New Internet Textualities As Post-Translated Phenomena:

The Palimpsestic Nature of Bardcore, Social Media Posts and Fandom Art

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Abstract

The theory of post-translation defined by Edwin Gentzler helps us to study the history of culture and, therefore, of the text as a history of re-creation, which is nothing but a way of conceptualizing translation. Post-translation, as well as other translatological theories such as the outward turn, emerge in the 21st century because the nature of texts today has evolved. The notions of multimodality and intermediality force us to understand the semiology of the text in new ways and, therefore, since the text is the core of any translation exercise, both movements are born to help us understand what the contemporary text is and how it is produced. At the same time, the study of web culture from perspectives such as those mentioned above allows us to contextualize the textual dynamics of prosumers as translatological phenomena.

The rupture with classical narrative that has culminated with postmodernity, added to the emergence of the Internet, forces us to redefine conceptually what a text is today. Authors such as Elleström take up the plurality of semiotic forms that coexist today, and which we call “text” in this paper, under the term “media” and stress the need to understand communicative processes in an intersemiotic and multimodal way in the contemporary era: "All media are multimodal and intermedial in the sense that they are composed of multiple basic features and are understood only in relation to other types of media" (2). The multimodality derived from the hypertextual nature of the Web, the constant rupture of binarisms and the tendency towards heterogeneity in concepts hitherto considered homogeneous such as authorship and narrative, as well as the surprising proliferation of diverse ways of communicating and new types of works makes the task of defining the nature

of the contemporary text difficult. As Page and Thomas state, "Indeed, Lev Manovich (n.d.) charges that the word ‘narrative’ is overused in relation to new media to cover up the fact that we have not yet developed a language to describe these strange new objects” (8). However, as this article proposes, translation studies, through the conceptual tools provided by Peircian semiosis, have precisely given us the resources and the ideal academic framework and terminology to describe, understand and contextualize these textual objects.

The contemporary sociocultural context requires translation studies, among other things, to open the focus from the semantic to the visual. And this is so not only because of the importance given to the semiotics of the image in the global era, but also, as Berger and Baudrillard after him warned, because most of the information we consume through a screen, even written text, is perceived by the brain as an image (Baudrillard *Screened Out* 177).

In this article, we will focus on analyzing the characteristics of the new texts that are being generated on the web and on demonstrating how their study from the perspective of translation not only facilitates our understanding of them, but can also be a spearhead for other analytical disciplines. We will develop the translatological nature of these contemporary texts and contextualize them through examples that we consider representative of the network: fandom art, the individual as a text on social media and bardcore songs. In doing so, we intend to present an updated view of translation studies, and to demonstrate that the cultural genesis of the Web is eminently and widely translated.

New textualities on the Internet

Already in the early days of the Internet, new textual forms proliferated and its expansion and popularity has continued to grow (Taylor and Francis; Page and Thomas). The rupture of narrative became popular, since hypertexts facilitated the jump between points in the same text; the convenience of generating and reproducing multimedia incited multimodal creation; the technological nature of the Web fostered the proliferation of video games, which promoted the rupture of classic narratives by focusing its mechanics on interactivity. In addition, the constant appearance of new forums on infinite topics and the emergence of blogs gave new meanings to citizen journalism, amateur fiction and self-referential creation while opening the doors to collaborative construction through systems centered on meta-commentary (Goggin and McLelland 331-342, Page and Thomas 1-16, 21-26, 35). With the new millennium, the Internet becomes an economic priority, and capitalism encourages a

technological progress that multiplies the already unsustainable level of textual production and expands it to new forms and even more audiences.

The way in which texts are produced on the Internet is changing at an unprecedented speed, "faster than can be documented by scholars" (Page and Thomas 3), almost impossible to predict; proof of this is that in 2011 academic circles still considered consumption from a cell phone to be negligible for analysis (Page and Thomas 21) despite the fact that today they are the device through which most information is consumed worldwide. Aside from this overwhelming volume of production, it seems that during the last decade technological progress has reached a certain stability that has resulted in new established forms. Today it is relatively easy to extract common characteristics from Internet texts that allow us to understand the textual nature of the 21st century and its relationship with translation.

Internet prosumers as translators

Several scholars have proven how the study of translation reveals that the concept of authorship is a construct associated with visions of art indebted to nineteenth-century ideals. Insofar as translation is a form of adaptation, and all art emerges as assimilation and overcoming of precursors, the perception of the original text as something sacred and unalterable is an obstacle to translation, and the idea of the definitive text can only be a fallacy. It is therefore necessary to study the contextual nature of semiotic equivalence.

In this line, contemporary culture demands that we modify our preconceptions of text as a monolithic, unalterableand static element and begin to understand it as something dynamic. Whether for diachronic, cross-cultural or circumstantial reasons, the new conceptualization of textuality must leave behind semantic univocity. The texts generated by prosumers on the Internet, which exemplify, by density and ontologically, the textual reality of the 21st century, can only be understood as dynamic elements (Page and Thomas 8) in which the figure of the receiver as the granter of meaning becomes key. Page and Thomas, Bell and Montfort (in Page and Thomas 9, 10; 63-82; 103-119) claim that the reader of the Internet is more than ever an individual of heuristic intent who discovers the text through free interaction with the media. The free disposition and organization of the text and its reception converge in the poststructuralist idea that it is the reader who ultimately creates the text by filtering it through his or her subjectivity. In the contemporary era, the text only makes sense understood as a pre-text, a hypotext or a hypertext in which hypotexts converge, and the

consumption of a text can only be analyzed as a translation derived from the framework of consumption.

Depending on this idea, translatology has studied creation as adaptation. Assembling all the critical vocabulary gathered by the different translatological turns of the 1980's, 1990's and 2000's, and starting from ideas indebted to Hutcheon among others, Gentzler studies culture as a repetition by assimilation. As happens with the acquisition of language, the creator generates content as acceptance and continuation of a previous canon or opposition and destruction of it, which at the same time has been constructed as a global image of an art, as a joint and co-dependent genesis. Gentzler (xii; 1-17) argues that culture is post-translated insofar as translation ensures the survival of texts as recreations and versions. This not only boils down to how Shakespeare, influenced by Saxon mythological sources, has come down to our days as one of the greatest writers of all time thanks to German theater of the seventeenth century, or to what extent Goethe's Faust helped promote a cultural revolution in the Brazilian postcolonial context by virtue of Haroldo de Campos' translation (Gentzler 36-58). Post-translation further helps us to understand through which pathways the assimilation of a precursor, its filtering through the consumer's subjectivity, and its subsequent re-expression shape human contemporary culture. Authors such as Queiroz and Aguiar have thoroughly explored the sociocultural consequences of intersemiotic transcreations and their repeated presence in Western culture; the list of examples is as endless as the history of art itself.

The textualities produced on the Internet perfectly exemplify these dynamics on which post-translation is based. The subsequent analysis will clarify what we suggest here: although post-translation has rightly insinuated that artistic creation is, to a greater or lesser extent, palimpsestic, the growing textual flow of the Internet makes the adapted nature of creation more than obvious. This leads us to three characteristics that articulate Internet texts and relate them to concepts specific to translation studies: multimodality, viral dissemination, and the question of authorship.

The issue of multimodality is surely the most interrelated with semiotics. The theories inherited from Peirce, in particular those articulated by Barthes (*Elementos de semiología, The Death of the Author, El susurro del lenguaje, La Aventura semiológica*), Eco (*Tratado de semiótica general, La Production des Signes*) and Fabbri, allow us to describe as a sign everything that is significant. Insofar as texts are superpositions of articulated signs, and each

sign can be considered as a hypotext of a hypertext, contemporary linguistics can assume as a text any discourse, depending on the signs system it relies upon. A song, a painting or a book are texts, and so the human body is, since it relates semantically in society or a fashion garment, as it provides visual, social or historiographical information (Elleström *Beyond Media Borders, Media Transformation, Transmedial Narration*); Alves, Aguilar and Quieroz; Smith; Vargau, d'Asprer).

Once we comprehend this idea, the issue of the amalgamation of sign systems as a textual feature arises. With the advent of multimodal communication, we begin to assume that sign systems work jointly and additively. Sign systems, captured by different senses, amalgamate in more or less subtle ways in all texts. We conceive a film as a unity composed by the visual and the auditory; we experience reading a novel also through the touch of the paper, its color, its smell or its electronic layout; every sign shapes our individual perception of consuming a given text. It would be valid to consider these cases of amalgamation of signs as subtle forms of semantic heterogeneity; however, the Web in the 1990's meant a revolution of textual formats that had its maximum expression in what was called "multimedia", "multimodal" (Page and Thomas 1-2; 21) or "translinguistic" in the broad concept in which Dovchin and Pennycoock handle it (Mills *et al.*). The arrival of platforms such as YouTube made the combination of musical and visual languages representative of cultural consumption on the Internet. Video games began to mix the sonorous, the visual and the verbal while turning textual consumption into something openly participatory. Simultaneously, social networks, forums and blogs began to be fertile ground for the proliferation of images to the point that it is increasingly difficult to read a text without an image articulating it or containing its meaning. Memes —which unite the verbal and the visual in profoundly intricate ways at a cultural level, as noted by Maitland and Cantarero— have also come to monopolize social networks.

The influx of translinguistic texts through online social platforms pushes us to reflect in parallel on the virality of Internet textualities. A text can reach hundreds of thousands of people in a matter of seconds. The main task of translation since the dawn of the discipline has been to give texts new lives, to transculturalize them and to extend their reach to make it easier for more people to access them, and this is precisely the most immediate consequence of the viral nature of Internet texts. The relationship with translation (Boria *et al*.) is even more obvious when we reflect on how this viral and supranational nature of web texts is

articulated through transcreative processes (Katan). As Dovchin and Pennycoock explain (Goddard in Jones 211-212): "superdiversity in social media is realized by "the mobility and mobilization of linguistic and other semiotic resources that are distributed, recontextualized and resemiotized in various ways in countless and rhizomatic digital media practices mushrooming on the internet". Re- entextualization on Facebook can be understood as the process by which a text (broadly understood) is "extracted from its original context-of-use and re-inserted into an entirely different one, involving different participation frameworks, a different kind of textuality" (a text might be condensed as a quote; an image used to suggest a place), producing "very different meaning outcomes." Re-semiotization, by contrast, refers to the "process by means of which every 'repetition' of a sign involves an entirely new set of contextualization conditions and thus results in an entirely 'new' semiotic process, allowing new semiotic modes and resources to be involved in the repetition process" (Varis& Blommaert, 2015, p. 36). As Dovchin, Sultana, and Pennycook (2015, p. 8) point out, Facebook users make meaning "not only through how they borrow, repeat and mimic certain linguistic resources available to them, but also through the ways they make new linguistic meanings within this complex relocalizing process"

We appreciate that the sum of re-entextualization and re-semiotization referred to by both authors follows the confusing tradition of looking for translation metalanguage that helps to escape from the binarisms associated with semantic equivalence (Marais 2-5) and perfectly coins what we understand as "transcreation" (Katan): giving new meaning to an initial text through its reinterpretation in a context different from the original. Thus, the rapid dissemination of information through the Internet reinforces the transcreated and translatednature of texts on the web.

This transcreated nature makes clear the latest reflection on their characteristics: the dissolution of the concept of authorship. In the same way that post-translation was based on the assumption of constant precursors of creation to support the argument that no text can be original, textual production on the Internet has ceased to give importance to authors as monolithic figures to focus on the relevance of the text over its author thanks to the dissemination of anonymous or collectively authored works. Since, as we will discuss later, social media profiles are avatars of the individual behind them, these platforms tend to generate texts that, in the unlikely event of being signed, are usually signed by avatars that conceal the real identity of the author. Ultimately, even texts that are signed tend to be received by giving more importance to content than to authorship, implying that, among digital natives, the authorship of new texts is not usually preeminent. The same happens in

forums, blogs and audiovisual platforms where, in addition, collective creation is encouraged through metacommentaries. In texts such as online video games, the issue is even more intricate since the receiver of the text becomes a co-creator by making conscious decisions for the fictional life of their avatar. In addition, the subculture of video games on the Internet favors modifications of the software source language to generate changes in the game itself, and, since this can often incur legal issues related to copyright, anonymous authorship takes on new meaning and importance as protection against possible lawsuits.

We can consider that the population extract in which the textual reality of the Internet permeates are generations Y and Z, since both form the core of what has come to be called "digital natives" and, at the same time, "prosumers". Thus, they are the biggest creators of content on the global network and, consequently, we assume that the texts we will study below will be created by and aimed at these generations.

Fandom art as palimpsest

The texts that make up fandom art are diverse: fanfics, fanarts, fanvids, fanfilms, fanadvertising, songfics, fandubs and fansubs, among others. All of them stand out for being clear examples of palimpsests. Their pretext is to take a fictional product, a work, or a character and move it away from what is considered canon in a given fan community (i.e., what the original producers of the work published under their authorship) through subjectivity, usually according to personal motivations (i.e. the need to continue consuming fiction, the interest in correcting possible flaws or shortcomings that the original product had, the mere recreation through re-creation or even erotic purposes).

As derivative products, there is an open debate about the legality of these works. The use of names, faces, scenarios, locations, motifs or any element likely to constitute a hypotext within a hypertext cannot be reproduced without explicit permission unless it has no economic interest. In a cybernetic context where profits can be generated through popularity and publicity, it is understandable that authors and companies insistently monitor and pursue fandom art, especially when it uses images of the original. However, it is a booming creative environment thanks, among other reasons, to the legal protection provided by anonymity on the Internet.

We have noticed that this legal persecution does not affect fanadvertising, which also uses original material to promote the work from which fans have taken it. It is therefore

obvious that the reasons behind this pursuit are linked to economic interests. Therefore, we believe it is significant that the insistence on continuing to upload fandom art to the cloud, even if it is accused of plagiarism, is rooted in a deep-embedded vision that exists among generations Y and Z of popular culture as an immaterial good with free access.

It is striking, moreover, if we consider the origins of fandom art. The continuation of another's work is as old as fiction itself: we can find antecedents from the Homeric sagas as continuations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, or the Aeneid as a Roman adaptation of the Greek epic for socio-political reasons; in Avellaneda's *Don Quixote*; in Marcel Proust's *Pastiches et mélanges*; or in Jorge Luis Borges's *Historia Universal de la Infamia*. However, the coining of the term “fanfic” as a work derived from another created by and for a specific fan community dates back to the 1970’s with fanzines. The contributions of the fandom of science-fiction audiovisual works such as *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* stand out. In the case of the latter saga, the fan community began to publish in fanzines small stories in which the childhood of the characters, their maturity after the movies, their origins and any details of interest not covered in the films were told. Such a volume of fanfics was generated that George Lucas, director and screenwriter of the first two trilogies of the saga, motivated their proliferation (after all, he himself had created the saga as a space opera revision of Kurosawa's samurai films, among other references) and dictated which of these fanfics could be considered canon, giving rise to what later became the "expanded universe" of the saga, from which he himself extracted economic profit. With the advent of the Internet, this phenomenon was opened to the general public. The volume of texts generated is overwhelming, but the most interesting is that these texts and their authors expand the margins and narrative horizons of the contexts in which they are inspired, reinforcing the idea of culture as a post-translated phenomenon.

The social dimension of these re-creations is striking at a translatological level. Since its origins, descriptive studies have reinforced the idea of conscious textual manipulation in translation as a driving force for social change and the breaking of centralisms and binarisms. Fandom art has been used repeatedly to give voice to disadvantaged social minorities: texts in which fictional or real characters experiment with a fluid and non-normative sexuality, in which racial minorities gain importance, in which residual sexism or colonialism is corrected in the plot or where female characters empower themselves proliferate. This conscious manipulation of an original text is in accordance with what some lines of research in our

discipline have been considering for decades: if any translation is re-creation and cannot take place in a vacuum, conscious textual manipulation is licit, necessary in many cases, and can only add culture in any society insofar as culture is not a limited space in which there is only room for a certain number of works.

Going back to Gentzler's post-translation studies and to Borges's or Haroldo de Campos's ideas (Arrojo; Kristal; Waisman; Vidal), in line with what is proposed by Perloff and Hutcheon, contemporary society can only understand its culture as a relationship of cross-references, versions of revisions, and constant recreation; the text is always transcreation. And in a society in which the greatest hotbed of culture stands out for its multimedia facet, fandom art shows itself to be an object of study of eminent translatological interest which points to the urgency of broadening the concept of text in the global era and of looking at translation as re-creation from a cultural perspective: in the end, every consumer of culture is a translator.

Bardcore and the post-translated society

As discussed in the previous section, the textual reality of the Internet involves the verification of culture as a post-translated phenomenon. Thus, apart from all the features that lead us to confirm that the textual production of the Internet has its germ in translation, what really represents a revolutionary change of perspective in Gentzler's thesis is the correlation that he establishes between society and translation as two co-dependent phenomena. If we add to this vision the broadening of the definition of text with which translation studies work and on which this article is based, we manage to understand the scope of the North American author's words (1): "some scholars find the field of translation studies too narrow, text-centric".

It is not complex to relate its translatological dynamics with concepts long treated by translation studies if we assume the heterogeneity of the textual reality present in the global network. When in a fanfic of the Harry Potter saga a character with a non-binary gender identity is introduced as a criticism of the transphobia manifested by the original author, we find ourselves before a paradigmatic case of what is treated by the Power Turn. If filters are applied to an Instagram or Tik-Tok story in order to alter physical appearance, we find reminiscences with the cases treated in the germinal work of Theo Hermans *The Manipulation of Literature*. When in an Internet meme the original meaning of a visual hypotext is stripped and deformed to generate a comical effect we find ourselves face to face

with Lefevere's own concept of “rewriting”. What remains to be addressed is the correlation between these semiotic processes and society: the impact that one has on the other and vice versa. The textual circumstances of the 21st century require us to integrate sociological discourse as an inherent part of translation studies (Gentzler 3). Although analyzing the post-translational repercussions of textual phenomena in such a rapidly changing cultural context is extremely complex, we can use the genesis and development of bardcore to illustrate Gentzler's suggestion.

Bardcore is a musical subgenre that takes contemporary popular songs and records them reinterpreted with medieval instruments, harmonies and rhythms to make them sound archaic. In some cases, the lyrics of the original song are even translated into Latin, Old Saxon or medieval French (Arroyo 238-246). As versions, they cannot be shared through the principal streaming platforms (Spotify, Apple Music, etc.) due to copyright issues; therefore, their main way of accessing them is through YouTube, where they are accompanied by at least one image or simple animation. These latter always attempt to evoke the preconceived idea of medievalism, the meme of the medieval in the dawkian sense. However, the most popular format for the manifestation of this image or animation in bardcore videos is through montages made with the web application Historic Tale Construction Kit, which allows to place on a parchment background figures, buildings, objects and animals extracted from the Bayeux tapestry, from the 11th century.

We can infer then that bardcore songs (and videos) are translated texts. Furthermore, their translation occurs simultaneously at different semiotic levels within each text. The analysis of these translatological processes in representative cases of the subgenre could occupy us dozens of pages, since the simple isolated fact that pop songs are being translated into dead languages with a certain rigor carries a series of social implications of high academic interest. However, what is noteworthy for the purpose of this section is to analyze how the social context influence their creation and vice versa or, in Gentzler’s words (3), "the initial reception of the translated text and the post-translation repercussions generated in the receiving culture".

Despite the high quality of most of the bardcore versions in terms of sound, interpretation and even translation into archaic languages, the Internet community agrees to treat them as memes. In part, this is because they share certain characteristics, namely: multimodality, easily replicable, generated by the sum of several previous hypotexts and with

an eminently humorous purpose. However, it is in the precise type of humor that underlies this variety of texts where their relevance as a case study resides.

The existential humor developed by digital natives, particularly members of generation Z, seeks comical effect through introspection and the analysis of one's identity. Therefore, it is based on ironizing the sociological and spatio-temporal contexts contemporary to the users. Bardcore is so illustrative because it arises as a humorous response to a very specific social context and, unlike most of the cultural phenomena that are generated and popularized on the network, we can date it.

Between late February and early March of the year 2020 the “coffin dance meme” became popular. During its first weeks of life, this text circulated through social media and gained popularity; with the outbreak of the COVID-19 health crisis in March 2020 the meme became one of the most viral phenomena of the year. Therefore, on April 20 a YouTube user created a new account under the pseudonym "Cornelius Link" and uploaded the first bardcore track: a cover of Stephan F's *Astronomia 2k19*, which is the song that functions as a musical hypotext in the coffin dance meme. Cornelius Link's version was accompanied by an image in which characters from Boyeux's tapestry were carrying a coffin, apparently dancing, and reached 1.5 million listens in just a few hours. Shortly afterwards, another user uploaded to his social media profile an animation in which the coffin dancers were reproduced in the style of an illuminated manuscript from the 13th century, and it did not take long for it to become incredibly popular. The sum of the two texts had such a huge impact that within two weeks more than two hundred different bardcore versions could already be found on the web.

As analysts from *The Guardian* point out, the most likely cause of the widespread popularity of this subgenre is the relationship that existed in the collective subconscious between the COVID-19 health crisis and the Black Death that devastated Europe during the Middle Ages. As both were global pandemics with immeasurable human consequences and given that societies tend to look to the past as a reference point in the face of crises. Because humor is the main communicative tool of digital natives in their hyperreal image on the Web and the aforementioned preference for existential humor, this first version of bardcore emerged as the comic response of a digital native to the most serious crisis situation in decades.

We thus observe how bardcore is a whole subgenre of translated texts arising as response to its context. The impact of its recent birth was enormous and from its humoristic

nature we can deduce that it served to alleviate the situation of generalized anguish and social panic that arose due to the health crisis. Since it had a post-translational effect, its use as a case study is highly illustrative. It is worth mentioning, in fact, that publishers such as Routledge have already published works analyzing the cultural, human and translatological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (Susam-Saraeva and Spišiaková; Lee and Wang).

Identity as a translated text in social media

In 2016, the television series *The Young Pope* by Paolo Sorrentino was released. It displays the experiences of a fictitious young pope during his stay at the Vatican. Unable to film in St. Peter's Basilica or the Apostolic Palace, the director decided to hire some of the best artists and restorers in the world to reproduce both perfectly at the Cinecittà in Rome. Similarly, for the costumes of the series, the workshop in charge of making the attire of the papal curia was hired. The result fascinated audiences, press and critics alike: the Sistine Chapel and the Baldachin of St. Peter's seen on screen are indistinguishable from the originals.

The specific case of *The Young Pope* exemplifies and summarizes one of the central issues in Jean Baudrillard's *Simulacres et simulation* (16): simulations start from the principle of equivalence, from the radical negation of the sign as value, from the elimination of reference. The French sociologist raises this question through the example of the Lascaux Caves (21) where, in order to preserve the original caves from wear and tear and destruction, exact replicas were created for tourists to visit. The closest experience to the original cave consists of a brief glimpse through a peephole. This situation, as Baudrillard suggests, reduces both the reproduction and the original cave to the category of “artificial”, since what is real does not fulfill its purpose and what does fulfill its purpose is not real. In the case of *The Young Pope*, the situation is slightly different: the reproduction of the Sistine Chapel and St. Peter's is motivated by the purpose of a specific director and his impossibility to film in the originals.

This idea of Baudrillard's culture of simulation has reached its peak in contemporary society in which we access information through screens. The reality we approach through social networks today is not such, but a manipulated, translated hyperreality. This conscious or unconscious self-translation of identities in social networks is representative of the transition to transhumanism of contemporary society, heir of postmodern culture; the final consequence, in short, of the transition to hyperreality.

Authors such as Gentzler, Bassnett or Lefevere (Gentzler 11, 62, 154, 169) have defended the link between Baudrillard's theories and translation studies. However, it has not yet been studied in depth how social media users translate and manipulate their identity to adapt it to multimodal spheres and to seek the acceptance of the Other that the virtual world implies; the social culmination of the phases of the image named by Baudrillard (*Simulacres et simulation* 17) and the realization of the culture of the simulacrum. All things considered, the texts we focus on in this section will be identities on social networks.

On Instagram, users can post photos with a brief description so that other users interact with them. It is also possible to publish stories (images or videos to which other users have access for 24 hours). Although the content of these publications is not restricted as long as it does not go against the social network's policy, most of the textual material found on Instagram consists of portraits or self-portraits of users. Popularity in this social network is measured through the number of followers of a particular profile.

Since every codified communicative process is a signifier and can therefore be considered a text, the identity of individuals, inside and outside social media, is textual and subject to reading and interpretation. The process of translation of this identity in these platforms works at different levels of subtlety.

First, the mere choice of a username involves a process of adaptation. While users can choose any name, including their own, the trend shows that most of them choose a nickname representative of the content they will display on their profile.

Secondly, when setting up an account, the individual must translate them own preferences into the format of the social network chosen. On Instagram, users must accept that, in order to exist as an individual in the hyper-real context of the social media, they need to adapt to the aforementioned posting format: their identity there will be based on the photos, the videos and the texts they upload and share.

Nevertheless, the greatest process of adaptation on Instagram happens with image. As Baudrillard (*Screened Out* 177) warned, cybernetics offers the possibility of modifying visual texts at will, producing as many versions as necessary until finding the one with which the user is comfortable. Beyond the relevance that image-editing programs have gained in Internet culture, Instagram offers the possibility of modifying images and videos in real time using the platform's own filters. These edits can adjust the image or video contrast, alter the

color of the eyes, increase the size of the lips, the number of freckles, or decrease the size of the nose. There are all kinds of filters depending on the intended purpose.

What happens with these manipulations at the semiotic level is simple: small variations are practiced in the visual code shared by sender and receiver with an aesthetic purpose, with the intention of making it more accessible as hyperreal, in a sort of intralinguistic translation, in Jakobsonian terms. This hyperreality brings us back to a recurrent idea within translation since the 1980's onwards: no text is absolute; there are as many possible versions as there are readings of it; any text can be subject to manipulation, and the original is almost never the definitive or the best version of itself. We see this idea perfectly represented in the image as Instagram text, constantly and almost obligatorily modified depending on how the users read and re-express themselves. This rewriting can be seen, perhaps most clearly, in the profile biography; a small text in which each user must compress information considered representative (or wanted to be highlighted) about him or herself. This information can be presented making use of any language function according to the desired effect (comical, poetical, referential, etc.) to help the virtual Other access directly a constructed idea of the Self.

The sum of all these hypotexts creates the identity as text on Instagram. They converge congruently in a single discourse that shapes a virtual personality, still a construct, an adaptation of reality in a virtual context. Given that the number of followers that an individual can reach on this social network and taking into account that a huge number of those followers will never physically meet the user, it is worth asking, as with the caves of Lascaux or the reconstruction of the Sistine Chapel, which of the two versions is more real.

This undoubtedly reaffirms Lefevere's view, among others, on translation as a text that takes the place of the original. Just as the rewritings he refers to supplant the original text in the target culture, the hyperreal translation of identity in social media supplants the identity of the individual outside it. An Instagram profile of an individual is the individual on the network. The simulated, translated, virtual identity supplants, by a mere matter of numerical scope, the real identity.

In conclusion, the study of textual genesis on the Internet not only allows us to affirm that the concept of text itself has necessarily mutated into something more complex, broad, multimodal and intermedial; in addition, the observation of the cultural capital of the network

from the perspective of translation studies allows us to analyze prosumers as translators and their creations as translated texts.

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