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Mindreading in Translation: Theory of Mind in a Shared Cognitive Translation Process

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Abstract: This paper explores the use of theory of mind (ToM) as a discourse-level theoretical framework in translation studies to explore how a translator's decision-making is influenced by shared cognitive processes. The American English translation of the second Manolito Gafotas book (Lindo 2009) was chosen as a case study because the translation process involved predicting the mental states of both children and adult readers, and because the translator, Carolina Travalia, published an introspective analysis of her own work (Travalia 2019), thereby providing an invaluable insight into the shared nature of the translation process. The analysis reveals that Travalia leveraged her ToM during the decision-making process to align with the publisher's belief about two idealised and homogenised target reader categories: morally conservative parents and morally immature children. The nature of the publisher-translator collaboration revealed in the analysis raises important questions about how ethics and authorship need to be redefined to reflect the collaborative and shared nature of translation.

Key terms: Translation, theory of mind, intentional stance, cognition, propositional attitude, literary translation, children's literature.

1 Introduction

Early process-oriented research in translation studies tended to understand cognition as either a predictable process that functions like a computer or as a mechanism that functions independently of its social environment. In recent times, theoretical advances in cognitive studies have given way to approaches in translation studies that view cognition as a situated and extended phenomenon that emerges from the interaction among translators and other agents in the

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translation process. The focus of this paper is to explore the role that THEORY OF MIND (ToM) plays in interactions that are constitutive of shared cognitive processes in translation. ToM is generally understood as the ability to attribute mental states to others, such as beliefs, desires, knowledge, and intentions (Gopnik and Wellman 1992; 1994).

In section 2, I draw on the relevant literature to situate this study within the extended cognition paradigm that has shaped current models of translation processes. In section 3, I introduce ToM as a theoretical tool and put forward INTENTIONAL STANCE, understood here as a framework that describes how individuals impute mental states to two or more people (Dennett 1987), to hypothesise the role that ToM plays in shared cognitive processes. In section 4, I present the case study, the American English translation (Lindo 2009) of the second book (Lindo 1995) in the children's series Manolito Gafotas. This book is particularly suitable for showcasing how translators can leverage their ToM, because the translation involved predicting the mental states of two distinct target readers, parents and children, as well as the publisher's beliefs and desires. The translator, Carolina Travalia, provided a detailed account of how the publisher's involvement in the translation process shaped the final product. Travalia's (2019) account is therefore used in the analysis to substantiate the shared nature of the translation process.

2 Extended cognition in translation studies

Early translation and interpreting cognitive models drew on the classical paradigm that viewed the mind as an information processing centre that works like a computer (Muñoz Martín 2010:148–149; Muñoz Martín 2016; Risku and Windhager 2013). These early models concentrated on translation and interpreting as problem-solving activities (Gile 1995; Toury 2012; Chesterman 2013) and on identifying the cognitive abilities that differentiate experts and non-experts (Jääskeläinen and Tirkkonen-Condit 1991). More recently, however, process-oriented research has pivoted towards the view that cognition is situated and extended (Muñoz Martín 2010; Risku 2014:36; Xiao and Muñoz Martín 2020; Hirvonen 2024).

Clark and Chalmers's (1998) seminal paper on EXTENDED COGNITION introduced the idea that the mind and its immediate environment should not be viewed as independent entities. In their thought experiment, a fictional man (Otto), who suffers from Alzheimer's, uses a notebook to take down information he needs to retrieve later, thereby extending the faculty of memory beyond the physical brain into the real world. For Clark and Chalmers, the notebook is an example of extended cognition because the notebook and Otto's mind constitute a COUPLED

SYSTEM that "can be seen as a cognitive system in its own right" (Clark and Chalmers 1998:8).

Although not stated as such, some early approaches to the study of translation phenomena seem to tacitly recognise that cognition is extended. Toury (1995), for example, divided the translation process into TRANSLATION ACT and TRANSLATION EVENT. The act is the "encounter of the human agent with a single text" and "the locus of the act is the human brain" (Toury 2012:67). Although Toury viewed cognition as something that occurs independently of context, the recognition that the act is based on an interaction between human agent and a text is consonant with the notion of coupled systems. Despite this overlap, however, Toury, and later Andrew Chesterman (2013:161–162), believed that only the translation event was observable, and that the cognitive processes involved in the act were beyond the reach of empirical sciences.

The extended cognition paradigm paved the way towards viewing the translator's mind as a site for socio-cognitive processes that emerge from the "dynamic interplay of artefacts, workplaces and spatial context" (Risku 2014:36). The socio-cognitive paradigm therefore considers cognitive processes observable in their extension into social settings (Hirvonen 2024). Thus, understanding how a cognitive process can be shared among stakeholders in a translation project or how translators utilise translation technologies, for example, can give us an insight into how the mind is both embedded in its environment and embodied and enacted by translators. In this spirit, Balashov (2020) explored how translators enter into a symbiotic relationship with the computer-aided translation (CAT) and machine translation (MT) tools they use, while Hirvonen (2024) moved away from looking at individual translators to a focus on SHARED COGNITION, which she defines as an "intelligent system of intersubjective (subject-to-subject) interaction in which translators jointly process information" (Hirvonen 2024:62). Although at first glance this may seem to reduce our understanding of shared cognition as translation processes which are explicitly shared by a team of translators only when they are physically in each other's presence, the reality is that translation is always a collaborative process. That is, translators contend with authors, addressees, other translators, and clients, even when these are merely "constructs in the mind[s] of translators" (Muñoz Martín 2010:153).

3 ToM and intentional stance

ToM is the ability to impute mental states to others (Gopnik and Wellman 1992; 1994). We know from past studies (Wellman et al. 2001; Doherty 2008) that children generally develop the ability to attribute mental states to others from about four years of age – although some studies have found evidence that this

milestone is reached much sooner in some children (Doherty 2008) and later in some who are neurodivergent (Baron-Cohen 1995).[1] One of the reasons for this developmental leap is that children begin to METAREPRESENT reality between ages three and four (Doherty 2008:39), or put another way, they begin to represent representations.

The human mind is able to represent real world objects in its cognitive architecture as a second-order representation. To say that someone represents a representation is to say that someone cognitively engages with a proposition that may or may not be true. For example, *references to death are not appropriate* is a proposition that could be true or false. Someone adopts a PROPOSITIONAL ATTITUDE when they take a stance in relation to a proposition, or as Zunshine (2006) explains, when someone "tags" the proposition with a mental state. The analysis in section 4, for example, will describe how the publisher adopted an attitude of belief in relation to the proposition above: *the publisher believes that references to death are not appropriate*. When metarepresentations involve other people and their propositional attitudes, Dan Dennett argued that the mind is engaging in "higher-order intentional states":

> For some years now, I have been urging the importance of looking for evidence of "higher-order intentional states" – beliefs about beliefs, desires about beliefs, beliefs about desires about beliefs, and so forth – and all of this might very well be characterized as urging the importance of looking for evidence of metarepresentation. (Dennet 2000:20)

Adopting an INTENTIONAL STANCE means treating "the object whose behaviour is to be predicted as a rational agent" (Dennett 1987:15). Dennett's intentional stance framework foresees three degrees of intentionality (first order, second order, and higher order of intentionality) that explain or predict the behaviour of intentional systems:

> First order intentionality: The first order attributes basic states such as belief and desire to an agent. For example, *the parents think that references to death are inappropriate.*
>
> Second order intentionality: The second order intentionality emerges when an agent attributes a mental state to another agent. For example, *the publisher believes that the parents think that references to death are inappropriate.*
>
> Higher order intentionality: The third order embeds further mental states about agents that attribute mental states to other agents. For example, the

[1] The claim that neurodivergent children take longer to reach ToM development milestones has been contested (Dinishak and Akhtar 2013).

translator knows that the publisher believes that the parents think that references to death are inappropriate.

In theory, propositional attitudes can be recursively embedded *ad infinitum* (Zunshine 2006; van Duijn et al. 2015). Zunshine (2006:32–34) illustrates this point by predicting how readers contend with up to six individuated mental states in Virginia Woolf's (1925) *Mrs. Dalloway*, one level beyond what people are normally capable of in social interaction. The fully fleshed out intentional stance is reproduced as follows:

> Woolf *intends* us to recognize [. . .] that Richard *is aware* that Hugh *wants* Lady Brunton and Richard *to think* that because the makers of the pen *believe* that it will never wear out, the editor of the *Times* will *respect* and publish the ideas recorded by this pen.

Cognitive verbs (in italics) represent the mental states of the agents as inferred by the reader. From Zunshine's analysis, we can surmise that there are six agents (Richard Dalloway, Lady Brunton, Hugh Whitbread, the makers of the pen, the editor of the *Times*, and the writer, Virginia Woolf), and that each of these agents adopts a propositional attitude that readers have to integrate into their interpretation of the scene.

Although Zunshine's application of ToM to literary texts provides something of a launching pad for the application proposed here, her approach does not map seamlessly to the approach taken in this paper. A literary theorist may apply ToM to understand how readers fill in narrative gaps or how mindreading is a situated cognitive ability that allows readers to blur the lines between reality and fiction. Translation scholars may ask similar questions, but the more immediately interesting questions are about translators themselves and how the decisions they make are guided by the mental states they impute to other agents in the translation process.

In one of the first studies to explicitly address the question of ToM in translation, Sturm (2017) conceptualises translation as a higher order metarepresentation to explore whether translator training fosters the development of attributive metacognitive abilities. To carry out her study, Sturm framed the translation process as "a simple chain of text production and re-production between author, translator, and audience, with metacognition as a central feature of this process" (Sturm 2017:432) and set intralingual translation tasks to reduce the influence of different levels of language proficiency on the results. Sturm used fMRI scans to partially confirm the activation of the ToM neural network during translation tasks and to show that the effectiveness of ToM in translation is in some way tied to the translator's ability to navigate dual perspectives. However, the study could not confirm definitively that translation competence is causally related to different levels of neural activation in the

brain. That is, it is not yet clear whether becoming a proficient translator leads to having more developed mindreading abilities.

Szpak et al. (2020) adopted Grice's definition of natural and non-natural meaning and combined it with relevance theory to explore how translators go beyond mere linguistic encoding by inferring the speaker's intentions – a process that is closely tied to ToM and PERSPECTIVE-TAKING. Like Sturm (2017), Szpak et al. used fMRI scans to identify the activation of the inferior frontal gyrus and the medial frontal gyrus when their participants engaged in perspective-taking, which they define as (1) the ability to distinguish what two people see and (2) the ability to understand that two people looking at the same object from different angles can offer two different descriptions of that object (2020:136). While their findings identified evidence of perspective-taking in reading tasks that did not involve translation, they were not able to identify the same when participants engaged in translation tasks. One of the factors that may have impacted these results, however, is that participants were all translation students rather than translation professionals, which may account for the observation that translation behaviour was seen to "be driven by low-level, micro-contextual plans" (Szpak et al. 2020:148).

Although limited in number, these studies suggest that being able to infer the mental states of others is an important metacognitive skill for translators. Szpak et al. (2020) confirmed that perspective-taking plays a big role in reading (an obviously important skill when it comes to developing translation competence) and that there is at least correlation between engaging in translation tasks and the activation of two brain regions associated with ToM. To date, there is no study that explores discourse level applications of ToM in translation that can be triangulated with the type of neuroimaging approaches in Sturm (2017) and Szpak et al. (2020).

4 Case study: Manolito Gafotas

Children's literature is often described as "ambivalent" when it is written for a dual readership (Shavit 1986; Hunt 2005). Stories should obviously try to engage children, but these stories must be equally agreeable to the parents who ultimately decide whether to buy the book for their child. An important function of children's literature, therefore, is to strike the right balance between what children enjoy reading and what adults think they ought to be reading. There are other stories, however, that are marketed under the children's literature banner but are also written to be enjoyed by adults as well. This adds a layer of complexity when the aim is to recreate an ambivalent text in translation that can garner cross-generational appeal (Metcalf 2003:323).

The Spanish series Manolito Gafotas (comprising eight books in total) is a much-studied example of a book series that is read by people of all ages despite being initially marketed for children. One of the ways in which the author, Elvira Lindo, achieved this effect was by encoding a narrative with a voice that addresses children alongside two further voices that address adolescents and adults by "deliberately exploiting the ignorance of the implied child reader" with humour and irony, which young children are unlikely to understand (Salstad 2003:219).

The series follows the adventures of Manolito García Moreno, a young boy growing up in the working-class neighbourhood of Carabanchel Alto in Madrid. The first book of the series, *Manolito Gafotas*, was translated into English by Joanne Moriarty and published by Marshal Cavendish in 2008 (heretofore MG1). The second book in the series, *Pobre Manolito*, was subsequently translated by Carolina Travalia for the same publisher in 2009 (heretofore MG2). The examples analysed in section 5.1 are taken from MG2.

MG1 and MG2 have been the subject of several studies that challenge the merits of sanitising children's literature in translation. Cámara Aguilera (2014) was one of the first to provide a systematic review of the cultural references and themes that were domesticated in the translation of MG2. This was followed by Vandaele (2015), who analysed examples from the Manolito Gafotas series with a cognitive and phenomenological lens to explore the role of mental imagery (the image conjured in the mind's eye during the reading process) in narrative humour. Vandaele (2017) then built on his previous work by uncovering the ideological agendas that guided the manipulation of the central character's narrative voice. Some of these critiques (and at times, criticisms) target the translator for the perceived shortcomings of the English versions. Cámara Aguilera (2014:31), for example, comes close to holding Travalia, the translator of MG2, responsible for failing to give target readers the opportunity to engage with "authentic" Spanish culture.

In response, Travalia (2019) carried out a comparative analysis of her own translation to explain the decision-making process that shaped MG2. What emerges from her account is not the process of a lone translator making unilateral decisions, but a process that was led by a publisher who took on the role of decision maker, and a translator whose role was significantly constrained by the publisher's priorities. The publisher, in anticipation that some of the material in the original could be potentially offensive to parents, made the initial decision to remove adults as target readers:

> *La editorial estadounidense... decidió dirigir la versión traducida exclusivamente a niños de entre ocho y doce años porque este público encajaba*

> *bien con la voz y la mezcla de amigos y familia de Manolito. Así se convirtió en una obra infantil propiamente dicha.* (Travalia 2019:394)
>
> 'The US publisher decided to target exclusively children aged 8–12 because that age group is more aligned with the narrative voice and Manolito's family and friends. As a result, the translation became a proper children's book.' (translation my own)

The decision to translate exclusively for children inevitably shaped every other aspect of the project, including the translation brief that was communicated to Travalia through the explicit expression of the publisher's expectations in the form of editorial interventions. This flow of information was managed, according to Travalia (2019:400), through a trial-and-error process, whereby Travalia would submit drafts and the publisher would suggest repairs that would ultimately achieve the publisher's desired outcome: a version that was acceptable to parents in the US. Information that was vital to the project was communicated in the form of a feedback loop between the translator and the publisher:

> *El resultado fue una oposición continua donde los borradores que entregábamos nos llegaban de vuelta con múltiples cambios en lo que concernía a la trama, las referencias de comportamientos negativos y elementos tabú y el lenguaje*. (Travalia 2019:400)
>
> 'The result was constant opposition, the drafts we submitted would be returned with multiple changes to the plot, references to negative behaviours and taboo subjects, and language.' (translation my own)

Travalia's initial position was one of praise for the elements of the original text that would eventually be adapted or attenuated in the translation. Her instinct was therefore to translate MG2 in a manner that would give future readers the opportunity to experience the text as she had. The nature of her role and the dominant position occupied by the publisher, however, meant that she had to resist her instincts and instead translate the text to meet the expectations of the publisher:

> *No perdamos de vista, por consiguiente, que la mayoría de los cambios en las traducciones al inglés de Manolito Gafotas [. . .] son el reflejo de la voluntad de la editorial llevada a cabo por nosotros los traductores.* (Travalia 2019:399)
>
> 'Let us not forget, therefore, that the majority of changes in the English translation of Manolito Gafotas [. . .] reflect the will of the publisher carried out by us translators.' (translation my own)

Travalia also argued that a lot of the adaptations in MG2 were necessary to maintain a sense of continuity with the decisions taken by Joanne Moriarty in the

translation of MG1. Whether she could have adopted a different approach regardless of how the first book was translated is questionable, given that she also reveals that the publisher communicated a preference for an approach that would sanitise the text based on the assumption that parents would be scandalised by the behaviour of the main character (and not because MG1 was translated in a particular way):

> *La editorial estableció que la serie iría dirigida exclusivamente a niños, presentaría un habla más estándar que los libros originales y sería más políticamente correcta en su contenido. Su función pasó de ser aquella de únicamente divertir a aquella de divertir y servir de buen modelo.* (Travalia 2019:414)
>
> 'The publisher decided that the series would be directed at children exclusively, the language would be more standard compared to the original, and the content would be more politically correct. Its aim moved from just entertaining to creating a translation that entertained and presented a model for good behaviour.' (translation my own)

Travalia's account provided a much-needed perspective to the debate and, more importantly, a valuable insight into the nature of the shared cognitive process that shaped the final product. Ultimately, and as Travalia herself recognises in the passage quoted above, instead of attempting to create a text that could be enjoyed by children and adults alike, the publisher and the translators took a deliberate decision to create a character that represented a model for good behaviour to the detriment of the narrative elements that could have been more entertaining and may have attracted readers from a broader age range.

5 The translator's intentional stance

One of the beliefs held by the publisher and imposed on the translator was that references to death and race would be inappropriate for the US market (Travalia 2019:399). We can see an example of how both these issues were dealt with in MG2 by analysing the translation of the last scene. Firstly, the strategy to implicitate the reference to death is rationalised by exploring how the translator embedded in her intentional stance the desire of the publisher and the prediction of how parent readers would react to the reference to death. The example illustrates how the translator may have leveraged her ToM to attribute proposition attitudes to other agents to devise a strategy that enacted these mental states of parents and publishers. Following this, a second intentional stance is then reverse engineered from the omission of a reference to race to

show how situating the racial reference in the US guided Travalia towards a strategy that grounded the text in politically correct racial discourses in the US.

5.1 Reference to death

In the excerpt below, Manolito and his grandfather are looking at a peaceful scene in front of them. In the original Spanish text, Manolito reflects on the similarities between the scene in front of him and a funeral scene in a movie that he had watched recently. His conclusion is that the scene before him is "much better" because no one had died yet in the "movie of [his] life," and because his grandfather (alluding to his own death) had promised him no one would die any time soon. In the translation, the idea of death is implied in the reference to the funeral scene in a movie, but the explicit mention of death in the source text – which refers to the eventual death of the grandfather – is removed and replaced with a vague statement that avoids mentioning death altogether:

> **Source text**:
> *Todo estaba tan quieto como en una película que echaron en la tele en la que un abuelo y un niño se quedaban los últimos en el cementerio después del entierro de uno que era negro. Pero esto era mucho mejor porque en la película de mi vida no habría ningún muerto de momento, me lo había prometido mi abuelo.* (Lindo 1994:188)
>
> 'Everything was quiet like in a movie they showed on TV where a grandfather and a child were the last to leave the funeral of someone who was black. But this was much better because no one was dying any time soon in the movie of my life. That's what my grandfather promised me.' (my own translation)
>
> **MG1**:
> Everything was quiet as in a movie where a grandpa and a boy are the last ones in the cemetery after a funeral **[Ø]**. But this was much better - because in the movie of my life, **my grandpa had promised me that he would try the next decade.** (Lindo 2008:144)

The decision to replace the reference to the grandfather's death with an abstract idea about the grandfather *trying the next decade* (in bold and underlined) is the outcome of a process that begins to take shape when the publisher encounters discourses around death in the original and metarepresents the prediction that parents will adopt the attitude of belief in relation to the proposition, *the reference to death is inappropriate for the target child readers.* The second order of intentionality that represents the publisher's prediction can be represented as follows:

> The **publisher** believes that **parents** believe that the reference to death is inappropriate for children.

Following Travalia (2019), the publisher's prediction about parents (metarepresented as theoretical constructs) and their predicted propositional attitude would have then been negotiated in an interaction that entailed the publisher giving feedback on the references that needed to be adapted to their shared cognitive models and shared translation goals, which could have only been achieved by the translator leveraging her ToM and adopting a stance that embeds the publisher's belief as a desire, thereby pushing the translator's stance to a third level of intentionality:

> The **translator** believes that the **publisher** desires the sanitation of references to death because the **publisher** believes that **parents** will believe that children should not be exposed to death.

What is notable in this intentional stance is the prioritisation of the predicted propositional attitude of parents when it comes to exposing children to discourses around death. There is no suggestion in Travalia's (2019) account that the publisher considered the possibility that allowing children to encounter death in the safety of a fictional narrative would have, in fact, fulfilled the didactic role that is often a function of children's literature in the US.

5.2 Omitted reference to race

The omission of the reference to race in the same passage (marked with Ø in the example from MG1 in 5.1.) demonstrates the situated nature of ToM and how the attribution of mental states can be guided by the prevailing social norms of the times. The movie scene referred to in the source text relates to the burial of *uno que era negro*, which roughly back-translates to 'someone who was black.' On the issue of translating according to what the target culture deems politically correct, Travalia said the following:

> *La sensibilidad hacia las diferencias de razas, religión, orientación sexual, y estatus, que muchos califican como corrección política, se valora mucho en la sociedad norteamericana actual. A los niños se les enseña a respetar al "otro" mediante la representación positiva de las diferencias o la eliminación completa de las mismas. Siguiendo esta idea, en la traducción al inglés de Manolito Gafotas se eliminó una serie de referencias posiblemente ofensivas para el público estadounidense*. (Travalia 2019:407)
>
> 'The sensibilities towards other races, religions, sexual orientations, and status, which many describe as political correctness, is currently valued highly in North American society. Children are taught to

> respect the "other" through the positive representation or blanket omission of these representations. Following the line of thinking, a series of potentially offensive references for a North American readership were eliminated from the English translation of *Manolito Gafotas*.' (translation my own)

What in a source context may be metarepresented as a playful intertextual parody of US television could become more problematic in the target context because of the heavy historical burden that racial discourses carry in the US. What we can surmise from Travalia's comment above is firstly, the rationale for eliminating references to race and secondly, the deliberation between adapting the reference to teach child readers respect through positive representation of racial differences or omitting the reference altogether. The decision to omit the reference means that the negotiation between the publisher and the translator led to the shared belief that the reference to race was tantamount to a negative portrayal of the African American community.

The decision was therefore not solely based on the prediction that parents would adopt a proposition attitude of belief that the reference is inappropriate for children. It was also based on how the reference, situated in a target cultural context and guided by target social norms, could have a negative impact on the economic success of the translation in the US. The shared aim here was not to avoid children encountering racial discourses (as was the case with the reference to death in the previous example) but to avoid grounding the narrative in controversial racial discourses that could be viewed as contravening socially acceptable discourses on race, thereby having a negative impact on the marketability of the translation in the US. The publisher's propositional attitude of belief that *the reference to race is inappropriate in the US*, therefore, becomes an attributed desire for the removal of the reference from the final product to avoid a potential controversy on racial grounds. The translator's intentional stance contains two different mental states then, both belonging to the publisher. Both attributions are necessary, however, to understand how the publisher's belief becomes a metarepresented desire which the translator then enacts by removing the reference:

> The **translator** knows that the **publisher** desires the reference to be omitted because the **publisher** believes the reference could be offensive.

Unlike the previous example where the publisher metarepresented parents as gatekeepers and predicted that they would find the reference to death inappropriate, the decision to remove racial references in the text is guided by social norms. Travalia (2019:408) describes the decision to omit racial references as *un ejemplo de la traducción social que respeta las normas actuales de la sociedad meta*

'an example of social translation that respects the current norms of the target culture'. Be that as it may, constructing the translator's intentional stance from the omission shows how ToM can be influenced and guided by socially situated phenomena. In this case, the situatedness of the reference to race ultimately resulted in its omission from the quoted passage.

6 Discussion: Shared cognition and ToM in translation

According to Hirvonen (2024:2), "shared cognition refers to an intelligent system of intersubjective (subject-to-subject) interaction in which translators jointly process information to analyse source material and construct meaning to produce target material, analyse the situation of translation production, solve problems, and make decisions." The examples analysed above satisfy many of these conditions: the source text was jointly analysed, and meaning was negotiated in intersubjective interactions. However, this interaction is between a publisher and a translator and not between translators of equal standing, which raises an important question about how ToM is shaped by the power dynamics in shared processes.

Hirvonen's definition does not factor in the power imbalance that was evident in the shared process between the publisher and the translator analysed above. Travalia's (2019) account of her interaction with the publisher brought to light that the translation process was dominated by the publisher, and that when it came to translating morally problematic themes (such as death or race), the translator's position was subjugated by the publisher's financial aims. Travalia was therefore not simply translating a text, she was tailoring the text to the publisher's predictions about two idealised and homogenised target reader categories: (1) parents that are morally conservative and (2) children that do not have the cognitive maturity to create an ethical buffer between the real world and fictionalised worlds. Whether parents are morally conservative or target child readers are cognitively immature, however, is not entirely the point. The point is that the publisher believed both propositions to be true, which led to the emergence of morally conservative parents and cognitively immature target readers as mental models, imposed on Travalia rather than negotiated with her as an equal stakeholder in the translation process.

Framing the translation process of MG2 as a situated and shared process therefore invites a reconsideration of the criticisms levelled at the translators, Moriarty and Travalia, for their role in sanitising MG1 and MG2 respectively. The overall approach of expurgating politically incorrect references cannot be explained as decisions taken solely by the translators. As Travalia's account reveals, and as the analysis above demonstrates, these decisions reflect the stance of the publisher, which prioritised parents presumably because they are

the ones who have the final say on whether to buy the book. One of the key achievements of Translation Studies has been to give the translator more visibility. In this case, understanding the translation process as a shared cognitive process has also allowed the publisher's influence on the translator to be more visible too.

6.1 Authorship in shared translation processes

An issue of growing concern when it comes to the debate around translation ethics is that the debates "tacitly assume[s] there is just one translator involved," and as a result, "scant attention has been paid to collaborative translation and shared agency" (Pym 2020:156). The case study analysed here is therefore located in a discussion on ethics that envisages translation as an activity that is carried out by more than one person.

In MG2, the translation decisions and the execution of those decisions were carried out by at least two people: the publisher and the translator. The publisher was the primary decision maker. The translator had a clear role too, but one that was subordinated by editorial interventions. While this is not tantamount to a criticism of the publisher, neither can we say that the publisher's intentional stance was based on "respect for the integrity of the other's linguistic product" (Pym, 2020:149). We also know that if the author of the original, Lindo, had not granted editorial licence to adapt the text, the translation might have not been carried out at all (Travalia 2019). Travalia (2019:399) clearly expressed the desire to translate in a way that gave target readers the opportunity to enjoy the text in a broadly similar way that source target readers were able to. Her propositional attitude before the translation began was that she (1) believed that children would enjoy the story without the need to adapt it and (2) believed that parents would not find problematic. Had the publisher not intervened and had Travalia been allowed to translate while still holding those two beliefs, MG2 would have been a very different text. The shared cognitive process that emerged in the translation of MG2 could have therefore only emerged in the way that it did because any change in the conditions would have jeopardised its existence.

The debate, therefore, should not be centred on whether the translation should have been sanitised or on how the translator could have avoided making wholesale changes. The debate that emerges from understanding the translation process as a shared cognitive activity, is about who really is responsible for the final product. Moreover, and returning to Pym's statement at the beginning of this section, postulating translation as something that is never carried out by a lone translator, but as an activity that depends on extended cognitive processes, such as those represented by the interaction between humans and technology in coupled systems, or as an activity that depends on shared processes among a

team of people, each with their own roles, can form the basis of an ethical discussion that frames agency and authorship in ways that are more aligned with the collaborative reality of translation processes.

6.2 ToM as a discourse-level tool

Current approaches to exploring the role of ToM in translation have so far focused on extrapolating brain imaging and behavioural data to investigate the activation of brain regions associated with ToM, among other metacognitive abilities (Sturm 2017; 2020; Szpak et al. 2020). However, these studies fall short of establishing a direct link between ToM activation and the competencies required for translation. Neuroimaging can identify areas in the brain involved in social cognition, for example, but it cannot reveal the intricacies involved in decision-making processes that occur in real-world translation tasks. This limitation underscores the need to continue developing qualitative, discourse-level analytical approaches, to generate hypotheses on the role of cognition in translation processes.

ToM and intentional stance as a discourse-level theoretical framework can shed light on the nexus between mind and context, or, per Toury's (2012:67–68) model of the translation process, the nexus between the translation act and the translation event. Retrospective accounts of how translators leverage their ToM, such as the one studied in this paper, corresponds to Toury's second problem, which Chesterman (2013:160) relabelled a REVERSE-ENGINEERED model because these types of models "reconstruct the possible or even probable route taken to a given factual solution." Chesterman's (2013:161) belief that the translation act cannot be directly observed, however, is only true if the mind is understood as an information-processing centre that is not shaped by its social environment. Such a view of cognition would invalidate the approach presented in this article for falling short of observing "actual" cognitive processes. However, viewing cognition as an extended phenomenon and framing the mind as constitutive of a system that depends on objects that exist beyond it, means that cognition is rendered observable by the very objects that are metarepresented in cognition.

Cognitive processes are therefore observable in the same way that norms are observable in the social interactions that shape a translation event, as Muñoz Martín (2016) has previously argued. In the case of MG2, the collaborative interaction between the publisher and translator is revealed in the decisions enacted by the translator. The translation product thus becomes an extension of this shared cognitive framework. Or put another way, the observable product (MG2) bore traces of translation behaviour that created a socio-politically acceptable translation, which not only embodies the beliefs and desires

negotiated in translation but also captures the situated nuances of the cognitive process.

Adopting ToM as a theoretical framework can be a first step towards exploring how the collaborative nature of translation projects is made feasible by a translator's ability to leverage their mindreading abilities effectively within professional constraints. However, there are limitations that need to be taken into consideration. While ToM and intentional stance can provide an insight into the mindreading abilities of translators, they can only ever provide a partial account of the shared cognitive processes that underpin translation events. That is why the approach here is not envisaged as all-encompassing but rather as a tool that can be triangulated with existing methods to continue developing models of cognitive processing in translation.

7 Conclusion

The aim of this article was to explore how Theory of Mind (ToM) can be applied as a discourse-level theoretical tool to describe shared cognitive processes in translation. To do this, the American English translation of the second Manolito Gafotas book was chosen as a case study because its translation required publishers and translators to metarepresent the beliefs and desires of target child readers and their parents and because the translator of the second Manolito book carried out an analysis of the translation process, which provided a useful window into the shared nature of the decision-making process.

To describe how the translator leveraged her ToM during the translation process, her intentional stance – based on Dennett's theory of intentionality – was reverse engineered from two translation decisions in the last scene of the story. The analysis revealed how the translator had to prioritise the beliefs and desires of the publisher in order to produce a translation that fulfilled its purpose, and it also revealed how the publisher's and translator's mental models, shaped by source cultural discourses, motivated the decision to remove a reference to race.

The post-analysis discussion moves the debate beyond micro-textual issues to understand how framing the translation process as a shared cognitive activity should lead to making the publisher's editorial interventions more visible, which means that the publisher should at least share the burden of the criticisms the translation received. An interesting avenue for future research would be to explore how the shared cognitive paradigm can help us redefine the question of authorship in translation copyright laws.

The main limitation of the study is that the data is not rich enough to yield generalisable conclusions and that ToM, as a theoretical tool, can only provide a partial account of cognitive processes in translation. That said, the first step

taken here suggests that ToM may play an important role in shared cognitive approaches in translation events and, as a discourse level tool, it can be applied in triangulated approaches with other methods, such as eye-tracking and think-aloud protocols, to provide qualitative depth in mixed methodological approaches.

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