding just above the ironing table, like sun-dust filtered through fine linen. (TANCOCK, p. 146)

At this hour the sun poured down on the front of the shop; the pavement cast up a very blaze of light and heat, setting great motes a-dancing on the ceiling; and this

flood of light, a little blue in the shadow of the paper on shelves and window, threw a blinding brightness on the shop-board, like a cloud of gold-dust sifted all over the fine linen. (SYMONS, p. 134)

At that hour the sun poured straight down on the shop window, and the sidewalk sent back reverberations of heat waves which danced in wavy patterns on the shop's ceiling. This strong light, tinged blue by reflection from the paper on the shelves and in the window, drenched the worktable with a blinding brightness that was like a golden dust of sunlight sifted through fine linen. (TOWNSEND, p. 156)

'*A cette heure,*' – Immediately, we find a significant variation in the rendering of the demonstrative article in this sentence-initial, temporal Adjunct: Tancock and Townsend opting for '*that*', and Symons for '*this*'. The basic functional difference between these two determining markers can probably be best accounted for in terms of a conceptual distinction between the 'proximal' (= '*this*') and the distal (= '*that*'). Accordingly, given that the descriptive focus established by the impressionistic tableau of light and colour to follow is both a close and detailed one, the proximal marker chosen by Symons would appear to be the preferable one.

'*le soleil tombait d'aplomb sur la devanture,*' – in the rendering of this sequence, Symons's translation is weakened by the absence of any emphatic adverbial marker (= '*d'aplomb*') serving to reinforce the core directional feature 'vertical descent', which is signified, in the original, by the predicate structure '(x) *tombait sur* (y)'. In the translations of both Tancock and Townsend, this feature is adequately lexicalised by the adverbial item '*straight*'. Moreover, Tancock's decision to lexicalise the secondary directional feature 'ingression' (= '*into*') in tandem with that of 'vertical descent' (= '*down*') would also appear to be an appropriate one, given that the tableau to follow will describe the effect of sunlight as it is seen to enter, precisely, into the washhouse.

'*le trottoir renvoyait une réverbération ardente,*' – this sequence would seem to manifest a certain degree of syntactic marking, given that we find a nominal group

signifying an inanimate entity in the Subject slot in collocation with a verbal item in the Predicator slot which, on the contrary, would normally tend to collocate with an animate agent. Additionally, the verb 'renvoyer' can be seen to include a strong factitive element within its core signification, which might be represented in the following way: '(a)(MAKES)(b) return to its original spatial location' ('after an initial displacement toward (a)'). Clearly, this core signification is more than compatible with the descriptive logic of the above sequence, provided that we accept the representation of 'le trottoir' as an active physical agent in the determination of the direction in which the 'réverbération ardente' is seen to be travelling. Nevertheless, the Theme-Rheme profile here would still appear to be a little unorthodox, given that prevailing contextual indicators would generally lead us to expect the nominal group item 'une réverbération ardente' to be found in the sentence-initial Theme slot rather than in the Rheme of the sequence (the contextualising passage is, in thematic terms, about 'effects of light' rather than 'pavements'). A sequence in conformity with this expectation might thus read something along the lines of 'une réverbération ardente rebondissait du trottoir', or, more simply, 'une réverbération ardente montait du trottoir'. Although these agnate transforms do not fundamentally alter the meaning of the message, they do nevertheless serve to modulate the way in which the reader would be likely to apprehend its Theme-Rheme profile and its Functional Logic. This can be shown by means of the following mappings:

> (i) Le trottoir (THEME) renvoyait une réverbération ardente (RHEME)
> (ii) Le trottoir (AGENT) renvoyait (ACTION) une réverbération ardente
> (PATIENT)

> (i) Une réverbération ardente (THEME) montait du trottoir (RHEME)
> (ii) Une réverbération ardente (MEDIUM) montait (PROCESS) du trottoir
> (SITE)

In the first pairing, we find that the use of 'Le trottoir' in the Theme slot maps onto an agentive reading of the sequence; in the second pairing, we find that the use of 'Une réverbération ardente' in this slot becomes equally conducive to an ergative reading,

which would essentially be articulated in terms of Medium and Process, with the transposed prepositional group '*du trottoir*' functioning in an accessory, Locative role. Furthermore, it would not appear to be too fanciful to construe this ergative reading as an implied one with respect to the first sequence as well, given that both of the sequences constitutive of the two pairings can be seen as agnate transforms of one other. Accordingly, this would give the following mapping:

Le trottoir (SITE) renvoyait (PROCESS) une réverbération ardente

(MEDIUM)

The fact that this reading maps the accessory Locative role directly into the Theme slot would again tend to confirm our hypothesis that the Theme-Rheme profile of the sequence is a somewhat unorthodox one. In the light of this observation, it is interesting to note that all three of our translators decide to retain the item 'pavement' (= '*trottoir*') in the thematically prominent slot in which it is to be found in the original, with various degrees of reorganisation ensuing in the Rheme.

Of the three translations considered, Townsend's '*the sidewalk sent back reverberations of heat-waves*' stays closest to the lexical composition of the original, the only significant modulation occurring in the qualifying structure of the nominal group in the Complement slot (i.e. '*ardente*' > '*of heat-waves*': adjective > prepositional group). This more or less direct lexical translation is by no means incoherent in any outright sense, although certain doubts remain concerning its idiomatic congruence within a descriptive, English-language context. Symons's '*the pavement cast up a very blaze of light and heat*' also duplicates the basic structure of the original fairly closely, with the choice of Predicator '*cast up*' (< '*renvoyait*') serving to accentuate the quasi-agentive role of '*the pavement*' (= '*trottoir*') to an even greater degree than is the case in the original. Additionally, his rendering of the nominal group structure in the Complement slot also involves a certain degree of reorganisation: its lexical composition clearly reflecting some of the key features that we might be likely to construe in the semantic representation of the original group (i.e. '*réverbération*' = '**rhythmical wave**' ('of **heat** or sound or **light**' ('directed contrariwise after striking a hard, flat surface'))); '*ardente*' =

'possessed of great **heat**' ('liable to strike into a **blaze**') > '*a very **blaze** of light and*
heat'. The resulting sequence, as we might expect from Symons, is also rhythmically
felicitous. Finally, we note that it is Tancock's translation which reveals the most
significant degree of sequence reorganisation, with many of the notions and features
construable within the semantic representation of '*réverbération ardente*' to be found
within the corresponding representation of the co-ordinated pairing of verbal items in the
Predicator slot, i.e. '*shimmered*' (= (PAST) 'to shine' ('in a soft, **rhythmical wave**')) *and*
baked (= (PAST) 'to absorb dry **heat**' ('in an oven or furnace')). This double
transposition of key semantic elements from nominal into verbal form is interesting in the
sense that it might be seen to be indicative of a wider trend within French to English
literary translation toward the reverbalisation of abstract nominal constructions signifying
actions or processes.ᵛ Moreover, the fact that such constructions are so prominent within
the *écriture artiste* tradition of descriptive prose would tend to double the stylistic stakes
involved in this kind of transposing move. Indeed, just how much licence should the
translator afford himself in this respect?

'*dont les grandes moires dansaient au plafond de la boutique;*'- in this sequence,
the central translation choice appears to revolve around the rendering of the nominal
plural, *moires* (= 'reflection of light upon a coarse grained surface' ('undulant',
'intermittent')). The '*moires*' referred to here are, of course, depicted as being cast by the
'*réverbération ardente*' issuing from the pavement, and the temptation for the translators
would seem to be to lexicalise both by means of a single lexical item. Townsend, for
example, places '*reverberations of heat waves*' (< '*réverbération ardente*') in the Subject
slot, and then qualifies this item by means of the Relative clause sequence '*which danced*
in wavy patterns across the ceiling'. Accordingly, none of the notions or features that we
construed in the semantic representation of '*moires*' is lexicalised in nominal form, with
only one of the secondary features construed therein being lexicalised in transposed
adverbial form (i.e. '*moires*' >'*in wavy* (= '**undulant**') *patterns* (= 'structured
conformation of colour and space')'. Tancock makes a rather similar move, relating the
presence of the '*(dancing) patterns*' (< '*les grandes moires (dansaient)*') directly to the
agency of '*the pavement*' through the use of the participial Predicator '*sending*'. The

notion of 'dancing' is, correspondingly, transposed from verbal into adjectival form. Similarly, Symons relates the presence of the '*great motes (a-dancing)*'(= '*les grandes moires (dansaient)*') directly to the agency of '*the pavement*' through the use of the participial Predicator '*setting*'. The notion of 'dancing' is also transposed from verbal into adjectival form by means of the addition of the hyphenated prefix '*a-* '. Although the choice of '*motes*' (= (PLURAL) 'tiny particle of reflected light') as the thematic nominal of the sequence serves to confer upon the latter a certain descriptive coherence, it can nevertheless be seen to render '*moires*' only imperfectly (both items inviting the construal of the notion of 'reflected light' in their respective semantic representations, which otherwise intersect only approximately). Once again, the question would appear to be raised as to how much licence the translators might legitimately afford themselves when rendering items possessed of a high degree of semantic determination in the original? In French, for example, the use of '*moires*' implies a very specific effect of light, and we get only a very loose impression of what this might be from the translations.

' *et ce coup de lumière,*'- this co-ordinated nominal group essentially fulfils a cohesive function within the text, serving to relexicalise the isotopic notion of 'light' in a thematically salient way (i.e. '*soleil*' > '*réverbération*' > '*moires*' > '*lumière*'). In French, of course, the use of the nominal classifier '*coup*' implies a vast range of potential collocates in the projected Qualifier slot, and it would seem to be correspondingly difficult to identify the core signification of this nominal marker with any degree of precision. Nevertheless, its basic function might be represented thus: 'un coup de (x)' = 'the sudden incursion of (x) within a given field of phenomena'. Moreover, the English language would seem to be notably bereft of any direct lexical equivalent of this polyvalent item: an absence which tends to generate a considerable diversity of lexical choices in response to its occurrence within a French source text. This diversity is clearly exemplified by the respective renderings offered of the above sequence: Symons giving us '*and this flood of light*'; Tancock '*This blazing light*' and Townsend '*This strong light*'. Indeed, with respect to each one of these renderings, it is interesting to note that the use of the respective Head and attributive items serves to index a far greater degree of feature specification into the semantic representation of '*light*'

than is normally implied by that of '*coup*'. Moreover, this would seem to be a common tendency in the translation of the structural idiom 'un coup de (x)'.

'*bleui par le reflet du papier des étagères et de la vitrine,*' - In the rendering of this sequence, Townsend's '*tinged blue*' would seem to be a stronger option than either Symons's '*a little blue*' or Tancock's '*slightly blue*', given that it clearly lexicalises the factitive feature implied by '*bleui*' (= '(MADE) blue'). It is also interesting to note that Symons chooses to modulate from the notion of 'reflection' to that of 'shadow' in his representation of the interaction between the encroaching sunbeam and the luminescence of the wallpaper in the washhouse (i.e. '*a little blue in the **shadow** of the paper on shelves and window*'). The reasons for this would seem to be more of a cognitive-perceptual order than a strictly linguistic one, although it perhaps hard to see why a beam of light should not, in principle, be tinged blue by ambient reflection, as is depicted in Zola's original text. Symons's rendering here would thus appear to raise the question as to what extent the translator is licensed to modulate the logic of the original image in accordance with his own aesthetic preferences?

'*mettait au-dessus de l'établi un jour aveuglant,*' – this sequence furnishes a characteristic example of Zola's highly idiosyncratic use of the verb 'mettre' in order to describe certain effects of light. The semantic logic of this usage might be represented as follows: '(x) mettait à (y) (z)', where (x) is seen to represent a particular kind of physical agent, (y), a given Locative indication, and (z), a particular configuration of light (or sound) within the sensory-perceptual field of the observer. Accordingly, the descriptive co-ordinates informing the use of '*mettait*' in the above passage would appear to correspond almost exactly to this logic, with (x) represented by '*ce coup de lumière*', (y), '*au-dessus de l'établi*', and (z), '*un jour aveuglant*'. Unfortunately, considerable problems seem to be raised by the use of this construction for the English-language translator, with none of the more obvious lexical equivalents of 'mettre' such as 'set' or 'put' lending themselves readily to closely-defined descriptive work of this kind (e.g. [?] this beam of light **set** a blinding brightness over the workbench; [??] 'this beam of light **put** a blinding brightness over the workbench'). A further problem is raised by the fact

that the two informationally salient nominal group items within this construction (i.e. '*un coup de lumière*' and '*un jour aveuglant*') can be seen to share very much the same kind of referential domain: the former referring to the incursion of light into the washhouse, and the latter to the effect of luminescence thereby created. Indeed, it is no doubt precisely the lack of distinction between the respective referential domains of these two items that induces Tancock to omit a second nominal lexicalisation of the notion of 'light' altogether: the trivalent predication of the original being replaced by a simple 'copular + predicative adjective + locative Adjunct' construction, i.e. '*this blazing light* [...] *was quite **blinding** just above the ironing table*'. By contrast, Symons opts to retain the trivalent predication of the original, with the dynamic three–place Predicator '*threw*' replacing '*mettait*' in the following sequence: '*this flood of light* [...] ***threw** a blinding brightness on the shop-board*'. Concomitantly, a certain degree of figurative tension seems to be created by the collocation of the Predicator '*threw*' with the nominal item '*flood of light*' in the Subject slot, given that the former would normally be seen to collocate with a nominal item referring to an active agent of propulsion (which the referent of the latter can, only in a strictly metaphorical sense, be said to represent). The trivalent predicative structure of the original is also retained in Townsend's '*This strong light* [...] ***drenched** the worktable with a blinding brightness*'. Moreover, as in Symons's rendering, the choice of verbal item (i.e. '*drenched*') in the Predicator slot serves to create a certain degree of figurative tension in relation to that to be found in the Subject slot, i.e. '*This strong light*': the former normally collocating with a nominal item referring to a 'liquid agent' rather than a 'luminescent' one.

The prevailing tendency in translating '*mettait*' here would thus seem to be toward the choice of a verbal item in the Predicator slot possessed of a considerably greater degree of semantic determinacy than the original item. This move toward greater semantic determinacy might also be seen as a broadly compensatory one, made in response to the absence of any general predicative operator in English able to fulfil the kind of descriptive function that '*mettait*' does in the original French. Indeed, in the translations of both Symons and Townsend, the choice of verbal item in the Predicator slot might legitimately be seen as semantically over-determined, with a certain degree of figurative surplus being created as a result. In response to this danger, we would thus

wish to propose '*laid*' as a possible rendering of '*mettait*' in this particular case. Not only does this verbal item collocate well with the locative indication concerning the 'worktable' (= '*établi*'), it also generates a semantic logic broadly commensurate with the core signification of 'mettre' (compare 'mettre' = 'to move (x) to (y) such that (x) remains in/upon/at/around (y)' with 'to lay' = 'to move (x) to (y) such that (x) remains in horizontal superposition upon (y)'). Whether or not this broad commensurability facilitates the adaptation of '*laid*' to the highly specific descriptive use to which Zola is putting '*mettait*' here, of course, remains open to debate.

'*comme une poussière de soleil tamisée dans des linges fins.*' – in this sequence, we find another stylistic motif which can be considered to be more than characteristic of Zola's painterly prose, i.e. the use of a figuratively structured nominal group to refer to a specifically configured effect of light. Indeed, in this instance, the figurative structure of '*une poussière de soleil*' would appear to be particularly apposite, enabling the reader to refigure the way in which the floating motes of dust are seen to be held in aerial suspension by the illumination of a sunbeam. The series of interpretative operations required on the part of the reader in order to construe the figure thus might be summarised as follows: 'il y a un soleil qui illumine de la poussière' > 'il y a une poussière illuminée par le soleil' > 'il y a une poussière qui se confond avec l'illumination du soleil et, réciproquement, l'illumination du soleil qui se confond avec de la poussière' > '*une poussière de soleil*'. In this way, the 'dust' and the 'sun' are represented as mutually partaking of the same qualities, the former being cast as an emanation or a manifestation of the latter (compare the syntactic analogy of '*une poussière de soleil*' with structurally homologous nominal groups such as 'un rayon de soleil', 'un éclat de soleil' or 'une lumière de soleil', all of which can be seen to imply the same functional relationship unambiguously).

Once again, the use of this kind of syntactic figure in Zola's text would seem to pose the translators a fairly acute problem. Indeed, it is little surprising to find that the structure of this figure is not completely duplicated in any of the three translations quoted above. In this respect, Townsend probably comes closest with '*a golden dust of sunlight*': the only deviation from the original being in the insertion of the 'colour' adjective

'*golden*' into the slot modifying the Head item '*dust*' (= '*poussière*'). Moreover, in attributing the same colour quality to the '*dust*' as that typically exemplified by '*sunlight*', Townsend would thus appear to be guiding the reader toward a more complete identification of one element with the other. Symons opts for a similar kind of approach with '*a cloud of gold-dust*', although the use of the nominal '*gold-*' rather than the adjectival '*golden*' in the attributive Modifier slot would tend to confer upon this item a 'sortal' rather than a 'colour-ascribing' function. By this, we mean that the '*dust*' is now represented as being of a kind deriving from a particular metallic element rather than as a minimally specified, material medium bearing a particular kind of colour property (compare 'gold- (x)'> 'the kind of material that (x) is is gold' with 'golden (x)' > 'the kind of colour that (x) is is golden'). Similarly, the globally visualised aspect of the '*dust*' itself is also explicated by virtue of the insertion of '*cloud*' as a Head item categorizer (i.e. '*gold-dust*' (perceptible in the formation of a) '*cloud*'. > '*a cloud of gold-dust*'). Exemplifying a rather different approach, Tancock's creation of a double item compound nominal (i.e. '*sun-dust*') has the merit of economically and concisely lexicalising both of the constitutive notional co-ordinates generating the original figure without any hint of over-explication or periphrasis.[vi] Consequently, the English language reader is left to do much the same kind of interpretative work as his French counterpart with respect to '*une poussière de soleil*'.

Evaluation of the translations

Tancock's translation includes a significant degree of syntactic reorganisation, executed with somewhat mixed results. On the one hand, the transposition into verbal form of key notions and features from the semantic representation of '*réverbération ardente*' (> '*shimmered and baked*') produces a rendering which is both fluent and idiomatic; on the other hand, the resort to a basic 'copular + predicate adjective' construction in place of the syntactically complex '(x) *mettait au-dessus de* (z)(y)' one probably simplifies the descriptive logic of the original sequence too much. Similarly, whereas the contrastive use of prepositions in the opening sentence (i.e. '*down into*'/'*up onto*') would seem to be

an effective one, the juxtaposition of '*on the shelves*' with '*in the window*' in the second sentence (separated only by the use of a comma) is likely to strike the reader as being more than a little clumsy.

Symons's translation can, once again, be seen to border upon adaptation in places. Indeed, one might reasonably speculate that this is the result of the poet-translator seeking to infuse his own text within a rhythm and cadence borrowed more from verse than prose (e.g. '*a very blaze of light and heat*' (perfect iambic rhythm); '*in the shadow of the paper in shelves and window*' (quasi-anapaestic rhythm)). Nevertheless, there would also appear to be a potential price to be paid for such prosodic craft, and this is perhaps manifested here in the form of minor lexical inadequacies and approximations, (e.g. '*motes*' (< '*moires*'), '*shadows*' (< '*reflets*')). Many would claim, of course, that such discreetly taken licence justifies itself by its own results. Moreover, in this case, the resulting text is nothing if not an aesthetically conceived and stylistically fluent one.

Townsend's translation typically includes sequences resembling something close to direct lexical translation (e.g. '*the sidewalk sent back reverberations of heat waves*'; '*a golden dust of sunlight*'). It is similarly embellished by small, explicatory touches, some of which can be seen to be justifiable (e.g. '*moires*' > '*wavy patterns*'; '*poussière*' > '*golden dust*'), others less so (e.g. '*ce coup de lumière*' > '*this strong light*'). This tendency toward explicitness is also manifested by the structured insertion of conjunctive and pronominal links between clauses (i.e. '*and the sidewalk*'; '*a blinding brightness that was like a golden dust*'). It might thus be said to furnish a good example of an apparently faithful translation which nevertheless seems to require a certain degree of lexical and structural bolstering in order to assure its coherence.

Proposed translation

At this hour, the sun was striking flush upon the upon the shop-window, and a shimmering heat-haze rose from the pavements, sending moiré waves of light dancing across the shop ceiling; and this sudden shaft of light, tinged blue from the reflection from the paper on the shelves and from the window, laid a very

dazzle of illumination over the work-bench, which settled there like sun-dust

filtered through fine linen.

Analysis II

We will now proceed to analyse a second passage, which might be seen to exemplify
Zola's painterly prose in wide-angled and panoramic perspective. In this passage, the
metropolitan landscape of Paris is described stretching out before the bewildered gaze of
the Coupeaus' wedding guests as they look precariously out at it from within the lofty
heights of the Louvre:

> *Paris, autour d'eux, étendait son immensité grise, aux lointains bleuâtres, ses*
> *vallées profondes, où roulait une houle de toitures; toute la rive droite était dans*
> *l'ombre, sous un grand haillon de nuage cuivré; et, du bord de ce nuage, frangé*
> *d'or, un large rayon coulait, qui allumait les milliers de vitres de la rive gauche*
> *d'un pétillement d'étincelles, détachant en lumière ce coin de la ville sur un ciel*
> *très pur, lavé par l'orage.* (ZOLA, p. 662)

> *All around them was Paris, a vast greyness tinted blue at the edges, with deep*
> *valleys in which roofs swelled and rolled like the sea. The whole of the Right Bank*
> *was in shadow beneath a great sheet of copper-coloured clouds; and, from the*
> *outer part of this gold-edged cloud, flowed a broad ray of sunshine, which lit the*
> *thousands of windows on the Left Bank in a shower of sparks, highlighting this*
> *part of the city against a pure, pure sky, washed clean by the storm.* (BUSS, p.
> 81)

> *All around them stretched the vast greyness of Paris, hazy-blue in the distance, its*
> *deep valleys surging with rooftops, the whole of the right bank lay in shadow,*
> *beneath a huge, ragged, copper-coloured cloud; a broad ray of sunlight,*
> *streaming out from the cloud's gold-fringed edge, glittered and sparkled on the*

myriad windows of the left bank, lighting up that part of the city so that it stood out against a perfectly clear sky, washed clean by the storm. (MAULDON, p. 81-82)

Paris all around them stretched out in its grey immensity, with its blue distances, its deep valleys, with their rolling waves of roofs; on the right of the Seine, all lay in shadow, beneath a great sheet of copper-coloured cloud; and from the edge of this cloud, with its fringe of gold, a great ray of sunlight shot out, lighting up thousands of window panes, to the left of the river, with sparkling flashes, blocking out this corner of the city in a flood of light against the clear sky, swept clear by the storm. (SYMONS, p.83)

All around them stretched the grey immensity of Paris, with its blue distances and deep crevasses filled with a huddle of roofs. The whole of the right bank was in shadow under a great canopy of ragged, copper-coloured cloud from behind the golden edges of which streamed a long ray of sunlight which lit up the thousands of windows on the other side of the river, striking from them innumerable sparks, and bathing one whole corner of the city in radiance, so that it stood out clearly against a sky that had been washed clean by the storm. (HOPKINS, p. 102)

'*Paris, autour d'eux, étendait son immensité grise,*' – perhaps the first thing to note here is that the newly inscribed Theme of the description to follow (i.e. '*Paris*') is placed in a maximally prominent, sentence-initial position. Concomitantly, the adverbial Adjunct serving to link in this passage of textual description with the Theme of the previous one (i.e. ('*les invités*' >)'*autour d'eux*') finds itself intercalated between the Subject and the Predicator. Indeed, from a contrastive point of view, the degree of thematic marking implied by this choice of syntagmatic ordering might be clearly brought out by means of comparison with the following unmarked sequence: '*Autour d'eux, Paris étendait son immensité grise*'. Moreover, of the four translators quoted, only Symons risks retaining '*Paris*' in the maximally prominent, sentence-initial slot in which we find it in the original, the other three opting to place the adverbial Adjunct therein.

Ultimately, however, the restoration of this less thematically marked form of syntagmatic ordering in the majority of the translations is perhaps to be regretted, given that it seems to result in the loss of a distinctive effect of descriptive emphasis: *'Paris'* no longer to be found boldly inaugurating the whole passage in the splendour of its sentence-initial isolation, as it does in Zola's text.

Additionally, these changes in the Theme-Rheme profile of the sequence can be seen to have repercussions at other levels of textual articulation too. Firstly, by way of control, we note that Symons's more or less direct lexical translation of the original demonstrates something very close to complete correspondence with the latter at all three levels of textual articulation (the modulation of the Complement function into a Site function at the second level notwithstanding). There would nevertheless appear to be certain problems implied by the use of direct translation[vii] in this case, as we shall see:

(i) *Paris* (MARKED THEME), *autour d'eux* (TEXTUAL THEME), *étendait son immensité grise* (RHEME)

(ii) *Paris* (SUBJECT), *autour d'eux* (ADJUNCT), *étendait* (PREDICATOR) *son immensité grise* (COMPLEMENT)

(iii) *Paris* (AGENT), *autour d'eux* (SITE), *étendait* (ACTION) *son immensité grise* (PATIENT)

(i) *Paris* (MARKED THEME) *all around them* (TEXTUAL THEME) *stretched out in its grey immensity* (RHEME)

(ii) *Paris* (SUBJECT) *all around them* (ADJUNCT) *stretched out* (PREDICATOR) *in its grey immensity* (SITE)

(iii) *Paris* (AGENT) *all around them* (SITE) *stretched out* (ACTION) *in its grey immensity* (SITE)

According to this reading, the placing of *'Paris'* in what is both a marked Theme and a Subject slot can be seen to confer upon this item a quasi-agentive role in relation to the verbal item in the Predicator slot, *'étendait'*. The core semantic logic of the verb 'étendre' might be represented thus: '(x) causes (y) to become horizontally extended in

space ('often, although not always, over a given surface, (z)'). The kind of agent selected by this verb would, of course, normally be '+ Human' in most contexts of usage, although one might also envisage a ' + Animal, - Human' one without too much idiomatic strain. An example of the former might be 'La ménagère étendait la nappe sur la table'; an example of the latter 'le chien étendait ses pattes devant lui'. In both cases, the Transitivity of these sequences might be reproduced without too much difficulty in English (which would give 'the housekeeper laid the cloth over the table' and 'the dog stretched out its paws in front of him' respectively). Where the verb 'étendre' would appear to differ from its English equivalents (e.g.. 'lay', 'stretch (out)'), however, is in the degree of latitude afforded to figurative usage. One example of such usage might be the following: 'Le soleil sur l'herbe étendait devant eux une nappe éblouissante'. In this sequence, a certain degree of figurative tension is generated by the collocation of 'étendait' with an item in the Subject slot referring to an inanimate agent (i.e. 'le soleil'). Again, in order to resolve this tension, the reader would be likely to confer upon the latter a quasi-agentive role, with the strictly physical causality implied by the agency of the sun being reconstrued in terms of its apparent analogy with the intentional agency of a human being. Although this interpretative move is not a complicated one in itself, there would nevertheless appear to be considerable resistance to quasi-agentive figures of this kind in English (compare [?]'the sun stretched out a dazzling drape of light before them on the grass' with 'a dazzling drape of light stretched out before them on the grass, cast by the sun's rays'). Indeed, with respect to 'Paris, autour d'eux, étendait son immensité grise', we might well expect this resistance to be even greater, given that there is no primary or non-figurative level of causality implied by the functional relationship obtaining between 'Paris' and 'son immensité grise' respectively: the latter being construable as a simple visual property of the former. The pressure to change the Transitivity of the translating sequence in English would thus appear to be a considerable one. This is clearly reflected, for example, in Hopkins's translation:

> (i) *All around them* (THEME) *stretched the grey immensity of Paris* (RHEME)
>
> (ii) *All around them* (ADJUNCT) *stretched* (PREDICATOR) *the grey immensity of Paris* (SUBJECT)

(iii) *All around them* (SITE) *stretched* (PROCESS) *the grey immensity of Paris*

(MEDIUM)

Firstly, we note that there is a simplification of the syntactical structure of this sequence in relation to that of the original (compare 'ADJUNCT – PREDICATOR – SUBJECT' with 'SUBJECT – ADJUNCT – PREDICATOR - COMPLEMENT). This simplification is principally facilitated by the integration of *'Paris'* into the qualifying structure of the newly created nominal group in the Subject slot (*'Paris'* + *'immensité grise'* > *'the grey immensity of Paris'*). Secondly, we note that the 'Subject-Predicator' inversion facilitates the placing of the locative Adjunct in the sequence-initial Theme slot (which is what we might expect to find here according to the developing thematic logic of the text) and the most important piece of new information (i.e. the introduction of *'Paris'* as text-topic) in the sequence-final part of the Rheme. Thirdly, and as a direct consequence of the changes at the level of Syntax and Theme-Rheme profile, we note that *'Paris'* is no longer cast in the quasi-agentive role in which we find it in the original, the bivalent transitive structure of the latter being replaced by what is essentially a univalent transitive structure in Hopkins's translation. Accordingly, it would now seem to be more than appropriate to apply an ergative reading to this new transitive structure, with the relationship between *'the grey immensity of Paris'* and *'stretched'* articulating itself as an interaction between Medium and Process respectively. Moreover, this reading would seem to correspond fairly closely to how the native English speaker would be likely to conceive of the phenomenon of 'stretching' in such cases as where no direct, intentional agency can be seen to bear upon its occurrence (compare (i) [?]'The carpet stretched out its redness before them' with 'The redness of the carpet stretched out before them'; (ii) [?]'The desert stretched out its endless vista before their eyes' with 'The endless vista of the desert stretched out before their eyes'). Hopkins's translation might thus be said to domesticate the figuratively marked transitive structure of Zola's original formulation in accordance with the prevailing idiomatic pressure of the English language. Despite the ergatively slanted recasting of events concomitant upon this domestication, however, the descriptive logic of the translating sequence remains broadly similar to that to be found in the original.

Buss makes even greater changes in basic textual structure in his translation: '*Paris*' being inserted into the nominal Predicate slot of an existential copular clause, in relation to which the nominal group '*a vast greyness tinted blue at the edges*' is placed in apposition:

(i)(a) *All around them was Paris* (THEME), *a vast greyness tinted blue at the edges* (RHEME).

(b) *All around them* (THEME) *was Paris* (RHEME), *a vast greyness* (THEME) *tinted blue at the edges* (RHEME).

(ii)   *All around them* (ADJUNCT) *was* (PREDICATOR) *Paris* (NOMINAL PREDICATE), *a vast greyness tinted blue at the edges* (NOMINAL ADJUNCT).

(iii)(a) *All around them* (SITE) *was* (IDENTIFIER) *Paris* (IDENTIFIED), *a vast greyness* (BEARER) *tinted blue* (QUALITY) *at the edges* (SITE).

(b) *All around them was Paris* (BEARER), a *vast greyness tinted blue at the edges* (QUALITY).

The first thing to note about this translating sequence is that a certain degree of informational prominence is conferred upon '*Paris*' by virtue of its positioning in the maximally salient part of the Rheme of the copular clause. Furthermore, the use of apposition with respect to the nominal Adjunct '*a vast greyness tinted blue at the edges*' in turn confers upon this item a further degree of informational salience by virtue of its Rhematic positioning in relation to the initial copular clause. In this way, Buss creates what might be called a double rhematic focus, with the important new textual information being presented in two stages: (i) in terms of what needs to be identified as the new topic of the text; (ii) in terms of the most important descriptive features and qualities pertaining to this new topic. Alternatively, the presentation of new textual information might be said to presuppose the following two questions: (i) 'What was all around them?' > '*All around them was Paris*'; (ii) 'What was what was all around them like?' > '*A vast greyness tinted blue at the edges*'. Moreover, this staggered presentation of the most important information to be conveyed by the sequence can be seen to contrast markedly with that to be found in the original sequence, whereby only one key question is presupposed, i.e.

'Que faisait Paris autour d'eux?' > '*Paris, autour d'eux, étendait son immensité grise*'.

By way of summary, we might say that whereas the original presents the core information of the sequence in terms of 'what Paris was doing around them' Buss's translation presents this information both in terms of 'what there was around them' and 'what it was like'. It is thus little surprising to find that the information conveyed by Buss's sequence seems to be somewhat different from that to be found in the original. Indeed, the most notable of the disparities incurred is the complete occlusion, in the former, of the semantic logic implied by the use of '*étendait*' in the Predicator slot of the latter (compare 'All around (z) was (x), a (y)' with '(x), all around (z), caused (y) to become horizontally extended in space'). Clearly, much of the semantic specificity of the original has been lost here as a result of the changes brought about by Buss in the textual organisation of the translating sequence. *De facto*, this loss would appear to give us fairly strong grounds for finding the latter inadequate.

Before we leave our analysis of this sequence, it might also be interesting to dwell a little upon the rendering of the nominal group '*son immensité grise*'. In semantic terms, the most striking thing about this group is that both the Head item (i.e. '*immensité*') and the attributive Qualifier (i.e. '*grise*') can be seen to lexicalise what are essentially visually descriptive features: the former lexicalising a superlative value in spatial extension, the latter a colour quality intermediate between white and black. Moreover, the fact that both of these features can be seen to be semantically if not syntactically attributive of '*Paris*' would tend to suggest that the form in which they are likely to be lexicalised in translation might well differ from that to be found in the original. A translation along the lines of ' Paris, grey and immense, stretched itself out all around them' would, for example, represent a perfectly plausible rendering of the original sequence, albeit one departing to a considerable degree from its basic mode of syntactic organisation. Despite these paraphrase-orientated possibilities, however, we note that all four of our quoted translators choose to retain the nominal form of lexicalisation to be found in the original, the only significant variation occurring in the way in which the resulting nominal group is actually structured: Buss and Mauldon opting for '*a/the vast greyness*' respectively; Symons and Hopkins for '*its/the grey immensity*' respectively. Clearly the second variant is the closer of the two, in syntactical terms, to the original, with '*immensity*' functioning

as a nominal Head item in the same way as its direct lexical cognate '*immensité*' in the latter. Conversely, the transposition of the feature 'grey' from adjectival into nominal form (i.e. '*grise*' (adj.) (= 'grey') > '*greyness*' (n.)) that we find in the renderings of both Buss and Mauldon results in a direct switch in the attributive relationship obtaining in the original group. The principal trigger for this switch would appear to be the tendency, in English, to lexicalise in nominal Head form the more concrete or clearly defined of the two descriptive features (which, in this case, would mean the colour feature rather than the spatial one). Nevertheless, the suspicion remains here that this trigger should perhaps have been resisted in the interests of rendering the precise conceptualisation informing Zola's original lexical choice.

'*aux lointains bleuâtres*,' – Zola use of the pluralized nominal form here to describe the delicate blue distances of the Parisian skyline represents an interesting example of the kind of technique that came to characterise the *écriture artiste* tradition of descriptive prose.[viii] In fact, the use of the pluralized nominal form of the lexeme 'lointain' can be seen to derive directly from the technical vocabulary of painting: the latter being used to refer to 'la partie d'un tableau représentant de façon réaliste des lieux, des objets très éloignés du premier plan'. In this light, the principal translation choice here would appear to revolve around the issue of whether to render the original form in either its syntactical or its semantic specificity.

As in the translation of the previous sequence, Symons and Hopkins once again show themselves willing to render the syntactical specificity the original in almost identical form (the use of the preposition notwithstanding): both of them translating '*aux lointains bleuâtres*' as '*with its blue distances*'. Despite this surface structural fidelity, however, a persistent doubt nevertheless remains as to whether '*distances*' would signify anything as precise to the English language reader as it is likely to do to his French counterpart. Indeed, this doubt would seem to be strengthened by the fact that, in English, the plural form of the abstract nominal 'distance(s)' is semantically redundant in a way in which the equivalently plural form in French (i.e. '*lointain(s)*') clearly is not. Indeed, it may well be this very disparity which triggers the use of the more commonly used singular form in Mauldon's '*in the **distance***'. Perhaps in response to the same trigger,

Buss's translation can be seen to include even greater changes in the basic structural organisation of the sequence: firstly, the adjectival group '*tinted blue at the edges*' becomes directly adjunctive upon '*a vast greyness*' (compare with the use of the apposed structure in the original); secondly, the core notion of 'distance' (< '*lointains*') is lexicalised in modulated form within the structure of the prepositional group '*at the edges*'. In resorting to such modulation, Buss would seem to be attempting to follow the precise visual logic of the unfolding description, firstly delineating the urban expanse of Paris as a mass of colour, and then defining how this mass can be seen to be composed of a dominant, focal hue (i.e. '*a vast greyness*'), and a secondary, peripheral one (i.e. '*tinted blue at the edges*'). Unfortunately, the use of '*edges*' to define the peripheral location of this secondary hue, although visually coherent, would nevertheless seem to be less than entirely adequate as a rendering of '*lointains*', given that it fails to lexicalise the very precise notion of 'distant space' ('as represented within a retreating perspective') which is central to the semantic representation of the latter.

Before leaving our analysis of this sequence, it is also interesting to note the way in which the attenuative suffix in '*bleuâtre*' is rendered. For example, this is achieved in Buss's translation by means of the insertion of the adjectival participle '*tinted*' in the Head slot of an adjectival group thematically dominated by the immediately qualifying adjectival item '*blue*'. To the same end, Mauldon's translation includes a compound adjectival group of which the first compounded item can be seen to fulfil an attenuative function (i.e. '*hazy- blue*'). On the other hand, this attenuative nuance is not clearly lexicalised at all in the rendering offered by both Symons and Hopkins (i.e. '*with its blue distances*'): a loss which is clearly unacceptable.

'*ses vallées profondes, où roulait une houle de toitures,*' – in this sequence, the use of both '*roulait*' and '*houle*' in the relative clause qualifying '*ses vallées profondes*' can be seen to create a strong isotopy of 'liquid movement'. Additionally, the nominal group '*une houle de voitures*' would appear to constitute a fairly clear case of syntactical figuration: the use of '*houle*' in the Head item slot serving to index the feature 'gently undulating' into the semantic representation of the nominal item in the qualifying prepositional group, '*de toitures*':

(i) *houle* = 'the **gently undulating** ripple and swell of the sea' ('in the absence of wave-break')[ix]; (ii) *'toitures'* = 'an expanse of rooftops'; ergo (iii) *'une houle de toitures'* = 'a **gently undulating** expanse of rooftops'

Once again, the use of this kind of complex syntactical figuration in the original text seems to trigger a considerable degree of reorganisation on the part of the translators. Firstly, we note that Symons's *'with their rolling* (< *'où roulait'*) *waves* (< *'houle'*) *of roofs* (< *'de toitures'*)' probably stays closest to the lexical composition of the original text. Accordingly, something of the latter's basic rhetorical structure is also reproduced by virtue of (i) the duplication of the isotopy of 'liquid movement' in the semantic representation of both items composing the qualified nominal structure *'rolling waves'*; (ii) the use of the prepositional group *'of roofs'* to insert the key thematic item into the qualifying structure of the embracing nominal group such that our resulting semantic representation of this item is likely to index in features from that of the Head item *'waves'* (see above). Nevertheless, despite these similarities, the use of *'waves'* as a rendering of *'houle'* would appear to be less than entirely accurate, given that the latter is used to refer to 'the gently undulating ripple and swell of the sea' as occurs, precisely, when there are no waves present. Mauldon's *'its deep valley **surging** with rooftops'* would seem to incur a similar inaccuracy in view of the fact that that the sea can be seen to be in its 'surging' phase just before the moment at which its waves actually break. On the hand, Buss's considerably reorganised *'with its deep valleys in which roofs **swelled*** (< *'houle'*) *and **rolled*** (< *'où roulait'*) *like the sea'* has the merit of lexicalising the most important features pertaining to the semantic representation of *'houle'* without in any way indexing in the inappropriate notion of 'wave-break'. On a more critical note, however, his use of the rather formal 'preposition + relative pronoun' structure *'in which'* in the place of 'where' might be considered to be stylistically cumbersome, as, indeed, is the insertion of the explicatory simile *'like the sea'* (no such explication of the figure is offered in the original). Finally, it is perhaps little surprising to find that Hopkins offers the most radically reorganised rendering, i.e. *'deep **crevasses** filled with a **huddle** of roofs'*. Again, this reorganisation seems to incur considerable inaccuracy. His choice of

'*crevasses*' to render '*vallées*', for example, indexes in the features 'narrowness' and 'depth' into our semantic representation of the resulting nominal group to a degree incommensurate with that of '*ses vallées profondes*'. His choice of '*huddle*' (= 'a dense agglomeration' ('of animate bodies')) to render '*houle*' also privileges the feature 'dense' at the expense of 'undulating' to an unacceptable extent, given the thematic prominence of the latter in the original.

'*toute la rive droite était dans l'ombre,*' – the principal translation choice raised by this sequence concerns the rendering of the copular Predicator '*était*'. Buss and Hopkins opt for direct lexical equivalence (i.e. '*était*' = '*was*'); Mauldon and Symons for the more semantically specific '*lay*' (the latter being strongly justifiable upon collocational grounds).

'*sous un grand haillon de nuage cuivré;*' – in this sequence, we again find a highly stylised use of a nominal Head item, with '*haillon*' being used to refigure the visual aspect of '*nuage cuivré*'. The semantic transfer might be represented in the following way: '*grand*' (= 'large') + '*haillon*' (= 'textile product' ('in a worn or torn state')) + '*nuage cuivré*' (= 'cloud' ('of copper-coloured hue') ergo '*un grand haillon de nuage cuivré*' (= 'a large cloud' ('of copper-coloured hue' ('with an aspect like a textile product' ('in a worn or torn state')))).

The responses from the translators to this figure are again various. For example, Symons reproduces the syntactical structure of the original almost exactly with '*beneath a great sheet of copper-coloured cloud.*' Nevertheless his rendering is perhaps not entirely adequate in semantic terms, given that the Head item '*sheet*' fails to lexicalise the secondary feature 'in a worn or torn state' with the same degree of clarity that '*haillon*' does in the original. The same remark might be made of Buss's '*beneath a great sheet of copper-coloured clouds.*' Alternatively, Hopkins's '*a great canopy of ragged, copper-coloured cloud*' effectively creates a new figure, with the use of '*canopy*' (= 'open-air covering' ('capacious')) in the Head slot serving to index the feature 'capacious' into the semantic representation of '*cloud*'. Concomitantly, the feature 'in a worn and torn state' is lexicalised by means of transposition in the form of an adjectival Modifier (i.e.

'*haillon*' > 'in a worn and torn state' > '*ragged*': n. > adj.). Although this adaptation is visually coherent, it can nevertheless be seen to modify the conceptual co-ordinates of the original figure to a considerable and perhaps unnecessary extent. Finally, Mauldon's '*beneath a huge, ragged, copper-coloured cloud*' dispenses with the figurative Head item structure altogether: the most salient features pertaining to '*nuage*' (= '*cloud*') in the original being lexicalised in the form of a long, modifying structure. Although this transposed rendering does not incur any glaring semantic inaccuracies, it nevertheless raises doubts as to the legitimacy of collapsing the basic figurative structure of the original in this way, particularly given the availability of idiomatic options in English reproducing precisely this structure. For example, even a direct lexical translation is by no means to be completely excluded in this case, e.g. '*beneath a great rag of copper-tinted cloud.*'

'*Et du bord de ce nuage, frangé d'or,*' – the important translation choice to be made in the rendering of this sequence would appear to be whether to reproduce the appositive structure of the original sequence or to lexicalise the feature 'gold' ('at the fringes') (< '*frangé d'or*') in the form of a more integrated modifying structure. In this respect, Mauldon can be seen to have taken the first option with '*from the cloud's gold-fringed edge.*' Similarly, Buss's '*and from the outer part of this gold-edged cloud*' also clearly lexicalises the aforementioned feature in the modifying structure. On the other hand, Symons's '*and from the edge of this cloud, with its fringe of gold*' does retain the appositive structure of the original, albeit in prepositional group form. Finally, Hopkins's rendering once again represents the most structurally adapted of the four translations. Rather than repeating the item '*cloud*', he re-anaphorises this item within a 'preposition + relative pronoun' structure (i.e. '*from behind the golden* (< '*d'or*') *edges* (< '*du bord*') *of which* (< '*de ce nuage*')': Additionally, the notion of 'extremity', lexicalised in adjectival form within the apposed adjectival group of the original, is transposed into nominal form in this rendering (i.e. '*frangé*' > 'extremity' > '*edges*': adj. > n.); the notion of 'gold', lexicalised in nominal form in the apposed group, correspondingly being transposed into adjectival form (i.e. '*d'or*' > 'gold' > '*golden*'). Again, although these various transpositions do not lead to any major semantic loss, what they do, unfortunately, do is

to completely adulterate the cumulatively developed, rhythmical texture of the original. Compare the carefully placed punctuated grouping of the latter with Hopkins's long, run-on sequence of unpunctuated clauses:

> *toute la rive droite* (4) *était dans l'ombre,* (5)
>
> *sous un grand haillon* (5) *de nuage cuivré,* (5)
>
> *et,* (1)
>
> *du bord de ce nuage,* (6)
>
> *frangé d'or,* (3)
>
> *un large rayon coulait* (6)[x]

> *The whole of the right bank was in shadow under a great canopy of copper-coloured cloud from behind the edges of which streamed a long ray of sunlight*

Clearly, almost nothing remains, in translated form, of the delicate expansions and contractions in prosodic volume characterising Zola's original French text. Although these rhythmical effects might be difficult to duplicate in their entirety in English, there would nevertheless appear to be little warrant for abandoning all attempt to reproduce their basic contour and shape. Hopkins's translation does precisely this, however.

'*un large rayon coulait,*' - the rendering of this sequence is largely uncomplicated in lexical terms, although it does produce a certain degree of variation: Buss's '*flowed*' perhaps collocating less well with '*ray of sunlight*' than '*streamed*' and '*streaming*' from Hopkins and Mauldon respectively. Symons's '*shot out*' would appear to be less appropriate still, '*shot out*' tending to back-translate as '*dardait*'.

The rendering of the attributive Modifier '*large*' also produces variation, with Hopkins's '*long ray*' most notably privileging the superior value of the wrong secondary feature (compare '*large*' = 'of superior dimension' ('in width') with '*long*' = 'of superior dimension' ('in length')).

'qui allumait les milliers de vitres de la rive gauche d'un pétillement d'étincelles,'
– in the translation of this sequence, the rendering of the verbal item in the Predicator slot *'allumait'* invites a basic consensus (i.e. *'which lit'* (BUSS); *'lighting up'* (SYMONS); *'which lit up'* (SYMONS). Rather, it is in the rendering of the adjunctive prepositional group *'d'un pétillement d'étincelles'* that significant lexical and structural variation is to be found. Once again, the striking thing about the structure of this group is the figurative use of a nominal form to represent a specific effect of light. Indeed, the whole sequence would seem to be strongly isotopic of the notion of 'illumination' in this instance (i.e. *'allumait'* – *'pétillement'* – *'étincelles'*). Accordingly, the series of interpretative transformations required in order to make sense of this isotopic articulation might be represented as follows: *'qui allumait les milliers de vitres* (de sorte qu'un reflet pétillant et étincelant se produisait)' > *'qui allumait les milliers de vitres d'un pétillement* (qui était comme celui des) *étincelles'* > *'qui allumait les vitres d'un pétillement d'étincelles'*.

Buss's *'in a shower of sparks'* has the merit of retaining the basic structure of the original Adjunct without sacrificing collocational congruence in English, although the isotopy of 'illumination' is less clearly lexicalised by the Head item *'shower'* than by *'pétillement'* in the former. Symons's *'with sparkling flashes'* reorganises this basic structure to a somewhat greater extent: the attributive Modifier *'sparkling'* transposing the notion of 'spark' from prepositional group into adjectival form (*'d'étincelles'* > 'spark' > *'sparkling'*) and the Head item *'flashes'* lexicalising the notion of 'illumination' ('brief', 'incandescent')(< *'pétillement'*). Hopkins's lexically expanded participial clause *'striking from them innumerable sparks'* moves even further long the cline toward paraphrase, with the attributive Modifier *'innumerable'* freely lexicalising the feature 'of vast and uncountable number' at the expense of that of 'illumination'. Finally, Mauldon's *'(a broad ray of sunlight)* **glittered** and **sparkled** on the myriad windows of the left bank' can be seen to lexicalise the whole isotopy of 'illumination' in exclusively verbal form. Although this multiply transposed rendering is visually coherent, the strong end-focus that we find upon *'d'un pétillement d'étincelles'* in the original is regrettably lost with respect to the transposing verbal items in the Predicator slot. Compare:

(i) *qui* (THEME) *allumait les milliers de vitres de la rive gauche **d'un pétillement d'étincelles*** (RHEME)

(ii) (*a broad ray of sunlight*)(THEME) [...] ***glittered and sparkled*** *on the myriad windows of the left bank* (RHEME)

'*détachant en lumière ce coin de la ville sur un ciel très pur,*' – in this sequence, the isotopy of 'illumination' is relexicalised by means of the participial group Predicator '*détachant en lumière*'. Turning to the translations, Buss's '***highlighting** this part of the city*' would appear to be a little more accurate than Mauldon's '***lighting up** that part of the city*' given that the contrastive dimension implied by the complex notion of 'illumination' ('against a backdrop of darkness') is more clearly brought out by '*highlighting*' than '*lighting up*'. Hopkins's '***bathing** one whole corner of the city **in radiance***' (B.T. '*baignant/trempant* (x) *de lumière*') can also be seen to occlude this contrastive dimension. More significantly, Symons's '***blocking out** this part of the city in a flood of light*' flirts with outright lexical error: the predicative structure '(x) blocks out (y)' tending to suggest that (y) has, in fact, been plunged into a state of obscurity rather than flooded with light.

In rendering '*sur un ciel très pur*', the translators choose to signal the superlative value of the attribute '*pure*' in several different ways: Buss repeats the adjective pure twice within the modifying group,[xi] thus producing a sequence which is highly marked in stylistic terms (i.e. '***a pure, pure** sky*'); Mauldon's use of the adverbial intensifier in '*a **perfectly** clear sky*' seems to inscribe itself within a register which is, at one and the same time, both formal (or formal-consultative) and spoken.[xii] However, the appropriateness of this kind of register to the rendering of a passage which is thoroughly literary in tone is nevertheless questionable. Less convincingly still, the renderings of both Symons and Hopkins (i.e. '*against the clear sky*' and '*against a sky*' respectively) do not include any superlative marking at all.

'*lavé par l'orage.*' – there is almost complete consensus here in the rendering of this final adjectival group: Buss, Mauldon and Hopkins all translating as '***washed clear***

by the storm'. The only variation is Symons's slightly modulated '*swept clear by the storm*' (B.T. '*balayé par l'orage*').

Evaluation of the Translations

Buss's translation includes a certain number of transpositions and modulations which favour the production of an idiomatically fluent and collocationally congruent text (e.g. '*a vast greyness*'; '*shower of sparks*'). In this sense, it might be said to be orientated toward the norms of 'good, literary English' which Buss himself has suggested should guide the practice of the professional literary translator.[xiii] A slavish adherence to such norms, of course, is not always necessarily compatible with the rendering of literary texture. This incompatibility is particularly evident in Buss's lexically expanded and explicatory rendering of '*où roulait une houle de toitures*' as '*in which roofs swelled and rolled like the sea*'.

Mauldon's translation reorganises the textual composition of the original text to an even greater extent than that of Buss. Doubtless these changes were undertaken for similar discursive reasons, with the need to ensure basic idiomatic fluency again predominating over more source text oriented criteria (see our analysis of '*un grand haillon cuivré*'; '*qui allumait les milliers de vitres d'un grand pétillement d'étincelles*'). Moreover, as above, this penchant for modulation and explication would appear to lead to the use of unnecessary and occasionally distorting explicatory procedures (compare '*détachant en lumière ce coin de la ville sur un ciel très pur*' with '*lighting up that part of the city so that it stood out against a perfectly clear sky*').

Symons's translation stays closer to the textual composition of the original than either that of Buss or Mauldon. This fidelity is particularly noticeable in the rendering of the first sequence, in which the syntagmatic ordering of the Zola's text (if not its precise syntactic structure) is duplicated almost entirely, despite strong idiomatic pressure to the contrary. Cutting in a somewhat different grain, however, is the choice of a number of semantically free renderings of what are fairly precisely defined lexical groups and

sequences in the original (e.g. '*coulait*' > '*shot out*'; '*détachant en lumière*' > '*blocking out* [...] *in a flood of light*'; '*lavé*' > '*swept clear*').

Again, we find that it is Hopkins's translation which makes the greatest departure from the original text (e.g. '*vallées*' > '*crevasses*'; '*houle*' > '*huddle*'; '*pétillement d'étincelles*' > '*innumerable sparks*'; '*détachant en lumière*' > '*bathing* [...] *in radiance*'). The concomitant adulteration of the basic rhythmical texture of the original is also flagrant in certain sequences (see our analysis of '*toute la rive droite* [...] *frangé d'or*'; '*détachant en lumière* [...] *lavé par l'orage*'). Furthermore, Hopkins's text can also be seen to be lexically expanded by a ratio of almost 20% in relation to the original (compare a count of 78 lexical items for the latter to that of 99 for the former). In this respect, it might be said to be both explicatory and periphrastic to a high degree.

Proposed Translation

The grey immensity of Paris stretched out all around them, with its hazy-blue backdrop and its deep valleys, surging with a swell of rolling rooftops; the whole of the Right Bank was plunged into shadow beneath a great rag of copper-coloured cloud; and, streaming out from the edges of this gold-tipped cloud, a broad beam of sunlight lit up the thousands of windows on the Left Bank, igniting them with a shower of sparks, such that this part of the city came to be highlighted against a pure, blue sky, washed clean by the storm.

Concluding Remarks

Although there are clearly no general prescriptions or rules to be drawn from our respective analyses of the way in which Zola's painterly prose has been rendered, it is nevertheless to be hoped that some of the more important stakes involved have been brought to light. Many of the images to be found in these two passages were, of course, so complexly wrought and highly stylised that any attempt to duplicate their exact

conceptual co-ordinates in English would have almost certainly resulted in too great a burden being placed upon the target reader's interpretative expectations. Accordingly, a certain degree of adaptation and reorganisation was seen to be inevitable. However, the precise degree to which such adaptation and reorganisation was judged to be legitimate in particular cases often remained open to clarification. Indeed, in this respect, we were at pains to emphasise that any significant reorganisation in textual structure in the passage from text to translation ought normally to be carried out in such a way as to ensure a corresponding lexicalisation of all of the key notions and features signified by the former. To the extent that the translating text was seen to have neglected to do this, it was judged to be inadequate. For example, failure to render the nuance of attenuation implied by the suffixation of '*bleuâtre*' was considered to be *de facto* unacceptable, given the number of options available within the lexicon of the English language enabling the translator to do precisely this (e.g. '*hazy-blue*', '*tinted blue*'). Moreover, due attention to such norms of lexico-semantic accuracy was seen to guarantee not only descriptive coherence but also a basic and rationally justifiable level of textual fidelity.

The possibility of achieving such fidelity was, of course, pushed to its very limit in certain cases. For example, in the rendering of Zola's idiosyncratic use of '*mettait*', we found that it was precisely the absence, in English, of any one, semantically simple, verbal item able to do the same kind of predicative work as the original French one that triggered the resort to more semantically complex options in translation. Moreover, the fact that these choices were seen to be made broadly in accordance with prevailing collocational requirements also tended to emphasise the importance of the latter to some of the more routine kinds of textual readjustment and revision that might take place. Buss's modulated rendering of '*d'un pétillement d'étincelles*' as '*in a shower of sparks*', for example, became directly explicable as a response to such requirements. Although such minor shifts may not appear to be of much significance in themselves, the impact of their progressive accumulation over the course of a whole text is nevertheless likely to be considerable.

In the course of our two analyses, we paid particular attention to the rendering of a number of structurally complex nominal groups depictive of certain highly configured visual effects. Although these groups were seen to be composed around very precise

conceptual co-ordinates, it was nevertheless striking to note just to what degree their basic structure had been either embellished or reorganised in translation. For example, both Buss and Mauldon had rendered '*son immensité grise*' as '*the vast greyness*', thus directly inverting the syntactic articulation of the two features lexicalised by the original group. The trigger for this *chassé-croisé* switch was again seen to be connected with a certain kind of constraint operating at a very basic level of idiomatic pressure within the English language, i.e. the need to lexicalise the more concrete of the two visual features in the Head slot. Ultimately, of course, there would seem to be no reason *a priori* why the translator should not occasionally seek to override such constraints in the interests of producing a more 'faithful' rendering of the original. Indeed, this is precisely what Symons and Hopkins sought to do in the above case: both of them offering '*the grey immensity*' as a lexically direct and structurally duplicated rendering of the original group. The systematic application of such an apparently simple translating approach does, however, threaten to generate one recurrent and potentially distorting stylistic effect: i.e. that the lexical and structural duplication of the original group will serve to produce a sequence of text which is stylistically marked to a far greater degree in the target language than in the original one. Clearly, there is no easy set of procedures to be elucidated guaranteeing the attainment of stylistic fidelity in each and every case.

The inadequacy of readily available solutions based upon direct lexical translation could be clearly seen in the rendering of the complex nominal group '*une poussière de soleil*'. In this case, we found that two of the three quoted translators favoured the insertion of key explicatory items serving to guide the reader toward a more concrete conceptualisation of the original figure (i.e. '*a **golden** dust of sunlight*'; '*a **cloud** of gold-dust*'). Our own preference, however, was for the more condensed solution proposed by Tancock: the choice of the compound nominal '*sun-dust*' representing a highly appropriate use of a native, structural resource, assuring both textual economy and semantic accuracy. More generally, it might be said that the greater the degree of figurative tension implied by the use of a given lexical item within a particular group, the greater the requirement upon the translator to reproduce the precise lexico-semantic co-ordinates of this group in his/her own rendering. In the rendering of the complex nominal group '*une **houle** de toitures*', for example, the inaccurate lexicalisation of certain

primary features pertaining to the semantic representation of '*houle*' was seen to produce a significant distortion of the basic figurative co-ordinates of the group, a re-depicting of its status as image. Similarly, we found that the translators struggled to come up with a term as technically precise as the pluralized nominal Head item in the rendering of '*lointains bleuâtres*'. Again, this apparent lacuna was seen to trigger the resort to loose approximation (i.e. '*tinted blue at the edges*') and inappropriate duplication (i.e. '*blue distances*').

In our analysis of these complex nominal groups, we also found a tendency toward the transposing verbalisation of certain processual notions which had originally been lexicalised in nominal form. For example, in the rendering of '*une houle de toitures*', Buss was seen to transpose into verbal form the features pertaining to the Head item of the original nominal group. Although this was achieved without undue semantic loss, the figurative co-ordinates of the group were nevertheless found to be unnecessarily explicated in the form of an inserted prepositional group simile: a move which resulted in a considerable loss of descriptive density. Another example of this kind of 'noun > verb' transposition was Mauldon's lexicalisation of the notions and features pertaining to the semantic representation of '*d'un pétillement d'étincelles*' in the form of a co-ordinated couplet of verbal Predicators, '*glittered and sparkled*'. Although this transposition was again seen to be executed without undue semantic loss, we also found that it resulted in the occlusion of an important effect of rhematic end-focussing. Clearly, such transpositions are rarely likely to be executed without incurring at least some degree of stylistic distortion or skewing of thematic emphasis. Nevertheless, the extent to which these subtle twists and distortions become discursively significant in any given case undoubtedly remains very much dependent upon the emerging textual context.

If the challenge posed by the translation of Zola's painterly prose could be summed up in one easy formula, then this might be that it revolves around the constrained refiguration of a descriptive space already heavily inflected with figurative modes of conceptualisation. In certain cases, this refiguration is likely to be closely based upon the lexico-semantic co-ordinates established by the original text; in others, the particular kinds of collocational expectation and idiomatic pressure operative within the target language are likely to trigger important changes in textual organisation. In our

analysis of the sequence '*Paris, autour d'eux, étendait son immensité grise*', for example, we found that the kind of quasi-agentive Transitivity implied by the use of the verbal item '*étendait*' in the Predicator slot of the French original simply did not transfer itself convincingly to an English-language context in the absence of any collocating item in the Subject slot marked '+ Animate'. As a result, three of the four translations were found to be considerably reorganised, with clearly identifiable structural effects being registered at all three levels of basic textual articulation, i.e. Thematic, Syntactic and Functional respectively. Despite the general discursive rationale of such reorganisation in this instance, however, we were nevertheless led to judge Buss's almost complete occlusion of the core semantic logic of the original Predicator to be largely inadequate. Ultimately, the dividing line between legitimate textual recomposition and undue licence would appear to be a thin one. It is to be hoped that we have been able to offer some reasonable criteria for deciding between the two in particular cases.

[i] Albert Thibaudet's stricture against Zola's apparently second-rate stylistic merits has long since entered into the annals of French literary criticism: 'Mais ce qui manque à Zola, et ce qui fait le nerf et la force de Flaubert, c'est l'art des dissonances, la manière de retenir et de couper ce style oratoire. Faute d'un tel art, Zola resemble à un apprenti sorcier', Albert Thibaudet, *Gustave Flaubert* (Paris: Gallimard, 1935), p. 283.

[ii] Henri Mitterand, 'Remarques d'introduction à l'étude des techniques de la composition et du style chez Emile Zola', *CN*, 24-25 (63), 79-81 (p. 80).

[iii] Joy Newton comments perceptively upon the hyperrealism of the impressionist painters, and their exclusive focus upon particular variations of light and shade: 'Pour les peintres, le sujet n'était important que dans la mesure où il reflétait la lumière – ce qui conduira à l'abolition de la matière, car le sujet disparaîtra quand il ne sera qu'un point de départ pour des variations sur la lumière', Joy Newton, 'Emile Zola, impressionniste', *CN*, 33 (1967), 39-52 (p. 40). The suggestion that Zola was, in any programmatic or absolute sense of the term, an impressionist has been strongly qualified by Philippe Hamon, who, whilst recognising certain impressionist traits in Zola's prose style, is nevertheless keen to emphasise the more structured and architectural aspects of his composition, i.e. the reliance upon plot, the integrated and anagogic nature of much of his symbolism, the recurrence of cyclical motifs, etc. See Philippe Hamon, 'A propos de l'impressionnisme de Zola', *CN*, 34 (1967), 139-147.

[iv] In an illuminating article, Alain Pagès presents suggestive epistolic evidence of Zola's ambivalent attitude toward the notion of 'écriture artiste' (coined by and immemorially associated with the Goncourts). Indeed, in some of his more explicit theoretical reflections, Zola advocated the importance of 'méthode' over either 'style' or 'rhétorique', inviting his successors to go beyond mere formal experimentation. See 'Zola/Goncourt: Polémique autour de l'écriture artiste', in *Les Frères Goncourt: art et écriture*, ed. by Jean-Louis Cabanès (Bordeaux: Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 1997), pp. 315-321.

[v] Doubtless, Vinay and Darbelnet would not hesitate to see this kind of transposition as evidence of their thesis that French tends, according to the dictates of its own *génie*, toward static, abstract nominal forms, conceived in broadly categorical terms ('sur le plan de l'entendement'), whereas English, according to similar dictates, tends toward more concrete, adjectival or verbal forms, conceived in relation to the complexities of *le réel*. Although theses of such generality are hard to either defend or refute in any absolute terms, they do have a degree of persuasiveness about them when backed up with certain types of anecdotal evidence *à la Stylistique comparée*. Nevertheless, a considerable gulf remains between these kinds of projections and the elaboration of a fixed set of generative or prescriptive translation rules. Moreover, Vinay and Darbelnet seem to be more than aware of this limitation in the pages of their cautiously generalising *manuel*.

[vi] Claude and Jean Demanuelli situate the various complex nominal structures in English upon a cline ranging from the 'vision analytique' of the 'A of B' structure to the 'vision synthétique' of the compound nominal. With respect to the transformation of the 'A's B' genitive into a full compound structure, he notes that 'le génitif A's B, dans la mesure où il peut avoir un emploi générique, suppose une interdépendance étroite des constituents qui tend à gommer l'autonomie de chacun par la construction d'une nouvelle notion. Pareille interdépendance est encore accentuée dans le nom composé (A (-) B) où, avec la disparition de la marque explicite ('s), il y a constitution d'un nouvel élément lexical à part entière. L'orthographe est à cet égard révélatrice, puisque l'on peut passer de la simple juxtaposition des deux termes à la présence d'un trait d'union pour aboutir à une fusion totale', Claude and Jean Demanuelli, *Lire et traduire anglais-français* (Paris: Masson, 1990), p. 32.

[vii] Valery Larbaud hints at the paradoxical infidelity of direct translation when he poses the following question: 'Que devrait-il [le traducteur] faire pour ne pas *trahir*, et pour éviter, d'une part, le mot à mot insipide et infidèle à force de servile fidélité, et d'autre part la "traduction ornée"?', *Sous l'invocation de Saint Jérome*, 14th edn (Paris: Gallimard, 1946).

[viii] '*Lointains bleuâtres*' furnishes us with a good example of the abstract nominal plural, as used to convey the effect of variegated sensation in the perception of primary visual phenomena (such as distances and

colours). Stephen Ullmann comments perceptively upon the concealed metaphysical paradox lurking behind such a stylised representation of what is effectively brute perceptual matter (his commentary is made with specific reference to the Goncourts' use of such terms as 'fugitives transparences' and 'imperceptibles apparences'): 'The advantage of the plural lies in its ability to convey the recurrence, diversity and multiplicity of these phenomena. At the same time, the construction is often at variance with the meaning of these abstract terms which cannot be easily conceived as a plural', Stephen Ullmann, *Style in the French Novel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964), p. 140.

[ix] *Le Petit Robert* gives us the following definition of *Houle*: 'mouvement ondulatoire qui agite la mer sans faire déferler les vagues'.

[x] Vissière (p. 464) discerns evidence of a basically decasyllabic verse pattern in this passage. Although this claim is somewhat vitiated by the fact that his *vers* are not successive but rather drawn from different parts of the passage, his emphasis upon the highly structured and rhythmical quality of Zola's descriptive prose style is nevertheless highly appropriate. The lines he cites in exemplification of 'une prose très travaillée[...], un poème en prose' are the following:

> *où roulait une houle de toitures*
> *toute la rive droite était dans l'ombre*
> *sous un grand haillon de nuage cuivré*
> *sur un ciel très pur lavé par l'orage*

[xi] It is perhaps interesting to note that Vinay and Darbelenet (p. 208) see the repetition of an attributive adjective more as a device available to the French translator when faced with an 'emphatic' structure of modification than the converse, as is the case here. They give as examples:

> Its *very* nice: C'est *très, très* bien.
> It's a *very* fine picture: c'est un *très, très* beau tableau.

[xii] We are, of course, borrowing our terminology from Martin Joos's wonderfully inventive meditation upon spoken register, *The Five Clocks* (New York: Harcourt, World & Brace, 1967).

[xiii] See Footnote 11 in our introduction.

Conclusion

It is to be hoped by this stage in the thesis that the reader might have begun to glean a few insights into what an expanded and non-prescriptive notion of fidelity with respect to literary translation might entail in practical terms. If anything has emerged with clarity over the course of our various analyses, then it is that the literary novel represents so much more than a simple sub-structure of meaning to be broken down and re-composed at will by the translator. Not only does this form signify through the interaction of character and the progression of plot but also through the composition of its own uniquely configured, linguistic texture. Accordingly, it has remained our contention throughout that a particular sequence of literary translation can only be judged to be successful to the extent to which it convincingly reproduces such texture. Conversely, it might also be considered to be inadequate to the extent to which it either glosses over or distorts the latter.

Clearly, Zola's *L'Assommoir* provided us with an almost perfect laboratory for the exploration of such issues, being both richly figurative and idiosyncratically oral in texture. Unfortunately, upon all too many occasions, we found that the translators were simply unable to reproduce the laminate complexity of signification established by the original with any degree of conviction. In many cases, this incapacity was seen to result from lexical lacunae or structural asymmetries obtaining between the two languages. Meaning-structures projected by particular lexical choices, made in both text and translation, were found to be both complex and over-determined. It was thus with a view to unpacking such structures that we sought to apply a flexible, heuristically orientated model of componential analysis, based upon the identification of 'core', 'secondary' and 'tertiary' features. In each case, the bracketing of such features was formulated in order to facilitate interpretative clarity rather than descriptive exhaustiveness. Our inspiration might thus be said to have been more of a hermeneutic than of a scientific order.

Eugene Nida had, of course, attempted to introduce an unrevised version of Katz and Fodor's generativist-based model of componential analysis in *Toward a Science of Translating*[i]. However, his examples seemed to be more elucidatory of the model itself than any sustained sequence of translation practice, and it was hard to see exactly how he

intended the former to be applied to the latter. Moreover, the inevitable drawback with any kind of componential analysis of individual items of lexis would appear to be that the holistic dimension of the text from which they are drawn threatens to become irretrievably obscured by such an atomistic focus. Indeed it was precisely with such a drawback in mind that we sought to factor in as many thematic considerations as possible into our own individual analyses, frequently pointing out the links between particular semantic features and more general isotopic trends within the text of *L'Assommoir* (such as 'promiscuity' and 'alcoholism'). In this respect, Greimas' concept of isotopy[ii] proved to be a useful one upon several occasions, enabling us to inscribe specific feature-clusters into more general patterns of recurrence.

With regard to future research, the potential for cross-fertilisation between Lexical Semantics and Translation Studies remains considerable, despite the turn away from linguistic research in the latter discipline in recent years. For example, within the tradition of French scholarship, François Rastier's 'interpretative semantics' (*'sémantique interprétative'*[iii]) furnishes an interesting model of the way in which lexico-semantic content interacts with discursive co-text and context. Thus far, however, little has been done to apply this paradigm to the field of translation. In Britain, D.A. Cruse's recent work in the field of lexical semantics has furnished an equally context-sensitive model with respect to the wide variety of individual meaning-structures composing any given lexicon[iv]. Indeed, possible applications of such a model to descriptive, corpus-based studies of translation such as our own are legion.

In the domain of comparative syntax, Jacqueline Guillemin-Flescher's *Syntaxe comparée du français et de l'anglais*[v] remains both a seminal and a dominant influence upon the development of this field with respect to French and English. By virtue of its sheer breadth of corpus documentation and range of methodological exploration, it continues to provide the present-day analyst with pointers and clues as to potentially interesting areas of research. For example, in our own study, we found its treatment of Adjunct placement and intercalation particularly illuminating. In France, work broadly inspired by Guillemin-Flescher's comparativist paradigm continues to be produced at regular intervals within various English departments throughout the country. In England, however, researchers have perhaps been a little more tentative in producing comparative,

corpus-based work of any scale. It is to be hoped that our own efforts have contributed to the remedy of such neglect.

Unfortunately, it would perhaps be difficult to envisage any wholesale transplantation of Guillemin-Flescher's conceptual framework into the English-language tradition due to the highly specific, intellectual context in which it was developed (i.e. under the tutelage of the formalist-orientated, French, cognitive semanticist, Antoine Culioli). It is for this reason that we chose to adopt (albeit loosely) a more 'native' paradigm of syntactical analysis in our own explorations, i.e. the 'functional grammar' model formulated by M.A.K. Halliday[vi]. Indeed, there was a strong precedent for this within the British-based tradition of Translation Studies, much work having already been done using a specifically functionalist paradigm (most notably by Basil Hatim and Ian Mason, Peter Fawcett and Mona Baker[vii]). Most of this work, however, limited its application of Halliday's model to problems concerning the translation of discursive register. Although by no means an illegitimate project in itself, this nevertheless left many areas opened up by Halliday's work practically untouched. It was thus with a view to exploring fresh terrain that we sought to apply a functionalist mapping of syntax, transitivity and theme to particular lexical sequences. In doing so, we were able to elucidate the way in which the thematic emphasis and communicative dynamism of these sequences often subtly shifted in the passage from text to translation. This kind of analysis also threw up some interesting insights about the way in which figurative structures of meaning are often syntactically embedded in the source text, and thus resistant to easy transfer from one language to another. Clearly, more work utilising Halliday's notion of 'grammatical metaphor' might be envisaged in this field.

In Chapter Four, we also attempted to open up new areas of research in the domain of prose rhythm and translation. Although this area has been frequently explored within the tradition of French Stylistics[viii], it has nevertheless remained singularly neglected in English-speaking, literary critical circles (practitioners therein preferring to devote their attentions to metrical verse). Our own effort to set up a comparative model in terms of which the stress-organised prosodic patterns of English can be compared with the syllabically-organised curves of melodic cadence in French might well seem a little primitive or reductive to some. Nevertheless, it is to be hoped that our use of this model

has succeeded in raising some stimulating questions as well as introducing one or two new analytical concepts (e.g. 'introductory frame', 'elaborative tail'). In the future, more research in this area might be envisaged focusing upon the way in which the reader actually cognises the shape and rhythm of the written sentence in the act of reading. Moreover, such research might well lead to conclusions departing considerably from those that would have been drawn using a phonetics-based paradigm such as the one we have adopted here.

Our reflection upon Zola's use of colloquial language, and the rendering of such language in English translation (Chapter Five), almost certainly has a longer pedigree in Translation Studies than our explorations in prose rhythm. Indeed, the problem posed by the translation of argot and dialect from one language into another might well be said to constitute one of the fundamental research domains of the whole discipline. Nevertheless, in our view, the basic conceptual parameters informing this domain could still be profitably sharpened up and refined in future studies, with more attention being paid perhaps to the potential differences obtaining between genuine argot, dialect, and more loosely defined, colloquial discourse. Research in this field, of course, remains perennially tied to the particular, with much diligent burrowing in dictionaries of argot and slang to be recommended far above any bald theoretical statement of impossibility.

Chapter Five in our thesis also quoted extensively from the stated and written intentions of the translators themselves with respect to the translation of argot. The reliability of such declared intentions in relation to what actually happens on the written page, of course, remains notoriously suspect, although by no means to be dismissed entirely out of hand. An explicitly stated *skopos* of the translation under study almost certainly needs to be factored into its analysis at some stage in the proceedings, albeit without undue emphasis being placed upon the determining weight of any one motivational factor when breaking down composite instances of translation choice. Moreover, much work has already been undertaken in Translation Studies with respect to the norms and values informing the commissioning of particular translations in particular cultures, and this tradition of research will undoubtedly continue to thrive. Although our own focus in this thesis has been more upon micro-stylistic choices, we do not see any

fundamental incompatibility between such a focus and more socio-historical kinds of research (such as those conducted, for example, by Lawrence Venuti[ix]).

In recent years, much work has been undertaken in linguistic research relating to large databases (or corpora) of information. One might also envisage a similar treatment of our own corpus, with the relevant software being able to supply interesting statistical information about, say, the relative incidence of 'imperfect – preterite' transpositions in relation to other variants (e.g. 'imperfect' – 'WOULD + base verb'). Such statistical trends would, of course, still need to be interpretatively evaluated if their full significance were to be yielded.

Finally, it is to be hoped that the Zola specialists reading this thesis might find pointers for their own future research. In many ways, the methodological template for stylistic studies of *L'Assommoir* was set by Jean-Louis Vissière's 1958 essay 'L'Art de la phrase dans *L'Assommoir*'[x]. Indeed, this short but illuminating reflection upon Zola's classic was perhaps the first to highlight many of the issues that we have been directly concerned with in this thesis, such as the extended use of *style indirect libre* and *écriture artiste* motifs throughout the novel. In particular, his treatment of Zola's use of Adjunct intercalation as a means of breaking up and intensifying the natural rhythm of the sentence proved to be both suggestive and fruitful with reference to our own treatment of prosodic patterns in *L'Assommoir*. In the period initially following Vissière's article, stylistic research within the field of Zola studies was perhaps a little slow to get off the ground. However, by the nineteen-eighties, work upon Zola's use of image and metaphor had begun to proliferate, and now represents a burgeoning sub-domain within the field of Zola studies as a whole[xi]. Moreover, all the signs are that this is likely to continue. Looking to the future, one might envisage more work upon the figurative torques and twists typically texturing his prose style, and the ways in which these articulate with the wider literary paradigm in which he was writing.

These figurative twists and torques, of course, constitute vital threads of what we have defined as literary texture. This latter notion, which is an absolutely integral one for our thesis, can also be seen to embrace phenomena such as lexical marking, isotopic inscription, connotation, prose rhythm, rhetorical and pragmatic textual effects, free indirect style, nominalisation, and transitivity. Accordingly, when we suggest that the

literary translator should strive toward a certain fidelity to literary texture, what we are essentially recommending is that he should, by turns, remain sensitive to all of these features as the work of translation proceeds. This is not, however, to insist that he should reproduce these features in exactly the same way as they are to be found in the source text: a practice which would almost certainly result in textual obscurity rather than textual fidelity. Rather, what is to be hoped is that the target text might be seen to be doing the same kind of textual work as the source text, and in ways which become readily accessible to the target reader (provided that the latter is prepared to do a little interpretative work at appropriate points in the reading process). In certain instances, this might simply involve the duplication of a clear piece of lexical marking: the head item in '*ses pétons nus*', for example, is undoubtedly more convincingly rendered by the similarly marked '*tootsies*' than by the unmarked '*feet*'. In other, more textually complex instances, a carefully crafted ambiguity or pun might need to be similarly crafted in the target text: Tancock's rendering of the predicate structure '*il crevait d'aise*' as '*he was thrilled to death*', for example, perfectly duplicates the sense of defeated collocational expectation generated by Zola's original text, albeit without resorting to semantically equivalent lexical items. Similarly, his use of the compound nominal form, '*sun-dust*' to render '*une poussière de soleil*' draws effectively upon a native linguistic resource (i.e. nominal compounding) in such a way as to preserve the density of the original formulation, despite the necessary shift in syntactical structure. In this way, Tancock successfully manages to render, not only the 'peculiar aroma, or consistency, or texture'[xii] of the original literary text, but also something of its power to 'shock slightly'[xiii], to disrupt conventional categories and collocations of thought in the process of creating a uniquely wrought, fictional universe.

Our aim in this thesis, of course, has not been to demonstrate that Leonard Tancock was, in some way, the best of our seven translators, but rather to project a clear and coherent ethics of literary translation practice. In this sense, our work can be seen very much as a continuation of the reflection inaugurated by Antoine Berman in the nineteen-eighties, albeit one conceived in far more empirical terms. In particular, it is to be hoped that we have been able to elucidate some of the diverse ways in which the literary translator might seek to remain faithful to the mode of signification embodied by

the original. Indeed, in most cases, we found that such fidelity is likely to be achieved through a virtuous interaction of different parameters and constraints. Such interaction implies both a sustained attention to the lexis, syntax and rhythm of the source text, and an unfailing awareness of the signifying potential inherent in the target language. The essential modality of the literary translator is thus to reconcile apparently disjunctive possibilities within a higher, hermeneutically executed synthesis: not so much 'source-orientated' or 'target-orientated', 'formal' or 'dynamic' but rather both at one and the same time. Janus-faced and resourceful, the perennial squarer of circles, artisan and artist! *Traductor trabajador*.

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[i] Eugene A. Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating* (Leiden: Brill, 1964). The original model was, of course, outlined in the seminal paper by Jerrold Fodor and Jerry Katz, 'The Structure of a Semantic Theory', *Language*, 39 (1963), 170-210.

[ii] For a detailed elucidation of this concept, see Algirdas-Julien Greimas, *Sémantique structurale* (Paris: Larousse, 1966).

[iii] François Rastier, *La Sémantique interprétative* (Paris: PUF, 1987).

[iv] D.A.Cruse, *Lexical Semantics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

[v] Jacqueline Guillemin-Flescher, *Syntaxe comparée du français et de l'anglais* (Gap: Ophrys, 1981).

[vi] M.A.K. Halliday, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (London: Longman, 1983).

[vii] Key works in this area include: Basil Hatim and Ian Mason, *Discourse and the Translator* (London: Routledge, 1990); Basil Hatim and Ian Mason, *The Translator as Communicator* (London: Routledge, 1997); Peter Fawcett, *Translation and Language: linguistic theories explained* (Manchester: Saint Jerome, 1997); Mona Baker, *In Other Words: a coursebook on translation* (London: Routledge, 1992). For an earlier, notable and influential contribution in this area, see Juliane House, *A Model For Translation Quality Assessment* (Tübingen: Narr, 1977).

[viii] See Chapter 4 for bibliographical details of some of the more notable contributions in this area.

[ix] See Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: a History of Translation* (London: Routledge, 1995).

[x] Jean-Louis Vissière, 'L'Art de la phrase dans *L'Assommoir*', *Cahiers naturalistes*, 11 (1958), 455-464.

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[xii] Leonard Tancock, 'Some Problems of Style in Translation from French', reprinted in A.H.Smith, *Aspects of Translation* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1957), p. 29.

[xiii] See Chapter 2, p. 82, for the full quotation from Tancock concerning the need to retain something of the 'slightly strange or unidiomatic', to 'shock slightly' when translating a literary work.

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