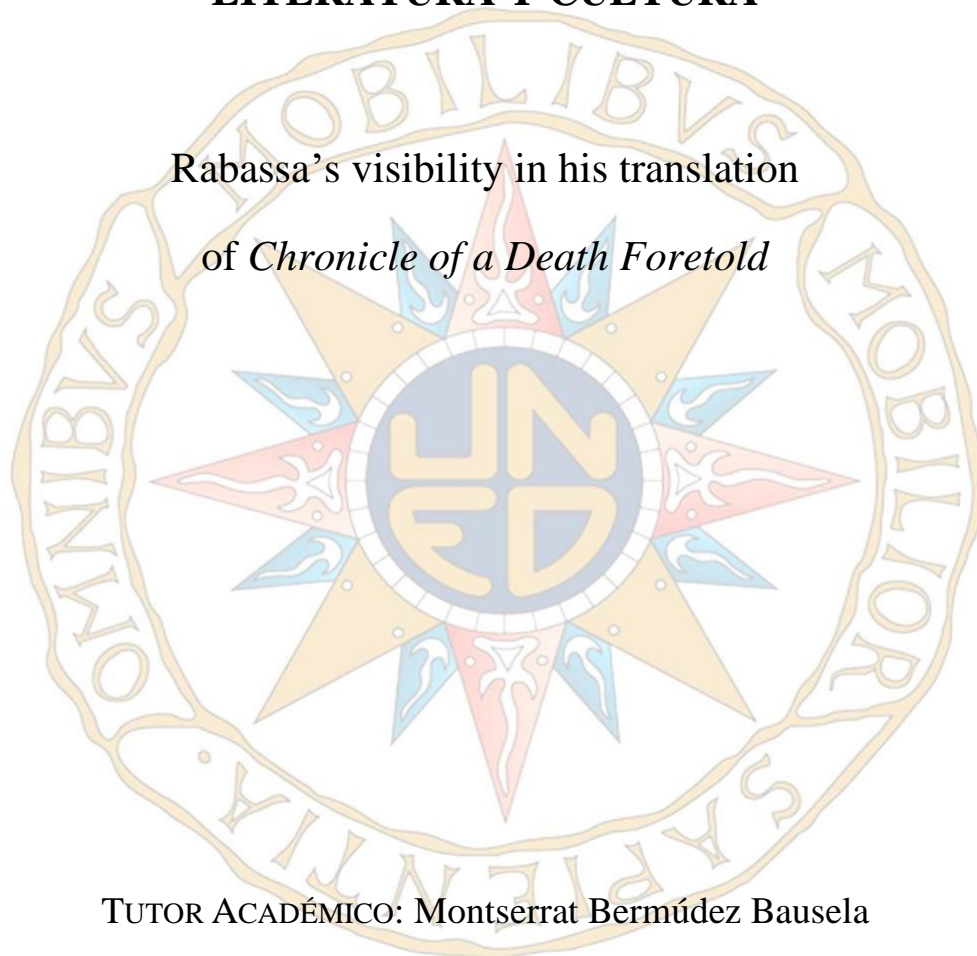




## **TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO**

### **GRADO EN ESTUDIOS INGLESES: LENGUA, LITERATURA Y CULTURA**

Rabassa's visibility in his translation  
of *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*



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To all the invisible and underpaid hard workers,  
who make possible communication among cultures in this globalized world,  
and, especially, to Ana and Eloína

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## INTRODUCTION

In the current state of affairs, the role of the translator within the publishing business seems to be in the shadow; in addition to this, it is generally thought that the less visible the translator, the better and more 'fluent' the translation is. Hence, it is no wonder that the readership of literary translations often take for granted that they are reading the foreign authors themselves. What they do not realise is that, in fact, they are reading an interpretation of their work by a translator who had to re-create it for a completely different culture, sometimes even in another time period.

This invisibility of both the translator and the translation has many consequences: translations tend to be more homogeneous in their rendering of different languages and cultures, along with the devaluation of the creative work of this trade. As a result, not only are translators paid less for their work, but also the cultural diversity of their works is limited by the demands stated on the publishers' guidelines. The overall concern of this dissertation is thus to draw attention to the valuable and, at the same time, undervalued role of the translator in the current literary market. I hope that my research on this topic will bring forward the issue of the invisibility of the translator for discussion at different levels: in the publishing industry, in the field of translation studies and among the general readership. In so doing, perhaps one day we will all benefit from greater quality and more heterogeneous translations, along with the recognition that the translation trade deserves.

The specific purpose of this research is to explore the importance of the translator's presence and voice, not just as a creative agent, but as a cultural mediator as well, challenging the current tendency towards 'fluency' in the Anglo-American publishing industry. Since translation, as we said, is a complex textual challenge and a socio-cultural activity, it has the ability of bridging the gap between Anglo and Hispanic cultures; yet there is always a risk of distorting and creating a stereotyped image of the foreign culture. The present paper bears in mind these ethical issues in tackling as a case study the analysis of Gregory Rabassa's translation: *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*.

The point of departure for this paper is Lawrence Venuti's views on the role of the translator (from the approach of Pure Translation Studies) in his seminal study

*The Translator's Invisibility*. In addition, we owe a debt of gratitude to other scholars' research that have approached the issue of invisibility in the English translation of Latin American literary works, such as Jeremy Munday's *Style and Ideology in Translation* (in a comparative study with an emphasis on the Descriptive Translation Studies approach), along with the exhaustive approach to the issue of Rabassa's visibility by María Guzmán's *Gregory Rabassa's Latin American literature* essay (framed from a translator-centred approach).

The research will be conducted on three stages: firstly, we will lay the theoretical foundation for the understanding of the phenomenon and the subsequent findings; secondly, we will set forth an analysis of the parallel text (in using this term, we are following the terminology of Corpus Linguistics), consisting of a source text (henceforth ST) and a target text (henceforth TT), grouped into the different levels of the language that have been deemed relevant to the research; lastly, we will present an analysis of the paratextual data of the TT that this research has gathered. As a TT, this research has chosen Rabassa's *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*; hence, our ST is García Márquez's *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*.

Thanks to the comprehensive analysis of the texts, it is possible to observe the translation procedures applied throughout the TT, the fluctuation of the translator in his overall strategy and, through the analysis of the paratexts originated around the TT, how the latter has been received. All these features will bring to the foreground the presence of Rabassa as a co-creative force of the book.

## 1. SUBJECT OF STUDY

### 1.1. Questions of Research

At the core of this research lies the objective of answering the following questions:

- What degree of visibility can be found in Rabassa's text?
- Does the adopted translation strategies serve to bring attention to the foreign culture and language of the ST?
- Is Rabassa's piece of work a submissive servant of the 'fluency' trend or is it a 'resistant' translation?
- Is Rabassa transforming the ST into a new creative piece?

### 1.2. State of Affairs' Overview

The path we are about to explore was only possible thanks to the tenacity and perseverance of reputed translated scholars, such as Lawrence Venuti, Jill Levine, María Guzmán and Jeremy Munday. They were audacious enough to go against the grain in addressing the underrated image of the trade, along with all the other ethical issues, so this paper will follow their steps.

Lawrence Venuti coined the term 'invisibility' in his thorough diachronic study entitled *The Translator's Invisibility: a history of translation*, laying the groundwork for additional research in this field. The appalling conditions of the trade and the increasing ethnocentric linguistic violence in the assimilation of the 'otherness' of foreign cultures are the main points raised in this first tracing of the genealogy of the problem. The socio-cultural and economic power dynamics of today demand 'fluent' translations that in turn result in the erasing of the mediator. As regards to the subject in our case study, Gregory Rabassa, Venuti finds some of his views about the practice of translation similar to the common self-effacing attitudes held by their colleagues (*Rethinking* 3).

Jill Levine's *The Subversive Scribe: Translating Latin American Fiction* addresses the vital role of the translator's presence in Latin American literature, attempting to make it more visible and understood. She overtly advocates for destabilising the traditional role of the translator as a mere servile scribe. Levine considers that, owing to the fact that "[s]omething is destroyed—the form of the original—but meaning is reproduced through another form" (7), this practice must



be a collaborative form of re-writing in which translators, if they want to succeed, need to be writers.

Jeremy Munday's *Style and Ideology in Translation; Latin American writing in English* is concerned with the cultural implications of translating foreign cultures from an Eurocentric perspective, as well as the inevitable distortion of the diverse 'voices' (or styles) of so many foreign authors, which are rendered by just a few translators. This interdisciplinary, cross-comparative study underscores two paradigmatic instances that are closely related to our issue: the many voices of Gabriel García Márquez through different translators, as well as the voices lent to different authors by Gregory Rabassa. Munday regards Rabassa's views on "the translator's role as essentially passive" and he adds that "he views himself as even more invisible than most other translators" (126). In his rigorous corpus-based analysis of Rabassa's style, he concludes that Rabassa's idiolect conditions his propensity to use modern American colloquialisms in dialogues, as well as to use creative collocations based on the sound and rhythm of the words. Moreover, he shows a tendency towards syntactic calquing and other interesting features grounded in the lexical priming theory, a psycholinguistic approach that is outside the scope of the present research.

María Guzmán's essay *Gregory Rabassa's Latin American literature: a Translator's Visible Legacy* offers a further approach to our subject of study by taking Rabassa as her subject, trying to show his visibility through his vast legacy. She delves into Rabassa's translations and insights to emphasise his contribution to the development of the Latin American Boom, attesting his role in shaping the voices of several Latin American authors belonging to this movement and in helping to build up a cultural legacy that goes beyond disseminating literary works (83). Moreover, Guzmán foregrounds the figure of this translator as an active creator who has been praised by both critics and readership, representing an uncommon example within the profession. Her book illustrates central aspects of his relationship with Gabriel García Márquez and the freedom this 'commissioner' gave him to tackle the task. Guzmán's translator-centred approach, albeit not addressing the specific literary work that is our case study, illustrates central aspects of Rabassa's relationship with Gabriel García Márquez and his work; namely, the freedom that he granted him to tackle the translation or Rabassa's original 'method' of work: reading for the first time the book while rendering it into

the TT, so as to communicate the sense of newness to his intended audience (60). After a close examination of his work, she concludes that Rabassa is neither invisible nor subordinate of the original, but one more creator that makes a personal contribution to the literary works.

Very little, however, has been said with respect to *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* on the matter of invisibility. At any rate, this abovementioned research will serve as our foundation for discussing the issue of translator's visibility in Gregory Rabassa's rendering of *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. The Material

This research will gather data from two different sources: the comparative analysis of a parallel text and certain paratexts on the translated work of Rabassa that is our case study. The parallel text analysis consists of dividing Gabriel García Márquez's literary work entitled *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* (which is the ST) into translation units that will be paired to the likewise divided translation of Gregory Rabassa's *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (which is the TT). For the former, the chosen edition is the one published by Mondadori and RBA in 2004, and for the latter, it is the digital edition published by Penguin in 2014.

In addition, both types of paratexts will be examined; firstly, the epitexts concerning the reception of the TT such as book reviews, interviews and critical analysis and, secondly, the peritexts surrounding not only the chosen publication, but also other printed ones.

*Crónica de una muerte anunciada* is a fictional literary work, first published in 1981 and shortly after, in 1983, translated into English. This novel belongs to the so-called Latin American Boom movement and Rabassa was between the first translators who helped to popularize it among the Anglo readership. Indeed, the movement achieved such worldwide success that has greatly influenced the Western canon; as Venuti explains, it was one of the cultural trends that during the 60's transformed the Anglo-British canon, owing to its narrative experimentation that allowed "interrogating dominant literary values," while "influencing the development of new English-language literatures" (*Translator's Invisibility* 266-267).

### 2.2. Research

According to the map drawn by Holmes (following Munday's *Introducing Translation Studies*), translation studies can be divided into three main areas: theoretical, descriptive and applied (17). The questions raised in this paper spring from theory and will also need the implementation of both descriptive and applied areas. In turn, these will need to be fed with the results of a parallel text analysis in order to reach a conclusion.

In regards to the theoretical field, we start from the previously defined notions of 'invisibility' and 'foreignization.' It will be required to contrast the findings observed in the 'generalizations' thrown by the textual analysis of a parallel text, following a descriptive approach. In addition, we will examine, following an applied approach, the epitexts surrounding the TT, focusing our attention on interviews and reviews published in different media, as well as the peritexts of diverse editions of the book.

As far as the descriptive translation area is concerned, this research is grounded in Gideon Toury's Descriptive Translation Studies (henceforth DTS) theory, in order to identify norms and laws that govern the translation process of this literary work. More specifically, we apply a process-oriented DTS theory to obtain through a systematic description the 'initial norm' governing the TT. For this purpose, Toury suggests using two different sources: the analysis of the product itself and the statements made by the 'sender' and reviewers of the TT (177-178). Therefore, we begin by conducting a textual analysis of the parallel text to identify 'regularities of behaviour' that show a pattern; in turn, these generalizations should expose the 'initial norm' or overall strategy adopted by Rabassa in this text.

However, for the sake of clarity, the terminology of the observed 'translation shifts' and other operational procedures in our analysis of coupled pairs will follow the taxonomy and process proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet's model. Even though their terminology of the two poles in the general strategy is different—they speak about 'direct' translation and 'oblique' translation, whereas DTS theory speaks about 'adequacy' and 'acceptability'—these terms likewise describe whether the translation is, respectively, source language-oriented or target language-oriented (88).

Before starting, the researcher must take into account the specific techniques that signal the overall strategy. These procedures can be observed at three levels; namely, at a semantic, grammatical and textual level. Subsequently, in the analysis of the parallel text, the researcher identifies when any of the most used procedures in 'direct' translation—such as borrowings, equivalences, calques or literal translations—is applied. At the same time, the researcher identifies any instances of other translation procedures signalling an 'oblique' strategy. Procedures such as transposition or modulation will only be relevant when they

are deemed 'optional'—as they result in marked structures—but not when they are considered 'obligatory'—as a result of the natural asymmetries between the language pair. Other procedures, signalling an 'oblique' strategy, that will need to be looked into are: adaptation, omission, economy, compensation (of translation loss), generalization and specification (88-93).

The progression of this part of the method can be conveniently divided into the following steps: identifying the units of translation, examining the ST, reconstructing the message's metalinguistic context, evaluating the stylistic effect and, finally, revising the TT. Due to the limitation of extension of the present paper, only a selection of paradigmatic examples of the parallel text will be commented and illustrated.

The next analysis is subdivided into two parts, following Gérard Genette's notion of 'paratext,' that is, into peritexts and epitexts (242-243). The access to the former is provided by both digital and physical libraries, as well as by the preview option of online marketplaces for books; whereas the latter texts are gathered from online newspaper archives and specialised translation journals.

Lastly, the results will be read in the light of the theoretical background exposed in the first part of this paper, focusing especially on the notions of 'invisibility' and 'foreignization'—the more foreign the resulting 'initial norm' of the analysis is, the more visible the translator becomes. This theoretical foundation also serves as a way to contrast Rabassa's insights about the issue with those of Venuti and, then, to confirm whether our findings coincide with their views.

On the whole, this research combines quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative, owing to the fact that the textual analysis is grounded in finding the predominant strategy or 'initial norm' by analysing the number of procedures linked to one strategy or the other ('direct' or 'indirect')—although the aim of this paper is not to quantify them; and qualitative, due to the need of gathering reviews of the TT's reception, as well as recollecting the insights provided by the 'sender' itself in his translation procedures.

### 3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

#### 3.1. Invisibility

To ascertain the degree of visibility of a translator, we should first reflect upon the subject of invisibility within the practice of translating. Translators play a fundamental role in allowing foreign-language communities to access the works of a given author. Their task can be described as the recoding of the ST's semantic signs and message into the language of a TT. The resultant textual product, in turn, will introduce an author to a foreign audience, and whether this author is going to be liked in those speech communities or not relies, to a large extent, on the work of the translator.

Yet, whenever a translator renders a literary work into a foreign language, this will not be 'the' translation of the literary work, but 'a' translation, one possibility amongst many others, determined by which linguistic choices are made, which translation strategies are used and, overall, by the translator's individuality. Unfortunately, this textual presence of the translator is too often ignored by the receiver, who, more often than not, believes to appreciate 'the author's style' in the translated literary work, without considering that they are actually reading someone else's words.

Venuti deems that this faceless role is an imposition of the current literary market. In his book *The Translator's Invisibility*, he explores the issue throughout the history of the trade and identifies a constant tendency in the Anglo-Saxon world towards 'fluidity' in its pursuit of achieving the illusion of 'transparency.' This fluent discourse, however, brings about an ethnocentric linguistic violence against the cultural values of the foreign literary works. According to this strategy, the translator ought to aim for the readability of the TT by using an overall strategy, along with the necessary procedures to conform the standards of 'acceptability.' (1-2). Therefore, following Venuti, the literary market encourages the invisibility of the translator.

In the abovementioned seminal study, Venuti termed the notion of 'invisibility'—and by extension its opposite, visibility—which refers to these multiple practices that create an illusion of discourse's transparency that serves to mask the translated work as if it were the original. As he puts it:

A translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers, and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text—the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the “original” (1).

At the same time, this is exacerbated by the fact that, more often than not, translators are not even mentioned in the reviews or even in the cover of the published TT. All of this has contributed to the marginalized status of both translators—as ‘shadowy figures’—and translations—as ‘derivative works’ (8). Invisibility has thus multifarious consequences; namely, “the invisibility of the translator as a co-producer of a text [...], the invisibility of the translator's activity within the text of the translation itself [...] and the invisibility of translation as a cultural practice and of the products of that process” (Gambier, Doorslaer 200). All things considered, the consequences of invisibility are many and detrimental not only to translators themselves, but also to cross-cultural communication.

### **3.2. Strategies in Translation**

As we have previously mentioned, the translation of a literary text consists not only on recoding the text, but also on bringing together two different cultures. Whenever translators encounter a problem to bridge the gap between the two cultures, they will have to make use of their problem-solving skills to accomplish such a task. Even though there are many possible translation procedures, the translator's behaviour can be framed within a general strategy which is considered the ‘initial norm’ or overall strategy. This basic choice obliges literary translators to position themselves either closer to the target culture or to the source culture, as it was already acknowledged in Schleiermacher's 1813 lecture “On the Different Methods of Translating,” when he stated that “there are only two possibilities. Either the translator leaves the author in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him; or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him” (Seruya, Miranda 258). This was the starting point for Venuti's notions of ‘foreignization’ and ‘domestication’—Venuti, however, argues that rather than being oppositional binomials, these two strategies are really two ends of a continuum. Choosing one or the other “can

emphasize the text's otherness or familiarity from a target culture point of view" (Baker et al. 29). In other words, depending on the degree of 'adequacy' and 'visibility' the literary translators want to achieve, they will employ a different strategy.

**3.2.1. Foreignization.** Foreignization is defined as an exoticizing strategy, in which the translator becomes visible, along with the text, which is rendered strange and unfamiliar, but closer to the SL and the source culture (González 80). Venuti claims that this strategy, while challenging the target culture's aesthetic values, enhances cultural diversity. In following this attempt at being faithful to the ST's syntax and semantics, Venuti reasons that a more obscure and resistant translation arises, a TT that defies the prevalence of domesticating strategies, creating an opacity that calls attention not only to the subject behind the translation, but also to the translation and to the act of translating itself. As a result, the SL's linguistic and cultural differences will be foregrounded, and domestic cultural values transformed (*Translator's Invisibility* 308). Venuti concludes that foreignizing is thus a desirable method of cultural intervention which "can be a form of resistance against ethnocentrism and racism, cultural narcissism and imperialism" (20), serving as a helpful device to redress the current cultural inequality with the Anglo-speaking world. Put another way, foreignization harks back to the notion of 'literal' translation and overlaps with Nida's concept of 'formal equivalence,' Toury's concept of 'adequacy' or Vinay and Darbelnet's 'direct translation,' all of them describing ST-oriented translator's behaviour strategies.

Among the most frequent translation procedures associated with this overall strategy, we can find, at the semantic level, borrowings, calques and literal translations to address unknown concepts or proper names; and at the syntactic level, the tendency to preserve the ST's syntactic patterns (*Introducing* 89).

**3.2.2. Domestication.** At the other end of the continuum, we find the domestication strategy, which favours the readability of the TT, rendering the ST less strange and more fluent by naturalising it through the use of specific translation procedures, such as transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation (following Vinay and Darbelnet's taxonomy) (90). In this way,



untranslatable words and cultural references are substituted by others that are familiar to the reader, making the reading experience smoother. This notion is already found in Nida's concept of 'dynamic equivalence,' which postulates that "translators [...] adjust their texts to the target culture, to harmonize them linguistically in terms of grammar and lexis, and to make them sound 'natural'" (*Routledge* 184). Nida openly advocates for an identification with the target culture, which is grounded on his adherence to essentialism, that is to say, the existence of an underlying reality that is translatable ( Pym 8). In other words, the ST's message can be transported to the TL as to obtain a response in the TT's readership that will be essentially similar to the one perceived by the ST's readership (*Routledge* 28).

Yet for some scholars this strategy is particularly detrimental to the literary translation practice, inasmuch as it can lead to the alteration of the ST's propositional meaning due to, among other things, omissions or exaggerations, as well as the transformation of ethical and moral issues; according to Venuti, "[t]he foreign text, then, is not so much communicated as inscribed with domestic intelligibilities and interests" (*Translation* 438). Furthermore, even though the ST becomes more accessible to the TT's readership, the translator will remain invisible under the fluency spell and the illusion of transparency. Put another way, domestication harks back to the notion of 'free' translation and overlaps with Nida's concept of 'dynamic equivalence', Toury's concept of 'acceptability' or Vinay and Darbelnet's 'direct translation,' all of them describing TT-oriented translator's behaviour strategies.

### **3.3. The Task of the Translator**

**3.3.1. Venuti's views.** Venuti, following Derrida's arguments in *The Margins of Philosophy*, describes translation as a form of writing that is the result of an interpretation and subsequent transformation of a given chain of signifiers in the ST into another chain of signifiers in the TT. In neither text these chains of signifiers are an original unity, because meaning is always deferred and differential, inasmuch as it is based on an endless chain of relations and exclusions among signifiers—as, for instance, occurs with the phenomena of intertextuality. Therefore, "both foreign text and translation are derivative: both

consist of diverse linguistic and cultural materials that neither the foreign writer nor the translator originates" (*Translator's Invisibility* 18). Little wonder is it that, throughout this book, Venuti calls to subvert the 'shadowy' existence of the translator by reclaiming not only legal rights of authorship for them—challenging conventional views on originality—but also their visibility.

Moreover, in *The Translator's Invisibility*, Venuti puts especial emphasis on translation as a cultural practice that exerts enormous power in the creation of foreign cultures' identities—often described in terms of transcultural violence. Even though such violence is partly inevitable and inherent to the translation process, he calls for a dissident approach in the chapter entitled "Call to Action." Translators should be aware that their practices can cause profound social effects, leading to either social change or to preservation of domestic values—especially when the TT's culture occupies a dominant position—and must take into account that one "always exercises a choice concerning the degree and direction of the violence at work in any translating" (19). Therefore, the translator should try to reduce "the ethnocentric reduction of possibilities," in order to represent the diversity of other foreign cultures (*Scandals* 82).

In the same vein, Venuti argues in *The Scandals of Translation* that "a translator can choose to redirect the ethnocentric movement of translation so as to decentre the domestic terms that a translation project must inescapably utilize" (83). In the same publication, in order to uphold his argument on diversity, Venuti brings up Antoine Berman's concept of 'ethics of difference' (81). This concept was termed in "Trials of the Foreign" and hinges on a required degree of respect for the ST's cultural otherness by avoiding cultural assimilation, without becoming a servant of the SL. The remedy proposed by Venuti is to adopt a foreignizing strategy, so as to create a 'resistant' text in which the translator's creativity reaches a compromise between the target culture's interests and the respect to the otherness of the source culture. It follows that, in so doing, translators inevitably inscribe themselves in their produced text (188).

Venuti's conclusion, in brief, is that not only should translators be visible subjects, but their translations should also be regarded as creative works in their own right.

**3.3.2. Rabassa's views.** Exploring Rabassa's heritage, one can find a wealth of documents—articles, reviews and even a memoir—that delve deeply into the process of translating, going beyond the usual technical problems, and exposing aesthetics, as well as philosophical and theoretical issues.

Rabassa's views on translation illustrate the conflicting preoccupations that arise at the moment of translation, and he often expresses them through literary devices. For instance, in his article “No Two Snowflakes Are Alike: Translation as Metaphor,” Rabassa gives his insights about the problematics of equivalence and untranslatability by using the metaphor that is in the article's title. Thus, according to him, the task of the translator necessarily involves the transformation of the text, since a word in one language cannot find its equal in another language. A word is a metaphor for an object or even for another word, whose equivalents are brimming with different connotations that reflect cultural differences. The translator must create a new metaphor that fits the original one, so as to render the personal and cultural nuances of the ST and the SL (1-3). Unfortunately, in doing so, “we tend to acculturate foreign sensitivities, sensibilities, and reflexes into our own milieu with the requisite changes,” affirms Rabassa at a later stage of his career in his book *If This Be Treason* (7)—a self-reflective memoir on translation built around the concept of ‘treason’ (once more, another extended metaphor).

In an essay tellingly entitled “The Ear in Translation,” Rabassa maintains that a good translation practice is not only a matter of grammar, syntax or diction, but also of how the TT should sound to reflect that of the ST (82). Rabassa, therefore, acknowledges that translation is a form of writing, although a constrained one that “is like acting because [...] when you're doing the book, you are García Márquez – you are playing him and someone else might play it a little differently,” as he reflects in an interview granted to Susan Bernofsky (Los Angeles Times). This metaphor of the translator as an actor brings forward the former as a co-creator of the literary work.

Nevertheless, after a lengthy deliberation in *If This Be Treason*, he does not rule out that there is also a place for ‘betrayal’ of the ST and its culture in this narrow form of writing. Indeed, Rabassa admits being guilty of such ‘treason,’ which he considers unavoidable in the face of the ambiguous nature of language—“[w]ords are treacherous things, much more so than any translator

could ever be” (6). In turn, such innate feature of the language itself accounts for the ambiguities found in any translation. The ambiguity of language, then, is the root cause of ‘treason’ because, in the first place, it is something idiosyncratic to the original text—although in this case allowed or even unnoticed by readership of the ST and thus not considered ‘treason.’

Immediately thereafter, Rabassa draws attention to the notion of ‘uncertainty,’ which he believes to be inherent to the translation practice (7). On this basis, he concludes that translators must be doubters at all times and embrace uncertainty. Accordingly, as González suggests, Rabassa’s words “call for translators to be attentive to the circumstances surrounding the translating situation and to translate with their ‘eyes open’” (54). This call for self-reflection—especially since Rabassa, a member of a hegemonic culture, is conscious of his active role in the prefiguration of the identities of other speech communities—can be seen as an ethical stance of the translator.

Throughout his career, Rabassa regards translation as an ongoing conversation between him and the author; as a matter of fact, he claims that he does not “think that any translation can really be called either definitive or final” (51), and he goes even further, comparing the task of the translator with the labour of Sisyphus (in reference to the Greek myth) (Snowflakes 8). To Rabassa, translation is the logic continuation of the ST, a dialogue that fosters cultural exchange through a certain degree of camaraderie (Guzman 81).

Moreover, in an interview given to Hoeksema, Rabassa defends that translators ought to receive more consideration and recognition, as they are more than middlemen, inasmuch as they hold a unique position in the literary world: “The translator may be the one person who exists simultaneously in two different worlds: as he works he must be both critic and writer, writer and reader.”

In his essay entitled “Words Cannot Express...The translation of Cultures,” Rabassa conceives himself even more overtly as a creator and stresses that he does not believe he should be in a position of invisibility or subordination (84); on the other hand, it is not difficult to come across seemingly self-contradictory statements as the one reproduced in his obituary: “The primary aim of any translator, Dr. Rabassa believed, was to convey the author's personality and to capture the imagination and energy of the writing, while making it sound natural and idiomatic to the second language” (Washington Post).

On the whole, all of the abovementioned documents draw us nearer to the voice of the translator that is our subject, showing his inner conflicts—as, for instance, expressed by the use of the cliché *traduttore-traditore* in his memories—and his conception of the art of this trade. We can assert that Rabassa is conscious of both, his responsibility as cultural mediator and his function as a creative agent who must go beyond the impossibility of finding the “*mot juste*” (Guzmán 38). In this light, we should then proceed to the analysis of the parallel text.

## 4. ANALYSIS OF THE PARALLEL TEXT

After making a close comparison of the parallel text, the analysis will be broken down into three levels that represent the main structural elements of the material.

### 4.1. At the Semantic Level.

**4.1.1. Equivalences at the word level.** First of all, we start by commenting on some of the most significant findings that point out towards what Vinay and Darbenet termed 'oblique' strategy (TT-oriented). Several translation procedures have allowed for a more domesticated rendering of the TT; for instance, there are several adaptations of cultural references, as illustrated by the replacement of "*polaco*" (García 35) by "Jew" (*Chronicle* Loc 85) and "*verbena de caridad*" (35) by "charity bazaar" (Loc 85), both of them resulting on a cultural assimilation, a practice designed for the readability of the TT; moreover, there are some instances of loss of evoked meaning in some Americanisms, as in "*espejuelos*" (39), which is translated into standard English: "glasses," (Loc 350) or "*quinta*" (40) (in Colombia, a house with a garden), translated into a rather different edifice, a "farmhouse" (Loc 363).

Generalization occurs in some cultural references as well, as in "*cantar valsas*" (37) that is rendered as "singing songs" (Loc 850), which arguably sounds better to the American ear due to alliteration and rhyme. Other instances of the naturalizing effect of this technique—which is not necessary to the target culture's understanding—are exemplified in the loss of nuance in the translation of emotions, such as "*exclamó asustada*" (16) rendered as "she explained with surprise" (Loc 113), and again, "*susto*" (19) into "surprise" (Loc 113), or "*lunes ingrato*" (9) as "distressing Monday" (Loc 42). In some cases, the image the TT reader receives is strikingly different, like when Rabassa translates "*en el regazo*" (20) as "to their chests" (Loc 162) through a modulation procedure in which a body part is substituted by another.

Indeed, the TT is peppered with many instances that make us wonder whether there has been some kind of misinterpretation, owing to the fact that there is a change of meaning that does not seem justified, as in the following: the compound noun "*bosque de higuerones*" (9) (an English equivalent of Colombian

*higuerón* is either a ‘strangler fig’ or ‘golden fig tree’, which is a rather gnarled tree, hardly used for timber) is rendered as “grove of timber trees” (Loc 40), evoking a quite different image of aligned straight trees, in the key dream of the opening paragraph; “*no parecía resfriado*” (23) is translated into “he didn’t seem to be chilly” (Loc 191); “*ocurrencia providencial*” (21) into “providential happening” (Loc 172); “*ortofónica*” (35) (a type of gramophone or old record player) into “music box” (Loc 302); “*sin saber para qué era*” (40) into “without knowing why” (Loc 362), and lastly, the even more striking translation of “*dos años después*” (42) as “two months later” (Loc 385), slightly altering the understanding of the plot itself—all of which might otherwise be regarded as an attempt to ‘improve’ or re-write the ST.

On the other hand, instances that signal towards the opposite strategy, that is, ‘direct’ strategy, are also abundant. As regards to proper names and place names, they are transferred unchanged—with some exceptions, like the name of the ranch “*Divino Rostro*” (18), which is rendered into “Divine Face” (Loc 208) through a calque procedure, or the toponym “*Cayena*” (38), for which Rabassa prefers to use a coreferential noun phrase, “Devil’s Island” (Loc 338), which is probably better known by the target audience—unless they have a diacritic mark as in “*María*” (10) or “*Guzmán*” (14), in which case they have been adapted to the English spelling conventions (but oddly not in “*Escolástica Cisneros*” (Loc 1041)).

This procedure of borrowing is also adopted in some instances of one of the most challenging elements to tackle in any translation: the so-called cultural referents, that is, cultural-specific elements that only exist in the ST’s culture. Rabassa decides to display some local colour by introducing his readers to the typical Colombian dance “*merengue*” (Loc 452), to “the whirl of the *cumbiamba* dance” (Loc 467), or to the “*Papiamento*” (a creole language spoken in the Caribbean) (Loc 343)—all of them transferred verbatim in the TT through borrowing; while with some food names the translator has opted for a lexical calque, as in “*sopa de crestas de gallo*” which is rendered into “cockscorn soup” (Loc 177).

The literal translation procedure is also often found as exemplified in “[u]n *mierda*” (15) rendered as “[a] shit” (Loc 109), which is not so common in English as a countable noun. This trend runs parallel and in opposite direction throughout the TT to the noticeable exceptions abovementioned, as if Rabassa attempts to

be as faithful as possible, not only to the lineal ordering of the sentences in the ST, but to diction as well. Take this as a further example of literalness: “*las buenas artes del valor y la prudencia*” (13) transferred into “the good arts of valor and prudence” (Loc 84), in which ‘valor’ and ‘prudence’ could have been easily substituted by more frequently used words—we can take into consideration how this results in a higher register of the TT as well.

**4.1.2. Equivalences above the word level.** Collocations, fixed expressions, idioms and other set phrases are being examined in the same fashion as above. Let us first focus on the procedures that reveal the application of an ‘oblique’ strategy. Some noun phrases have been substituted by collocations that are not even equivalent, as in “*parranda pública*” (20) that turns into “public festivities,” (Loc 157) which seems somehow a more institutionalized event than a “wedding” (Loc 167), which is a further translation Rabassa chooses for “parranda” (21); or “*lo compré a cualquier precio*” (10) transferred as “bought it at a cheap price” (Loc 119), probably aiming at naturalizing the TT.

Other noun phrases may include a postmodifier that is omitted in the translation, as in “*vestidos de paño oscuro de la boda*” (20) that translates into “dark wedding suits” (Loc 165), thus not mentioning the clothing’s fabric; or reversely, add a premodifier: “*durante el viaje*” (31) that results in the collocation “during the whole trip” (Loc 263). Spanish collocations also have been replaced by other English collocations in spite of changing the propositional meaning, as illustrated by the rendering of “*otras cuatro no lo creyeron cierto*” (34) as “four others weren’t sure” (Loc 299). There are some interesting examples of compensation procedure in place that render a noun phrase (‘*baúl de consolución*’) into two that may be more familiar to the target readers, as in “*no le quedaba ni un baúl de consolución para guardar tanto dinero*” (42) that becomes “he didn’t even have an old trunk where he could keep so much consolation money” (Loc 388).

As regards to idioms and other set phrases, there are instances of simplification that are not obligatory, as exemplified in the colloquial phrase “*cayó en la cuenta*” (24) that is reduced to just “he realized” (Loc 203), which clearly results in a more neutral register. In the rendering of the Colombian idiom “*de mala ley*” (28) that means ‘quarrelsome,’ Rabassa opts for “lowlifes” (Loc 252),



which is an optional modulation that does not fit the intended propositional meaning, although it keeps its expressive one. Furthermore, a colloquial Americanism “*vainas de mujer*” (40) is transferred as “woman problems” (Loc 356) by a specification technique—‘*vainas*’ refers to any kind of issue, not necessarily a problem—becoming a more neutral register as well. Other fixed phrases are likely affected by simplification, such as “*cerrada de luto hasta la empuñadura*” (35) that is rendered into a mere “who was in mourning” (Loc 301).

Lastly, as a definitive illustration of the extent to which the ST has been recreated, the common Spanish idiom “*juega limpio*” (42), which could have easily found its English equivalent in ‘you play fair,’ has instead become “you don’t beat around the bush” (Loc 378)—an expression with a different value, as it rather conveys the idea of ‘you get to the point’—that can be understood as a pragmatic translation through a modulation procedure.

On the other side of the direct-oblique continuum, we find a few fixed expressions whose translation is carried out through the unusual—for this type of phrases—word by word procedure. At one point, the mother says “*de esa agua no beberás mientras yo esté viva*” (15), ironically implying that the pretender will never have her daughter, which is a play on words of the metaphorical sense of the word ‘water’ in two well-known Spanish sayings: “*nunca digas de esta agua no beberás*” (whose closer equivalent would be ‘never say never’) and “*agua que no has de beber, déjala correr*” (whose equivalent would be “don’t be a dog in the manger”). This utterance is transferred into “you won’t have a drink of that water as long as I’m alive” (Loc 105), which can puzzle readers and hint at something culturally distinct beyond their domestic knowledge. Some idioms have been translated by the calque procedure, even if the target reader is left clueless as to what their meaning might be, as in “*mi hermana sintió pasar el ángel*” (23), which in Colombia means ‘to remain pensive and silent,’ being transferred as “my sister felt the angel pass by” (Loc 199); it is even stranger the rendering of “*ya está de colgar en un alambre*” (37), meaning that the girl is fit for marriage, as “she’s all set to be hooked” (Loc 331); however, some calques are more transparent, as “*parece que también está nadando en oro*” (32) that becomes “it also seems that he’s swimming in gold” (Loc 276), which makes sense as the semantic field of the paragraph concerns water activities. Likewise, metaphors and other literary devices, being a trial for the translator, are mostly kept untouched when possible,

such as in “*piel cocinada a fuego lento por el salitre*” (31) that becomes “skin slowly roasted by saltpetre” (Loc 261); “*pobreza de espíritu*” (37) or “*penuria de espíritu*” (38) becoming “poverty of spirit” (Loc 329) and “penury of spirit” (Loc 333) respectively; or even those maintaining the exact same word order in the whole sentences, such as “*siempre se levantaba con cara de mala noche*” (14) that is transferred as “he always got up with the face of a bad night” (Loc 97) and “*hubiera jugado sus cartas marcadas hasta las últimas consecuencias*” (46) as “she had played out her marked cards to the final consequences” (Loc 429).

## 4.2. At the Grammatical Level

**4.2.1. Syntactic structure.** By and large, the syntactic interventions made in the TT are due to the idiosyncratic differences in the pair of languages, that is, they are obligatory procedures that render the TT acceptable according to the TL’s sanctioned grammar.

Nevertheless, some Spanish structures have been kept, pointing to a somehow resistant text that allows the reader to experience the foreign rhythm; for instance, the following dependent clause, “*donde estaban los dos hombres que esperaban a Santiago Nasar para matarlo*” (20), rendered into “where the two men were who were waiting for Santiago Nasar in order to kill him” (Loc 159), would have sound more natural by shortening the hypotactic structure with a reduction of the defining relative clause by a whiz-deletion. Likewise, this sentence shows a marked structure, since usually this type of embedded clause headed by the pronoun ‘who’ is placed immediately after the noun phrase that is modifying. In addition, the use of an abbreviated version of the subordinated conjunction ‘in order to’ in the causative phrase would have shortened this utterance.

Sometimes Rabassa also reveals linguistic traces of the ST by structural calques that include elements that are usually omitted in English through elliptical constructions, as in “*que no son capaces de hacer nada que no sean desgracias*” (28) rendered into “that can’t do anything that isn’t something awful” (Los 253); in this case, ‘something’ could have been omitted. Similarly, there are remarkable instances throughout the text of postponing elements that usually precede the modified head phrase, as in “*la puerta de más uso*” (17) becoming “the door most

used” (Loc 127), whose marked structure would have been avoided by placing the adjectival phrase before the noun. Other highly marked construction is illustrated by “*la puerta del frente, salvo en ocasiones festivas, permanecía cerrada*” (17) that is directly transferred into “the front door, except for festive occasions, remained closed” (Loc 128), in which the subject of the main part of the sentence is split by a prepositional phrase, when a less marked version can be rendered by fronting such prepositional phrase—or even an unmarked one by placing it at the end of the sentence.

As we mentioned, the variation of the lineal order, when deemed obligatory due to the asymmetries between languages, do not reveal the overall strategy; nevertheless, on some occasions this reorganization is accompanied by optional transpositions—a translation procedure applied on an oblique strategy—as shown by the transfer of the phrase noun “*tantas coincidencias funestas*” (17) into “such fatal coincidences” (Loc 131). What we have here is an adjective ‘*tantas*’ being transposed into the adverbial form ‘such,’ causing a significant shift in meaning.

Lastly, an unusual instance of the alteration of the sentence message is also found in the utterance “*no lo encontré tan raro como decían*” (33), due to the omission of the negative particle ‘*no*’ (whose scope affects the whole utterance), as can be appreciated in its counterpart “I found him just as strange as they had said” (Loc 286). Such domestication of the ST results in an affirmative sentence that completely reverses the meaning.

**4.2.2. Tense, aspect and mood.** Dissimilarities between the two linguistic systems account for most of the verbal shifts, thus they do not reveal a particular inclination towards an ‘oblique’ strategy. Yet this research has found several instances that show a certain undeniable grade of domestication at this level. The utterance “*me parecía muy bien que se casaran*” (37), which becomes “it seems all right to me” (Loc 347), is paradigmatic of such frequent obligatory modulations; at the same time, it is an example of optional transportation procedures—since the past tense ‘*parecía*’ shifts to the present tense ‘seems’— that occur throughout the text.

Similarly, two non-obligatory transposition procedures are found in the transferring of “*me pareció más serio de lo que hacían creer sus travesuras*” (33)

into “he seemed more serious to me than his antics would have led one to believe” (Loc 287). As we can see, in spite of the two sentences still being framed in the past, the perfective aspect of the predicator in the TT’s superordinate clause presents the action as completed, whereas in the ST it does not; moreover, and most unusually, the ST’s modality of this clause is also changed by the addition of the epistemic modal ‘would’ indicating a degree of uncertainty.

Even more conspicuous findings pointing towards an ‘oblique’ strategy can be found as well. For instance, the epistemic modality encoded by the verbal periphrasis ‘*haber de ser*’ included in the sentence “*el hombre que nunca había de ser suyo*” (19)—which in this case conveys the idea that this is not supposed or destined to happen in the future—shifts to the perfect past tense through an optional transposition of the verb, as shown in the TT, “the man who had never been hers” (Loc 150), which completely changes the future-oriented meaning of the original sentence.

**4.2.3. Gender.** Common gender nouns are much more frequent in English than in Spanish, hence it is not surprising that sometimes there should be a referential gender ambiguity in the TT that does not occur in the ST. One example of this is the rendering of “*se sentaba [...] a cantar valsas de solteras con sus vecinas*” (37) into “she would sit [...] singing single-woman waltzes with her neighbours” (Loc 330), in which the latter noun loses the gender distinction.

### 4.3. At the Textual Level

**4.3.1. Linguistic variation.** At a textual level, in comparing the parallel text we have taken into consideration that “language does not exist in a vacuum” (Snell-Hornby 38). A communicative event depends on the use of different language varieties in different circumstances; thus the text, as a discourse, is endowed with a particular structure and diction that is closely related to the situation that is at hand. Language variation is therefore a multifarious phenomenon that can be analysed, roughly speaking, in different ways, namely, from a use-oriented perspective or from a user-oriented one. The latter gives rise to what we know as dialects, whereas the former gives rise to registers. In our analysis we have kept both in mind. Snell-Hornby considers them to be one of

the pitfalls of literary translation, inasmuch as language is an integral part of one's culture that is socially constructed and conditioned by a specific time and place whose influence is likewise felt in the translator's wording (38-39). Let us see how this relation between language function and form has found an equivalent in the TT and the implications in the overall strategy.

**4.3.1.1. Register.** As far as register variation concerns, García Marquez's style is characterised by blending elements of fiction and reality—especially in this work—through a journalistic prose, along with colloquial dialogues. Accordingly, in order to portray the different participants of the storytelling, the ST's narrative discourse frequently alternates from formal to colloquial register; the narrator tends to employ the former, whereas the dialogues held by the characters employ the latter. By and large, Rabassa has managed to convey these register shifts, sometimes resorting to slang words, such as 'prick' (Loc 632) to render the Colombianism 'pinga.' Paradoxically, the use of a resistant syntax, as the postposition of adjectives—let us take “there had never been a death more foretold” (Loc 522) as an example (an adjectival inversion that is also found in the title of the book itself)—results in a slightly higher register of the narrator, as well as endowing the narration with a more literary resonance.

**4.3.1.2. Variation.** The analysis of the dialectical variation, on the other hand, has shed light into how Rabassa tackles the difficult task of translating regional voices, an issue that “arises from the absence in the target language of a subcode equivalent to the one used by the source text in its reproduction of the source language,” as Brisset argues in Venuti (*Translation*, 344). On the rendering of Colombianisms, such as “*papayeras*” (45)—“group of brass” (Loc 412) in the TT—and other Americanisms, such as “*ensopados*” (22)—“soaked” (Loc 185) in the TT—Rabassa, in spite of being an advocate of experimentalism, has opted for a standardisation of the dialect, which entails the elimination of its presence in almost the whole TT. Following Baker, we can see that this translator choice results in the inevitable loss of evoked meaning (*Other Words* 13). Albeit the cultural loss suffered, it is worthy of note that more domesticating solutions—such as dialect localisation—have been avoided, rendering a more to-the-letter but neutral speech patterns.

All in all, Rabassa pays great attention to the familiar and informal registers; however, he fails to convey the geographic connotations of the Colombian dialect which necessarily brings about a degree of cultural neutralisation.

**4.3.2. Cohesion.** Cohesion is the network of relations among different parts of the text, so as to organise it in a coherent way. Among the different cohesive devices identified by Halliday and Hasan in Baker (190), we have found particularly relevant to this research to focus on reference and lexical cohesion, along with the punctuation and structure of the text.

**4.3.2.1. Reference.** The ‘direct’ strategy is not the only strategy adopted to denote the direct relationship between linguistic elements in the TT. There are some findings that indicate otherwise, albeit just a few of them, which are worth noting. For instance, the translation of “*de modo que sus hermanos mayores, Pedro y Pablo, llevaron la ortofónica al hotel [...] y lo hicieron con tanto revuelo que no hubo nadie que la viera venir y no la viera regresar*” (36), becomes “so her older brothers, Pedro and Pablo, took the music box to the hotel [...] and they did it with such a rush that there was no one to witness them come and then not leave” (Loc 310). In this sentence, the anaphoric third-person singular pronoun ‘*la*’—an indexical item, which is repeated twice, encoding the reference for the ‘*ortofónica*’ (a record player)—is being clearly omitted in the TT and substituted by a compensation technique in which the third-person plural pronoun ‘they’ conveys the meaning of a different anaphoric reference, namely, Pedro and Pablo. As a result, there is a change in the message and in how the action is perceived. Moreover, this action is perceived differently because in the ST it is carried out ‘with such a stir’ (*‘revuelo’*) and, in the TT, ‘with such a rush,’ which have different connotations.

**4.3.2.2. Lexical cohesion.** According to Halliday and Hassan, lexical chains are organised networks within the text that not only help to maintain the cohesion but also to construct the context that gives rise to the instantial—also known as textual meaning (213). A domestication of the text is reflected, for instance, in the analysis of the reiteration of the word ‘*parranda*’ (20) throughout the TT. The first appearance of the word is transferred into ‘festivities’ (Loc 158); yet, instead of it

just being repeated, Rabassa applies different hyponyms as “party” (Loc 100), hypernyms as “wedding” (Loc 225), and even other set of words related to the semantic field of ‘celebration activities’ as in “revelry” (Loc 412), “carousing” (Loc 192) and “public spree”(Loc 469).

**4.3.2.3. Punctuation.** Since García Márquez’s style tends to be more hypotactic than the TL’s standard, we have considered relevant to examine how the structure of sentences and paragraphs is being affected at the macro level by either change or adherence to the ST’s punctuation. The research has found that, by and large, there is an adherence to the punctuation, even when rendering extraordinarily lengthy sentences, as the one with as many constituents as 88 words in page 13 of the ST (Loc 63 in the TT). Nonetheless, there are some interesting occurrences of domestication, as in the splitting of one paragraph into two—which begins in page 32, “*La noche que llegó dio a entender en el cine que era un ingeniero de trenes*” and ends “[...] *un estremecimiento de espanto*” in page 33; thereby, we find a new paragraph in the TT whose point of departure is “My mother gave him the final blessing [...]” (Loc 278). This is a substantial transformation of the information flow, since the thematic structure of the paragraph has been drastically altered, thus drawing attention to the new theme.

Thematic structure is also affected in “*Mi madre no les hizo caso, por una vez en la vida, ni le prestó atención a su esposo*” (28), due to the semicolon that divides the sentence in “My mother paid no attention to them; for once in her life she didn’t even pay any attention to her husband” (Loc 247)—this division works as a disambiguation (specification procedure), since in the ST it is not clear whether ‘for once in her life’ applies either to the preceding referent (her children), to the following referent (her husband), or to both of them. Similarly, a conjunction is omitted and compensated by a semicolon in the rendering of “*Pues no sólo había vendido la casa con todo lo que tenía dentro, sino que le pidió a Bayardo [...]*” (42) into “But not only had he sold the house with everything in it; he asked Bayardo [...]” (Loc 387).

## 5. ANALYSIS OF PARATEXTS

The visibility of a translator in a particular literary work can also be assessed by looking at the reviews of the translated literary work, along with the physical evidence in the actual book itself (*Introducing* 241). Anthony Pym, a translator scholar interested on the issue of visibility, proposes analysing the reception of the TT through published reviews to see if any mentions of the translators can be found, as well as the criteria by which reviewers have evaluated the translated book. Moreover, Pym suggests paying attention to the translator's visibility in a literal way, that is, by searching if the translator's name appears on the cover of the literary work (229).

Reviews are therefore a useful source to examine the issue, especially if the TT is disapproved because it does not conform to the aesthetic expectations of the literary industry. According to Venuti, reviewers rebuke translations that render text patterns more 'jarring' and exotic, along with translations whose discourse is more heterogeneous due to the use of dialects that deviate from the standard (*Scandals* 20).

There is a wide range of paratexts that can be analysed. This research has examined what Genette termed peritexts and epitexts (*Introducing* 242). Peritexts are the additional texts included in the actual literary work, such as images, the title and other texts on the cover jacket, the information on the flaps, introductions, prefaces, footnotes and so on. On the other hand, epitexts not only refer to reviews and interviews prompted by the translated book, but also to other promotional material provided by publishers and booksellers.

### 5.1. Peritexts

One would have expected that Rabassa—who has won several awards for being an outstanding translator, becoming a celebrity in the translation scene—should be mentioned in some way or another in the advertising paratextual, on the cover or at least in the flaps of the jacket, but he is not. As a matter of fact, his presence is not more relevant in the peritexts than in other instances of García Márquez's translators, such as Edith Grossman or J.S. Bernstein. For example, in Grossman's first edition of *The General in His Labyrinth*, her name does not appear until the reader has turned a few pages, that is, the third page after the



flyleaf. In the same way, all the consulted editions of *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, from the first edition to the most recent ones, do follow this same pattern: the name of the translator is hidden in the interior of the book and the typography is considerably smaller than the author's. On top of that, an illustrated edition (published in 1984 by Ballantine Books in the USA) that devotes the two last pages of the translation to the biography of both the author and the illustrator, fails to acknowledge the translator's work. Nevertheless, synchronically speaking, we came across some striking differences: Rabassa is indeed nowadays mentioned as an advertising bait on online marketplaces for books, such as Amazon, as well as on smaller bookstores for used books, such as Biblio.com, whereas Grossman is never mentioned.

## 5.2. Epitexts

Regarding other types of epitexts, it is worth noting that, in the promotional launching of the books, not all the reviewers overlooked the fact that the text was a translation. The literary columnist of "Books of the Time" praises Gregory Rabassa's translation, since "he doesn't exactly diminish the power of these passages," although this New York Times' reviewer concludes by saying "at least as far as a reader who doesn't read Spanish can tell" (Lehmann-Haupt), which recognises a key shortcoming: the inability of most receivers to compare the ST with the TT to underpin their stylistic judgements. Most commentaries about the translated work in other reviews seem to attribute the TT's linguistic achievements "in prose that is spare yet heavy with meaning" solely to García Márquez, but others—like the Washington Post columnist (Rubenstein)—raves about how "Rabassa has once again done García Márquez the honour of a brilliant, shimmering translation" after he had long been acknowledged as the 'right man for the job.'

As for the title itself, Rabassa remembers that it met some criticism because some commentators believe that it should have been 'Chronicle of an Announced Death' (*Treason* 103). However, he makes a case for his creative wording based on how the formula 'chronicle of a \_\_\_\_\_ foretold' has ended up becoming a cliché phrase. Likewise, the scholars Gerald Martin branded the TT's title as an instance of 'irresistible mistranslation'—inasmuch as it preserves the syntactic structure, while endowing it with a superstitious connotation that is not held by

the ST's title—that is “clearly ‘better’ than the very prosaic Spanish one” (Martin 160). In brief, the title of the work in particular reflects how the choices of the translator can stir up controversy and spread into newspapers’ headlines around the world, leaving the mark of his creator.

Lastly, there are no footnotes or glossaries to be found—which could have made cultural and contextual meaning available to the foreign reader—in the whole translated book, possibly so as to hide the impression of reading a translated work.

To conclude with probably the most important insights about the TT, those of the author (and commissioner) himself, Gabriel García Márquez, let us consider some extracts from an interview for *The Paris Review*, where he claims that “a good translation is always a recreation in another language. That is why I have such great admiration for Gregory Rabassa,” to resume emphasising how “his work has been completely re-created in English” by Rabassa. García Márquez also sheds some light on the struggle of the translator, along with his method to tackle such arduous task, when he says that “there are parts of the book which are very difficult to follow literally. The impression one gets is that the translator read the book and then rewrote it from his recollections.” Hence, for García Márquez, translators are admirable in doing a work that is “intuitive rather than intellectual” (Piepenbring).

## 6. DISCUSSION

### 6.1. Discussion of the Parallel Text

Looking at the micro-level of the analysed parallel texts, we cannot find a fixed strategy dealing with cultural terms. Proper nouns and name places have been borrowed, as well as some other cultural-specific terms that were probably unknown at the time by the 'receivers.' There are, however, a similar number of other procedures, such as generalizations and modulations, that render a more domesticated TT. Hence, the reader has the opportunity to see traces of the other culture, but loses part of the nuances and, sometimes, even the actual foreign referent.

Other feature that often crops out in the translation is the use of English words that have kept the same Latin root, or that at least sound similar to the Spanish words—even when another equivalent would have been more natural and accurate. This technique is definitely a tribute to the foreign sound, albeit upgrading to a more solemn storytelling. Moreover, the frequency in which mistranslations or misinterpretations occur at the semantic level can be seen as an attempt to recreate more freely the poetic impression left on Rabassa after reading the ST.

There is also the same ambivalent attitude in dealing with collocations, idioms and other fixed expressions. Instances of generalization and omission to naturalize a collocation, rendering a more domesticated text, are not rare; indeed, creative collocations are frequent. The ST is endowed with a wealth of idiomatic expressions that, even when they have a suitable 'equivalent' in English, have not always been transferred following a domesticating strategy. The research has found many instances of a phrase calque procedure that shows the foreign conceptualization of the world. In addition, metaphors are hardly ever adapted or substituted; these indirect descriptions keep the original image, sometimes even repeating a closely similar structure. This tendency, nevertheless, has been softened and countered by simplifications and changes of perspective of many other phraseological constructions in the text.

When observing the syntactic structure, the reading of the ST occasionally reveals itself as a translation, offering the flavour of the foreign language. These marked syntactic constructions are sometimes found in whole sentences, and

other times in the unusual postposition of modifiers and other forms of inversion through the use of structural calquing and literal translation procedures. However, this does not mean that a certain degree of domestication has not taken place as well. Indeed, there are many instances of transportation, modulation and rephrasing along the text. Thus fluent sections of the text are juxtaposed to more exotic and 'jarring' ones.

As regards to grammatical shifts, the analysis shows a conspicuous use of non-obligatory procedures of either modulation or transposition. In some cases, not only tense, but also mood and aspect of the predicator shift to the whim of the translator in a clear domestication of these features. Common gender nouns, by and large, are not in any way specified, which affect the message of the text in some occurrences, since it creates an ambiguity in the TT that is not in the ST.

Linguistic variation is affected in both register and dialectal variations. The register results in a slightly more elevated and solemn storytelling; nevertheless, it still keeps the pragmatic use of different registers as they are combined in the narration. The standardisation of the Colombian dialect results in an unavoidable loss of evoked meaning. However, it does not follow that Rabassa's solutions are the most domesticating ones he could have resorted to. There are some noticeable instances of borrowed Americanisms, even at the risk of rendering the text more obscure, while other instances show the use of a neutral English equivalent; conversely, there are seldom adaptations of Colombianisms to the Anglo culture.

At the macro level, the cohesion of the text is achieved through a close adherence to the ST punctuation, although it defies the current preference in translation for less hypotactic structures and more spare punctuation. Having said that, the information flow is drastically altered, due to a worth-of-noting reorganization of a paragraph in one occasion. Lexical cohesion is conveyed not just by repetition, but through synonyms that do not appear in the ST as such. This can be seen as a way of maintaining complex lexical chains that run throughout the text, whose relation to the text is disambiguated by means of different domesticating procedures, such as specification or generalization. As for the use of reference, this research has found some compensation techniques that aim to creatively convey the same function, albeit altering the propositional meaning.

All things considered, there is not a clear-cut 'initial norm.' Instances of both domestication and foreignization strategies alternate, with no evident findings that can explain the disparity in Rabassa's decision-making when facing the same problem. Yet we can conclude that the text receives an infusion of features from the target language and, as a result of this interaction between the language pair, there is a certain degree of acculturation of the TT that makes more visible the translation as such.

## **6.2. Discussion of the Paratexts**

The examination of the peritexts throw different results, whether we see them diachronically or not. On the whole, the recognition of Rabassa's work is more visible at the present time than it used to be. As for the epitexts, although most reviewers fail to acknowledge the book as a translation at all, still there is a sizeable proportion that, in addition to noticing it, praise the talent of Rabassa. Interestingly enough, the title itself has become a cliché phrase that is frequently found on the newspapers' headlines, leaving once more a trail of Rabassa's presence on the literary work. Lastly, our research cannot ignore the positive reception of the translation by Gabriel García Márquez himself, who has taken every opportunity to praise Rabassa's work.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1. Review of the Research Questions

The findings of this research are presented below with the aim of answering the questions addressed in Chapter 1.

- What degree of visibility can be found in Rabassa's text?

There is a moderate degree of Rabassa's visibility in his translation of *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* that stems from the care he puts on reproducing the syntax and some cultural elements of the language, as well as from the acknowledgment of the work itself as a translation by diverse media and the commissioner.

- Does the adopted translation strategies serve to bring attention to the foreign culture and language of the ST?

To some extent, the text emphasises some aspects of the Colombian culture, mirroring mental frames of this society in particular situations—especially thanks to the use of syntactic calques and literal translation of idiomatic phrases; whereas on other occasions the text assimilates, or just ignores, cultural aspects that could have had more relevance in the text.

- Is Rabassa's piece of work a submissive servant of the 'fluency' trend or is it a 'resistant' translation?

This translation has not in any way yielded into a total submission; although there are parts of the book that read more fluently than others, there is an undercurrent counterweight in the process of translation that makes it 'resistant' without it being so noticeable at first sight.

- Is Rabassa transforming the ST into a new creative piece?

The close reading of a mere bilingual reader would definitely conclude that the work has undergone not just some stylistic changes—which bring to the fore Rabassa's creative sensibility—but even a few drastic transformations in the perceived images of the story.

## **7.2. Conclusions**

The main conclusion of this research is the claim that Rabassa is a visible figure in the text, a cultural mediator who promotes with his choices the representation of certain aspects of the foreign culture, while neglecting others. Although it is difficult to pinpoint with accuracy the overall strategy adopted, it is evident that the text is endowed with the exotic flavour of the Colombian ambiance and culture. As Rabassa puts it, “there ought to be some kind of undercurrent, some background hum that lets the English-speaking reader feel that this is not an English book ”(Words 42). Simultaneously, a degree of domestication has taken place for the sake of readability of the book, along with an irresistible creative force that Rabassa bottles up inside his prose. So many ‘mistranslations,’ ‘mistakes’ or mere re-creations are possible only thanks to the consent and encouragement of the commissioner. Rabassa somehow ends up emerging as a co-author of what seems to be the logic continuation of the ST, after paying the due respect to the foreign culture. Undoubtedly, author and translator enjoy a symbiotic relationship in which both have profited of their prominent position in their respective fields.

We should also take into consideration that “[s]ince English is the lingua franca, translating a book into English puts it in a position to be translated into many different languages”—as explains Esther Allen, the Pen translation committee chairwoman to the New York Times (Kinzer). By choosing this particular book for translation, and doing it in the unconventional way previously mentioned, he further spread García Márquez’s literature and South American culture at large, bringing at the same time the trade of translation to the foreground, which is the last definite proof of Rabassa’s power to transform the status quo and, therefore, of his visibility.

## **7.3. Recommendations**

In the course of this investigation, the complexities of underlying interactions among cultures become evident and, at the same time, the findings in the research show that, within the practice of translation, personal style, philosophical and moral views of the ‘sender’ condition a final product and have a fundamental role in raising awareness to prevent blatant assimilations of foreign cultural and

linguistic features. Hence, more research is needed to unveil the essential role of the translator, so as to upgrade its status.

As for the translation of this literary work in particular, there are some issues that have drawn my attention that would require further research. On the one hand, the sheer amount of 'misinterpretations' and/or 're-creations' that Rabassa has consciously or unconsciously left as his personal trademark throughout the text and, on the other hand, the translation of Colombian idioms and other phraseological expressions that could undergo an in-depth research to tell us more about Rabassa's ingenious re-writing.



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