

New Perspectives on Translation: Cătălina Iliescu, *Relevancia y traducción. Una retrospectiva con lentes actualizantes*

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Relevancia y traducción
Una retrospectiva
con lentes actualizantes



Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu

EDITORIAL COMARES



Interlingua

Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu's book *Relevance and Translation. A Retrospective through Updating Lenses* (*Relevancia y traducción. Una retrospectiva con lentes actualizantes*, Editorial Comares, 2022) offers a contemporary perspective on dramaturgical translation. The seven chapters of the book focus on translation, adaptation, dramaturgy and cultural appropriation: starting from an overview of verbal and non-verbal communication and the theory of relevance, the author moves towards the role of equivalence nowadays “between glory and

oblivion” and finishes with an analysis of relevant equivalence in the translation of dramatic texts, taking as an example Marin Sorescu's play *A treia țepă* (*La tercera estaca, Vlad the Impaler*).

The author's stated purpose for this study is to verify the applicability of the theory of relevance to the comparative analysis of the translation of theatre plays, adopting Ernst August Gutt's point of view (in the 1990s, Gutt linked cognitive linguistics and translation – as a communicative activity). However, Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu proposes an analytical tool (the “model of relevant equivalence”) to be used on a Romanian pseudo-historical play and its translations into English and Spanish. Moreover, the author moves beyond a simple comparative analysis and incorporates the receivers' reactions into the theory of relevance. By including the readers or the spectators in the analysis (their inferences and their expectations), Ms. Gheorghiu observes the text from a different angle, thus uniting all those involved in the act of

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communication (the author, the translator, the theatre director and the spectator/ reader).

In the chapter that focuses on the translation of theatre plays, Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu briefly reviews some of the most relevant positions on the interlingual translation of dramatic texts, starting with Susan Bassnett who started a debate in 1985 based on the metaphor of the labyrinth, adding the problem of cultural clash to the complicated conventions of text-stage translation. Ms. Gheorghiu underlines the importance of analysing and translating a text differently in different contexts and times, depending on the conventions, expectations and narratives of the audience at different historical moments, and emphasizing the collaboration between all those involved in the distribution of the final product. She also underlines the fact that her analysis aligns with the traditional translation position, which ascribes the translation of theatre to literary studies, as one of its constituent genres. From Susan Bassnett, Ms. Gheorghiu moves to Mary Gaddis Rose, who is a representative of the hermeneutic paradigm in modern translation studies, and who proposes an intertextual and multidimensional approach to the translation of theatre plays. Further on, she points out that some useful studies in her analysis of Sorescu's play are the volumes coordinated by Zuber-Skerritt, *The Language of Theatre* and *Page to Stage*, as they bring together the opinions of dramatic translation theorists, directors, translators, and authors, joining different points of view (literary, artistic, hermeneutic, semiotic, linguistic), in order to address the main difficulty of theatrical work (its teleological duplicity between text and stage). The end of this chapter offers the Spanish view on translating theater plays, introducing theorists such as Poyatos, Santoyo, Pujante, or Bobes Naves, representatives of a new generation of researchers who accompany their theoretical hypotheses with models applicable to theatrical texts translated into Spanish.

The chapter "Analysis of the relevant equivalence of the dramatic text *A treia țepă* (*La tercera estaca*, *Vlad the Impaler*) by Marin Sorescu" introduces an analysis model that addresses equivalence from a cognitive perspective, using concepts such as interpretive similarity, contextual effects, inferential communication or the principle of relevance, proposed by Sperber and Wilson and applied by Gutt to translation. With this new model of "relevant equivalence", Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu proposes some instruments for translation analysis that contribute to the transversality of translation studies and draw on the theoretical apparatus from related disciplines such as linguistics or literary studies. Not only does she explain the model of relevant equivalence, but she also verifies its viability by applying it to selected

lines from the pseudo-historical drama *A treia țeapă* by Marin Sorescu and its translations into English (*The Impaler's Third Stake*, 1980; *Vlad Dracula the Impaler*, 1987/ 1990) and Spanish (*La tercera estaca*, 2018). Ms. Gheorghiu also emphasizes the fact that she has taken into consideration the following factors: the complicated aspects of the source language or culture, which could cause difficulties in understanding; the differences in the perception of the source text even among a homogeneous group of Romanian readers/ spectators, as shown by a survey carried out with fifty Romanian respondents, who were asked to offer their understanding of some lines from Sorescu's play. Moreover, Ms. Gheorghiu also presents the results of the surveys that were applied on 25 English-speaking respondents and 20 Spanish respondents who were asked to comment on the English and the Spanish translations of the play. Although it would have been advisable to include responses from 50 English speakers and 50 Spanish speakers for a more balanced opinion, the results of the surveys confirm the usefulness of the relevance model for the comparative study of translated theatre plays.

The new analytical framework introduced by Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu encompasses parameters such as communicative intentions (as reflected in several target texts) or the relevance principle. The proposed "relevant equivalence model" provides an instrument for detailed introspection of the translation of the dramaturgical text, both in the case of linguistic and cultural differences. It is obvious that the book is aimed at researchers or students interested in translation studies, as it offers a thorough analysis useful for future studies in this field. Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu successfully demonstrates that the field of translation studies has more to offer.