

CHARACTERISTICS OF ORALITY IN TRANSLATION: REPETITIONS IN ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS ON ROMANIAN COMMUNISM

■ Diana Painca
■ Free University of Brussels
■ Belgium

ABSTRACT

The issue of orality in translation has recently come under close scrutiny. Scholars have pointed out the distinctive features of orality and drawn attention to their intricate translation process. Orality can roughly be defined as a primary modelling system (spoken language) as opposed to writing or literacy. To instantiate the issue of orality in translation, I rely on oral history interviews that I briefly describe in both linguistic and historical terms. I also touch upon Paul Bandia's authoritative book *Orality and Translation* (2016), explaining the difference between a pragmatic and a metaphoric conceptualization of translation. In addition to this theoretical framework, I develop a more practical part relying on Walter Ong's work of reference *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982, 2002). Therefore, the scholar classifies oral thoughts and expressions into nine categories. However, the aim of this article is to address only one of them, namely redundancy, and examine the difficulties it poses in translation. To accomplish this objective, I first translate several oral history interviews on Romanian communism from Romanian into English. Secondly, I map the peculiarities and complexities of such a process and, just as importantly, I illustrate the function of redundancy in these particular interviews.

KEYWORDS

orality, translation, oral history interview, redundancy/repetition, communism.

1. ORALITY AND TRANSLATION - SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before addressing the relation between orality and translation, it is incumbent upon me to state the purpose of the translations used here. Hence, to be more explicit, the oral history interviews selected for this paper were translated as part of the corpus for my PhD thesis¹. The primary objective of the dissertation is to investigate the linguistic difficulties posed by the translation of oral history interviews on communism from Romanian into English. Secondly, the thesis aims to see how these translated historical texts articulate the communist experience in Romania.

The issue of **orality** has preoccupied a cohort of researchers, and their work has yielded important results. It should be noted though that studies in orality were pre-eminently carried out in societies or languages where literacy played but a minimal role, oral referring thus to pre-literate (Alant, 2010).

In his seminal paper *Towards a Linguistic Definition of Orality* (2010), Jaco Alant calls for a linguistic definition of orality that could dislodge the term from the anthropological and literary realms. He emphasizes the distinctive feature of orality, namely sound, which he defines in rather poetic terms as something *essentially evanescent* (Alant, 2010: 45) that *exists only as it vanishes* (*ibid*). Alant draws attention to Saussure's claim that not all sounds represent speech. Speech can only be accomplished when 'the sound, a complex acoustical-vocal unit, combines...with an idea to form a complex physiological-psychological unit' (Saussure, 1959: 8, quoted in Alan, 2010: 47). It is only in speech that the sound turns into a sign that reflects the connection between the signifier and the signified. Finally, as Alant points out, the peculiarities of sound can also be evidenced by yet another Saussurian notion: the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign. According to the French linguist, this can be explained by the fact that different sound-images are employed in different languages for basically the same signified (Alant, 2010: 47).

¹ Diana Painca is a PhD student within the Doctoral School 'Languages, Letters and Translation' (Université Libre de Bruxelles). The innovative interdisciplinary approach of her research extends the boundaries of Translation Studies illustrating the connection between this discipline and oral history on the subject of Romanian communism. The thesis draws upon sources like historical interviews with a wide range of people (survivors of Communist prisons, members of the anti-Communist resistance in the mountains, King Michael of Romania) all taken from three main Romanian books on the era that she translates into English. The goal of her work is to present the translator's difficulties pertaining not only to linguistics, terminology and background historical knowledge, but also to the distinctive features of the oral history interview, like repetitions and vividness of languages (obtained through rich imagery).

In Walter Ong's influential book *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982, 2002), the dichotomy orality-literacy gains salience. Also relying on Saussure's postulates, he acknowledges the importance of oral speech that supports all verbal communication.

Ong sees language as *an oral phenomenon* (Ong, 2002: 6), and analysing the interplay between orality and literacy (or writing), is keen to show that writing can never do away with orality, the former being a *secondary modeling system* inextricably linked to a primary system, that is, spoken language (Ong, 2002: 8). In much the same vein, Grant Lovejoy in his article *The Extent of Orality* (2008) contends that a great number of dictionaries define orality as 'a reliance on spoken, rather than written, language for communication' (Lovejoy, 2008: 2). However, Lovejoy believes that an extended definition should consider the communicational, relational and cognitive features of oral cultures (Lovejoy, 2008: 2).

Let me now return to Ong, who identifies nine characteristics of oral thoughts and expressions. Therefore, they can be additive (rather than subordinative), aggregative (rather than analytic), redundant, conservative or traditionalist, close to the human lifeworld, agnostically toned, empathetic and participatory, homeostatic, situational (rather than abstract). However fascinating as it might have been, my paper does not attend to all these features of orality but to only one, namely redundancy – repetition. As Lovejoy (2008) and Ong show, this feature helps both the speaker and the audience keep track of the argument and not lose the sequence of events. How the translator deals with redundancy and repetitions is something that I will be looking at in subchapter 2.

1.1. THE INTERVIEW

Let me now shift my attention to the **interview**, and the way it is defined by two different fields of research: (a) oral history and (b) linguistics. First, it should be noted that (a) oral history as a discipline is a method of 'collecting memories and personal commentaries of historical significance through recorded interviews' (Donald Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, 2003: 19). It would not be then wrong to state that oral history is predicated on the use of the interview, seen as an exchange between a professional interviewer and an interviewee and recorded in audio or video format. Recordings are then transcribed, placed in an archive and used for further research. Ritchie calls attention to the historical objective of the interview. It seeks information and knowledge about the past and should be distinguished from that used by sociologists, political scientists, etc. Last but not least, the interview is understood as a well thought-out investigation that should yield a thorough and intelligible historical account.

On the other hand, the interview has but recently gained a purchase on (b) linguistic research. It has been amply exploited by fields like sociology, anthropology or discursive psychology. In his authoritative paper *A critical review of qualitative interviews in applied linguistics* (2010), Steve Mann charts the roles assigned to interviews by various disciplines. Therefore, social scientific research highlights the active - interactive nature of the interview (Mann, 2010: 8) that enables spontaneity and improvisation. Mann also insists on the fact that the interview is a co-construction between an interviewer and an interviewee, a dynamic process seeking to create meaning (Mann, 2010: 8).

Moreover, Conversation Analysis has focused on the interview interaction and linguistic research has used interviews as a method of data collection in order to examine different language phenomena. Block justifies the use of interviews in linguistic research by a need to 'take research participants 'at their word' ...[that is] to offer presentation of data plus content analysis, but no problematization of the data themselves or the respective roles of interviewers and interviewees' (2000:757, quoted in Mann 2010: 12).

1.2. TRANSLATION

After fathoming orality and interview it is incumbent upon me to explain how these two notions are approached by Translation Studies scholars. Paul Bandia's compelling work *Orality and Translation* (2015) discusses the complexity of orality in translation. Consequently, according to Bandia, translation is an essential tool for the 'recording, textualization, representation or appraisal of orality' (Bandia, 2015:125).

There are primarily two avenues of inquiry when tackling orality in translation. The first one departs from a pragmatic conceptualization of translation, and proposes a study of the intra- and interlinguistic or intersemiotic translation practice (ibid). This approach has galvanized interdisciplinary research in areas like gender studies, intercultural communication studies or film and media studies. The second one offers a metaphorical approach that addresses issues like otherness and alterity, minority languages and cultures, etc. As Bandia aptly explains, this second axis of investigation enables a close analysis on the connection between orality and translation in numerous fields pertaining to humanities and social sciences, including history (where my paper actually situates itself), anthropology, theology, classics or fine arts (ibid).

1.3. REDUNDANCY

As I have previously shown, one of the features of orality, according to Walter Ong (1982, 2002) is redundancy. This concept has also been studied

from a linguistic perspective, and a plethora of definitions have been framed. In their lucid and concise article *What is Linguistic Redundancy?* (1999)², Ernst-Jan Wit and Marie Gillette have charted the various meanings attributed to this concept by different scholars. Therefore, they show how overdetermination and high predictability demonstrate that repetition of information lies at the core of redundancy (Wit and Gillette, 1999: 3)³.

One more definition worth noting is that provided by Hunnicut, who views redundancy as ‘the systemacity in one’s language (and speech). This refers to the information in a complete sentence over and above that which is essential’ (Hunnicut 1985: 53, quoted in Wit and Gillette 1999:3)⁴. Following their rigorous and in-depth analysis of the concept, the two authors distinguish between grammatical and contextual redundancy. If grammatical redundancy is intrinsic to the language system, being systematically necessary, the contextual one is optional (Wit and Gillette, 1999: 3)⁵. My paper is concerned with the latter, which broadly refers to the repetition of identical or apparently identical components. In their attempt to clarify the concept, Wit and Gillette advance four kinds of contextual redundancies: (a) identical or synonymous repetition, (b) isolating, salient repetition, (c) contrasting repetition, (d) distinguishing, differentiating repetition. In what follows I will incorporate both this classification and also that proposed by the Georgian scholars Kemertelidze and Manjavidze which dovetails with the first one mentioned, albeit with some differences. Consequently, they distinguish between the following categories: anaphora, epiphora, anadiplosis, framing, root repetition, chain repetition and synonymous repetition (Kemertelidze; Manjavidze, 2013: 4-7).

2. REDUNDANCY IN TRANSLATED ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS ON ROMANIAN COMMUNISM

This second part of the paper attends to the peculiarities of redundancy in **my translation** of oral history interviews on communism from Romanian into English. The data is extracted from the following books: *Memorialul Durerii: Întuneric și Lumină* (2013) by Iulia Hossu Longin, *Supraviețuitorii. Mărturii din temnițele comuniste ale României* (2014, Humanitas), by Raul Ștef and Anca Ștef, and *Convorbiri cu Regele Mihai I al României*, the third edition published in 2008 by Humanitas.

² Gillette, E.J.; Wit M. (1999), ‘What is linguistic redundancy’, available at <http://www.math.rug.nl/~ernst/linguistics/redundancy3.pdf>

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

Let me now begin the analysis proper, by illustrating redundancy in a series of examples selected from the data mentioned hereinabove.

When the interviewer asks Marioara Horescu Blănaru whether she heard anything about her husband who was on trial for his anti-communist activities, she replies: ‘And such a rumour emerged from time to time, that someone either ran away, or that he left somewhere, or someone took him out of prison, so that for seven years I believed that he either hid somewhere or was somewhere, across the border’ (‘Și a mai apărut din când în când câte un zvon de acest gen, ba că a fugit cutare, ba că a plecat în cutare loc, ba că l-a scos cutare din închisoare, așa încât șapte ani am avut convingerea că ori e undeva ascuns, ori e undeva, peste graniță’; Hossu Longin, 2013: 58). The repetition of ‘cutare’ (an indefinite pronoun, with an adjectival function in ‘cutare loc’) poses some translation challenges, as it remains unaltered in Romanian, yet changes need to be applied in English. Hence, I was compelled to use two different words, *someone* and *somewhere*, for basically the same Romanian word. In addition, the translation of ‘undeva’ by ‘somewhere’ (just like ‘cutare’) leads to an extra repetition not intended in the original text. Needless to say, the role of ‘ba’ as a disjunctive conjunction used three times by the interviewee must be clearly signposted.

Another telling example that demonstrates how repetition amplifies emotions is also provided by the same interviewee. Recounting the moment her husband saw their child for the last time before his execution, she says: ‘He took the child in his arms, with tears falling down and the only thing he could say was: ‘Corneliu, Corneliu’, over and over again. We didn’t talk about anything else. Just that: with the child in his arms and with tears falling down. ‘Corneliu, Corneliu’, over and over again’ (‘El a luat copilul în brațe, îi curgeau lacrimile și singurul lucru pe care putea să-l spună era: ‘Corneliu, Corneliu’, la nesfârșit. Altceva n-am vorbit împreună. Doar atât: cu copilul în brațe și-i curgeau lacrimile. ‘Corneliu, Corneliu’, la nesfârșit’; Hossu Longin, 2013: 59). As a translator, I found it appropriate to slightly recast the structure ‘îi curgeau lacrimile’ (tears were falling down), adding the preposition *with* to reinforce the poetic nuance embedded in the source text. I would also like to draw attention to the contrasting repetition ‘*We didn’t talk about anything else. Just that*’, where the words that semantically form a contrast are repeated or redundantly coded, as Wit and Gillette explain (1999: 10). What is more, the double repetition of ‘*over and over again*’ and also of the child’s name (‘Corneliu’) points out emphatically the grief caused by the separation between father and son.

The story of the resistance groups in the mountains is retraced by survivors and also by those who lent them a hand and who subsequently faced

repression by the communist regime. Prominent leaders of such a group were Doctors Alexandru Dejeu and Iosif Capotă who, in their valiant effort to keep hope alive in the country's fight against communism, proclaimed the necessity of resistance.

Teofil Crețu, a member of the group Capotă-Dejeu, was sentenced to hard labour for life. He testifies: 'I knew they were determined people, resolute people, who did not flinch from fighting against communism, on the contrary, on all occasions and in all circumstances I talked to them, we spoke only about this and we discussed only this, the way in which we could fight and how we could take action against communism in our country' ('Știam că sunt oameni hotărâți, oameni fermi, care nu dădeau în lături de la lupta împotriva comunismului, din contră, în toate ocaziile și împrejurările când aveam discuții cu dânșii, numai despre asta vorbeam și numai despre asta discutam, despre felul în care putem lupta, cum putem activa contra comunismului la noi în țară'; Hossu Longin, 2013:100). Apart from the repetitions of the words 'people' and 'only' which call attention pointedly to the high moral stature of the fighters, there is also a contrasting repetition. Therefore, the idea that '*we spoke only about this and we discussed only this*' increases the implicit contrast expressed by the fact that they '*did not flinch from fighting against communism*'.

To continue, when interviewed about his brother's refusal to renege on his convictions even when standing trial, Gavril Dejeu says: '...I think he knew that, whether he was sentenced to death or not, in reality death awaited him, because the way in which the organs of the Securitate treated him was beyond description' ('...cred că a știut că, indiferent dacă este condamnat la moarte sau nu, în realitate moartea îl așteaptă, fiindcă modul în care s-au comportat cu el organele de Securitate a fost incalificabil'; Hossu Longin, 2013:108). As this short sentence suggests, death (or the fear of death) was ubiquitous, becoming a mute and cold companion of an oppressive life.

The ideas of suffering, resistance or death that emerge in these interviews about the fighters in the mountains point to the Romanians' struggle to preserve their dignity and liberty. However, despite its significance, this chapter in history has almost been consigned to oblivion. Octavian Paler, a renowned writer and journalist, born in a mountain village involved in the resistance movement, makes some vituperative comments on this matter:

It looks as if we are the only ones cursed. The only ones who let foreigners believe that we were a nation of cowards, that we didn't stand up to Soviet colonisation for many, many, many years and that we bore with it. We are the only ones who allow foreigners to talk about Romanian passivity [...] forgetting that some of our countrymen actually rebutted the philosophy of submission from

Miorița for seventeen years, I repeat, for seventeen years. (Numai noi parcă suntem blestemați. Numai noi îi lăsăm pe străini să creadă că am fost un popor de lași, că nu ne-am ridicat împotriva colonizării sovietice mulți ani, mulți ani, mulți ani și că am răbdat. Numai noi le permitem străinilor să vorbească despre pasivitatea românească [...] uitând că niște compatrioți ai noștri au contrazis, de fapt, filozofia resemnării din Miorița timp de șaptesprezece ani, repet, timp de șaptesprezece ani (Hossu Longin, 2013: 233).

With regard the first sentences, I felt compelled to use the structure *'it looks as if'* that expresses the interviewee's search for an explanation of Romanian apathy. On the other hand, in the case of the repetition 'mulți ani, mulți ani, mulți ani', I translated 'ani' (years) only once, since the repetition of 'many' three times helps the whole sentence achieve the same effect in English as it does in Romanian.

A sense of outrage and revolt at contemporary Romania's rampant apathy runs through Paler's interview. His answers are replete with repetitions meant to add emphasis to his ideas and preserved as such in the Target Language. He says conclusively:

[...] why do we forget what should not be forgotten? Why do we forget that in the 1950s, Romania was the first country in Eastern Europe – I repeat, the first country in Eastern Europe – before the Hungarian Revolution, before the 'Prague Spring', before the Polish workers' uprising in Gdansk. I do not undermine these revolts in any way. I just want to say that we also have the right to dignity, we also have the right to pride. Because there were in Romania our own fellow countrymen – I repeat, the first in Eastern Europe – who had the courage to place liberty above their own lives. (De ce uităm că, în anii 1950, România a fost prima țară din estul Europei – prima țară din estul Europei, repet -, înaintea Revoluției Maghiare, înaintea 'Primăverii de la Praga', înaintea revoltei muncitorilor polonezi de la Gdańsk. Nu minimalizez deloc aceste revolte, în nici un fel. Vreau să spun numai că și noi avem dreptul la demnitate, și noi avem dreptul la mândrie. Că au existat în România compatrioți ai noștri – primii, repet, în estul Europei – care au avut curajul să pună libertatea deasupra vieții lor. (Hossu Longin, 2013: 242).

The repetition of 'first' appears obviously in the translation, being also introduced by the interviewee's emphatic use of 'I repeat'. What is more, the structure *first country* coupled with *before the Hungarian Revolution, before the Prague Spring* forms a contrasting repetition where the double use of the preposition 'before' adds even more weight to the expressed message. It goes

without saying that the translation was not problematic, yet the translator should not address this string of repetitions superficially, and render them in a condensed version in the target text. This approach would only mangle the original and provide a translation bereft of the power and emotion of the source text.

As I have shown so far, the oral history interviews are interspersed with repetitive words that also illustrate non grammatical circumstances, such as sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic elements (Wit; Gillette, 1999: 9). An interviewee can sometimes wax lyrical and repetitions can turn a subdued account into a more personal, poignant one.

When talking about her brother who was part of the resistance movement in the mountains, Victoria Hașu-Trâmbițaș laments the absence of a burial place for him. She touchingly shares her feelings: 'I look at all the mountains and I wonder: 'Were they also here, I wonder?' Because they didn't stay put, Madam. They walked up and down for a long time, they didn't stay put. And I think to myself: 'Were they also here, I wonder?' Whenever I see the mountains and every single minute, Madam, I think about them, every single minute' ('La toți munții mă uit și zic: 'Oare or fi fost ei și pe-aici? Oare?' Că ei n-au stat numai într-un loc, doamnă. Ei au umblat mult, n-au stat numai într-un loc. Și mă gândesc așa : 'Oare si pe-aici au fost ?' Eu, când văd munții și în tot ceasul, doamnă, mă gândesc la ei, în tot ceasul'; Hossu Longin, 2013: 267). Repetitions are profusely employed in this paragraph and the translator has to map them all. Unarguably, the most striking example is the use of 'oare' no less than three times. This is an interrogative adverb that naturally requires a question mark at the end of the sentence that it introduces. However, I avoided the literal translation and I chose instead a pronoun (I) and a verb (wonder) to obtain a similar effect in English and to make it sound as natural as possible. These are, after all, oral history interviews, and when reading them, one should have the impression of actually listening to the interviewees' stories. By the same token, the translator should pay heed to all the characteristics of orality.

Let me now return to the example previously mentioned. The peculiar syntax of the Romanian sentence '*Eu, când văd munții și în tot ceasul, doamnă, mă gândesc la ei, în tot ceasul*' that contains the repetition of *every single minute* had to be closely studied. I finally opted for a literal translation that could better render the emotion embedded in the source text tinged with sadness and regret.

This first set of examples presented hereinabove has been primarily concerned with the resistance fighters in the mountains, being excerpted from the book *Memorialul Durerii: Intuneric si Lumina* (2013) by Iulia Hossu Longin. In what follows, I will look at the repetitions that appear in political

prisoners' accounts (*Supraviețuitorii. Mărturii din temnițele comuniste ale României*, 2014, by Raul Ștef and Anca Ștef).

Let me now analyse an example selected from Inocențiu Glodeanu's interview. When describing his first impressions upon arrival at the prison, he confesses: 'It was dead quiet, we couldn't hear anything in the prison, silence struck you' ('Era o liniște desăvârșită, nu auzeam nimic în închisoare, tăcerea te izbea'; Ștef, 2014:59). The synonymous repetition is obtained through the use of the word 'quiet' reinforced by the noun 'silence' that conveys the same meaning. Therefore, translating also meant searching for new words that could intensify and rightly portray the auditory image underlying the source text.

For historical information purposes, it is worth mentioning that many people were tortured, arrested and sentenced to many years in prison for the simple reason of helping a member of the resistance groups or expressing their disagreement about the communist regime.

The examples pertaining to the first category abound, one of them being that of Otilia Răduleț. She is the one being interviewed, yet she begins her story by using a rhetorical question herself: 'Wasn't it the right thing to do, when my friends came and asked for my help, or they went to my father and asked for his help, wasn't it right to help them?' ('Nu era normal, când prieteni de-ai mei vin și îmi cer ajutorul, sau se duc la tatăl meu și-i cer ajutorul, nu era normal să-i ajutăm?'; Ștef, 2014: 69). The position of '*wasn't it right*' at the beginning of the sentence and its repetition at the end illustrates the concept of framing (Kemertelidze; Manjavidze, 2013: 5). The translator's task is to identify its presence in the original text and not remove it in translation, because the interviewee's choice of framing, as a type of repetition, reveals her strong belief in the justice of her actions. In much the same vein, she adds: 'I do not regret, no, helping the partisans, no, knowing them, no!' ('Nu am nici un regret, nu, pentru că i-am ajutat pe partizani, nu, pentru că i-am cunoscut, nu!'; Ștef, 2014:75). The emphatic use of 'no' three times, and rendered as such in English, also draws attention to the orality of the interview, steeped in subjectivity and strong personal involvement.

Another element that transpires in these interviews is the acute sense of hunger, described at length by many interviewees. Nistor Man's account is quite revealing in this respect, illustrating the torment inflicted on people by the lack of food: 'We suffered from hunger like jackals, like any other famished animal. We were starving animals. And it's not the stomach that is starving, it's the cell that is starving, even the bone cells, even the hair is starving, everything is starving in our body' ('Noi am suferit de foame ca șacalii, ca orice animal înflămânzit. Noi eram animale flămânde. Și nu e

flămând stomacul, e flămândă celula, chiar și celula osoasă, chiar și părul este flămând, totul e flămând în corpul nostru'; Ștef, 2014: 79). The four-time repetition of the word 'starving' might account for the speaker's intention to hammer his message into his listeners. Needless to say that the translator has to pay attention not only to the identical repetition but also to the synonymous repetition between the words 'starving' (flămând) and 'famished' (înlămânzit). The translation demands thus an accurate semantic analysis and careful reading so that this *microscopic* description of hunger could be successfully transferred into the target language. In his strenuous effort to capture in words the otherwise indescribable suffering wreaked by hunger, Nistor Man resorts to a powerful visual image that cuts deep into the readers' minds, being twice repeated. The comparison with *jackals* or with *starving animals* and *famished animals* requires attention and a loose translation drifting from the original would be ill-advised. What is more, as the focus of Man's description shifts from particular to general (to a universally valid observation) towards the end of the paragraph, the present tense simple of the original is maintained in the Target Text.

Nistor Man's account leaves an indelible impression on readers/listeners, being wrapped in a powerful and reflective language that poses a challenge to any translator. Yet another telling example that I have gleaned from his interview:

Do you know what I think is the secret of survival? Forgiveness brings you inner balance. Inner balance means health, inner balance means resistance, inner harmony, even that of internal organs – you can control your stomach, your liver, intestines, you can control your gallbladder, viscera, everything you've got can be under your control if you have forgiven everything. (Știți care cred eu că este secretul supraviețuirii? Iertarea îți aduce echilibrul intern. Echilibrul intern însemnează sănătate, echilibrul intern însemnează rezistență, armonie internă, până și a organelor interne – îți poți stăpâni stomacul, ficatul, intestinele, îți poți stăpâni fierea, viscerele, tot ce ai poate fi sub controlul tău dacă ai iertat totul. (Ștef, 2014: 83).

The repeated structure 'inner balance' (used three times in this paragraph) is first introduced as an answer to a question, being later defined. Its use at the end of a sentence (*Forgiveness brings you inner balance*) and the beginning of a new one (*Inner balance means health, inner balance means resistance*) forms a type of repetition called anadiplosis (Kemertelidze; Manjavidze, 2013: 5). This figure of speech adds a special effect to the source text and its translation, notwithstanding its apparent lack of difficulty, should bear the stylistic mark of the original.

The repetitions I have put under scrutiny depict in sharp terms the brutal and repressive world of communism. They are sometimes paired with auditory images for a more marked effect. Galina Răduleanu's confession brings into stark relief the psychological terror carefully orchestrated from the very first moments of the investigation. 'At the Securitate, everything was conceived in such a way as to make you feel harassed, starting with the bolts that clanged shut eerily, starting with the clanging of the chains of those going to the investigation room' ('În Securitate, totul era făcut în așa fel încât să te simți agresat, începând cu zăvoarele, care se închideau cu un zgomot sinistru, începând cu zgomotul lanțurilor celor care mergeau la anchetă'; Ștef, 2014: 296). The repetition of the word 'starting' has a twofold purpose: it introduces an enumeration, and it also attracts attention, if only for a minute, to the dismal backdrop where the action was unfolding. Things or sounds that seem too unimportant to be noticed serve here a significant function, enhancing the incremental psychological destruction they were meant to inflict on victims. As far as the translation is concerned, it should be stated that a literal rendering has been applied in the case of 'începând cu'; however, I chose to translate the word 'zgomot' (noise), repeated twice in the paragraph, by 'clang/clang'. The English verb and noun depict more effectively the specificity of prison sounds (chains of prisoners, doors that are shut) and contribute to a more potent auditory image.

Last but not least, the inner force of those who survived inhumane treatment and conditions in communist prisons, but also of those who perished in their fight, is captured by Octav Bjoza's words: 'Say to yourself, if you are in the cell and you disturb them: 'I am a winner!' Say it ten times, a thousand times, tens of thousands of times! 'I'm not afraid, I'm not hungry, I'm not in pain', and so it will be, my son!' ('Spune în gând, dacă ești în celulă și-i deranjezi: 'Sunt un învingător!' Spune de zeci, de sute, de mii de ori, de zeci de mii de ori! 'Nu mi-e frică, nu mi-e foame, nu mă doare', și așa va fi, fiule!'; Ștef, 2014:262). The imperative form of the verb 'to say' ('a spune', repeated twice) is translated as such into English, for it accentuates the instruction/advice received by Octav Bjoza from older people (hence the use of 'son' at the end of the paragraph). What is more, the string of nouns making reference to numbers ('zeci, de sute, de mii de ori, de zeci de mii de ori') is not problematic in translation, and I chose to render it as such in English, instead of opting for a shorter and more compressed version.

Repetitions are also present in the interviews taken to King Michael of Romania by Mircea Ciobanu (*Convorbiri cu Regele Mihai I al României*, 2008). As befits a more formal language style implied by the high status of the interviewee, objective descriptions are less frequently punctuated by personal involvement and subjectivity. When talking about the invasion of

Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops and the possibility of Romania being also targeted, King Michael concludes: 'Betraying one man's good faith is a crime. Betraying a people's good faith is something indescribable' ('Înșelarea bunicii-credințe a unui singur om este o infracțiune. Înșelarea bunicii-credințe a unui popor este incalificabilă'; Ciobanu, 2008: 17). The Romanian noun 'înșelare' (betrayal), used twice by the King, can be more effectively translated in English by the gerund 'betraying'. Applying this translation technique called transposition helps the text fit better into the target language. What is more, from a stylistic point of view, an anaphoric repetition emerges, which is translated accordingly, as I have already shown.

King Michael employs repetition more consistently when trying to express an idea as clearly as possible. What is interesting to observe is that he includes repetitions in a telegraphic speaking style. Asked by the interviewer about his watchword, he tersely, yet self-assuredly, replies: 'Truth. Only truth can set us free' ('Adevărul. Doar adevărul ne poate elibera'; Ciobanu, 2008: 190). Translation is hardly problematic in this case, so a word-for-word transfer can also convey in English the conciseness and the didactic tone of the sentences.

Before rounding off my analysis, I would like to dwell on one more example. When defining a communist historian, the King contends: 'He uses only the facts and events that can be incorporated into his demonstration. When he has them, fine. When he does not have them, he makes them up' ('El apelează doar la fapte și evenimente care intră în demonstrația lui. Când le are, e bine. Când nu le are, le inventează'; Ciobanu, 2008: 18). The double occurrence of the Romanian direct object *le* (referring to facts) preceded by the verb *a avea* can easily find their corresponding forms in English (them and have respectively).

3. CONCLUSION

Repetitions, as a feature of orality, can pose numerous problems in the translation or oral history interviews from Romanian into English. The translator must successfully address all these challenges and seek to preserve the oral characteristics of the original into the target language. The source text, just like the original, should give readers the impression that they are listening to the interviewees' stories, not reading them. For this reason, repetitions - pervasive in these interviews on communism - should not be easily disposed of.

The repetition of a word in Romanian that has an identical form both as an adjective and as a pronoun cannot be preserved in English where different forms for an adjective and pronoun are used. Moreover, when confronted with an emotional description provided in the original, the translator can

avoid literal rendering and choose instead to recast the repetition in such a way as to make sure it has the same effect on the target audience.

As I have shown, contrasting repetitions permeate the whole ensemble of interviews. They are assigned a significant importance by all speakers who use them as a method to reinforce a point or to delineate psychological traits of the fighters against communism.

In order for repetitions and contextual meaning to be effectively rendered in English, syntactic and semantic changes have to be applied. Synonymous repetition is apparently the most problematic as the translator is forced to widen his/her search for words and mark out those suitable to the context. Moreover, transposition as a translation technique can also be used for a more natural effect in the target language. It is also worth noting that literal translation has appeared to be reliable, especially in curt, telegraphic-style paragraphs.

Last but not least, these repetitions acquire an important role in these oral history interviews dealing with communism. They manage to bring into sharp relief personal stories about communism in Romania, emphasizing not only what people said, but also how they said it, how they felt about their experiences and how they analysed them in retrospect. The repetitions depict realistically and in an unadorned style people's ordeal and suffering during communism. Even more importantly, they cast light on Romanians' resistance and struggle to extricate themselves from the powerful jaws of a destructive regime and fight for dignity, liberty and the survival of their very nation.

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