EVALUATING THE APPROPRIATENESS OF A TRANSLATION. A PRAGMATIC APPLICATION OF RELEVANCE THEORY

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Resumen

En este trabajo analizamos dos traducciones al español de dos fragmentos de Lord Arthur Savile's Crime para mostrar cómo la teoría de la Relevancia puede determinar cuál es la traducción adecuada de soluciones recorridas en la traducción pragmática. Para ello empleamos varios de los instrumentos de análisis propuestos por Gutt en Translation and Relevance. Los textos citados no sólo se eligieron por ser potenciales "situaciones de comunicación secundarias" entre otras conclusiones, podemos afirmar que uno de los dos grupos de traducciones estudia es un caso eficiente y efectivo que el otro en términos de la teoría de la Relevancia, y que, en principio, la "traducción directa" de Gutt se puede definir con bastante seguridad en el caso de obras literarias, siempre y cuando la presencia de semántica interpretativa completa no significando que una traducción y su original deben compartir las mismas claves comunicativas.

Palabras clave: teoría de la Relevancia, traducción, evaluación pragmática de la adecuación

Abstract

This paper analyses two passages from two Spanish translations of Wilde's Lord Arthur Savile's Crime in order to evaluate their degree of appropriateness. The analytical tools used in this application of Relevance theory are based on Gutt's research on the subject as explained in Translation and Relevance. The passages in question were chosen because they seem very likely to produce 'secondary communication situations'. The net result of this analysis is that it makes it possible to argue for one of the two sets of translations under scrutiny as other being less effective and efficient in terms of the principle of relevance. A further conclusion is that in the case of literary works, Gutt's direct translation may be quite safely advocated, with the proviso that the presumption of complete interpretative resemblance in the originally envisaged context should not imply that translations have to share the communicative clues of the original.

Key words: Relevance theory, translation, pragmatic evaluation of appropriateness

Résumé

Ce travail analyse deux traductions à l'espagnol de deux textes appartenant au récit d'Oscar Wilde Lord Arthur Savile's Crime. Notre analyse en est de signaler quelle est la façon de solutionner quelques erreurs fondamentalement pragmatiques. Pour ce faire en employant plusieurs outils d'analyse que Gutt nous a signalés dans Translation and Relevance. Les textes cités ont été choisis parce qu'ils peuvent produire des "situations de communication secondaires". Le résultat de notre analyse fait possible d'affirmer que l'un des deux groupes de traductions étudiés est plus efficace et efficace à l'œuvre du point de vue de la théorie de la Pertinence. Une autre conclusion est en principe que, en ce qui concerne les œuvres de littérature, on peut définir avec assez de sécurité la direct translation de Gutt, avec la condition de que la similitude d'interprétation complète présente ne signifie qu'une traduction et son original doivent partager les mêmes clés de communication

Mots clés: Théorie de la Pertinence, traduction, évaluation pragmatique de la détermination

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1. Introduction

This paper is intended to bring out the advantages of Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson's *Relevance Theory* (1986) as an evaluating method for judging the degree of appropriateness enjoyed by different translations of an English literary work into Spanish. My notion of appropriateness will be a technical one, although it will be geared to the underlying principles of Relevance Theory, one of which is, broadly speaking, that in processing information people try to balance costs and rewards — they automatically process each new item of information in a context in which it yields a maximal contextual effect for a minimum cost in processing (Blakemore 1992:31-2).

Accordingly, this introduction is followed by an explanation and discussion vis-à-vis translation of such concepts as **context**, **contextual effect**, **cognitive environment** and others that underpin any application of the principle of relevance. This account is influenced by pragmatics in seeing language-use as shaped to differing degrees by the intentions and cognitive environments of the individuals involved, here Wilde and two translators as well as readers from different times and cultures.

Part of the present paper will be centred on the identification of the constituent elements that make a translation efficient, effective, and appropriate in the eyes of Relevance Theory; that is, the identification of the characteristics a text meant to be a translation should embody in order to reach levels of efficiency, effectiveness, and appropriateness on a par with those of the text in the original. The translations that will be analysed in the following pages are two passages from two Spanish translations of Oscar Wilde's short story *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*. The writers of the Spanish translations are B. Montuenga (henceforth abbreviated to BM) in the *Alhambra* edition (see References), and Julio Gómez de la Serna (JG below) in the *Aguilar* edition.

2. The conceptual framework of a relevance-theory approach to translation

Since most of the following is an application of Relevance Theory to the comprehension of the reasons why certain segments of text may be particularly difficult to translate and to the development of solutions thereon, it is important to adopt an analytical method that combines practical, corpus-based insights into the subject with the theoretical framework designed by Sperber and Wilson (1986). As far as this paper is concerned, that method is based on the results of Ernst-August Gutt's research and personal concern over the theoretical foundations of translation as they are explained and discussed in his study *Translation and Relevance* (1991). The subtitle of this book, *Cognition and Context*, emphasizes the significant role which the notion of **context** plays in the analysis of whatever text that comes under the grip of translation.
Viewed as instances of text in Hallidayan terms, the passages from *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* given in the Appendices may be analysed as communicative events, or simply as constituent parts of the relatively large communicative event Oscar Wilde shaped by means of that short story. Such a segment of text as Lady Windermere's comments about François, the cook at Bentinck House, and a certain General Boulanger (see Appendix 1) may be considered to be capable of triggering a process of linguistic interaction on which situational factors like the profile (status, education, etc) of the target reader groups of the source language text (ST) or the background against which the publishing of *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* took place can bear to a significant extent.

The acts of ST production and reception are important considerations. To start with, they are the arena, as it were, where the two correlated vantagepoints that are involved in the model of verbal communication put forward by Sperber and Wilson, *ostensive-inferential communication*, may best be seen in action. Secondly, they also help to bridge the gap between traditional, *broad* conceptualizations of context, and the *narrow* sense Sperber and Wilson impose on it.

According to the authors of *Relevance*, the nature of the communicator's behaviour is *ostensive*, whereas the nature of comprehension is *inferential* (1986:65). Besides being a sociological event or semiotic encounter of a literary nature, the text of *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* is subject both to *ostension* and to *inference*, ostension on the part of the communicator, Oscar Wilde, and inference on the part of his readership. Wilde not only selected meanings, but also the lexicogrammatical devices necessary to convey them. Further, he may be expected to have laid them out against the background of his potential reader's *cognitive environment*, which is the whole set of facts 'that he can perceive or infer: all the facts that are manifest to him' (Sperber and Wilson 1986:39). An individual's total cognitive environment results from the interaction of his cognitive abilities with his physical environment, and therefore comprises both facts and *assumptions*¹, which may be manifest to an individual, whether true or false.

In *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*, Oscar Wilde, as any other communicator, can be thought to have behaved ostensively so long as he set about making manifest to his readership his intention to make manifest a basic layer of information. But, as Sperber and Wilson remark (1986:50), 'recognising the intention behind the ostension is necessary for efficient information processing'. This was the English late nineteenth-century reader's prime task; therefore, the translator should also ensure that the Spanish late twentieth-century reader of Wilde in translation is able to recognize the writer's intention (known as *communicative intention*) to modify his cognitive environment, and thus put a layer of information across (informative intention). If a translation prevents the Spanish reader from recognizing Wilde's informative intentions, it can be written off as

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¹ Sperber and Wilson define assumptions as 'thoughts [i.e conceptual representations, not sensory representations or emotional states] treated by the individual as representations of the actual world (as opposed to beliefs, desires, or representations of representations)' (1986:2).
inappropriate. Gómez de la Serna's rendering of the passage from Lord Arthur Savile's Crime that is concerned with Mr Podger's cheque, at first for a hundred pounds, but finally for a hundred guineas (see Appendix 2), is a case in point. As I shall explain later on, Wilde uses a very subtle linguistic and cultural mechanism therein to brand the palmist as a mean person, a miser. Such is the layer of information (an instance of literary characterization) that Wilde seems to have meant to convey. Yet the translation is not felicitous at all since it eliminates both the implicated layer of information and the expressive artistry of the writer, as though there were no ostensive behaviour in that segment of text. As a result, the reader's cognitive environment is neither modified nor enriched, and if it is, this takes place to a rather lesser degree, and besides not along the same lines that Wilde designed. In any case, all of this should serve to warn translators not to overlook 'some essential aspects of implicit verbal communication', as Sperber and Wilson refer to them:

(...) what is communicated by an utterance is a speaker's meaning, which in the case of an assertion is a set of assumptions. One of these assumptions is explicitly expressed; the others (if any) are implicitly conveyed, or implicated. The only difference between the explicit content of an utterance and its implicatures is supposed to be that the explicit content is decoded, while the implicatures are inferred (1986:56)

Consequently, a segment of text is usually difficult to translate whenever the stimulus produced out of ostensive behaviour is made up of easy-to-decode and barely vague explicatures (the explicit content), together with much vaguer, inference-dependent implicatures. Overlooking any of these meaningful components or unduly distorting their weight in communicative events such as those given in the Appendices is likely to produce inappropriate translations.

As regards a theory of communication based on the existence of a principle of relevance, it is important to distinguish between cognitive environment and context. The difference arises from the observation that there is every indication that individuals engaged in verbal communication cannot and do not attend to everything included in their cognitive environment, and that consequently there is something that makes them attend to some things rather than others, and thus make certain assumptions. This is the most characteristic phenomenon of the comprehension process, which Sperber and Wilson describe in the following terms:

As a discourse proceeds, the hearer [and for that matter, the reader] retrieves or constructs and then processes a number of assumptions. These form a gradually changing background against which new information is processed. Interpreting an utterance involves more than merely identifying the assumption explicitly expressed: it crucially involves working out the consequences of adding this assumption to a set of assumptions that have themselves already been processed (1986:118).
The 'gradually changing background' of already processed assumptions 'against which new information is processed' constitutes the context as Sperber and Wilson view it. The context is, therefore, a variable portion of an individual's cognitive environment, and further has a specific function, which I shall briefly describe below. Note that Sperber and Wilson, who speak in a cognitive rather than sociological vein, narrow down the meaning of context away from the generality of, for example, Malinowski's cultural context or Firth's context of situation. Relevance being concerned with the study of communication, Sperber and Wilson define the context to one of the two parties of participants in a communicative event, and to one of the various classes of things that might be given as an answer to the question 'What is communicated?'. That class of things is made up of assumptions, and the vantage point in communication with which context is associated may be that of a hearer processing an assumption explicitly asserted by a speaker. Accordingly, context comes under inference/comprehension, and is defined as 'essentially, a subset of the individual's old assumptions, with which the new assumptions combine to yield a variety of contextual effects' (1986:132).

The subset or context must comprise an adequately selected set of background assumptions in the memory of the deductive device (e.g. a hearer or reader). Accordingly, Sperber and Wilson's context is restricted to the individual's cognitive representations of elements present in the context of situation and culture, and not to the elements per se, and, unlike a cognitive environment, does not include all of the individual's 'old assumptions' (i.e. previous to the processing of new information), but only those that are capable of combining with new assumptions generating contextual effects. That is the reason why Sperber and Wilson speak of an 'adequately selected' (1986:138) set of background assumptions when they comment on the nature of contexts.

A context has a passive function insofar as it is the subset of our existing assumptions with which each new assumption we form is expected to interact in order to yield what Sperber and Wilson call a contextual effect. This concept is central to the understanding and application of their Relevance Theory. 'To modify and improve a context is to have some effect on that context - but not just any modification will do,' Sperber and Wilson point out (1986:109). This simple idea underpins the concept of contextual effect, the modification or improvement of a context out of a deduction 'based on the union of new information (P) and old information (C), [i.e.] a contextualisation of (P) in (C)' (1986:108). (C) standing for context, there are three ways in which a new item of information may have a contextual effect on (C):

1. It may allow the derivation of a contextual implication [a context-dependent conclusion]
2. It may provide further evidence for, and hence strengthen, an existing assumption.
3. It may contradict an existing assumption (Blakemore 1992:30)

The selection of a particular context is determined by the search for relevance, an item of

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information being relevant in a given context when it has a contextual effect of the types mentioned above in that context (Sperber and Wilson 1986:122). Nevertheless, as the authors themselves acknowledge, a merely classificatory definition of relevance, which will only capture the intuition that, to be relevant in a context, an assumption must connect up with that context in some way (via contextual implications, strengthenings, or contradictions), is not operative. To start with, it does not help to clarify the value of this other intuition:

The weaker the contextual effects of an assumption, the less willing we are to call it relevant, even though it can be argued that, if an assumption has any contextual effect at all, then technically it is relevant (Sperber and Wilson 1986:122).

This argument has important implications for the assessment of translations, since it may happen that a Spanish rendering of a dialogue in English, as is the case of the passage of the guineas, manages to convey contextual effects as does the text in the original, but then they are so weak that only technically can they be considered relevant. Would such a translation be appropriate?

Secondly, the above definition of relevance does not take account of the fact that 'contextual effects are brought about by mental processes, [which], like all biological processes, involve a certain effort, a certain expenditure of energy' (Sperber and Wilson 1986:124). For this reason, a definition of relevance will be well-grounded provided it reflects the fact that it is a comparative concept, an important condition for evaluation purposes as those involved in the assessment of translations. Ultimately, Sperber and Wilson adopt an extent-conditions format which presents the following definition of relevance:

\[
\text{Extent condition 1: an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that its contextual effects in this context are large.}
\]

\[
\text{Extent condition 2: an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that the effort required to process it in this context is small (1986:125).}
\]

This definition of relevance accords with the general aim in information processing mentioned at the beginning of the paper: 'to recover as many contextual effects as possible for the least cost in processing. That is, the aim is to balance costs and rewards' (Blakemore 1992:4). In linguistic interaction it is this communicative goal that determines the extension of a context in the search for relevance, and therefore may also constitute a criterion to judge the appropriateness of different translations of a certain text. Accordingly, if a translation produces fewer contextual effects than another, and further they are subject to greater processing effort, it does not seem unreasonable to discard it. Likewise, if a translation brings about more contextual effects than those intended by the author of the ST,
let alone greater processing effort, such a translation may just as well be put aside. Sperber and Wilson point out (1986:49) that information processing in general will only be undertaken in the expectation of some reward because it involves effort. Since the reward for processing the information contained in a translation is also gained or received by dint of contextual effects, the term effective may be used to refer to a translation that complies with extent condition 1, and efficient if it complies with extent condition 2.

Finally, it is important to note that neither the notion of relevance nor the ostensive-inferential model of communication enunciated by Sperber and Wilson are meant to act as a necessary safeguard against failures to carry out successful verbal communication. For one thing, 'ostensive communication requires the participation of the recipient in the form of appropriate cognitive behaviour, and in particular of attention' (Sperber and Wilson 1986:154), which may not take place, and for another, any communicator can get hold of the wrong end of the stick and mistake the basis for his assumption that his utterance is worth processing (cf Blakemore 1992:37), which on the whole implies that communication takes place at a risk.

As a result, Sperber and Wilson prefer to speak in terms of presumption of relevance concerning every act of overt communication; that is, what speakers or writers really do is to presume that their utterances will be processed to an adequate effect and with minimally necessary effort. It is these two minor presumptions together that determine the level of optimal relevance, the presumption that the utterance will have adequate contextual effects for the minimum necessary processing (Blakemore 1992:36). Thus, the principle of relevance is the principle that gives rise to the presumption of optimal relevance, inasmuch as 'every act of ostensive communication communicates the presumption of its own optimal relevance' (Sperber and Wilson 1986:158). This formulation of the principle of relevance has significant implications for the assessment of translations. Seeing that communicators do not always succeed in being optimally relevant, but rather intend their audiences to believe that they have achieved optimal relevance, as Sperber and Wilson point out (1986:158-9), it might be possible to argue for a dubious translation by stating that the presumption of optimal relevance suffices for making it worth reading or simply reliable. However, the above researchers themselves argue against such an attenuated criterion.

Ostensive communication must be seen as communicating more than a mere presumption of attempted relevance. The addressee may be willing to believe that the communicator has tried very hard to be relevant, but if he also believes that [the communicator] has totally failed, he will not pay

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5 Although Sperber and Wilson use the terms efficiency and long-term cognitive efficiency in connection with the acts of reaching goals and improving one's knowledge of the world as much as possible given the available resources' (1986:46-7), I think that the common dictionary definitions of the adjectives effective, producing the desired result, and efficient, working well, quickly, and without waste, make these terms fairly self-explanatory, and therefore in the assessment of translations I shall associate effectiveness with contextual effects (e.g., improvements that happen when old assumptions act on new ones due to rhetorical purpose), and efficiency with processing effort (i.e., processing without waste).
attention to [him]. So (...) a communicator must intend to make it manifest to the addressee that [his] ostensive stimulus is relevant enough (Sperber and Wilson 1986:159; emphasis my own).

For these reasons, the translator should start by making his ostensive stimuli relevant enough. In order to arrive at the appropriate level of sufficiency for the relevance of those basically lexicogrammatical ostensive stimuli, the translator should attend to:

i. the possible contextual resources of the writer of the ST,
ii. the way in which information is made accessible, and
iii. the reader's processing abilities or intellectual awareness.

3. Relevance theory at work on two particular segments of two different translations

This section is concerned with the analysis of two segments of text from Lord Arthur Savile’s Crime alongside two Spanish versions of them in order to exemplify what mistranslation would amount to from the standpoint of Relevance Theory. Therefore, I make a comprehensive use of the terminological and conceptual tools described in the preceding section.

3.1. Coping with mismatches in contextual information

The passage that contains Lady Windermere's comments about François, the cook at Bentinck House, and a certain General Boulanger is especially amenable to the principles of Relevance Theory because in translation it may give rise to a secondary communication situation. By means of this concept Gutt tries to underscore the importance of the possible contextual resources of the writer of an ST:

For communication to be successful the text or utterance produced must be inferentially combined with the right, that is, speaker-envisaged, contextual assumptions. Let us call communication situations where this condition is fulfilled primary communication situations. However, it can happen - for various reasons - that in interpreting a text an audience may fail to use the contextual assumptions intended by the communicator and perhaps use others instead. Such situations we shall refer to as secondary communication situations, and in most cases they will lead to misinterpretations (Gutt 1991:73).

In my opinion, among the 'various reasons' or 'situations' Gutt alludes to is the
existence of readerships that usually have access to some literary works only in translation and then many decades after the book first came out in the original. In addition, apart from aspects of medium and time, such other factors as number, education, and status can impinge on the characteristics of the readerships of ST and TT (target or receptor language text), with the result that they may differ from one another to a large extent. *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* and its Spanish translations are a case in point.

With that short story, Oscar Wilde may be expected to have been writing for a small if well-educated and surely somewhat specialised public. *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* came out in 1887, although it was published again in 1891. Given that *The Portrait of Dorian Grey* also came out that year, and that his first society comedy, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, was not produced until 1892, his volumes of stories and fairy tales may well be supposed to have been overshadowed to a large extent. It is self-evident that there will be plenty of differences between that English 'audience' and a Spanish readership of the late twentieth century, and even between the first British readers of the short story and those of today.

In the case of BM's translation, the publishers themselves inform the reader about their motivations and intentions, and also let out the type of readership they expect for their edition:

Consciente (…) de la escasez de materiales adecuados para el aprendizaje de las técnicas de traducción, EDITORIAL ALHAMBRA pone a disposición de los estudiantes interesados en perfeccionarse en la traducción del inglés al español (…) su colección de TEXTOS BILINGÜES. Se trata de una serie de obras en lengua inglesa (…) con el texto paralelo en castellano, cuya traducción se ha verificado en función de su carácter didáctico (Wilde 1985: back cover, emphasis my own).

Accordingly, this translation seems to take account of the reader's processing abilities or intellectual awareness, and since it is designed to assist the student in perfecting his translation technique, why not presume that it will contain skilful solutions to difficult passages, to the problems posed sometimes by the sharp differences in cognitive environment between the readerships?

With regard to the possibility of a secondary communication situation, it strikes me as rather probable that the Spanish late twentieth-century reader of the translation will not hit on the right contextual assumptions intended by Oscar Wilde, the primary communicator. It will be necessary for that reader to make use of the right context because the disambiguation of linguistically ambiguous expressions, among other things (Gutt 1991:73), depends directly on the adequate selection of a set of background assumptions. Context is also needed to determine whether the propositional forms of an utterance like the extract in Appendix 1 are intended as explicatures, or whether they serve only to convey implicatures.

'Quiet' in 'I do wish General Boulanger would keep quiet' is a linguistically ambiguous lexical item, especially if its sentence is removed from the passage in which it
appears. In what sense did Wilde mean to use the adjective? [WITH LITTLE NOISE] or [WITHOUT UNWANTED ACTIVITY OR EXCITEMENT]? Or perhaps both? Curiously enough, BM opts for the first sense, callado, and JG, for the second one, quieto, thus eliminating the ambiguity of the expression in the original. The person the qualifier refers to, 'General Boulanger', also poses problems of ambiguity. On the one hand, it is not difficult to recognize that Wilde as communicator intended to convey the following explicature or analytic implication:

(1) (a) Input: (X - General Boulanger - Y)
    (b) Output: (X - a person in command of an army or other fighting force, whose surname is Boulanger - Y)

This simple deductive rule constitutes a possible logical entry for GENERAL BOULANGER. The trouble is that such rules as the above apply automatically, regardless of context (Gutt 1991:134). Moreover, since logical entries are assumed to be 'small, finite and relatively constant across speakers and times' (Sperber and Wilson 1986:88; emphasis my own), and in addition there have been generals (at least in Western Europe) for centuries, the logical entry of GENERAL BOULANGER will not prove a stumbling block to the translator, but it will not help him to disambiguate the meaning of quiet.

On the other hand, the following alternative logical entry for GENERAL BOULANGER is not so straightforward. It pivots on having previous experience of the genre of text in which its sentence appears:

(2) (a) Input: (X - General Boulanger - Y)
    [in paradigmatic association with other fictional people present at Lady Windermere's reception such as Mr Podgers, Lady Jedburgh, Sir Thomas, the Duchess of Paisley, etc, now attending to the palmist's reading Lord Arthur's hand]
    (b) Output: (X - a fictional male character who is not attending to the palmist's performance, but is somewhere else in Bentinck House - Y)

In this inferential rule the analytic implication proper would be male character, whereas, taken as a whole, the output of the inferential rule would amount to a contextual implication, since it does not follow only from the propositional form symbolized as the string of concepts (X - General Boulanger - Y), unlike a person in command of an army or other fighting force, whose surname is Boulanger. Now it is the inferential combination of the propositional form and the context (as supplied by the preceding co-text) that produces the implication, and therefore it is contextual or context-dependent. This contextual implication would not be difficult to render in translation because it does not arise from Wilde's possible contextual resources as given by his first potential readers' and his own cognitive environment. The implication simply depends on any reader's processing ability to notice that no character by the name of Boulanger appears in the text of the story either before or after Lady Windermere's uttering 'I do wish ...', whether explicitly or
implicitly. Obviously, the translator need not show mastery therein. However, it remains to be seen whether Oscar Wilde really intended to express that the hostess is annoyed with a guest called 'General Boulanger' because, say, although he has not been a party to Mr Podger's performance, he may have been near enough and talking loud enough to annoy the busy hostess, causing her to exclaim 'I do wish ...' on purpose.

In my view, the above contextual implication, which comprises a set of new assumptions, constitutes a contextual effect, a context-dependent conclusion. In addition, the effort required to process it in the context is small. However, its existence is not enough: when balancing costs and rewards as regards the segment of text about François and the general, it seems that the rewards can be enhanced without raising the costs excessively, and that, consequently, the relevance of the new assumptions can be surpassed. How can this be achieved?

In the text of the passage in question there is every indication that 'General Boulanger' is a subtle allusion to an extra-textual, real General Boulanger\(^3\), a readily accessible component of Oscar Wilde's and his original readership's cognitive environment. Roughly speaking, what Wilde seems to have intended to communicate (i.e. his informative intention) in this segment of text may be described as follows:

\(3\) General Boulanger, a Frenchman 'contemporary' with Lady Windermere, annoys her because he is missing about and rousing people to revolt; as a result, a (presumed) fellow countryman of his who lives in London, François, the chef of Bentinck House, is very agitated about politics; as a result, his cookery will probably be harmed and his excellent soup may have an undesirable taste, as a result, François' soup being the last dish left for supper, Lady Windermere's guests will be most displeased; as a result, this may not create a very good impression of her last reception, one of Lady Windermere's best nights, a thought which is sure to horrify the hostess; and finally the worst (for a Wildean person): Boulanger's mundane deeds are marred the beauty of a piece of culinary art, François' excellent soup, which in turn affects the artist, the patron, the public, and so on.

If it is allowed that anything resembling the above string of implicated assumptions constitutes Wilde's most probable informative intention in the passage, how does he

\[\text{\footnotesize\textsuperscript{3} Georges Boulanger (1837-1891) was a French general, minister of war and political figure, who led a brief but influential authoritarian movement that threatened to topple the Third Republic in the 1880s. He began to take part in politics under theegis of Georges Clemenceau and the Radical party. After 1887 his life became eventful and even close to romantic fiction.}

In January 1889 Boulanger was returned as deputy for Paris by an overwhelming majority. When the election results were announced, wildly shouting masses of his supporters urged him to take over the government immediately. Boulanger declined and spent the evening with his mistress instead. To his friends' astonishment, Boulanger fled from Paris on April 3, going first to Brussels and then to London. In 1891 Boulanger committed suicide in Brussels at the cemetery of bones over the grave of his mistress (Encyclopaedia Britannica [Micropandia vol 3] 1974 421)\]
manage to convey it? In other words, what signs are there that he is behaving ostensively, that he not only aims to fulfil an informative intention, but also to make it mutually manifest that he has that informative intention?

The answer to these questions is connected with the *stylistic dimension of communication*, which is 'of special interest to literary studies' (Gutt 1991:123). It seems that, if the translator is faced with the necessity of reconstructing the historical, cultural and sociological background in which the piece of literature in question was written, and does so to arrive at what the original author really purposed to communicate, he should rely on the stylistic properties of the original, not because of their 'intrinsic value', as Gutt remarks, but because 'they provide *clues* that guide the audience to the interpretation intended by the communicator' (1991:127). This is the reason why stylistic properties, to which Gutt refers as *communicative clues*, are worth preserving, but not at all costs, since this might amount to a return to the form of the message as the focus in translating. The translation theories that aim for the preservation of communicative clues fall under the general heading of *direct* translation (cf. Gutt 1991:161-186).

The main ostensive, communicative clue Wilde uses in the passage about François and the general is *syntagmatic association*. 'Quiet in 'I do wish General Boulanger would keep quiet' is part of Lady Windermere's emphatic ('do wish') expression of her dissatisfaction ('would') with the present and a wish for change in the future, for the French minister of war's political manoeuvres are making François feel anxious and nervous. It does not matter whether the chef is a supporter or an enemy of Boulanger, whether he longs for his victory or his defeat; for Lady Windermere and her audience, whom she involves in her movements ('And now let us go to supper'), the only significance of Boulanger's actions is François' agitation and what this state can bring about. Accordingly, the translator should consider the meaning of 'quiet' noting that this word appears in a sentence motivated by the content, explicit and implicit, of the preceding co-text, which constitutes the adequate context (a subset of the individual's 'old' assumptions) against which to process the Lady's exclamation of disapproval. As regards the text in the original, it is important to remember that the lexical items underlined in the following representation of the co-textual chain contribute, as it were, *encyclopaedic entries* towards the buildup of the right context, which pivot on the cognitive environment of Oscar Wilde and, presumably, educated English late nineteenth-century readers:

*supper* >>> some hot *soup* >>> *François*: excellent soup >>> ...
*the then stereotype* of French middle-class food

*so agitated about politics at present* <<< 'to agitate' means 'to argue strongly in public for or against some political or social change', which fits in with Georges Boulanger's career. Although the related adjective simply means 'anxious and nervous', the specific sense of the verb reinforces the occurrence of 'politics'

*Boulanger, quiet*  
*Boulanger* is a very common French surname, as common as the English surname *Baker*; in fact, 'boulanger' means 'baker' in French!
The above string of syntagmatically associated lexical items with their respective logical and encyclopaedic entries is the cognitive pathway to an intertextual signal, which is part of the communicative clues of the passage. According to Hatim and Mason's definition, intertextual signals are 'elements of text which trigger the process of intertextual search, setting in motion the act of semiotic processing (...) They do not constitute the intertextual reference as such but are crucial pointers to it' (1990:133). Having identified 'General Boulanger' as an intertextual signal, the translator can embark on the exercise of charting the various routes through which that signal links up with the sources from which it was drawn, to which it refers, or by which it was inspired. Such sources are spoken of as pre-texts by Hatim and Mason (1990:134).

As shown above, syntagmatic association serves the purpose of causing the reader to build up the adequate context for processing the 'new' assumptions supplied by the intertextual signal; that is, the thematic or topical relationship Oscar Wilde consciously established between Georges Boulanger's deeds as presented in late nineteenth-century newspapers and magazines (one pre-text) or discussed in contemporaneous political and social circles in London and Oxford (another pre-text), and the sign 'General Boulanger' in one of the sentences of a short story in which a fictional reception is portrayed. After filtering the information provided by these pre-texts, Wilde's own cognitive environment may also have functioned as a pre-text. In terms of Relevance Theory, the effort required to process 'General Boulanger' as an intertextual signal, as a textual allusion to a real person, is greater than the effort required to arrive at the contextual implication in (2); however, the relatively high processing effort is offset by the quality and large number of the contextual effects recovered. As Blakemore points out (1992:32), 'someone who is searching for relevance will extend the context only if the costs this entails seem more likely to be offset by contextual effects'. Through the recognition of the above intertextual signal, the culmination of a carefully wrought ostensive stimulus, the contextual effects and 'new' assumptions described in (3) will comprise contextual implications and strengthenings of existing assumptions (especially about Wilde's wit and flamboyance), subservient to subtle rhetorical purposes such as arousing the reader's sympathy for Lady Windermere's 'plight', alluding to the author's favourite themes, and even flattering the reader on his spotting an allusion to a real person.

In the case of the English 1887 or 1891 readings, it is almost certain that the conditions for a primary communication situation were met, and therefore that the communication between communicator and audience took place successfully on the lines explained above. The interpretation of the utterance in Appendix 1 does not seem to have posed any problem for those audiences when they had to combine the text of the utterance with the contextual assumptions envisaged by Oscar Wilde, which were easy to come to (small processing effort) in their situation. Yet is it equally easy for a British late twentieth-century readership of Lord Arthur Savile's Crime to select the same context that Wilde devised? It is clear that the modern reader of the story will not stumble over the explications and stylistic properties of the passage, and that the lexical cohesion arising from the syntagmatic relationship between such elements as 'François', the name of a cook,
and 'Boulanger' will make him think of France as the most accessible context. Nevertheless, the probability that the modern reader will realize the connection between the textual 'General Boulanger' and the extra-textual Georges Boulanger is very low, since the deeds of the onetime French minister of war, a Radical and a troublemaker, are no longer part of the current French political scene. For an 1891 reader of Wilde, the above connection constituted a fairly strong assumption; for his great-grandchildren it is rather weak, unless the modern reader is a History teacher, a crossword-fancier, or is endowed with a colossal encyclopaedic memory. The trouble is that failing to recognize the intertextual signal may not only hamper the feedback effects related to 'François', the soup, Lady Windermere's fears, and the other items of information, but also disfigure the purport of Wilde's sentence 'I do wish General Boulanger would keep quiet', leading to undesirable misinterpretations.

The modern British reader's difficulties in understanding Wilde's communicative intentions may become king-sized in the case of a contemporary Spanish reader of Lord Arthur Savile's Crime in translation. In principle it might appear to be enough that the Spanish translations of the passage should meet the following requirement:

The sum total of the explicatures and implicatures of the translation must equal the sum total of the explicatures and implicatures of the original (Gutt 1991:95).

Accordingly, the translator could make some implicit things in the original explicit in the Spanish text as long as the 'sum total' remains the same; for example,

(4) Y ahora, vamos a cenar. Seguro que ya se lo han comido todo, pero tal vez encontremos un poco de sopa caliente, gran invento de los franceses. François hacía antes una sopa excelente, pero ahora está tan agitado con la política que ya no me siento nunca segura de él. Por eso me gustaría que el general Boulanger, ese político francés que anda tan alocado por ahí, se estuviese quietecito, sin revolucionar tanto a sus congéneres.

This type of solution would fit in with 'communicative', 'same-message' or 'dynamic-equivalence' approaches to translation, which Gutt subsumes under indirect translation. The problem continues to be, however, that such a reshuffling of explicatures and implicatures as the above example (a resource Gutt clearly questions [1991:96]), ignores the stylistic properties of the original text; there are too many explanatory additions in the translation. These additions might be justified by the sharp differences in cognitive environment between ST author and TT readers; the original audience was able to disambiguate the meaning of 'quiet' with ease via the context envisaged by Wilde. That meaning (say, 'quiet' = [WITHOUT STARTLING SPEECHES] [WITH LITTLE NOISE] [WITHOUT UNWANTED ACTIVITY]) in French politics) can also be recovered by means of the linguistically encoded elements of the utterance, but it is the combination of linguistic decoding and inference that elucidates the right meaning and produces the most contextual effects. The above additions

would thus be designed to supplement what the combination of linguistic decoding and inference fails to provide in the case of present-day Spanish readers.

The problem with additions, which usually prove to be a vehicle for the explication of implicatures, is that they can sink the original author's intention of getting his audience to make use of their inferential abilities to a relatively predetermined degree. Consequently, additions in particular and the explication of implicatures in general should be restricted to a relevant minimum. This minimum would fulfill two functions: first, it would enable the reader of the translation to familiarize himself somewhat with the context assumed by the original communicator; secondly, the familiarity thus acquired would not have a distorting influence on the weight of the stylistic properties devised by the original communicator because most of them would be preserved.

BM's translation keeps up the effects of the syntagmatic association which makes the comprehension process work up to 'I do wish General Boulanger would keep quiet' by (i) maintaining 'Francois' from the original, and (ii) translating 'soup' and 'agitated' as 'sopa' and 'agitado'. On the other hand, JG's version thwarts the inferential process because the name 'Francois' is rendered into Spanish as 'Francisco', thus obscuring the possible connection between 'Francois' (presumably, a French chef) and 'Boulanger' (presumably, the troublesome, contemporary French politician), and consequently blocking a route through which the contextual assumptions envisaged by Oscar Wilde can be made more accessible for a Spanish readership. Further, JG's 'preocupado' is less effective than BM's 'agitado' because the first adjective is suggestive of a mental involvement, while the second one calls up a state of involuntary physical excitement, which is easier to associate with a decrease in Francois' considerable expertise in making 'excellent soup'. Besides, in Spanish 'agitado' is reminiscent of the expression 'agitacion politica', which fits in with Georges Boulanger's living.

As I have mentioned above, both BM and JG opt for one of the two senses of quiet: 'callado' and 'quieto', respectively. Wilde's 'quiet' does not require such precision. One of the things Lady Windermere may want to prevent is the general's delivering startling political speeches (especially to Francois), an objective which in semantic terms can be conceptualized as combining the notions of [WITH LITTLE NOISE] and [WITHOUT UNWANTED ACTIVITY]. For this reason, it is not really necessary to solve the ambiguity, but simply direct the Spanish reader's comprehension process towards a suitable field (here, politics) for the context envisaged by Wilde.

In order to improve BM's translation, a predicate of the type of

se dejase / abstuviese - de - conspirar / revoluciones / discursos revolucionarios / tanto discurso revolucionario

---

1 JG's translation of the passage cannot be used as the basis for improvements because it dispenses with meaningful ostensive elements such as 'Francois', thereby overlooking Wilde's significant arrangement of textual components.
may be substituted for 'se estuviese callado'. No other modifications or additions are necessary. This explication entails a slightly or fairly greater processing effort, since the improved translation contains from three to five more lexical items than the original. However, it does not spell out the connection between 'François' and 'General Boulanger', which might make someone argue that the above explication is ineffectual and therefore superfluous because it produces a contextual implication similar to (2): a fictional male character who is not attending to the palmist's performance, but is somewhere else in Bentinck House. Yet, in my opinion, the explication succeeds in improving on that contextual implication: the new assumptions it conveys enhance the contextual effect. On the basis of syntagmatic association, lexical cohesion in BM's text only gives rise to the implication

\[ ['François' \quad \text{alguien, chef(?)}, ] + 'Boulanger' \quad \text{personajes franceses / Francia} ] \]

The mismatch in contextual information about Georges Boulanger in the cognitive environment of the Spanish receptors prevents política / historia francesas from engaging the cognitive association-of-ideas process. Owing to the clause 'ahora está tan agitado con la política', some readers might deduce that the annoying fictional male character who is not attending to the palmist's performance ... is a politician somehow connected with the chef, but this is still too weak an assumption for the reader to extend the context so that it can approximate to the one envisaged by Wilde, in which Georges Boulanger was included. Now, the explication I have put forward extends the network of syntagmatic oppositions, although it does not by means of inference, since, not unlike 'callado', 'revoluciones' or 'discursos' are textually encoded elements. In the 19th-century original 'politics at present' combined inferentially with 'General Boulanger', with the result that the readers could easily (i.e. efficiently) retrieve the field current French political scene from their cognitive environment, thus linking it with the textually encoded 'politics'. My solution is intended to supplement the intertextual signal of 'General Boulanger' with certain linguistically encoded elements in order to make its pre-texts more accessible to the contemporary Spanish reader, but not in a crystal clear fashion, since this does not seem to have been Wilde's idea:

\[ ['François' \quad \text{alguien, chef(?)}, ] + 'Boulanger' \quad \text{tanto texto, revolución(?) } ]

\[ = \text{política francesa de finales del siglo XIX (?) }] \]

This extension of the cohesive syntagmatic network does not preclude the possibility of the existence of an extra-textual Boulanger, an implication which both 'callado' and 'quieto' make virtually impossible. It is this type of explication, and not other additions, that I find really necessary for the translation of segments of text like the passage of 'General
Boulanger'. The explication can prompt the reader to construct an encyclopaedic entry for 'General Boulanger'; thus, he may get to feel that there is an allusion to a real person therein. Accordingly, in contrast with 'callado', my solution can give the Spanish readers access to the originally intended interpretation by helping them to familiarize themselves with the possible contextual resources of the writer of the ST.

All things considered, it is clear that using one single adjective of the type of 'callado' or 'quieto' to comply with the principle that

for an utterance in the receptor language to qualify as a direct translation of some original utterance in the source language, it needs to share all the 'communicative clues' of that original (Gutt 1991:162)

poses some problems, because this requirement is fruitful only if the receptor language utterance is processed in the originally envisaged context, which I have shown is not so easy in 1996 as at the end of the nineteenth century. At present the level of accessibility to that context has diminished noticeably, whereas Oscar Wilde was able to let the interpretation of the sentence of 'quiet' hinge considerably on the reader's inferential abilities because a mismatch in contextual information was unlikely to arise. In this connection, I do not think that 'translation with commentary' (e.g. by means of an explanatory footnote about Georges Boulanger) is an appropriate solution here, either. To start with, it uproots inference from the comprehension process, as though Wilde had intended to put the meaning of the passage across only through linguistic coding and decoding; secondly, it drastically flouts the principles of direct translation:

A receptor language utterance is a direct translation of a source language utterance if and only if it purports to interpretively resemble the original completely in the context envisaged for the original (...) In secondary communication situations this implies the need for the target audience to familiarize themselves with the context assumed by the original communicator (Gutt 1991:163-6).

Not only would a footnote here entail much more processing effort, but it would also prevent the contemporary Spanish readers from 'inferring' or rather involving themselves in the search for the context. Translation with commentary is thus less rewarding, whereas a simple alteration like the above explication increases the processing effort (compared with the original), but not altogether so much as a footnote, and further it is an intratextual solution which does not dispense with inference as it is only suggestive of the pre-texts Wilde may have thought of when he wrote the passage. There may be fewer contextual effects without a footnote, and then it may take the Spanish reader longer to arrive at them, but this detective work is far more rewarding, far more creative, than reading a footnote, which spills the beans without artistry. Moreover, my explication has not a distorting influence on the interpretation intended by Wilde (cf Gutt 1991:166), because, even if, in
the light of the original, he had intended to suggest that a fictionalized Georges Boulanger might have been present in the kitchen of Bentinck House in person addressing a speech to a fellow countryman, my translation would also allow of this interpretation.

3.2. Struggling with the context of culture

In the previous section I proposed a solution to a tricky text which responded to the defining characteristic of direct translation as Gutt views it:

(... not that it achieves complete interpretive resemblance but rather that it purports to achieve it, that is, that it creates a presumption of complete interpretive resemblance (Gutt 1991:186).

Gutt adds that the presumption of complete interpretive resemblance is of value both where complete resemblance is achieved, and where the translator knows that it is not achieved, as is my case. Neither of the texts in the Appendices impedes complete interpretive resemblance out of linguistic differences between English and Spanish. The intricacy of the passage about François' soup and General Boulanger for translation lies in the close bond between extra-textual references and the original communicator and audience's cognitive environment. On the other hand, the extract about the cheque and the guineas shows how elements of the original communicator and audience's context of culture can get in the way of the translator's work. However, the analysis of utterances such as those can produce almost conclusive proof that direct translation is capable of coordinating the audience's expectations with the communicator's intentions. As Gutt puts it (ibid),

being aware that there his translation will not meet the expectations of the audience and hence mislead them, the translator can consider strategies for preventing communicative failure, for example by alerting the audience to the problem and correcting the difference by some appropriate means, such as footnotes, comments on the text or the like.

Choosing from those strategies depends again on the principle of balancing costs and rewards, the principle of relevance. Accordingly, what the translator should do is to determine which of those strategies presumably has adequate contextual effects (the most and the best) for the minimum necessary processing. In the case of the first extract, my conclusion has been that incorporating a small explication into BM's text is the most relevant solution (JG's translation requires other additional improvements). In the case of the second extract, however, the principle of relevance suggests the use of a different strategy.

In the communicative event of Appendix 2, Mr Podgers, the palmist, only accepts to read Lord Arthur's hand when the latter agrees to pay him in guineas for the information
he is eager to obtain. For an English reader, either contemporary with Oscar Wilde or born before 1971, it would not be difficult to understand the implications of someone’s being paid in guineas in lieu of pounds. A guinea was a former British gold coin, worth £ 1.05, which means that a cheque for a hundred guineas was worth £ 105. Lord Arthur’s first offer is a cheque for a hundred pounds, but it is Mr Podgers that subtly induces him to bid more money for the information: a hundred ‘guineas’. The question is whether the palmist’s apparent disagreement with the Lord over the price of the information is intended to be interpreted as an explication (e.g. on reflection Mr Podgers asks for £ 105, the actual price) or rather as a means to convey implicatures. Context is again needed to determine the answer to that question; for this reason, it is necessary for the translator to have resort to the preceding co-text as a contributor to the context in order to find out if there is some implicit information.

How does Mr Podgers dare to ask for any money when he has been reading other people’s hands for free (e.g. the Marchioness of Jedbrugh’s; cf Wilde 1985: 180), and then why does he dare to bargain with Lord Arthur about the cheque only to obtain five more pounds? In other words, how does it come about that the palmist’s apparently innocent question ‘‘Guineas?’’ said Mr. Podgers at last, in a low voice ‘‘is relevant for Lord Arthur, ‘‘Certainly!’’? And why does Mr Podgers speak in a low voice? Is it for shame or for other reasons? In my opinion, Oscar Wilde may have meant to imply that the palmist is a poor person or else a miser, or a person with a miserly attitude, and as a result that perhaps one should distrust him. When the reader gets to the conversation depicted in Appendix 2, the narrator has already informed him that

when Mr. Podgers saw Lord Arthur’s hand he grew curiously pale, and said nothing. A shudder seemed to pass through him, and his great bushy eyebrows twitched convulsively, in an odd, irritating way they had when he was puzzled. Then some huge beads of perspiration broke out on his yellow forehead (...) Lord Arthur did not fail to notice these strange signs of agitation, and for the first time in his life, he himself felt fear (Wilde 1985:180).

Mr Podgers seems to avoid telling Lord Arthur what he saw in his hand because it is a very serious matter, so serious that when Mr Podgers tells him at last, the Lord rushes from Bentinck House ‘‘with face blanched with terror’’ (Wilde 1985:190). Therefore, the palmist’s refusal to speak appears to be justified. However, when Lord Arthur offers him the cheque, his eyes flash for a moment. The palmist thus turns out to be rather unscrupulous, particularly because he prefers to be paid in guineas. Then he may also be short of money or a pretentious person: although he wears gold-rimmed spectacles, his watch-chain is ‘‘flash’’ (i.e. attractive and expensive-looking), and he has no club. Further, he may be greedy for money: in his dilatory efforts he tells Lord Arthur that his ‘‘hours are from ten to four’’, and that he makes ‘‘a reduction for families’’ (Wilde 1985:188). All of the above assumptions (pretentious, greedy, miserly, etc), which may at first be weak, can be inferred mainly from

what is linguistically encoded in the co-text that precedes the passage in question (from 'bushy eyebrows' onwards). Consequently, the contextual implications that derive from the combination of those old assumptions with the new assumptions related to the passage of the Guinea provide further evidence for, and hence strengthen, the existing assumptions about Mr Podgers. Such a contextual effect creates a halo, as it were, of mystery and suspicion round the character of the palmist.

The passage in Appendix 2 seems to be the culmination of Wilde's characterization of Mr Podgers, but unfortunately for translation, previous knowledge of the difference between pounds and Guineas is absolutely necessary to comprehend the writer's communicative intention. In order for a Spanish rendering of the above passage to qualify as a direct translation of the original utterance, the translator should once more consider strategies for preventing a secondary communication situation. In this case, a simple footnote about what a guinea was worth is enough to alert the Spanish audience to the mismatch in contextual information and correct the difference. Here there seems to be no other strategy that entails less processing effort with similar contextual effects. The trouble is that if the Spanish reader does not know what a guinea was worth, he will not perceive the subtle manner in which Wilde brands Mr Podgers as a mean person; for a miser, a difference of five pounds is sure to be very important. If such information is not supplied, the reader will also be puzzled when he reads some pages later that 'Lord Arthur (...) drew a cheque for £ 105'.

BM's translation mirrors the original text, but lets the recovery of the contextual effects envisaged by Wilde hinge on the reader's processing ability to associate the phrase 'un cheque por ciento cinco libras' with the preceding, now relatively remote, conversation between Lord Arthur and the palmist about a cheque. This solution relies heavily on the reader's intellectual awareness, i.e. on the expectation that he will realize that the cheque finally drawn by Lord Arthur is for £ 105, not £ 100, and think that there must be some logical explanation for the change... what about the Guineas mentioned by Mr Podgers some pages before? However, although this solution may cause the reader to retrieve the right encyclopaedic entry to process the lexical item 'guineas' in its context (e.g. by looking the word up in a dictionary), the rewards (contextual effects) thus attained can be furthered at a lesser risk and more efficiently by dint of a brief footnote. An explication via addition or replacement (e.g. "¿Qué tal si son guineas, que como Vd. sabe son de oro y valen un poquito más que las libras?") would make the translation deviate excessively from the stylistic properties of the original; besides, such an exchange would not be natural between two Englishmen holding a brisk conversation.

What Gómez de la Serna does here amounts to tampering with the text of the original, since Wilde's motivated choice of certain linguistic expressions and arrangement (first 'pounds', then 'guineas') is distorted. When Mr Podgers says "'Guineas?'", he seems to be bargaining, raising Lord Arthur's offer tentatively for his own benefit. In relevance terms, the contextual effect of the palmist's utterance on the Lord is that it contradicts his assumption that a hundred pounds will be a reasonable price. But this contradiction is relevant for him because he is so interested in what Mr Podgers saw in his hand that he
accepts to pay the palmist in guineas without a moment's hesitation. On the other hand, JG's sequence 'Le daré un cheque de cien guineas' (...) '¿Cien guineas?' conveys no idea of bargaining or of greed for money. Mr Podgers simply appears to make sure that Lord Arthur said a hundred pounds. Accordingly, his question has no real contextual effects, since Sperber and Wilson point out that 'the addition of new information which merely duplicates old information does not count as an improvement' (1986:109). In JG's translation, 'en voz baja' may suggest that Mr Podgers does not want other guests to hear that he is accepting money, but this implication is barely context-dependent and then so straightforward that only technically can it be regarded as relevant. Finally, on such a basis the subsequent phrase 'un cheque de 105 libras' does not help the reader to construct the right context at all. Obviously, in the light of the preceding co-text, someone might argue that the very fact of Mr Podger's accepting Lord Arthur's money is enough to make him a glutton for it in general. Nevertheless, comparison with the original clearly shows that Wilde devised a different and elaborate mechanism to convey that layer of information. Even if there was presumption of optimal relevance on the part of JG, this does not save him from striving to preserve what the original author worked out carefully and, above all, ostensively.

4. Conclusion

BM's Spanish rendering of the two segments of text analysed in this paper is more appropriate than JG's translations, which are less effective and efficient in terms of the principle of relevance. Although both translators may be expected to have presumed that their utterances would have adequate contextual effects for the minimum necessary processing, their translations (utterances in the receptor language) do not qualify equally as direct translations of the ST utterances. I have made it clear that in the case of literary works I advocate Gut's direct translation, with the proviso that the presumption of complete interpretive resemblance in the originally envisaged context should not imply that translations have to share all the communicative clues of the original. Yet a translator should make every effort to give the TT audience access to the originally intended interpretation, preserving as many communicative clues (linguistic and others) of the original as possible. Wherever the differences in cognitive environment between original communicator and audience and a readership posterior to them are large, the translator should work out strategies to pave the way for the recovery or construction of a context as similar as possible to the one envisaged by the original communicator. Montuenga not only seems to have respected Wilde's motivated choices to a large extent, but his own translation choices are more relevant than Gómez de la Serna's, perhaps because he realized that the ostensive stimuli Oscar Wilde devised embodied more meanings than those arising from mere linguistic decoding, but there is still room for improvement.
Appendices

In the following extracts from Lord Arthur Savile's Crime // El crimen de Lord Arthur Savile / El crimen de Lord Arturo Savile, **boldface** is used to highlight the most significant words and phrases pertaining to the analysis of the Spanish translations.

Appendix 1

(...) And now let us go to supper. They are sure to have eaten everything up, but we may find some hot soup. François used to make excellent soup once, but he is so agitated about politics at present, that I never feel quite certain about him. I do wish General Boulanger would keep quiet. Duchess, I am sure you are tired? (Wilde 1985:184)

TRANSLATIONS

B. Montuenga (ALHAMBRA)

(...) Y ahora, vamos a cenar. De seguro que se lo han comido todo, pero tal vez encontremos un poco de sopa caliente. François hacía antes una sopa excelente, pero ahora está tan agitado con la política, que ya no me siento nunca segura de él. Me gustaría que el general Boulanger se estuviese callado. Duquesa, estará fatigada, ¿verdad? (Wilde 1985:185).

J. Gómez de la Serna (AGUILAR)

(...) Y ahora vamos a tomar algo. Se habrán comido todo; pero aún encontrarremos una taza de caldo caliente. Francisco preparaba antes un caldo riquísimo; pero ahora le veo tan preocupado con la política, que nunca estoy segura de nada con él. Quisiera realmente que el general Boulanger permaneciera quieto. Duquesa, tengo la seguridad de que está usted fatigada (Wilde 1988:242).

Appendix 2

Mr. Podger's eyes blinked behind his gold-rimmed spectacles, and he moved uneasily from one foot to the other, while his fingers played nervously with a flash watch-chain.

"What makes you think that I saw anything in your hand, Lord Arthur, more than I told you?"

"I know you did, and I insist on your telling me what it was. I will pay you. I will give you a cheque for a hundred pounds'
The green eyes flashed for a moment, and then became dull again.

'Guineas?' said Mr. Podgers at last, in a low voice.

'Certainly. I will send you a cheque to-morrow.' (Wilde 1985:188).

The first thing to be done was, of course, to settle with the cheiromantist; so [Lord Arthur] sat down at a small Sheraton writing-table that stood near the window, drew a cheque for £ 105, payable to the order of Mr. Septimus Podgers (...) (Wilde 1985:202).

TRANSLATIONS

B. Montuenga (ALHAMBRA)

Los ojos del señor Podgers pestañearon detrás de los lentes de montura de oro, y se apoyaba inquieto ya en un pie ya en otro, mientras sus dedos juguetearan nerviosamente con una fulgurante cadena de reloj.

- ¿Qué le hace a usted pensar que vi algo en su mano, lord Arturo, aparte de lo que dije?

- Sé que lo vio, e insisto en que me diga de qué se trata. Le pagaré. Le daré un cheque de cien libras.

Los ojos verdosos relampaguearon por un momento, pero en seguida volvieron a su aspecto sombrío.

- ¿Guineas? -dijo el señor Podgers, por fin, en voz baja.

- Desde luego. Le enviaré un cheque mañana (...) (Wilde 1985:189).

Lo primero que debía hacerse era, naturalmente, saldar cuentas con el quiromántico, de modo que [lord Arturo] se sentó ante una mesita-escritorio Sheraton instalada junto a la ventana, extendió un cheque por ciento cinco libras, pagadero a la orden del señor Septimus Podgers (...) (Wilde 1985:203).

J. Gómez de la Serna (AGUILAR)

Los ojos de mister Podgers tuvieron un vivo parpadeo tras sus gafas de oro; se balanceó con aire turbado sobre uno y otro pie, mientras sus dedos jugueaban nerviosamente con la brillante cadena de su reloj.

¿Por qué cree usted, lord Arturo, que he visto en su mano algo más de lo que he dicho?

Sé que ha visto usted algo más, e insisto en que me lo diga. Le daré un cheque de cien guineas.

Los ojillos verdes de mister Podgers relampaguearon durante un segundo, y luego volvieron a quedarse inexpressivos.

¿Cien guineas? -dijo, por fin, mister Podgers en voz baja.

Lo primero que debía hacer, indudablemente, era saldar cuentas con el quiromántico. Así, pues, [lord Arturo] se sentó ante una mesita de Sheraton colocada frente a la ventana, y llenó un cheque de 105 libras, pagadero a la orden de mister Septimus Podgers (...) (Wilde 1988:248).
References

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