

**An Intercultural Communication
Perspective of Back-translation:
The Impact of Cultural Hybridity and
Border Crossing**



Aalborg University, May 2016

Culture, Communication and Globalization – Master's Thesis

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Abstract

This Master's thesis in Culture, Communication and Globalization aims at providing insight into the following research question: What role does back-translation play in intercultural communication? I attempt to investigate this research question through the following sub-questions: How may intercultural communication effect the method of back-translation? What happens to a text when it crosses cultural borders twice? What are the strengths and weaknesses of a back-translation method from an intercultural communication perspective? And how may Cultural Translation effect the validity of back-translation as a quality assessment method?

Background

Back-translation concerns the translation of a text that has two principal methods, that is, forward translation and backward translation. While forward translation converts a text from the source language to the target language, the back-translation converts the same text back from the target language to the source language. Back-translation functions as a quality assessment method, purported to provide clients of translation agencies with a quality control, assuring accuracy and high value content in translations. At an academic level, relatively little attention has been paid to issues of back-translation, yet this method has in practice become surprisingly prevalent in the translation industry. This research aims to obtain a deeper understanding of back-translation in the context of intercultural communication.

Theory, Methodology, and Method

This thesis is guided by the theoretical framework of discourse analysis and Juliane House's Functional-Pragmatic Model, both serving as analytical commitments in the analysis. Discourse analysis and Functional-Pragmatic Model share the view that language is a social construction, in which a discursive event influences its context, and the context is, in turn, influenced by the discursive event. Additionally, they both emphasise cultural aspects of meaning. This thesis will, as well, argue that culture is a social construction, because culture is learned through human interaction. In this study, human interaction involves professional translators interactively constructing meaning across borders. The activity of translating one language into another places the translator 'in between' cultures: a position referred to as Third Space. Third Space is a concept to be found within Cultural Translation theory, and enforces Cultural Hybridity and Untranslability.

As Third Space focuses on the individual translator who has his/her own background, pre-understandings, and experiences that contribute to the on-going construction of reality, reality may have multiple perspectives, indicating interpretivist thinking, which, as well, permeates this thesis. Theoretical knowledge and methodological assumptions are employed to practical knowledge in terms of written translations in a back-translation process, performed by professional translators. The text, subject for translation and back-translation, is the Danish article “Den nødvendige avis” (*The necessary newspaper*) from the Danish newspaper Ekstra Bladet.

Findings and Discussions

The analysis is structured by three subjects, underpinning the Functional-Pragmatic Model. These are 1) Function Equivalence, 2) Field, Tenor, and Mode, and 3) Genre. Within these three subjects, three relevant issues/topics to be discussed were found from analysing the data collection. The first topic concerns the problematic of conveying expressive text function, emerging from the analysis of Function Equivalence. It is here illustrated, what may happen to a text when it crosses cultural borders twice. The second topic deals with translators as intuitive social actors, deduced from the analysis of Field, Tenor, and Mode. This topic accounts for how the context of intercultural communication may effect the method of back-translation, in which the weakness of the back-translation method from an intercultural communication perspective can be found. This revolves the validity of back-translation as a quality assessment method. Finally, the third topic accounts for Untranslability vs Translability, discussed in relation to Genre. Untranslability can result in incorrect translation, which may effect the communicative purpose that the translation is supposed to fulfil. However, Untranslability may also create transparency by illuminating issues that can be modified, which, indeed, is a strength of the back-translation method. Simultaneously, languages are becoming more translatable due to globalisation. It is through these findings the role of back-translation in intercultural communication is explored.

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1 Introduction

Increased communication and interconnectedness have become identifying marks of a present globalised world (who.int, 2016). Thus, contact with different cultures is today a routine feature of everyday life (Papastergiadis, 2011, p. 1), forcing international companies, in particular, to be able to communicate across cultures, subsequently, increasing the demand for experts in cultural border crossing. Such experts are, according to Pym, professional translators (Pym, 2014, p. 49). The tendency of increased global communication requires more than ever multilinguals (Pilegaard, 2008) who know two languages and two cultures, as they are purported to possess competences in conveying messages from one culture into another. While the translation industry is growing and widening (The Economist, 2015), the demand for high quality translations – to fulfil effective and competent communication across cultures – is increasing as well. At this point, one may ask, what high quality translation constitutes? Many global companies struggle to agree on what a ‘good’ and high quality translation comprise. In part, because they have difficulties in defining, what quality means to them. Scholars, as well, discuss the concept of quality in the search for an adequate methodology to gauge the quality of translation outcome (Depraetere, 2011, p. 1). In practice, translation agencies worldwide offer different types of quality assessment services to guarantee their customers high quality translations. One of such services is the method of back-translation. It is this quality assessment method that this thesis is concerned with.

1.1 Field of Interest

Back-translation is a method purported to provide clients of translation agencies with a quality control, assuring accuracy and high value content in translations (McGowan, 2014). Back-translation takes place at the end of a translation workflow. It is the translation of a text that has “two principal methods—forward translation and backward translation. While forward translation is a method to convert a document [...] from the source language to the target (foreign) language, the back translation method is used for translating the same document [...] back from the target language to the original (source) language.” (Roy, 2009, p. 100) Back-translation has been described as a quality assessment tool that can be “performed for all types of translation and localization projects” (McGowan, 2014) and helps clients evaluate equivalence of meaning between

the source text¹ and target text². This means that a back-translation process³ concerns the same text undergoing translations twice, involving at least⁴ two different translators: one translator conducting the forward translation, and the other conducting the backward translation. Such an interactive process between people (translators) from different cultures with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds is characterised as an intercultural communication process (Jackson, 2014, p. 3). In other words, intercultural communication is the process of “the exchange of information between individuals who are unlike culturally” (Jackson, 2014, p. 2). In this thesis, *the exchange of information* refers to the exchange of written translations in a back-translation process between translators who are culturally unlike. As a starting point, *culturally unlike* can, e.g., refer to the different nationalities of the translators. The translator performing the translation of the source language into the target language is, most likely, a native of the target language, and the translator performing the back-translation will, most likely, be native of the source language. This is the case in this study. Before going into details about the scope of this research within the framework of intercultural communication, it is found significant to account for the term translation.

Conventionally, translation is “understood as the process by which the meaning in one language is conveyed in another. It usually involves the discovery of linguistic correspondences between different languages, or the transfer of terms from one language into another.” (Papastergiadis, 2011, p. 5) However, due to cultural differences and the nature of languages or terms, it is almost impossible to replicate the exact meaning when translating. There will always be an uneven fit. (Papastergiadis, 2011, p. 5) “This unevenness or non-equivalence inspires both a lament for what is lost in translation, and a celebration of the extension in conceptual understanding through creative improvisation and hybridization.” (Papastergiadis, 2011, p. 5) Such unevenness or non-equivalence may be explained through the concept of Cultural Translation, coined by Indian cultural theorist Homi K. Bhabha. Cultural Translation embraces the intermediary position of the translator in the borders ‘in between’ cultures. This space ‘in between’ is within the spectrum of Cultural Translation referred to as Third Space: a position that may likely enforce Cultural Hybridity and Untranslability. Cultural Hybridity has become a popular term of our era, as a result of increased globalisation, used to describe “diverse intercultural mixtures” (Kraidy, 2005, p. 1). As Cultural

¹ The source text is the original text that is to be translated into another language

² The target text is the finished product of a translated text

³ The back-translation process, in this thesis, refers to the process from translating the source text into the target text, and the translation of the target text back to the original (source) language

⁴ The client can ask for two or more back-translations, hence, more translators will be involved in the process

Hybridity is a broad notion, “[i]t is therefore imperative to situate every analysis of hybridity in a specific context where the conditions that shape hybridities are addressed” (Kraidy, 2005, p. vi). This is what this thesis aims at: Cultural Hybridity can be explained through the mixture of two cultures that emerges in the intercultural process of translating. It is within this process, Untranslability may arise as well, characterising when there in one language cannot be found an equivalent in another language when translating. Therefore, this thesis recognises that translations will always produce cultural change by rejecting the view of ‘universal translability’, in which everything can translate everything else (Pym, 2014, p. 154). All in all, Cultural Translation can be generalised in the following short sentence: “Wherever borders are crossed, cultural translation may result.” (Pym, 2014, pp. 141-142) In a back-translation process, the cultural borders are, so to say, crossed twice. This means that Cultural Translation may, as well, result twice in back-translations.

It is at this point my interest for exploring the back-translation method arose. When translating a language into another, there will, naturally, be cultural factors – existing and emerging within the position of the translator – that influence the translation outcome. However, in the case of back-translation, Cultural Translation will strike twice, making this process even more vulnerable to cultural impacts, such as Cultural Hybridity and Untranslability. Furthermore, with the epistemological approaches of social constructivist and interpretivist thinking guiding this thesis⁵, I put forward the idea that different people speak differently, because they think differently (Kramersch, 2000, p. 11). Translators, as any other individual, interpret texts and produce translations based on their own pre-understandings and cultural knowledge, and “[w]hen language is used in context of communication, it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways.” (Kramersch, 2000, p. 3) In this sense, this study attempts to illuminate the intercultural aspects that exist between translations, while being aware of that translators from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds influence such process, and, subsequently, frame translation discourse as a complex, though important channel of intercultural communication. Therefore, I wish to explore the following research question:

What role does back-translation play in intercultural communication?

I intend to investigate the above research question through the following sub-questions:

How may intercultural communication effect the method of back-translation?

⁵ This will be elaborated in section “4.2 Methodological Assumptions and Paradigms”

What happens to a text when it crosses cultural borders twice?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of a back-translation method from an intercultural communication perspective?

How may Cultural Translation effect the validity of back-translation as a quality assessment method?

1.2 Research Objectives: Investigating the Role of Back-translation in Intercultural Communication

Within the framework of this research, I aim to contribute to scientific development within the study of Culture, Communication and Globalisation, to be more specific, intercultural communication. Today, the study of texts as well deals with peoples, such as the translator as interpreter (Baer & Angelelli, 2016, p. 6). It is within this framework that this thesis is concerned with, as I attempt to explore the process of written translations in the social practice of back-translation, involving translators with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. I intend to reach an academic level within intercultural communication by employing theoretical knowledge to practical knowledge. The theoretical tools applied to this study concern the cross-discipline of discourse analysis, Functional-Pragmatic Model by Juliane House, and Cultural Translation Theory by Bhabha. These discipline/theories will be further elaborated in section “3 Theoretical Framework”. These discipline/theories are employed to practical knowledge in terms of written translations in a back-translation process, performed by professional translators. This, with the purpose of investigating the method of back-translation that has in practice become surprisingly prevalent in many translation fields (Ozolins, 2009, p. 1). It is not the objective of this thesis to suggest a ‘right’ way to measure translation quality. Rather this thesis is about viewing back-translation through critical lenses from an intercultural communication perspective.

The central objective of this research consists in examining the complexity of intercultural communication through comparing written translation texts, categorising findings, and critically discuss the discursive and interactive process of the social phenomenon of back-translation and its validity as a quality assessment method. This is explored through ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions posed above, in which ‘what’ questions seek to describe, and “‘how’ questions are concerned with interventions to bring about change.” (Blaikie, 2010, p. 17) Thus, the purpose of this thesis is to describe a version of a social phenomenon by answering ‘what’ questions: *What* role does back-

translation play in intercultural communication? *What* happens to a text when it crosses cultural borders twice? And *what* are the strengths and weaknesses of a back-translation method from an intercultural communication perspective? Additionally, this research attempts to critically discuss findings brought about 'how' questions: *How* may intercultural communication effect the method of back-translation? And *how* may Cultural Translation effect the validity of back-translation as a quality assessment method?

How I go about answering these 'what' and 'how' questions will be accounted for in details in "3 Theoretical Framework", "4 Methodological Framework", and "5 Method" sections. Nevertheless, the next section will present a roadmap for the remainder of this thesis by shortly describing each section.

1.3 Thesis Structure

This section provides an overview of this thesis. After the introductory, section "2 Literature Review" is presented in order to link this research to the current state of relevant knowledge and to discuss it in relation to previous research within this field of interest (Blaikie, 2010, p. 17).

Section 3 is titled "3 Theoretical Framework", which in detail accounts for disciplines and theories applied, including defining and discussing concepts and ideas relevant to this thesis' analysis. This theoretical section contains four sub-sections, each to fulfil different purposes. Firstly, section "3.1 The Cross-discipline of Discourse Analysis" aims to connect the relationship between the concepts of intercultural communication, culture, and discourse analysis, in which discourse analysis is employed as an analytical tool. Secondly, section "3.2 What is High Quality Translation?" is different from the other sections within this theoretical framework, because it does not account for a theory used in the analysis. The aim of this section is to discuss various perspectives and schools, concerning how high quality translations can be evaluated, as it is found important to distinguish between different ways at looking at translation quality. Thirdly, a way to evaluate translation quality has been suggested by House, leading us to section "3.3 Functional-Pragmatic Model". The model is an analytical framework for analysing and comparing original and translation texts. This theoretical model is applied as a guideline for analysing the data collected: translations in a back-translation process. While this model will support and structure the analysis, I will as well take a critical standpoint to it. Such a critical standpoint may be found in cultural aspects explained in section "3.4 Cultural Translation Theory". Cultural Translation emphasises the position of the translator, who knows two languages and, presumably, two cultures, which may say something

about the effects that cultures have on translation outcome. This theory is used in the analysis to discuss findings.

Section 4 is titled “4 Methodological Framework”. Firstly, this section accounts for the research strategy: the inductive strategy, and what this means to the procedure for conducting this research. Secondly, I will account for the methodological assumptions and paradigms, guiding my thinking framework. I view reality through the lens of an idealist ontology, which predicates that reality is created by the human mind (Blaikie, 2010, p. 93). The idealist ontology is closely linked to social constructivist and interpretivist epistemologies, in which an idealist reality is “made up of shared interpretations that social actors produce and reproduce as they go about their everyday lives.” (Blaikie, 2010, p. 93) I will explain how ontological and epistemological thinking influence this thesis, from collecting data to interpreting data in the analysis. Furthermore, I will explain how this thinking frame is reflected in my choices of theories.

Section 5 is titled “5 Method” and subsumes the data collection procedure of gathering primary data. The data are naturally occurring data in the form of written textual data. More specific, the data are translations in a back-translation process, containing one Danish source text⁶, one English target text⁷, and two Danish back-translations⁸. In this section, I account for the advantages of conducting such types of data, followed by a discussion of claimed criticisms towards collecting a few data and analysing data in details, indicating that this study is to be found within a qualitative framework. This qualitative research “recognizes that the subjectivity of the researcher is intimately involved in scientific research.” (Ratner, 2016) I will, therefore, account for how subjectivity guides this thesis: from the choice of topic, formulating research questions, to selecting methodologies and methods, and interpreting the collected data. When recognising that subjectivity indeed permeates this thesis, it is, as well, important to stand back, as a researcher, and reflect on values that may effect the research (Ratner, 2016). Therefore, a reflexive approach has been taken into account in this thesis context. Thereafter, I attempt to evaluate the quality of this qualitative research by discussing reliability of data and methods, and the validity of findings. The subsequent section deals with the limitations of this study and provides suggestions for further investigations. Finally, this

⁶ Appendix A

⁷ Appendix B

⁸ Appendix C, Appendix D

section finishes off with the analysis strategy, which in details explains the analysis procedure, from interpreting collecting data to deducing findings.

Section 6 is titled “6 Analysis: Bringing Discourse Analysis, Functional-Pragmatic Model, and Cultural Translation together”. Based on my data preparations explained in section “5.4 Analysis Strategy”, it is here, I start a detailed analysis of the Danish source text in comparison to the English target text and the two Danish back-translations. I argue for my statements, followed up by data presentations. With the theoretical guidance of discourse analysis as intercultural communication, House's Functional-Pragmatic Model, and Bhabha's notion of Cultural Translation Theory, I, as well, critically discuss my findings.

Section 7 is titled “7 Conclusion”. It is here, I provide a summary of my findings.

2 Literature Review

Back-translation is a practice little studied and even less researched in culture and communication studies (Ozolins, 2009, p. 1). In the search for scientific literature, there seems to be a lack of studies focusing on back-translations in the context of intercultural communication. While relatively little attention has been paid to the issues of back-translation, yet this method has in practice become surprisingly prevalent in the translation industry (Ozolins, 2009, p. 1). As suggested in the introduction, this is likely due to the increased global communication, forcing international companies to communicate effectively across cultures, hence, the demand for high quality translations. It is, as well, in my experience that back-translation is frequently applied in practice, as I worked full time in a translation agency when undertaking my internship as part of my studies in the Master's programme “Culture, Communication and Globalization” at Aalborg University, Denmark. I am, therefore, aware of that this method is actually being used in practice with the purpose to ensure clients of translation agencies high quality translations.

At an academic level, this thesis revolves an intercultural communication perspective of back-translation, focusing on cultural aspects that exist in between translations in a back-translation process, influenced by the interplay of professional translators with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This perspective has yet not been found researched aside from one single study, which came close to this research scope. That research was titled “Back-translation for cross-cultural research” by Richard W. Brislin conducted in 1970 (Brislin, 1970). Brislin's research aimed to investigate two aspects: “(1) factors that affect translation quality, and (2) how equivalence

between source and target versions can be evaluated.” (Brislin, 1970, p. 185) One can say that Brislin's first aspect relates to two research questions of this thesis: How may intercultural communication effect the method of back-translation? And how may Cultural Translation effect the validity of back-translation as a quality assessment method? One can argue that ‘factors’ refers to ‘intercultural communication’ and ‘Cultural Translation’, as these can be seen as factors effecting a back-translation method, and ‘translation quality’ can refer to ‘the method of back-translation’ and ‘the validity of back-translation as a quality assessment method’. Brislin's second aspect cannot be found in this thesis' research questions, in fact, this thesis, from the beginning, suggests a model to evaluate equivalence between texts. This is accomplished through House's theory of Functional-Pragmatic Model, which this thesis' analysis employs as an analytical framework for analysing and comparing source and translated texts. There are to be found similarities between Brislin's research and this thesis. In short, Brislin's findings showed that 1) back-translations lead to poor results, 2) back-translation gives insight into the competence of the translator, and 3) there is no unit of measurement for assessing adequacy/quality (Brislin, 1970, p. 213). Brislin's findings are interesting, but it is found important to re-consider his findings, as much has happened since 1970. Based on this thesis' analysis and deduced findings, I both agree and disagree with Brislin's findings. I do not agree with Brislin's first finding: back-translations lead to poor results. Based on my analysis, I agree that back-translations *can* lead to poor results, however, strengths of a back-translation method were also found, which could lead to better translations (results). Whether back-translations lead to good or poor results is determined by the translator, therefore, I agree with Brislin when stating that back-translation gives insight into the competence of the translator. This matter is elaborated in section “6.1.4 Translators as Intuitive Social Actors”. At last, I cannot agree with Brislin's third finding: there is no unit of measurement for assessing adequacy/quality, as I base my analysis within the theoretical framework of Functional-Pragmatic Model, which is developed as a unit of measurement for assessing translation adequacy and quality. It is, however, important to note that even though this model supports the analysis, I will, as well, take a critical standpoint to it. In this way, the Functional-Pragmatic Model is further developed through the scope of thesis.

3 Theoretical Framework

The following subsumes the theoretical framework employed in this thesis. The theories, disciplines, concepts, and ideas provided in this section will be explained in details. The purpose is

to provide an understanding of the theoretical foundation, underlying this research, and their relevance in the process of answering the research questions. This section includes the following: “3.1 The Cross-discipline of Discourse Analysis”, “3.2 What is High Quality Translation?”, “3.3 Functional-Pragmatic Model”, and “3.4 Cultural Translation Theory”. As these sub-sections have shortly been presented in section “1.4 Thesis Structure”, I will jump directly to the first theoretical subject.

3.1 The Cross-discipline of Discourse Analysis

The theoretical framework section takes its point of departure in the cross-discipline of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis can be both diverse and interdisciplinary (Mason, 2016, p. 203), therefore, this section aims to narrow down the scope of discourse analysis to be employed in this thesis. In doing so, I, firstly, attempt to account for the relationship between concepts of intercultural communication, culture, and discourse as a cross-discipline, and why, these are important to understand when investigating the role of back-translation in intercultural communication.

In this thesis, discourse analysis is employed to investigate the way a version of the world is produced through discourse, in this case, how language is depicted as producing an aspect of the social world. (Bryman, 2012, p. 528) More precise, this study applies discourse analysis as “an analytical commitment to studying discourse as texts [...] in social practices [...]. The focus is [...] on language as [...] the medium for interaction; analysis of discourse becomes, then, analysis of what people do.” (Silverman, 2006, p. 224) *Texts in social practices* refers to written translations produced in a back-translation process: a process that involves the interaction between social actors (translators) with different cultural backgrounds. One can say that the production of translations in a back-translation process is a way to understand the discourse channelling between cultures. As suggested in the introduction, such an interactive process between social actors from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds has been defined as an intercultural communication process. (Jackson, 2014, p. 3)

Intercultural communication has somewhat become everyday-speech, making the concept both mundane and ubiquitous. Nevertheless, researchers and anthropologists claim diverse perspectives of how intercultural communication should be understood (Piller, 2011, p. 8). There are, however, core elements of an intercultural process that are widely agreed upon, one in which the focus is “on

cultural differences more than similarities.” (Bennett, 2012). In order to work out in detail what intercultural communication means, it is found important to distinguish between two concepts often used indiscriminately. Some utilize cross-cultural communication as a synonym for intercultural communication, while others perceive these as two separate concepts with different research purposes, stating that cross-cultural communication “refers to the comparison of communication behaviours and patterns in two or more cultures”, while “intercultural communication research involves an investigation [...] between individuals (groups) from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.” (Jackson, 2014, p. 3) This study attempts to illuminate cultural differences, rather than similarities in a back-translation process, while as well being aware of that translators with various linguistic and cultural backgrounds influence such process.

To understand what intercultural communication is all about, one as well has to take a grasp at what culture is, which is far from an easy task, as culture is ambiguous (Van Dijk, 2011). In 1976, cultural theorist Raymond Williams wrote the famous sentence: “Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language.” (Grossberg, 2013, p. 456) Still today, the culture concept raises discussions of what it entails. Just recently, French philosopher Étienne Balibar “described the concept of culture as “the most confusing of all.”” (Grossberg, 2013, p. 456) I attempt to define the culture concept in relation to its relevance to this study. On the face of it, culture is, on the one hand, “the process of human self-making” (Grossberg, 2013, p. 457). On the other hand, it refers to fundamental social processes of world making, a process that creates different ways of living (Grossberg, 2013, p. 458). Hence, culture both defines the being of the human, as well as the particularity of and differences among humans (Grossberg, 2013, p. 458). From a social constructivist view, culture is learned through interaction. Therefore, “[c]ulture teaches one how to think [...] in other words, how to communicate. In many respects, the terms communication and culture can be used interchangeably” (Neuliep, 2006, p. 44). This is in line with Edward T. Hall’s dictum: “Communication is culture, and culture is communication” (Knapp & Knapp-Potthoff, 1987, p. 3). Hence, humans both express and create culture through communication (Bennett, 2012, p. 1211), indicating that humans learn culture through language. Because through language, we can interact with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds in order to learn more about ourselves and others (Jackson, 2014, p. 4). Language can be defined as spoken, signed, or written language, and when talking about language as a meaning-making phenomenon, representing some aspects of social life (Fairclough, Mulderrig, & Wodak,

2011, p. 357), we are indeed referring to the notion of discourse (Cumming, Ono, & Laury, 2011, p. 8). Discourse has developed intensively and (has been) is applied to a variety of study fields.

During the 90s, new cross-discipline of discourse studies emerged, extending the field to a much broader conceived nature of language and communication (Van Dijk, 2011, p. xvi). A major cross-discipline is *discourse as social interaction*, in which discourse is defined as a social interaction among humans, where meaning is produced when language users engage in talk or text. (Van Dijk, 2011, p. 3) Another related cross-discipline is *discourse as communication* that is interested in the analysis of messages, e.g., focusing on expressed interaction in texts among language users. As a third example, which is more linguistic-oriented, concerns *discourse as complex, layered construct*, focusing on dimensions of natural language, such as expression (words, phrases) and meaning (Van Dijk, 2011, p. 4). Taking inspiration from the three aforementioned cross-disciplines, this thesis, not surprisingly, adheres to *discourse as intercultural communication*, which includes social interaction among humans, expressed interaction in written texts, and a linguistic-oriented analysis. This is quite a broad statement, which requires elaboration: In this thesis, textual translations across cultural (national) borders refer to intercultural communication. Additionally, the back-translation process, which is subject of analysis, is a construction of a perceived 'meaning-making' social interaction among humans, more specifically, among professional translators from different cultures with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, in order to conduct a detailed analysis, a linguistic-oriented approach is likely to open up for comprehensive discussions that may reveal both strengths and weaknesses when conducting back-translations as a quality assessment method.

Over and above, as back-translation being a quality assessment method, one must assume that this method seeks effective and competent communication across cultures. But how may one gauge translation quality to fulfil such effective and competent communication? What constitutes translation quality? The answers to these questions may vary. In the following, I will discuss several perspectives in evaluating high quality translations.

3.2 What is High Quality Translation?

This section does not attempt to explain a fixed way to evaluate quality, instead it presents a discussion of diverse approaches, perspectives, and schools, indicating that translation quality assessment is a more complex process than so. It is found important to discuss translation quality, as back-translation is a method for evaluating translation quality.

There are great disagreements over ways of translating (House, 2001, p. 243) (Pym, 2014, p. 2), thus different views on meaning, leading to different concepts, which indicate diverse ways of evaluating translation quality. (House, 2001, p. 243) From a hermeneutic perspective, subjective and intuitive translation evaluations are emphasised, meaning that scholars regard translations as individual and creative acts, which are dependent on subjective interpretation, interpretive skills, and knowledge. In such translation processes, texts may change meaning depending on the translator's position (House, 2001, p. 244). One may argue whether such a relativizing stance of content and meaning is appropriate for evaluating how and why a translation is 'good'. On the other hand, one may as well argue that the translator's cultural knowledge and understanding of the world is impossible to omit, as a translation is based on human act. An opposing view is a response-based approach that aims at a more specific way of evaluating translation quality by dismissing the translator's mental actions. One may take a behaviourist view that posits a good translation as one favouring the concept of 'equivalence of response'. This concept suggests that "the manner in which receptors of a translation respond to the translation should be "equivalent" to the manner in which the source text's receptors respond to the original." (House, 2001, p. 244) Another approach, quite different to the equivalence of response view, is the Skopos theory, coined by German linguist Hans Vermeer, in which the target-side purpose and function is dominant (Pym, 2014, p. 43) and overrides the importance in judging a translation's quality. (House, 2001, p. 245) The Skopos approach emphasises the norms of the target culture, which are the crucial yardstick in evaluating a translation. In this sense, it is the translator and/or the client/person commissioning the translation that decides the function the translation must fulfil in its new environment. However, the criticism of the Skopos approach goes about how to exactly determine equivalence, as determining a linguistic adequacy of a purpose-based translation is not clear. Nevertheless, most important for this approach is that the translation has a natural flow. This means that the translator can freely accept and reject information to fit the purpose. (House, 2001, p. 245) Translation quality may also be evaluated within text and discourse, e.g., within descriptive translation studies and linguistic-oriented approaches. In descriptive translation studies, the perspective is oriented towards the translated text, in which a text is evaluated in terms of its forms and functions inside the system of the receiving culture. The idea is to describe the characteristics of that text as perceived based on target culture members' knowledge. This means that the translation may be presented as a new text, a new product, of the target culture only, making it difficult to evaluate equivalence between source and target text. Linguistic-oriented approaches, however, deals with the relationship between source

text and the translation, but the procedures and analyses are varied. Such linguistic-oriented approaches have widened the area of studies to comprise concerns with linguistics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis. Yet, according to House, most promising are the approaches that takes into account the interconnectedness of the context and text, “because the inextricable link between language and the real world is both definitive in meaning making and in translation.” (House, 2001, pp. 245-247) There are several theoretical models, which exist to satisfy such interconnectedness of context and text in translations, in which one has been developed by House, named the Functional-Pragmatic Model.

3.3 Functional-Pragmatic Model

I will start this section by shortly introducing the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics, also called SFL, as this is the prominent theory that Functional-Pragmatic Model takes inspiration from. SFL is a theory appropriate to explain how humans make meaning through language. Its major architect is M.A.K Halliday, professor of linguistics, who was influenced by J.R. Firth, the first linguistic professor in Great Britain. Additionally, the influence of Saussure, Hjelmslev, Malinowski, linguists of the Prague School, and Halliday's teacher, Wang Li, give this theory its distinctive flavour. (Martin, 2010, p. 14) The theory differs from other theories, because it, above all, emphasises the idea of choice. It views “language as a large network of interrelated options, from which speakers unconsciously select when speaking” (Martin, 2010, p. 14), writing, or translating. From its theoretical perspective, it brings meaning, function and context into relationship. From a practical perspective, the theory continues to develop. (Coffin, Lillis, & O'Halloran, 2010, p. 2) Juliane House, for instance, has taken the SFL theory further by developing a quality assessment model called Functional-Pragmatic Model of Translation Evaluation⁹, which is an analytical framework for analysing and comparing original and translation texts. It is this theory, I find most suitable to support the analysis and discussion of back-translation as a quality assessment method from an intercultural communication perspective. Different from Halliday's theory, House draws on pragmatics, discourse analysis, and distinctions between spoken and written language. (House, 2001, p. 247) A pragmatic focus is important to this thesis, as the study of linguistic communication must be put in its context, because the choices that translators take influence translations in a back-translation process. In terms of conducting discourse analysis, this

⁹ In this thesis referred to as “Functional-Pragmatic Model”

is viewed as essential in the process of analysing discourse complexities in intercultural communication. At last, making a distinction between spoken and written language is crucial as well. Analysing the one or the other would present diverse analyses and results, e.g., spoken language may include more modes, such as intonation, which is entirely excluded from written language, e.g., in textual translations as in this case.

The analysis and comparison of a source text and its target text is done on three levels: 1) Language/text (Function Equivalence), 2) Field, Tenor, and Mode, and 3) Genre. It is here important to note that these three levels structure the analysis, and the collected data will be presented and discussed within these levels. The three levels are explained in details in the following.

At the level of language/text, translation equivalence is a basic concept underpinning House's Functional-Pragmatic Model, and it is viewed as the fundamental criterion of translation quality (House, 2001). Ivir provides a well-described definition, stating that equivalence is "relative and not absolute, [...] it emerges from the context of situation as defined by interplay of (many different factors) and has no existence outside that context, and in particular it is not stipulated in advance" (House, 2001, p. 247). The reason why this definition makes sense to this study is because equivalence cannot solely be linked to linguistic similarities, as "any two linguistic items in two different languages are multiply ambiguous, and because languages cut up reality in different ways." (House, 2001, p. 247) This gives grounds for Function Equivalence, meaning that this type of equivalence relate to the preservation of meaning across different languages and cultures. As House does not go into further details about Function Equivalence, I have chosen to draw on Buhl's theory of text function. Buhl propounds that a text has three functions: informative, expressive, and vocative. (Buhl, 2005, p. 76) An informative text function focuses on the message, such as conveying information, knowledge, facts, and/or something concrete (Buhl, 2005, p. 76). The expressive text function centres upon how the sender/writer expresses himself/herself, often showing feelings and by using figurative language (Buhl, 2005, p. 86). At last, the vocative text function emphasises the receiver/reader, as the vocative text aims to catch the reader's attention and get the reader to act upon it. Examples of such texts are advertisements and campaigns. (Buhl, 2005, p. 91) "Such a framework does not, however, exclude another, rather different interpretation: namely that every...act contains some element of each of the three functions." (Halliday &

Webster, 2014, p. 4) According to House, it is crucial that translators convey the text function of the source text to the target text. In this case, it is rather interesting to look into whether, or to what extent, such functions are conveyed in back-translations. In this way, one can illuminate what might happen to a text when it crosses cultural borders twice. This will be accounted for in the analysis.

In order to preserve meaning, there are aspects, which are important to translations. This concerns the text in context, because it is posited that a translated text has a function equivalent to its source text, which pragmatically emerges from a particular context of a situation. In order to break down the broad notion of context of a situation, it is now appropriate to present such situational dimensions, defined as Field, Tenor, and Mode. (House, 2001, pp. 247-248) House describes Field as the social activity, subject, and topic (House, 2001, p. 248). Martin provides a slightly more detailed description: "Fields are about people interacting with their world [...] what people are doing and what they are doing it to." (Martin, 2010, p. 20) Tenor deals with the nature of participants, both the addresser and the addressees, and the relationship between them, i.a., in terms of social distance (House, 2001, p. 248). At last, Mode refers to the channel, such as television, e-mail, letter, translations, and so on, but it is necessary to go deeper "if the effect which mode has on choices within language is to be fully appreciated." (Martin, 2010, p. 22) The best way to do that is to consider the effect that different channels have on communication, because they can effect the relationship between social actors by placing barriers between them. (Martin, 2010, p. 22) All in all, "you cannot understand a text unless you know something about the context in which it occurs." (Martin, 2010, p. 28) As the context is a social one, it involves humans doing things with their lives (Field), interacting with other humans (Tenor), and to make use of a channel, or several channels, of communication to do so (Mode). (Martin, 2010, p. 28)

In terms of context, analysing Field, Tenor, and Mode is not enough. One must take the concept of Genre into account, which can be viewed as incorporated 'in between' Field, Tenor, and Mode, and the textual function. Even though these are useful for accessing the relationship between text and context, they are basically limited to capturing features on the linguistic surface. Additionally, Genre is useful in the analysis and evaluation process, because it attempts to open up for a deeper textual analysis. While Field, Tenor, and Mode capture the connection between texts and their microcontext, Genre connects texts with the macrocontext of ,i.a., cultural factors, in which a text is embedded in (House, 2001, p. 248). In other words, Genre sets up to explain how people

accomplish things in a culturally specific way (Martin, 2010, p. 26). How people do things in a culturally specific way strongly indicates that this model takes a functionalist approach to culture. Even though scholars describe cultures as interpretive for understanding human behaviours, we cannot ignore peoples' experiences of perceiving members of other cultures as behaving 'differently' in particular discourse situations. One must, therefore, be aware of that when language is used in communication, "it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex way" (Kramsch, 2000, p. 3). When evaluating textual translations, the translation assessor must consider such cultural filters. Cultural filters describe cultural transfer in a translation process and is a means of "capturing socio-cultural differences in [...] communication" (House, 2001, p. 251). According to House, these differences should not be left to individual intuition (House, 2001, p. 251). But as translators usually work individually with translations, it can be argued that individual intuition will always be present, as translators can only perform based on what they know; their cultural backgrounds. In the process of looking deeper into such cultural filters in order to discuss the role of back-translation in intercultural communication, the theory of Cultural Translation is presented in the following.

3.4 Cultural Translation Theory

Theorisation can, indeed, be related to translation practices. In fact, translators are theorising all the time. In their everyday work, they constantly generate possible translations and then has to choose between them, meaning that a series of ideas are brought into play about what a translation is, and how it should be carried out. Hence, they are theorising. As suggested, there has been, and still are, disagreements over different ways of translating, which, at first, opened up for arguments concerning practical theorisation and then turned into explicit theories with names and explanations for multiple aspects of translation. (Pym, 2014, pp. 2-3) One of those theories is Cultural Translation. This theory can be called a fairly new theory, because it takes into account points that other translation theories lack and complements valid points (Pym, 2014, p. 143), which are necessary to stress when dealing with translation as intercultural communication. These points concern, e.g., the introduction of a human dimension and an approach to translation as a cultural process (Pym, 2014, p. 154). This is further elaborated in the following.

The idea of Cultural Translation presented by Bhabha is an approach that does not address translations as finite texts, but rather views translations as a general activity of communication

between cultures. It can be understood as a cultural process where there is no fixed target text. (Pym, 2014, p. 138) No fixed target text can be explained through the notion of Untranslability. This means when there cannot be found equivalence between the source and target text, which may lead to a translation, in which a word is lost through creative improvisation and hybridization. Hence, the original text may change in transit, corroborating the process of no fixed target text. This is related to multiplicity of meanings attached to translations and the subjective position of the translator – who knows two languages – situated on or in the borders between cultures, in which Cultural Hybridity may emerge. By accepting that Cultural Hybridity and Untranslability may likely occur in a translation process, and the fact that the translator has to make choices between multiple meanings, justify the concept of Cultural Translation, because it allows translators to cut across binarisms. (Pym, 2014, pp. 140-141)

Cultural translation is generalized in the following sentence: “Wherever borders are crossed cultural translation may result” (Pym, 2014, p. 142). Bhabha emphasizes the position of the translator by pointing to the space ‘in between’ cultures, referred to as Third Space. By accepting the notion of Third Space, in which Untranslability and Cultural Hybridity may emerge, reveals aspects ignored by other translation theories and paradigms. Firstly, it involves the aspect of viewing translation from the perspective of the translator. Secondly, its focus on hybridity says something about the position of the translator, who knows two languages and, presumably, two cultures, which might say something about the effects that cultures have on translation outcome. It is here important to note that Bhabha does not say that translations are hybrid, but he locates a translatory discourse that enacts hybridity. (Pym, 2014, p. 143)

As many other theories, Cultural Translation has neither been exempted from criticism. The critique goes about the statement that “Cultural Translation is not in touch with the translation profession” (Pym, 2014, p. 156). This is indeed a relevant critique to take up, as this thesis’ empirical material is based on professional translators’ translations. The above statement has been made, because Cultural Translation concerns more about its theoretical scope than translations as texts. Bhabha talks about the dynamics of cultures in terms of Cultural Hybridity. In this case, the dynamics between translators with different cultural backgrounds. In this sense, the concept of Cultural Translation is too powerful to empower translators in practice. (Pym, 2014, p. 156) As this thesis aims at combining theory with practical knowledge, this criticism is not seen as an impediment. Instead, the theoretical scope of Cultural Translation is way to open up for aspects, or perspectives,

revolving the practice of translation, such as back-translation from an intercultural communication perspective and the impact of Cultural Hybridity and border crossing.

4 Methodological Framework

When choosing a research design, researchers strive to a methodological fit. Edmondson & McManus “define methodological fit as internal consistency among elements of a research project.” (Edmondson & McManus, 2007, p. 1155). Therefore, the purpose of this section is to account for the choices made in relation to research traditions, philosophical approaches, and assumptions, drawing on adequate inferences to answer the research questions. This section subsumes the sub-sections “4.1 Research Strategies” and “4.2 Methodological Assumptions and Paradigms”.

4.1 Research Strategies

In order to answer the research questions, “a procedure, a logic, for generating new knowledge” (Blaikie, 2007, p. 8) is required. Research strategies are such logics. This thesis follows the inductive strategy, because this study is guided by research questions, in which I attempt to develop statements about relationships from observing the empirical world, meaning that statements are developed in the process, rather than a deductive strategy in which statements are formulated in advance to test theories. (Bradley, 1992, p. 105) In this case, my research questions emerged when I undertook my internship in a translations agency, in which my speculations revolved scepticism about the intercultural elements in a back-translation process. Therefore, I seek to explore the role of back-translation in intercultural communication by investigating how intercultural communication effects the method of back-translation, illuminating what happens to a back-translation when it crosses borders twice, investigating the strengths and weaknesses of a back-translation method from an intercultural communication perspective, and understanding how Cultural Translation may effect the validity of back-translation as a quality assessment method. In order to look into these issues, primary data have been collected from a translation agency, containing one Danish source text¹⁰, one English target text¹¹, and two Danish back-translations¹². The data are naturally occurring data, as I have not been involved in or influenced the data gathering process. These texts “document what participants are actually doing in the world –

¹⁰ Appendix A

¹¹ Appendix B

¹² Appendix C, Appendix D

without being dependent on being asked by researchers.” (Silverman, 2006, p. 157) In this case, the written translations document what translators are doing in the world without being dependent on me (the researcher). The collected data are then subject to a detailed analysis from which findings are deduced. As will be elaborated in section “5.4 Analysis Strategy”, I will be categorising the collected data in order to find topics and issues to be discussed, indicating that I will interpret data, taking a subjective stance to research.

To interpret, or interpretivism, predicates a strategy that respects the difference between people, in which an interpretivist paradigm requires researchers to grasp a subjective meaning of social action. (Bryman, 2012, p. 30) Such a relationship between the researcher and the researched can be explained through Blaikie’s notion of researcher’s stance when generating knowledge (Blaikie, 2007, p. 11). Blaikie explains that a researcher either takes an ‘outsider’ or ‘insider’ stance (Blaikie, 2007, pp. 11-12). At the one extreme, an outsider stance “requires the researcher to stand back from the social phenomenon being investigated.” (Blaikie, 2007, p. 11) On the other extreme, the insider stance requires the researcher to immerse in the social situation. (Blaikie, 2007, p. 11) In the data collection process, I, as a researcher, can be characterised as an outsider, because, as suggested, I have not influenced the data gathering process, as the translations were carried out in their natural settings: The translators performed the translations as if they were purchased by any other clients. This outsider stance is viewed as an advantage to this inquiry, as it allows me to gather data from a ‘real’ social phenomenon, which is viewed as a strong trait to this study’s reliability, because, e.g., manipulation or any influences are left out. Nevertheless, my stance in the analysis process contradicts an outsider stance. The reason for this is that I interpret the data in order to generate knowledge. This means that I become a part of what is being researched, indicating an involvement of my subjective perspectives of a social phenomenon (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 70). This subjective analysis process is described in section “5.4 Analysis Strategy”. Having already opened up for interpretivist thinking, we shall now take a further look into the methodological thinking that guides this research.

4.2 Methodological Assumptions and Paradigms

A methodology refers to a model to conduct research within a context of particular paradigms. (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 72) Wahyuni defines a research paradigm as “..a set of fundamental assumptions and beliefs as to how the world is perceived which then serves as a thinking framework that guides the behaviour of the researcher.” (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 69)

Two main philosophical dimensions to distinguish research paradigms are ontology and epistemology. (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 69) In short, ontology concerns assumptions “made about the nature of social reality that is investigated.” (Blaikie, 2007, p. 12) In other words, “ontology is the view of how one perceives a reality.” (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 69) Moreover, ontological assumptions relate to epistemological assumptions about the way knowledge of reality can be obtained. (Blaikie, 2007, pp. 12-13) According to Blaikie, ontological perspectives can be explained by two opposed theories: realist and idealist. The realist theory assumes that phenomena have existence that is independent of human activities. On the contrary, the idealist theory assumes that reality of phenomena are created by the human mind. (Blaikie, 2010, p. 93) As this thesis is based on phenomena that have existence dependent on human activities, created by human minds, this research methodology adheres to an idealist ontology, being closely linked to social constructivist and interpretivist epistemologies, in which an idealist reality is “made up of shared interpretations that social actors produce and reproduce as they go about their everyday lives.” (Blaikie, 2010, p. 93) Social actors are then considered to construct the reality and culture that they are part of. In the case of this study, the phenomenon of a back-translation process involves social actors (translators), interpreting texts and, from this, produce translations with the purpose to fulfil effective and competent communication across cultures. The produced translations (data collection) are representations of a reality, socially constructed between professional translators, followed by an analysis, which I attempt to interpret, analyse, and discuss in order to answer the research questions. This means that this thesis' findings are a product of the constructed dynamics between translators and the researcher. Furthermore, social constructivist and interpretivist ideas are as well reflected in the choices of this thesis' theories and disciplines.

Taking point of departure in discourse analysis and House's Functional-Pragmatic Model, there are indeed some methodological connections. There may be several, but this thesis highlights a few commonalities. Firstly, they share the view that language is discursive events that “influence the contexts in which they occur and the contexts are, in turn, influenced by these discursive events” (Young & Harrison, 2004, p. 1), strongly indicating that language is a social construction. Moreover, both discourse analysis and the Pragmatic-Functional Model emphasise cultural aspects of meaning (Young & Harrison, 2004, p. 1). My understanding of the concept of culture is as well a social constructed one, because, as mentioned, culture is learned through human interaction. In this study, the human interaction involves professional translators interactively constructing meaning across borders. The activity of translating one culture to another places the translator ‘in between’

cultures, which in has been referred to as Third Space – a feature within Cultural Translation. As mentioned, Third Space focuses on the individual translator who has his/her own background, pre-understandings, and experiences that contribute to the on-going construction of reality. And because human perspectives can be described as subjective, reality may change and have multiple perspectives. This indicates interpretivist thinking, which signifies that meaning is constantly created by interpretations. Therefore, interpretivists reject the understanding of only one truth. (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 71) Discourse analysis is as well “against the assumption that we can treat accounts as true or false descriptions of ‘reality’” (Silverman, 2006, p. 224), because discourse analysis emphasises the way versions of the world are produced in discourse (Silverman, 2006, p. 224), and these versions are indeed diversely represented from one social phenomenon to another. To this thesis, interpretivist thinking means several things. Firstly, translations are viewed as “representations of reality rather than as simply true or false” (Silverman, 2006, p. 153). In other words, translations represent different realities – no translations are the same. The reason for this is that translations are highly influenced by the individual translator’s pre-understandings and cultural knowledge, which influence the translator’s choice of words, indicating that a selection between subjective meanings are constantly being made. Secondly, interpretivist thinking also means that the translators and I, as the researcher, substantially influence the data collection and the analysis, meaning that this research is merely a ‘snapshot’ of the truth, implying that there exists several truths, or realities. Additionally, this means that had this thesis been conducted by another researcher and different translators to carry out translations, the findings would most likely turn out in a different manner, indicating that multiple meanings will always exist in social science and humanities, as humans are investigating humans, and all individuals are unique with different cultural backgrounds and pre-understandings.

5 Method

Whereas methodology refers to a wide package of philosophical commitments that comes with particular research approaches, methods refer to practical tools to make sense of empirical reality. (Saukko, 2003, p. 8) More specific, research method “consists of a set of specific procedures, tools and techniques to gather and analyse data” (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 72). This section subsumes “5.1 Data Collection”, “5.2 Credibility of Qualitative Research”, “5.3 Limitations”, and “5.4 Analysis Strategy”.

5.1 Data Collection

This section accounts for the considerations made about the kind of data collected. The following presents the sub-sections “5.1.1 Primary Data”, “5.1.1.1 Written Textual Data”, “5.1.2 Qualitative Data”, and “5.1.2.1 Reflexivity”.

5.1.1 Primary Data

In social research, there are three main types of data: primary, secondary, and tertiary. (Blaikie, 2010, p. 160) Primary data are generated by the researcher who is responsible for the design of the study, data collection, and analysis of the gathered data (Blaikie, 2010, p. 160). Secondary data characterise data that have been collected by others. At last, tertiary data have already been analysed by other researchers. (Blaikie, 2010, p. 160) I have collected the data that are subject to this thesis' analysis, meaning that the analysis is based on primary data and, therefore, deploys 'new' data to answer the research questions posed. The advantage of primary data is that I, as the researcher, have a certain control over the production and analysis, putting myself in a position to judge the quality, which is more difficult with secondary and tertiary data types. (Blaikie, 2010, p. 161) This thesis' primary data consist of translations purchased from a translation agency. In this way, the translation process will be carried out on the same terms as if real clients were to purchase such a quality check service. The data is, therefore, retrieved from a real social phenomenon without any interference from the researcher, also referred to as naturally occurring data (Silverman, 2006, p. 157). Another reason for using this particular translation agency is that it offers culture-adapted native tongue translations. In this case, it means that an English-speaking translator, who has acquired good Danish skills, translates into English, and a native Danish-speaking translator, who has good English skills, translates into Danish. It is the translation agency's mission to ensure high quality by employing mother-tongue translators who, in practice, master the target language (their mother-tongue) and, they are, therefore, purported to understand the deep-rooted values and norms in the target culture (their native country), because a mother-tongue translator is assumed to possess the linguistic and cultural competences to communicate in his/her own native country. In this way, translation outcome becomes more authentic, hence, high quality translations to fulfil effective and competent communication across cultural borders. After having established contact to the translation agency, the next part consisted in choosing the text to be translated and collecting the data. The following shows the steps of the data collection process:

- ❖ **First step:** Choosing a Danish source text¹³
- ❖ **Second step:** One native English translator to perform the translation from Danish (source) into English (target)¹⁴
- ❖ **Third step:** Two native Danish translators – independent of each other – to perform translations from English into Danish (back-translations)¹⁵

The first step required me to choose a source text to be translated. The chosen source text is called “Den nødvendige avis”¹⁶ written by former Chief Editor Hans Engell from the Danish newspaper Ekstra Bladet. The reason for choosing this particular text was because of its quite expressive language, containing figurative language (metaphors) and expressions (idioms), which I believed would be a quite challenging text, not just to translate, but to reproduce in a back-translation as well. Because reproducing the same words/meaning/function is what back-translation is supposed to do – to ensure the client that the correct words/meaning/function have been conveyed in the target text. Subsequently, the analysis of back-translations of such a text will prove or disprove the character of such reproductions. There is, however, a criticism towards selectivity in a researcher's choice of text, also referred to as ‘cherry-picking’. (Mason, 2016, p. 206) Cherry-picking refers to researchers choosing the ‘appropriate’ text for discourse analysis. Mason proposes that the cherry-picking problem can be avoided through thoroughness and transparency, such as providing examples that can support the case being made. (Mason, 2016, p. 209) In order to suppress the cherry-picking problem, the analysis will continuously be supported by examples found in the collected data. Second step concerns the actual translation, performed by a native English translator who translates the Danish source text into English. Thereafter, as a third step, the English version was sent to two native Danish translators who – independently of each other – translated the English text back into Danish, without having seen the Danish source text. Please note that usually there will only be one translator for third step (back-translation), but in order to obtain more perspectives by conducting analysis on more than one back-translation, a second one was carried out for the purpose of this research.

¹³ Appendix A

¹⁴ Appendix B

¹⁵ Appendix C, Appendix D

¹⁶ Appendix A

5.1.1.1 Written Textual Data

The data collection of translations in a back-translation process are characterised as written textual data. With these written textual data, I will conduct a detailed analysis. This is seen as an advantage, because analysis of such data provides richness (Silverman, 2006, p. 157). Richness is what this thesis aims to reach, and this is the reason for why only a few written texts have been collected, as they allow for detailed analysis and deeper understanding, instead of gathering and analysing many texts. Silverman supports this claim by stating, “like many other qualitative approaches, textual analysis depends upon very detailed data analysis. To make such analysis effective, it is imperative to have a limited body of data with which to work.” (Silverman, 2006, p. 194) However, some will argue that such a detailed analysis of only a few written texts may be too “subjective, giving too much scope to the researcher’s interpretations” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 2), “so that the study therefore becomes a doubtful scientific value.” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 17) “Thus validity [...] would be wanting”. (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 2) Flyvbjerg, and this thesis as well, argues that this is a misunderstanding, and that subjectivism is not viewed as a threat, but rather as a strong trait to this study. In fact, Flyvbjerg argues that subjectivism applies to all methods, whether qualitative or quantitative research. Even in quantitative research, elements “of arbitrary subjectivism will be significant in the choice of categories and variables for a quantitative or structural investigation, such as a structured questionnaire to be used across a large sample of cases.” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, pp. 19-20) Subjectivity will be further discussed in section “5.1.2 Qualitative Data”.

Another misunderstanding concerns the tendency to understand that “[g]eneral, theoretical (context-independent) knowledge is more valuable than concrete, practical (context-dependent) knowledge” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 3). This thesis speaks for that detailed written textual analysis produce “a type of context-dependent knowledge which research on learning shows to be necessary to allow people to develop from rule-based beginners to virtuoso experts.” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 4) In fact, the advantage of a detailed written textual analysis is that it “can ‘close in’ on real-life situations [...] in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice.” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 19) Flyvbjerg, therefore, concludes that, “[p]redictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context-dependent knowledge is therefore more valuable than the vain search for predictive theories and universals.” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 7)

Finally, a third major criticism concerns the possibility of generalising findings produced by context-dependent knowledge, indicating that validity and reliability are at stake. It must be stressed

that it is not the goal of this study to produce standardised results “that any other careful researcher in the same situation or studying the same issues would have produced. Rather it is to produce a coherent and illuminating description of and perspective on a situation that is based on and consistent with detailed study of that situation.” (Blaikie, 2010, p. 217) Flyvbjerg argues that one can often generalise on the basis of detailed analysis, and the “study may be central to scientific development via generalizations as a supplement or alternative to other methods. But formal generalization is overvalued as a source of scientific development, whereas ‘the force of example’ is underestimated.” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 12) In this sense, one can view this study’s findings as an illustration of a phenomenon and, thereby, contribute the findings of this detailed analysis as an example to ‘generalisation’. Based on Flyvbjerg’s argument, the criticisms concerning subjectivity, context-dependent knowledge, and generalisation are not viewed as impediments to the validation and reliability, but rather as strong traits.

5.1.2 Qualitative Data

“Qualitative researchers suggest that we should not assume that techniques used in quantitative research are the only way to establish validity of findings from qualitative or field research.” (Silverman, 2006, p. 43) Quantitative researchers claim that validity is based on operational definitions of variables, official data, experimental data, or random sampling of populations. (Silverman, 2006, p. 43) Such form of research may be appropriate to some research of social science, but quantitative research, for instance, excludes the inquiry of people in social processes, such as everyday situations. Such social reality cannot be measured via statistics. (Silverman, 2006, p. 43) As this research is based on the social process of back-translation as intercultural communication between translators with diverse cultural backgrounds, this study is to be found within a qualitative framework. Furthermore, qualitative research “recognizes that the subjectivity of the researcher is intimately involved in scientific research.” (Ratner, 2016) This means that subjectivity guides this thesis, everything from the choice of topic, formulating research questions, to selecting methodologies and methods, and interpreting the collected data. Subjectivity indeed guides this research, because I have chosen this thesis’ topic and formulated the following research questions: What role does back-translation play in intercultural communication? How may intercultural communication effect the method of back-translation? What happens to a text when it crosses borders twice? What are the strengths and weaknesses of a back-translation method from an intercultural communication perspective? And how may Cultural Translation effect the validity of back-translation as a quality assessment method? In the process of answering these research

questions, written textual data in forms of translations in a back-translation process have been carried out, in which a detailed analysis of these naturally occurring data will be conducted with the aim to obtain a deeper understanding of a social phenomenon. More specifically, I take a flexible and subjective approach to analysis in preference to a fixed and objective approach, which traditionally characterises quantitative methods. (Silverman, 2006, p. 35) In terms of flexibility, this means that I, as the researcher, am encouraged to be innovative (Silverman, 2006, p. 35). This, for instance, shows evidence when I categorise the collected data in order to discuss relevant topics and issues. In this sense, being innovative still means to be true to the data. How I go about categorising is elaborated in section “5.4 Analysis Strategy”. When categorising by choosing topics to be discussed, one can as well argue that I subjectively interpret the data. As mentioned, researchers of quantitative inquiries, adhering to objectivity, would most likely claim that subjectivity might become doubtful scientific value (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 17). As it is believed that objectivity cannot be reached when humans investigate humans, Ratner encourages researchers of qualitative studies to stand back and reflect on values that may effect their project (Ratner, 2016), hence, the account for reflexivity in the following section.

5.1.2.1 Reflexivity

The concept of reflexivity is used in a variety of ways (Alvesson, 2003, p. 24). According to Alvesson, the probably most common one is the emphasis on the researcher as part of the social world being studied, which calls for exploration and self-examination. (Alvesson, 2003, p. 24) As suggested, subjectivity influence this entire study, from the beginning with the choice of topic and formulating research questions to interpreting the analysis and deducing findings. This stresses the point that I, as the researcher, indeed am part of the social world being studied, influencing the research course, analysis, and findings.

To narrow down the focus area of reflexivity and its relevance to this thesis, this section concentrates on reflexivity as a process by which I reflect upon the interpretation process in the analysis. According to Alvesson, “[r]eflexivity means working with multiple interpretations in order to steer clear of traps and/or to produce rich and varied results.” (Alvesson, 2003, p. 25) To this thesis, reflexivity means that I am completely aware of that the research questions invite multiple interpretations and can indeed provide varied results, also additional to those interpretations and results provided in this analysis. This thesis is reflexive in the way that it acknowledges ambiguity, and that the findings deduced from the analysis are not definite, but rather an example of

perspective of the role that back-translation plays in intercultural communication. In this way, I do not reject the possibility of other perspectives, or interpretations, within this study framework. This is as well in line with the social constructivist and interpretivist epistemologies of this thesis, as it is viewed that reality is constructed by the interplay between produced interpretations and perceptions of unique individuals (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 71).

5.2 Credibility of Qualitative Research

This section accounts for the evaluation of the quality of qualitative research. Credibility rests on reliability of data and methods, and on the validity of findings. (Silverman, 2006, p. 289) In terms of reliability of data, Silverman argues that as the data are naturally occurring data, the written textual data are available and unfiltered. For this reason, written textual data are, in principle, reliable. (Silverman, 2006, p. 288) As to reliability of methods, Moisander and Valtonen suggest two ways to satisfy reliability criteria (Silverman, 2006, p. 282):

1) “by making the research process transparent through describing our research strategy and data analysis methods in a sufficiently detailed manner in the research report.” (Silverman, 2006, p. 282)

This thesis attempts to comply with this criterion. This shows evidence throughout section “4 Methodological Framework” and section “5 Method”, in which strategies, approaches, assumptions, paradigms, methods, etc. that guide the course of this thesis, have been thoroughly explained and discussed. In this way, other researchers will be able to replicate or repeat the research. (Silverman, 2006, p. 282)

2) “by paying attention to ‘theoretical transparency’ through making explicit the theoretical stance from which the interpretation takes place and showing how this produces particular interpretations and exclude others.” (Silverman, 2006, p. 282) In order to meet this reliability criterion, section “3 Theoretical Framework” aims to describe and clarify theories and theoretical considerations relevant to support the analysis. Section “5.4 Analysis Strategy” explicitly illustrates my interpretations emerging from the collected data. These two sections are separately described in order to create clarity and transparency. They (theories and interpretations) are then unified and discussed in the analysis.

In terms of validity of findings, Hammersley defines validity as “the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers.” (Silverman, 2006, p. 289) Two

forms of validation have been suggested as particularly appropriate to qualitative research (Silverman, 2006, p. 289):

1) “Comparing different kinds of data (e.g. quantitative and qualitative) and different methods (e.g. observation and interviews) to see whether they corroborate one another.” (Silverman, 2006, p. 290)

This thesis only employs qualitative methods through a detailed analysis of written textual data.

Omitting quantitative methods is seen as a limitation of this study. For future investigations, it is a possibility to involve quantitative methods as well, in order to strengthen the validity of findings (this will be elaborated in section “5.3 Limitations”).

2) “Taking one’s findings back to the subjects being studied. Where these people verify one’s findings, it is argued, one can be more confident of their validity.” (Silverman, 2006, p. 291) Going back to participants to verify findings make sense when there has been a dialogue between researcher and participants, because the researcher must then ensure that he/she has understood the participant correctly. However, in this case, there is no dialogue. The subjects being studied are not humans, but their products (translations), and it does, therefore, not make much sense to go to the translators for verification. Hence, this is not viewed as an impediment to reach validity.

It can be concluded that this thesis indeed aims to satisfy the above-mentioned reliability criteria through a transparent process, both methodologically and theoretically. Additionally, this study aims to meet the validity criteria as well, however, omitting quantitative methods can be viewed as a lack in validity. I prefer to look at this issue as a limitation matter with the possibility to conduct quantitative methods to strengthen the validity through further investigation. How this can be done is explained in next section.

5.3 Limitations

For future investigations, one could compare different kinds of data – combining qualitative and quantitative methods – to see whether they corroborate one another in order to enforce validity. An example of adding quantitative method to this qualitative study could be to conduct questionnaires in order to gather data from the translators carrying out the translations. This, with the purpose to put focus on the translator and gain insight to the translator’s thoughts and perspectives. Such a method could be relevant to the analysis section called “6.2.1 Translators as Intuitive Social Actors”, which deals with the context of back-translation in intercultural communication. This is one of the three aspects of context called Tenor, and it accounts for the nature of participants in a

discourse (House, 2001, p. 248). As intercultural communication is defined by an interactive process between translators from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, fruitful findings may be deduced when involving participating translators' perspectives.

Another limitation of this thesis can be found in the number of data gathered. Due to financial matters, only one English translation¹⁷ and two Danish back-translations¹⁸ have been purchased for the purpose of this study. As mentioned, a few data can be seen as a strength, as they allow for detailed analysis, a deeper understanding of a social phenomenon, and rich findings. However, in order to support the deduced findings, more data can aid in the process of substantiating arguments and discussions in the analysis.

5.4 Analysis Strategy

According to Wahyuni, analysis strategy involves “cutting the collected texts into pieces and logically recombining them. This translation from raw data to findings requires interpretation of empirical data.” (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 76) Wahyuni's sentence shortly explains the procedure of this analysis strategy. Appendix E provides an outline of the analysis strategy. This section aims to describe in details how the analysis strategy has been accomplished. As viewed in Appendix E, it is seen that the analysis strategy has been divided into four steps:

- ❖ Step 1: Comparing texts
- ❖ Step 2: Cutting collected texts into pieces
- ❖ Step 3: Identifying categories
- ❖ Step 4: Choosing relevant topics to discuss

Step 1: Comparing texts

After collecting the data, all four texts: the Danish source text, the English target text, and the two Danish back-translations, were inserted in a table. Each sentences were compared and reviewed, and in the column named “Function Equivalence”, Function Equivalence was then proved or disproved. The purpose with this first step was to create an overview of all four texts in terms of Function Equivalence.

Step 2: Cutting collected texts into pieces

¹⁷ Appendix B

¹⁸ Appendix C, Appendix D

This second step as well presents a table, containing all four texts. This table shows excerpts from the table in “Step 1: Comparing texts”. As indicated in the headline of this step, the purpose was to cut the collected texts into pieces. I did this by picking out any deviations, or any issues, that could be worth discussing in relation to the scope of this thesis. These would be issues, such as words or figurative languages lost in the process, words that have not been translated, or the production of synonyms in the process. I commented on all issues detected. This is seen in the last column named “Comment(s)”.

Step 3: Identifying categories

At this step, I started to identify categories by grouping the issues detected in the previous step. As seen in Appendix E, I discovered several categories, which are placed under the column named “Categories”, and issues or examples found have been placed in the right side column named “Issues/Examples” within the appropriate category.

Step 4: Choosing relevant topics to discuss

From the identified categories, I chose and created three topics to discuss. These are:

- ❖ Topic 1: The Problematic of Conveying Expressive Text Function
- ❖ Topic 2: Translators as Intuitive Social Actors
- ❖ Topic 3: Untranslability vs Translability

These topics were put in relation to the Functional-Pragmatic Model. This means that the above three topics function as findings, or relevant discussable topics, within the three levels of the Functional-Pragmatic Model: 1) Function Equivalence, 2) Field, Tenor, and Mode, and 3) Genre.

In order to argument for and substantiate the above three topics, excerpts are presented throughout the analysis. How this is accomplished is explained in the following section.

5.4.1 Data Presentation

In order to explicitly describe the data presentation in the analysis, the following will show examples taken from the analysis. The first example concerns excerpts and is illustrated through Excerpt 1:

Excerpt 1:

“HVER DAG LÆSER en halv million danskere Ekstra Bladet.”¹⁹ (*EVERY DAY, half a million Danes READ Ekstra Bladet.*), see Appendix A, line 3.

Excerpt 1 is an example of the Danish source text: “HVER DAG LÆSER en halv million danskere Ekstra Bladet.” (*EVERY DAY, half a million Danes READ Ekstra Bladet.*) As it must not be assumed that all readers of this thesis understand Danish, all Danish sentences, or words, have been translated into English in brackets directly after the Danish sentence or word. It is important to mention that the translations in brackets are my own translations, and they are, therefore, not necessarily identical with the sentences in the English target text²⁰. Furthermore, for analysis purpose, underscoring has been added below some words – just for the reader to focus on these words, as these are the words subject for discussion. This is also stated in the footnote:

“Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).” This analysis contains 19 excerpts, and some excerpts appear several times.

Another type of data presentation in the analysis concerns figures. The following figure, Figure 1 (also an example taken from the analysis), illustrates a translation process, focusing on words that are subject for discussion.

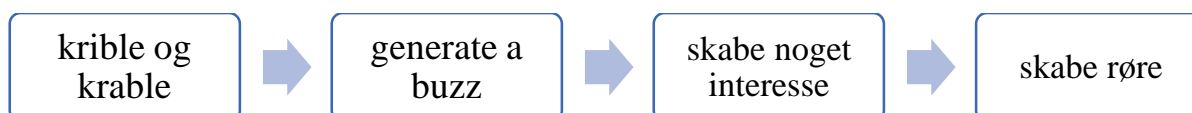


Figure 1

The first box with the words “krible og krable”²¹ (*generate a buzz*) presents the Danish source text. The next box with the words “generate a buzz”²² presents the English target text. The last two boxes with the words “skabe noget interesse”²³ (*create some interest*) and “skabe røre”²⁴ (*create excitement*) present the two Danish back-translations. It is here important to note that both Danish back-translations have been separately translated from the English target text. Moreover, it is also

¹⁹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

²⁰ Appendix B

²¹ Appendix A, line 4-5

²² Appendix B, line 6

²³ Appendix C, line 6

²⁴ Appendix D, line 5-6

noteworthy to mention that in some cases, I distinguish between the two back-translations by referring them to the first and second back-translation. In such a case, the first back-translation concerns the third box (e.g. “skabe noget interesse” (*create some interest*)), and the second back-translation refers to the last box (e.g. “skabe røre” (*create excitement*)). Now that the data presentation has been thoroughly explained, we now reach the analysis.

6 Analysis: Bringing Discourse Analysis, Functional-Pragmatic Model, and Cultural Translation together

In this thesis' analysis, it is found appropriate to combine discourse analysis with House's Functional-Pragmatic Model, as these two disciplines/theories share commonalities. Firstly, they share the view that language is discursive events that “influence the contexts in which they occur and the contexts are, in turn, influenced by these discursive events” (Young & Harrison, 2004, p. 1), strongly indicating that language is a social construction. Moreover, both discourse analysis and the Pragmatic-Functional Model emphasise cultural aspects of meaning-making between social actors (Young & Harrison, 2004, p. 1). Cultural aspects are indeed a focus area in this thesis, calling for a cross-discipline of discourse analysis: discourse as intercultural communication. This means that this discourse analysis is being applied as an analytical commitment to studying discourse as texts in a social practice (Silverman, 2006, p. 224). More specific, *texts in social practice* refers to written translations produced in a back-translation process – a process that involves interaction between professional translators from different cultures with different cultural backgrounds, enforcing Cultural Translation. As described, the notion of Cultural Translation emphasises the position of the translator being situated in the space ‘in between’ cultures. This space has, by Bhabha, been referred to as Third Space: a space that, i.a., enacts Cultural Hybridity and Untranslability. Analysing such an interactive process is a way to understand the discourse channelling between cultures.

More specific, this discourse analysis focuses on intercultural communication as social interaction among humans (professional translators), expressed interaction in written texts (translations), and a linguistic-oriented analysis (discourse analysis), focusing on dimensions of natural language, such as expressions (words, phrases). In order to bring these elements together and narrow the focus to the role of back-translation in intercultural communication, the Functional-Pragmatic Model has been employed as a guideline and analytical framework for comparing source and translation texts,

focusing on Function Equivalence, context (Field, Tenor, and Mode), and Genre (Cultural Translation), because it is posited that a translated text has a function equivalent (Function Equivalence) to its source text, which pragmatically emerges from a particular context of a situation (Field, Tenor and Mode), influenced by both internal and external cultural factors (Genre).

The following will, therefore, account for Function Equivalence, Field, Tenor and Mode, and Genre. In the process of analysing these, three relevant topics, as explained in section “5.4 Analysis Strategy”, were identified in the collected data. These can be viewed in “Appendix E, Analysis Strategy”. The first topic is “The Problematic of Conveying Expressive Text Function”, emerging from the analysis of Function Equivalence. The second topic, “Translators as Intuitive Social Actors” emerged from the analysis of Field, Tenor, and Mode. Finally, the third topic, “Untranslability vs Translability”, is discussed in relation to Genre.

6.1 Function Equivalence

In the process of analysis, it is found crucial to compare the Danish source text with the English target text and the two Danish back-translated texts, in order to investigate the role that back-translation plays in intercultural communication, to explore how intercultural communication can effect the method of back-translation, to understand what happens to a text when it crosses cultural borders twice, to explore strengths and weaknesses of a back-translation method from an intercultural communication perspective, and at last, to look into how Cultural Translation may effect the validity of back-translation as a quality assessment method.

Comparing texts makes it possible to assess translation equivalence, which is the basic concept underpinning the Functional-Pragmatic model. In this sense, equivalence is “relative and not absolute, [...] it emerges from the context of situation as defined by interplay of (many different factors) and has no existence outside that context, and in particular it is not stipulated in advance” (House, 2001, p. 247). As suggested, this definition of equivalence for translations is well formulated, because it cannot be taken for granted that two linguistic items in two different languages have the same value, meaning, or associations. Furthermore, due to cultural differences and the nature of languages and terms, it is almost impossible to replicate the exact meaning when translating. There will always be an uneven fit. (Papastergiadis, 2011, p. 5) Therefore, the term Function Equivalence has been found more appropriate, as this type of equivalence relate to the preservation of meaning across different languages and cultures (House, 2001, p. 247). In this way, the text function can be conveyed in translations. In this study, it is of interest to look into whether

Function Equivalence has been conveyed in the back-translation process. To put it in a different way: Has Function Equivalence survived crossing borders twice?

In order to come up with an adequate answer to that question, one must first state the text function of the source text, “Den nødvendige avis”²⁵ (*The necessary newspaper*), before being able to compare it to the translated texts: the English target text²⁶ and the two Danish back-translated texts²⁷. As mentioned, House does not go into much detail about Function Equivalence, therefore, Buhl's theory on text function has been drawn in for this purpose. Buhl suggests three text functions: informative, expressive, and vocative. (Buhl, 2005, p. 76) In short, an informative text function focuses on the message, such as conveying information, knowledge, facts, or/and something concrete (Buhl, 2005, p. 76). The expressive text function centres upon how the writer expresses himself/herself, often showing feelings, attitudes, and by using figurative language (Buhl, 2005, p. 86). At last, the vocative text function emphasises the reader, as it aims to catch the reader's attention and get the reader to act upon the text. (Buhl, 2005, p. 91) All three text functions have been found in the source text. In the following, examples are provided and analysed, starting with the informative text function.

6.1.1 Informative Text Function

Excerpt 1:

“HVER DAG LÆSER en halv million danskere Ekstra Bladet.”²⁸ (*EVERY DAY, half a million Danes READ Ekstra Bladet.*), see Appendix A, line 3.

Excerpt 1 shows that the informative text function has been accomplished through facts, such as “HVER DAG” (*EVERY DAY*) and “en halv million” (*half a million*). The function of these words are to inform the reader about the amount of people (*half a million*) who read the newspaper on a daily basis (*EVERY DAY*).

²⁵ Appendix A

²⁶ Appendix B

²⁷ Appendix C, Appendix D

²⁸ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

Excerpt 2:

“Et dagblad, som døgnet rundt følger begivenheder i ind- og udland.”²⁹ (*A daily paper that follows domestic and international news around the clock*), see Appendix A, line 8-9.

Excerpt 2 presents the informative text function by informing its reader about the spectrum of the newspaper. The words that are emphasised here are “døgnet rundt” (*around the clock*) and “ind- og udland” (*domestic and international*). These words refer to the types of information (*domestic and international*) and the information flow (*around the clock*) that Ekstra Bladet provides.

Additionally, Ekstra Bladet wishes to inform its reader about other emphases of the newspaper. This is illustrated in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 3:

”Men Ekstra Bladet er også avisen, der lægger vægt på god underholdning, sport og alt det sjove og frække”³⁰ (*But Ekstra Bladet is also the newspaper that emphasises good entertainment, sports, and all the fun and naughty stuff*), see Appendix A, line 19.

The informing attributes in Excerpt 3 is accomplished through the sentence: “god underholdning, sport og alt det sjove og frække” (*good entertainment, sports, and all the fun and naughty stuff*). Here, Ekstra Bladet informs the reader that this newspaper is more than just serious news, it also provides entertainment, sports, fun, and naughty stuff.

Excerpt 4:

”Alle henvendelser bliver nøje gennemgået”³¹ (*All inquiries are thoroughly gone through*), see Appendix A, line 28.

This last example shows that the informative text function has been accomplished through “nøje gennemgået” (*thoroughly gone through*). The reader is being informed about the quality of Ekstra Bladet’s work and their approach to news handling. The adverbial modifier of manner, “nøje”, is, in

²⁹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

³⁰ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

³¹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

this sentence, a key attribute, because it characterises the action “gennemgået” (*gone through*), implying that inquiries are not just gone through, they are gone through thoroughly.

These above-mentioned examples are a selection of the informative text function, and more examples can be found in the source text. Informative features do not dominate this text, however, the expressive text function is more obvious throughout the source text. The text is marked by figurative language, such as metaphors and fixed expressions (idioms). At the same time, the writer's attitudes and feelings are present throughout the text. Examples of the expressive text function are illuminated in the following.

6.1.2 Expressive Text Function

Excerpt 5:

”Når folk ser vores plakat eller forside, skal det krible og krable”³² (*When people see our poster or front page, it has to generate a buzz*), see Appendix A, line 4-5.

Expressive attributes can be found in the words ”krible og krable” (*generate a buzz*), which can be characterised as a fixed Danish expression, thus an idiom.

Excerpt 6:

”Ekstra Bladet skal være avisen med de overraskende nyheder. Fræk, respektløs, grænseoverskridende, højtråbende og troværdig”³³ (*Ekstra Bladet must be the newspaper with the surprising news. Daring, disrespectful, barrier-breaking, loud, and trustworthy*), see Appendix A, line 5-6.

Excerpt 6 presents the expressive text function through the attributes, “Fræk, respektløs, grænseoverskridende, højtråbende og troværdig” (*Daring, disrespectful, barrier-breaking, loud, and trustworthy*). This is a form of metaphor – to be more exact – a personification, as Ekstra Bladet is a newspaper embodying human characteristics. These attributes explicitly describe how Ekstra Bladet wants to be described. At the same time, the words express a provocative attitude of

³² Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

³³ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

the writer, implying that one needs to be daring, disrespectful, barrier-breaking, and loud, in order to reveal truths, hence, to be trustworthy as well.

Excerpt 7

“En avis, der taler rent ud af posen”³⁴ (*A newspaper that speaks plainly*), see Appendix A, line 10.

Excerpt 7 is an example of a sentence that combines two types of metaphors: personification and a dead metaphor. Firstly, the sentence can be characterised as a personification, because a thing (newspaper) takes the human feature of speaking. Secondly, “taler rent ud af pose” (*speaks plainly*) can be defined as a dead metaphor, because the expression is part of normal – or an integral part of – Danish language and is not always recognised as a metaphor or figurative language (Buhl, 2005, p. 115).

Excerpt 8

”Ekstra Bladet er vagthunden, som bider hårdt, når myndigheder, magthavere, offentlige eller private virksomheder og institutioner begår fejlgreb. Alle avisens journalister og fotografer er sporet til den opgave.”³⁵ (*Ekstra Bladet is the watchdog that bites hard when authorities, powerful leaders, public or private companies or institutions make mistakes. Every journalist and photographer at the newspaper are tracking down such task.*), see Appendix A, line 22-24.

As seen in Excerpt 6 and 7, through personifications, Ekstra Bladet takes on human characteristics. In Excerpt 8, Ekstra Bladet is also referred to as a watchdog. Firstly, it is directly stated, “Ekstra Bladet er vagthunden, som bider hårdt” (*Ekstra Bladet is the watchdog that bites hard*). Secondly, “er på sporet til” (*are tracking down*) is a way to continue the reference to a watchdog, or more specific, the actions of a watchdog.

³⁴ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

³⁵ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

Excerpt 9

"I Ekstra Bladet er vi udholdende, graver og borer og holder ikke op, fordi nogen bliver sure"³⁶ (*At Ekstra Bladet, we are persevering, we dig and poke, and we never stop, just because someone gets angry*), see Appendix A, line 16-17.

Excerpt 9 contains several expressive text function features. Firstly, "graver og borer" (*dig and poke*) characterises a metaphor, as Ekstra Bladet does not literally dig or poke for news. Secondly, the expressive text function is accomplished through the writer's attitude and enthusiastic feelings, which are present in the linguistic features; "vi er udholdende, graver og borer og holder ikke op, fordi nogen bliver sure" (*we are persevering, we dig and poke, and we never stop, just because someone gets angry*). Here, the reader gets a clear idea of what the writer's opinion is on finding and digging up news: They keep on going and do not care if someone gets angry. As a third note, the writer states, "vi" (*we*), indicating a sense of collectivism and solidarity – that this is how all journalists and photographers work at Ekstra Bladet.

Excerpt 10

"Den nødvendige avis"³⁷ (*The necessary newspaper*), see Appendix A, line 1.

Throughout the text, the writer has a confident attitude. This is, i.a., evident in the headline when using the adjective "nødvendige" (*necessary*). One can argue whether Ekstra Bladet is necessary, but in this text, the writer wants to send the message that Ekstra Bladet is indeed necessary, resulting in that the reader gets the idea that the writer has a strong opinion and knows his standpoint.

³⁶ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

³⁷ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

Excerpt 11

“Vi kalder tingene ved deres rette navn – og lader andre om at tale udenom. Ekstra Bladet er Danmarks politisk mest ukorrekte avis – stiller de spørgsmål, som andre ikke tør. Ekstra Bladet er aldrig i regering. Altid i opposition.”³⁸ (*We call things as they are – and we let others beat around the bush. Ekstra Bladet is Denmark's most politically incorrect newspaper – we ask the questions that others do not dare to ask. Ekstra Bladet is never in government. Always in opposition*), see Appendix A, line 14-16.

Like Excerpt 10, Excerpt 11 is as well an example of the writer's attitude, which is present through a straightforward, confident, and provocative tone of voice. Firstly, “tale udenom” (*beat around the bush*) can be characterised as a dead metaphor. Again, it is a sentence that is normal – an integrated part of – Danish language, and people do not always recognise it as a metaphor (Buhl, 2005, p. 115). Furthermore, by stating, “og lader andre om at tale udenom” (*and we let others beat around the bush*) indicates that Ekstra Bladet – opposed to the others – does not beat around the bush, but in fact, speaks plainly and directly. Hence, the writer's straightforwardness. Secondly, the writer's attitude is as well present in the sentence, “Danmarks politisk mest ukorrekte avis” (*Denmark's most politically incorrect newspaper*). Emphasis is accomplished through the use of the superlative degree of “mest” (*most*), which expresses a confident attitude of the writer: Ekstra Bladet is not just any politically incorrect newspaper, it is, in fact, the *most* politically incorrect one. This is the message that Ekstra Bladet wants to send its readers. The sentence is then backed up by the provocative sentence, “stiller de spørgsmål, som andre ikke tør” (*we ask the questions that others do not dare to ask*). The provocative tone of voice lies in the words, “som andre ikke tør” (*that others do not dare to ask*), because they denote a sense of passivity: that when you do not dare to do something, you presumably do nothing, hence, you are passive, but Ekstra Bladet's role is to take up these cases that people do not dare to take up themselves. In the next sentence, the writer's attitude is present as well: “Ekstra Bladet er aldrig i regering. Altid i opposition” (*Ekstra Bladet is never in government. Always in opposition*). The key linguistic features here are “aldrig” (*never*) and “altid” (*always*), which stresses the writer's directness and confident attitude.

³⁸ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

Excerpt 12

”Vi leverer hårdtslående og afslørende journalistik”³⁹ (*We deliver hard-hitting and revealing journalism*), see Appendix A, line 11.

”I Ekstra Bladet møder du den benhårde journalistik”⁴⁰, (*At Ekstra Bladet, you will meet hard-core journalism*), see Appendix A, line 17-18.

As a last example of the expressive text function, I would like to stress the use of expressive adjectives employed in the source text, such as “hårdtslående” (*hard-hitting*), “afslørende” (*revealing*), and “benhårde” (*hard-core*). These adjectives represent the kind of journalism practiced at Ekstra Bladet. It is here interpreted that revealing news cannot be found through kindness and politeness – the revealing news are dug out and communicated by Ekstra Bladet due to their hard-hitting and hard-core journalism.

As seen from Excerpt 5-12, these are examples of expressive text function features found in the Danish source text⁴¹. The examples are the result of my selection and analyses, attempting to illustrate different kinds of expressive text function features, such as metaphors, fixed expressions (idioms), writer's attitudes and feelings, and expressive adjectives. It must, however, be noted that there can be found further attributes of the expressive text function, than those represented in this analysis.

6.1.3 Vocative Text Function

Finally, the vocative text function focuses on the reader and aims to catch the reader's attention. It is the purpose of the text to activate the reader and get the reader to do something or agree on something (Buhl, 2005, p. 91). The vocative text function is present in following statements:

³⁹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

⁴⁰ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

⁴¹ Appendix A

Excerpt 13

”FIND DIG I EKSTRA BLADET eller find dig i hvad som helst”⁴² (*PUT UP WITH EKSTRA BLADET or put up with anything*), see Appendix A, line 21.

Excerpt 13 is Ekstra Bladet's slogan, and the sentence subsumes several features of a vocative text function. Firstly, the first part of the sentence, “FIND DIG I EKSTRA BLADET” (*PUT UP WITH EKSTRA BLADET*), makes use of capitalisation, which is a linguistic technique used to catch the attention of the reader. Capitalisation is also seen elsewhere in the text:

“HVER DAG LÆSER en halv million danskere Ekstra Bladet” (*EVERY DAY half a million Danes READ Ekstra Bladet*), see Appendix A, line 3;

“EKSTRA BLADET ER ikke bange for tabuer” (*EKSTRA BLADET IS not afraid of tabus*), see Appendix A, line 14; and

“FORESTIL DIG EN verden uden Ekstra Bladet?” (*IMAGINE A world without Ekstra Bladet?*), see Appendix A, line 32.

Secondly, in Excerpt 13, the verb “FIND/find” (*PUT/put*) is in the imperative mood, which is a verb form that makes a command or request. This linguistic technique is a way to encourage the reader to do something. Thirdly, the sentence makes use of the words “DIG/dig” (*YOU/you*) in order to speak to the reader directly.

Excerpt 14

”Ekstra Bladet er vagthunden, som bider hårdt, når myndigheder, magthavere, offentlige eller private virksomheder og institutioner begår fejlgreb. Alle avisens journalister og fotografer er sporet til den opgave. Men uden læserne gik det ikke.”⁴³ (*Ekstra Bladet is the watchdog that bites hard when authorities, powerful leaders, public or private companies or institutions make mistakes. Every journalist and photographer at the newspaper is tracking down such task. But this could not be possible without the readers.*), see Appendix A, line 22-24.

⁴² Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

⁴³ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

The vocative text function has been accomplished in Excerpt 13 through the emphasis on the need for the readers. This is seen in the last sentence, “Men uden læserne gik det ikke” (*But this could not be possible without the readers*). Because without the readers, Ekstra Bladet would not be able to find the errors or misactions in private or public organs. One can argue that the sentence implicitly encourage readers to take action.

Excerpt 15

“Når folk ser vores plakat eller forside, skal det krible og krable: ”Den avis må jeg have fat i.” Ekstra Bladet skal være avisen med de overraskende nyheder.”⁴⁴ (*When people see our poster or front page, it has to generate a buzz: ”I must have that newspaper”. Ekstra Bladet has to be the newspaper with the surprising news.*), see Appendix A, line 4-5.

This last excerpt, Excerpt 15, shows that the article, “Den nødvendige avis” (*The necessary newspaper*), is an advertisement for Ekstra Bladet, trying to attract readers by appealing to their curiosity and interest through the sentence, “skal det krible og krable” (*it has to generate a buzz*), leading to an encouragement of purchasing the newspaper, expressed through the sentence, “Den avis må jeg have fat i” (*I must have that newspaper*). The key linguistic feature in this sentence is the verb “må” (*must*), which strongly emphasises the need for the newspaper. Also the verb “skal” (*has to be*) in the next sentence, “Ekstra Bladet skal være avisen med de overraskende nyheder” (*Ekstra Bladet has to be the newspaper with the surprising news*), emphasises that Ekstra Bladet has to be the newspaper with the surprising news and nothing less.

It is also noteworthy to mention here that the examples of the vocative text function provided above (Excerpt 13-15) are a selection from the source text, and more attributes are likely to be found than those accounted for in this analysis.

Sub-conclusion

At this point, it can now be confirmed that the source text subsumes all three text functions: informative, expressive, and vocative. The source text was, however, heavily and mostly marked by expressive text function features.

The next step in this analysis is now to compare the source text to the translated texts, in order to look into whether Function Equivalence has been conveyed, as this is the first level in the

⁴⁴ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

Functional-Pragmatic Model of evaluating high quality translations. In order to so, I have compared all three texts: the Danish source text, the English target text, and the two Danish back-translations. This comparison can be viewed in the table in “Appendix E, Analysis Strategy”. The table shows that all sentences have been compared and reviewed in order to prove or disprove Function Equivalence. The findings from the comparison of the translations showed issues with transferring the expressive text function. This is further elaborated in the following.

6.1.4 The Problematic of Conveying Expressive Text Function

In the process of comparing texts, it was found that the informative and vocative text functions have been conveyed in the majority of cases. However, several issues were found in regard to conveying the expressive text function. Three examples are accounted for in the following.

Excerpt 5:

”Når folk ser vores plakat eller forside, skal det krible og krable”⁴⁵ (*When people see our poster or front page, it has to generate a buzz*), see Appendix A, line 4-5.

The expressive text function feature that I wish to discuss here is the fixed expression (idiom) “krible og krable” (*generate a buzz*). The Danish source text was translated to:

“When people see our poster or front page, it needs to generate a buzz”⁴⁶, see Appendix B, line 6.

This was then back-translated to:

“Når folk ser vores plakat eller forside, skal det skabe noget interesse”⁴⁷ (*When people see our poster or front page, it has to create some interest*), see Appendix C, line 6,

and

“Når folk ser vores spiseseddel eller forside, skal det skabe røre”⁴⁸ (*When people see our placard or front page, it has to create excitement*), see Appendix D, line 5-6.

⁴⁵ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

⁴⁶ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix B).

⁴⁷ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix C).

⁴⁸ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix D).

The following figure, Figure 1, illustrates the translation and back-translations of the idiom, “krible og krable” (*generate a buzz*), in process.

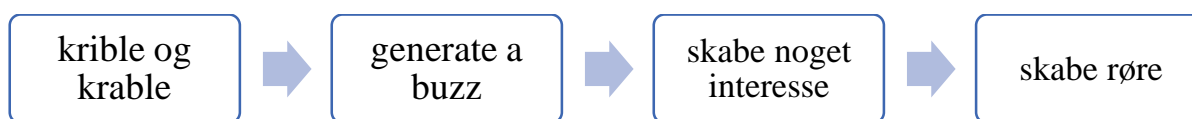


Figure 1

It is here seen that the Danish fixed expression “krible og krable” has been translated to an English Function Equivalence: “generate a buzz”. However, none of the Danish back-translations have conveyed the expressive text function, as “skabe noget interesse” (*create some interest*) and “skabe røre” (*create excitement*) cannot be characterised as fixed expressions (idioms). Another similar example can be found in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 7

“En avis, der taler rent ud af posen”⁴⁹ (*A newspaper that speaks plainly*), see Appendix A, line 10.

This sentence has been translated to:

“A paper that speaks its mind”⁵⁰, see Appendix B, line 13

This has then been back-translated to:

“En avis, der siger sin mening”⁵¹ (*A newspaper that expresses one's opinion*), see Appendix C, line 12,

and

”En avis, som giver sin mening til kende”⁵² (*A newspaper that makes one's opinion known*), see Appendix D, line 12.

⁴⁹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

⁵⁰ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix B).

⁵¹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix C).

⁵² Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix D).

With this example, I would like to stress the metaphor “taler rent ud af posen” (*speaks plainly*). Figure 2 demonstrates the translation process.

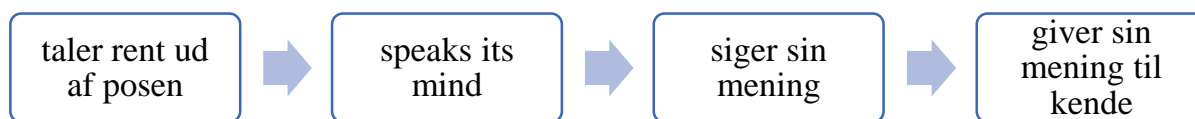


Figure 2

As earlier analysed, Excerpt 7 contains two types of metaphors: a personification and a dead metaphor. The personification, which concerns a thing (in this case, a newspaper) that takes the human feature of speaking, has been conveyed in all translations. However, the issue here concerns the dead metaphor, “taler rent ud af posen” (*speaks plainly*). When translating this sentence into English, an English metaphor has been produced: “speaks its mind”, hence, Function Equivalence has been accomplished in the English target text. However, similar to the previous example, none of the Danish back-translations have conveyed an expressive text function. “Siger sin mening” (*expresses one’s opinion*) and “giver sin mening til kende” (*makes one’s opinion known*) are not viewed as metaphors.

Another expressive text function feature that seems difficult to reproduce in back-translations is the repeating similarity between Ekstra Bladet and a watchdog (: “Vi kan være meget bidske” (*We can be very vicious*), see Appendix A, line 20, “Ekstra Bladet er vagthunden, som bider hårdt” (*Ekstra Bladet is the watchdog that bites hard*), see Appendix A, line 22, and ”For Ekstra Bladet vil fortsat passe opgaven som den vakse, vågne og kritiske vagthund” (*Because Ekstra Bladet will persistently attend to the task as the alert, attentive, and critical watchdog*), see Appendix A, line 34). These examples merely show the repeating reference to a watchdog. However, the sentence at stake here is the one stated in Excerpt 8:

An excerpt from **Excerpt 8**:

”Alle avisens journalister og fotografer er sporet til den opgave”⁵³ (*Every journalist and photographer at the newspaper are tracking down such task*), see Appendix A, line 23-24.

This sentence was translated to:

⁵³ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

“All the newspaper’s journalists and photographers are focused on this task”⁵⁴, see Appendix B, line 29-30.

This sentence was then back-translated to (same translation in both back-translations):

”Alle avisens journalister og fotografer er fokuserede på denne opgave.”⁵⁵ (*Every journalist and photographer at the newspaper is focused on that task*), see Appendix C, line 28-29, and Appendix D, line 28-29.

With this example, I wish to focus on “sporet til” (*tracking down*). In the following figure, Figure 3, the translation process is illustrated.

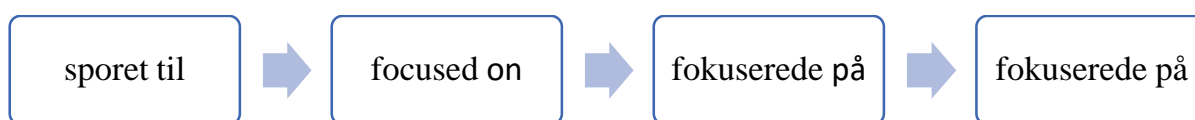


Figure 3

By using ”sporet til” is a creative way to play with words and to continue the reference to a watchdog. It gives the reader a picture of that Ekstra Bladet is the aggressive, vicious watchdog that *tracks down* revealing news. However, “sporet til” (*tracking down*) becomes ”focused on” in the English target text, resulting in ”fokuserede” (*focused*) in both Danish back-translations. The reference to a watchdog in this sentence has been lost in translation.

Sub-conclusion

The above-mentioned examples illustrate what can happen to a text when it crosses cultural borders twice with the focus on Function Equivalence. The result of this analysis shows that the expressive text function can be rather problematic to reproduce when translating, and especially complicated to convey in back-translations. The English target text did convey Function Equivalence in terms of expressive text function in the two first examples (see Figure 1 and 2), but not in the last example (see Figure 3). As to the back-translations, none of the three examples conveyed the expressive text function (see Figure 1-3).

⁵⁴ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix B).

⁵⁵ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix C, D).

With this being said, it must not be forgotten that the aim of the back-translation method is to reproduce the source text based on the target text, in order to evaluate equivalence of meaning between the source and the target text. Therefore, detecting flaws, or errors, in back-translations, as I have been doing in this section, is seen as a strength of the back-translation method, because it is then possible to take up and modify these flaws, or errors, in order to reach high quality translation. The method of back-translation has then fulfilled its function as a quality assessment tool.

6.2 Field, Tenor, and Mode

As back-translation, in this thesis, is viewed as a social phenomenon in intercultural communication, influenced by many different cultural factors, it is not enough to just analyse Function Equivalence. One must as well consider the aspects of context – context of situation – known as Field, Tenor, and Mode. Therefore, we will now move on to the second level of the Functional-Pragmatic Model by analysing the context of situation. Afterwards, the notion of Genre will be dealt with, as this concerns the broader aspect of context. In this way, one will be able to come closer to understanding what role back-translation play in the context of intercultural communication. It must be stressed that text function (Function Equivalence), context of situation (Field, Tenor, and Mode), and Genre (internal and external cultural aspects) should not be viewed as separate entities, but for the purpose of analysis, these elements are split up in order to create a clear overview.

Martin states, “you cannot understand a text unless you know something about the context in which it occurs.” (Martin, 2010, p. 28) As the context is a social one, it involves humans doing things with their lives (Field), interacting with other humans (Tenor), and to make use of a channel of communication to do so (Mode). (Martin, 2010, p. 28) In more details, Field accounts for the social activity, subject and topic, and communicative purpose (House, 2001, p. 248). Tenor deals with the nature of participants, and the relationship between them in terms of, i.a., social distance (House, 2001, p. 248). At last, Mode refers to the channel of communication (Martin, 2010, p. 22), in this case translations. In the following, I will be discussing the context (Field, Tenor, and Mode) of intercultural communication that may effect a back-translation process. It was found that translators themselves have a prominent influence when it comes to the context of back-translation. This is elaborated in the following, hence, the section has been categorised as “Translators as Intuitive Social Actors”.

6.2.1 Translators as Intuitive Social Actors

Starting with Field, the social activity or social setting (context) is a back-translation process with the communicative purpose to fulfil effective communication in another culture. The subject concerns an article from the Danish newspaper Ekstra Bladet. As mentioned, Martin states, “you cannot understand a text unless you know something about the context in which it occurs.” (Martin, 2010, p. 28). This means that translators need to have a much more widespread knowledge than the text actually provides, implying that the translator needs knowledge of Ekstra Bladet and what it stands for. In this case, the translator, who translates the Danish source text into English, is native English. Even though a professional English translator is assumed to have acquired good Danish skills, hence, wide knowledge of the Danish language and culture to some degree, it cannot be expected that the English translator knows of Ekstra Bladet. If the English translator is not aware of or has little knowledge of Ekstra Bladet and what it stands for, the translator does not understand the context in which the text occurs. In this study's translation process, there were found a few incidents, which could indicate a lack of Field context, e.g., in the following sentence:

Excerpt 3:

”Men Ekstra Bladet er også avisen, der lægger vægt på god underholdning, sport og alt det sjove og frække”⁵⁶ (*But Ekstra Bladet is also the newspaper that emphasises good entertainment, sports, and all the fun and naughty stuff*), see Appendix A, line 19.

The source text was translated to:

“However, Ekstra Bladet is also the paper that emphasises good entertainment, sports, and fun and games.”⁵⁷, see Appendix B, line 23-24.

The English text was then back-translated to:

⁵⁶ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

⁵⁷ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix B).

”Men Ekstra Bladet er også avisen, som lægger vægt på god underholdning, sport og skæg og ballade.”⁵⁸ (*But Ekstra Bladet is also the newspaper that emphasises good entertainment, sports, fun and games*), see Appendix C, line 23,

and

”Men Ekstra Bladet er også den avis, som lægger vægt på god underholdning, sport, og skæg og ballade.”⁵⁹ (*But Ekstra Bladet is also the newspaper that emphasises good entertainment, sports, fun and games*), see Appendix D, line 23.

The issue here is that the translation of “frække” (*naughty*) becomes “games”. The translation process is shown in the following figure, Figure 4.

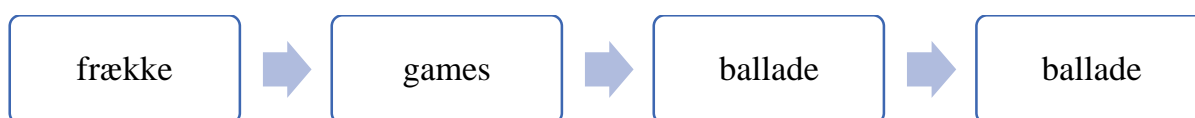


Figure 4

The word “frække” (*naughty*) becomes absent in the English target text, being replaced with “games”. Even though Ekstra Bladet offers online games, it does not substitute “frække” (*naughty*) in this context. Furthermore, some may say that the word “frække” (*naughty*) is one of the words characterising Ekstra Bladet, that is, e.g., due to their popular, weekly nude articles of “Side 9-pigen” (*Page 9 girl*), and the word “frække” (*naughty*) would then be an important word in the text. It can, therefore, be argued whether the English translator chose to leave out “frække” (*naughty*), because he/she did not know the Field context to the fullest. The consequences hereof can be seen in the Danish back-translations as well, in which “frække” (*naughty*) has been replaced with “ballade” (*games*) in both back-translations.

However, even though being a Dane, it does not mean that one knows everything about Ekstra Bladet. One may naturally have some associations, but it is not anticipated that one knows their slogan for instance. This is evident in the second back-translation:

⁵⁸ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix C).

⁵⁹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix D).

Excerpt 13

”FIND DIG I EKSTRA BLADET eller find dig i hvad som helst” (*PUT UP WITH EKSTRA BLADET or put up with anything*), see Appendix A, line 21.

Ekstra Bladet's slogan was translated to:

“PUT UP WITH EKSTRA BLADET or put up with anything”, see Appendix B, line 27.

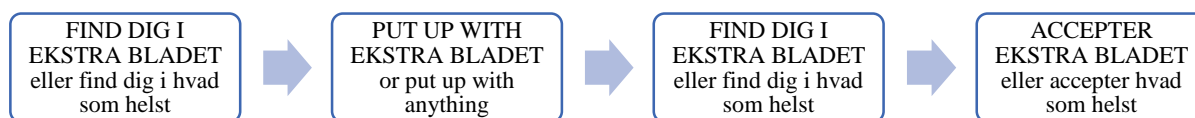
The slogan was back-translated to:

”FIND DIG I EKSTRA BLADET eller find dig i hvad som helst” (*PUT UP WITH EKSTRA BLADET or put up with anything*), see Appendix C, line 26,

and

”ACCEPTER EKSTRA BLADET eller accepter hvad som helst” (*ACCEPT EKSTRA BLADET or accept anything*), see Appendix D, line 26.

Figure 5 illustrates the translation process:

**Figure 5**

It is here seen that one of the Danish translators is able to convey the exact sentence in Danish. This could indicate that he/she is aware of Ekstra Bladet's slogan. The other Danish translator is, however, not able to reproduce the slogan, as he/she has written “ACCEPTER/accepter” (*ACCEPT/accept*) instead of “FIND DIG I/find dig i” (*PUT UP WITH/put up with*).

From the two above examples, it is concluded that if one wants to minimise errors in back-translations, translators are required to have knowledge about the Field context in which the text occur. Furthermore, the examples also show that understanding the Field context of a culture different from one's native culture can be a challenge (referring to Excerpt 3, translating “frække” (*naughty*)). Nevertheless, it can as well be a challenge for those belonging to that culture (referring to Excerpt 13, translating Ekstra Bladet's slogan).

The other aspect of context is Tenor, which deals with the nature of participants in a discourse and their relationships (House, 2001, p. 248). As this thesis revolves translations, the focus is on the translators as participants and not the addresser (Ekstra Bladet) and addressees (readers). Even though the back-translation process is seen as an interactive process among social actors from different cultures, translators' workspace can be described as rather individual, working in the space 'in between' cultures. This space – to be situated in the borders between cultures – has been characterised as Third Space and represents the subjective position of the translator who knows two languages and probably two cultures. This means that the individual translator carries out his/her work (translations) by constantly making choices between multiple meanings based on, i.a., his/her own cultural knowledge, pre-understandings, and mental lexicon. It is within this Third space, Untranslability and Cultural Hybridity may emerge, as it is not always possible to replicate the exact meaning when translating (Papastergiadis, 2011, p. 5). Even though House states that translation evaluation should not rely on individual intuition (House, 2001, p. 251), it is difficult to see how individual intuition can be left out, as translators work individually in their Third Space, and, therefore, are dependent on their own linguistic and cultural abilities based on knowledge that they have (Saeed, 2004, p. 3). If they lack information, or context, about a text, what can they then rely on apart from their intuition? Naturally, translators can search the Internet for information/context, but beyond that, it would go back to their intuition. What I wish to state here is that, in the case of back-translation, it is important to be aware of that the different translators performing back-translations will likely never produce the same translation, because translators, like any other individual, think differently and choose words differently. This is evident when comparing the two Danish back-translations, in which synonyms have been conveyed:

Excerpt 16

“Som er blevet udsat for elendig behandling på institutioner og i virksomheder.” (*Who has been exposed to terrible treatment at institutions and companies*), see Appendix A, line 26-27.

This source text has been translated to:

“Who have been treated terribly by the institutions and companies.”, see Appendix B, line 33,

and back-translated to:

”De er blevet uretfærdigt behandlet af institutioner eller virksomheder.”⁶⁰ (*They have been treated unfairly by institutions and companies*), see Appendix C, line 32,

and

”Som er blevet behandlet forfærdeligt af institutioner og firmaer.”⁶¹ (*Who have been treated terribly by institutions and firms*), see Appendix D, line 31-32.

Here, I wish to stress the words “uretfærdigt” (*unfairly*) and “forfærdeligt” (*terribly*) in the Danish back-translations. The translation process is demonstrated below in Figure 6:

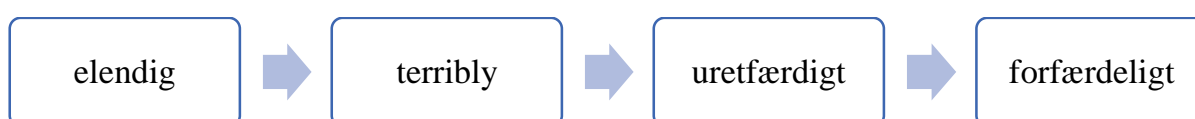


Figure 6

Besides from different sentence constructions in the two back-translations, the two last boxes in Figure 6 show that the word of choice is diverse, in which one chose “uretfærdigt” (*unfairly*), and the other chose “forfærdeligt” (*terribly*). On a semantical level, it can be argued to what extent these two words have the same meaning, value, or associations. In my interpretation, “uretfærdigt” (*unfairly*) connotes something that is unfair, or injustice, whereas “forfærdeligt” (*terribly*) does not connote unfairness or a sense of injustice, but indicates that someone has been treated really badly. Another similar example of translators choosing differently can be found in the next excerpt:

Excerpt 2:

“Et dagblad, som døgnet rundt følger begivenheder i ind- og udland.” (*A daily paper that follows domestic and international news around the clock*), see Appendix A, line 8-9.

This source text was translated to:

“A tabloid that follows domestic and international news around the clock.”, see Appendix B, line 11-12.

⁶⁰ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix C).

⁶¹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix D).

This English sentence has been back-translated to:

”En avis, der følger de nationale og internationale nyheder døgnet rundt.”⁶² (*A newspaper that follows national and international news around the clock.*), see Appendix C, line 10-11,

and

”En tabloidavis, som følger de danske og internationale nyheder døgnet rundt.”⁶³ (*A tabloid newspaper that follows Danish and international news around the clock.*), see Appendix D, line 10-11.

With this example, I wish to stress the Danish back-translations of the words, “nationale og internationale” (*national and international*) and “danske og internationale” (*Danish and international*). The translation process is illustrated in the following figure, Figure 7.

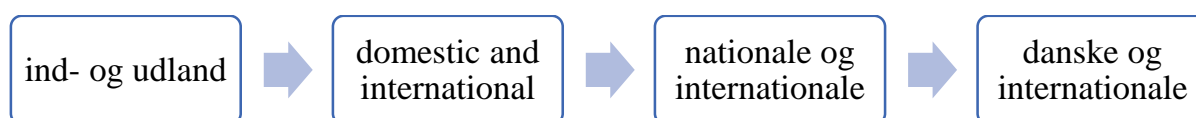


Figure 7

It is here demonstrated that the one Danish translator chose “nationale” (*national*), and the other chose “danske” (*Danish*). This example merely show synonyms and indicate that translators choose differently, but without jeopardising Function Equivalence. However, another example shows that Function Equivalence may be at stake. This concerns the following source sentence:

Excerpt 17

”Den opgave løser Ekstra Bladet”⁶⁴ (*Ekstra Bladet solves this task*), see Appendix A, line 31.

This sentence has been characterised as having an expressive text function, expressing the attitude of the writer. That is due to the verb “løser” (*solves*). The reader gets the idea that the writer is confident that Ekstra Bladet solves the task, without any doubt. The source text was then translated to:

⁶² Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix C).

⁶³ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix D).

⁶⁴ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

“This task is performed by Ekstra Bladet.”, see Appendix B, line 37-38,

and back-translated to:

”Det gør Ekstra Bladet.” (*Ekstra Bladet does that*), see Appendix C, line 36,

and

”Denne opgave har Ekstra Bladet påtaget sig”⁶⁵ (*Ekstra Bladet has taken on this task*), see Appendix D, line 36.

The translation process of “løser” (*solves*) is illustrated below in Figure 8.

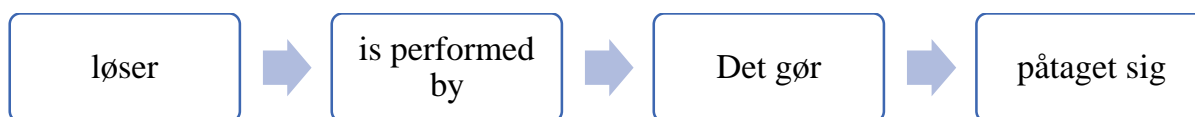


Figure 8

The first back-translation conveys this expressive feature, by confidently stating: ”Det gør Ekstra Bladet.” (*Ekstra Bladet does that*). But the second back-translation, ”Denne opgave har Ekstra Bladet påtaget sig” (*Ekstra Bladet has taken on this task*), does not transfer the same confident attitude of the writer, because there is a difference from taking on a task to solving the task. In this case, the two translators, carrying out the back-translations, choose differently, in which the one conveys Function Equivalence, and the other does not.

The above excerpts (Excerpt 13, 16, 2, and 17) prove that translators choose differently. To sum up, Excerpt 13 shows that the one Danish translator conveys the slogan, and the other does not. Excerpt 16 shows synonyms: The one Danish translator employs the word “uretfærdigt” (*unfairly*), and the other uses “forfærdeligt” (*terribly*), but it can be argued whether they connote the same meaning. Excerpt 2 shows pure synonyms: The one Danish translator chose the word “nationale” (*national*), and the other chose “danske” (*Danish*). At last, Excerpt 17 shows that the one Danish translator conveys Function Equivalence, and the other does not.

The fact that translators choose differently, would this not put the validity of back-translation at risk? Because translators, as any other individual, choose differently between multiple meanings

⁶⁵ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix D).

and words, meaning that some translators may be able to convey, e.g., Function Equivalence, and some translators will not be able to transfer Function Equivalence, such as seen in Excerpt 17. Another factor (or fact) is that professional translators are not equally competent. Some translators may be very skilled with many years of experience, and others may not be as skilled, but need more translation experience in order to become more skilled. The issue, I wish to state here is not whether back-translation in theory works, the issue is a pragmatic one determined by translator's competences. This calls for elaboration: In theory, a back-translation exist to provide clients with a quality check, assuring accuracy and high value content (McGowan, 2014) by comparing the back-translation to the source text in order to see whether the translated target text has been translated with high quality. The back-translation is then posited to reproduce the source text, and if any issues, or errors, are discovered in the back-translation, this then means that the target text needs modification. It is at this point pragmatic issues come into force. The above excerpts (Excerpt 13, 16, 2, and 17) prove that translators choose differently, and this may likely be based on translators' skills and competences. Therefore, back-translations will give different results depending on the translator. For example, imagine this following scenario. I will use the terms 'good' and 'poor'. I am aware of that 'good'/'poor' are vague words, but I use these just to keep the example simple to prove a point: A Danish text is being translated into English. The translation of the English target text turns out good (who decides this is not important for this example). However, the Danish back-translation turns out to be a poor translation. How can the poor Danish back-translation then justify the quality of the good English target text? The short answer is that the Danish back-translation cannot justify the English target text, as flaws discovered in the Danish back-translation may not be flaws in the English target text. In this case, the back-translation will not have succeeded in accomplishing its function: to ensure accuracy and high value content. Hence, the validity of a back-translation as a quality assessment method in practice would then be wanting.

The third aspect of context is Mode, which refers to the channel of communication. In this study, the channel is translations in a back-translation process. But, according to Martin, it is necessary to go deeper "if the effect which mode has on choices within language is to be fully appreciated." (Martin, 2010, p. 22) The best way to do that is to consider the effect that different channels have on communication, because they can place barriers between them. (Martin, 2010, p. 22) The question would then be: How may the channel of back-translation effect the intercultural communication in this context? Or, in other words, what role does back-translation play in intercultural communication? As discussed through Tenor, individual, intuitive translators and their subjective

position influence the context, hence, translators themselves may indeed effect the back-translation process, thus, the communication. On the one hand, this kind of communication is an intercultural one with translators from different cultures with different cultural backgrounds influencing the channel. On the other hand, due to cultural differences between languages, there will always be an uneven fit in a back-translation process. As mentioned, “[t]his unevenness or non-equivalence inspires both a lament for what is lost in translation, and a celebration of the extension in conceptual understanding through creative improvisation and hybridization.” (Papastergiadis, 2011, p. 5) Such unevenness and non-equivalence arise from the position of the translator (Third Space), e.g., in terms of Untranslability and Translability. This will be further elaborated in section “6.3 Genre”, which opens up for both internal and external cultural factors that may influence the context (Field, Tenor, and Mode) of a back-translation in intercultural communication.

Sub-conclusion

As mentioned, intercultural communication is defined by the interactive process between translators from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. One can, therefore, argue that the context is an intercultural one between translators. This section, containing aspects of context, therefore describes how intercultural communication may effect the method of back-translation. In order to know the context in which the text occur, Field requires translators to have a much more widespread knowledge than the text actually provides. Because, if one wants to minimise errors in back-translations, translators are, in this case, required to have knowledge of Ekstra Bladet and what it stands for. In terms of Tenor context, it is difficult to see how individual intuition can be left out, as translators work individually in their Third Space, and are, therefore, dependent on their own cultural knowledge, pre-understandings, and mental lexicon. Would this not put the validity of back-translation as a quality assessment method at risk? Because translators, as any other individual, have different levels of competences and choose differently between multiple meanings and words, meaning that a back-translation can turn out poor. How can a ‘poor’ translation justify a perhaps ‘good’ target text? The short answer is that it cannot, and this is indeed the pragmatic weakness of back-translation as a quality assessment method. At last, Mode questions how the channel of back-translation can effect intercultural communication. One aspect is that the channel is heavily effected by the subjective position of the translator and the cultural aspect that exist between translations in a back-translation process. The element Genre deals with such cultural aspect in a broader context, leading us to the third level of the Functional-Pragmatic Model.

6.3 Genre

While Field, Tenor, and Mode capture the connection between texts and their microcontext, Genre connects texts with the macrocontext of cultural factors (external influences), in which a text is embedded in (House, 2001, p. 248). This can be explained through the notions of Untranslability and Translability.

6.3.1 Untranslability vs Translability

Due to cultural differences and the nature of languages, it is almost impossible to replicate the exact meaning when translating. Untranslability is a term describing unevenness or non-equivalence, in other words, when words are untranslatable. As explained, this situation emerges from Third Space – the subjective translator's position 'in between' cultures – a position that, firstly, enforces the individual, intuitive translator to choose among multiplicity of meanings and, secondly, gives rise to Cultural Hybridity, because the translator knows of two languages and presumably two cultures as well. The choices made by translators to eradicate Untranslability in the process of finding the most exact equivalence may influence the result of a translation, hence, it may effect the communicative purpose the translation is supposed to fulfil. In this thesis, three Untranslability issues were found in the collected data. These are discussed through the following excerpts.

Excerpt 18

"Eller som synes, at noget er så groft, at det må frem til debat"⁶⁶ (*Or who think that something is so critical that it must be brought up for debate*), see Appendix A, line 27-28.

This source text has been translated to:

"Or who think that something is so important that it must be debated"⁶⁷, see Appendix B, line 33-34,

and, consequently, been back-translated to:

⁶⁶ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

⁶⁷ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix B).

”Eller de mener, at noget er så vigtigt, at det skal tages op til debat”⁶⁸ (*Or who believes that something is so important that it must be brought up for debate*), see Appendix C, line 32-33,

and

”Eller som mener, noget er så vigtigt, at det skal debatteres”⁶⁹ (*Or who believes that something is so important that it must be debated*), (Appendix D, line 32)

The word at issue here is “groft” (*critical*). The translation process is presented below in Figure 9.

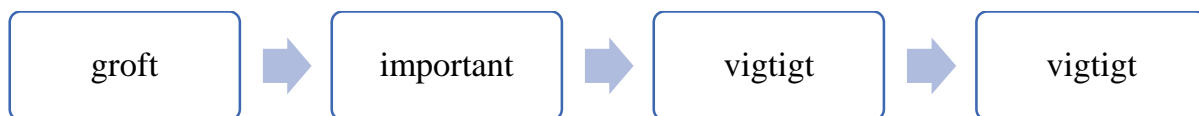


Figure 9

It is here seen that “groft” (*critical*) becomes “vigtigt” (*important*), due to the English target text. The issue here is that “groft” (*critical*) is quite a negative word, whereas “vigtigt” (*important*) does not necessarily connote negative associations. It is, therefore, interpreted that “groft” (*critical*) with its negative connotations seems difficult to transfer to English, and “groft” (*critical*) is, therefore, characterised as an untranslatable word in this context.

The second Untranslability issue is explained through the following excerpt:

Excerpt 19

”I Ekstra Bladet møder du den benhårde journalistik, som skaber larm og ballade”⁷⁰ (*At Ekstra Bladet, you will meet hard-core journalism that generates noise and trouble*), see Appendix A, line 17-18.

This sentence has been translated to:

⁶⁸ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix C).

⁶⁹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix D).

⁷⁰ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

“At Ekstra Bladet, you will find hard-core journalism that generates noise and trouble”⁷¹ (Appendix B, line 21-22),

and has been back-translated to:

“Hos Ekstra Bladet får du hardcore journalistik, som skaber røre og problemer”⁷² (*At Ekstra Bladet, you will get hard-core journalism that generates disturbance and problems*), see Appendix C, line 20-21,

and

”På Ekstra Bladet finder du hardcore journalistik, som skaber uro og problemer”⁷³ (*At Ekstra Bladet, you will find hard-core journalism that generates disturbance and problems*), see Appendix D, line 20-21.

I would like to stress the word, “larm” (*noise*). Its translation process is viewed in the figure below, Figure 10.

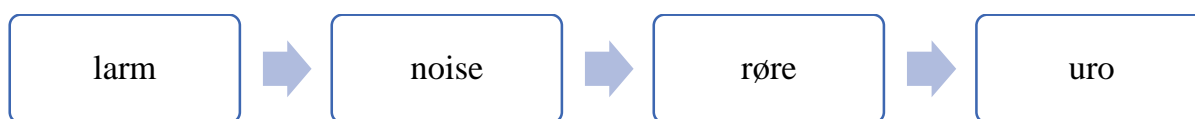


Figure 10

In this excerpt, it is seen that “larm” (*noise*) becomes “røre” (*disturbance*) and “uro” (*disturbance*). It is not to say that this is wrong, because in this context, “larm” (*noise*) can mean several things, which could connote “røre” (*disturbance*) and “uro” (*disturbance*), but at the same time, “larm” (*noise*) can also refer to creating attention. As “larm” (*noise*) is quite ambiguous in this context, it has been classified as an Untranslability issue.

The third issue has already been mentioned, however, it is the most prominent example of Untranslability. This concerns Excerpt 3:

⁷¹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix B).

⁷² Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix C).

⁷³ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix D).

Excerpt 3:

”Men Ekstra Bladet er også avisen, der lægger vægt på god underholdning, sport og alt det sjove og frække”⁷⁴ (*But Ekstra Bladet is also the newspaper that emphasises good entertainment, sports, and all the fun and naughty stuff*), see Appendix A, line 19.

The source text was translated to:

“However, Ekstra Bladet is also the paper that emphasises good entertainment, sports, and fun and games.”⁷⁵, see Appendix B, line 23-24.

The English text was then back-translated to:

”Men Ekstra Bladet er også avisen, som lægger vægt på god underholdning, sport og skæg og ballade.”⁷⁶ (*But Ekstra Bladet is also the newspaper that emphasises good entertainment, sports, fun and games*), see Appendix C, line 23,

and

”Men Ekstra Bladet er også den avis, som lægger vægt på god underholdning, sport, og skæg og ballade.”⁷⁷ (*But Ekstra Bladet is also the newspaper that emphasises good entertainment, sports, fun and games*), see Appendix D, line 23.

The issue here is that the translation of “frække” (*naughty*) becomes “games”. The translation process is shown in the following figure, Figure 4.

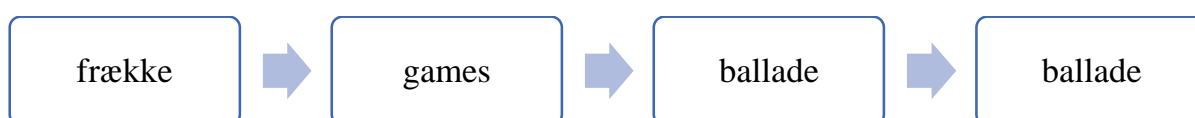


Figure 4

As mentioned earlier, there is no equivalence nor Function Equivalence between “frække” (*naughty*) and “games”, as they have different meanings and do not substitute each other. The

⁷⁴ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

⁷⁵ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix B).

⁷⁶ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix C).

⁷⁷ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix D).

consequence hereof is that "games" was then back-translated to "ballade" (*games*). The English translator was in fact aware of the challenge of translating "frække" (*naughty*), because he/she placed a comment to the translation, in which he/she stated: "I am not certain if this is adequate. "Frække" is a very odd word to translate and it could mean several different things". "Frække" (*naughty*), therefore, becomes an issue of Untranslability. Furthermore, this example shows how Untranslability may effect the translation and give the translation a different meaning.

These examples prove that Untranslability issues can lead to incorrect translations. However, Untranslability can as well create transparency and illuminate issues that can be modified and corrected after having conducted a back-translation, leading to a better translation (high quality) and, in this way, promote the communication, or message, that the sender wishes to send. This is indeed the strength of the back-translation method in intercultural communication.

At the other extreme, Translability has as well been found in the back-translation process. But what is meant by Translability? The notion of Translability, in this case, subsumes external influences, which can turn out to be quite influential, even more than linguistic considerations and the professional competence of the translator (House, 2001, p. 253). With globalisation and internationalisation characterising much of our life today (House, 2001, p. 253), the impact of the English language as a global lingua franca – a bridge language – has led to words becoming more and more translatable. An example of Translability can be found in Excerpt 12, which was dealt with earlier as well:

Excerpt 12

"I Ekstra Bladet møder du den benhårde journalistik"⁷⁸, (*At Ekstra Bladet, you will meet hard-core journalism*), see Appendix A, line 17-18.

This sentence has been translated to:

"At Ekstra Bladet, you will find hard-core journalism"⁷⁹, see Appendix B, line 21-22,

which has been back-translated to:

⁷⁸ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix A).

⁷⁹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix B).

”Hos Ekstra Bladet får du hardcore journalistik”⁸⁰ (*At Ekstra Bladet, you will get hard-core journalism*), see Appendix C, line 20-21,

and

”På Ekstra Bladet finder du hardcore journalistik”⁸¹ (*At Ekstra Bladet, you will find hard-core journalism*), see Appendix D, line 20-21.

The noteworthy word here is “benhårde” (*hard-core*). Its translation process can be viewed in the figure below, Figure 11.

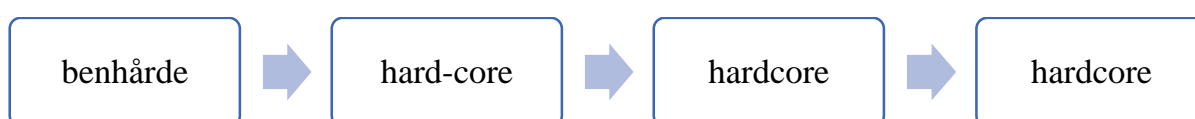


Figure 11

It is here interesting that the English word “hard-core” has been kept in both back-translations, without translating it to its Danish equivalence. This is an example of that “hardcore” seems not to be a strange word to convey in Danish texts, since both Danish translators chose to keep it in its English form. The fact that English terms are getting more accepted in the Danish language, one can, at this point, argue that Translability can be one solution to overcoming Untranslability, leading to less errors in back-translations.

Sub-conclusion

At the one extreme, due to cultural differences in languages, Untranslability remains. However, Untranslability can create transparency and illuminate issues that can be modified and corrected, so that the target translation is improved. At the other extreme, Translability is becoming more and more visible in contemporary texts, due to external influences, such as globalisation and internationalisation, in which English has become a ‘bridge language’ in intercultural communication.

⁸⁰ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix C).

⁸¹ Underscoring has been added by the researcher for the purpose of analysis. Underscoring does not appear in the original text (Appendix D).

7 Conclusion

In the process of investigating the role of back-translation in intercultural communication, it was found important to acquire translations in a back-translation process. Comparing translations and analysing Function Equivalence illustrates what may happen to a text when it crosses cultural borders twice. The findings of this analysis shows that the expressive text function can be a challenge to convey, both in the first step (Danish source text into English target text) and when conducting back-translations (English target text back to Danish). It was found that expressive text function features, such as fixed expressions (idioms), metaphors, and the continual reference to a watchdog, created complications in the process of translating: The expressive text function features were in, several cases, not conveyed. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that the aim of the back-translation method is to reproduce the source text, in order to evaluate equivalence of meaning between the source and the target text. Therefore, detecting flaws, or errors, in back-translations is seen as a strength of the back-translation method, because it is then possible to modify these flaws, or errors, in order to reach high quality translation and effective communication across borders. This is indeed a major strength of the back-translation method from an intercultural communication perspective, as the translation can improve in the process due to the back-translation.

How intercultural communication may effect the method of back-translation can be discussed through its context. Field, Tenor, and Mode illuminate that the context in which the text occur influence a back-translation. In summary, Field requires translators to have a much more widespread knowledge than the text actually provides. Because, if one wants to minimise errors in back-translations, translators are required to have knowledge of Ekstra Bladet and what it stands for. In this research, there were found a few incidents, which could indicate a lack of Field context for the native English translator who translated the Danish source text into English. This concerned the challenge of translating the word “frække” (*naughty*) that was translated to “games” (see Excerpt 3). However, even though being a native Dane, it does not mean that one knows Ekstra Bladet to the fullest, in which the Danish translator conveys the incorrect slogan of Ekstra Bladet (see Excerpt 13 illustrates). In terms of Tenor, it is difficult to see how individual intuition can be left out, as translators work individually in their Third Space, and are, therefore, dependent on their own cultural knowledge, pre-understandings, and mental lexicon. Would this not put the validity of the back-translation method as a quality assessment method at risk? Because translators, as any other individual, choose differently between multiple meanings and words, meaning that some

translators, performing back-translations, may be able to convey, e.g., Function Equivalence, and some translators will not be able to. Additionally, in the light of translators being different, translators as well possess different levels of competences, which may influence the back-translation. For example, how can a 'poor' back-translation justify the quality of a 'good' target text? The short answer would be that it cannot. This is indeed the weakness of the back-translation method from an intercultural communication perspective. At last, Mode questions how the channel of back-translation can effect intercultural communication. As an extension to Tenor, the channel is heavily effected by the subjective position of the intuitive translator and the cultural aspects that exist between translations in a back-translation process. Such cultural aspects can be explained through the notions of Untranslability and Translability. At the one extreme, due to cultural differences in languages, Untranslability can emerge in translations, resulting in incorrect translation. The most significant example of an Untranslability issue is found in Excerpt 3: the translation of "frække" (*naughty*), which becomes "games". In this case, the translator is fully aware of the challenge of translating this word in this context, as he/she states: "I am not certain if this is adequate. "Frække" is a very odd word to translate and it could mean several different things"⁸². This means that the choices made by translators to eradicate Untranslability in the process of finding the most exact equivalence may influences the result of a translation, hence, it may effect the communicative purpose that the translation is supposed to fulfil. However, Untranslability may also create transparency and illuminate issues that can be modified and corrected, which is a strength of the back-translation method, as already suggested. At the other extreme, Translability characterises when languages are becoming more translatable. This is seen in the in Excerpt 12, in which the word 'hard-core' has been kept in its English form in both Danish back-translations. This is an example of that English words are becoming more visible in contemporary texts, due to external influences, such as globalisation and internationalisation, in which English has become a 'bridge language' in intercultural communication.

⁸² Appendix B, see comment box

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