

The manipulative facet of translating implicit communication: challenges and implications from both theoretical and empirical perspectives

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Abstract

This paper examines the implications of translation choices that fail to consistently render implicit strategies from a source language into a target language. In the heterogeneous framework of implicit communication phenomena, this paper investigates the translation of presuppositions, implicatures, and topic-focus structures. Furthermore, it highlights how their consistent or inconsistent rendering into other languages might make a translated text manipulative. These instances are substantiated by examples from different text genres, including novels and official translations of political speeches in the English-Italian, English-Spanish, and Spanish-Italian language directions. Besides suggesting strategies for implicit communication that prevent translated texts from becoming dangerously manipulative, this paper seeks to raise awareness about (i) the ways linguistic manipulation can affect the target readership and (ii) the risks posed by manipulating translations to socially constructed knowledge as well as the creation of a democratically grounded consensus.

1 Introduction

The translation of the pragmatic dimension of texts is still an underexplored field of research, with the treatment of implicit communication posing a new challenge, as its translation can drastically affect the transparency of a message, hence the communicative intentions of the source text author (Masia 2021). This paper focuses on the issues and challenges raised by the manipulation brought about by implicit discourse devices. Linguistic phenomena categorized as strategies to encode indirect content in utterances are numerous, each of them influencing the way content is construed and interpreted by the receiver. In particular, the challenges in translating presuppositions (cf. Stalnaker 1974, 2002; Karttunen 1974; Sbisà 2007), implicatures (cf. Grice 1975), and different patterns of information structure (cf. Lambrecht 1994; Cresti 2000; Lombardi Vallauri 2009) will be considered. As argued, inconsistent translations of these discourse phenomena may lead to a number of potentially harmful consequences on interpretive grounds, including the discrepancy in processing information, and the wrong attribution of the author's commitment in spoken or written text. Drawing on examples from the translation of literary texts and political speeches, some criteria to translate implicit contents are eventually proposed.

To do so, this paper is organized as follows: Section 2 provides an overview of the notion of “translation-as-manipulation” as conceptualized by the Manipulation School; Section 3 addresses issues with translating implicit contents as well as objectives and methodologies of pragmatically-oriented translation models; Section 4 outlines the three pragmatic phenomena analyzed; Section 5 explores how translation can become manipulative and sheds light on the consequences and biases that can result from wrong translations of implicit meanings; finally, Section 6 suggests some criteria to deal with translating implicit meanings.

2 Overview: translation as manipulation

That manipulation is an intrinsic consequence of any translation process is already a consolidated opinion among scholars of the so-called Manipulation School, such as Hermans (1985), and Bassnett/Lefèvere (1998). The main line of reasoning of this tradition of studies is that translation is a rewriting process of a source text for a specific target audience and for a specific purpose, in conformity with the target language norms and other constraints. For this reason, translation implies a form of manipulation. Within this framework, the concept of translation as manipulation implies other factors, independent from other specific discourse devices responsible for meaning distortion in a text. These factors concern both the planning of a translation work and other constraints related to the structure of the target language (cf. Vinay/Darbelnet 1995). While the latter can be regarded as more objective as they depend on the grammatical differences between the source and the target language, the former is more subjective, as they depend on individual choices like *which* texts should be translated, *when* they should be translated, and for *what* purpose. Klimovich (2015) reports on translation activities during the Soviet Union, when texts were only translated if their content complied with the ideology of the regime. When translators come to grips with the pragmatic dimension of a text, they tend to shift from structural to functional equivalence. In these cases, translation seeks to “re-perform locutionary and [most importantly] illocutionary acts, in the hope that the end product will have the same perlocutionary force in the target language” (Hatim 2001: 180).

From a more integrated perspective, that sees translation as “melting” objective and subjective determinants, Dukāte (2009) highlights the importance of cultural, ideological, linguistic and literary differences between the source language and the target culture. She also rightfully remarks that when texts are translated by human agents, the likelihood that they reflect individual and psychological influences increases (cf. *ibid.*). But, why would a translator misunderstand and distort the original text? Addressing such a question is obviously a daunting task when analyzing translational practices. Most importantly, it requires adopting more selective perspectives, including specific levels of analysis. Sections 3 to 5 deal with the role of the pragmatic level of utterances – notably, the implicit encoding of meanings – in producing manipulative translations, especially if certain implicit discourse phenomena are not considered.

3 Pragmatics in translation

It is widely acknowledged that one of the pivotal roles of pragmatics is to fix the propositional content of utterances by looking at their actual usage contexts (cf. Morris 1938; Bianchi 2003). From this perspective, the interpretation of an utterance depends on determining not just the conventional value of its component parts, through purely semantic processes, but also the type

of speech act it performs, and the actual communicative intention it conveys. The latter is usually attributed to the pragmatic level of interpretation. For this reason, the study of meaning in pragmatic research differs from that of traditional semantics, in at least three aspects: (a) while semantics mainly studies meaning construction and interpretation at the sentence level, pragmatics does so at the utterance and discourse level; (b) while semantics studies meaning as conveyed by an expression, pragmatics studies meaning as conveyed by its context; (c) while semantics studies meaning that is mainly *explicitly* coded on the text surface, pragmatics also seeks for the *implicit* meaning which, more often than not, relies on context. By way of illustration, consider the statement in (1), uttered by John to Mark.

(1) There is salt on the shelf.

On closer inspection, at least three different meanings can be associated to this statement, based on the particular context in which (1) is uttered: (a) *The shelf hasn't been cleaned* – if Mark has not thoroughly cleaned the house; (b) *Take some salt to dress your salad* as a reply to *This salad is a bit bland*; (c) *Someone has been in the kitchen*, as a reply to *Have you found anything in the kitchen?*

From a pragmatic perspective, then,

any sentence acquires sense only when a set of contextual assumptions is specified that fixes its truth conditional value [...], that is, only once a description of the use of an expression is fixed along with its most relevant interpretation.

(Bianchi 2003: 19–20)

Therefore, by changing the background of shared contextual hypotheses, the truth conditions of an utterance may change accordingly.

Apart from the truth-conditional values of a sentence, in some cases pragmatics may also help identify the class and meaning of words that are syntactically or semantically ambiguous. This is the case with *cleaning* in (2) which can be interpreted as a verb (= the activity of cleaning fluids can be dangerous) or as an adjective (= the fluids used for cleaning can be dangerous), depending on its formal properties.

(2) Cleaning fluids can be dangerous.

The correct interpretation of this word, then, does not depend on the meaning of the sentence *per se*, but on the meaning determined by the linguistic or extralinguistic context in which the utterance is produced. In the same vein, an ambiguous word like *bat* can either denote an animal or a stick. So, in (3)

(3) Leo is holding a bat.

whether what Leo is holding is an animal or a stick can only be established looking at the wider context of the discourse. Generally, this could be attributed to the fact that most implicit discourse strategies require looking into speakers' or writers' mental states, so as to reconstruct hidden communicative intentions, an ability that human translators can perform better than automatic translation tools. However, as rightfully remarked by Farwell/Helmreich (1999: 2): "language is used not simply to report events in the world. It is also used to convey the rich mental model that individuals and cultures bring to bear on the communication process". In other words, in producing both oral and written texts, people intend meanings and search for

meanings beyond texts; this is a common practice in any task of language processing and in any usage of a language.

Overall, pragmatically oriented translation models emphasize the following three aspects of a translation process (cf. Farwell/Helmreich 1999; Masia 2021): (i) the beliefs of the translator and those of the author of the source text, (ii) what the translator knows about the author's beliefs, (iii) what the translator knows about the recipient's beliefs. When these data are not available to the translator, they will have to go beyond the literal level to disentangle more pragmatic meanings related to the functional effects of a message, its information structure and the illocutionary act it performs. Successfully retrieving these data ensures the correct reproduction of the same communicative intentions as those expressed by the author of the source text. Building on these premises, the following research questions will be answered: (i) how should implicit content be translated? (ii) which aspects should be kept in mind to ensure safe translation strategies? (iii) how can untranslated (or wrongly translated) implicit contents make a text manipulative?

Before addressing these research questions, I will first recall the pragmatic strategies that constitute the bulk of the proposed analysis, i. e. implicature, presupposition and topic-focus structure.

4 Linguistic features of implicit communication

4.1 Implicature

One way of making communicative intentions implicit is through *implicatures*. This term was introduced by Grice in 1975, and indicates an inference associated with an utterance which does not directly express it. Grice's seminal observations on implicatures moved from the assumption that the contribution of every utterance to an interaction is not only represented by what is explicitly said, but also by what is not said but implied. For example, in (4)

- (4) A: Why don't you prepare one of your delicious recipes?
 B: I have 100 tests to evaluate

As a reply to (4A), (4B) cannot only be taken to mean 'I have 100 tests to evaluate'. Indeed, B also states that they will not follow A's suggestion to prepare a delicious recipe. If this second meaning is not understood by the receiver, the speaker's utterance would simply be a pointless contribution to the ongoing exchange. This means that implicatures are repairing inferences bridging the gap between the literal meaning of what is expressed and what is actually intended. So, the only way for (4B) to function in a conversation is its being deemed compliant with the Principle of Cooperation, which Grice (1975: 45) formulates as follows: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged". To do so, speakers must comply with cooperative communicative behaviors regulating the quantity of the information conveyed in a linguistic message (maxim of Quantity), its truth value (maxim of Quality), its relevance to communicative goals (maxim of Relation) and its manner of presentation (maxim of Manner). The role of these maxims in everyday conversations is better appreciated when they are deliberately violated by speakers to achieve particular communicative effects.

- (5) Maxim of Quantity
 A: Where is the dog?
 B: Somewhere in one of the gardens of the building
- (6) Maxim of Quality
 A: Why do you think Mary is so rude with John?
 B: He is only her submissive and faithful dog
- (7) Maxim of Relation
 A: Are you playing tennis this evening?
 B: Mmhh... I'm afraid I'll be in a never-ending meeting today
- (8) Maxim of Manner
 A: Are you up to an afternoon break at the office bar?
 B: Well, actually, I'll have to sit on my chair, open the laptop, switch on the laptop, click on my email box, write an email, send the email and then close the email box.

In (5), B's answer to A's question is far from precise. The use of *somewhere* makes it difficult to understand where exactly the dog is. So, (5B) implies that either the speaker does not have more precise information on where the dog is or that they do not want to provide A with such a piece of information. In (6), assuming John is a human, he cannot literally be Mary's *submissive and faithful dog*. Hence, the speaker means that John is submissive and faithful, just like a dog is. (6B) exemplifies a common case of metaphor, through which two distinct semantic domains are associated due to their conceptual closeness. Notably, the two features that *John* and a *dog* have in common are submission and faithfulness, what makes their association relevant in the person of John. Here, the implicature derived is that, in order for B's utterance to be cooperative, John's association with a dog must mean that he shares some of the qualities of the animal and, of course, not that he is a dog himself. In (7), speaker B is not providing a relevant answer to A's question, as they are not directly saying "No, I'm not playing tennis". Rather, they inform A that they will take part in a never-ending meeting. What makes B's utterance acceptable is that their answer must mean 'no' to satisfy cooperation requirements. This inference, which is the implicature arising from B's utterance, is arrived at by speaker A based on world knowledge assumptions for which it is assumed that taking part in a long meeting may cause delays with subsequent revisions of one's daily agenda. In (8), B chooses an apparently inadequate way to express a single action (i. e. sending an email), as they provide unnecessary details. Thus, what makes B's utterance acceptable is that their answer must mean 'send an email' to satisfy cooperation requirements.

Grice also explains that maxims are not "rules" to observe. Because speakers strive to comply with them to be cooperative and make a conversation work (cf. Grice 1975: 47f., cf. also Sbisà 2007). These violations are called conversational implicatures, which can be understood thanks to contextual information. They differ from conventional implicatures, which usually derive from the literal meaning of an expression. For example, Grice's popular example *He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave* can only be understood if *being brave* is considered – in the conversation – as the logical consequence of being English. This correlates with the function of the connector *therefore*, whose meaning is derived independently of its conversational context.¹

¹ For the analysis described in this paper, only conversational implicatures have been considered.

4.2 Presupposition

Presupposition is one of the most common strategies of implicit communication and its characterization reflects a long tradition of linguistic and philosophical studies, based on both theoretical and empirical grounds (cf. Frege 1892; Strawson 1950; Fillmore 1969; Stalnaker 1974, 2002). In this work, I will refer to the Stalnakerian notion of presupposition, according to which some information is presupposed when it is taken for granted in a conversation (cf. Stalnaker 1973, 1974). Compared to other seminal accounts emphasizing the semantic properties of presupposition (cf. Frege 1892; Russell 1905), this concept is strongly usage-driven, in that it sees presuppositions as reflecting *ways of using utterances* in given communicative contexts.² In this perspective, presuppositions are outlined as contents mutually believed to be true by both speaker and receiver. Yet, this is not an essential proviso for using presuppositions in discourse. In fact, since presuppositions hinge on specific conversational choices made by participants in an interaction, speakers may choose to take some content for granted – i. e. they presuppose it – even when it is completely new to the addressee. When this is the case, presuppositions are said to be “accommodated” (cf. Lewis 1979). This means adjusting one’s common ground with the requirements of the new presupposition being conveyed. Differently from other types of conversationally based implicit meanings like conversational implicatures, presuppositions generally cling to specific syntactic constructions or lexical categories called presupposition triggers, of which I report some examples below (cf. Karttunen 1974; Kiparsky/Kiparsky 1971; Sbisà 2007; Lombardi Vallauri 2009; *inter alia*). Some of these trigger types (e. g. definite descriptions) presuppose the existence of a given referent, others presuppose the truth of a particular state of affairs.

- (9) Definite phrases
- a. **The growing debt** is scuttling international agreements
Change of state verbs
 - b. Political parties have not **stopped** bribing people in exchange of votes
Iterative adverbs
 - c. **Also** emerging parties will fall into the temptation of corruption
Defining relative clauses
 - d. **The bribes that have been lavished by MPs** come from public money
Subordinate clauses
 - e. **When elections were rigged** many people gathered on the streets
Factive predicates
 - f. **It is significant** that European governments did not want to invest more money to revive the economy

The idea of classifying presuppositions as “implicit” may be contentious, given that their content is overall explicit on the surface text. In fact, the type of implicitness that can be associated with presuppositions relates to the speaker’s responsibility for conveying certain content presented as already known at the moment of the utterance (cf. Lombardi Vallauri 2016; Lombardi Vallauri/Masia 2014). Other types of implicitness – as we have seen for implicatures – mainly

² In this respect, Stalnaker is believed to have inaugurated the “pragmatic approach” to presupposition, although hints at this perspective trace back even earlier to Strawson (1950) and Donnellan (1966).

concern the content level. For this reason, Lombardi Vallauri/Masia (2014) distinguish between what they call implicitness of content and implicitness of responsibility. While the former concerns the main content of an utterance, the latter concerns the speaker's responsibility for introducing some new content in the discourse.

Presuppositions resist logical negation (cf. Seuren 1988). For example, if the utterance *John stopped smoking* is negated (10), the presupposition that John used to smoke would still be true.

- (10) It is not true that John stopped smoking
(presupposition = John used to smoke)

So, what falls within the scope of negation is only the asserted component of the utterance, namely that John has stopped smoking. To some extent, this is not unexpected, as the presupposition conveys the procedural meaning (cf. Wilson 2011) – namely, a particular instruction on how to process certain content in one's mind – to construe some information as already belonging to a shared common ground. Thus, both the speaker and the receiver commit to its truth. For this reason, denying a presupposition would be an uncooperative and contradictory conversational move. Non-presuppositional content – which, for convenience, I will classify as asserted – conveys the procedural meaning that only the speaker is committing to the conveyed proposition and takes on the responsibility for its truth, in case it was challenged (cf. Masia 2020).

Within the field of research on implicit language (cf. Lombardi Vallauri/Masia 2014; Masia 2021), the type of implicitness brought about by presupposition has been associated to another discourse device which equally contributes to establishing informational hierarchies in an utterance, namely **topicalization**. This refers to the process by which a sentence unit is uttered as topic, i. e. as information deserving less attention on the part of the receiver, since it is already present in their working memory (Lombardi Vallauri 2009). For a deeper understanding of the function of the topic in discourse, the next section will depict it also in relation to focus, to which it opposes for the different way they contribute to the communicative dynamism of the utterance (cf. Firbas 1992).

4.3 Information packaging and the topic-focus articulation

Topic and focus typically pertain to the level of Information Structure, that is, the level of an utterance in which informational hierarchies between sentence units are established (cf. Firbas 1992; Lambrecht 1994). Because these units have been investigated from different angles – semantic, syntactic, functional, and prosodic – I will rely on Cresti's (2000) and Lombardi Vallauri's (2009) working definitions, which consider the strong correlation between packaging (cf. Chafe 1976) some information as topic and focus and the modulation of the illocutionary force of the utterance.³ The syntactic locus of this force is generally associated with the focus, while the topic serves as a semantic frame to allow its understanding. As a consequence, the

³ With illocutionary force I mean the particular intention with which an utterance is produced by the speaker (cf. Austin 1962); put another way, in any interaction, the illocutionary force represents the reason why a message is uttered.

functions of topic and focus as modulators of utterances' illocutionary force can be defined as follows (cf. Lombardi Vallauri 2009):

- Focus is the unit conveying the illocutionary force of the sentence
- Topic serves as a conceptual basis for the interpretation of the sentence's illocutionary force but lacks an illocutionary force of its own.

Linguistically, topic and focus may vary from spoken to written language, both inter- and intra-linguistically. In spoken language, focus is often identified by more prominent prosodic features, while in both written and spoken languages strategies like fronting constituents, cleft sentences, and given lexical expressions may mark some content as informationally more relevant than other content, as illustrated in (11).

(11)

Context Have your two sons moved to England, then?

Fronting JOHN⁴ moved to England. Harry has found a new job in Germany

Cleft sentence It's JOHN who has moved to England. Harry has found a new job in Germany

Focusing adverb Only JOHN has moved to England. Harry has found a new job in Germany

Compared to presupposition, topic and focus call for looking at the wider discourse context, in that any item can be classified as topic or focus on the basis of the communicative dynamics of the preceding linguistic context, which constitutes the basis of communicative goals and intentions. The definitions of topic and focus adopted here also entail that whether some information should be packaged as topic or focus does not depend on its activation degree (given, new or accessible, in the terminology used by Chafe 1994), but rather on what piece of information the speaker elects as the purpose of their message. This means that focus does not necessarily correlate with new information, and that topic is not necessarily given information. Consider the short dialogue in (12), as an example.

(12)

A: Have you bought the chairs and the table you were looking for?

B: Actually, it's only a TABLE I was looking for.

The word *table* in B is given information, as it has already been introduced in the discourse. However, it becomes the focus in that B aims at "correcting" some information erroneously believed by A (that is B's will to look for both a table and chairs). So, B's intention to update A's mental model with the item TABLE (with reference to what B was looking for) requires processing this information item more attentively.

5 Translation and manipulation

As already pointed out, manipulation may result from given translation choices (cf. Rabassa 1984; Farahzad 1999; Katan 1999; among others). Besides the distinction between subjective and objective manipulation illustrated in Section 2 (cf. Vinay/Darbelnet 1995), Farahzad (1999) also suggests differentiating between conscious and unconscious manipulation. Conscious manipulation is a deliberate alteration of the target text, based on political or social factors also

⁴ Here and elsewhere in the paper, capitals are used to signal focus.

related to the need to adapt the source text to the target culture. Unconscious manipulation is non-intentional, possibly due to the cultural and structural differences between the source and the target language. So, although any translated text can result in some form of manipulation, its potential negative consequences should be considered. In particular, when the target language has the tools to appropriately reproduce the semantic and pragmatic dimension of a source text, these should not be neglected. All in all, translators should be aware of the phenomenon of manipulation in order to properly assess whether it enhances the target text's intelligibility and readability, or it can cause irremediable distortions of its content in the reader's mind.

5.1. Translating presuppositions

Below, I report some extracts from a speech by Donald Trump at the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, and its Italian translation taken from an online Italian journal *La voce di New York* ('The Voice of New York').

SOURCE TEXT – English	TARGET TEXT – Italian
(13) I addressed the threats of facing our world, and I presented a vision to achieve a brighter future for all humanity.	(13') Ho affrontato le minacce che incombevano sul nostro mondo e ho sottoposto a voi la mia visione per ottenere un futuro più luminoso per tutta l'umanità. Lit. transl. 'I have faced the threats that loomed over our world and submitted to you my vision to achieve a brighter future for all humanity. '
(14) In that spirit, we ask the nations gathered here to join us in calling for the restoration of democracy in Venezuela. Today, we are announcing additional sanctions against the repressive regime targeting Maduro's inner circle and close advisors.	(14') In questo spirito, chiediamo a tutte le nazioni qui presenti di unirsi alla nostra chiamata per ripristinare la democrazia in Venezuela. Oggi annunciamo ulteriori sanzioni contro il regime repressivo e nel nostro mirino abbiamo il circolo di Maduro e suoi più vicini consiglieri. Lit. transl. 'In this spirit, we call on all nations present here to join our call to restore democracy in Venezuela. Today we are announcing further sanctions against the repressive regime and, in our sights , we have Maduro's circle and his closest advisers.'

As can be noticed, the Italian translations in (13') and (14') display packaging strategies that deviate from those of the source text. Notably, while in (13) *a vision* is asserted through an indefinite description, its translation in (13') is definite (*my vision*), as it presupposes its existence and identifiability (cf. Strawson 1950). Similarly, while in (14) Trump says that the sanctions target Maduro's inner circle (indefinite description), in the Italian translation in (14') a definite description is used (It. *nel nostro mirino* 'our sights').

Since distinct comprehension instructions are provided to the source and target addressees, the repercussions on their mental representations of the model of discourse will be likely to differ. Notably, while in (13) the receiver is instructed to process the idea that Trump has a vision to achieve a brighter future for all humanity as new (i. e. unshared) information, due to its assertive nature, in the Italian translation, the receiver is instructed to process the same piece of information as shared knowledge, as the use of presupposition packaging suggests. Similarly, the occurrences below show translations which render the presupposed content with an assertive strategy.

SOURCE TEXT – English	TARGET TEXT – Italian
<p>(15) We believe that when nations respect the rights of their neighbors and defend the interests of their people, they can better work together to secure the blessings of safety, prosperity and peace.</p>	<p>(15') Crediamo che quando le nazioni rispettano i diritti dei loro confinanti e difendono gli interessi della loro popolazione, possono lavorare meglio insieme per essere benedette da sicurezza, prosperità e pace.</p> <p>Lit. transl. 'We believe that when nations respect the rights of their neighbors and defend the interests of their people, they can work better together to be blessed with security, prosperity and peace'.</p>
<p>(16) Each of us here today is the emissary of a distinct culture, a rich history and a people bound together by ties of memory, tradition and the values that make our homelands like nowhere else on Earth.</p>	<p>(16') Oggi, ognuno di noi qua presente è emissario di una cultura diversa, di una storia diversa e di un popolo legato da vincoli di memoria, tradizioni e valori che rendono speciali le nostre azioni come nessun altro posto sulla terra.</p> <p>Lit. transl. 'Today, each of us present here is an emissary of a different culture, a different history and a people linked by bonds of memory, traditions and values that make our actions special like no other place on earth'.</p>
<p>(17) With support from many countries here today, we have engaged with North Korea to replace the specter of conflict with a bold and new push for peace.</p>	<p>(17') Con il supporto di molte delle nazioni qui presenti oggi, abbiamo iniziato un rapporto diplomatico con la Corea del Nord per allontanarci dallo spettro del conflitto, con una nuova e audace spinta verso la pace.</p> <p>Lit. transl. 'With the support of many of the nations present here today, we have begun a diplomatic relationship with North Korea to move away from the specter of conflict, with a bold new push towards peace.'</p>

In (15) Trump uses a definite description to presuppose that there are blessings of safety, prosperity and peace, whereas in its translation (15') the same content is asserted (*per essere benedette da sicurezza, prosperità e pace*), and is thus presented as new to the receiver. Here, while the source text addressees (15) must comply with the presupposition that there exist blessings of safety, prosperity, and peace, the same content need not be accommodated by the target text receivers (15'), who are required to process that piece of information as factual and shared. Along the same lines, while in (16) the existence of values “that make our homelands great” is

conveyed as shared knowledge not deserving much attention, in (16') it is asserted, turning it into the bulk of the receiver's attention.

A particularly interesting case is (17) and (17'), where the change of state verb *replace* is translated with a different change of state verb, *allontanarci* ('move away'). Here, the presuppositional status of the content does not change, though its referential meaning does. While the verb *replace* presupposes that there is a "specter of conflict", *allontanarci* ('move away') presupposes that the US are currently close to the specter of conflict. So, translating presuppositions with semantically different presuppositions may become a manipulative strategy, in that the speaker's communicative intentions are represented in a distorted way. In fact, when a presupposition is rephrased as an assertion, what Trump intends to background in his message (i. e. to be treated as less relevant) is deliberately foregrounded in the translation (i. e. treated as more relevant). This translation practice may risk leading to an illegitimate and improper attribution of epistemic attitudes towards negotiated knowledge and, accordingly, of commitment and responsibility degrees. In fact, it turns the idea of nations protecting their people into one that it is nations which need to be protected. Furthermore, this is not needed as the literal translation 'per garantire le benedizioni della sicurezza, della prosperità e della pace' is perfectly intelligible in Italian and pragmatically coherent with the source text.

Restrictions on the structural patterns of information may be even stronger when these are conditional on specific positional factors. For example, in some verbs of movement in Italian, subjects may follow the verb to provide new information (*È arrivato Giovanni* 'Giovanni has arrived' or *Oggi viene Giovanni* 'Today, Giovanni comes'). A similar configuration would hardly be grammatically acceptable in English (**Has come Giovanni*), as subjects are normally required to be placed before verbs, whether transitive or intransitive.⁵

For a presupposition to exist, a certain, though by no means absolute, degree of similarity between languages is expected to be found in the range of possible triggers presupposing contents in utterances. Conversely, languages tend to differentiate themselves more markedly in relation to topic-focus articulation patterns. From a wider perspective, presupposition triggers are more profoundly entrenched in grammar and **rely** on grammar to convey shared contents in a conversation. For this reason, considering a translation of presuppositions as consistent as possible with the source text looks fundamental. This is all the more true if the target language uses the same or similar presupposition triggers to those of the source language.

5.2 Translating topic and focus

The mental structuring of information is believed to be less demanding when given contents precede new ones (cf. Chafe 1994). This allows the reader to proceed from something they already know, because active in the current universe of discourse (cf. Chafe 1994), to new ideas, which is commonly referred to as the principle *from given to new information* (cf. Givón 1987; Mereu 2009). Such a way of organizing information in a text is intended to comply with the processing needs of the reader and, in general, with the constraints of the human cognitive architecture, that is essentially geared to first dealing with given contents, serving as

⁵ Except for a few presentative constructions like *Here comes my son* or other inversions such as *Says he* in the narrative and news context.

informational anchors for contextualizing new ones. On the whole, whatever the informational pattern of an utterance, its translation should seek to reproduce the same communicative dynamism as faithfully as possible, even when some structural solutions in the target language do not entirely match those of the source language. This allows two texts to reach functional equivalence more easily, thereby triggering similar processing and interpretive operations in the readers of the source and the target texts. In (18) and (19), two examples of aligned rendering of information structure are given, one from English to Italian (cf. Scarpa 2008: 163) (18), the other from Spanish to Italian, taken from Sepúlveda's popular novel *Un viejo que leía novelas de amor* (19).

SOURCE TEXT – English	TARGET TEXT – Italian
<p>(18) Each event that is recorded in the accounting records is called a transaction. Each transaction causes at least two changes on the balance sheet (not counting the changes in the totals and in the date), even when only one side of the balance sheet is affected.</p>	<p>(18') Qualesiasi evento che venga contabilizzato e chiamato transazione e qualunque transazione comporta almeno due cambiamenti nello stato patrimoniale (senza contare i cambiamenti nei totali e nella data). Come nel caso in questione, entrambi i cambiamenti possono interessare anche una soltanto delle due sezioni dello stato patrimoniale.</p>
<p>(19) Los pocos habitantes de El Idilio más un punado de aventureros llegados de las cercanías se congregaban en el muelle, esperando turno para sentarse en el sillón portátil del doctor Rubicundo Loachimín, el dentista que mitigaba los dolores de sus pacientes mediante una curiosa suerte de anestesia oral. – Te duele? preguntaba. Los pacientes, aferrándose a los costados del sillón, respondían abriendo desmesuradamente los ojos y sudando a mares.</p>	<p>(19') I pochi abitanti di El Idilio, e un punto di avventurieri arrivati dai dintorni, si erano riuniti sul molo e aspettavano il loro turno per sedersi sulla poltrona portatile del dottor Rubicundo Loachimín, il dentista che leniva i dolori dei suoi pazienti con una curiosa sorta di anestesia orale. “Ti fa male?” chiedeva. I pazienti, aggrappati ai braccioli della poltrona, rispondevano spalancando smisuratamente gli occhi e sudando a fiumi.</p> <p>Eng. ‘The few inhabitants of El Idilio, and a point of adventurers from the surrounding area, had gathered on the pier and waited for their turn to sit in the portable chair of Dr. Rubicundo Loachimín, the dentist who soothed the pains of his patients with a curious sort of oral anesthesia. “Does it hurt?” he asked. The patients, clinging to the armrests of the chair, responded by opening their eyes wide and sweating profusely.’</p>

In (18), the noun phrase *Each transaction* (It. ‘Qualunque transazione’) is topic in both the English and the Italian texts. Also in (19), *Los pacientes* (It. ‘i pazienti’) is topic both in the Spanish and in the Italian text. There are cases, though, in which the need to emphasize a sentence unit may cause differences in the syntactic position of a phrase. On this account, Scarpa (2008: 163) points out that when a translator comes across a marked construction, they generally follow a principle of “neutralization” in producing the target text. This strategy becomes even more crucial when preserving the markedness nature of a construction would make the target text sound odd or less natural (Masia 2021). By way of illustration, consider the Italian translation of the following Spanish excerpt from de Cervantes' *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (edited by Martín de Riquer).

SOURCE TEXT - Spanish	TARGET TEXT - Italian
<p>(20) Tenía en su casa una ama que pasaba de los cuarenta y una sobrina que no llegaba a los veinte, y un mozo de campo y plaza, que así ensillaba el rocín como tomaba la podadera. Frisaba la edad de nuestro hidalgo con los cincuenta años; era de una complexión recia, seco de carnes, enjuto de rostro, gran madrugador y amigo de la caza.</p> <p>Eng. ‘He had in his house a housekeeper who was over forty and a niece who was not yet twenty, and a young man from the countryside and square, who saddled the nag as he took the pruning shear. Our gentleman was about fifty years old; he was of a strong complexion, dry of flesh, with a good face, a great early riser, and fond of hunting’.</p>	<p>(20’) Aveva in casa una governante che passava i quarant’anni, una nipote che non arrivava ai venti e un garzone per i lavori della campagna e per la spesa, capace tanto di sellare il ronzino quanto di maneggiare la roncola. L’età del nostro gentiluomo rasentava i cinquant’anni: era di complessione robusta, asciutto di corpo, magro di viso, molto mattiniero e amante della caccia.</p> <p>Eng. ‘She had in her house a governess who was over forty years old, a niece who did not reach twenty and an apprentice for the work of the countryside and for the shopping, capable as much of saddling the nag as of handling the billhook. The age of our gentleman was close to fifty: he was of robust complexion, lean of body, thin of face, very early riser and fond of hunting.’</p>
<p>(21) Con estas razones perdía [el pobre caballero] el juicio, y desvelábase por entenderlas y desentranarles el sentido, que no se lo sacara ni las entendiera el mesmo Aristóteles, si resucitara para sólo ello.</p> <p>Eng. ‘With these reasons [the poor gentleman] lost his senses, and he took pains to understand them and unravel their meaning, which Aristotle himself would not have taken it out of him or understood them, if he were to rise for this purpose alone.’</p>	<p>(21’) [Il povero cavaliere] perdeva la testa dietro a queste argomentazioni e non dormiva per cercar di capirle e di sviscerarne il senso, ma neanche Aristotele in persona, se fosse risuscitato a quel solo scopo, sarebbe riuscito a cavarne fuori e a capirci qualcosa.</p> <p>Eng. ‘[The poor knight] he lost his head behind these arguments and did not sleep to try to understand them and to dissect their meaning, but not even Aristotle himself, if he had risen for that sole purpose, would have been able to get out of them and understand something.’</p>
<p>(22) [Casi todo aquel día] caminó sin acontecerle cosa que de contar fuese, de lo cual se desesperaba, porque quisiera topar luego con quien hacer experiencia del valor de su fuerte brazo.</p> <p>Eng. [Almost all that day] he walked without anything happening to him that he could tell, of which he despaired, because he would like to meet later with someone to experience the value of his strong arm.</p>	<p>(22’) Camminò [quasi tutto quel giorno] senza che gli accadesse nulla degno d’esser narrato, del che si disperava, perché avrebbe voluto imbattersi subito in qualcuno su cui sperimentare il valore del suo forte braccio.</p> <p>Eng. ‘He walked [almost all that day] without anything happening to him worthy of being told, which he despaired of, for he would have liked at once to come upon someone on whom he could experience the value of his strong arm.’</p>

In (20) and (21), the communicative dynamism, namely the increase of the informativity degree, goes from the verb to the subject in Spanish, and from the subject to the verb in Italian. Thus, *el pobre caballero* (‘the poor knight’) appears less topical in (21) than the *povero cavaliere* in (21’). By the same token, in (22), the author emphasizes the verb *caminar* (‘walk’), and the translator the adverbial phrase *quasi tutto quel giorno* (‘almost all that day’), which has preverbal position (and is thus less focal) in the source text.

Other interesting cases are to be found in (23) and (24), from Sepúlveda's novel.

SOURCE TEXT - Spanish	TARGET TEXT – Italian
(23) El cielo era una inflada panza de burro colgando amenazante a escasos palmos de las cabezas. [Eng. 'The sky was an inflated donkey's belly hanging menacingly a few feet from their heads.']	(23') Il cielo, che gravava minaccioso a pochi palmi dalle teste , sembrava una pancia d'asino rigonfia. Eng. 'The sky, which weighed menacingly a few palms from his heads, looked like a swollen donkey's belly.'
(24) No le agradó la nueva Eng. 'He did not like the news '	(24') La notizia non gli fece piacere Eng. 'He did not like the news '

In (23), the gerundive modifying clause *colgando amenazante a escasos palmos de las cabezas* appears in a more focused part of the sentence, while in Italian, it is translated as an incidental clause, devoid of any illocutionary force of its own (cf. Cresti 2018). Similarly, while in (24) *la nueva* ('the news') is uttered as part of the focused unit, in the Italian version (24') its translation is in a sentence-initial position, and has topical status. Here again, a literal translation ('Non gli piacque la notizia'), not just maintains the same topic-focus pattern, but it is also absolutely acceptable and stylistically coherent with the source text.

Looking at the above examples, an a priori consideration concerns the attention shifts from one syntactic locus to another, since different strategies of informational structuring are chosen to translate an utterance or a piece of text. In particular, while in (24), 'the news' (*la nueva*) is the author's communicative purpose (the focus), and therefore an information item to which the reader is expected to pay greater attention, in (24') the same item of information is presented as communicatively less important, thus calling for a shallower processing (Ferreira et al. 2001). Similarly to the cases of translation of the presupposition-assertion dichotomy illustrated above, such translations of the topic-focus dichotomy alter the reader's conceptualization of the author's communicative intention. In other words, the set of information goals established by the author of the source text does not match those of the translation. Such a discrepancy is mostly reflected in the different communicative effectiveness of the two texts, as well as in the way they are intended to shape the mental world of the related readers.

5.3 Translating implicatures

What said about the translation of presuppositions and information structure units becomes even more essential for those strategies of implicit communication which conceal the main content of a message, such as implicatures (Lombardi Vallauri/Masia 2014). As a matter of fact, dealing with implicatures in interlinguistic translation entails more attention to the knowledge shared by interlocutors and the role this plays in facilitating the mutual understanding of communicative intentions. This means that when a translator comes across an implicature, they should evaluate the extent to which the target text reader shares with the source text author the contextual premises needed to understand the implied content. This will help them decide whether to leave some content implicit or to make it explicit.

If we consider the cultural distance between the source text readers and the target text readers, one strategy to deal with implicatures is by making them explicit in the translation, either in the body of the text or as a footnote. However, this operation is not entirely risk-free. Indeed, fixing

a univocal speaker's meaning is not always straightforward. Because more than one meaning can be implied in an utterance, identifying the exact content to imply involves considering discourse relevance. The problem of translating implicatures has traditionally been investigated in the context of political discourse (cf. Sanatifar 2016), where the target text audience does not always share the same knowledge of the topic with the source text readers. To this extent, Sanatifar (2016: 97) maintains that

working out political implicatures often requires a wider range of contextual and encyclopedic knowledge from the audience. The situation gets even more complicated when the speech is translated into a distant culture and/or language, where the target readers may share less with the original audience due to being members of a different community with a different style of communication.

(Sanatifar 2016: 97)

Sanatifar also points out that “the translator is the one who – on an assumption that target readers lack the necessary contextual information to understand the implicatures – is expected to make adjustments to compensate for the implied meanings, reduce their mental effort and make translation more relevant to them.” (cf. *ibid.*: 97). Therefore, when dealing with implicit meaning, a translator shall first evaluate what and how much can be left under-expressed, or unexpressed, in the translation based on what can be considered as shared. Then, they will decide how to make the target text more relevant to its readers, so as to spare them a cognitively tedious or even impossible comprehension process. Explicitation is a sound – yet, not always viable – strategy to pursue high relevance in a translated text, and it allows the translator to achieve the maximal interpretive equivalence between the source and the target text (cf. Gutt 1991). Through explicitation, textual effects of a target text are increased, and this reduces the need of additional processing efforts. Also, as a relevance-based measure, explicitation reduces the range of meanings potentially intended by the original author, thus aligning the target text reader's assumptions with the writer's intentions. Gutt (1991) suggests that a solution to do so is by adding footnotes, clarifications in the introduction or preface or comments alongside the text.

The implications of the above considerations are relevant not only for the way a text is understood but also for the way it induces the creation and consolidation of long-lasting beliefs and ideas in the target text readers' minds. This is particularly true for texts aimed at influencing people's vision of the world, their choices and behaviors, like political texts, which play a decisive role in, for example, portraying a political leader in the eyes of the whole world. To better clarify this point, I will discuss examples from speeches held by party leaders. The following excerpt comes from a speech held in 2018 by Matteo Salvini, leader of the right-wing populist party Lega.

- (25) Io penso anche ai tanti insegnanti, riempiti di promesse da una Sinistra che li ha traditi. Insegnanti che ogni giorno, ormai, sono aggrediti in classe, anche per colpa di una Buona Scuola che ha cancellato il merito. Nel Paese che ho in testa, oltre ai diritti, torneranno a essere importanti anche i doveri. Oltre ai sì, sarà importante dire di no. **Come si fa a garantire tutto gratis per tutti? Come si fa a garantire che non verrà bocciato più nessuno? Che generazione tiri su? Che studenti tiri su? Che genitori tiri su?** Quelli che se il figlio porta a casa una nota, invece di prendersela col figlio, vanno a scuola a prendere a cazzotti il professore. La buona scuola deve tornare a essere un luogo di educazione, di rispetto, di regole, di crescita, di convivenza, con gli insegnanti che torneranno a fare gli insegnanti, e non i poliziotti.

‘I also think of the many teachers, filled with promises by a Left that has betrayed them. Teachers who are attacked in the classroom every day, also because of a Good School that has canceled merit. In the country I have in mind, in addition to rights, duties will also become important again. In addition to the yes, it will be important to say no. How do you guarantee everything for free for everyone? **How do you guarantee that no one will fail again? What generation do you raise? What students do you raise?** What parents do you raise? Those who if their son brings home a note, instead of taking it out on their son, go to school to punch the teacher. The good school must return to being a place of education, respect, rules, growth, coexistence, with teachers who will return to being teachers, and not policemen.’

The bold-typed strings in the short text convey the implicature – derived from the violation of the Maxim of Relation – that other political parties or the government⁶ propose to make everything free for everybody in schools, in the sense that (a) students will not be required making any effort to pass tests or to receive their degree and that (b) nobody will fail. The following utterances imply that this fact would not help raising a generation with laudable skills and competences, and that this would not help future parents – as well as their kids – grow with positive qualities. These contents are not explicitly coded on the text surface, meaning that the speaker gives those contents as shared with the receivers. However, while for the average Italian recipient the possibility that those contents are shared is somewhat high, for non-Italian recipients of the same message this may not be the case. This is why a translation of this text portion (25’) would impose the target text reader the effortful task of implying content which is not shared in advance.

- (25’) I also think about the many teachers, filled with promises by a Left party who betrayed them. Teachers who are everyday attacked in class, also due to a “Good School” who completely obliterated the idea of merit. In the country I have in mind, besides rights, also duties will regain importance. Besides “yes”, it will be important to also say “no”. **How it is possible to make everything free for everybody? How is it possible to assure that nobody will fail? What sort of generation are we raising? What sort of students are we raising? What sort of parents are we raising?** Those who if their child gets a demerit at school, they go punching the teacher instead of reproaching their child. The “Good School” must go back to being a place of education, of respect, of growth, of cohabitation, with teachers who will continue to be teachers and not policemen.

⁶ By the time the speech was held, a leftist government was in office in Italy.

As for implicatures, the general tendency is to keep them as such in translation. Let us consider this other excerpt from Trump's speech at the Union Address (26) and its official Spanish translation (26').⁷

- (26) To speed access to breakthrough cures and affordable generic drugs, last year the FDA approved more new and generic drugs and medical devices than ever before in our history. We also believe that patients with terminal conditions **should have access to experimental treatments that could potentially save their lives**. People who are terminally ill **should not have to go from country to country to seek a cure** – I want to give them a chance right here at home.
- (26') Para acelerar el acceso a curas revolucionarias y medicamentos genéricos asequibles el año pasado la FDA aprobó más medicamentos y dispositivos médicos nuevos y genéricos que nunca antes en nuestra historia. También creemos que los pacientes con afecciones terminales **deberían tener acceso a tratamientos experimentales que podrían salvarles la vida**. Las personas con enfermedades terminales **no deberían tener que ir de país en país buscando una cura**. Quiero darles una oportunidad aquí en casa.

In the original version (26), the bold-typed utterances respectively assert that patients with terminal conditions should have access to treatments that might save their lives and that these people should not move from country to country to be cured, but the implicature also suggests that, at the moment, terminal patients do not have access to experimental treatments and that they have to move from country to country to be cured. These two implicit meanings stem from the speaker's violation of the maxim of Relation ("Make your contribution pertinent and relevant to the purpose of the ongoing discussion"). In other words, Trump's saying that terminal patients should have access to cures cannot be altogether purposeless if the utterance is expected to be cooperative for the communicative goals to be met. In fact, the speaker has uttered such a message to get his addressees infer that terminal people in the US **actually lack** accessible cures, which makes them move from country to country. As can be noted in (26'), the implicatures in the source text are also found in the Spanish translation, and nowhere else in the text does the translator provide an explanation or a paraphrasis. This leads to a situation that can be summed up as follows: if an average American citizen can reasonably be expected to know in advance that, in the U. S. A., terminal patients do not have access to experimental treatments and that they are forced to move from country to country to be cured, the probability that also a Spanish-speaking citizen already shares such a knowledge is legitimately lower, especially if they do not live in the United States. Consequently, it is more likely that the Spanish-speaking recipient will have to bring about an extra mental work to reconstruct the implicatures (and, thus, the implicit communicative intentions) associated with these utterances and adjust their common ground accordingly.

Had the translator opted for the explicitation of the implicatures of the original text, such a choice would not have come without risks, because, as already said, there are cases in which more than one implicature can be derived from an utterance. Consider the following occurrence from a speech held by Barack Obama in 2015.

- (27) Will we accept an economy where only a few of us do spectacularly well?

⁷ The full text is available at *Discurso sobre el Estado de la Unión*.

At the surface level (i. e. independently from what one knows about Obama's thoughts and political ideas), this rhetorical question can be thought to convey at least two implicatures:

- (a) If you vote for me, I will turn richness into a privilege for all people
- (b) Today, USA is a country where richness is only for few people

That an utterance may conceal more than one implicature is far from rare. Yet, understanding which of the several implied contents is the one actually meant by the speaker relies on the translator's subjective evaluation. A reliable interpretation of the author's intentions is a fundamental step of translating implicatures, and obviously involves reaching a well-grounded understanding of the political context of the source text as well as of the ideas and stances upheld by the politician.

Looking for the right implicature to translate has non-negligible repercussions on what types of contents the translated text will convey, and on the target text reader's understanding of that text and of the speaker's thought. So, for example, if the translator considers (a) to be the implicature meant by the politician (i. e. if you vote for me I will make richness a privilege for all people), they will emphasize that Obama will do something good to the American people, should he be elected President. By contrast, if implicature (b) is considered as more probable or relevant (i. e. today, USA is a country where richness is only for few people), the focus of the question will be on a negative aspect of today's America. Put otherwise, while (a) induces a more forward-looking view on the future, (b) is somewhat bound to make receivers aware of an undesirable social and economic situation of the country. This conundrum may admit more than one solution. On the one hand, making an implicature explicit is a receiver-oriented strategy (cf. Masia 2021), as it increases the relevance and contextual effects of a text; on the other hand, it may risk imbuing the text with potentially distorted representations, should the translator misunderstand the communicative intentions of the speaker. Although translation entails some degree of recreation of a text, when it comes to texts containing ideological content (cf. Masia 2021), this practice should be thoroughly monitored.

6 How to deal with implicit contents in translation

Building on what expressed already, a few other remarks are worth making. In the introduction to this paper, I have set out the following research questions:

- a. How should implicit contents be conveyed from a language to another?
- b. What aspects should be kept in mind to ensure safe translation choices?
- c. How can untranslated (or wrongly translated) implicit contents cause a text to be manipulative thereby making some relevant information only partly accessible for the addressee?

Addressing (a) involves non-objective and non-generalized criteria. In fact, a sound translation choice is, among other things, a condition of the cultural distance between two languages. On this account, Sanatifar (2016) investigates the degree of understanding of Persian translations of some speeches by Barack Obama which contained conversational implicatures. In his experiment, Sanatifar found that those Persian translations which did not make the implicatures of the source text explicit proved to be more difficult to understand than those translations which made the implicatures explicit either in the body of the text or in a footnote. He remarks that this explicitation strategy makes the relevance of an implicature more straightforward and

avoids that receivers look for other (probably wrong) implicitly conveyed intentional meanings. However, as already seen, the explicitation of an implicature is a potentially risky operation in that it requires that the translator takes the responsibility for simply “guessing” what the author of a text actually means (beyond the literal level), if clear-cut cues are neither available in the original text, nor in the background knowledge of the translator. Explicitating some implicit content may thus be a **manipulation-reducing** or a **manipulation-enhancing** strategy based on how accurately and precisely it is carried out by the translator. When an exact cue to interpreting some implicit content is available, the implied content can be made explicit and allow the reader to align their knowledge with that of the source text author. But, when the author’s communicative intention cannot be clearly retrieved, making guesses for the sake of clarity and reliability may turn out to be an even more manipulative and insidious choice to make. So, not disregarding the text type under investigation, the following tenets could be taken as a rule of thumb for the translator:

- Explain only the implicit content for which you have a unique assertive counterpart.
- When you are not sure about what meaning is actually intended by the speaker, translate it as implicitly as it is in the source text. Any possible, but subjective, interpretations should be rendered as footnotes or in the preface.

As for (b), one crucial parameter concerns what the translator knows about what the target receivers know, namely their previous knowledge of the source text topic. Although this is desirable, it is often far from being straightforward (Sbisà 2007). Therefore, the translator is expected to make the necessary effort to reproduce in the target text the same communicative effectiveness of the source text, while still keeping in mind that the former was originally conceived for a different readership or audience and a different communicative context.

A further parameter to consider is the function of a text in the source and target culture. In this respect, Scarpa (2008: 115) remarks that identifying the type a text belongs to in the source culture is a non-negligible step to understand what aspects of the translation process should be given more attention and what methodology should be adopted to translate the source text. For example, if a text is conceived to be persuasive, and if its persuasiveness depends on some peculiar linguistic traits, such traits should be kept in the translated version. For instance, if a commercial advert exploits presuppositions to pass the information about some relevant qualities of a product, translating those presuppositions into assertions risks weakening the persuasive power of the source text. The same holds for topical constituents when translated as focus. Consider the following slogan from L’Oréal (28) and its Spanish translation (28a).

(28) L’Oréal creates Vitalift complete care for men who still want to look good. Skin stimulated regains its vitality.

(28a) L’Oréal crea Vitalift 5. Un cuidado completo para hombres que todavía quieren verse bien. Estimula la vitalidad de la piel.

Lit. trans. ‘L’Oréal creates Vitalift 5. Complete care for men who still want to look good. Stimulates skin vitality’

In the English slogan, the fact that using L’Oréal Vitalift stimulates the skin is topicalized, as it is presented as if it had already been introduced in the discourse. In the Spanish translation, the same content is instead focalized. This means that it must be interpreted as new in the utterance.

Moreover, the English text uses a change-of-state verb (*regain*) which is not preserved in the Spanish translation. The interpretive effect stemming from this translation strategy is that the presupposed vital skin of the addressee, which eventually lost its vitality, is not necessarily entailed in the target text (28a). In fact, the verb *regain* can either mean that a particular entity or state of things does not exist and should be created from scratch, or that it existed before but then disappeared. So, the use of *estimular*, instead of other change-of-state verbs such as *recuperar* or *volver a [mostrar su vitalidad]*, is ambiguous and fails to properly render the communicative effect of the original message.

Last but not least is the answer to research question (c). In the light of what already said, explicating implied meaning produces a safe and good translation only when the speaker's intention is successfully understood. This is particularly true for implicatures, which are mostly "hidden" behind the literal meaning; conversely, presuppositions and topics less strongly impact the main content of an utterance, which is very often almost completely coded on the text surface (cf. Lombardi Vallauri/Masia 2014). In this scenario, the translator shall not just guess *what* is left implicit, but also *how* it is left implicit, i. e. in what packaging type. Correspondingly, if some information is presupposed in the source text, this means that the author wants their audience to take it for granted. Translating it as an assertion would thus produce a communicative countereffect on the target text reader's understanding of the discourse model: while readers of the source text will take the presupposed content to be less relevant and unimportant in the communication, the target text readers of the same content will see it as more relevant and worth processing with more attention. Consequently, that content will not be assigned analogous information statuses in the source and target receivers' mental model of discourse. Furthermore, while the content is not aimed at fulfilling the author's informative goal in the source text, it becomes the carrier of the message's illocutionary force in the target text.

Altering the informational configuration of an utterance in translation may thus turn into a manipulative practice because it subverts the author's perspective and epistemic engagement, which, in turn, determines how relevant and purposeful some pieces of information are in a sentence. Because of this, dealing with implicit language properly in interlinguistic translation becomes a pressing concern because it may determine how easily a text is understood and the extent to which it may manipulate readers. Needless to say, assessing the use of implicit language in a translation turns out to be a challenging attempt, due to the fuzziness of many implicit discourse devices (see, for example, the similarity of some presupposition triggers with conventional implicatures, cf. Chemla 2009).

The argumentation here developed does not intend to be an exhaustive account of how pragmatics can be dealt with in interlinguistic translation. Rather, it seeks to provide useful groundwork to better understand the cognitive effects of translating (or not translating) presuppositions, implicatures and topic-focus structures. A greater effort is therefore called for with a view to setting the path for a more fine-tuned methodology in this domain of research.

The proposed analysis did not touch upon other widespread implicit linguistic strategies, such as metaphor, humor, and other phenomena of argumentation structure like fallacies, syllogisms, enthymemes, etc. Yet, I believe that homing in on the role and nature of the three pragmatic

aspects touched upon – which are so pervasive in certain manipulative text types – could constitute a promising start for research on the power of linguistic manipulation in translation.

7 Conclusion

Translating the pragmatic layer of utterances is a challenging task for the translator, especially when implicit discourse devices must be rendered between languages that involve distant cultures. This paper has sought to highlight some criticalities related to dealing with implicit meanings in interlinguistic translation focusing on presuppositions, implicatures, and topic-focus structure. Results show that pragmatically based translation models so far have only mildly touched upon the problem of fulfilling the pragmatic and functional comparability between a source text and its target text. In fact, a partial or wrong rendering of such strategies risks turning a text into a manipulative act of communication. Therefore, despite structural differences between languages, implicit discourse devices should remain unaltered in interlinguistic translation, since any deviation from this criterion would engender alterations in the way some contents as well as authors' ideas and intentional meanings are construed in the receiver's mind.

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