Translation as a Global Language

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Abstract

L'obiettivo di questo articolo è proporre una riflessione sulle potenzialità di un approccio interdisciplinare che integri la ricerca sul potere dell'inglese come lingua globale e gli studi sulla traduzione, vista come metafora dello scambio interculturale. Partendo da un breve quadro storico dello sviluppo dei *Translation Studies*, l'articolo di concentra poi sulla traduzione dell'informazione, analizzando prima sul ruolo delle agenzie di stampa e successivamente dei blog. Si mette in evidenza come la definizione stessa di 'traduzione' venga messa in discussione di fronte alle varie forme adattamento, manipolazione e riscrittura presenti nel mondo dell'informazione. Varie metodologie, mutate da diversi campi della *Discourse Analysis*, sono brevemente descritte illustrandone i vantaggi per il ricercatore e prendendo in esame le difficoltà da affrontare per mantenere una posizione il più possibile oggettiva nell'analisi, ulteriormente complicata dalla presenza di più lingue e culture. In conclusione, riprendendo la struttura tripartita proposta da Jakobson, l'articolo propone di guardare alla traduzione come a un *continuum*: un approccio ritenuto utile e coerente con il crescente grado di ibridismo che caratterizza l'esperienza contemporanea della comunicazione.

Introduction

The title of this essay is to be intended as a manipulation of the label 'English as a Global Language'. Of course, translation is not a language and the reason for referring to it as to 'a language' is to draw attention on the role that translation plays in the balance of global language power. It is argued here that translation can be analysed as the other side of the same coin that sees English as the language of globalization. In his book *English as a Global Language*, David Crystal (2003) reminds his readers that, if one quarter of the world's population is now able of communicating to a useful level of English, then three-quarters are not. Stemming from this simple – but fundamental – reminder, this paper invites the reader to see Translation under a different light and argues in favour of a wider interdisciplinary approach to Translation Studies. More specifically, this reflection stems from the various works which Gerardo Mazzaferro (2002: 263) interweaves in his article "The English Language as Part of Macro Economic and Socio-Cultural Processes". The present work then, while sharing Mazzaferro's assumptions and conclusions, tries to add an extra

facet to the complex structure presented in his work, where English is analysed as a language of power from an interdisciplinary point of view while taking into account the contextual binding to the processes of economic globalization in terms of new identities, knowledges and cultures.

The other key concept from which the present work stems is the idea of translation as "a metaphor for intercultural exchange" (Bielsa, 2007: 4). As Bielsa explains, we now live in a globalised world where the movement of people around the planet has reached an unprecedented scale, a fact clearly reflected in the number of great writers of our age who have experimented with the unfamiliar, such as Vladimir Nabokov, Samuel Beckett and Milan Kundera, but to name a few. According to Bielsa (2007) "exiles, like translators, view their world from more than one perspective".

News Translation and Globalization

The focus of the present article, then, is the translation and distribution of news on a global scale. 'News' is here intended in its broadest sense, including all kinds of information distributed through media, notably including mainstream media such as newspapers, television broadcasts and internet news websites, but also grassroots information in the form of blogs, forums and mailing lists. News Translation is a relatively recent field of study in the realm of academic research and notably a subject of the discipline of Translation Studies, intended here as the academic branch that developed from the so called 'cultural turn' (Bassnett, 2002). Academic works dealing with the specific subject of news translation all belong to the now closing decade (Cronin, 2003; Baker, 2006; Bielsa and Bassnett, 2009, but to name a few), a decade that will significantly go down to history as the one that opened with the attack to the World Trade Centre.[1]

The reasons that have brought English to its current global position depend on the hegemonic role that first Britain and then the United States have played on the global market. Stemming from the Industrial Revolution in Britain, then developing into mass production and distribution, this process gradually brought to the current situation we commonly refer to as 'Globalisation' (Crystal, 2003). As the concept of globalisation has been so widely and extensively employed to refer to all kinds of issues having any global-scale effect, many definitions are available. Among all of them, the one that seems most interesting and apt within the scope of this paper is that proposed by Terhi Rantanen (2005) in her book *The Media and Globalization*: "Globalisation is a process in which

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[1] It might be useful to remind how the name itself shows a direct link to globalisation and commerce, something that has certainly contributed in turning the architectural complex into a symbol of Western capitalism.

worldwide economic, political, cultural, and social relations have become increasingly mediated across time and space."

The interesting aspect of this definition is that it interweaves all the aspects touched by the news media: economic, political, cultural, and social relations. Moreover it refers to *time* and *space*, two concepts that prove particularly significant when dealing with the media and our contemporary post-modern society – as explained below. Last but not least, the key word of the above definition is *mediated*, a term that draws our attention to the centrality of media and their filtering, through which all information has to pass in order to be distributed. In fact, Rantanen points out that the media do not limit themselves to connecting, but they mediate, which is a much more complex process.

The strong link between economy and the distribution of information made the social scientist Manuel Castells (1996: 66) define the new economy, which has emerged in the last few decades, as *informational*: in his book *The Rise of the Network Society*, he explains that the productivity and competitiveness of the agents of our economy fundamentally depend upon their ability "to generate, process and apply efficiently knowledge-based information". In the light of the current global financial crisis, his statements prove even more effective: the main, basic means employed to inflate a financial bubble, in which the declared value of goods does not correspond to their actual one, is nothing else than language. Thus also Anthony Giddens's (1990: 77-8) words from his book *The Consequences of Modernity* prove very effective even if almost twenty years have elapsed since he wrote them: "the global extension of the institutions of modernity would be impossible were it not for the pooling of knowledge which is represented by the 'news'."

From the point of view of sociolinguistics, one of the most relevant consequences of this process of globalization of information is that the language in which such informational exchanges normally take place is English. As Mazzaferro (2002: 134) points out, "Market has supported the spread of English as a 'global commodity' and has strengthened its relationship to the 'new planetary vulgate' in terms of economic and personal success and integration in globalized world." Consequently, English is often described as the *lingua franca* of global business, the language that allows people and countries to be part of the global capitalist system. As convincingly argued by Robert Phillipson in his article "*Lingua franca* or *lingua frankensteinia?* English in European integration and globalisation", the use of the term *lingua franca* can prove dangerous because it acts as a smokescreen and instils the idea that a language can be a neutral means of communication. He defines the label *lingua franca* as pernicious, invidious, and misleading, pointing out that

> there is an ironic historical continuity in *lingua franca* being used as the term for the language of the medieval Crusaders battling with Islam, for the language of the Franks, and currently for English as the language of the crusade of global corporatisation, marketed as 'freedom' and 'democracy'. (Phillipson, 2008: 263)

Thus, English is the language of globalization, the mediation and distribution of information is pivotal in the globalization process and information is mediated through language. As already stated, the relevance of mediation and distribution is linked to the concepts of *time* and *space*, which are at the core of the whole globalization process. It is useful here to recall the postmodern trend that David Harvey (1989) identified as 'time-space compression' in his work *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Harvey argued that the process developed from an acceleration of organizational forms and technologies of production, thus compressing turnover times in many sectors and accentuating volatility and ephemerality. Starting with the telegraph, new technologies have increasingly compressed our perception of space and time, to the degree that much of what we define as 'civilization' relies on the possibility of real-time communication (Stratton, 1996). The most obvious example of this fact can be found in the stock exchanges.

The fusion of economic markets, stock exchanges, globalization and compression of space and time is condensed in the organizations that nowadays distribute virtually any piece of information we get to know about from mainstream media: news agencies. The two main global distributors of news reports nowadays are Reuters and Associated Press. According to Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen:

> The news agencies were among the world's first organizations to operate not only globally, but to operate globally in the production and distribution of 'consciousness', through the commodification of news, in ways which had very significant implications for our understanding or appreciation of time and space. (Boyd-Barrett, 1998: 5)

In its early days, Reuters' main business was to provide financial news: an aspect which has contributed to the growing recognition of news about market trends and other facts related to economic interests as part of the mainstream news coverage. At the same time, the importance of the sector related to economic and financial news influenced the stimulus towards speed of delivery and to the western ideology of news as 'impartial' and 'objective'. (Boyd-Barrett, 1998: 64)

Together with Roger Fowler, I believe that because news is a way of representing the world in language, the imposition of a structure of values is impossible to avoid. Such values are social and economic in origin and news should never be considered a value-free reflection of 'facts' (Fowler, 1991: 4). As a consequence, the idea of News agencies acting as wholesalers who redistribute *objective* information based on the bare facts is as dangerous as the label of *lingua franca* against which Phillipson warns us.

If on the one hand News agencies contribute to global processes of homogenization and westernization through the use of English and through the promotion of western, anglo-centric values and points of view, on the other hand the great percentage of news that agencies sell is translated from languages and into languages other than English, which of course entails important

implications from the point of view of culture and identity. Nevertheless, the presence of translation processes within news agencies seems to be quite a thorny issue, especially in terms of the definition of 'translation' itself.

Representatives of Reuters and Agence France Press were present at a symposium organized in 2004 by the Centre for Translation and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Warwick. The goal of the research project was to investigate the politics and economics of translation in global media. As reported by Bielsa, both Eric Wishart – the then Editor in chief of AFP – and Anthony Williams – then Editor of Treasury News, Reuters – interestingly seemed to have a negative opinion of translation and understood the term exclusively as 'literal translation' as opposed to the job carried out by professionals they preferred to define 'journalist-translator', 'international reporters' or simply 'journalists with the knowledge of another language' (Bielsa, 2007: 15). While describing the situation in a typical Reuters bureau with a domestic language, Williams explained:

> While the international correspondents need to be linguists to understand what is going on in the country where they are working, local staff need to be able to render the original English language stories in German, French or whatever. But it is not translation pure and simple, rather the production of a news service, a news product in a specific language, tailored to a specific local audience and reflecting the journalistic norms in that region. (*Languages of Global News*, 2004)

In this passage it is clearly possible to see the role that the market plays in news distribution, as news reports are themselves products, built and sold to media customers in order to satisfy their needs. These media customers will then further reshape such news commodities in order to satisfy their own customers. It is worth reminding that, in capitalism-based countries, customers of mainstream media are of a double nature, in most cases we have, on the one hand, the public (readers, listeners or viewers) who need to be attracted by news items that interest them, but on the other hand we have advertisers who will provide financial backing for the medium by buying advertising slots, depending on the number and kind of people interested in that news product and likely to be reached by the advertisement as well. Hence it is possible to say that marketing plays a major role in the production and distribution of news, an aspect which raises interesting questions about news translation practices.

Implications for Translation Studies

When analysing the history of studies and works dealing with translation-related issues, one may have the impression that the whole debate keeps focusing on the same question without ever providing a definite answer. Such debate is believed to have started from Cicero's *De Optimum*

Genere Oratorum, (Cicero, 1949) the first text we know in which the author tries to decide whether a translation should rather be strictly literal (word by word) or freer and translate the sense of the text. Reporting about that two thousand year long debate goes beyond the scope of this paper; what is of interest for our purposes is the different approach in Translation Studies that has developed in recent years, starting from the 1980s.

The difference between that old question and the new attitude established with what has come to be known as 'the cultural turn' lies in the fact that choosing between a source-oriented or a target-oriented approach had mainly a prescriptive aim, while the goal of new ways of working on translation rather focused on a descriptive attitude. As explained by Susan Bassnett,

> The purpose of translation theory is to reach an understanding of the process undertaken in the act of translation and, not, as is so commonly misunderstood, to provide a set of norms for effecting the perfect translation (Bassnett, 2002: 43).

Since the 1980s, in which Translation Studies established itself as a discipline, its object of study has expanded from *The Bible* and literary works to include virtually all typologies of translation, of which news can be considered the latest. It is the novelty that characterises news as the object of this discipline that has engendered the idea of writing the present paper in order to draw the attention on the interesting potential offered by this new approach as a complement to sociolinguistics.

As convincingly argued by Christina Schaeffner, concepts and methods of linguistics, text linguistics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis have always been used by Translation Studies. However Translation Studies concepts have not been used by Discourse Analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis, and Political Discourse Analysis to a similar extent. Translation, intended here both as product and as process, enables the researcher to detect and highlight sociocultural and political practices, norms and constraints, which may prove particularly relevant in the field of political discourse (Schäffner, 2004).

The analysis of news translation has often attracted criticism within the academia, because the degree of manipulation applied in the translation process is considered so relevant that it is impossible to talk about 'translation' anymore. Studies about the translation of adverting had attracted similar comments (Pym, 2004). Both translation processes interestingly put at stake the definition of translation itself.

When analysed thoroughly, such criticism actually reveals itself quite weak. If we look at the great amount of work carried out in the field of Translation Studies we shall discover that interesting objects of research are often to be found in translated texts that somehow question what we mean by 'translation'. In the words of Bassnett:

> It was also clear that another important research question had started to emerge involving the very definition of translation itself. Since news translation is not strictly a matter of interlingual transfer of text A into text B but also necessitates the radical rewriting and synthesizing of text A to accommodate a completely different set of audience expectations, criteria applicable to the analysis of the translation of print documents, whether technical or literary, no longer serve the same purpose. (Bassnett, 2006)

In a similar fashion, Robert Holland (2006) points out that processes of 'globalisation' and the advent of 24-hour global news services raise new issues which mainly concern the concept of target culture itself. He argues that, with regard to global news translation into English, it is difficult to establish what is the 'target culture' understood to be, and that even admitting the possibility of a 'global culture' does not solve the issue, as we must admit that this is heterogeneous and contested.

Some useful concepts and approaches

A very interesting case, witnessed in recent years, that questions this concept of a global target culture is that of the English-speaking Arabic TV station *Al-Jazeera*. As recounted by Hugh Miles (2005), the first Arabic channel of *Al-Jazeera* opened in 1996, its staff including 120 BBC trained Arab journalists who had just lost their job as a consequence of an aborted joint Saudi-BBC attempt to start a channel in Arabic which would keep up to the standards of BBC World Service news.

Hence 120 out of 250 of those journalists moved to *Al-Jazeera* where they started what soon became a very popular TV channel all over the Arab worlds. Their previous experience with BBC World must have had an important role in the way the programmes were shaped. But what is of interest for our scope is the fact that in November 2006 the English version of the channel started being broadcast. Interestingly, in 2004 the project manager for the English channel, Nigel Parsons, talking about the project during an interview stated: "the brief is emphatically not to do an English translation of the Arabic channel. It will have international appeal and fill a lot of gaps in existing output." (Whitaker, 2004)

We can assume that what Parsons meant was that the English version would not correspond to the Arabic one, it would have different reports and different programmes, would be made exclusively for its English broadcast and not dubbed or subtitled from its Arabic twin channel. But if we refer to 'translation' in a broader sense, then it is possible and useful to look at *Al-Jazeera* from a Translation Studies point of view and, as a I argued in the opening lines, think of the translation side as an extra facet that can help understanding this globalisation process.

I believe it is useful to look at the issue in terms of 'voice'. What is actually being translated from the Arabic *Al-Jazeera* to the English-speaking *Al-Jazeera* is not the actual Arabic palimpsest, but rather its voice. I take this concept from a recent intervention of Jan Blommaert (2006) in

Target, in which he argues in favour of a "transdisciplinary dialogue" between Critical Discourse Analysis and Translation Studies.

Blommaert explains that, sociolinguistically, 'language' (intended here in its traditional notion of a countable thing with a name such as 'French' of 'English') "is a rather useless tool for understanding the concrete use of language in society" (2006: 167-8). Hence, he states, heterolingualism pertains to 'voices' and not to 'languages', as it is through *voice* that, he explains, "you make yourself understood in your own terms" (2006: 166)

Blommaert argues in favour of a less rigid approach in which hybridity and diversity are not only studied in terms of contrastive analysis of texts in different languages, but rather as a continuum in which different voices can also be found within one language (e.g. English). His argument is actually coherent with Jakobson's (2000) tripartite subdivision of translations into 'intralingual', 'interlingual' and 'intersemiotic'.

As I have already argued elsewhere (Caimotto, 2009), looking at the kind of manipulation news items go through, even within a single language, is a useful approach which a researcher in news translation needs to experience in order to then work on the difference which can be found in news texts in two languages. At the same time, it would certainly be useful for sociolinguists, dealing with issues related to language and power, to take an interdisciplinary approach as well and look at their own object of study from the perspective of translation studies.

Another approach which proves very useful when dealing with news translation is that of 'framing', as conceived by Goffman (1986) and Lakoff (2002). When analysing examples of news translation, thinking of the target text as the result of a 'reframing' can prove to be an inspiring and productive approach. Again, this is a theory which was developed to be used within monolingual contexts, but opens itself to interdisciplinarity.

Critical Discourse Analysis as a discipline has often attracted criticism because of the degree of subjectivity it needs to imply in its approach to its object of study. As convincingly explained by Van Dijk (2006),

> *as such*, discourse structures are not manipulative; they only have such functions or effects in specific communicative situations and the way in which these are interpreted by participants in their context models. […] This means that in principle the 'same' discourse (or discourse fragment) may be manipulative in one situation, but not in another situation. […] In other words, *discourse is defined to be manipulative first of all in terms of the context models of the participants*. That is, as critical analysts, we evaluate discourse as manipulative first of all in terms of their context categories, rather than in terms of their textual structures.

Hence, scholars dealing with issues related to the use of discourse in order to manipulate the meaning of what is being communicated will be forced to bring their own values into the process, in order to identify the ways and the goals pertaining to specific discourses. This necessity obviously

raises important questions regarding the objectivity of scholars themselves. I would argue that scholars working on texts translated from one language into another, thus bringing together more than one culture and more than one system of values, face an even greater risk of being biased in their approaches and findings.

In order to carry out one's research as required by scientific standards, scholars need to look for methodologies that will help them putting a distance between themselves and their object of study. As I have already argued elsewhere (Bani and Caimotto, in press), a CADS approach (Corpus Assisted Discourse Studies) can be an answer to this problem. Various scholars (Garzone and Santulli, 2004; Partington, 2004; Bayley, 2007; Duguid, 2007; Fairclough, 2007) argue in favour of corpora as useful tools to check the hypotheses developed in qualitative analysis against empirically verifiable data, shifting back and forth from the corpus data to the textual dimension. This twofold process can also be used as a source of inspiration. Partington (2004: 12) convincingly holds the opinion that reading and concordancing provide different kinds of insight, and the two approaches can reinforce and complement each other.

The various approaches referred to above do not need to be applied all together. They are exposed here with the goal of showing the great potentiality that an interdisciplinary approach can offer, not only to Translation Studies, but also to the other disciplines that employ such methodologies and often relegate interlingual translation issues on the margins. The key point is that sociolinguists and discourse analysts inquiring about the links between language and power and the power of manipulation are likely to find new inspiration in the works carried out under the academic label of Translation Studies. Before coming to the conclusions, I would like to briefly present a few case studies of grassroots information, which I believe call for interdisciplinarity and raise interesting issues about translation.

Grassroots power and translation

During the recent war in Iraq, a new way of distributing information emerged and made itself visible: blogs. A blog is like a diary that people publish online for other to read freely. In some very recent cases, blogs have been turned into what are commonly labelled as 'news aggregation websites', that is simply websites which collect news articles, reassemble them and offer a digest to their readership.[2] Such blogs actually work in a way which is very similar to that of traditional media and they are run by professionals who actually earn their living by doing that. If this phenomenon is interesting because of the way in which it further blurs the line that separates

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[2] Some examples are Huffington Post and Drudge Report

mainstream information from independent journalism, it does not raise particular issues that are of relevance for our scope.

What does raise interesting questions related to language and power, and to the role of translation, is the online presence of independent, non-professional[3] diaries that some young people started publishing in order to provide an alternative point of view. The two examples I would like to start from were opened by two young Iraqis in their mid-twenties. One of them was Salam Pax's *The Baghdad Blog* the other Riverbend's *Baghdad Burning*. Both of them used pseudonyms to protect themselves. Both diaries were published into books (Pax, 2003; Riverbend, 2005).[4] But while Salam Pax now works as a journalist, Riverbend's last post was published in 2007 when her family fled to Syria, and no news about her has been found online since then.

The aspect that proves interesting from the point of view of language and power is the way in which the English language plays an important role. This can be seen in the way Ian Katz, the journalist from *The Guardian* who managed to actually get in touch with him, introduces the blogger:

> He was just like us. By now we had got used to a portrayal of Iraqis as poor, anti-Western, frequently hysterical and altogether very different from us; here was one who addressed us in perfect idiomatic English (Pax, 2003: ix)

I believe this quotation clearly shows the strong link between language and identity, and the journalist convincingly stresses that the communication between Salam Pax and its readers in Western countries was possible not only because the blog was in a language which would be intelligible for its readers, but also because of the shared identity that his good knowledge of English implied. The following extract from the blog also shows the importance of language choices:

> This mess I'm in really bothers me. With all my talk of anti-Americanism (is that a word?) I still make references to their culture, their music and their movies. I got whacked for saying 'Fuck you' – I should have said *inachat khawatkum*, but no one would have understood. Just as most Iraqis don't understand most of what is being said by Americans. We would have smiled politely at each other and moved on.
> I feel like the embodiment of cultural betrayal. The total sell-out – and this is making me contradict myself all the time. […] I am all the arguments we used to have about us being attachments to western culture rolled into one. This is not the dialogue of equals we used to talk about. I keep making references to their - everything - because I am so swallowed up by it. Look, I have been sending you e-mails in English for the whole last year! How sad is that? Shame on me. (Pax, 2003: 54-55)[5]

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[3] By non-professional I mean to refer to the fact their authors do not earn money from writing them.
[4] An Italian version of both books was published (Pax, 2003b; Riverbend, 2006).
[5] Pax is addressing his friend Raed, the blog was structured as an exchange of emails between the two of them.

In one of her first posts, Riverbend also commented upon her choice of writing in English and the reactions it provoked in her readers:

> You know what really bugs me about posting on the internet, chat rooms or message boards? The first reaction (usually from Americans) is "You're lying, you're not Iraqi". Why am I not Iraqi, well because a. I have internet access (Iraqis have no internet), b. I know how to use the internet (Iraqis don't know what computers are) and c. Iraqis don't know how to speak English (I must be a Liberal). All that shouldn't bother me, but it does. (Riverbend, 2005: 6)

The paradox lies in the fact that translation becomes more visible when it is absent. On war blogs written by Iraqis, translation is not carried out from one source text in one language into a target text in a different language. In this sense, there is no translation process in the production of Iraqi blogs. Nevertheless, on a different level, the translation process is as present as ever, as these blogs' authors are moving from one culture into a different one, reporting personal thoughts and external commentaries uttered in Arabic by translating them into English. At the same time, these authors present themselves as hybrids, who do not even have a mother tongue anymore (Pax, 2003: 26). Moreover, the medium they employ, the Internet, in intrinsically Western for many reasons,[6] so that the fact that it is employed by Iraqis implies an even further passage of cultural translation.

I would now like to compare the two blogs analysed above with a third one which represents the other possible way, namely writing in the author's local language. The blog in question is Yoani Sánchez's *Generación Y*,[7] a blog about the daily life in Cuba told through the eyes of a young woman in her thirties. Several differences separate this blog from Pax's and Riverbend's. The author uses her own name, even if her own government is against her work: a position it has repeatedly demonstrated by not allowing her to travel abroad to attend international gatherings where she had been invited to receive some recognition. (Sanchez, 2008b)

The first interesting aspect which can be observed from the comparison is that *Generación Y* features a long line of 17 flags that link the main page to its various volunteer translations. Posts from Baghdad, from either blogs, were only seldom reported and translated on other bloggers' websites, without the systematic translation work showed on Sanchez's pages. Several observations can be made about this different choice towards translation. On the one hand, by writing in Spanish, Sanchez can expect her audience to be wider than that made by potential speakers of Arabic. The object of her analysis and criticism is mainly her own country, Cuba, even if the United States are often featured in her posts when she tells about the embargo or Washington foreign policy. The war blogs also criticized their own government, but their main concern seemed to inform the rest of the world about daily life in Iraq as a consequence of the US military presence.

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[6] An explanation of why the Internet is intrinsically Western goes beyond the scope of this article. (For further discussion see Benedikt, 1991; Porter, 1996; Cameron, 1998)
[7] Her blog has been translated and published in Italy (Sánchez, 2009)

The kind of assistance that the Iraqi blogs received from their online friends was mainly directed at the publication of posts by avoiding filtering and censorship. Also Sanchez reports that she necessitates that kind of assistance, and that volunteers translate her work, an issue, this one of translation into other languages, which did not raise itself as a problem to be tackled as far as the Iraqi blogs were concerned.

Conclusions

A short article like this one cannot hope to cover all the issues related to such a wide topic. Its aim limits itself to the proposal of a reflection about the potentials offered by interdisciplinarity. In the now closing first decade of this century we have witnessed such important changes in terms of communication technologies and global economic (im)balances, that an analysis of issues related to the English language and power arguably calls for new insights that would include phenomena such as that of *Al-Jazeera English* or the blogs from Baghdad.

From a sociolinguistic point of view, the surge of a globalised audience - with all the problems of definition such concept entails - raises important issues that need to be tackled when dealing with English as a global language and its power. Especially when dealing with news, it is necessary to take into account both the use of English as the *lingua franca* – bearing in mind the various dangers analysed above – and the practice of translation, by thinking of it as the other side of the same coin. Hence, approaches that do not separate manipulation – whether biased or not – within the same language from manipulation through interlingual translation can offer some new productive and interesting insights.

The results of the interdisciplinary dialogue that has been developing in recent years between Critical Discourse Analysis and Translation Studies seem to move in the direction of a continuum, where the boundaries that divide language and voices are more blurred than in the past. Such approach is certainly coherent with the strong globalising forces that characterise our daily experience of the world and aptly represent the hybrid character of the global experience of communication.

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