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Thesis presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**CARDIFF  
UNIVERSITY**

**Unconscious Discourses in Translation**

**PRIFYSGOL  
CAERDYDD**

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08 June 2022

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## Abstract

The present thesis aims to offer a new way of looking at how Translation Studies can incorporate Lacanian psychoanalysis for the study and practice of translation. Previous attempts at using psychoanalysis within the field of Translation Studies appear to have focused primarily on the translator's unconscious and how its influences may be overcome, neutralised or at least minimised. This has often included analyses of the translator's relationship with the author, for example in the context of the Oedipal triangle which likens the author to the father and the target language to the mother.

While this thesis does not intend to forsake the above approach, its objective is not psychoanalysing the translator. Rather, I aim to demonstrate how Lacan allows us to recognise the core of untranslatability which is present in any text. Resting on the Lacanian understanding of language that it is at its core arbitrary and meaningless, I will discuss in this thesis how the encounter with untranslatability poses a crucial point in translation which perpetuates its practice. I will do so by using Lacan's Discourses of the Master, Hysteric, Analyst, and Capitalist to explore disavowed structures and unconscious patterns in translation. I suggest that these discourse structures offer the possibility of an original understanding of the interrelations among different elements involved in translation, thus illustrating various approaches and mechanisms that structure translation practice. Most importantly, my use of the Analyst's Discourse pattern will demonstrate above mentioned importance of the translator's encounter with untranslatability.

This will be done by adapting the four discourse structures developed by Lacan to include concepts from translation and using these new patterns to analyse selected theories and approaches from Translation Studies. The analysis will show that patterns like the four adapted discourse structures can be found in different areas of translation, thus offering an original way of exploring the study and practice of translation.

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# List of Abbreviations

Acronym	Name
<b>Translation Concepts</b>	
ST	Source Text
TT	Target Text
TL	Target Language
<i>t</i>	(Perfect) translation
$\overline{T}$	Translator
CAT	Computer Assisted Translation
MT	Machine Translation
<b>Lacanian Concepts</b>	
<i>a</i>	Object of desire / objet <i>a</i>
S <sub>1</sub>	Master-signifier
S <sub>2</sub>	Knowledge
\$	Split subject
S.s.S	<i>Sujet suppose savoir</i>
<b>Bible Versions</b>	
ESV	English Standard Version
NIV	New International Version
KJV	King James Version
NKJV	New King James Version
CSB	Christian Standard Bible
NLT	New Living Translation
RSV	Revised Standard Version
ILL	Inclusive Language Lectionary
LXX	Septuagint
NA28	Nestle Aland Greek New Testament (28th Edition)
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
<b>Bible</b>	
OT	Old Testament
NT	New Testament
<b>Organisations</b>	
UBS	United Bible Societies
ECPA	Evangelical Christian Publishers Association
TWB	Translators without Borders

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# 1. Introduction

Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic theory is heavily indebted to linguistics. The starting hypothesis of my research is that, for Lacan, any use of language qualifies, strictly speaking, as a translation, since language by definition correlates with unconscious significations. In his inaugural speech to his guest professorship at the Free University of Berlin, the German translator Olaf Kühl stated that Lacan's unconscious could be described as a translation without original (Kühl 2011).<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Kühl likens the relationship between translator and original text to the relationship between analyst and analysand (Kühl 2011). Despite the significance of the above, Lacanian approaches to Translation Studies are rare. In the present thesis, I want to offer a new view of how Lacanian theories and translation interrelate. The specific part of Lacan's teachings used for this purpose are the four discourse structures developed in Seminar XVII (Master, Hysteric, University and Analyst) and the additional one Lacan outlined in his talk at the University of Milan and in "Radiophonie" (Capitalist).

I claim that these discourses offer the possibility of an original understanding of the interrelations among different elements involved in translation, thus illustrating the crucial role which the recognition of the untranslatability inherent in any text plays for the practice of translation. Previous theories which included Lacanian theories appear to have brushed over the potential which Lacan's claim that language is in essence arbitrary holds for our understanding of untranslatability. In this thesis I will illustrate that the encounter with untranslatability marks a pivotal moment in the translation process.

To demonstrate the plausibility of my claim, I will begin by substituting the original Lacanian concepts in the discourse patterns with comparable translation terminology. In a second move, I will discuss the validity of the new

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<sup>1</sup>Olaf Kühl is a German translator, slavist, and author. The publishing house Rowohlt named him one of the most important translators from Polish and Russian into German (Olaf Kühl. [no date]). He received multiple prizes for his works, such as the "Brücke Berlin Literatur- und Übersetzerpreis" (2016) and the "Helmut-M.-Braem-Übersetzerpreis" (2018).

translation patterns by applying them to specific theories and approaches to translation, with a special emphasis on Bible translation.

The main theoretical questions that will guide my research are:

1. To what extent can translation terminology be used in place of Lacan's original concepts to illustrate similar discourse patterns within translation?
2. To what extent is Lacanian Discourse Analysis able to illustrate the structures governing translation practice?
3. To what extent do particular approaches and views of translation display similar tendencies to specific discourses and how can the similarities enrich our understanding of translation?

As the above research questions may suggest, this thesis is premised on the working assumption that the basic discourse structures developed by Lacan can be found in the patterns that underlie translation. In response to the first question, I will identify the translator, the source text, the target language, and the translation to correspond most closely to Lacan's concepts of the split subject ( $\$$ ), the master-signifier ( $S_1$ ), knowledge ( $S_2$ ), and the object of desire ( $a$ ) respectively. By using these translation concepts to replace Lacan's original signifiers in the formulae of the discourses of Master, Hysteric, Analyst, and Capitalist, I will be able to discuss a number of translation approaches and theories that appear to display these adapted discourse patterns.

Specifically, the pattern of the Master's Discourse will be shown to relate best to translation theories which highlight the importance of following the exact structure and wording of the original. On the other hand, the Hysteric's Discourse will be associated with approaches that question the superiority and consistency of the original. Furthermore, I will argue that the approaches associated with the Hysteric's Discourse promote translations which place a stronger emphasis on creating a natural sounding target text rather than on following the exact wording and linguistic minutiae of the original. In other words, it will be found that the Master's Discourse structure relates best to approaches that focus on the linguistic material of the original, whereas the

pattern of the Hysteric's Discourse relates best to approaches that focus on the content and context of the original. Hence, the patterns of the Master's and the Hysteric's Discourse, as they will be discussed in this thesis, illustrate one of the oldest debates in translation: whether to translate word-for-word or sense-for-sense. For this reason, I will use Bible translation as a common area for the analysis of these two structures as traditionally it played an important role in discussions around their roles and validity.

Following the adaptation of the Discourses of the Master and the Hysteric, I will discuss the pattern of the Analyst's Discourse, which will be shown to resemble the general engagement of the translator with the dimension of untranslatability or, in other words, the impossibility of producing a perfect translation. Furthermore, this structure will be argued to relate closely with, for example, the general purpose of activist translations where translators establish their own motives for their work. Lastly, I will associate the Capitalist Discourse with more contemporary developments in translation, i.e., from the late 20th century onwards, and the trend of commodifying translation via, for example, machine translation and other translation software, as well as the increasing focus on assets (e.g., translation memory) over skills.

It will be noted that I have omitted in-depth discussions of the University Discourse, which Lacan also presented in Seminar XVII. Although I will discuss this discourse to some degree as part of the Capitalist's Discourse, I have chosen not to elaborate on its relevance for translation in detail. The reasons for this are primarily pragmatic, as the restrictions of time and space did not allow for a closer analysis of the University Discourse. Furthermore, my main understanding of this discourse suggests that it is particularly suitable as an illustration for translator training but also it can be seen to describe the process which brings about the translator as split between source and target language, or – very similarly to Lacan's split subject – the translator as split between conscious and unconscious knowledge. As my objective was to illustrate structures and mechanisms taking place in the process of translation, translator training did not fall within the purview of this thesis. Furthermore, I believe a more detailed discussion of the University Discourse bears the risk of looking at the translator as a split subject and trying to psychoanalyse

him/her. As I have stated previously, it is not the objective of this thesis to offer a psychoanalytic view of the translator but rather, analyse some of the structures and patterns in the translation process.

Finally, I would like to emphasise that I do not assume that Lacan's discourses, when applied to Translation Studies, permit a watertight structuralist categorisation of various approaches to the discipline. Neither do I intend to use these discourses to draw conclusions on the psychological condition of translators. Rather, I will use these discursive patterns as a means to explore disavowed structures and unconscious connections that pertain to the act of translation as a linguistic problem.



## 1.1 Literature Review: Psychoanalysis in Translation

To begin this thesis, I will introduce research from Translation Studies which has concerned itself with the relationship between psychoanalysis and translation. Despite Lacan's emphasis on language and relations between his theories and translation, at the time of writing this Literature Review, psychoanalytic theories have not been central to Translation Studies, compared to other areas such as cultural studies and linguistics. The psychoanalytic ideas which have been discussed by translation scholars appear to cover mostly the translator's unconscious, for example in the context of Oedipal relations between author and translator or translator and original text, Freudian slips and mistranslations, as well as transference, perhaps due to its linguistic connection to the word translation; for example, in German *übersetzen* [translate] and *übertragen* [transfer] were often used interchangeably by scholars, including Sigmund Freud. Most translation scholars appear to use Freudian ideas as their main orientation, but some also include Lacanian theories. However, I could not identify any research in translation that explores the Lacanian discourse patterns discussed in this thesis.

For this Literature Review, I have selected texts which I believe to be the most representative of their areas and most relevant for my theoretical approach. The texts will be discussed following the chronological order of their publication.

### *Serge Gavronsky (1977)*

The first text to be discussed looks at the unconscious of the translator. In his article "The Translator: From Piety to Cannibalism" Serge Gavronsky pays particular attention to Sigmund Freud's understanding of psychoanalysis (Gavronsky 1977). Gavronsky's main reference to psychoanalysis resides in his imagery of the translator as trapped in the Oedipal triangle, which reflects closely how it was thought of by Freud (Gavronsky 1977).

In his paper, Gavronsky looks at the relationship between the translator and the "double text" (i.e., source and target text), basing his discussion on two categories: the pious translator on the one hand, and the cannibalistic translator on the other (Gavronsky 1977). Firstly, the pious translator occupies

a passive role as re-coder, viewing him-/herself as inferior to the author (Gavronsky 1977, p.53). From the pious translator's point of view, the text is almost semi-sacred and in need of the translator's protection (Gavronsky 1977, p.53). As if adhering to the law against incest, the translator represses all desire to touch the source text, which Gavronsky also refers to as the "mother text" (Gavronsky 1977, p.53). Secondly, the cannibalistic translator turns into a creator him-/herself by rejecting the previously mentioned metaphorical prohibition against incest and becoming "aggressively self-assertive" (Gavronsky 1977, p.53).

Along with some brief references to Sigmund Freud, the most notable one in the context of psychoanalysis is Gavronsky's use of the Oedipal triangle to illustrate the relationship between a pious (word-for-word) translator, the author, and the original (Gavronsky 1977, p.54). Traditionally, he proposes, the word-for-word translators were mostly men of the church who treated every text like a copy of the Bible or another sacred text (Gavronsky 1977, p.54). Gavronsky further compares this type of translator to a Benedictine monk who has made vows of chastity, poverty and obedience towards the text (Gavronsky 1977, p.54).

According to this view, the translator upholds his/her chastity by maintaining only a platonic, formal relationship with the "mother text", that is to say by placing the main emphasis of the translation process on the signified, the "spirit" of the text, instead of the signifier, its flesh (Gavronsky 1977, p.54). The metaphorical Benedictine vow of poverty is compared with the translator's modesty in refusing to copy the author's presence (Gavronsky 1977, p.54). Gavronsky continues that "poverty" requires the presence of the law, which is represented by the dictionary acting as a "cordon sanitaire", i.e., a barrier to prevent spreading of diseases via trespassers (Gavronsky 1977, p.54). The translator remains obedient and virtuous by tolerating no rival and staying "obedient only to his calling" (Gavronsky 1977, p.54). Meanwhile, the author occupies a sacred position and becomes a god-like being, reducing both the reader and the translator to a secondary status (Gavronsky 1977, p.55).

As anticipated, according to Gavronsky this author-translator-text relationship is shaped by the Oedipal triangle, where the translator views him-/herself in the role of the metaphorical child of the author who he/she views as rival (Gavronsky 1977, p.55). The role of the object of desire is ascribed to the original as the “mother text”, and as such it is characterised by the paternal figure symbolised in the pen (Gavronsky 1977, p.55). This role allocation would lead to the conclusion that altering the text in any way is tantamount to disrespecting the paternal authority and break the prohibition of incest (Gavronsky 1977, p.55). However, during the translation process the pious translator cannot avoid touching the mother text (Gavronsky 1977, p.55). The pleasures he/she experiences in this process are disguised as “good works” that will help his/her reputation (Gavronsky 1977, p.55). In other words, the translator has to adapt the source text to some degree in the translation, which Gavronsky believes to bring enjoyment to the translator.

These passages where the pious translator has to “touch” the mother text are disguised in the target text as the translator’s good work and successful translation (Gavronsky 1977, p.55). In the translation process, the translator shapes him-/herself after the author in a similar manner to how a son is made in the image of his father (Gavronsky 1977, p.55). That is, the translator writes the translation trying to imitate the original author in the target language. Therefore, Gavronsky understands translation to tell the story of successful repression of incest by the translator while he/she remains able to verbalise his/her own desires and connect the final process to his/her own proper name in being named on the same page as the author in the final product (Gavronsky 1977, pp.55–56). Put differently, while the translator represses the desire to rewrite the original and replace the author, he/she is still able to engage with the text in a creative way. Furthermore, he/she is named together with the author on the same page of the target text and is thus able to claim ownership over the translation.

In his text, Gavronsky develops interesting points regarding the relationship between translator and author, as well as the translator and the translation based on the Freudian idea of the Oedipal triangle. Having been written in the 1970s, from a more modern perspective, Gavronsky’s text may appear

outdated and cliché at a first glance, in particular as the language suggests that Gavronsky based his article on the assumption of a male translator only. As such, the text offers scope for further engagement with psychoanalytic theories and the inclusion of less gender-biased analysis – as demonstrated, for example, by Anne Quinney whose text will be discussed later in this Literature Review. Nevertheless, it offers an interesting analysis of the relationships at play within the translation process which makes it a fruitful text to be used for my own analysis which will explore further some of the relationships in translation. Gavronsky's theory on the two different types of translators will be relevant for two of the core chapters of this thesis. The image of the pious translator will be discussed in relation to Lacan's Master's Discourse (chapter 3), and the cannibalistic translator will be relevant for the Hysteric's Discourse (chapter 4).

*Alan Bass (1985)*

Alan Bass discusses in his article "On the History of a Mistranslation and the Psychoanalytic Movement" an example of a potential *Fehlleistung* or parapraxis in translation (Bass 1985). The example Bass refers to comes from a text by Sigmund Freud, who developed and coined this concept of parapraxis, or also often called *Freudian* slip. Bass uses Freud's mistranslation in his work on Leonardo da Vinci to discuss the idea of the fetish and also that of transference (Bass 1985).

The error that Bass refers to can be found in Freud's text on Leonardo da Vinci, "Eine Kindheitserinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci", generally referred to as "Leonardo" by Freud and his disciples, which features an extensive analysis of one of da Vinci's recorded dreams (Freud 1910; Bass 1985). In his analysis, Freud mistranslates the Italian word *nibio* [kite] as *Geier* [vulture] and uses the imagery as a foundational element of his theory on the fetish (Freud 1910; Bass 1985, p.105). Bass describes that in Freud's argument the (alleged) vulture becomes a representation of the mother, based on a similar representative connection between "mother" and "vulture" in Egyptian hieroglyphs (Bass 1985, pp.121–122). During his study, Freud displays excellent knowledge of Italian, as well as Latin and Greek and even corrects

the existing translation of da Vinci's dream, his only error being the translation of *nibio* which is the word his theory is based on (Bass 1985, p.123). While Bass argues that the assumption that the bird in Leonardo's dream was a vulture - and thus Freud's translation of *nibio* as *Geier* - is erroneous, Freud's mistranslation nevertheless does illustrate his theory of the fetish (Bass 1985, p.137). Bass suggests that for Freud, the idea of the vulture became a fetish itself as he continued to find proof for his faulty theory by drawing on the imagery of the vulture in Egyptian symbolism and connecting this to da Vinci's childhood as well as his relationship with his mother (Bass 1985). In the second edition of Freud's study on da Vinci, he adds a footnote where he states that one of his disciples, Oskar Pfister, detected the outlines of a vulture in a painting by da Vinci which Freud states represents the artist's mother (Bass 1985, pp.133–134). In response to the second edition, Freud's other disciple, Carl Gustav Jung, writes to him in a letter that he as well had found the outlines of a vulture in the picture but in a different place (Bass 1985, pp.135–136). Bass concludes that Freud's mistranslation of *nibio* as *Geier* is an illustration of the concept of the fetish:

Freud has continued to maintain that he sees what was never there – the vulture – for motivated reasons, that is, because it fits in too well with the related theories of the infantile sexual theories and of “Egyptian” language formation (Bass 1985, p.137).

Bass suggests that Pfister and Jung also fetishized Freud's theory and thereby the theory of the fetish became a fetish in itself for Freud and his disciples (Bass 1985, p.137).

The relationship between Freud and his disciples Pfister and Jung who all found the supporting evidence for the imagery of the mistranslated vulture is related by Bass to the concept of transference (Bass 1985, pp.137–141). Bass elaborates that the etymological and linguistic connection between *übersetzen* [translate] and *übertragen* [transfer] which, depending on the context, can both mean “translate” in English (Bass 1985, p.138). Transference, Bass concludes, is therefore already connected to translation due to their linguistic links. Furthermore, he adds that transference, translation, and mistranslation are all carriers in one way or another, the “printing press and fetishism as *vehicles* of

mistranslation pull together the threads of our argument in an unlikely weave” (Bass 1985, p.139).

In his paper, Bass illustrates well the potential for fetishization of specific terms or images in translation and the effect they can have on the readership. In the case of Freud, the strong influence he had on Jung and Pfister added to the transferential fetishization of the same imagery and concept despite it being based on a mistranslation.

*Antoine Berman (1985)*

The next article to be mentioned in this section of the Literature Review is Antoine Berman’s “Translation and the Trials of the Foreign” (Berman 2012).<sup>2</sup> In the article, Berman proposes an “analytic of translation” that uncovers and analyses what he describes as common, unconscious, and deforming tendencies in translation (Berman 2012, p.242). The main references to psychoanalysis made by Berman are based on his argument that these deforming tendencies are caused by the translator’s unconscious and can be overcome by means of the proposed analytic (Berman 2012).

Berman suggests that part of a translator’s being, including his/her desire to translate, are formed and determined by certain unconscious forces (Berman 2012, p.242). Hence, in order to avoid deforming the original, “[the] translator’s practice must submit to analysis if the unconscious is to be neutralized” (Berman 2012, p.242). According to Berman’s view, there is thus hope for translators to overcome their unconscious and “liberate” their work from the deformations Berman associates with most translations (Berman 2012, p.242). Based on this thesis, Berman proposes to include psychoanalytic approaches to language and linguistics in translation but does not elaborate on which theories he believes to be most beneficial (Berman 2012, p.242). He suggests that this psychoanalytic approach to translation should approximate the work of analysts since translation is an essential part of psychoanalysis (Berman 2012, p.242).

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<sup>2</sup> Originally published in 1985 in French as *La Traduction comme épreuve de l'étranger*. I am using here Lawrence Venuti’s English translation published in his *Translation Studies Reader* (Venuti 2012).

This proposed psychoanalytic approach to translation, Berman states, is particularly relevant to the translation of novels, since they are often stylistically underestimated and therefore not studied as closely as, for example, poetry (Berman 2012, p.243). He argues that in his analytic of translation, a translator should pay attention to twelve different tendencies that should be avoided (Berman 2012, p.244).

I should point out here that from a Lacanian perspective it would be unrealistic to set out to overcome any unconscious interfering with the translation, since unconscious interferences cannot be fully known by the translator, and therefore cannot be overcome or undone. Hence, the research presented in this thesis does not aim to develop an approach to translation which eliminates or circumnavigates unconscious influences. Rather, I aim to provide an original view on unconscious structures present in translation and showcase that translation will always be biased to some degree. Since the meaning attributed to language is individual and will to some degree differ from person to person, it is unlikely for someone to be able to translate a text in an objective way without allowing for any distortion of the original. Arguably, even the source text would not be exactly how the author intended it to be. Nevertheless, Berman's article may still aid translators who wish to translate a source text in as literal a manner as possible. It can be a useful tool to reflect on one's own translation choices.

*Dennis Porter (1989)*

In his article "Psychoanalysis and the Task of the Translator", Dennis Porter discusses Walter Benjamin's seminal text "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers". In particular, he focuses on Benjamin's understanding of translatability and relates this in the second part of the paper to Lacanian theories (Porter 1989). For example, Porter suggests that Lacan would most likely argue in favour of "relative translatability", for example due to his return to Freud in the original German (Porter 1989, pp.1074–1075). By calling for a return to Freud and a rereading of the German originals, he would also call for a retranslation of certain concepts and passages (Porter 1989, p.1074). Furthermore, Porter highlights that, based on a Lacanian view,

[...] we are all in one way or another translators. We are all decoders of transmitted messages in a language that is not our own – messages that even when addressed to us are meant for someone else. And the analyst's role, in particular, is preeminently, albeit obliquely, that of translator of another's speech (Porter 1989, p.1077).

Like translators, an analyst's work takes place mainly in language as psychoanalysis, according to Lacan's return to Freud, is understood to be a "talking cure" which is reliant on an attentive and well-informed listener (Porter 1989, p.1079).

Picking up Paul de Man's suggestion that there is no original since language always fails, Porter highlights that this makes translation possible from a Lacanian perspective "because it is in our misses, f anywhere, that we know each other and know ourselves" (Porter 1989, p.1080).<sup>3</sup> One of the most important outcomes of a psychoanalytic analysis is that the analysand would become aware of his/her own existence in language via his/her own speech (Porter 1989, p.1082). Similarly, a translator may see him/herself in language as the "unnatural attention to two codes inherent in the act of translating distances the agent temporarily from both in a space between" (Porter 1989, p.1082).

Porter's article presents an interesting discussion which links Lacanian psychoanalysis and translation. Particularly the image of the translator finding him/herself in the tension between two codes relates to my own research presented in this thesis as I will suggest that the translator is best suited to represent Lacan's split subject in the adapted discourse patterns. I will argue that as the subject is split by language, the translator is split between source and target language, or source and target text.

### *Susan Ingram (2001)*

In "Translation Studies and Psychoanalytic Transference" Susan Ingram proposes that translation uncovers the unconscious of both the source text

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<sup>3</sup> Paul de Man also discussed Benjamin's understanding of translatability in his text "Conclusions" but argues that Benjamin was in favour of *un*translatability whereas Porter understands Benjamin to be in favour of translatability (Benjamin 1972; De Man 1985; Porter 1989).



and the translator (Ingram 2001). Ingram discusses in her paper a range of psychoanalytic theories and concepts and relates these to translation.

For example, Ingram offers a Lacanian view on translation and suggests that, viewing the translator as a “patient”, the author of the original comes to hold the position of a *sujet supposer savoir* (S.s.S.) (Ingram 2001, p.101). Based on this view, Ingram suggests that the process of translation might reveal the unconscious of the original (Ingram 2001, p.101). In Lacanian theory the S.s.S., often translated as the “Subject Supposed to Know”, is a function taken on, for example, by the analyst vis-à-vis the analysand, who supposes that the analyst knows what he/she desires (Lacan 1998a, pp.231–236; Ingram 2001, p.99). This function is not limited to the analyst but can be ascribed to any individual, for instance the original author of a given text. Importantly, the emphasis of this function lies on the *supposition* of knowledge rather than the actual knowledge held by the S.s.S. Furthermore, Lacan highlights in his Seminar XI “that no psychoanalyst can claim to represent, in however slight a way, a corpus of absolute knowledge” (Lacan 1998a, p.232).<sup>4</sup> This crucial statement will become especially relevant in his Discourse of the Analyst,<sup>5</sup> where the analyst reveals to the subject that he/she does not know the answer to the subject’s desire (Lacan 2007). The shock of the revelation of the absence of knowledge can prompt the analysand to seek his/her own answer to his/her desire, and take responsibility for his/her own symptom (Lacan 2007).

Furthermore, Ingram draws on the connection between translation and transference, which she bases on Freud and Proust (Ingram 2001, p.97). For example, Ingram highlights that just as Freud suggests that transference is inevitable, Proust states translation is inevitable (Ingram 2001, p.97). Like Freud, he could only accept one solution as the correct treatment of a patient (Ingram 2001, p.97). Proust reports that his grandmother could only accept the one translation she grew up with as the “right” translation of a certain book (Ingram 2001, p.97). Like her, some other readers can only accept one translation that they in effect fetishize while the translator for them remains

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<sup>4</sup> See also Seminar XVII (Lacan 2007, p.52).

<sup>5</sup> The Analyst’s Discourse will be introduced in the Theoretical Framework and discussed in detail and in context of translation in the respective chapter.

invisible (Ingram 2001, p.98). The reader who as a child grew up with one specific translation accepts the translator's desire for themselves and accepting a different translation means to renounce their own desire (Ingram 2001, p.98).

Ingram also refers here to the philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's theory of the schizophrenic as symptom of ills in society; in this sense the transference in their theory of psychoanalysis describes the alienation of the other and not of the schizophrenic him-/herself (Ingram 2001, pp.103–105). She ends her comparison of psychoanalytic theories with the Swiss psychiatrist and psychotherapist Carl Gustav Jung (Ingram 2001, p.106). In his view transference is essentially a prolonged social drama, i.e., a transference into a symbolic scenario in which, for example, a person in a dream comes to symbolise the self (Ingram 2001, p.106). The symbolism then indicates the locus of the patient's unconscious during the transformation (Ingram 2001, p.106).<sup>6</sup>

While Ingram does not develop these psychoanalytic theories into any significant detail in relation to translation, her paper offers a valuable insight into the potential psychoanalysis has for translation studies. As such, she opens up opportunities for further research which picks up and elaborates on some of the connections she points out. This thesis, for example, will focus primarily on Lacanian theories, and as such draw on a similar idea to that of the translator as patient and the source text as S.s.S. In my chapter on the Hysteric's Discourse, the translator takes on a similar position to that of a hysterical subject, analysing or questioning the source text which here I associate with the role of master-signifier.

*Anne Quinney (2004)*

In her article "Translation as Transference. A Psychoanalytic Solution to a Translation Problem" Anne Quinney uses the translator as metaphorical child

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<sup>6</sup> Ingram's paper is also used by Lorelei Caraman-Paşca in her paper "The Psychoanalytic Concept of Transference: Its Applications in Literary and Translation Studies. Transferential Models of Reading" (Caraman-Paşca 2013). In her paper Caraman-Paşca draws on different theories of transference and their relevance to predominantly models of reading (Caraman-Paşca 2013). As her only reference to translation appears to be the text by Susan Ingram, I have chosen not to include her in the main body of this Literature Review.

of the author to illustrate her own experience of translating the memoir of the French psychoanalyst Jean-Bertrand Pontalis under the author's supervision (Quinney 2004).

In her work with Pontalis on the translation of *Fenêtres*, Quinney detects a similar constellation in their role allocation as suggested by Gavronsky in his previously discussed text, i.e., the author taking on the role of the father while the translator takes on the position of child (Quinney 2004, p.121). She mentions that, while reflecting on the translation process, she noticed that she had unconsciously associated Pontalis with her father, and designated him a paternal role (Quinney 2004, pp.120–121). Pontalis on the other hand asserted his paternity not only over the source, but also over the target text by supervising the translation (Quinney 2004, pp.120–121). Quinney found herself to fall easily into the role of the daughter and behaved accordingly, for example by seeking approval, asking for advice, and overall “sticking to the rules” of translating the text as closely as possible to the original (Quinney 2004, pp.120–121). She writes that she was not to alter the text by any means because she “would be crossing a line” (Quinney 2004, p.121). In this scenario, however, countertransference becomes visible, as Pontalis claimed his paternal role over the target text rather than leaving it to the publisher. Although the translation was already under contract, Pontalis still insisted on approving the translation before publication in order to keep his status as “father” of the text, since “[only] paternity can legitimize an offspring and Pontalis was most certainly, in his eyes, the sole legitimizing father of this translation [...]” (Quinney 2004, p.121).

In her paper, Quinney notices further parallels between translation and psychoanalysis: for example, where the analyst must resist correcting the analysand's story, she proposes that the translator must refrain from correcting the original and instead transport it into the target language without altering anything even if the text includes errors (Quinney 2004, p.114). She also highlights that the process of analysis is often said to be a process of translating in itself, as analyst and analysand work together to “translate” the mind, which contains psychic formations (wishes, ideas, etc.) that fail to be expressed in language (Quinney 2004, p.114). Both translator and analyst

function in this view as mediators between “two worlds” (ideas and languages) and both “engage in activities that seek to liberate language that is imprisoned and in a way that will create something new [...]” (Quinney 2004, p.114). The unconscious can be seen as set of symbols, representing the individual’s repressed wishes and desires, which are to be translated by the analyst (Quinney 2004, p.114). Similarly, the translator always engages with networks of symbols, trying to reproduce the source text in the target system (Quinney 2004, p.114).

Quinney suggests that Sigmund Freud himself proposed the view of the analyst as a translator when he “claimed to have discovered the means to translate hysterical symptoms and dreams into language that analyst and analysand alike might understand” (Quinney 2004, p.115). Freud used the term translation, *Übersetzung*, in the context of neuroses and symptoms intended as translations of unconscious material. By *Übertragung* (to carry across) on the other hand, he referred to the psychoanalytic phenomenon of transference, i.e., the manifestation of unconscious wishes, problems etc. and the displacement or transfer of associations and identifications from one person to another (Quinney 2004, p.115).<sup>7</sup>

Finally, the main point of Quinney’s paper is to raise the translator’s awareness for the unconscious speaking through language and how language can occasionally betray its speaker (Quinney 2004). Hence, translation arguably highlights the individual’s alienation in language (Quinney 2004, p.116). Quinney illustrates this in the case study of her own work on Pontalis’ *Fenêtres* (Quinney 2004, p.117). She mentions different factors that can influence the translator’s unconscious, such as the time and place in which they are born, the culture and circumstances of their growing-up, their gender, ideological and social background, or the relationship to author, publisher or prospective reviewers (Quinney 2004, p.112). Quinney mentions one example from her work on the translation of *Fenêtres* where her *Widerstand* [resistance] to a section of the original about father-substitutes interferes with her understanding of the text (Quinney 2004, pp.117–118). *Widerstand*, she

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<sup>7</sup> See also Sigmund Freud’s *Traumdeutung* (Freud 1900).

explains, is defined by Pontalis and Laplanche as the obstruction to accessing the unconscious (Quinney 2004, p.118).<sup>8</sup> According to Pontalis, her resistance was the result of her unconscious rejection of the idea of father-substitutes (Quinney 2004, p.118). This manifested itself in the above mentioned *Fehlleistung*,<sup>9</sup> i.e., her refusal to understand the French original (Quinney 2004, pp.118–119). This example led Quinney to the conclusion that translation offers an opportunity for the translator to work through conflicts with his/her unconscious wishes and fantasies (Quinney 2004, p.119). In this context, she also warns about the desire to translate a certain text, since this may reveal many traps to the unconscious where something in the text connects with the translator and triggers the wish to rewrite the text (Quinney 2004, p.119).

Quinney's case study is an interesting example of how the unconscious may influence the translator while also successfully raising awareness of how even experienced scholars can be affected by their unconscious wishes. However, as she mentions herself, few translators will have the opportunity to translate a text together with an analyst who would point them towards possible unconscious interferences. Nevertheless, the example of Quinney's translation arguably illustrates well the theories previously mentioned by Berman and Gavronsky and highlight their relevance for translation practice. For example, Quinney's examples support Berman's point that there are unconscious tendencies that deform a translation. While she does not directly refer to Berman's twelve tendencies, she highlights instances where her unconscious interfered in the translation process, which supports his overarching argument that a text's shape is often changed in translation unintentionally. Furthermore, Quinney gives a real-life example of how the Oedipus complex, which Gavronsky mentioned in his text, could take place in translation. Quinney makes explicit mention to how she saw herself taking on

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<sup>8</sup> See also Laplanche and Pontalis' *The Language of Psycho-Analysis* (Laplanche and Pontalis 1988).

<sup>9</sup> Often translated to English as parapraxis or Freudian slip, literally translated "a failed (mental) performance". It is often attributed to lack of concentration, such as a slip of the tongue, which is often explained in psychoanalysis by an interference of the unconscious (Laplanche and Pontalis 1988, pp.300–301).

the metaphorical role of Pontalis' daughter during the translation process (Quinney 2004, pp.120–121).

*Lawrence Venuti (2013)*

Lawrence Venuti discusses the idea of Freudian slips in translation in the context of his idea of “remainders”. Basing his theory on the works of Jean-Jacques Lecercle, Venuti writes about the remainder:

[The] remainder is ever-present in language use: it is a range of possible phonological, lexical, and syntactical variations on the current standard dialect, which is by definition invested with such cultural and social value as to exclude or repress any nonstandard forms or to restrict them to particular uses and situations (Venuti 2013, p.37).

In translation, Venuti states, the remainder refers to an element that differs from both the standard of the source text and the general style of the translation (Venuti 2013, p.37). One example Venuti mentions is Alan Bass' English translation of one of Jacques Derrida's texts where he chooses to follow modern English syntax and place adjectives before nouns instead after them, as it is common in French. This grammatical variation between source and target text, according to Venuti, presents a “remainder” and points towards a domesticating translation approach,<sup>10</sup> i.e., the assimilation of the source text to meet the target cultures norms. At the same time it highlights the difference in the way of thinking between French and English-based philosophy (Venuti 2013, p.37).<sup>11</sup>

In his text, Venuti differentiates between a remainder that is released intentionally and unintentional remainders (Venuti 2013, pp.37–38). For example, a poet or novelist may use a remainder for stylistic purposes, and a translator might use it for compensation, because a feature or stylistic effect of the source text cannot be reproduced at all or not in the same place (Venuti 2013, pp.37–38). However, an unintentional remainder is released

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<sup>10</sup> Venuti discusses his ideas of “domestication” and “foreignization” for example in his books *Scandals of Translation* (Venuti 1999) and *The Translator's Invisibility* (Venuti 2004). Domestication refers to the act of adapting the source text to fit in with the target language and culture, while foreignization refers to translations that adapt the target language to confront the reader with the foreignness of the source text (Venuti 1999; Venuti 2004).

<sup>11</sup> It should be noted that Venuti generally appears to advocate the “foreignizing” translation approach.

unconsciously by the language user (Venuti 2013, p.38). Venuti points towards another example from Bass' translation, as it includes a passage where the translation contradicts itself (Venuti 2013, p.38). While one sentence mentions the impossibility of carrying over the materiality of a source text, a few sentences later it is said that it can in fact be carried over (Venuti 2013, p.38). Venuti interprets this remainder as indication of the "translator's dream": that translation can overcome the difference between language and culture and resemble the source text in its entirety without loss or gain (Venuti 2013, p.39).

Drawing on Freud, Venuti sees these remainders as symptoms, i.e., signifiers that are motivated by the translator's unconscious (Venuti 2013, p.39). Bass' error could thus be seen to amount to a symptom of his unconscious rejection of the source text's message that translation cannot reinstate the materiality of the source text (Venuti 2013, pp.39–40). When he created the chain of signifiers that constitute the target text, his unconscious released the remainder in response to the text (Venuti 2013, p.40). The reason behind this rejection could be, as mentioned above, the desire for a perfect translation (Venuti 2013, p.40).

The notion of desire leads Venuti to engage with Lacan's theory that desire is caused by a lack, which originates in the imposition of language on the individual (Venuti 2013, p.40).<sup>12</sup> On the one hand, language is the only medium through which one can experience reality, but on the other hand, it always fails to reflect fully the entirety of the world (Venuti 2013, p.40). In the case of translation, desire would originate in the source text's signifying chain (Venuti 2013, p.40). According to this view, the original text creates a lack in the translator, who unconsciously demands from the text to fill this lack (Venuti 2013, p.40). This would result in the unconscious altering of the text, exposing the translator's desire in the parts where the translation is dislocated or erroneous (Venuti 2013, p.40).

In Lacanian terms, Venuti writes, the translator is trapped between the Name-of-the-Father, and the mother tongue, together with the translation it produced

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<sup>12</sup> See for example Lacan's chapter "The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious" in *Écrits* (Lacan 2006, pp.671–702).

(Venuti 2013, p.50).<sup>13</sup> The Name-of-the-Father is represented by the source author and text; it constitutes the restricting factor of a translation (Venuti 2013, p.50). Author and text demand respect from the translator for the linguistic and stylistic structure of the text, Venuti writes, while the mother tongue tempts with familiarity and competence (Venuti 2013, p.50). Through the release of a remainder the translator's unconscious may indicate the desire to challenge the author's authority and the desire to be recognised as original creator or even canonical figure himself (Venuti 2013, p.51).

Venuti's approach to connecting psychoanalytic theories and translation is particularly interesting and some of the ideas he mentions, such as the Name-of-the-Father and Lacan's understanding of desires, will be relevant to my own research as well. In particular, the relationship between the translator and the source text, as well as the feeling of lack in this context, will be discussed later on in this thesis. While Venuti discusses different theories and concepts from psychoanalysis and relates them to translation, this thesis will focus in more detail on the relations and dynamics between different elements of translation.

Overall, most studies and theories introduced in this Literature Review focus primarily on the unconscious of the translator and how it can potentially interfere with a smooth translation process. This mostly includes references to Freud and his theories, for example the Oedipal triangle, parapraxes, or transference. It may be noted that psychoanalytic theories and in particular Lacan's, appear to be underrepresented in Translation Studies. As such, this area offers much room for further explorations and research. This thesis for example, aims to expand the existing body of knowledge by discussing how Lacan's discourse structures can be seen to resemble similar trends in the translation processes. I believe that understanding these relations and visualising them in the form of discourse patterns could help us to appreciate the diversity of translation approaches and the different relations that may guide some approaches. Furthermore, I hope that this view of Lacanian theories, and in particular the discourses, can help to highlight that there is no

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<sup>13</sup> The Name-of-the-Father is a Lacanian concepts and refers to the primordial signifier which introduces the individual to language and the Law (e.g., Evans 2006, p.122). The concept will be introduced in more detail in the Theoretical Framework.



right or wrong approach to translation. Rather, I hope to raise awareness of the fact that translation is always flawed by virtue of language.

## 2. Theoretical Framework and Methods

### 2.1 Overview

After the preceding discussion of the relevant literature from the field of Translation Studies, I will here provide a general overview of Lacan's teachings and introduce the concepts and theories that are most relevant to the present thesis. Following this I will briefly summarise Lacan's general understanding of discourse in the later part of his teachings, and then discuss his five discourse structures before moving into the Methodology part of the introduction, where I will elaborate on my use of these discourse structures in the context of translation. As part of this section on Methods, I will explain the translation elements included in the adapted discourses and how they will be used. Furthermore, I will outline the application of discourse patterns in the core chapters as well as the materials to be analysed.

#### 2.1.1 Lacanian Key Concepts

Lacan's teachings can be categorised into three successive phases which are each dedicated to one of the three registers that constitute human reality for Lacan, i.e., the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real (Dean 2000; Chiesa 2007; Voruz and Wolf 2007).

In the 1930s and 40s, Lacan began his teachings with a strong emphasis on the Imaginary, in the 1950s he moved his focus to the Symbolic and shifted from there towards the Real during the 1960s and 70s (Dean 2000; Chiesa 2007; Voruz and Wolf 2007). However, language and the Symbolic never cease to play an important role in Lacan's theories. As Dennis Porter states "almost all of Lacan's writings and teachings are in one way or another a meditation on language" (Porter 1989, p.1067).

Seminar XVII, which is one of the key texts for the present thesis, was held in the academic year of 1969-70 and would fall into the last of the three stages. Lacan often built upon his previous teachings and uses many concepts and ideas that he developed in his preceding seminars and lectures. Therefore, this chapter will briefly summarise the concepts that are relevant for the present thesis in chronological order of the aforementioned phases.

### 1930s/40s - Focus on the Imaginary

Lacan states that the Imaginary refers firstly to the relationship of the subject to its formative identifications, and secondly the subject's relation to the (illusory) Real (Lacan 1988, p.116). This means that the Imaginary relates primarily to surface appearances as it is strongly based on illusions, such as the idea of wholeness, self-determination and similarity (Evans 2006, p.84).

In this initial phase of Lacan's teaching, Lacan develops the idea of the Mirror Stage, which is an important stage in the development of the subjects' alienated identity (see Lacan 1988; Chiesa 2007, p.5). Alienation here refers to the fundamentally divided condition of the subject in its relation to the signifier (Fink 1997, pp.44–46, 59–53). One of the most important signifiers in causing subjective alienation and division is what Lacan refers to as Name-of-the-Father, whose function is to introduce the "law" to the subject (Lacan 1993, p.96). The term "name of the father" is first mentioned in Lacan's teachings around 1950, and became a proper concept, capitalised and hyphenated, in his 1955/56 *Seminar III The Psychoses* (Lacan 1993; Evans 2006, p.122). From the beginning of his discussions of this term, Lacan plays with the homophony of *nom* [name] *du père* and *non* [no] *du père* and refers mainly to the constraining function of the father (Evans 2006, p.122). However, the term begins to play a greater role only later, in Lacan's works on psychosis, where it was conceptualised more thoroughly. Now a capitalised and hyphenated term, the "Name-of-the-Father" is what sustains signification linguistically (Lacan 1997; Evans 2006, p.122). It is the key signifier that ties together signifier and signified,<sup>14</sup> thus providing structure in the subject's symbolic universe (Grigg 1999, p.54). In an individual's development, this term would initially refer to the name (or "no") of the father which, by introducing a third party to the relationship between mother and child, disrupts their unity (Fink 1997, pp.55–56). The concept is often also referred to as "paternal metaphor" or "paternal function", since the Name-of-the-Father is not actually tied to the

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<sup>14</sup> For this reason, it is in some contexts also called *point de capiton*, its English translations vary mainly between "quilting point" and "anchoring point".

biological father of a child but refers to a signifying operation that takes place as part of an individual's development (Fink 1997, pp.55–56; Feldner and Vighi 2015, pp.68–69).<sup>15</sup>

The Name-of-the-Father is closely connected to Lacan's concept of the master-signifier which will play an important role in this thesis. As such, it will be referenced at different times during my analysis. The change from name of the father to Name-of-the-Father falls also within the shift of the focus of Lacan's teaching from the Imaginary to the Symbolic, which will be outlined below.

### *1950s - Focus on the Symbolic*

As Lacan's focus moves towards the Symbolic in the 1950s,<sup>16</sup> so does the emphasis on the function of the signifier. The Symbolic is essentially the realm of language and culture, which is understood to be autonomous and disconnected from biology or genetics (Evans 2006, p.204). It could thus be described as a universe of symbols that, once introduced, is completely available to the subject and only needs to be assimilated (Evans 2006, p.204). At the same time, the subject is immediately dependent on the Symbolic and is unable to think or imagine life without it, as any speculation about language is impossible without language (Evans 2006, p.204).

The foundational concept of this realm is the signifier, while the signified and signification belong to the Imaginary (Evans 2006, p.84). About the signifier, Lacan states that its locus is the Other (Lacan 2006, p.688). In other words, the signifier is introduced to the subject by the Other. Its basic function is to represent the subject for another signifier and, as such, this "latter signifier is the signifier to which all the other signifiers represent the subject – which means that if this signifier is missing, all the other signifiers represent nothing" (Lacan 2006, p.694).

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<sup>15</sup> As the original context of the concept of the Name-of-the-Father may suggest, it is linked to Freud's Oedipus triangle and *jouissance* (see Grigg 2006; Verhaeghe 2006). The concept of *jouissance* will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter as it becomes most important in Lacan's theories in his later teachings which focussed on the dimension of the Real.

<sup>16</sup> The first of Lacan's seminars begin during this phase with his 1953/54 seminar *Freud's Papers on Technique* (*Les écrits techniques de Freud* in the French original) (Lacan 1988).

Lacan begins to develop his theories of the signifier in his paper “The instance of the letter in the unconscious” by referring to Ferdinand de Saussure’s formula of the sign (Lacan 2006, pp.415–416).<sup>17</sup>

De Saussure states that a concept is intimately tied to its sound-image, each recalling the other. He visualises it as below (de Saussure 1966, pp.66–67):

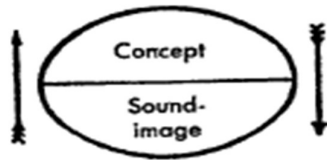


Figure 1: Saussure’s “sign” (de Saussure 1966, p.66)

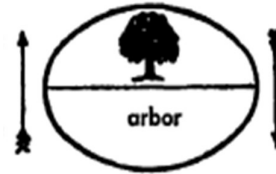


Figure 2: Example of Saussure’s “sign” (de Saussure 1966, p.67)

Lacan, however, inverts de Saussure’s formula so that the signifier (S) is over the signified (s), capitalising the former to highlight its position of primacy (Lacan 2006, pp.414–415). De Saussure’s illustration, which situates the image of a tree over the word “arbor” (Figure 2) is similarly revised by placing the signifier “arbre” over the image of a tree (Figure 3) (Lacan 2006, p.416). However, for Lacan a better illustration of the formula S over s is the one seen in Figure 4 (Lacan 2006, p.416).<sup>18</sup>



Figure 3: Lacan’s adaptation of Saussure’s sign (Lacan 2006, p.416)

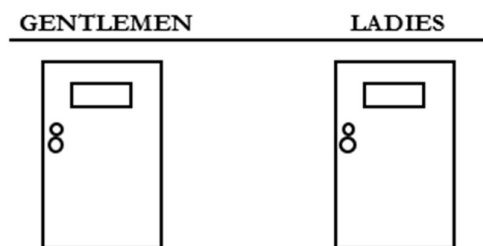


Figure 4: Visualisation of Signifier over signified (Lacan 2006, p.416)

This illustration emphasises the dominant position of the signifier over the signified as it exposes the allocating dimension of language. The two doors receive their function from the name they have been given, which implies that

<sup>17</sup> See for example chapter 3 of Bruce Fink’s *Lacan to the Letter* for a reading of Lacan’s “The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious” (Fink 2004, pp.63–105).

<sup>18</sup> See also Fink for an analysis of this illustration (Fink 2004, pp.82–85).

each will signify the absence of the other – there will be no men behind the door saying “Ladies”, and no women behind “Gentlemen”. Neither of them state that there is a room with at least one toilet behind the door, yet the average adult will know what to expect if they can speak English. Lacan continues to illustrate the arbitrariness of language with a story of two children sitting in a train facing each other. When the train stops at a station, both look out of the window and while one claims they have arrived at “Ladies”, the other says the place was called “Gentlemen” (Lacan 2006, p.417). This story reaffirms what de Saussure already stated about language, that there is no natural, biological connection between a concept and its sound-image (see de Saussure 1966, p.67).

The arbitrariness of language means that signification is only possible through reference to further signification, implying a chain-like structure in which signifiers are connected like the links of a necklace (Lacan 2006, p.415). Hence, Lacan speaks of a signifying chain (Lacan 2006, p.418). Across this chain, signification will carry on shifting from signifier to signifier, until it encounters a stop or discontinuity, which Lacan later calls master-signifier ( $S_1$ ) (Feldner and Vighi 2015, p.66). A master-signifier, in its most basic definition, is a signifier which refers to a part of an individual’s identity (Bracher 1993, p.23). As such, the master-signifier could be a term which the subject identifies with, for example their nationality or profession (Bracher 1993, p.23). Master-signifiers usually hold some positive or negative values which make messages more meaningful by providing impact (Bracher 1993, p.23).<sup>19</sup> Hence, people feel drawn to discourses that assert their individual master-signifiers, as a discourse which does not offer a representative master-signifier will often cause feelings of anxiety, alienation or even aggression (Bracher 1993, p.26).

In most cases, the child begins to form his/her identity by identifying with, and attempting to embody, signifiers which are valued by the Other, and those connected to them through metaphor or metonymy (Bracher 1993, p.27). The reason for the child to attempt to appropriate these specific signifiers is the

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<sup>19</sup> See also Feldner and Vighi for a short passage on the master-signifier and identity (Feldner and Vighi 2015, pp.66–67).

desire for the Other.<sup>20</sup> Lacan states concerning desire that “[...] man’s desire is the Other’s desire [*le désir de l’homme est le désir de l’Autre*]” (Lacan 2006, p.690). This can mean at least two different things: firstly, that an individual desires what the Other desires; and secondly, that an individual desires to be desired by the Other. Both of these understandings will become relevant particularly to the Hysteric’s Discourse, where the subject’s desire becomes a driving force and is split between these two notions. In his *Écrits*, Lacan continues to explain that he understands his statement to mean “that it is qua Other that man desires” (Lacan 2006, p.690); that is, desire is always shaped as the Other’s desire (Lacan 2006, p.689).

Significantly, desire for Lacan goes beyond need and demand and as such cannot be satisfied (Lacan 2006, p.689). This point will be particularly important in the context of the Capitalist Discourse, which camouflages desire as demand. Contrary to demand, however, desire is unconscious, which means that it cannot be fully articulated and therefore defies satisfaction (Dean 2000, p.47). The subject may not be aware that his/her desire cannot be fulfilled since it is unconscious. This will cause him/her to continue to search for something which will bring plenitude and satisfy lack. Lacan’s understanding of desire will play a crucial role throughout the thesis and in relation to all discourses discussed as the object of desire (to be discussed below) will be represented in the adapted discourse patterns by the translation.

#### *1960s/70s - Focus on the Real*

The final phase of Lacan’s teachings took place in the 1960s and 70s and focussed mainly on the realm of the Real (Dean 2000, p.36; Chiesa 2007, p.5; Voruz and Wolf 2007, p.ix). In brief, the Real is that which is located beyond the Symbolic and therefore escapes signification. This means that, while the Symbolic functions in oppositions, i.e., absence vs. presence, there is no absence in the Real (Evans 2006, p.162). The Real cannot be assimilated to language or symbolisation, it cannot be imagined, attained or integrated into the symbolic order (Evans 2006, p.163). It can also be regarded as the limit of

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<sup>20</sup> See also, for example, Bruce Fink for his explanations of the Lacanian idea of desire in his reading of “Subversion of the Subject” (Fink 2004, pp.106–128).

any symbolisation, but in being that limit, it works as a productive force rather than a constraining one. That is to say, while it has a negative presence, it has positive effects insofar as it stimulates the production of significations (Dean 2000, p.51).

It is in this final phase of his teachings that Lacan introduces his original notion of *objet a* (the object-cause of desire). This object is assumed to fulfil desire, and provide *jouissance* by filling the lack in the subject (Bracher 1993, p.41). However, since the logic of desire is based on resistance to its fulfilment, the object-cause of desire only exists as a hypothetical concept. Ultimately, it only provides partial *jouissance*, thus recreating in the subject the same sense of lack and dissatisfaction which is the very cause to its being a subject. This concept will be crucial for Lacan's discourse theory as developed in Seminar XVII. In this thesis, *jouissance* will be particularly relevant for the chapter discussing the Hysteric's and the Capitalist Discourse.

Desire, *objet a*, and *jouissance* are strongly interconnected concepts. The latter approximates to the English word "enjoyment" or "pleasure", but is often left untranslated to retain its original ambiguity in connection with both enjoyment and orgasm (Evans 1999, p.1; Evans 2006, p.93).<sup>21</sup> *Jouissance* already appeared in previous phases of Lacan's teachings but becomes increasingly important in relation to the Real, as it comes to signify an encounter with the Real and its impossibility. In this respect, *jouissance* is presumed to be achieved via *objet a* and therefore it is simultaneously the aim of desire and what sustains it, as it is less related to the satisfaction of a need than to the satisfaction found in pursuing an unsatisfied desire (Evans 1999, p.6). Ultimately, then, *jouissance* is present only as the manifestation of an absence or lack. Looking at *jouissance* from a standpoint of energy and thermodynamics, Mladen Dolar states that if "the signifier is the machine, *jouissance* is the energy" (Dolar 2006, p.141). However, the signifier brings with it a loss of energy, or a loss of *jouissance*, which in turn produces a surplus, that is, a surplus *jouissance* (Dolar 2006, p.141). Similarly, Alenka Zupančič illustrates this dichotomy inherent in (surplus) *jouissance* with the economic

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<sup>21</sup> Néstor A. Braunstein discusses the difficulties of translating *jouissance* into English briefly in his text "Desire and Jouissance in the Teachings of Lacan" (Braunstein 2003, pp.103–104).



example of how one has to spend money to save it,<sup>22</sup> for example, one has to buy product A instead of B in order to save £100; yet, if one buys neither and keeps the money, they save nothing (Zupančič 2006, p.172).<sup>23</sup>

Lacan's idea of surplus *jouissance* [*plus-de-jouir*] is strongly connected to the Marxian idea of surplus value (e.g., Fink 1997, p.96; Clemens and Grigg 2006, pp.3–4; Feldner and Vighi 2015, p.98).<sup>24</sup> This concept is particularly important for the Discourse of the Capitalist which is discussed in chapter 6, since “enjoyment” is at the centre of this discourse (Šumič 2016, p.33).<sup>25</sup> Zupančič relates this to contemporary society as strongly shaped by the Capitalist Discourse. She states that we live in a society of enjoyment “not simply in the sense that we massively indulge in all sorts of enjoyment while neglecting or bypassing social duties and responsibilities, but rather in the sense that enjoyment itself has become our most prominent and inexorable duty” (Zupančič 2006, p.169).<sup>26</sup> She highlights further the idea of enjoyment without hindrance [*jouissance sans entraves*] which is a fundamental characteristic of surplus *jouissance*. This is illustrated by her with the example of products such as sugar-free sweets, fat-free pork roasts, and decaffeinated coffee, i.e., products that promise enjoyment without the negative side-effects (Zupančič 2006, p.172). In this example, one can see again that *jouissance* manifests itself in an absence or lack. Much of the enjoyment of the above examples (sweets, pork roasts or coffee) comes from the fat, sugar, and caffeine they contain respectively. However, these substances can be harmful for an individual's body, particularly when consumed in excess, as they can be associated with symptoms such as obesity, diabetes, or in case of caffeine with insomnia and anxiety. Hence, the surplus *jouissance* Zupančič refers to

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<sup>22</sup> See also, for example, Zupančič's text “Sexual is Political?” where she discusses *jouissance* in the context of sexuality and politics (Zupančič 2016).

<sup>23</sup> See also Juliet Flower McCannell's text “More Thoughts for the Times on War and Death: The Discourse of Capitalism in Seminar XVII” where she discusses *jouissance* and surplus *jouissance* in the context of Capitalism and the Master's Discourse (MacCannell 2006).

<sup>24</sup> See also Zupančič's text “When Surplus Enjoyment Meets Surplus Value” (Zupančič 2006).

<sup>25</sup> Feldner and Vighi state for example that the disavowed ideological command in the Capitalist Discourse is “You must enjoy!” (Feldner and Vighi 2014, p.33; Feldner and Vighi 2015, p.78)

<sup>26</sup> See also Todd McGowan's book *End of Dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the Emerging Society of Enjoyment* (McGowan 2004).

can be seen in the lack of these substances, and thereby the promise of enjoyment without negative side effects.

This section covered some of Lacan's teachings and outlined concepts that play an important role in this thesis. The following section will look specifically at Lacan's view of discourse and, following this, his own discourse structures, which form the foundational tool for the present thesis.

### **2.1.2 Lacan's Five Discourses**

Lacan uses the term "discourse" at many different points during his teachings and in different contexts. However, during the latter phase of his teachings, which this thesis primarily refers to, "discourse" appears to refer to social links or bonds (Klepec 2016, p.115). For example, in his 1972 talk at the University of Milan, Lacan briefly defines "discourse" as that which "in the ordering of what can be produced by the existence of language, makes some social link function" (Lacan 1978, p.12). Similarly, in the opening session of Seminar XVII he states that

discourse can clearly subsist without words. It subsists in certain fundamental relations which would literally not be able to be maintained without language. Through the instrument of language a number of stable relations are established, inside which something that is much larger and goes much further than actual utterances [*énonciations*] can, of course, be inscribed (Lacan 2007, p.13).

In other words, discourse takes place in language but at the same time goes beyond language to constitute a social bond. Any use of language or speech would thus include structures of discourse that entail more than what the linguistic material of the text conveys but which are crucial for the social links to function.

As such, translation would certainly include different structures of discourse in the Lacanian sense, as it establishes a social link between, for example, the author (or the original) and reader, or between two cultures in general through the medium of language. The view of translation as a social link would be supported by, for example, Christiane Nord who explains that Functionalism considers translation to be a communicative interaction between individuals (Nord 2001, p.187). Similarly, Basil Hatim and Ian Mason describe the act of

“translating as a communicative process which takes place within a social context” (Hatim and Mason 1990, p.3). Their general view of translation is one of “translation as a process, involving the negotiation of meaning between producers and receivers of texts” (Hatim and Mason 1990, p.3). Other explicit links between translation and discourse have been made for example by Hatim and Mason in their book *Discourse and the Translator* (Hatim and Mason 1990) as well as by Jeremy Munday and Meifang Zhang in their book *Discourse Analysis in Translation* (Munday and Zhang 2017) who also identified a total of 228 articles that they considered “relevant to the theme of discourse analysis and translation” (Munday and Zhang 2017, p.3).<sup>27</sup>

Brian Paltridge explains discourse analysis as examining “patterns of language across texts and considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used” (Paltridge 2012, p.2). Furthermore, it also looks at how relationships of participants in discourse are influenced by language and how social identities and relations are affected by the use of language (Paltridge 2012, p.2). Based on this understanding, translation would be a fertile area to apply discourse analysis, as would be suggested by the number of articles identified by Munday and Zhang which engage with the connection between discourse and translation. Translation functions as a connecting point between different languages and cultures but also displays the relationship between the different languages and cultures as translators communicate a foreign culture in a familiar language.

In the following sections, I will discuss the discourse patterns used in this thesis in more detail. I will begin with the general structure outlined in Seminar XVII by discussing the four positions they include and their relation to each other, as well as the four entities occupying the four positions. After this, I will look at four initial discourses introduced in Seminar XVII and finally I will discuss the fifth discourse, the Capitalist Discourse, which Lacan briefly explored outside Seminar XVII but never fully developed. Lacan introduces his first four discourses in Seminar XVII, which he held during the academic year of 1969-70 under the title *L'Envers de la psychoanalyse* (Russell Grigg's

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<sup>27</sup> These articles were divided into international (126 articles) and Chinese articles (102 articles) (Munday and Zhang 2017, p.3).

English translation used here was published under the title *The Other Side of Psychoanalysis* (Lacan 2007)).<sup>28</sup> The first two sessions of the seminar focus on the Discourse of the Master and the Discourse of the Hysteric, to which Lacan added the Discourse of the University and the Discourse of the Analyst from the third session onwards (Lacan 2007, pp.11–39). In the third session, titled “Knowledge, a Means of *Jouissance*”, he first explicitly introduces the formulae for all four discourses as shown in Figure 5:

$$\begin{array}{cccc}
 \text{U} & & \text{M} & & \text{H} & & \text{A} \\
 \begin{array}{c} S_2 \\ \hline S_1 \end{array} \rightarrow a & & \begin{array}{c} S_1 \rightarrow S_2 \\ \hline \bar{S} \quad a \end{array} & & \begin{array}{c} \bar{S} \rightarrow S_1 \\ \hline a \quad S_2 \end{array} & & \begin{array}{c} a \rightarrow \bar{S} \\ \hline S_2 \quad S_1 \end{array}
 \end{array}$$

Figure 5: The four discourses in Seminar XVII (Lacan 2007, p.39)

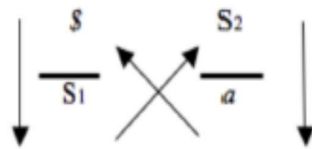


Figure 6: The Capitalist Discourse (Vanheule 2016, p.7)

As indicated by the initials, the discourses are, from left to right, the Discourse of the University, of the Master, of the Hysteric, and of the Analyst. Outside his Seminar XVII, Lacan added to these four initial discourses a fifth one (Figure 6). This discourse, the Capitalist Discourse, deviates significantly from the above patterns by turning the left-hand side of the Master’s Discourse upside down. As will become clear in the discussion of this discourse, and more so in the specific chapter where I will look at this structure in the context of translation, the Capitalist Discourse is particularly relevant for the understanding of contemporary society, that is from the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Looking at the general setup and graphic representations of Lacan’s discourses, it should be noted that they consist of two levels, the conscious

<sup>28</sup> For a more detailed reading of the entire seminar see for example “Reflections on seminar XVII” (Clemens and Grigg 2006).

level on the top, i.e., above the bar, and the unconscious level on the bottom, i.e., below the bar, with the latter also being referred to as the “hidden” side of the discourse (Vanheule 2016, p.2). The discourse layout is further divided into four positions, which are occupied by four elements. The four positions are the “agent” on the top left, “other” on the top right, “truth” on the bottom left, and “product” on the bottom right. The direction of movement is indicated by the arrows (Figure 7).

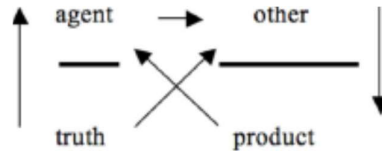


Figure 7 : Discourse outline (Vanheule 2016, p.2)

Perhaps most important is the position of truth on the bottom left underneath the agent and the upwards arrow from truth to agent. Stijn Vanheule explains that:

This arrow indicates that all actions made by the agent in a given discourse rest on a hidden truth. Indeed, characteristic of all discourse is that a repressed element motivates the agent’s actions, and that this repression engenders the possibility of a social bond, represented at the upper level of the discourse. (Vanheule 2016, p.2)

In other words, the actions of the agent are driven and influenced unconsciously by a truth that causes him/her to address an other. As the diagonal arrow from the truth to the other indicates, the other is unconsciously influenced by an unconscious truth as well. The downward arrow from other to product signals that in response to the agents address, the other “produces” something which is directed to the agent according to the diagonal arrow from product to agent. The missing arrow from product to truth however indicates how whatever the agent receives from the other does not correspond to the truth that motivates his/her actions. That is, the true cause of the agent’s action towards the other cannot be fulfilled and will continue to prompt the agent to move.

It is furthermore indicated by the arrows that all established relationships between the different entities are unilateral. This means that neither the agent

nor the other have access to the truth despite its influence on them. Hence, because the truth remains unknown to the agent and other, the other cannot respond to the agent in a way that will relate to their truth. This is an important factor in the continuation of the discourse, since, as Vanheule states, the movement of the discourse relies on the repression of the truth (Vanheule 2016, p.2). Furthermore, because the goal of the discourse is never achieved, the agent continues to address the other and thus keep the discourse in motion.

The four positions discussed above are occupied according to Lacan by four elements which are concepts he had developed and elaborated on in previous seminars. These are the “master-signifier”, “knowledge”, the “split subject”, and the “object of desire” (also called *objet a*). An overview of the four entities and their abbreviations is included below in Table 1:<sup>29</sup>

Table 1: Lacan's terminology

S <sub>1</sub>	Master-signifier
S <sub>2</sub>	Knowledge
\$	Split subject
a	Object of desire/impossibility

Here, I will briefly summarise the concepts' functions in the context of the discourse, beginning with the master-signifier, symbolised by Lacan as S<sub>1</sub>. The master-signifier has the “potential function [...] to represent the subject for another Signifier” (Lacan 2007, p.89), i.e., it is an identity-bearing signifier. For example, the master-signifier “Christian” represents the subject, who is the believer, to other signifiers in that specific signifying chain, i.e., the signifiers of Christianity. The subject, in other words, is “caught” within a particular network of religious signifiers, which constitute that subject's ontological horizon. Knowledge as S<sub>2</sub> in this context is not what a person “knows” per se but the entire network of signifiers that constitute reality for the subject. The split subject, \$, refers to the individual after the introduction to language, i.e., the subject of the unconscious. The object of desire, a, is what is supposed to be able to satisfy the subject's desire. As such, it represents an impossibility

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<sup>29</sup> Clemens and Grigg add to this that S<sub>2</sub> is “Knowledge as in *le savoir* or “knowing that –” and a is “both *objet a* and surplus-pleasure” (Clemens and Grigg 2006, p.3).

for the subject: the self-division that cannot be mended, or the lack that cannot be filled.

Depending on which of the above entities occupies the position of the agent, Lacan theorises four different discourses, each of which representing a social bond. In these four structures, the entities change positions by rotating clockwise by a quarter turn. Lacan begins with the Master's Discourse, in which the master-signifier ( $S_1$ ) is found on the top left, which is the position of the agent. From there, the master-signifier moves to the right and takes the top right position of other while the subject (\$) slots into the place of the agent, forming the Hysteric's Discourse. In the third discourse, the Analyst's Discourse, the master-signifier has moved to the bottom right position of product, the subject moved to the top right position of other and the object of desire ( $a$ ) functions as agent. Another rotation to the right brings in the University Discourse, in which knowledge ( $S_2$ ) is the agent, the object of desire is on the top right hand, i.e., the other, the subject is on the bottom right, i.e., truth, and the master-signifier is on the bottom left, i.e., product.

As I mentioned earlier, Lacan adds to this a fifth discourse to these four in the early 1970s. The Capitalist Discourse was never fully developed by Lacan as it was only discussed in his talk in Milan and in "Radiophonie" (Lacan 1970; Lacan 1978).<sup>30</sup> The pattern of this discourse differs significantly from the general structure of the four discourses. For instance, to form this discourse the elements do not change their positions according to the clockwise rotation. Furthermore, the direction of the arrows indicating movement differs as well, making it possible for the discourse to function as an endless, accelerating loop.

In the following section, I will elaborate on the five discourses developed by Lacan in more detail by explaining the positioning of the four elements within the discourse matrix, as well as some of the key characteristics of the

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<sup>30</sup> "Radiophonie" is the transcript of a radio interview which was published in the journal *Scilicet*; a recording of the original interview held by Robert Geogin is available on the website Radio Lacan (Radio Lacan [no date]). The first four questions of the interview were initially broadcasted on the radio and the full interview was published in 1970 in the journal *Scilicet*. Since there is currently no official English translation available of this interview, I am using an unofficial translation by Jack Stone.

individual discourses. This will be the final theoretical section on Lacan, after which I will move to the Methodology, where these theories will be discussed in the context of translation.

### *Master's Discourse*

The Master's Discourse (Figure 8) is the first structure introduced by Lacan in

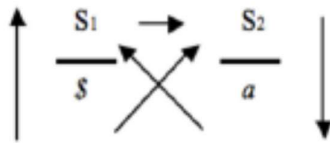


Figure 8: *The Master's Discourse* (Vanheule 2016, p.3)

Seminar XVII. It is controlled by the master signifier ( $S_1$ ), representing a “master”, in position of agent. In brief, the master-signifier addresses a representative of “knowledge” on the conscious level of the discourse as signified by the

horizontal arrow. On the unconscious level, the master-signifier and knowledge are influenced by the split subject as truth. Finally, the product of this discourse is the object of desire. Particularly in this discourse, the relation between agent and other is often referred to as a “master and slave” relationship, a point to which I will return in the course of the thesis.

Bruce Fink claims that the Discourse of the Master can be seen to present a primary discourse since it “embodies the alienating functioning of the signifier to which we are all subject” (Fink 1997, p.130). In the schema one can see that the master is affected by the split subject as unconscious truth of the discourse. This split subject symbolises the master’s “repression of subjective division” (Vanheule 2016, p.3). That is, the master of the discourse must keep any flaw hidden from the other to uphold his/her position, and as such the master’s truth ( $\$$ ) must remain in the hidden side of the discourse (Fink 1997, p.131). However, this truth propels the master to address the other, symbolised by  $S_2$  (knowledge), who in this discourse is also considered as “slave”. The master here holds a position of complete dominance and orders the other, the slave, to do whatever he/she demands (Fink 1997, p.131; Lacan 2007, p.174; Klepec 2016, p.125). In Lacan’s words “[the master] gives a sign, the master-signifier, and everybody jumps” (Lacan 2007, p.174).<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Slavoj Žižek likens this discourse to “absolute Monarchy” – “it is the “Sun-King” Louis XIV with his L’état, c’est moi who is the master par excellence” (Žižek 2006, p.109).



The master addresses the slave to perform work for him/her and during this process the slave learns something (Fink 1997, p.131). As such, he/she comes to represent knowledge ( $S_2$ ) to the master, who has no interest in the actual knowledge but only in how it can work for his/her benefit (Fink 1997, p.131). Since the slave produces the object of desire, his/her work is essential to the profit of the discourse (MacCannell 2006, p.197). At the same time it is equally important that the master on the other hand does not spend any energy on the production him-/herself since he/she must make profit without any losses (MacCannell 2006, p.197). The *objet a* thus represents the idea of surplus value or surplus *jouissance* (Fink 1997, p.131; MacCannell 2006, p.197).

In Lacan's theory, the object of desire is always an impossibility as desire cannot be fulfilled. Hence, no matter what the slave produces, it never fully satisfies the master. This is indicated on the bottom level of the discourse, where the object of desire cannot relate to the split subject. Rather, the position of truth is circumnavigated and the product is passed on directly to the agent. Furthermore, as indicated by the arrow from truth to agent, the master has no means to address the hidden truth or fully know it. This means that the master is unable to identify what he/she is missing, which therefore remains lacking in production. Nevertheless, as stated previously, this flaw in the master has to remain hidden from the slave in order for the master to uphold his/her dominance.

In this thesis, I will discuss this discourse in the context of translation placing a strong emphasis on the linguistic structures of the original and thus treating the source text as a metaphorical "master" over the translation. The Master's Discourse will be discussed in detail in chapter 3.

Should the hidden truth or flaw of the master become known to the slave, this realisation may lead into the next discourse, which I will now discuss.

### *Hysteric's Discourse*

The Hysteric's Discourse takes place, for example, when the slave has become aware of a flaw in mastery. As such, the discursive roles of master

and slave are reversed: the slave, here the split subject, becomes the agent of the discourse, while the master is the other who is addressed.

As Figure 9 indicates, the split subject's addressing the other takes place on

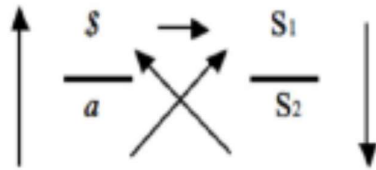


Figure 9: *The Hysteric's Discourse*  
(Vanheule 2016, p.3)

the conscious level of the matrix. On the unconscious level, the object of desire is the truth of the agent while knowledge is the product. Having become aware of the master's

flaw and feeling a lack him-/herself, the subject in this discourse interrogates him/her in order to find out what the master desires and what can fulfil the subject's unknown desire.

It was stated previously, that according to Lacan “[...] man's desire is the Other's desire [*le désir de l'homme est le désir de l'Autre*]” (Lacan 2006, p.690). It was furthermore explained that this statement can be understood in two different ways, i.e., man desires what the Other desires, and man desires to be desired by the Other. For the hysterical subject, this means that he/she desires what the master desires on the one hand, but on the other he/she also desires to be the object of the master's desire. For the hysterical subject, the former may be the conscious motive of the interrogation of the master, while the latter could be the unconscious reason behind it. Some scholars have highlighted in this respect that what the hysterical subject unconsciously wants is a better, more masterful master, who lives up to his/her title (Klepec 2016, p.126; Madra and Özselçuk 2016, p.162). Lacan himself makes a similar claim in his guest lecture at Vincennes when he addresses the students saying, “What you aspire to as revolutionaries is a Master. You will get one” (Lacan 2007, p.207).

The hysterical questioning of the master is often associated with a sense of aggression and force, and some scholars have surmised that the hysterical subject is (on the conscious level) “allergic” to master-signifiers (Zupančič 2006, p.164; Klepec 2016, p.126). Hence, the hysteric is disposed to attacking any master in order to expose their flaws and short-comings (Klepec 2016, p.126). Peter Klepec summarises this in saying that “the hysteric wants to be the master of the master and thus a real master!” (Klepec 2016, p.127).

The master responds to this questioning or attack by producing knowledge (S<sub>2</sub>) which is believed to answer the subject's questions. However, as can be seen in the matrix, the truth of the discourse is bypassed, and the desire of the subject remains unfulfilled causing the continuation of the discourse. As such, the Hysteric's Discourse is often connected to scientific progress and discoveries due to its interrogative nature and the strong emphasis on producing knowledge (Fink 1997, p.133). Lacan elaborates in particular on the hysterical subject and its discourse during his afore-mentioned lecture at the experimental university Vincennes in 1969, which is also referred to as his "Analyticon" (Lacan 2007, pp.197–208).<sup>32</sup> Vincennes was founded in direct response to the events of May 1968, a period of great civil unrest including strikes and riots that led France to a standstill (History of Paris 8. [no date]). From its inception, Vincennes was a radical left-leaning University with Philosophy being its strongest department (Cohen 2010, p.207). Contrary to traditional French universities, at Vincennes the students were able to design their own programs by choosing different classes, and lectures were replaced by seminars in smaller groups which encouraged student participation (Cohen 2010, p.208). Overall, the university broke with many of the academic traditions in France in the way it ran its courses but also in that it was self-governed instead of led by a dean appointed by the government (Cohen 2010, pp.207–208).

In the context of Lacan's "Analyticon" at Vincennes, the dichotomy between the hysterical subject's desire to "dethrone" the master and to find a master is particularly interesting. As it was established previously, the split subject addresses (or rather, attacks) the master driven by the object of desire. On the conscious level, the subject is looking for flaws in the master in order to disprove him/her. The hysterical subject's aggressive address of the master is, in essence, a rebellion. One of the students present at Lacan's lecture

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<sup>32</sup> During the student-worker revolution in May 1968, Lacan spoke up in support of the students (Lee 1991, p.8). While students perceived Lacan with mixed opinions, his work "provided a radical alternative to all hierarchical philosophical systems and social organizations" (Lee 1991, p.8). As a consequence of these protests a new and experimental university called the Université de Paris-Vincennes (now Paris VIII) was founded (Lee 1991, p.9). Under the direction of Serge Leclair Vincennes founded a Lacanian department of psychoanalysis in January 1969 (Lee 1991, p.9).

interjected that this would apply to the students at the lecture as well (Lacan 2007, p.205). He states “[...] some students still think that by listening to Monsieur Lacan’s discourse they will find in it the elements that will enable them to challenge his discourse” (Lacan 2007, p.205). In other words, the student suggested that some attendees might have come to the lecture in order to gather material to use against Lacan, whom they may perceive as a “flawed master”. This fits in well with what was previously argued about the subject of the Hysteric’s Discourse who is trying to expose the master as an imposter.

If this attempt to gather material to counter Lacan’s discourse was seen to be an illustration of the conscious dimension of the hysteric’s desire to oppose the master, there would also be an unconscious level where the students as hysterical subjects aim to become the object of the master’s desire by using their knowledge. According to this understanding, the hysterical attack against the master is unconsciously the *search* for a master, i.e., for something that can provide the subject with a sense of meaning for his/her life. This dichotomy is what leads Lacan to say to the students of Vincennes: “What you aspire to as revolutionaries is a Master. You will get one” (Lacan 2007, p.207). This implies that the rebellion against traditional academia, and more generally capitalist society, was, according to Lacan, an attempt to discredit the dominant master-signifier in order for the Vincennes students (and lecturers) to point out their flaws and thereby become desirable. In this case, it resulted in an institution where lecturers and students were almost at the same level and lectures and seminars were interactive and potentially perceived as “anti-academic”. However, due to the unconventional setting, Vincennes students were refused any academic credit and thus could not receive any academic titles until 1972.<sup>33</sup> The efforts to attain official recognition as university arguably support Lacan’s claim that the hysteric unconsciously still seeks the affirmation of the master. For example, one student speaks about finding the “means to overthrow the university” (Lacan 2007, p.205). Yet, Lacan states that what is actually being created at Vincennes is only “a critical University” (Lacan 2007,

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<sup>33</sup> The issue of credit points is touched on by Lacan and the students in the “Analyticon” as well (Lacan 2007, pp.200–201).

p.206). In other words, the university as master would not be overthrown but only recreated.

Furthermore, the product of this discourse structure, i.e.,  $S_2$ , is associated with *jouissance* in that the Hysteric's Discourse tends to eroticise knowledge, turning it into an elusive object of desire (Fink 1997, p.133). The enjoyment of knowledge explains why Lacan's Hysteric's Discourse is often associated with scientific discoveries and progress (Fink 1997, p.133). For example, the element of scientific or academic productivity and progress resulting from the Hysteric's Discourse may be supported by the list of well-known academics who are connected to Vincennes (in particular philosophy), e.g., Hélène Cixous, Michel Foucault, Alain Badiou, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Luce Irigaray.

This particular discourse will be discussed in chapter 4, where I will look at it in the context of theories of and approaches to translation which question the source text and its meaning and place emphasis on the implicit information of the original.

As will be discussed below, the Hysteric's Discourse is also essential for psychoanalytic practice, since any subject undergoing analysis must be placed in this particular discourse (Lacan 2007, p.33).

#### *Analyst's Discourse*

The third discourse according to Lacan's quarter turn rotation is the Discourse of the Analyst (Figure 10) which illustrates the basic principle of Lacanian analysis.

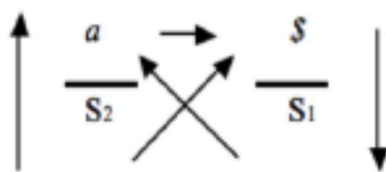


Figure 10: *The Analyst's Discourse* (Vanheule 2016, p.3)

of the Analyst (Figure 10) which illustrates the basic principle of Lacanian analysis. Contrary to the other three discourses, this one is not incidental in the sense that one unknowingly partakes in it; rather, the subject intentionally

chooses to enter this discourse by undergoing analysis. In the course of a psychoanalytic session, the hysteric meets the analyst, since every analysand, regardless of the clinical symptom, is placed in the hysteric's position by the analyst (Fink 1997, p.136; Lacan 2007, p.33). As can be seen in the matrix, the agent in this discourse is the object of desire, which is represented by the analyst. As explained previously, the Hysteric's Discourse focuses on the

production of knowledge as the subject desires to know what could fulfil his/her desire. Hence, the analyst as object of desire takes on the role of the subject supposed to know in order to be desired by the hysteric. In other words, the subject expects to receive the analyst's "knowledge to function in terms of truth" (Lacan 2007, p.53). However, as previously established, the object of desire exists only as a lack. In analysis, the analysand must encounter this lack as impossibility. Lacan emphasises that the analyst is in fact not supposed to know much at all, which is what the analysis should also reveal (Lacan 2007, p.52). Lacan claims:

The analyst says to whoever is about to begin – "Away you go, say whatever, it will be marvellous." He is the one that the analyst institutes as subject supposed to know (Lacan 2007, p.52).

By establishing the analyst as subject *supposed* to know, the analyst reveals that he/she does not have access to the knowledge that the analysand desires. In response to this shock, the hysteric is encouraged to produce a new master-signifier. This new master-signifier, however, is unconscious to the subject, and he/she may be unaware that a new master-signifier was produced or what exactly it is. Based on the representation of the discourse, the new master-signifier is relayed to the analyst or object, indicating that he/she may be aware of a new master-signifier being produced. The new master-signifier would show itself as a dead-end in the analysand's discourse as it has yet to be brought into relationship with other signifiers during the analytic session (Fink 1997, p.135). In other words, the analyst pays attention to instances where the analysand's speech gets stuck as he/she encounters a signifier in their speech which only refers back to itself. An example for this type of signifier is "the law", in the sense that the law is "the law" because the law tells us that it is; in turn, we follow the law, because the law tells us to do so. The task of the analyst is to help the analysand to bring this master-signifier into relationship with other signifiers and thereby break out of the above illustrated self-referential loop. This means that the master-signifier must be connected with a new Master's Discourse where it is able to relate to a different network of signifiers ( $S_2$ ). Hence, Lacan states that "what he produces is nothing other than the master's discourse" (Lacan 2007, p.176). As such, the aim of the analytic experience is for the subject to become able to produce significations that are not based on

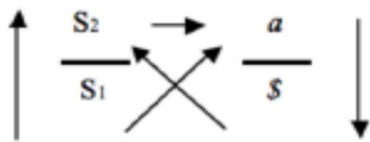
the certainty of knowledge. Put differently, the subject is urged to detach signifiers from fixed meanings and thus allowing these signifiers to return to their place of ambiguity and engage in the constant slippage of meaning, which Lacan sees as a fundamental characteristic of language.<sup>34</sup>

The Analyst's Discourse will be discussed in detail in chapter 5, in the context of the translator's engagement with untranslatability and agency.

Below I will briefly introduce Lacan's University Discourse. While this particular discourse will not be central to my analysis, I will nevertheless briefly mention it here since it will be partly relevant to the arguments concerning the other discourses.

### *University Discourse*

The fourth discourses discussed by Lacan in Seminar XVII is the University



Discourse. As can be seen in Figure 11 the agent of this discourse is knowledge ( $S_2$ ) which addresses an object of desire ( $a$ ) on the conscious level of the matrix. On the unconscious plane, knowledge is influenced by

Figure 11: *The University Discourse*  
(Vanheule 2016, p.3)

a master-signifier ( $S_1$ ) on the left-hand side, and the split subject ( $\$$ ) is produced by the object of desire on the right-hand side.

Knowledge in this discourse is the collective knowledge available to us represented by the university or, more generally, by the modern sciences. The hidden truth of the university is a master-signifier that urges it to address the other, *objet a*, with the command "You must know!" (Feldner and Vighi 2015, p.78). The result of this is a split subject who is aware of the partiality of his/her knowledge. This discontent keeps the discourse running, as the subject joins the university and requests or searches more knowledge.

The University Discourse shares a strong connection with the Capitalist Discourse, which is why it was introduced here despite not being looked at in this thesis in more detail.

<sup>34</sup> According to Lacan, meaning slides metonymically along chains of signifiers until they encounter a metaphoric "full stop", i.e., a master-signifier.

## Capitalist Discourse

The fifth and final discourse mentioned by Lacan in his teachings is the

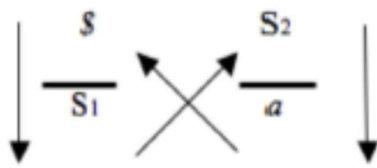


Figure 12: The Capitalist Discourse  
(Vanheule 2006, p.7)

Capitalist Discourse (Figure 12). As stated previously, this structure was not part of Seminar XVII and remained underdeveloped.

In Figure 12 it can be seen that its pattern differs significantly from the original matrix. In

the initial four discourses, the positions as well as the direction of movement remains the same as only the entities rotate clockwise. However, in the Capitalist Discourse, the direction of movement changes and the entities occupying the positions are ordered in a new pattern. Looking at the changed direction of movement it is noticeable that it now resembles a loop mirroring the infinity symbol. This is indicative of the Capitalist Discourse's characteristic illusion of a smooth movement without gaps or inconsistencies which could carry on forever. In the other discourses on the other hand there is always one element – the element found in position of truth – that is “internally excluded” and functions by interrupting the discourse, or causing it to stumble.

The Capitalist Discourse shares a strong connection to the Master's Discourse and the University Discourse. For instance, the left side of the discourse is a version of the Master's Discourse which has essentially rotated 180 degrees. This means that the split subject is in position of agent, the master-signifier in position of truth, and the upwards arrow from truth to agent has turned into a downwards arrow from agent to truth. As Feldner and Vighi point out, both the Capitalist Discourse and the University Discourse are regressions of the Master's Discourse (Feldner and Vighi 2014, p.32).<sup>35</sup> The former, as mentioned, via the 180 degree rotation, and the latter via an anticlockwise quarter turn rotation (Feldner and Vighi 2014, p.32). Furthermore, the Capitalist Discourse shares a similar disavowed ideological command, which

<sup>35</sup> Samo Tomšič for example mentions also that the University Discourse was already associated to Capitalism by Lacan before he formulated a specific Capitalist Discourse structure (Tomšič 2016, p.158).



in the University is “You must know!” and in the Capitalist discourse “You must enjoy!” (Feldner and Vighi 2014, p.32).<sup>36</sup>

As the name suggests, this discourse is meant to illustrate the general pattern of capitalism. Here, the subject is in position of agent and represents simultaneously the consumer but also the worker.<sup>37</sup> A unique element in this discourse is that the subject believes to have free access to the unconscious truth which is here occupied by the master-signifier ( $S_1$ ); as such the subject is under the impression to be in complete control over the discourse. This illusion is symbolised by the downwards arrow from agent to truth, while in the initial four discourses the arrow went up from truth to agent. Here the master-signifier could represent, for example, a brand or commodity that is supposedly the answer to the subject’s feeling of lack and discontent. From the master-signifier the discourse moves towards knowledge ( $S_2$ ) in position of other, which can be taken to represent the market or expert knowledge. This is where the subject is enabled to connect with the object of desire ( $a$ ) as product of the discourse, which could also be understood as the surplus value that the capitalist extracts from the worker’s labour-power.<sup>38</sup>

The ability of the subject to connect to the object of desire in this discourse suggests the disavowal of ambiguity, reducing desire to demand as according to Lacanian theory, the object of desire as hypothetical and cannot actually be obtained. Since the object of desire ( $a$ ) can never be fully achieved, the perceived fulfilment of this discourse is only temporary and the subject is enjoined to repeat the discourse pattern again and again. Because of the illusion that the subject has control or free access to the unconscious truth of the discourse, the subject not only repeats the cycle, but also attempts to accelerate it in order to gain access to a larger quantity of the desired product. As stated above, the illusion of free access to the unconscious means is based

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<sup>36</sup> See *Critical Theory and the Crisis of Contemporary Capitalism* (Feldner and Vighi 2015, pp.77–78).

<sup>37</sup> Levi R. Bryant for example argues that this structure represents both Capitalist Consumption and production (Bryant 2008, p.8).

<sup>38</sup> See also for example Heiko Feldner and Fabio Vighi’s translation of the formula into its capitalist equivalents (Feldner and Vighi 2014, p.32; Feldner and Vighi 2015, p.79).

on the disavowal of ambiguity and reduces desire to “demand”, leading to the assumption that it can be fulfilled by a given product.

Importantly, in capitalist societies the subject is defined by his/her valorised work (wage labour). Therefore, the capitalist will attempt to maximise profits by accelerating the process while lowering production costs (i.e., the cost of human labour). This optimisation of production includes the technological automation of work, which threatens to make labour-power redundant.<sup>39</sup> As human labour becomes redundant, workers lose their jobs and thus their income, leaving them with limited spending power. Arguably, then, Lacan predicts the downfall of this discourse insofar as capital continues to run by itself in a loop while human labour is being eliminated. This would suggest that there is a fall in the total mass of wages that hampers consumption, and consequently also the creation of surplus-value and profit. In his Milan talk, Lacan states about the Capitalist Discourse that “it could not run better, but in fact it goes so fast that it consumes itself, it consumes itself so much that it gets consummated [eventually it burns out]” (Lacan 1978, p.11).<sup>40</sup>

Lacan’s Capitalist Discourse will be particularly relevant for my discussion of translation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the connection with developments in translation technology. This will be discussed in chapter 6.

Having introduced Lacan’s discourse structures, I will now discuss how these structures will be used to look at patterns found in translation by proposing that some elements from translation can be used to replace Lacan’s original ones.

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<sup>39</sup> See also Karl Marx and Friedrich Engel's notion of the law of the “tendency of the rate of profit to fall” [*Gesetz des tendenziellen Falls der Profitrate*] (Marx 1973; Marx and Engels 1983).

<sup>40</sup> “ça se consomme, ça se consomme si bien que ça se consume” (Lacan 1978, p.11).

## 2.2 Methodology

### 2.2.1 *Lacanian Discourses in Translation*

In this section, I will use Lacan's discourses as a means to look at different translation patterns. I will do so by establishing a logical correspondence between four translation concepts and Lacan's four discursive elements, which will in turn produce five discourse matrices relevant to translation. The translation elements I propose to use are the translator, the target language, the source text, and the translation. Below, I will elaborate on the relationship between Lacan's original elements and the corresponding ones for translation. Furthermore, I will introduce the adapted discourse structures to be used for this thesis. After this introduction, I will briefly explain how these discourses will be used to look at patterns in translation and which materials I will use for the analysis.

Although the suggested elements (the translator, the source text, the target language, and the translation) make no explicit mention of the author and the source language, I believe they are implicitly present in the chosen entities as they are, for example, inherently connected to the source text. Furthermore, in a Lacanian context, statements are thought to take on an existence independently of their speakers, due to the co-authorship of the unconscious. Thus, the original's author may be considered secondary in respect of the process of translation. Additionally, the purpose of this thesis is to provide a new angle to look at the process of translation, which focuses primarily on the production of the target text. The intention is to place a stronger emphasis on the translator, the target language, and the target text instead of the production of the source text, the influence of the author, and the source language. A separate application of Lacan's discourses that includes some of the elements I left out may nevertheless be an interesting opportunity for future research.

In the below Table 2, I present an overview of the proposed allocation of translation terminology to the Lacanian entities occupying the discourses:

Table 2: Adapted terminology overview

Lacan's Original Concepts		Suggested Translation Concepts	
S <sub>1</sub>	Master Signifier	Source Text / original	ST
S <sub>2</sub>	Knowledge	Target Language	TL
\$	Split Subject	Translator	ℳ
a	Object of Desire	(Perfect) Translation	t

Firstly, I propose that the source text (ST) takes on a similar function to the master-signifier in translation, since it can be seen as the authority which guides the translation as demonstrated, in particular, in the chapter on the Master's Discourse. Furthermore, the master-signifier functions as a metaphorical "full stop" that ends all associations and can be seen to be an identity bearer, e.g., the signifier "Christian" may hold the identity of a Christian believer. In a similar manner, the source text functions as a "full stop" for the translation as it limits the participants of the translation discourse to itself. As such, it also holds the identity of the translation in its title and content as the translation will generally refer back to the original.<sup>41</sup> For example, the English translations of Lacan's teachings receive their "identity", as highlighted in the title, from the French originals. *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XVII* (translated by Russell Grigg) is limited to the content of the original *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan, Livre XVII* and all additions or annotations have to be marked as such. Secondly, in my adapted discourse patterns Knowledge (S<sub>2</sub>) is substituted by the target language (TL). In Lacanian theory, knowledge refers to the total network of signifiers and similarly, the target language is the network of signifiers available to the translator to use for the translation.

Thirdly, I will use the translator (ℳ) in place of the split subject (\$). The split subject is divided by language, i.e., it is split between conscious and the unconscious knowledge. In a similar way, the translator could be seen to be split between source and target language and therefore alienated by an

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<sup>41</sup> In my explications I will only refer to the process of translation itself and not consider the participation of editors, publishers, readership etc., which in reality will always influence translations to some degree. In this first attempt to apply Lacanian Discourse Analysis to translation, I will favour comprehensibility over completeness in terms of influences.

inequality between target language and source text which renders a perfect translation unachievable. A divided translator may be torn, for example, between trying to preserve the exact wording of the source text on the one hand and adapting the text to meet the conventions of the target language (as well as the target culture) on the other hand.

Finally, in this application the object of desire (*a*) is replaced by the hypothetical symbol of a perfect translation (*t*). Lacan understands the object of desire to be an impossibility since desire cannot be fulfilled. Similarly, the perfect translation is unattainable due to the differences between any two languages and cultures. Complete equivalence can never be achieved as no two languages are the same.<sup>42</sup> Hence the perfect translation would be a concept similar to the object of desire in that it is desired but impossible to achieve. Furthermore, since the aim of translation is to produce a target text, I believe it is sensible to propose a perfect translation as the object of a translator's desire, at least in the context of the translation process.

Using the proposed elements from translation in place of the corresponding Lacanian elements in the discourse patterns results in the following structures:<sup>43</sup>

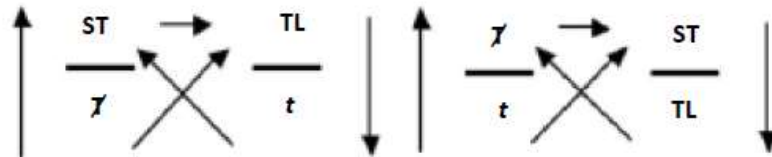


Figure 13: Adapted Master's Discourse    Figure 14: Adapted Hysteric's Discourse



Figure 15: Adapted Analyst's Discourse    Figure 16: Adapted University Discourse

<sup>42</sup> See for example Eugene Nida in his article "Principles of Correspondence": "Since no two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages. Hence there can be no fully exact translations" (Nida 2012, p.141).

<sup>43</sup> For these schematics I adapted the discourse patterns as they are displayed in Stijn Vanheule's paper "Capitalist Discourse, Subjectivity and Lacanian Psychoanalysis" (Vanheule 2016).

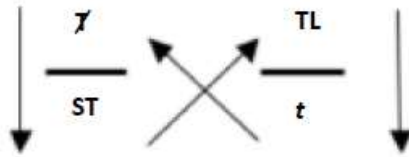


Figure 17: Adapted Capitalist Discourse

These patterns will be elaborated on further in the course of this thesis, beginning with the Master's Discourse in chapter 3 in the first chapter, followed by the Hysteric's Discourse in chapter 4 in the second chapter, the Analyst's Discourse in chapter 5, and the Capitalist Discourse in chapter 6. As it was stated previously, the University Discourse will not be included in more detail in this thesis but may be briefly referred to at different points in particular in the context of the Capitalist Discourse.

It should be noted that this thesis does not claim that the Lacanian discourses shape translation practice. Rather, I argue that their structure can be used as a critical and analytical tool to explore different patterns at work in the act of translation.

### **2.2.2 Outline and Method of Analysis**

In order to identify the above-mentioned discourse patterns, I will look at a selection of influential writings from the field of translation studies, including both historical writings about translation which have been read and discussed within Translation Studies and more contemporary texts that contribute to Translation Studies as a modern academic discipline and discuss how their view of translation relates to the patterns. These texts are mostly taken from English, German and French scholars but are generally available in English as well. Since my knowledge of French is insufficient for an adequate analysis of the approaches, I will primarily reference their English translations and only include parts of the originals occasionally for some closer comparisons of wording and sentence structures. With respect to the German texts, the primary source for the analyses are the originals, but English translations will be included after direct quotations for comparison or reference. The two chapters discussing the Master's and Hysteric's Discourse will include an additional section which focusses on Bible Translation in particular. For

theories which propose particular approaches to translation – for example, those by Eugene Nida or Lawrence Venuti – I will look at where the primary focus of the approach lies and who could be said to be “in control” of the translation process. In addition to this, I will pay attention to whether there are general tendencies that reflect the main traits of Lacan’s original discourses.

For example, I expect to identify a Master’s Discourse structure where the source text is placed in a position of primacy or superiority and the structures and peculiarities of the target language are, as far as reasonable, discounted. The language of these translations could be described as “translationese”. This term is often connected with “bad” translations and has a negative connotation. However, as it will be discussed in this thesis, “translationese” may be a desirable outcome for some scholars. It will be argued that this type of translation is based on a structure similar to the Master’s Discourse as it places a strong emphasis on the original and its linguistic patterns.

In contrast to this, the Hysteric’s Discourse will be associated with those translations and theories that focus more strongly on accurately rendering the meaning and effect, i.e., the perceived intention, of the original by analysing and dissecting the text in every detail. One important characteristic of the Hysteric’s Discourse is the subject’s questioning of the master, for example by asking “what do you want?” A similar characteristic which can be found in translations that follow a similar structure to the Hysteric’s Discourse may be the translator approaching the text by asking “what do you mean?” or “what are you trying to say?” This type of approach places less emphasis on the words and emphasises instead the meaning and intention of the original.

In other words, I will look at the overall recommendation of the scholars for translation: whether they recommend translating as literal as possible, focussing on the words and linguistic structures of the original, or whether they recommend a close analysis of, for example, the meaning and intention of the original and rendering the text in a way that makes it accessible for the target text reader. For theories that are less focused on proposing approaches to translation and instead focus on analysing translation in general, I am looking

at the imagery used by the scholars as well as evaluations of translations and views of the entities used in the proposed discourse structures.

Finally, this thesis will include an analysis of some published translations of the Bible. The aim for this is to identify patterns such as the adapted discourses by analysing the translators' notes and prefaces, for example, the described approach to the translation, references to other translators and scholars, as well as possible criticisms of other translations. Furthermore, I am looking at the layout of the translation itself, such as the number of footnotes and marginal notes, the acknowledgement of inconsistencies within the source text, or the amount of additional background information.

The majority of the Bible versions used here were selected due to their overall popularity. The exception to this is the translation called *The Voice* which will be used due to its unique translation approach. The more traditional translations chosen here have consistently been four of the bestselling translation since 2011 according to the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association (ECPA) (Christian Book Expo: ECPA Bible Bestsellers. [no date]). These translations are the *New International Version* (NIV), the *King James Version* (KJV), the *New Living Translation* (NLT), and the *English Standard Version* (ESV). In addition to the King James Version, I will also include the revised version the New King James Version (NKJV). The NKJV is not a new translation per se but rather, a revision of the KJV's language to allow contemporary readers easier access. As highlighted above, the analysis will also include the translation called *The Voice*, due to its notable layout and approach of translating scripture in form of a drama script and the frequent inclusion of additional materials and information.

Since this thesis will reference different translations of the Bible, whenever quotations from the Bible are included, the version will be indicated by adding the abbreviation of the specific translation after the reference to the book, chapter, and verse. For example, "Gen. 1:1, ESV" refers to Genesis chapter one, verse one in the English Standard Version.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> The abbreviations of the Bible versions used here are included in the "List of Abbreviations".



## 2.3 Thesis Outline

The four main chapters will follow the sequence of Lacan's four discourses, with the exception of the University Discourse. Hence, the thesis will start with the discussion of the Master's Discourse, followed by the Hysteric's Discourse, and the Analyst's Discourse. In addition, the final core chapter will focus on the Capitalist Discourse.

The discussion of the Master's Discourse will show that similar patterns can be used to describe translation processes and practices which emphasise the source text's priority over the translation. This would seem to indicate that the translator adapts the target language to fit the structure and wording of the original instead of trying to convey its message according to the conventions and expectations of the target text readers. The chapter will first show this by discussing the general structure of the discourse and its application to translation. Following this, I will look at relevant translation theories, such as Walter Benjamin's famous preface to his German translation of Baudelaire's *Tableaux Parisiens* "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" (Benjamin 1972), Serge Gavronsky's idea of the "pious translator" as discussed in his text "The Translator. From Piety to Cannibalism" (Gavronsky 1977), Antoine Berman's proposed "Analytic of Translation",<sup>45</sup> and Venuti's idea of "foreignization".<sup>46</sup> After this overview, I will focus more specifically on the area of Bible translation. This part of the chapter will first discuss the legend of the Septuagint and its relation to the structure of the Master's Discourse. After this, the parallels between the Biblical source text as agent over the discourse and Lacan's idea of the master-signifier as agent will be explored, which will lead into an analysis of how the layout of Bible translations may convey the illusion of a consistent source and target text. In the final section of this chapter, I will discuss some instances in the history of Bible translation where structures like the Master's

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<sup>45</sup> As discussed in his text "Translation and the Trials of the Foreign" (Berman 2012).

<sup>46</sup> As discussed in his texts "Genealogies of Translation Theory: Schleiermacher" (Venuti 1991), *The Scandals of Translation. Towards an Ethics of Difference* (Venuti 1999), and *The Translator's Invisibility. A History of Translation* (Venuti 2004).

Discourse can be argued to guide the actions of translators, as well as the (institutionalised) Church.<sup>47</sup>

In the second chapter I will discuss structures in translation and Translation Studies whose significance can be explored through the lens of the Hysteric's Discourse pattern. As in the preceding chapter, I will begin with a theoretical discussion of the psychoanalytic discourse's relevance to translation. I will then focus on translation studies in general by looking at theories from Deconstruction (i.e., Jacques Derrida and Rosemary Arrojo), Serge Gavronsky's "cannibalistic translator", as well as two historical examples which are the concept of the *belles infidèles*. This section will be followed by a closer look at the area of Bible translation. The analysis will begin by discussing ideas of Eugene Nida and Charles R. Taber, which focus strongly on the translation of Christian scripture, in particular "dynamic equivalence". Subsequently, I will discuss issues around the notions of enjoyment and *jouissance* which Lacan associated strongly with the Hysteric's Discourse, highlighting how a similar discursive pattern can be seen in the general structure of the Bible translations used here. Finally, I will discuss some feminist views on Bible translations and a number of issues translators face in translating the Bible in a gender-neutral way.

After the Hysteric's Discourse the discussion will move to the Analyst's Discourse. The chapter will begin by elaborating on the theoretical potential of this discourse structure for translation. The ensuing analytical part will explore instances where this pattern can be found in translation. First, I will comment on the idea of agency in this field, which involves the ways translators engage with untranslatable elements in a text to be translated. In this context, I will discuss research conducted by Maria Tymoczko and Mona Baker. Tymoczko focuses primarily on translators' agency in the context of postcolonialism and power relations in, for example, politics and culture. After an analysis of the underlying structures in translation according to Tymoczko in the context of the Analyst's Discourse, I will move to Baker's paper on activist translation.

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<sup>47</sup> I will use the capitalised term "Church" in this thesis when referring to the Church as organisation, e.g., the Roman Catholic Church, as opposed to the church as a building or a general group of Christian believers.

Baker discusses two activist groups and the work of the volunteer translators who supported the groups. I will contrast this initial section on the Analyst's Discourse pattern and agency in translation, by discussing how the same discourse structure can also be found in the area of Functionalism. The functionalist approach to translation offers a different way for the translator to engage with the source text and its untranslatable aspects, for example, by establishing a *skopos*, or purpose, over the translation and stressing the importance of the translation brief.

The last analytical chapter will investigate current tendencies in translation which are reminiscent of Lacan's Capitalist Discourse. First, the chapter will provide a theoretical discussion of the connections between the discourse and translation. Following this, I will elaborate on different characteristics of the Capitalist Discourse and similar trends in translation. The areas from translation that will be used for this analysis are some technological developments, such as CAT tools and machine translation. Furthermore, this chapter will include the functionalist approach to translation, in particular *skopos* theory, which was previously mentioned in relation to the Analyst's Discourse. Drawing on these aspects of translation, I will highlight some of the characteristics of the Capitalist Discourse which can be found in translation. Firstly, I will discuss how, for example, functionalist approaches may create the illusion that the translator has complete control over his/her translation. This will be followed by a discussion of the "abuse" of the feeling of discontentment and the idea of surplus *jouissance*, which will lead to an assessment of the self-destructive tendency of the Capitalist Discourse. Finally, I will look at the idea of commodification in translation as reflected in the trend of moving away from a skill-based to an asset-based profession.

In the final Discussion and Conclusion, I will summarise and assess the findings of these four main chapters and address the three research questions that were established in the Introduction. As part of the Discussion, I will address some of its problems and limitations and suggest opportunities for future research.

## 3. The Master's Discourse

### 3.1 Introduction

#### 3.1.1 Overview

This first core chapter aims to provide an analysis of translation processes via Lacan's Master's Discourse pattern. This Discourse of the Master places a strong emphasis on the master-signifier. In the preceding Theoretical Framework, it was proposed that in my adapted discourse patterns the role of master-signifier is taken on by the source text as it tends to over-determine the meaning of the final target text. For example, the initial step of a person trying to translate a text may be to translate every single word or sentence in the same order as it is written in the source language. This would be an example of a Master's Discourse where the original completely defines the words and structure of the target text. Historically speaking, I suggest that this discourse structure can be used to understand many theories of particularly early Western translation practice and theory. As the chapter will illustrate, particularly some approaches to Bible translation ascribe complete authority to the source text. Since the Bible is considered to be "the Word of God", each signifier may be perceived as sacred.

To illustrate the relevance of Lacan's Discourse of the Master, this chapter will first elaborate on the theoretical application of translation terminology to the discourse pattern which was introduced in the Methodology. After discussing the initial theoretical foundation, the chapter will explore some examples from translation theory and practice. Finally, I will discuss some examples from the area of Bible translation in the context of the Master's Discourse.

In the Discourse of the Master, communication is based around a commanding agent which, as such, deploys strong "symbolic authority" or in other words, a legalistic influence. The key aspect of this discourse is complete obedience to the master. In the examples from translation studies to be explored the most relevant element is the emphasis placed on the original and the need of the target language to adapt to the source text's structure. The scholars and approaches I will refer to in this chapter are particularly influential and well-

known within Translation Studies; these include Walter Benjamin, Antoine Berman, and Lawrence Venuti. In addition, I will also use Serge Gavronsky's image of the "pious translator" due to his use of psychoanalysis and the potential of type of translator for exploring the Master's Discourse pattern.

The study of translation shares a strong connection with Biblical Studies, as many of the early scholars invested in translating were religious people, concerning themselves with the correct translation of scripture. For example, one of the most iconic scholars was the Christian priest St. Jerome, who translated the Greek Septuagint into Latin (often referred to as the Vulgate).<sup>48</sup>

### 3.1.2 Theoretical Application

It discussed as part of the Theoretical Framework that the Master's Discourse

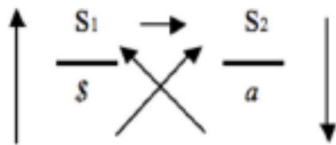


Figure 18: The Master's Discourse (Vanheule 2016, p. 3)

is dominated by the master-signifier ( $S_1$ ). This master-signifier (also often called the "master") occupies the position of agent and addresses the other ( $S_2$ ). Lacan often refers to the other in the context of this discourse also as "slave" (Lacan

2007, p.21). As this terminology suggests, the other is here in a position of submission and obedience and is thus required to follow the master's commands to produce the object of desire ( $a$ ). In Lacan's original discourse, the object of desire is an, at least partially, unconscious product or remainder of signification. The underlying and undermining truth of the master-signifier is the split subject ( $\$$ ), or in other words the master's ontological inconsistency caused by linguistic alienation. This unconscious truth means that the product of the master's relation to the other cannot satisfy the master's desire, as the lack created by language cannot be fully filled.

After applying the translation terminology, which was proposed in the Methodology, the new pattern of the Master's Discourse in translation looks as shown in Figure 19. The source text (ST) is found in

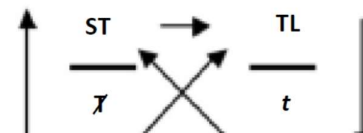


Figure 19: Adapted Master's Discourse

<sup>48</sup> The Septuagint is often abbreviated by the using the Roman numerals *LXX* as it is commonly believed that the translation was conducted by 70 Jewish Scholars (see the legend of the Septuagint's production by Philo and Iranaeus).

position of agent, or master, and the target language (TL) is in the position of the other, or slave. The truth of the original is the translator ( $\mathcal{T}$ ) and the product of the other is the translation ( $t$ ). This means that the source text poses as a consistent, coherent, and complete signifying unit, structured around master-signifiers which “secure” meanings. Locating the translator in the position of truth is meant to highlight his/her bias in understanding the text, but also the idea that the original itself is flawed due to the nature of language. In other words, the source text can be argued to be a “translation” as well, as will be discussed in more detail in this chapter.

Regarding the directions indicated in this discourse, it can be seen that since the source text is positioned in control, the target language has to accommodate the linguistic structures of the original. As the arrows from truth

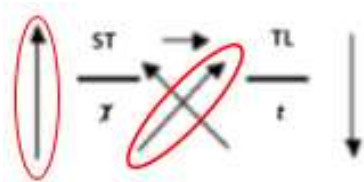


Figure 20: Adapted Master's, *Discourse (Translator's Influence)*

towards agent and other indicate (Figure 20), one understanding would be that the translator (unconsciously) influences the source text as well as the target language. While translations may be treated as a mirror image of original by the target language reader, in fact they always imply some key subjective choices. Most importantly, any translation is the translator's understanding of the original in his/her own (target language) words. Another interpretation of this part of the schematic would be that the same truth of the source text of being divided or flawed, is also the truth of the target language. In other words, the inability of language to fully convey anyone's thoughts and intentions undermines both the original and target language. Nevertheless, the target language is used to produce a translation which is intended to fully render the original. As such, it relates and connects to the source text, as indicated by the arrow from  $t$  to ST. The perceived superiority of the original in this discourse pattern means that the source text on the other hand cannot fully relate to the translation, for example, because the translation comes chronologically after the original. Furthermore, source and target text may not be seen to hold an equal standing. Furthermore, on the bottom half of the formula there is no arrow from translation to translator. This is used as an indication that, firstly, the translator cannot fully perceive all

cannot be fully satisfied by it. Secondly, this indicates that the translation is unable to fix the linguistic flaw or division of the original.

To place the source text in a dominating position over the discourse would imply the complete loyalty of the translator, in the sense that the original cannot be questioned or adjusted to match the target language or culture. This means that when the source text is transferred into the target language, the target language has to adapt to the original's format, structure, and linguistic framework. Theoretically, it may be argued that each word has to be replaced by one word alone and has to remain in the same place of the sentence, paragraph, page, and text. Since this task is impossible for most language combinations, this chapter will focus primarily on translations that render the original as literal as possible while respecting the basic grammatical constraints of the target language and avoiding a highly ungrammatical and potentially intelligible rendition.<sup>49</sup> In order to produce a legible text, literal translations have to compromise on some level and, for example, reorder words or sentences.<sup>50</sup> It can be argued that this compromise is symptomatic of the division and inconsistency at the core of the Master's Discourse, indicated in the underlying truth of the agent and the inability of the truth and the product to connect.

I suggest that, if the translator (and thus his/her bias) is understood to be the underlying and undermining truth of the source text and the target language, the source text is trapped between the author and the translator. That is, the source text may be seen to be caught between the meaning it was intended to have in the source culture and the meaning it has in the target language. For example, a literal translation may lack some of the cultural connotations and implications which the reader of the source language and culture will understand without them being explicitly mentioned.<sup>51</sup> On the other hand,

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<sup>49</sup> It may be noted that extremely literal, philological translation are sometimes used for scholarly purposes. One example of this may be interlinear translations which will be discussed later on in this chapter.

<sup>50</sup> An example of a refusal of this type of compromise could be the Qur'an which as a result is seen as "untranslatable". For Muslim believers, the word of God is confined to one specific linguistic form which is as essential as the meaning of its words (Abdul-Raof 2001, p.17).

<sup>51</sup> See for example Norm Mundhenk's paper "Implicit and explicit information in translation" for an analysis of the different types of information which may be implicitly communicated in the source language but will be lost in the target language if not made explicit (Mundhenk 2018).

certain signifiers in the target language may evoke associations that are specific to the target culture and provide the text with a new meaning. Hence, the original would be divided between two readerships, two languages, and ultimately two messages. Hence, the image of the Master's Discourse of having a complete and authoritative master in control as agent is ultimately flawed due to the truth which underlies and undermines him/her/it (here the translator).

It was mentioned previously, a second interpretation of the translator as the underlying truth of the source text is the incompleteness of language. In other words, the source text can be seen as already representing a kind of translation, in so far as it is divided in language as well. Similar to a translation which is divided between source and target language or translator and author, the original is arguably divided between the author's conscious intentions and the interference of his/her unconscious. When the original was first written, the author was limited by similar linguistic and semantic constraints in the native language as those that the translator faces in the target language. In Lacanian thought, no language can render completely what its speaker is trying to convey, which is an opening for the unconscious to steer the speaker's utterances. In other words, according to this view, due to the inherent constraints of language, the source text would be as flawed as its translation. This hints towards the imperfection of the original which has to be repressed by the translator (and the reader) in a Master's Discourse.

I would suggest that both of the above interpretations of the translator in

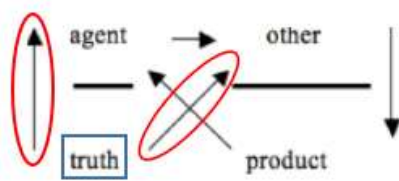


Figure 21: Discourse outline, truth's influence (Vanheule 2016, p.2, my emphases)

position of truth apply in the adapted Master's Discourse structure. That is, the source text is always already lacking and can be seen as a translation itself; and the translator's unconscious is likely to influence his/her understanding of the

original, leading to the source text being divided to some degree between its intended and its perceived meaning. Looking at the discourse pattern (Figure 21), it can be seen that the same truth which affects the agent also influences the other. This is indicated by the two arrows moving from truth to agent and



from truth to other. This pattern illustrates that the unconscious division of the source text also affects the target language. I suggest that the target language, as well as the original, is influenced and shaped by the translator's personal experience and only presents his/her own linguistic universe. The target language in itself is, like the source language, ultimately only language, and as such can never fully express what the translator consciously aims to convey. The reason behind the source text's "imperfection" is the imperfection of the source language, or rather, language in general. Therefore, the same limitation of language in general holds true for the target language which likewise is unable to produce a perfect text. This confirms that even the best translation is never "perfect" in the same way as no source text perfectly conveys its author's intentions.

The innate imperfection of translations may be the cause for retranslations, particularly of those texts that are regarded as "canonical". The Bible would be one example of a text that has a multitude of translations which have been analysed, discussed, and criticised by many scholars. The source text's lack can never be filled by its translations, which may lead to an endless chain of production. This could for example materialise in a plurality of translations in the target language, or lengthy editing processes by proof-readers, editors, and publishers. At least some of the potential imperfections of the translation remain, to some degree, unknown to the translator, as he/she is unable to look at it as an impartial reader. Instead, translators often rely on an editor or proof-reader to review the text before it is published or submitted to the client.<sup>52</sup> Writers are often said to become "blind" towards their mistakes since they see a "perfect" version of the text they are writing. While this does not mean that a translator would find nothing to improve, he/she might have unconsciously favoured a certain signifier which he/she believes to convey perfectly everything the corresponding signifier in the source text includes. One example of a translation error where the translator favoured a particular, incorrect, signifier was previously mentioned in the Literature Review: Alan Bass discussed in his article "On the history of a mistranslation and the

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<sup>52</sup> This may apply to some text types more than others: for example, texts for which the translator has a template which only needs minor editing, e.g., certificates, are less likely to require an external review.

psychoanalytic movement” Sigmund Freud’s mistranslation of a dream of Leonardo da Vinci (Bass 1985).<sup>53</sup> In his text, Freud misunderstood the Italian word *nibio* [kite] from da Vinci’s original text to mean *Geier* [vulture] (Bass 1985, p.105). Based on this misunderstanding, Freud subsequently came to a wrong conclusion for his own theories which relied heavily on this particular signifier (Bass 1985, p.105).

In summary, in translations relating primarily to the patterns of the Master’s Discourse, the source text and its structure are prioritised over the target language and its native linguistic and semantic patterns. Hence, the target language has to be adapted by the translator to fit around the original, instead of conveying its message in the linguistically and culturally most natural way for the target language readership. This can be seen particularly in word-for-word or literal translation, and other approaches that focus on the original’s form and structure or its foreignness. Some of the writings that explore and advocate such source-oriented translations will be discussed in relation to the Master’s Discourse in the ensuing section.

### 3.2 The Master’s Discourse Pattern in Translation

In this section of the chapter, I will discuss different examples from translation theory which display features of the Master’s Discourse pattern. As it was discussed previously, this pattern (Figure 22) places particular emphasis on the structure and linguistic framework of the source text is in the position of agent. In this section, I will discuss these patterns and where they occur in different theories of translation, including ideas Walter Benjamin, Serge Gavrinsky, Antoine Berman, and Lawrence Venuti.

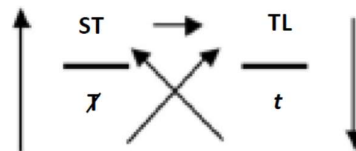


Figure 22: Adapted Master’s Discourse

It was previously argued that translations which follow a pattern similar to that of the Master’s Discourse are likely to attempt to create an exact replica of the source text in the target language. Furthermore, a structure like that of the Master’s Discourse can arguably be found in approaches of theories of

<sup>53</sup> The text was also discussed as part of the Literature Review.

translation that highlight the importance of the original and aim to convey the original as literal as possible. These approaches would place more emphasis on following the exact structure and wording of the source text than creating a natural sounding translation.

Arguably, the purpose of this type of translation would be to give visibility to the original and potentially to increase its influence. Walter Benjamin discussed this type of translation in his seminal text “Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers” (Benjamin 1923).<sup>54</sup> Benjamin’s key argument is that a translation should be transparent for the original to “shine through” and for its pure language to be highlighted and emphasised (Benjamin 1923, p.xv). As such, a good translation, according to Benjamin, should point its reader towards the original (Benjamin 1923, p.xv). He emphasises that this could only be achieved in *Wörtlichkeit* [literality], because the word, in his view, is the *Urelement* [original element] of the translator (Benjamin 1923, p.xv).<sup>55</sup>

One example from Benjamin’s text that is particularly relevant in relation to the Master’s Discourse is the idea that the original establishes the law of the translation. Benjamin writes that “in ihm [dem Original] liegt deren [der Übersetzungen] Gesetz als in dessen Übersetzbarkeit beschlossen” [“for in it [the original] is their [the translations’] law determined as in its translatability”, my translation] (Benjamin 1923, p.vii).<sup>56</sup> This statement would seem to support the strong symbolic and therefore commanding role of the source text similarly to the master-signifier in Discourse of the Master. The master-signifier establishes the law of the other and the discourse, demanding a response. A similar tendency can be seen in translation when the target language is bent to follow the original’s demand for translation, which is found in its translatable elements. This law of the source text includes, along with the general structure

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<sup>54</sup> Translated into English by Harry Zohn under the title “The Task of the Translator” (Benjamin 2002) and by Steven Rendall under the title “The Translator’s Task” (Benjamin 2012).

<sup>55</sup> Benjamin does also highlight that complete loyalty at the level of the word is unable to fully render the meaning of the original (Benjamin 1923, p.xiv). However, he states that the translation should mostly refrain from the intention of communicating something (Benjamin 1923, p.xv).

<sup>56</sup> Also “[...] for the laws governing the translation lie within the original, contained in the issue of its translatability” in Harry Zohn’s translation (Benjamin 2002, p.254). Or “For in it lies the principle of translation, determined by the original’s translatability” in Steven Rendall’s translation (Benjamin 2012, p.76).

and content of the translation, the command of translatability (Benjamin 1923, p.viii). In other words, if translatability is an essential part of some originals, translation is imperative.

However, Benjamin also comments that, although the “law” of the original demands translation and part of the original’s meaning lies in its translatability, the translation itself does not mean anything to the source text (Benjamin 1923, p.viii). A similar tendency was highlighted previously in the context of the relation between translation and original, or product and agent, in this version of the Master’s Discourse. It was pointed out that the translation relates to the source text, but the source text does not relate to the translation. This was said to be indicated in the unilateral arrow from product to agent. It was argued that the original does not relate directly to the translation, since it is viewed as the superior text and preceded the translation. Furthermore, translation according to Benjamin should not focus too strongly on rendering the original’s meaning (Benjamin 1923, p.xv). Rather, he states that translations should focus on the level of the word and allowing the original to shine through instead of reading like an original in the target language (Benjamin 1923, p.xv).

The ideas highlighted here were the law of the translation which is established by the original and the strong emphasis on the *Wörtlichkeit* of the translation. Benjamin even pointed out that the word should be prioritised over the meaning of the translation.<sup>57</sup> Arguably, this is reminiscent of the master-slave relationship that Lacan associated with this discourse. A Benjaminian translator would be the slave of the original and blindly follow its law as it is laid out in its translatability without questioning the meaning or legibility of the target text.

The idea of a master-slave relationship in translation is also mentioned by Serge Gavronsky in his text “The Translator: From Piety to Cannibalism” in the

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<sup>57</sup> For example, Andy McLaverty-Robinson writes in his article “Walter Benjamin: Language and Translation”: “The goal is not to turn the original language into the new language – e.g., to turn a French text into an English text. Instead, it is to turn the new language into the original language – e.g., to turn English into French. The translator should not preserve the current state of the new language. S/he should allow the new language to be strongly affected, expanded, and deepened by the original language of the text. This might require going back to the basic elements of language and reconstructing how the language is spoken. It should create a hybrid language which touches the senses” (McLaverty-Robinson 2013).

context of his image of the pious translator (Gavronsky 1977).<sup>58</sup> This type of translator is compared to a Benedictine monk, who follows the words and structure of the original religiously in his/her translation (Gavronsky 1977).<sup>59</sup> In the context of this monkish translation, Gavronsky raises the idea of textual transparency, i.e., the shining through of the original in the target text (Gavronsky 1977, pp.54–55). This transparency may suggest a strong hierarchy between translator and original, where the translator takes on the position of a slave whose core value is absolute faithfulness to the master (Gavronsky 1977, pp.54–55). This would be similar to the relationship between agent and other in Lacan’s original Master’s Discourse which he described often as a master-slave relationship (Lacan 2007).

This “slave” translator is described as a translator who is trapped in an oppressive religious relationship between a god-like author and his/her semi-sacred original (Gavronsky 1977). He/she, Gavronsky writes, sees him-/herself as a passive re-coder who is inferior to the author (Gavronsky 1977, p.53). The source text on the other hand takes on a position of “semi-sacred” item (Gavronsky 1977, p.53).

The translator thus acts as protector of the source text and worships it from a safe distance (Gavronsky 1977, p.53). He/she swears absolute fidelity and acts in the translation process as a silent partner and conduit to advertise it and promote it in the target culture (Gavronsky 1977, p.53). This pious translator appears to prioritise the original in order to point the target audience towards the translation’s origins in the source text, similar to Benjamin’s idea that a translation should allow the original to shine through (see Benjamin 1923, p.xv). In remaining consistent with Gavronsky’s monastic imagery, it may be said that the translator here renounces his/her earthly connections and origins in the mother tongue and points instead towards the original. Gavronsky speaks in this context also of the “mother text” (Gavronsky 1977, p.53) which points towards a metaphorical “rebirth” of the speaking being as translator who is renamed by the superior semi-sacred mother-text. This imagery of a rebirth

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<sup>58</sup> Gavronsky’s text was introduced as part of the Literature Review.

<sup>59</sup> The other image discussed by Gavronsky, the cannibalist translator, will be discussed in the chapter focussing on the Hysteric’s Discourse.

reminds strongly of Biblical passages which reference the necessity for believers to be “born again” and to turn away from their earthly, sinful nature (see Jn.3:1-8).

Similarly, Gavronsky appears to suggest that the translator has to turn away from his/her cultural and linguistic origins to fully honour the source text.<sup>60</sup> The “born again” translator is faced with the metaphorical “taboo of incest,” and his *délire de toucher*, i.e., his desire to touch the text (Gavronsky 1977, p.53). To “touch” the original and to adapt in any way is interdicted by its perceived sacredness but also by the author whom Gavronsky calls the “father creator” (Gavronsky 1977, pp.53–55). By means of the prohibition, the mother text becomes the object of desire, written and defined by the pen, which represents the father’s phallus (Gavronsky 1977, p.55). This translator obeys only the perceived “higher truth of the original” as if it was a “carbon [copy] of the Bible, and the Bible itself written in a qualitatively different language that could only be approximated in translation” (Gavronsky 1977, p.54). Hence, every author is seen as “god-like” and establishing a master-slave relationship between author and translator (Gavronsky 1977, p.55). Gavronsky’s parallels to Christianity could be seen to emphasise the association to the Discourse of the Master, as God is often perceived as the Lord over humankind. In translation, the source text would take on this position of “Lord” or master for the translator.

I suggest that another similarity that can be detected between Christianity and translation may be the impossibility of keeping within the “law”. In translation, the source text cannot be rendered completely. Similarly, the Mosaic Law (the Torah in Judaism or the five books of Moses) of the Old Testament, which is given to Moses to enable people to lead a life pleasing to God, is impossible to fulfil entirely because of human nature.<sup>61</sup> The reason that complete translation is impossible has to do with the incompatibility of source and target

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<sup>60</sup> Gavronsky appears to presuppose that the translator translates into his/her own mother tongue. He does not specify this but for example describes the cannibalistic translator as feeding upon the source text before he/she enunciates them in his own tongue (Gavronsky 1977, p.60).

<sup>61</sup> This applies particularly to the latter for books, from Exodus 20 (Moses receives the Ten Commandments) through to Deuteronomy 32 (the Song of Moses before he blesses the tribes (Deut. 34) and then dies on Mount Nebo (Deut. 34)).

language, but also with the translator's subjective understanding of the original and both languages involved. It is the translator's biased reading of the source text, the text's own division in language due to its author and the text's division between source and target language. In this discourse pattern, the translator always looks up to the source text as his/her master that commands translation. In this translation process the original's wording and structure are to be superimposed onto the target language. In other words, the target language has to be adapted to the structure and language of the source text in order to provide the desired translation.

One translation approach that aims to aid the translator in overcoming his/her biased understanding of the original and create a target text which fully renders the original, including its structure, was introduced by Antoine Berman in his article "the Trials of the Foreign" (Berman 2012).<sup>62</sup> Berman introduces in his article twelve unconscious tendencies which deform the source text in the translation process (Berman 2012). Berman proposes that a good translation should challenge its readership with "the foreign" instead of adapting the linguistic material to suit the reader's experience (Berman 2012). Overall, similar to Benjamin's ideas of translation and Gavronsky's pious translator, Berman's theory reflects a view of the original which places it in a position of authority that is similar to the master in Lacan's discourse. Furthermore, the suggestion that the translation should be an opportunity for the reader to engage with the foreignness of the source text indicates that the target language is forced to comply with the source text and language's structure and thereby takes on the position of "slave". Based on this priority of the original and the translation's position of compliance, Lacan's discourse pattern is arguably visible in their metaphorical master-slave relationship.

In his text, Berman acknowledges the unconscious as interfering factor in translation, but he proposes that it can be "neutralised" through reflection and respecting his proposed unconscious, deforming tendencies. However, I suggest that the truth of the Master's Discourse pattern in translation is the fact that the source language is already imperfect and flawed on multiple levels.

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<sup>62</sup> Berman's article was previously introduced as part of the Literature Review.

In addition to the translator's unconscious, the symbol  $\bar{X}$  in the adaptation of Lacan's discourse can be understood as representation of the inherent "translational" dimension of language itself and thus of the source text. This translational dimension refers to the inevitable flaw at the source text's core which is due to the author as split subject who is never able to express fully what he/she intends to. Based on the individual's division by language, any writer is always also a translator who translates his/her conscious processes into language.

One example of Berman's twelve unconscious trends in translation is the idea of "rationalisation" which affects the original's syntax, particularly in areas such as punctuation and the rearranging of sentences and their sequences (Berman 2012, p.245). Furthermore, it can be identified when, for example, a verb is translated by a noun or the more general of two word options is chosen (Berman 2012, p.245). Writing a translation that fully avoids rationalisation and still remains intelligible may be possible between languages that are closely related but would pose a particular challenge for languages that differ strongly in structure and punctuation. For example, a translation between German and English that avoids rationalisation completely may appear unusual but still intelligible. However, a translation between Japanese and German or Japanese and English may be more difficult to understand if the translation retains word order and type, as well as punctuation. An example of a type of translation that avoids rationalisation is interlinear translation, as long as it would also consider word class and specificity.

Berman's proposed type of translation, which avoids all rationalisation as well as the remaining eleven tendencies would follow a similar trend to the translation theories introduced previously by Benjamin and Gavrinsky. Similar to the master in Lacan's discourse, the original acts as dominating agent over the discourse and dictates exactly the structure of the translation without allowing for adjustment. The target language thus has to be rearranged to fit around the source text instead of conveying its content in a way that is natural or more intelligible to the reader. Berman "analytic of translation" and the resulting relationship between original and target language would, similarly to the previous theories, resemble a master-slave relationship similar to that



displayed in the Master's Discourse. The elements of the source text would in this case lay out the law with which the target language has to comply in order to produce a suitable translation.

This ideal translation according to Berman would allow the reader to encounter the foreignness of the original. This idea of encountering the foreign in the target text is discussed in more detail by Lawrence Venuti in his concept of "foreignization". Foreignization, as opposed to "domestication", highlights the foreignness of the original and exposes the translation as translation (Venuti 1991; Venuti 1999; Venuti 2004). In this context, Venuti also mentions the issue of the translator's invisibility in contemporary translations which follow a domesticating approach and promotes more visibility by foreignizing the target text (Venuti 1991; Venuti 1999; Venuti 2004). It may be noted that it is not Venuti's only aim to protect the source text but rather, "to make a difference, not only at home, in the emergence of new cultural forms, but also abroad, in the emergence of new cultural relations" (Venuti 2004, p.313).

When translators highlight the prevalence of the source text over the target language it simultaneously highlights the labour and impact of the translator and thus renders him/her visible. The translator takes the source text into the target language to produce the translation in a manner where the target language is an other that has to be adapted to accommodate the original. Particularly in literary translation, this highlights the incompatibility and inconsistencies between both languages.

Venuti builds his theory on, for example, the seminal 1813 lecture by Friedrich Schleiermacher "Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens" (Schleiermacher 1963).<sup>63</sup> Schleiermacher proposes that a translator should either move the reader towards the author, or leave the author in peace and move the reader towards him/her (Schleiermacher 1963, p.47; Schleiermacher 1977, p.74).

Between these two approaches, Schleiermacher suggests, there is no possible middle way as they are completely separate and must be followed

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<sup>63</sup> The English translation used here is called "On the Different Methods of Translating" and was translated by André Lefevere (Schleiermacher 1977).

strictly as close as possible (Schleiermacher 1977, p.74). These two approaches resemble closely Venuti's ideas of domestication (moving the author towards the reader) and foreignization (moving the reader towards the author). In addition to using Schleiermacher's two approaches as basis for his theory, Venuti also uses André Lefevere's English translation of Schleiermacher's originally German text as to illustrate and contrast the two different approaches (Venuti 1991).

Lefevere's translation follows a domesticating approach and to illustrate this Venuti uses, for example, a passage where Schleiermacher refers to translations which preserve the foreign character to illustrate his point (Venuti 1991, p.130). The German original states:

[...] eine Haltung der Sprache, die nicht nur nicht alltäglich ist, sondern die auch ahnden läßt, daß sie nicht ganz frei gewachsen, vielmehr zu einer fremden Aehnlichkeit hinübergebogen sei (Schleiermacher 1963).

Lefevere translates this into English as:

[...] a feeling for language which is not only not colloquial, but also causes us to suspect that it has not grown in total freedom but rather has been bent towards a foreign likeness (Schleiermacher 1977, pp.78–79).

Within this passage Venuti highlights the translation of "zu einer fremden Aehnlichkeit hinübergebogen" (Schleiermacher 1963, p.55) as "bent towards a foreign likeness" (Schleiermacher 1977, pp.78–79). Venuti proposes that this translation domesticates Schleiermacher by adapting the syntax to fit more conventional English and instead suggests to translate this as "toward a foreign likeness bent" (Venuti 1991, p.130). This solution, he writes, "resists fluency by marking the English translation as archaic for the contemporary Anglo-American reader, foreignizes the English by bending it toward the German syntax" (Venuti 1991, p.130). This could be seen to be indicative of a translation approach in which the original takes priority and ownership of the target language. Using Lacan's image of the master-slave dichotomy it can be said that the source text forces the target language into servitude.

Venuti promotes his foreignizing approach not to highlight the primacy of the source text or the source culture. His primary concern appears to be bringing

the translator out of the shadow of the original's author and into the light of the reader's perception. While this may not initially appear congruent with the Master's Discourse where, in my adaptation, the translator is hidden in the unconscious realm, underlying the original, the basic pattern of the approach appears to be similar to the Discourse of the Master. Similar to the adapted discourse, the translator is the "truth" of the original, which means that the meaning of the source text is influenced by the translator's personal bias and understanding. The source text also takes priority over the natural structures and conventions of the target language. Instead of rendering the original in a way that would appear natural to the reader of the target text, the translator adjusts the target language to expose the foreignness of the original and retain its original structure. In position of the product is the final translation itself which is assumed to be the object of desire that reflects the original in the best possible way.

In conclusion, this initial part of the chapter on translation studies and the pattern of the Master's Discourse has highlighted different approaches where the original establishes the law for the target language. The common feature between theories by Walter Benjamin, Serge Gavronsky, Antoine Berman, and Lawrence Venuti is that the target language should be adapted to fit the original instead of adapting the structure of the source text to match the target language. This priority of the original is reminiscent of Lacan's master who establishes the law for the other in the Master's Discourse. Benjamin in particular mentions explicitly the law of the original which is revealed in its translatability (Benjamin 1923). Lacan often refers to the master-slave relationship in conjunction with the liaison between agent and other in the Master's Discourse (Lacan 2007), which appears in a similar manner in some of the theories that were discussed here. For example, Gavronsky describes the original as master and the translator as slave (Gavronsky 1977). These elements are also mirrored in Berman's and Venuti's texts, even though they are not explicitly mentioned.

Berman highlighted that the translator should not compromise at all in the translation and discusses different tendencies he identified and warned against. This parallels the idea of the original being the master over the target

language and establishing the law, i.e., structures and patterns, which the translation should follow. Venuti proposed a similar approach despite not referencing the idea of a “law” or “master-slave” relationship, or an authoritative source text. However, he stipulates that the target text should reveal the foreignness of the original and its different structures. In other words, the target language should be adjusted in order to fit around the source text and reflect the source language.

### **3.3 Bible Translation**

The previous section of this chapter discussed some of the general theories from translation that lend themselves to an analysis in terms of the adapted Master’s Discourse. In the following part, I will focus more specifically on the area of Bible translation. Especially during the earlier history of Translation Studies, translations of Christian scripture played an important part in many theories. Often, these theories were developed to improve the translation of scripture and most of the early, influential scholars focused their research and theories on this issue. Some of the most iconic texts, such as St. Jerome’s “Letter to Pammachius” (Jerome 2012), which focuses strongly on the translation of scripture, even predate the actual recognition of Translation Studies as an academic field.

This section will begin by discussing the first official translation of Jewish (and later Christian) Scripture called the Septuagint and how some of the legends surrounding its production relate to the Master’s Discourse. Following this I will provide a brief overview of some further translations of the Bible, including St. Jerome’s Latin translation of the Septuagint, as well as translations of Scripture into vernacular languages such as German and English. It will be argued that, particularly in 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe, the Church attempted to uphold the superiority of the Bible by preventing translations into common languages such as English.

After this discussion, I will address the “illusion” of a consistent source text for translations. As Lacan’s master is secretly a split subject, the Biblical source text (particularly the New Testament) is fragmented underneath the consistent translations used by believers. This fragmented nature will lead to the

discussion of the layout of translations and how they may attempt to uphold the image of a superior original and disguise its fragmented nature.

### **3.3.1 The Septuagint**

The Septuagint (often abbreviated as LXX) is the first commonly known official translation of Jewish scriptures which today form part of the Bible (the Old Testament and some Apocrypha). The translation was conducted approximately in the third century BC and originally intended for the Greek speaking Jewish community (De Troyer 2013, pp.267–268). The apocrypha included in this translation are originally Greek texts that were not included in the Hebrew scripture but accepted by Hellenistic Jews. Its oldest currently available manuscript, the *Codex Vaticanus*, is estimated to have been produced around the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD.

In this section I will introduce two of the main legends surrounding the creation of this translation. It will be highlighted that these legends support a translation process which follows the pattern of the Master's Discourse in so far as the original (or God) is complete control while the target language blindly follows its orders and creates a perfect translation. The translator as "truth" of the original stays mostly hidden in these legends as the target text was initially perceived as perfect. The translators in these legends are described only as vessels for a divine spirit and have little agency in the translation process. As such, I will argue that they remain hidden underneath the original until the birth of the Christian faith and the resulting tensions cause Jewish believers to question the authority of the Septuagint.

As indicated previously, concerning the initial commission and production of the Septuagint there are two dominant legends that will be discussed in this chapter, one by Aristeas and one by Philo and Irenaeus (Robinson 2002, p.4). Both accounts state that a select group of scholars are said to have created one consistent translation under guidance of God. This translation perfectly renders the source text without creating ambiguities or falsifying scripture due to ambiguities within the source text. The accounts could be argued to illustrate the Master's Discourse pattern (Figure 23) in so far as they describe the

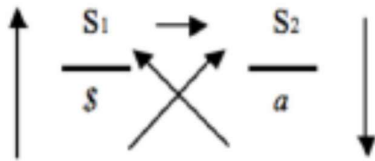


Figure 23: The Master's Discourse  
(Vanheule 2016, p.3)

original as a kind of master text who orders a translation as an object of desire to be produced by the other. The truth of this discourse is the translator who remains initially hidden as secret influence on both source text and target language. This truth was addressed

later, after the tensions between Christian and Jewish believers caused some controversies surrounding the Septuagint.

The first legend around the Septuagint to be discussed stems from the letter of Aristeas to his brother Philocrates.<sup>64</sup> To summarise the legend briefly, Aristeas explains that that king Ptolemy wished to have a Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures as part of the Alexandrian library (Aristeas 2002).<sup>65</sup> Since there were no Hebrew speakers in Alexandria, Ptolemy ordered for a delegation to be sent to Jerusalem and ask for 72 skilled and well respected elders (six from each tribe) to be sent to translate the scriptures (Aristeas 2002). These chosen scholars were taken to a mansion on an island where they conducted the translation over 72 days (Aristeas 2002, pp.5–6). Aristeas mentions that each morning, before starting their work, they would wash their hands and pray (Aristeas 2002, p.6). After completion, the director of the Alexandrian library Demetrius read out the final translation to the Jewish community and received positive response that the translation was seen as accurate in every aspect and no further revisions were to be made (Aristeas 2002, p.6).<sup>66</sup>

One dominant feature of this legend in relation to the Discourse of the Master is the translation as object of desire. Aristeas' account of the Septuagint highlights it as perfect copy of the Hebrew law and equally sacred. This may imply that it fulfils the source text by and in the target language. This would be similar to the perception of the product in the Discourse of the Master where

<sup>64</sup> The actual identity of both Aristeas and Philocrates remains unknown but the author was most likely a Hellenic Jew from Alexandria of the late second century BC (Robinson 2002, p.4)

<sup>65</sup> The referenced king Ptolemy is likely to have been Ptolemy II Philadelphus who reigned over Egypt from 283-246 BC (Meisner 1973, p.35; Aristeasbrief. 2007).

<sup>66</sup> The reference Demetrius is most like Demetrius of Phalerum (born around 350) who lived at Ptolemy I's court and won significant influence (Meisner 1973, p.46).

the agent orders the other to produce the object of desire to satisfy the master. The Greek Septuagint of the legend was seen to be “accurate in every aspect” so that the final product needed no revision (Aristeas 2002). In other words, it was seen to be a *perfect* translation which would arguably satisfy the master’s, i.e., the original’s, desire. Both Aristeas and Philo’s account, as will be discussed below, highlight the importance of the Scripture and the divine influence of God. For example, the sanctity associated with the source text as the word of God is emphasised in this account when Aristeas mentions that the scholars would wash their hands before going to work every morning. The target language itself is barely mentioned in the legend and the Jewish translators’ main purpose appears to be channelling and noting down the instructions of God. However, while it was initially perceived as a success, the Septuagint was later accused of being “polluted” by its translators. This instance of the hidden truth being revealed will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

While in Aristeas’ account the translation was a communal effort by commissioned translators, another version of the well-known legend separates the translators from each other as well and claims each of them produced their own text. This second legend was initially created by Philo who includes an account of the translation of Jewish Scripture from Hebrew to Greek in his *Vita Mosis* (Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, p.35).<sup>67</sup> Similarly to the previous legend, according to Philo, king Ptolemy sent an envoy to Judea to ask for scholars to be sent to Alexandria to translate the Jewish Law from Hebrew to Greek (Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, p.36). The translators withdrew to the island of Pharos to find quiet and private place for their work, where they would not be disturbed in their work (Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, p.36). They prayed over their books and work, asking God for the success of their work and found His agreement for the benefit for all of mankind (Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, p.36). When the scholars went

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<sup>67</sup> The account is included in English in Abraham and David J. Wasserstein’s book *The Legend of the Septuagint* which this thesis will refer to for this legend. Philo lived approximately from 25 BC to 45-50 AD in Alexandria and his writings are considered to be of great importance to Judaism (as well as Christianity) as only little Jewish literature is available from this time (Goodenough 1962, p.2).

to work, each of them began separately to write a translation as if they were possessed (Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, p.37). Furthermore, all of the translations were identical word for word (Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, p.37). Irenaeus (c. 130 – 202/3 AD) adds to this legend more detail in his text *Against Heresies* where he states that the people of Jerusalem sent 70 elders who were well versed in the Scripture as well as both Hebrew and Greek language to Ptolemy (Irenaeus [no date]).<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, because Ptolemy was worried that the elders may conspire against him and hide passages or purposefully mistranslate the text he decided to separate the men from each other so they would have to translate the Scripture each by themselves without counsel from the other elders (Irenaeus [no date]). When they presented their translations to Ptolemy, each text was identical to the others using “the very same words and the very same names, from beginning to end, so that even the Gentiles present perceived that the Scriptures had been interpreted by the inspiration of God” (Irenaeus [no date]).

Like Aristeas, Philo and Irenaeus highlight the divine influence of the Scripture and God. For example, Philo writes that the translators began to write like possessed after praying over their work and materials. In other words, similar to Lacan’s Discourse of the Master, the agent (here the divine original) is in control of the discourse and commands the other (here the target language) while the translator qua truth remains largely in the shadows. This legend describes the translators as “possessed” by the original, which would leave them without control over the translation process. The target language appears to be also less important than the original and is barely mentioned at all. To use Lacan’s words, the target language could be seen to be a “slave” who is following the “master’s” orders. Furthermore, because the source text in these legends has complete control over the translators, all 70 translations of Philo’s and Irenaeus’ account are identical. Hypothetically, if the original were completely in control without unconscious interferences, there would be

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<sup>68</sup> This number of 70 elders working on the translation led to the common abbreviation for the Septuagint as LXX. Irenaeus is believed to have lived approximately from 130 to 200 AD and was bishop in Vienne and later Lyons where he also wrote *Against heresies* (Osborn 2003, pp.2–4).



no ambiguity about possible translations and hence only one consistent final product as in this legend. Ergo, the translation would be a perfect copy of the source text, conveying its message perfectly in every aspect. The target language here has, according to the legends, achieved exactly what was asked of it and produced the source text's object of desire.

Philo's legend in particular was widely accepted and supported by Jews and Christians (Freedman 2016, pp.13–14). The former endorsed the legend out of the fear that admitting inadequacies in the translation would affect the perception of the source text and shed a negative light on it (Freedman 2016, pp.13–14). One aspect to consider was that ambiguities in the translation could cause theological problems, as people may be inclined to misunderstand or read things into the text which are not part of the original (Freedman 2016, pp.13–14). For example, the original Hebrew states that in Genesis God says what in a literal English translation could be rendered as "Let *us* make man in *our* image" (Gen. 1:26, my italics) which could be misinterpreted as a collaborative view of creation between God and others, or a plurality of gods (Freedman 2016, pp.13–14). While according to Judaic doctrines there is only one God, Greek culture advocated a religion with multiple gods who were responsible for different areas of life and patrons of different areas of Greece. Hence, the Greek translation clarifies ambiguities like these and renders the Hebrew text according to Jewish teachings of the Scriptures (Freedman 2016, pp.13–14).

However, despite the initial support of the Septuagint, the Jewish religious leaders turned against it when Christians began to claim the Septuagint for themselves and the theological tensions between Christians and Jews became harsher (Freedman 2016, p.18). One of the key passages that caused disagreement between Jews and Christians was Isaiah 7:14 where the Hebrew word *almah* or *hā'almāh* was translated as *parthenos* [virgin] (Freedman 2016, p.17). Christian believers often use this passage to support the belief that Jesus, who is said to be born to the Virgin Mary, is the Messiah of Old Testament prophecies. However, while the original Hebrew term is often used in reference to virgins, it does not explicitly state this. In general, it refers to young women of marriageable age who are still unmarried. In the New

Testament, the gospel of Matthew quotes this particular passage from the Greek Septuagint to support his view of Jesus as Christ (Freedman 2016, p.16). Before the Christian faith was established, this translation of *almah* as *arthenos* did not pose an issue to Jewish religious leaders but as the Christian faith developed, the translation choice became strongly contested. In this disagreement about the translation, the hidden truth of the source text becomes visible as its ambiguity becomes the subject of theological debates. This revelation of the master's flaw can lead to the breakdown of the Master's Discourse and lead the subject into a Hysteric's Discourse. If the Septuagint were indeed the object of desire, it would have remained the uncontended translation of the Word of God. For those opposed to the Septuagint the formerly hidden translator became visible as their understanding of the source text and their use of the target language become one of the main arguments in their theological disputes.

Despite the disapproval of the Jewish believers, the Septuagint initially retained its authority within early Christianity. For example, Justin Martyr (100 – 165 AD) affirmed the Septuagint to be “the authentic translation of the original Bible” claimed to be was superior to the Hebrew text of the Jews (Freedman 2016, pp.17–18). He argued that the original Hebrew used by Jewish believers had been tempered with in order to challenge and discount Christianity (Freedman 2016, p.18). However, the spirit who rested on the 70 translators who produced the Septuagint rectified the text back to its original message, leaving the translation superior to its source text (Freedman 2016, p.18). This view was further supported by St. Augustine who used Philo and Irenaeus' legend as argument in favour of the legitimacy of the Septuagint and claimed that the Hebrew text was falsified to prevent other nations from knowing the truth of the Scriptures (Freedman 2016, p.23). This may be a first indication of a structure similar to the Hysteric's Discourse, where the subject turns against the master. Similarly, the original is questioned here instead of the translation.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> This particular discourse pattern will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

The Septuagint was translated into Latin in the late 4<sup>th</sup> century by St. Jerome and is commonly referred to as the Vulgate. St. Jerome discusses his approach to translation “Letter to Pammachius” where he states that while he advocates a “sense-for-sense” approach for translation in general, he believed scripture should be translated “word-for-word” as there “even the very order of the words is a mystery” (Jerome 2012, p.23). St. Jerome’s approach to translating scripture would thus correspond with the basic pattern of the adapted Master’s Discourse, as St. Jerome’s statement implies, the source text’s word order dictates the structures of the translation.

For a long period, the Septuagint and its Latin translation the Vulgate were considered to be the main texts to be used for Christian teachings. In the next chapter, I will discuss in more detail the earlier attempts to translate the Bible into vernacular languages such as English or German beginning in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

### **3.3.2 Common Language Translations**

Many of the early attempts to translate the Bible into “common” languages such as English or German were met by dismay from the Church as the common perception was that only Greek and Latin were able to convey the superior message of the Bible (see Gritsch 2003, p.63).<sup>70</sup> Hence, many early translators of the Bible had to face severe resistance or even persecution. In this section I will argue that this reaction of the Church may be seen as an attempt to uphold the dominant Master’s Discourse of the time by preventing laypeople to gain access to the scriptures and learn about their faith by themselves. Rather, it appears as though the Church tried to control people’s access to teachings and interpretations of scriptures by keeping translations in common languages unavailable or at least limited. In this way, the Church can be argued to have attempted to uphold the view of a perfect master according to their perception, as unlearned people who did not know Greek or Latin were unable to question their teachings since any ambiguity or flaw was kept hidden.

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<sup>70</sup> Ironically, the Latin Vulgate was written in the “common language” of the time as indicated in its (Latin) name “*versio vulgate*”, meaning “common / ordinary version”.

The German scholar Martin Luther may be one of the most well-known translators of the Bible, even though he was not the first to translate the Bible into German (Gritsch 2003, p.62). In medieval Germany, the printing of German Bibles was discouraged by the (Roman Catholic) Church and publishing German translations was prohibited as they were considered too poor for the superior meaning conveyed in the Latin Vulgate (Gritsch 2003, p.62). In spite of these restrictions there were 18 German translations of scripture in existence by 1518 (Gritsch 2003, p.62). Luther began to study Hebrew from 1506 onwards and translated the New Testament in 1521 during his exile at the Wartburg, using the first text-critical Greek edition of the New Testament published by Erasmus of Rotterdam in 1516 as source text (Gritsch 2003, pp.62–63). After the publication of the New Testament he moved on to the Old Testament which was to be completed in three parts but was delayed due to Luther's illness (Gritsch 2003, p.64). Later, he translated also the Apocrypha but put less emphasis on them as he considered them secondary to the Holy Scripture (Gritsch 2003, p.64). Luther's Bible was often critically acclaimed due to notes, perceived errors and other reasons (Gritsch 2003, p.66).

One of the most often mentioned elements of the *Luther Bibel*, as opposed to other translations, is his return to the Hebrew original instead of working from the Septuagint. The return to the Hebrew text also meant that the apocrypha was initially not part of his translation but, as mentioned above, translated separately at a later point. Rome on the other hand considered the Septuagint and its canon (which included the Apocrypha or Deuterocanon) the superior source text for translations and accepted only the Latin Vulgate as legitimate rendering. However, Luther was not only problematic for the Church because of his translation as he voiced his strong opinions and disagreements with the Church, such as his view of indulgences and papal authority (Beutel 2003, p.9). Hence, Luther's work as translator had many negative consequences for him beginning with a trial for heresy which was opened by Rome in the summer of 1518 and led to his excommunication in 1520 (Beutel 2003, pp.9–11). All of Luther's books were ordered to be destroyed and any of his religious writings in the empire's territory were to be censored (Beutel 2003, p.12). "Lutheranism"

even became one of the charges against the William Tyndale who translated the Bible into English (Daniell 1994, p.377). Nevertheless, Luther was able to complete his translations of the Bible and died of natural causes in 1546 (Beutel 2003, p.18).

Similarly to Luther, John Wycliffe's call for a translation of the Vulgate into Middle English caused tensions between him and the church (Dove 2006). Whether the translation known today as Wycliffe Bible was actually translated by him or someone else who was inspired by him remains unclear (Dove 2006, p.386). Nevertheless, his body was ordered to be posthumously removed from holy ground and burned due to his teachings and associations with the English renderings of the Vulgate (Freedman 2016, p.84). While Wycliffe was officially condemned only after his death, William Tyndale, who set out to translate the Bible into English in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, was imprisoned, trialed and strangled at the stake with his body being burned afterwards for his works (Daniell 1994, p.382). Tyndale began his translation in Great Britain but had to move to Germany because the authorities prohibited his work (Robinson 2002, p.90). Initially, his English translation of the New Testament was published in Cologne but then also in Worms as Catholic authorities intervened and suppressed the publication (Robinson 2002, p.90). After the completion of the New Testament, Tyndale worked on a translation of the Old Testament for some years but was unable to finish it (Robinson 2002, p.90).

Eventually, Tyndale was arrested and imprisoned in May 1535 for different charges one of them being Lutheranism (Daniell 1994, pp.364–365, 377). He was condemned and executed as a heretic in 1536 after spending over a year in a cell at Vilvorde (Daniell 1994, p.374; Robinson 2002, p.90). He was degraded from priesthood and “handed over to the secular authorities for punishment – that is, burning at the stake” (Daniell 1994, p.374).

One can see a Master's Discourse pattern for example in the Church's response to Luther's translation project as it may have been perceived as a threat to the dominant discourse at the time. Luther's return to the Hebrew original could have been understood as undermining the Septuagint as master text and the Vulgate as its object of desire, or perfect translation. In addition to

the challenge of the master source text and its translation, Luther's translation and also his teachings were threatening the influence of the Roman Catholic Church as their role of mediators between the word of God and believers would become less necessary if people were to gain access to translations in their own language. Through Luther's works, the common people were made aware of some of the biased teachings of the time that took advantage of people's lack of access to scripture. Similarly, Tyndale and Wycliffe may have been perceived as a threat in Great Britain although the consequences for particularly Tyndale were perhaps more extreme than for Luther. Overall, the prospect of a Bible in the language of the people which was not controlled and sanctioned by the religious authorities (e.g., the Roman Catholic Church) would have been perceived as a threat to the religious doctrines of the time and as such the Master's Discourse. For example, one of the ways for the Church to attempt to uphold the authority of the Septuagint as original and the Vulgate as perfect object of desire would be to make it inaccessible to lay people. Preventing the Bible from being translated would presumably protect it from being challenged as any potential imperfection or ambiguity in the text can remain hidden. As such, the mirage of a perfect, absolute master and an equally perfect object of desire could be maintained.

After these extreme measures against German and English language translations of the Scriptures, an official, complete English translation was eventually commissioned less than 100 years later after the Reformation in England when Henry VIII had severed England's ties to Rome. In 1604 John Reynolds' proposal for a new translation was approved by King James who appointed himself as patron, under the condition that there were to be no marginal notes in the text (Greenslade 1963, p.164). According to the rules that were instated for the project, the scholars were, for example, asked to follow the Bishop's Bible as closely as possible to assure it was a revision of existing English translations instead of a new translation (Robinson 2002, pp.138–139).<sup>71</sup> However, in the end the 47 translators who worked on the

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<sup>71</sup> The Bishop's Bible included the Old and New Testament and was first published in 1568. It was a revision of an existing translation (the Great Bible, first published in 1539) and was undertaken by request of the archbishop of Canterbury (Matthew Parker) who was one of the most prominent leaders of the Reformation in England (Chamberlin 1991, pp.3, 8–9).

project did not just revise an existing translation but instead rewrote it extensively and to some extent retranslated passages by returning to manuscripts in the original languages (Robinson 2002, p.139).

After its completion the KJV competed with the Geneva Bible for approximately 50 years before it established itself as the standard English translation by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century (Robinson 2002, p.139).<sup>72</sup> Even though the KJV was never actually authorised, it was the only folio Bible in print and thus came to replace its predecessors the Bishop's Bible and the Geneva Bible (Greenslade 1963, p.168). Greenslade writes that eventually "to multitudes of English-speaking Christians it has seemed little less than blasphemy to tamper with the words of the King James Version" (Greenslade 1963, p.168).

One similarity between the KJV and the Discourse of the Master may be seen in the emphasis the translators placed on the original instead of revising an existing translation as it was proposed in the conditions for the project. In addition to this however, a similar pattern to the Master's Discourse can also be seen in the way the KJV was established as one of the most popular English translations of the Bible. Previously, access to the scriptures was limited due to the strict limitations set on translating the Bible into common languages. Similarly, after the KJV was published, access to scripture in other translations was restricted as pointed out by (Greenslade 1963, p.168). This could be seen as an attempt to establish and maintain the image of this translation as the perfect object of desire or the only answer to the original's need for a translation. Furthermore, as previously stated in the case of the Septuagint and the Vulgate, the availability of only one translation arguably supports the impression of a definite, unambiguous source text. The success of this strategy can be seen for example in the previous comment that to tamper with the KJV would come close to blasphemy (Greenslade 1963, p.168). It could be argued that in this case a different Master's Discourse is formed within Christianity where not the source text is in position of agent but the KJV. As such, the KJV may hold a similar position for English speaking Christians to

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<sup>72</sup> The Geneva Bible included the Old and New Testament and was first published in 1560. It included annotations for difficult and important passages and was the earliest printed English Bible using Roman letters (Chamberlin 1991, pp.6–7).

the Septuagint or the Vulgate to Catholic Christians in medieval Europe. In other words, this translation would be the final rendering of Scripture into English, regardless of the discovery of more reliable manuscripts as well as the changes in the English language and culture.

While Bible translation in and around the 16<sup>th</sup> century was difficult and even dangerous as discussed above, since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, translations of the Bible have become increasingly common, and a wide variety of versions is available which follow different approaches and have different focuses. One modern translation which stands out as the most literal is the ESV which is based on a word-for-word approach which they also refer to “essentially literal” (The Origin of the ESV | Crossway. 2011). A number of Christian scholars raised the need for a new literal Bible translation and a few years later the publishing house Crossway instigated the ESV project (The Origin of the ESV | Crossway. 2011). The team of translators included over 100 people from different denominations and was overseen by a committee of 14 members of different backgrounds (The Origin of the ESV | Crossway. 2011). In the preface to the ESV the oversight committee situates this translation in the tradition of the KJV and some later translations, including the English Revised Version, the American Standard Version, and the Revised Standard Version (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version* 2016, p.ix).

The ESV arguably supports further the idea of a consistent source text and the KJV as a perfect object of desire. According to the preface the need for a new translation arose from the changes in the English language while the changes in available manuscripts are not mentioned in relation to the KJV (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version* 2016, p.ix). As such, the need for a new translation that follows in the tradition of the KJV is explained not based on the ambiguity or uncertainty of the original but on the flaw of the target language. Hence, the image of the original as complete master is maintained and the ESV is established as the replacement object of desire to the KJV.

In this section of the chapter, I pointed out instances where different translations (including processes, practices, products), which have been carried out since the early modern period, show similarities with the Master’s



Discourse patterns. Particularly the attempt to limit access to scriptures or different interpretations of scripture was argued to relate closely to patterns of this discourse. By restricting access, the Church was able to establish and maintain the image of a consistent and unambiguous source text, as well as one translation which functions as object of desire.

### 3.3.3 The Source Text Illusion

The preceding subchapter discussed the creation of a selection of Bible translations and some of the arguments and controversies around them. Looking at the Greek Septuagint and its legends for example, one aspect that

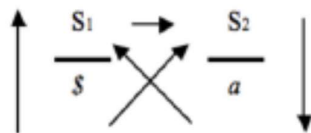


Figure 24: *The Master's Discourse* (Vanheule 2016, p.3)

could not be denied was the fact that there are certain discrepancies between the Hebrew texts and the Greek Septuagint. However, some Christian scholars began to blame the source text to be inaccurate or manipulated to mislead its readers. This is arguably similar to an instance where the undermining truth underneath the agent in the Discourse of the Master is revealed and may lead into a Hysteric's Discourse (\$ in Figure 24). In this case, it was the ambiguity of the original that became visible and with it the biased understanding of the translators that was rendered in the translation. This hidden truth is revealed when translation and original are examined or questioned in relation to each other. This part of the chapter will focus in more detail on the left-hand side in the schematic of the Master's Discourse, that is, the source text and its hidden truth. In the context of Bible translation, this is truth is, for example, the fragmented nature of the original as there is currently no consistent source text for translations. Nevertheless, many readers of the Bible are likely to be unaware of any ambiguities or inconsistencies in the original manuscripts.

As it was mentioned previously, in this version of the Master's Discourse structure, the importance and superiority of the source text is emphasised. In the Bible, the source text presents a unique challenge. Many of the early translations of the Christian scripture are not made from the original text but from existing translations such as the Septuagint or the Latin Vulgate (see France 2003). Using the original for translations of ancient texts before the

invention of printing would prove difficult, since manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible from the pre-Christ era were only discovered in the middle of the twentieth century (France 2003, p.178). Until then, the earliest manuscripts available to translators were dated approximately within the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD (France 2003, p.178). In addition to the Hebrew manuscripts, there are full and partial manuscripts of the Greek Septuagint which are estimated to range from the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD onwards (France 2003, p.178). However, these Greek translations often differ to a degree from the Hebrew source text and have to be treated with caution in the context of translation (France 2003, p.179).

Source texts of the New Testament raise similar issues. The earliest full manuscripts date back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD; additionally, there are partial manuscripts from the middle of the second century (France 2003, p.179). However, because of the large number of manuscripts, there are many different versions of the same text (France 2003, p.179). Many differences are only minor discrepancies such as spelling, grammar or style but there are nevertheless instances where the manuscripts disagree with each other and it is unclear which one is to be treated as the “correct” version (France 2003, p.179). The most important discoveries of early Biblical manuscripts were only made recently. This means that translations conducted before the late 20<sup>th</sup> century (e.g., the King James Bible) are arguably based on less reliable texts (France 2003, p.179). Three example passages where this becomes most obvious will be discussed later on in the chapter in the context of layouts of Bible translations.

Possibly the main reason for the differences between manuscripts is that before the invention of the printing press in the 15<sup>th</sup> century all copies of scripture had to be written by hand. It is unlikely that any one copy was completely identical to its original but rather, would contain some errors (e.g., spelling errors etc.) (Freedman 2016, p.14). The guide to the *Novum Testamentum Graece* states that “[there] is hardly a sentence of the New Testament that has the exact same wording in each of these exemplars” (Trobisch 2013, p.1). Hence, the more often a text was copied, some copies being possibly made from previous copies, the more errors would be introduced (Freedman 2016, p.14). Since the Septuagint was popular among

Christians and initially Jews as well, many copies were made of it and many variations exist (Freedman 2016, p.14). In addition to the accidental variations between manuscripts due to spelling errors etc. some readers may have also added their own notes in the margins or between the lines which would not always be known to the scribe (Freedman 2016, p.14).<sup>73</sup> Finally, some differences may be due to revisions by the scribes to make the texts more suitable for the contemporary readers as their language changed over time (Trobisch 2013, pp.1–2).

Irrespective of these difficulties in finding a reliable, consistent manuscript, translators still require a source text to use for their work. The most commonly used texts for translations of the Old and New Testament are scholarly editions which compare and evaluate textual variants and present a suggested source text to translators.

One popular source text suggestion for the Old Testament is the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) which is published by the German Bible Society (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. [no date]). Notably, the aim of the BHS is *not* to recreate the original Hebrew text, since no complete originals from the earliest times of the Old Testament are currently available (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. [no date]).<sup>74</sup> Nevertheless, as the BHS is a basically “diplomatic” edition,<sup>75</sup> it does record the words of one single manuscript and lists the differences found in other manuscripts separately (Trobisch 2013, p.2).

Hence, I argue that this diplomatic text edition of the Old Testament supports the illusion of one consistent source text which is to be trusted for all

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<sup>73</sup> This could be a possible explanation for the different endings of the gospel of Mark between manuscripts for example, older manuscripts end in chapter 16 verse 8 with an open ending where an angel tells three women that Jesus had risen from the grave and was no longer to be found in the tomb. However, later manuscripts contain a longer ending which include an additional twelve verses. Similarly, the gospel of John contains a passage which is problematic as only younger manuscripts contain a passage that recounts a story of a woman who was caught in adultery (Jn. 7:53 – 8:11).

<sup>74</sup> The manuscript used for the *Codex Leningradensis* which is dated to the year 1008 (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. [no date]). The oldest available Old Testament documents are the complete book of Isaiah and further fragments which were found in a cave at the Dead Sea in 1949 (dated between 150 BC – 70 AD) (BHS :: bibelwissenschaft.de. [no date]). The fragments often include only few words or letters and can thus not be used as reliable source text (BHS :: bibelwissenschaft.de. [no date]).

<sup>75</sup> “Diplomatic” editions follow one manuscript and discrepancies are listed separately; this is opposed to “eclectic” editions, which record a text based on the decisions of a committee concerning which variant is the most likely to be correct (Trobisch 2013, p.2).

translations. The one complete manuscript used is dated nearly 2,000 years after the first written accounts of the Old Testament by Moses. The BHS could be argued to function like a master-signifier in Lacan's Discourse of the Master as it presents itself on the surface as consistent and complete. In Lacan's original discourse, the truth of the master-signifier, the split subject and thus the division by language, remains unconscious. Similarly, the *Codex Leningradensis*, the basis for the BHS, has potentially been copied by hand many times and it is unclear how reliable it is, particularly considering the absence of vowels in the earliest versions.<sup>76</sup> However, this truth would not be obvious and possibly downplayed as the BHS presents one consistent text for the translator. Although a translator of the Bible is likely to be aware of the potential flaws in the source text, he/she is left with few options other than using the text for the translation. Hence, the idea of a completely reliable source text is maintained.

The other option for a suggested source text is an eclectic text of which the New Testament source text suggestion is an example. The available manuscripts for the New Testament are dated nearer to the time their events took place compared to the Old Testament. However, there are also more differences between the different versions. Most contemporary translations are likely to be based on the *UBS Greek New Testament* and the *Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament*. The former is currently available in its 5<sup>th</sup> edition and is according to its product description identical to the 28<sup>th</sup> edition *Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament* (NA28), with the exception of some minor differences in punctuation (UBS Translations | New Testament. [no date]).

This thesis will focus largely on the NA28, since more information on its compilation is publicly available on their website. Its first edition was published in 1898 and it is currently available in its 28<sup>th</sup> edition since 2013 (Nestle Aland Novum Testamentum Graece. The 28<sup>th</sup> Edition. [no date]). The NA28 is targeted primarily at translators and includes the complete New Testament using the most reliable and oldest manuscripts available at the time of being

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<sup>76</sup> The *Codex Leningradensis* is one example of a Masoretic text meaning they included vowel indicators and not only consonants which enabled an easier understanding of the text (BHS :: bibelwissenschaft.de. [no date]).

updated (Nestle Aland Novum Testamentum Graece. The 28th Edition. [no date]). Hence, the production of 28 editions in 115 years is indicative the instability of the New Testament source text(s) used for translation. As mentioned previously, the NA28 is an eclectic text and thus uses and documents the manuscripts based on the decisions made by an international editorial committee (Trobisch 2013, p.2). This committee was commissioned to determine which of the available documents is the oldest and most reliable form of the New Testament (Trobisch 2013, p.2).

The four oldest *complete* manuscripts of the New Testament used for the NA28 are dated around the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century AD (Trobisch 2013, p.20). One problem in evaluating the reliability of ancient manuscripts is the combination of competing readings by their writers (Trobisch 2013, p.22). When scribes and editors noticed the differences between variations of a text, their approach was often to combine and preserve all readings instead of picking one over the other (Trobisch 2013, p.22).<sup>77</sup> One New Testament example is found in Luke 24:53 where some earlier manuscripts use the Greek word *eulogountes* for “blessing” while others use the synonym *ainountes* (Trobisch 2013, p.22). In some of the later manuscripts it appears that scribes used both terms, adding an “and” between them causing translators to search for two different synonyms to use in the target text; for example, the KJV used “praising and blessing” (Trobisch 2013, p.22).

Another problem is the simplification of texts as the historical editors were likely to make a text easier to understand for its readers, or favour the more legible variant of an obscure passage (Trobisch 2013, p.24). Hence, concerning the evaluation of ancient manuscripts, a document which is more difficult to understand may be more likely to be considered reliable and preferred as Source Text for contemporary translations (Trobisch 2013, p.24). Although age is repeatedly mentioned as an important factor when evaluating manuscripts, it would be a mistake to automatically trust the older variant as the reason some of the papyri survived is that they were discarded due to

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<sup>77</sup> This issue is not limited to the Bible but can be encountered in any ancient manuscripts of literary texts (Trobisch 2013, p.23).

errors (Trobisch 2013, p.24). Additionally, early copies are equally likely to contain a scribal error as later manuscripts (Trobisch 2013, p.24).

These issues in evaluating the different manuscripts highlight again the fragmented nature of the original and the eclectic version arguably leaves more possibility for this to be recognised in including different text variants. In case of the New Testament and the eclectic source text the divided nature of the master is particularly interesting since the text is actually divided into different manuscripts. However, as the truth of the master-signifier is hidden from the other, the split of the source text remains “hidden” as translations are likely to be presented in one consistent text in the target language, albeit often with footnotes. The target language as other, similarly to the Master’s Discourse, follows the source text as it is perceived on the surface level while its divided truth remains largely “ignored” in order to create a target text. The textual differences between manuscripts are often marked by footnotes in the translation or other minor indications which do not obstruct the reader. For example, looking at the afore mentioned differences in the ending of Mark’s Gospel, the King James Version includes the longer ending without any annotations. This would be due to the fact that it was written in the 17<sup>th</sup> century but the earliest available manuscripts, which are currently considered to be the most reliable, were only discovered in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Even after the discovery of older, more reliable manuscripts, the KJV remained unedited and only in its intended successor, the New King James Version, the passage is annotated by a footnote that explains:

Verses 9-20 are bracketed in the NU-Text as not original. They are lacking in Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus, although nearly all other manuscripts of Mark contain them (Farstad 2015, p.1033).<sup>78</sup>

This footnote is the only indication towards the difference between manuscripts and is not marked otherwise in the narrative, e.g., by brackets or italics, as in other translations. It may be noted that the NKJV is not a new translation per se but instead is a revision of the KJV, as its language could be considered archaic and difficult to understand for contemporary readers and

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<sup>78</sup> NU-Text refers to the *Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament* and the *United Bible Society’s third edition*.

its source texts are no longer the most reliable. Nevertheless, the revisions concerning the actual content of the KJV based on recent discoveries are very unobtrusive and may be difficult to notice for the average reader. Furthermore, even though the NKJV notes that the longer ending was not part of two manuscripts, it emphasises the fact that most manuscripts do include it. Arguably, this could be seen to defend the legitimacy of the KJV's version of the Scripture. A possible reason behind this may be that an open acknowledgement of the fallibility of one of the most prestigious and popular English translations may equally challenge the superiority of the source text and thereby the Bible as a concept. Many readers may not be aware of the wide range of manuscripts which are used for Bible translations. It could even be argued that the significance of "the Bible" is found primarily in its name instead of its actual textual material. Therefore, discarding one translation which has been used by (English speaking) Christian for generations may destabilise the gravity of the signifier "the Bible".

Compared to the KJV and the NKJV, in the edition of the English Standard Version (ESV), the translators mark the ending of Mark by including an insertion in the main text after verse eight:

[Some of the earliest manuscripts do not include 16:9–20.] (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version* 2016, p.946)

This brief commentary is further annotated with a footnote pointing the reader towards the preface which states concerning Mark 16 that most manuscripts do not contain these verses and that further information is available in the ESV Study Bible or the more detailed preface to the standard edition of the ESV available online (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version* 2016, p.xi).

The remainder of Mark 16 is placed in double square brackets but remains in the same type face as the main text without further highlighting. Arguably, unless the reader pays attention to the brief insertion after verse eight, he/she may remain oblivious to the fact that the source texts used for the translation are inconsistent concerning this passage. This would be consistent with the Master's Discourse in the sense that it could be seen as an attempt to hide the underlying truth of the source text as fallible subject to language. In comparison, the New International Version (NIV) uses italics to highlight this

passage in addition to a similar comment and footnote and separates it from the first part of the chapter with a horizontal line.

The same applies to two other passages, John 7:53–8:11 and Psalm 145:13, mentioned in the preface of the ESV. The passage from the gospel of John is a story where Jesus is asked by Jewish scribes and Pharisees to judge a woman who was caught in adultery. The manuscripts vary in where this story is placed in the New Testament, while some manuscripts include this account in John chapter seven or 21, others include in it the gospel of Luke in chapter 21 or 24 (*The Holy Bible. New International Version* 2011, p.730).

In summary, I suggest that in these translations the tendency to conceal ambiguity between the different manuscripts and thus the instability of the source text can be understood as features similar to the adapted Master's Discourse pattern. This concealment may range from a complete absence of acknowledgement regarding differences between manuscripts to diminutive or inconspicuous footnotes or marginal notes. Other versions or translations which acknowledge or even highlight variations between manuscripts may be more akin to processes seen in the Hysteric's Discourse.

When discussing the hidden truth of the source text as divided or inconsistent, it should also be noted that the original is written in three different languages. The Old Testament is written in Hebrew and Aramaic, and the New Testament is written in Greek. Hence, the source text is not only physically divided into multiple different manuscripts but also divided into different languages. In the following section of this chapter, it will be discussed how these inconsistencies in the original are rendered in the layout of translations associated with the pattern of the Master's Discourse. That is, it will be highlighted how the layout of the translations can be argued to disguise the original's inconsistencies.

### **3.3.4 Layout**

In this chapter, I argue that translations which display features that are similar to the Master's Discourse may try to conceal the previously discussed inconsistencies in the source texts as much as possible. One example I will discuss in this section is how translators may not highlight those instances where the manuscripts divert from each other or only indicate them in a covert



way. One feature may be the layout of the target text. Often, the main text is included in standard script and there are some annotations or marginal notes in diminutive footnotes which explain certain ambiguities or stylistic effects such as homophony.

One of the commonly found annotations relates to stylistic elements such as phonetic similarities which are often mentioned in a footnote stating “[...] sounds like [...]”. The print of the English Standard Version (ESV) used here is one example of a translation with particularly few footnotes similar to the King James Version (KJV) (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version 2016*; Bancroft 2018).<sup>79</sup> The KJV print used here includes little to no footnotes, which was one of the conditions set in King James’s commission of the translation (see Greenslade 1963, pp.165–166).<sup>80</sup> The NKJV on the other hand acknowledges some of the differences which can be found in the different Biblical manuscripts used as source texts. As the intended successor of the KJV, the objective of the NKJV was to make the language of the KJV more accessible to modern readers and update the translation where necessary. As such, its translators refer to an approach of “complete equivalence” (Farstad 2015). Overall, the NKJV follows its predecessor in its main narrative and therefore favours the sources used by the KJV translators over the more recently discovered older manuscripts. Differences between the KJV and the currently accepted Bible text to be translated are only mentioned in footnotes.

To showcase some of the above-mentioned characteristics of the layout of the NKJV, the KJV and the ESV, I include below abstracts of the same Bible passage. Out of these three versions, only the NKJV includes two footnotes which acknowledge inconsistencies between the available Hebrew

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<sup>79</sup> The preface to the ESV explains that it is an essentially literal translation which follows the “word-for-word” approach in order to best render what the Bible says and how it is said (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version 2016*, pp.ix–x). I am using the 2016 edition of the ESV published by Crossway based on the availability to me. In the preface of this edition it is mentioned that the standard edition is also available with a more detailed preface which discusses the translation choices and a fuller set of textual notes which is available online at [esv.org](http://esv.org) (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version 2016*, p.xi). Furthermore, the *ESV Study Bible* is mentioned to also discuss translation choices in further detail (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version 2016*).

<sup>80</sup> However, it should be noted that the original 1611 KJV does include marginal notes despite the condition set by King James (see King James Bible Margin Notes. [no date]).

manuscripts whereas both KJV and ESV omit this information. The verses from the passage this relates to are Genesis 6:3 and 6:5:

Table 3: Genesis 6:3&5 in KJV, NKJV, and ESV

	King James Version	New King James Version	English Standard Version
Main Text	<sup>3</sup> And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always <i>strive</i> with man, for that he also <i>is</i> flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. [...] <sup>5</sup> And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and <i>that</i> every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.	<sup>3</sup> And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not <i>strive</i> <sup>a</sup> with man forever, for he <i>is</i> indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." [...] <sup>5</sup> Then the LORD <sup>a</sup> saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and <i>that</i> very intent of the thoughts of his thoughts was only evil continually.	<sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not <i>abide</i> in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." [...] <sup>5</sup> The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
Footnotes		6:3 <sup>a</sup> Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate read <i>abide</i> . 6:5 <sup>a</sup> Following Masoretic Text and Targum; Vulgate reads <i>God</i> ; Septuagint reads <i>LORD God</i> .	
	(Bancroft 2018, p.8 my italics)	(Farstad 2015, p.6 my italics)	( <i>The Holy Bible. English Standard Version</i> 2016, p.5 my italics)

These particular editions of the ESV and KJV can be argued to create the illusion of a consistent and definitive source text. The NKJV on the other hand acknowledges the existence of further manuscripts and divergences between those source texts. Overall, as stated previously, footnotes are particularly scarce in this print of the KJV which was one of the conditions set by its commissioner King James. Furthermore, there were fewer manuscripts available at the time of its production and the more recent edition used here has not updated the translation, for example with footnotes or other annotations and marginal notes. Arguably, this would be picked up by the NKJV as it was intended to be its successor.

The ESV on the other hand does include some footnotes, however, this edition appears to focus primarily on information the target language is unable to convey adequately, such as sound effects. For example, in Genesis 5:29, the ESV explains in a footnote that the name “Noah” sounds like “relief” in the original language and in Genesis 6:4 it is added that “Nephilim” could also be translated as “giants” (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version* 2016, p.5). Often, the names of people and places in the Biblical text either have a meaning that relates to their story or sound similar to a word which is meaningful for their life. For example, the place “Nod” means “wandering” and refers to the place where Cain settled after killing his brother Abel and being cursed by God to be “a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth” (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version* 2016, p.4).<sup>81</sup> Other footnotes refer to semiotic limitations in the target language, e.g., the Hebrew term *adam*, which is traditionally translated as “man,” includes women as well, whereas the English term does not (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version* 2016, pp.1–5).<sup>82</sup>

When looking at passages where the source language differs, i.e., parts of Ezra and Daniel in the Old Testament and the shift to Greek between the Old and the New Testament, it can be seen that the KJV does not acknowledge these changes at all. The NKJV does include a footnote in the relevant sections of the Old Testament indicating that the passages Ezra 4:8–6:18 and Daniel 2:4–7:28 are originally Aramaic (Farstad 2015, pp.472, 888). However, the shift from Hebrew to Greek between the end of the Old Testament and the New Testament is only indicated implicitly, when footnotes refer to a Greek source text instead of a Hebrew one. The ESV includes a brief introductory section before the New Testament which explains some of the background but also that the New Testament is written in Greek instead of Hebrew (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version* 2016, pp.893–894). In the Old Testament on the other hand only the passage in Daniel includes a footnote to mention the linguistic shift while it is not mentioned in Ezra (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version* 2016, pp.431, 822). The reason may be that in Daniel, the text states explicitly that the people of the story are speaking in Aramaic,

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<sup>81</sup> See footnote in the ESV (*The Holy Bible. English Standard Version* 2016, p.4).

<sup>82</sup> The gender issues involved in English Bible translations of the creation of man will be discussed further in chapter 4.

whereas in Ezra the text indicates that a letter was written in Aramaic but then translated (Ezr. 4:7, Dan. 2:4).<sup>83</sup>

Similar to the adapted version of Lacan's Master's Discourse, the absence of footnotes in the KJV arguably gives the text a layout suggesting a consistent source text which can be transported seamlessly and unobtrusively into another language. The text appears to be cohesive, without any form of interruption which arguably puts it into a position of authority, representing the image of a unitary original for the target text reader. The KJV may possibly be the translation many English speakers may imagine when hearing the word "Bible". Despite the existence of a revised version of this translation, a survey from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association (ECPA) suggests that the KJV was the second most popular translation in December 2018 despite its age (ECPA Bible Translations Bestsellers, Best of 2018. [no date]). Considering the dated language of the KJV and the absence of important manuscripts, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls which were only discovered in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, it could be assumed that it would be replaced by more recent translations. However, possibly due to the authority placed on it by generations of Christians it appears to remain one of the favourite representations of the word of God for the English reader.

The ESV could be argued to emphasise the authority of the source text in the lack of references to the inconsistencies between manuscripts. Instead, the footnotes highlight the inadequacy of the target language and aim to atone for the shortcomings of the translation. For example, the footnotes indicate the missing sound effects, ambiguities, or cultural elements which are pertinent to understanding the message of the source text. The relative scarcity of footnotes in comparison to other translations (e.g., NLT, NIV) has a similar effect as the KJV as it creates the illusion of the original's authority, consistency, and reliability.

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<sup>83</sup>[...] The letter was written in Aramaic and translated. Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king as follows: [...] (Ezra 4:7-8, ESV). "Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic [,,]" (Daniel 2:4, ESV).

One other edition of the ESV to be discussed here in terms of its layout is its interlinear Old Testament.<sup>84</sup> In this version, there is an English word-for-word translation below the Hebrew original (Figure 25). It should be noted that a radical word-for-word translation such as this lends itself to an analysis in terms of the adapted Master’s Discourse in itself as it strictly follows the linguistic “law” of the source text. In this section of the chapter however, I want to focus primarily on the layout of this interlinear translation and how it exhibits features similar to the adapted Master’s Discourse.

<sup>3</sup>וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לֹא יָדוֹן רוּחִי בָאָדָם לְעֹלָם בְּשָׁגֵם  
 in-that-also for-eternity in-the-man Spirit-of-me he-shall-abide not Yahweh then-he-said  
 הוּא בָשָׂר וְהָיוּ יָמָיו מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה: <sup>4</sup>הַנְּפִלִים  
 the-Nephilim year and-twenty hundred days-of-him and-they-will-be flesh he  
 הָיוּ בָאָרֶץ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם וְגַם אַחֲרָיֶהּ כֵּן אָשֶׁר יָבֹאוּ  
 they-came-in when thus after and-also the-those in-the-days on-the-earth they-were  
 בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל-בָּנוֹת הָאָדָם וַיִּלְדוּ לָהֶם הֵמָּה  
 these to-them and-they-bore-children the-man daughters-of to the-God sons-of  
 הַגִּבּוֹרִים אֲשֶׁר מֵעוֹלָם אֲנָשֵׁי הַשָּׁם: <sup>5</sup>וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה כִּי  
 that Yahweh and-he-saw the-name men-of from-ancient-time which the-mighty-ones  
 רַבָּה רָעַת הָאָדָם בָּאָרֶץ וְכָל-יִצְרָל מַחְשַׁבֹת  
 thoughts-of inclination-of and-every-of in-the-earth the-man evil-of great  
 לְבָבוֹ רַק רָע כָּל-הַיּוֹם: <sup>6</sup>וַיִּנְחַם יְהוָה כִּי עָשָׂה אֶת-  
 — he-had-made that Yahweh and-he-regretted the-day all-of evil only heart-of-him

Figure 25: Genesis 6:3-6 (The Hebrew-English Interlinear ESV Old Testament. Biblia Hebraica and English Standard Version 2014, pp.11-12)

The abstract in Figure 25 highlights the incompatibility of Hebrew and English on an absolute word-for-word level of translation. The first obvious difference is the direction of the text. While English moves from left to right, Hebrew moves from right to left which is an initial hurdle for a reader of interlinear translations. According to western norms the text of verse three and five would be read as:

<sup>3</sup>Then-he-said Yahweh not he-shall-abide Spirit-of-me in-the-man for-eternity in-that-also he flesh and-they-will days-of-him hundred and-twenty year [...]. <sup>5</sup>and-he-saw Yahweh that great evil-of the-man in-

<sup>84</sup> The New Testament is also available as interlinear translation, following a similar layout. However, the version referenced here uses the New Testament translation of the Revised Standard Version instead of the ESV in the parallel column (Douglas 1990).

the-earth and-every-of inclination-of thoughts-of heart-of-him only evil all-of the-day (Gen. 6:3&5; pp.10-11) (*The Hebrew-English Interlinear ESV Old Testament. Biblia Hebraica and English Standard Version* 2014, pp.11–12)

The second issue which can be seen in this abstract is that often it takes two or three English words to render one Hebrew word. The translators may have been able to compromise here by adding hyphens in between the English components used to translate a single Hebrew word but if the translators were to produce a text that reads fluently, these needed to be eliminated. This can be seen in the column next to this interlinear translation, where the publishers included the official ESV translation of the passages (Figure 26):



Figure 26: Genesis 6:4-6, incl. ESV translation (*The Hebrew-English Interlinear ESV Old Testament. Biblia Hebraica and English Standard Version* 2014, p.12)

This type of translation is possibly one of the most transparent ones since the reader can re-enact the translators’ path from the source text to the translation. The interlinear translation is particularly similar to the transparent translation proposed by Walter Benjamin. Similarities to Lacan’s Discourse of the Master become visible here in different areas, such as the size of the script. The Hebrew source text is here explicitly foregrounded as its font is much bigger than the diminutive script of the target language correspondents. The proposed narrative translation, on the other hand, takes up less than a third of the page and is printed in equally small font as the correspondents below the Hebrew with little spacing between the lines. This layout arguably emphasises the importance of the source text as highlighted in the adapted discourse structure, and the target language has to be adapted to fit the source language.

The final target language narrative appears only as a reference point in the margin to aid the readers understanding.

Another similarity with the Master's Discourse is the illusion of (more or less) singular correspondents for each Hebrew term. For example, the Hebrew term *wəyāləḏū* found in Figure 26 in the third row, here translated as "and-they-bore-children", could according to Strong's Concordance be translated as "to bear, bring forth, beget". Choosing another one of these options arguably would not change the meaning, however, the point remains, that there is no singular solution to every signifier of the source text. In other words, this interlinear translation may create the illusion that there are definite, singular English solutions to the Hebrew source text.

To sum up, it was argued that the translations used in this section, supported the illusion of a definitive source text by creating a target text that included as little indicators towards uncertainties in the manuscripts as possible. Rather, these translations included relatively few footnotes and passages like the longer ending of Mark are marked in such a way that is not obvious to readers. In addition to this, the interlinear translation highlighted the superiority of the original in the size of the script. Arguably, this particular translation would be the best example for a translation process that strictly follows a pattern like that of the Master's Discourse as the original dictates exactly the order of the words as well as the sentence structure. Most importantly in relation to the Master's Discourse is here the attempt to disguise uncertainties in the source text as well as possible and to highlight its importance compared to the translation.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The present chapter has highlighted different areas in which translation and its reception can be seen to follow the structure of the Master's Discourse. One example I discussed were instances, where translators place the original on a pedestal and arrange the target language to suit the linguistic framework of the source text instead of aiming to produce a natural sounding text. In the case of Bible translation, I further highlighted patterns in the translations' layouts as well as in the history of Bible translation.

In the first instance, I discussed translation theories and approaches which highlight the need for the target language to adapt to the source text's structure of wording. In these cases, I suggested that the original takes on the role of dominant "master" over the target language and thus the translation, while the target language takes on the role of "slave" similar to the relationship between agent and other in Lacan's original discourse pattern. As such, I argued that the source text stipulates the law of the translation in its linguistic framework.

Furthermore, I argued that similarly to the split subject as underlying truth of the master-signifier, the translator can be seen to be the hidden truth of the original as it is his/her (biased) understanding of the text that is rendered in the translation. Another way in which the translator as underlying truth of the original could be understood is that the original is itself a translation. In other words, it could be argued that any text is divided by language and does not fully resemble what it was intended to mean, and as such it is inherently ambiguous.

In Lacan's original discourse, the truth is unconscious or repressed. Similarly, in translation, the ambiguity of the original has to be accepted and ignored to some degree in order to produce a translation. This means that translators often have to prioritise one understanding of the original because its ambiguity cannot be completely retained. However, in this chapter I suggested that these instances where translators have to prioritise are largely concealed, and instead a text is presented which portrays the image of a definitive and authoritative rendering of the original. This was discussed in particular in the context of the layout of translations, such as the presence of footnotes and marginal notes.

If, following Lacan's original discourses, the hidden truth of the master(-signifier) was to become known to the slave this may lead to the slave becoming hysterical and beginning to question the master's authority. This scenario is illustrated by Lacan in his *Discourse of the Hysteric*, which will be discussed in the next chapter.



I argue that, while in Lacan's discourse the hysterical subject questions and challenges the master, in translation the translator tends to question or overanalyse the original text after becoming aware of its ambiguity.

## 4. The Hysteric's Discourse

### 4.1 Introduction

#### 4.1.1 Overview

Based on Lacan's quarter turn rotation, the discourse following that of the Master, which I discussed in the previous chapter, is the Discourse of the Hysteric. This structure may occur when a Master's Discourse becomes problematic, for example if the subject realises the lack and imperfection in the master and begins questioning its essence and position as agent. The pattern of the Hysteric's Discourse describes this process of questioning by placing the subject in position of agent and the master-signifier in position of other.

As introduced in the Theoretical Framework, the subject's interrogation of the master is driven by the unconscious object of desire. This is split between a conscious and an unconscious dimension. Consciously, it is the wish to acquire that which the other (the master) desires and thereby surpass them. On the unconscious level on the other hand, the subject wants to *become* the object of the other's desire. This is an important dichotomy that marks Lacan's Hysteric's Discourse and will be discussed further later in this chapter in the context of translation.

In the present chapter, I will argue that a similar structure to that of the Hysteric's Discourse can be found in the process of translation where the translator questions the original text's meaning. I would like to highlight here that my use of the Discourse of the Hysteric is not connected to pathological views of hysteria. In this thesis, I am borrowing the term and Lacan's discourse pattern to look at some translation processes, theories, and practices in translation. Looking at hysteria not as a mental illness but as a discourse structure by distinguishing between pathological and normal hysteria, it can be seen to exhibit traits of speech in general (Wajeman 2003, p.82). Gérard Wajeman writes that "drastically put: the speaking subject is hysterical as such" (Wajeman 2003, p.82).<sup>85</sup> Hence, the Hysteric's Discourse pattern could be

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<sup>85</sup> Wajeman continues that "As formalized by Lacan, the discourse of the hysteric accounts for historic and clinical hysteria; for the position of the speaking subject as such; and even for

understood to be a common pattern to be found in language as such instead of being limited to an occurrence in mental illness.

The following exploration of Lacan's discourse in context of translation will consist of two parts: a more theoretical investigation of translation structures similar to the Discourse of the Hysteric, and a more specific analysis of patterns in Bible translation in the context of this discourse. First, the theoretical part will elaborate on the application of translation terminology to Lacan's discourse pattern that was briefly introduced in the Methodology. This will form the basis of an examination of similar structures in translation processes, research, and approaches. This includes examples from theories by Jacques Derrida, Rosemary Arrojo, Serge Gavronksy, Eugene Nida, and the topic of *les Belles Infidèles*. As will be discussed in this chapter, the theories used here display patterns that are similar to Lacan's discourse in the way they approach the source text, use the target language, or highlight the importance of knowledge. The ideas from Derrida and Arrojo discussed here relate mostly to their work in conjunction with deconstructionist views of translation which question the stability of language in itself and as such highlight the ambiguity of the original. Gavronsky was already introduced previously in the Literature Review and the Master's Discourse. Here, I will discuss the counterpart to his pious translator (discussed in the Master's Discourse) which is the cannibalist translator who is described to "devour" the original to create a new translation. *Les Belles Infidèles* will be looked at as a historical example of a type of translation which may be the result of these "cannibalist" translators. *Les Belles Infidèles* are translations, which are said to be too beautiful to be faithful to the source text, as the translators have placed their primary focus on creating a translation that is pleasant to their readers instead of accurately rendering every element of the original.

The second section of this chapter will focus on the area of Bible Translation, beginning with Eugene Nida's idea of "dynamic equivalence" which focuses less on the formal elements of the original.<sup>86</sup> Rather, the primary focus lies on

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language patterns that seem far removed from hysteria in the strict sense of the term" (Wajeman 2003, pp.82–83).

<sup>86</sup> The counterpart to dynamic equivalence as developed by Nida is "formal equivalence", where a translator "is concerned with such correspondences as poetry to poetry, sentence to

conveying the dynamics between the original and its reader and creating a similar relationship between the translation and its reader. While Nida's approaches are applicable to any type of translation, he makes frequent references to the area of Bible translation. This is why I will include him, including his works with Charles R Taber, in the section focusing on this area in particular. I will then look further at different target texts and their prefaces to highlight some similarities to the Hysteric's Discourse. This will primarily include the *New Living Translation* and *The Voice*. Following this, I will look at selected feminist approaches to Bible translation. In this respect, I will discuss aspects and issues such as gender neutrality, the use of inclusive language, and historical and cultural context.

#### 4.1.2 Theoretical Application

Lacan's Discourse of the Hysteric is one of the four discourses which he

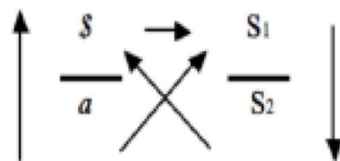


Figure 27: *The Hysteric's Discourse* (Vanheule 2016, p.30)

introduced in Seminar XVII as following from the Discourse of the Master. As discussed in the Theoretical Framework, in this pattern the split subject (\$) is in the position of agency, i.e., in the top left corner. The unconscious truth, which drives his/her action is the object of desire (*a*) in the bottom left. This influence is symbolised by the upwards arrow on the left-hand side. It causes the subject to address the other on the top right corner, here the master-signifier (*S*<sub>1</sub>). The downwards arrow on the right-hand side indicates that this address prompts the master-signifier to produce some form of knowledge (*S*<sub>2</sub>).

Two important factors regarding “knowledge” in this discourse are its position on the unconscious level and the missing connection to the object of desire. Firstly, the product's position on the unconscious level means it is outside the other's “control”. In other words, the master is unable to fully know what the subject learns from the provided answer (i.e., knowledge). A similar situation can be experienced in everyday conversations, where the speaker cannot completely control how their interlocutor understands or interprets what was

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sentence, and concept to concept. [...] one is concerned that the message in the receptor language should match as closely as possible the different elements in the source language” (Nida 2012, p.144).

said. Hence, the product which the subject receives may not be the same product the other intended to provide. Secondly, the fact that knowledge ( $S_2$ ) is unable to form a functional relationship with the object of desire means that it cannot satisfy the underlying motivation of the discourse. That is, the product of the discourse cannot coincide with its truth, i.e., the driving motive. Here, this means that knowledge cannot be the object of desire or, put differently, the object of desire cannot be known.

The predicament of the split subject is that it is essentially a subject who is alienated from him-/herself via language, which means that he/she can never fully grasp who he/she is, insofar as identity is delivered and supported by language as other. The master-signifier on the other hand is perceived as bearer of identity. It is a metaphorical “full stop” which concludes a chain of associations. For the split subject to be agent means that he/she is at least partially aware of a lack in the master-signifier as identity-bearer. This leads the subject to question its very essence. The subject in this discourse is caught between his/her unconscious desire for the master and the conscious revelation of the master’s imperfection. Therefore, the hysterical subject is likely to get caught in contradictions, e.g., between the urge to fill the master’s lack in order to be desired and the conscious wish to defile the master. It is important to bear in mind in this context that, like in the previous chapter, the master-signifier still holds the position of “master” while the split subject is the “slave” who in this discourse “rebels” by pointing towards all the inconsistencies of the master. On the conscious level, this appears to be a subversive attitude of the subject towards the master. However, on the unconscious level, the aim of the discourse is for the subject to be recognised and desired by a holder of authority. This is indicated by the unconscious truth of the subject, which is the object of desire, and desire is always the desire of the other, according to Lacan (Lacan 2006, p.690).<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Lacan writes that “le désir de l’homme est le désir de l’Autre” (Lacan 2006, p.690).

Concerning identity, Wajeman states that in the Hysteric's Discourse one can see the symbolic dependence of the subject on the other and illustrates this as shown in Figure 28 (Wajeman 2003, p.84). On the surface, the subject



Figure 28: *Hysteric's Discourse Outline* (Wajeman 2003, p.84)

appears to be in control of the discourse, making the other respond to his/her questioning (Wajeman 2003, p.84). However, the schema highlights that the subject remains dependent on the other:

He/she asks the other, "who am I?" and receives the response "you are who I say" (Wajeman 2003, p.84). Furthermore, I would like to point out that "who I am" (i.e., the subject's truth) is not the same as what the other says the subject is ("who you say I am"). Since there is a mismatch between the driving truth and the answer provided by the other, the hysteric subject's questioning continues.

The present chapter will reveal a similar type of structure to be a common pattern in translation. I would also suggest that a translation process with the translator as a divided subject in the position of agent may result in a divided target text. By this I mean that because the translator is torn between the source text and the target language, the resulting translation may reflect this division through its inconsistencies and contradictions. One possible way this may happen is, for example, when in a literary text a character makes explicit reference to the language he/she is speaking. Depending on the translator's approach, this could result in a contradiction if a character were to say in English that they are speaking German.<sup>88</sup>

The Discourse of the Hysteric can help to illustrate a possible cognitive process where the product is the target language and/or the other's knowledge about the original and its context. The creation of a target text or an academic piece on translation would be the overarching aim of a discourse in which the translator or scholar attempts to work with the received information to recreate the original in the target language or, for example, reflect on a translation.

<sup>88</sup> Theo Hermans discusses an example of this type of issue in his text "The Translator's Voice in Translated Narrative" (Hermans 2009).

As it was introduced in the Methodology, applying translation terminology to

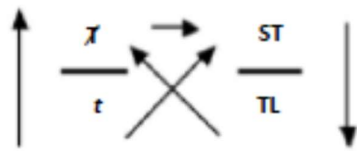


Figure 29: Adapted Hysteric's Discourse

Lacan's Discourse of the Hysteric (Figure 29) places the translator ( $\mathcal{X}$ ) in the position of the agent. He/she is influenced by the object of desire, i.e., the translation ( $t$ ). The translation is found in the position of unconscious or impossible truth. He/she addresses and questions the source text (ST), in order to gain knowledge of the appropriate signifiers in the target language (TL). It becomes clear that, compared to translations following the Discourse of the Master, the emphasis shifts from source text to translator. Thus, the previous "master  $\rightarrow$  slave" relationship is reverted into a "slave  $\rightarrow$  master" relationship. I suggest that this presents one possible progression of a translator whose approaches were based on an underlying Master's Discourse.<sup>89</sup> This translator may have realised some inconsistencies or ambiguities in the source text which he/she could not easily translate. In trying to define the original's meaning, the translator may then have become increasingly aware of the uncertainty of meaning, leading to continuous questions towards the source text. For example, these questions may be "what is your point? What do you want? What is your intention?" A "hysteric" translator may search the source text for gaps and inconsistencies to support a view of an imperfect source text or with the aim to improve those instances in the translation. However, on some level, the translation remains tied to the original's authority, which can be seen in the simple fact that the translation chronologically comes after the original. A translation can only result out of a source text, regardless of its approach and reception by the readership. Even those translations discussed here, which could be connoted as "unfaithful" because of the creative freedom applied by the translators, remain rooted in an original which prompted their creation.

Despite the translation's roots in the source text, in the Hysteric's Discourse, the exact wording and structure of the source text are no longer a form of sacred scaffolding which has to be retained at the expense of the target

<sup>89</sup> While this can be the case for the translator of the Master's and Hysteric's Discourse, there is not necessarily a chronological progression from one discourse to the other.

language, as it happens in the Discourse of the Master. Furthermore, because, for a translator of the Hysteric's Discourse (pattern), meaning has lost its stability, the entire text may no longer be an "inviolable" object. In other words, the preservation of the original's "sanctity" is not the translator's driving motive. Instead, he/she is led by his/her own desire for a perfect translation which is hoped to be fulfilled via the target language produced by the interrogation of the source text.<sup>90</sup> Of course, this discussion offers only a theoretical exploration and does not aim to suggest that the translators or researchers mentioned in this chapter attempt to "defile" the source text. The conscious motives that guide their analysis will be very personal and may not correspond completely to this application of Lacan's theories. The primary focus of this thesis lies with the structure of Lacan's discourses and how they can offer a new way of looking at the different relations at work in the translation process.

As mentioned before, even though the hysterical subject (\$) is driven by the object of desire (a), he/she is also unaware of what this truly is. Lacan writes that "the hysteric fabricate[s] a man as best she can – a man who would be animated by the desire to know" (Lacan 2007, p.34).<sup>91</sup> In other words, the subject creates a master in position of other whose desire it is to know. Lacan bases this on the idea that in the Master's Discourse the master "has slowly defrauded the slave of his knowledge and turned it into the master's knowledge" (Lacan 2007, p.34). Using the structure of the Hysteric's Discourse to look at translation means that the translator ( $\mathcal{X}$ ) is driven by the desire for a perfect translation (t). In other words, the aim to produce a perfect translation motivates the translator to question and analyse the original for a way to convey it completely in the target language.

As mentioned previously, Lacan states that desire is the desire of the other (Lacan 2006, p.690). Similarly, a translation (as object of desire) most likely originates in the other (the source text) or at least it is deeply connected to it.

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<sup>90</sup> This pleasure is not unlike the one mentioned by Gavronsky, when he writes about the hidden pleasure of "touching" the mother text (Gavronsky 1977). However, the hysterical translator is much more aggressive and focused on his/her own pleasure than the "pious" translator, who almost represses the forbidden pleasure of his/her own creativity.

<sup>91</sup> Lacan writes this in context of relations between man and woman. He also uses the female pronoun "she" to refer to the hysterical subject throughout his texts, but explicitly mentions that hysteria is not limited to women (Lacan 2007, p.33).



For example, a translation is tied to the original in its structure and meaning but also in its perceived “desire” to reach a wider audience outside the source language. In a hypothetical situation where the desire of the other is having an impact on the readership, this could mean at least two different things according to Lacan’s notion of desire. Firstly, that the translator’s desire is the same desire as that of the other, i.e., to attain a certain significance for the readership; or, secondly, it may be that the translator desires to be desirable to the other. In other words, this hypothetical translation may desire to be desired by the readership (like the original), or to be desirable to the source text. Lacan’s hysterical subject is ultimately divided between those two desires. The first often includes a disregard for the master and an urge to challenge or even destroy them, while the unconscious desire is to turn into the object that would provide full satisfaction to the master. Lacan writes that:

What hysterics ultimately want one to know is that language runs off the rails concerning the magnitude of what she as woman is capable of revealing concerning *jouissance*. But this is not what matters to the hysteric. What matters to her is that that other called a man know what a precious object she becomes in this context of discourse (Lacan 2007, p.34 original emphasis).

Similarly, a translator may be torn between the unconscious desire to complete the source text with a translation on one hand, and the conscious wish to highlight or fix the original’s imperfections on the other hand, and thus to surpass it. A translator may analyse and dissect the source text and question its meaning, consistency, and intentions similarly to the hysterical subject’s questioning of the master. As a result, Lacan’s split subject receives some form of knowledge, while the translator, or translation scholar, receives possible target language signifiers or information respectively. Furthermore, Lacan’s discourse suggests that the other is affected by the same truth as the agent; this means that the translator’s analysis of the source text is undermined by his/her desire. Therefore, the target language signifiers will never truly be able to resemble the perfect translation because the analysis was already biased. A translator’s understanding of the original is likely to support his/her feelings and desire to provide *the* translation, even if this includes errors or excludes other interpretations. An example of this may be

Freud's mistranslation of *nibio* as Geier [vulture], which was discussed by Alan Bass (Bass 1985).<sup>92</sup>

The incongruity between the target language and the desired translation can

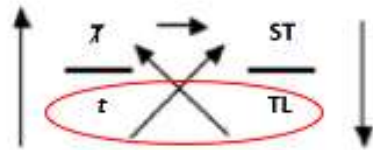


Figure 30: Adapted Hysteric's Discourse, missing connection between translation and translator

be found on the bottom half of the adapted discourse structure in the absence of an arrow between *t* and TL (Figure 30). This disconnection may be amplified when the original's structure and wording lose their authority over the translator and thus the translation process.

Hence, this hysterical translation may be one of rewriting, where the translator enjoys the creative writing process instead of aiming to transcribe the original word for word. The final translation received by the new readership would be one possible approximation of the source text.<sup>93</sup>

Let us briefly summarise the above by using the example of a translator. The structure of the Hysteric's Discourse adapted to translation describes the work of a translator or translation scholar who questions and analyses the source text. The product of this analysis is a collection of target language signifiers which correspond to the structure and content of the original. The driving motor behind this process is the translation as the object of the translator's desire. Importantly, in this structure the target language and the hypothetical perfect translation cannot directly connect. In other words, the target language is unable to provide the translator with the means for the outcome that he/she desires.

## 4.2 The Hysteric's Discourse Pattern in Translation

In this section, I will discuss different examples to illustrate the theories previously introduced. In this first part of the analysis of patterns in translation, I will draw on some examples from Translation Studies in general. This

<sup>92</sup> This text was discussed in more detail in the Literature Review.

<sup>93</sup> It may be noted that to a degree every translation is an approximation, as every language is shaped uniquely by its speakers. Hence it would be unlikely for signifiers of two different languages to share the same meaning, use, and connotations. However, I would further argue that this is particularly prominent in translations showing traits of the Hysteric's Discourse pattern.

includes theories from Jacques Derrida and Rosemary Arrojo who are both discussed here as scholars engaged with the area of Deconstruction. Derrida and Arrojo have both published research which combines deconstruction with translation some of which will be explored here in relation to the Hysteric's Discourse (Derrida 1985; Arrojo 1998; Arrojo 2012; Derrida 2012). After this, I will discuss the idea of a "cannibalistic translator" which was introduced in Serge Gavronsky's paper "The Translator: From Piety to Cannibalism" (Gavronsky 1977).<sup>94</sup> Following this I will focus on the concept of *les Belles Infidèles* (Levi 2000) and its similarities with Lacan's Discourse of the Hysteric.

In the second part of this section, I will look at examples from the area of Bible translation more specifically. This will include Eugene Nida and Charles R Taber's dynamic equivalence as they placed strong influence on Bible translation and are often referenced in the prefaces of Bible translations. One example discussed here which applies Nida's theories is the *New Living Translation* (NLT). I will also discuss a translation called *The Voice*, which uses an approach the translators and editors of this text termed "contextual equivalence" (Bell et al. 2012, p.xix). Following the examples from existing Bible translations, I will look at some of the research on the Bible and its translation from the feminist movement. The theories I am using for this analysis focus primarily on the use of inclusive and gender-neutral language, as well as the depiction of women in Bible.

### *Deconstruction*

The deconstructionist movement in translation provides a good example of the tendencies that can be observed in Lacan's Discourse of the Hysteric, as deconstruction entails the questioning of language and meaning in itself. I will focus predominantly on deconstructionist theories as they relate to translation. This includes some ideas of Jacques Derrida, who coined the term "deconstruction" in the late 1960s, and Rosemary Arrojo, who is a well-known contemporary scholar within translation studies. The *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies* states that deconstruction questions the

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<sup>94</sup> The text was introduced in the Literature Review and Gavronsky's idea of a "pious" translator which he contrasts with the cannibalistic translator was discussed in the previous chapter.

view of traditional Western philosophy that meaning can exist outside and before language, instead, meaning is seen as an *effect* of language (Davis 2011, p.74). Yet, translation is not considered impossible. Rather, “the work of deconstruction shows that the *limit* of language, which prevents pure meaning and total translation, is also precisely what makes translation possible in the first place, since this limit ensures that meaning can never be absolute, closed off, or shut down” (Davis 2011, p.74 original emphasis). In other words, translation can exist and thrive because meaning is unstable. If the meaning of a text cannot be definitive or absolute, translations take place and potentially continue endlessly, for example in retranslations.

Jacques Derrida was a leading scholar in the deconstructionist movement. Derrida repeatedly ties together his theory of deconstruction and translation. In doing so, he often draws on the Biblical story of the tower of Babel and Walter Benjamin’s “Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers”. As I will show here, Derrida’s assessments of translation relate well to some of the elements which can be observed in the Discourse of the Hysteric and the application of this pattern to translation.

It was previously mentioned that a hysterical subject is likely to contradict him-/herself due to the contradicting desire to be desirable to the Other, and the conscious questioning of its authority or essence. A contradictory element in translation could be seen in Derrida’s statement about translatability and untranslatability. He states that “I don’t believe that anything can ever be untranslatable – or, moreover, translatable” (Derrida 2012, p.369). This could be seen as an indicator of a tension between resistance towards the other and a wish to be desirable, which is similar to that present in the Hysteric’s Discourse. The hysterical subject is torn between the wish to overcome the master and his/her desire the same. Consequently, neither is entirely possible to the point of satisfaction. Translation, as Derrida describes it, can be seen to be torn between a resistance that causes untranslatability on the one hand and the desire for the original to be rendered in the target language on the other. However, neither extreme – complete untranslatability and complete translatability – appears to be possible for Derrida. Derrida explains that he comes to the conclusion that everything and nothing is translatable because

he separates it into two basic sides: property and quantity (Derrida 2012, p.369). He elaborates that it would be possible for someone who is completely competent in two languages without constraints of time and words to fully convey every element of a text to the audience, which would be correlate to the property of the original (Derrida 2012, p.369). However, Derrida states that a translation should also respect the quantity of the source text, with the unit of this quantity being the word (Derrida 2012, p.370). This split can be argued to correspond to the deadlock which can be found if the Hysteric's Discourse pattern is applied to translation. The examination of the original may eventually allow the translator to gain a closer or near-complete understanding of the original and a wide variety of possible target language signifiers. However, he/she will struggle to find the right words to convey all this information in the same quantity as the source text, i.e., the same number of words, punctuation or even letters. This problem arguably resembles the bottom half of the Hysteric's Discourse pattern, where the knowledge as product cannot relate to the object of desire as truth; or, using the proposed terminology from translation, the target language signifiers produced cannot coincide with the perfect translation. That is, the target language cannot assemble a translation which is equivalent in both quantity and property.

Another statement by Derrida, here drawing on Benjamin, that stands out in view of the Discourse of the Hysteric, is that the original text is dependent on the translation and even requires it (Derrida 1985, p.188). The overall image painted here would suggest that the original is flawed and lacking and requires the translation to complete and enlarge it (Derrida 1985, p.188). Derrida explains further:

And if the original calls for a complement, it is because at the origin it was not there without fault, full, complete, total, identical to itself. From the origin of the original to be translated there is fall and exile. The translator must redeem (erlösen), absolve, resolve, in trying to absolve himself of his own debt, which is at bottom the same – and bottomless (Derrida 1985, p.188).

Derrida's statement about translation echoes some of Lacan's explications about the Hysteric's Discourse. Derrida explicitly notes the lack in the source text, which correlates to the hysterical subject realising and filling a lack he/she

detected in the master-signifier. Furthermore, he states that only the translator can fill this lack in the translation, thereby redeeming and concluding it. In other words, the translator becomes the “saviour” who comes to deliver the original from its confinement to the source language and secure its survival and growth. The primary objective appears to be the original’s sur-vival,<sup>95</sup> while its author is of secondary importance (Derrida 1985, p.179):

Such sur-vival gives more of life, more than a surviving. The work does not simply live longer, it lives more and better, beyond the means of its author (Derrida 1985, p.179).

Derrida might be suggesting that the original is “missing out” without the translation, and therefore left incomplete. The existence of an original without translation may thus be seen as something pitiful and subpar. Furthermore, an author alone could be seen to be incapable of securing the source text’s survival and supplying everything it needs. The translator would thus be able to provide the other’s object of desire (the translation) and become desirable, which correlates to Lacan’s theory about the hysterical subject. It is through identifying the exact object of the master’s desire that the hysterical subject unconsciously hopes to be able to become desirable.

It can be said that in Derrida’s theories the focus of translation shifts away from the sovereignty of the author and towards the importance of the translator and the translation. A similar shift can be observed in Rosemary Arrojo’s theory discussed below as well. Arrojo is a translation scholar who has often engaged with the deconstructionist movement in translation studies. In one of her texts, she discusses the relationship between the translation and the text to be translated. But also the translation’s relationship “to their authors, the ones who supposedly have the ultimate authority or right in deciding (and perhaps limiting) what their texts mean, the ones to whom they [the translators] supposedly owe their deepest fidelity and respect” (Arrojo 2012, p.106). The authority that is connected with the position of the author here is reminiscent of what Lacan states about the father figure who “may be regarded as the

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<sup>95</sup> The translator of Derrida’s text uses this spelling (“sur-vival”) to highlight the connotation of “over” in the word survival (“*sur*” being the French for “over”) (Derrida 1985, p.178).

original representative of the Law's authority" (Lacan 2006, p.688).<sup>96</sup> Similarly to Lacan's idea of the Father who lays down the law, the traditional view of the author discussed by Arrojo in her text, defines and limits the meaning of the original (Arrojo 2012, p.106), i.e., he/she defines the "law" of the source text which will define the translator's work. Furthermore, the translator ("supposedly") owes the author respect and loyalty (Arrojo 2012, p.106) which could also evoke associations to the law and Lacan's idea of the *non/nom du père* (previously mentioned in the Theoretical Framework). According to Lacan, it is the father's name, or the father's "no", which declares the mother off limits to the child, thereby symbolically castrating the child by introducing the law and the lack that emerges with it (Evans 2006, p.122). Similarly, the author could be seen to take on a similar position for the translator as the father does for the individual in Lacan's theory, as it is the author's "no" or "name" that defines the text and thus introduces the translator to the law and arguably to lack. It is the author's name attached to the source text that declares it his/her property and thus the translator cannot claim it as his/her own. For example, most novels will include the author's name on the front cover even in translation, while the translator is mentioned only in minor font on one of the pages inside.

The law of the original is found in its words, structure and meaning as they define the translation process and the target text. This law was established by the master in the Master's Discourse and is now questioned in the Hysteric's Discourse. Similarly, the "law" of the source text as it is established by the author could be seen to be challenged by the translator in Arrojo's text, based on the repeated insertion of "supposedly" (Arrojo 2012, p.106). Furthermore, the emphasis placed on the authorial role of the translator in the "rewriting of originals" (Arrojo 2012, p.101) points towards an approach that rejects the authority of the author.<sup>97</sup>

Arrojo states that deconstructing the idea of "intrinsic meaning and authority" in the source text allows for the translator's task to be brought into the centre

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<sup>96</sup> The father figure is the originator of the "paternal metaphor" which is another term used by Lacan for the Name-of-the-Father, button tie, or master-signifier.

<sup>97</sup> The authorial role of the translator is a recurring theme in Arrojo's texts.

of thought about language and culture, since the author's "ownership" of the text's meaning is put into question (Arrojo 1998, p.44). Moving the translator to the centre of attention not only of translation but of language and culture, could be compared to the hysterical subject's desire to become desirable. Arrojo continues the above that every language user is also a translator as no one "will ever be in direct contact with the 'originals' of their texts," regardless of the language they are written in (Arrojo 1998, pp.44–45). Stating that essentially every language user is also a translator, could be seen to be similar to the hysterical subject's demand for the master's attention by questioning and analysing him/her/it. If everyone is a translator, this could hold the potential to make translators an object of desire, as it is pushed into the centre of attention and interest. Furthermore, this may be a rejection of the paternal authority previously associated with the author and elevate the translator to the same position as the writer of the original. This is reminiscent of Lacan's hysterical subject, who simultaneously rejects the master, while also unconsciously desiring to be desired by the same. In my analogy involving translation this could be a translator who rejects the source text as it is defined by the paternal authority of the author but simultaneously desires to take ownership over it and recreate it.

The common ground in my examples from Derrida and Arrojo is that the translator and the translation have become the centrepiece of the translation process and are elevated to a desirable position, whereas the source text and its author were demoted into being secondary. As highlighted, this is a similar tendency to the hysterical subject's rejection of the master's authority and the unconscious wish to be desired. Furthermore, deconstruction questions the stability of meaning, and thus the stability of the original which leads Arrojo to propose that every user of language is ultimately a translator. Similarly, the hysterical subject questions the authority and completeness of the master, as he/she is aware that the master is a split subject, and as such lacking, as well. Finally, Derrida and Benjamin's assertion that the original *requires* the translation to complete it and to ensure its survival is similar to the hysterical subject's desire to be desired by completing the other. Lacan suggests that the continuous questioning of the master is secretly aimed at teasing out what



the master is lacking, so that the hysterical subject can incarnate it and, in this way, become desirable. Similarly, the suggestion that the original is dependent on a translation to fulfil the original may be seen to be the answer to this question of the hysterical subject “what do you want?” – as Lacan writes,

What matters to [the hysteric] is that that other called a man know what a precious object she becomes in this context of discourse (Lacan 2007, p.34).

While Lacan here talks about relations in gendered terms, his point could be applied to Derrida’s suggestion about translation and original: what matters to the translator is that the other called original know how precious he/she is in the context of the discourse (of translation or language).<sup>98</sup>

*Serge Gavronsky’s “Cannibalist Translator”*

Another text which discusses translation using similar terminology to Lacan is Serge Gavronsky’s article “The Translator: From Piety to Cannibalism” (Gavronsky 1977). This particular text was discussed previously in the Literature Review and also in the chapter engaging with the Discourse of the Master. Gavronsky discusses two types of translators, the first one being the pious translation discussed in the previous chapter. The second type is the cannibalistic translator who shows a strong connection to Lacan’s Discourse of the Hysteric in different ways, for example the issue of the subversion of the original as master over the translation process.

Concerning the relationship between the translator and the source text Gavronsky speaks of the “slave-master dialectic” (Gavronsky 1977, p.55), in which the translator sees him-/herself as a child of the author (who is portrayed as the father) and follows his commands (Gavronsky 1977, p.55). Gavronsky compares altering the source-text in the process of translation to an act of incest, as the translator is a product of the “father” (i.e., the author) and the source text (Gavronsky 1977, p.55). At a different point, he also calls translations which do not focus on rendering the original literally, “cannibalistic” (Gavronsky 1977, p.59). The result of these cannibalistic approaches, offering

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<sup>98</sup> As with previous examples, the aim of this comparison is not to suggest that Derrida was a hysteric but that certain “hysterical” patterns (as defined by Lacan) can be found in theories of translation as well.

[...] a primary text, producing equal sequences of stressed and unstressed passages, adhering, in this corps accord, to the shape and the fullest meaning of the "original" while proposing itself as a thing-in-itself. The original has been captured, raped, and incest performed. [...] The original is mutilated beyond recognition; the slave master dialectic reversed [...] (Gavronsky 1977, p.60).

As in the previous section of this chapter, where I drew parallels between deconstruction and the hysterical subject's rebellion against the master, Gavronsky here evokes an image of the translator turning against the original. However, in Gavronsky's critique of certain translations, the translator does not only question and dissect the source text, but instead, he/she devours it and attempts to replace it with his/her own work. The image described here is similar to the top half of Lacan's formula of  $\$ \rightarrow S_1$  or in the adapted formula  $\mathcal{X} \rightarrow ST$ , that is, the hysterical subject turning against the master and questioning his/her essence. A similar pattern as per Gavronsky's suggestion is then the translator turning against the source text as mapped out in my adapted formula. The image of translation described by Gavronsky lends itself particularly well to a comparison with Lacan's theory, due to the terminology used, as well as the aggression implied in the process through words such as "capture", "rape", "incest", "mutilation" (Gavronsky 1977, p.60). Similarly, the Discourse of the Hysteric is often associated with an aggressive rebellion against the master. The cannibalistic translator in Gavronsky's text eliminates all traces of the original language and instead rewrites the text and presents a new (perfect) text to the reader (Gavronsky 1977, p.59).

In addition to this, Gavronsky highlights, like Lacan, the question of enjoyment, which is part of this interaction between translator (or subject) and source text (or master-signifier). He refers to a translator "who savors the text, that is, who truly feeds upon the words, who ingurgitates them, and who, thereafter, enunciates them in his own tongue [...]" (Gavronsky 1977, p.60). Here, the translator is in the position of being able to fully enjoy whatever information, or target language signifiers, he/she receives from the source text and use it to his/her own liking. This image of "feasting" on the source text strongly emphasises enjoyment, which correlates with Lacan's *jouissance* as associated with the position of the product. Gavronsky continues that, contrary to literal translation, this cannibalistic type of translation is "not a passive

observance of some metaphysical superiority of the original, but [...] an obvious indication of sexual transgression, a manifestation of desire, of an indescribable pleasure that the translator may not be willing to acknowledge openly”(Gavronsky 1977, p.60).<sup>99</sup> Gavronsky’s description of this type of translation is reminiscent of Lacan’s notion of *jouissance*, which, as mentioned, is strongly connected to knowledge as found in position of product and represented by  $S_2$ .<sup>100</sup> Furthermore, Lacan also draws a strong connection between *jouissance* and the Oedipus complex (Lacan 2007, p.74), which Gavronsky states is prevalent in translation, in the sense that translation is an Oedipal act (Gavronsky 1977, p.57).

### *Les Belles Infidèles*

An example of these cannibalistic translations described above may be *les Belles Infidèles* which Gavronsky only briefly alludes to in his article (Gavronsky 1977, p.58). The term was coined in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by Gilles Ménage and can be translated as “the beautiful unfaithfuls” or the “unfaithful beauties” (Levi 2000, p.126). Ménage used the term first to explain the success of the translations by his friend Nicolas Perrot d’Ablancourt (1606-1664) which he suggested were beautiful but unfaithful to the original (Levi 2000, p.126). Quickly, the term came to designate a group of translations in the second third of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in France (Levi 2000, p.127). Concerning these issues, D’Ablancourt said that sticking too close to the words of the original would betray its style and elegance, leaving the target text illegible unless the reader is familiar with the original (D’Ablancourt 2002b, p.159). He wrote that “those strict translators produce only a carcass from a living body and make a monster from a miracle” (D’Ablancourt 2002a, p.160). Another translator whose work has been associated with the group of *les Belles Infidèles*, Guez de Balzac, argued that “the real object of translation was not the text, but the interior emotions of those who heard or read the translation” (Levi 2000, p.127). A pattern like the Hysteric’s Discourse’s is visible here insofar as the translators do not blindly follow the wording and linguistic

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<sup>99</sup> These characteristics were previously mentioned in connection to the Discourse of the Master which displays similar attributes.

<sup>100</sup> “Knowledge is a means of *Jouissance*” (Lacan 2007, p.79)

structure of the original but question its meaning and intentions. Furthermore, if one were to accept Gavronsky's proposition of the Oedipal triangle found in the relationship between author, source text and translator, Balzac's statement that the object of translation should not be the text itself but instead its internal qualities could be seen as a rejection of the paternal position of the author. Similarly, D'Ablancourt describes literal translations, that are guided by the original's wording and structure as defined by the author, as abominable (D'Ablancourt 2002a, p.160).

The strong focus on the internal characteristics of the original, such as the emotion they evoke in their readers, suggests that the translator analyses the text's meaning and effect closely in order to gain the needed knowledge.<sup>101</sup> This would mimic the pattern of the Hysteric's Discourse insofar as the subject questions and interrogates the master-signifier for its meaning and purpose. In response, the subject receives knowledge. This interaction is driven by an unconscious, i.e., unknown, object of desire. Similarly, the translator's interaction with the source text is likely to be driven by the aim to produce a translation. As with the hysterical subject, a translator may not know exactly what the perfect translation of a given text looks like, i.e., its exact wording and structure in the target language, which may lead him/her to continue analysing the text, and potentially its background and context, in order to gain more information to use for the target text. Even after the translation is complete, translators may find ways of improving their work, or reasons not to be completely satisfied with it.

Another trait of *les Belles Infidèles* which is reminiscent of Lacan's Hysteric's Discourse is that these translations can be perceived to take on the role of the original for the target text reader and aim to become desirable as texts in their own right. Similarly, the hysterical subject questions the other and uses the received knowledge in order to fill their desire and thus overcome the master. On an unconscious level, the subject does this to become desirable to the

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<sup>101</sup> As opposed to a translator who focuses primarily on the formal elements of the original, such as lexis, syntax etc. as discussed in the previous chapter.

other, which could be seen as a similar characteristic to these translations which appear to aim at completing the source text in the target language.

Based on this analysis, *les Belles Infidèles* can be seen to be translations primarily following a similar pattern to that of Lacan's Discourse of the Hysteric. Here, the focus lies primarily on producing a translation which is enjoyable to read and captures what translator believes the original's reader's emotional response was instead of its style and structure. Hence, contrary to the Master's Discourse, the "law" of the source text, as it is captured in its words and structure, is rejected by the translators. Arguably, the driving motif here is a translation that can fulfil the translator's desire and be desirable.

In summary, the theories discussed in this section place their primary emphasis on the translation and its enjoyment while making the original's structure and wording a secondary concern. The deconstructionist movement was discussed to do so in challenging the meaning of the source text and language in general. In a similar manner to the subject in the Hysteric's Discourse, the translator here can be argued to challenge the authority of the source text. An analogous tendency was discussed in the image of Serge Gavronsky's "cannibalist" translator who recreates the original creatively in the target language. Using the image of cannibalism, in this theory the authority of the original is also challenged, and the translator occupies the main focus in the translation process. This was further related to enjoyment as connected to Lacan's notion of *jouissance*, which can be seen to be at work in the Hysteric's Discourse.

As an example of this type of translation, I mentioned *les Belles Infidèles*, which are creative re-writings of their respective source texts. These texts were discussed to show similarities with the adapted Hysteric's Discourse in so far as the translator analyses the original and uses the received information to create a new text which centres on the readers' enjoyment. Furthermore, comparably with to the previous approaches, it can be argued that the original here also takes a secondary position and is challenged in its authority.

## 4.3 Bible Translation

This part of the chapter will focus on the analysis of some approaches to Bible translation via the Hysteric's Discourse pattern. I will first look at approaches to Bible translation, beginning with Eugene Nida and Charles R. Taber's concept of "dynamic equivalence". Nida and Taber's concepts of formal and dynamic equivalence are the guidelines many prefaces to Bible translations refer to. After this I will also discuss the role of enjoyment, *jouissance*, and knowledge as product in Lacan's discourse, and how these can be seen in a similar way in translation. This will lead me to the discussion of the target text's structure. The translations of the Bible I will focus on primarily in this part of the chapter are the New Living Translation (NLT) and *The Voice*.

In the following section I will discuss the issue of gender in Bible translation, as it is a particularly prominent issue in Bible translation and offers a good example for looking at the pattern of the Hysteric's Discourse in translation. The analysis will begin with examples from feminist responses to the Bible and its translation before moving to some concrete examples where translators may encounter difficulties with translating the text in a gender-neutral way.

### 4.3.1 Approaches to Bible Translation

#### *Dynamic and Formal Equivalence*

Many prefaces in translations of the Bible will point towards two categories of translation, which are word-for-word and sense-for-sense, and explain their own approach in relation to them. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the issue of word-for-word versus thought-for-thought approaches to translation is already mentioned in St. Jerome's "Letter to Pammachius" from 395 A.D., where he makes a clear distinction between translation in general and translation of scripture. He writes in his letter:

Indeed, I not only admit, but freely proclaim that in translation [interpretation] from the Greek – except in the case of Sacred Scripture, where the very order of the words is a mystery – I render not word for word, but sense for sense (Jerome 2012, p.23 brackets in original).

As this statement suggests, the translation approaches brought up in this section are not an issue that is limited to Bible translation. However, it appears

to be of more concern in this area because of the sacredness attributed to the text.

The translation scholar Eugene Nida points out that translation cannot be categorised into only two approaches (Nida 2012, p.141). Nevertheless, his distinction of approaches is fundamentally dual as he suggests the translator follows the ideal of either formal or dynamic equivalence (Nida 2012, p.144). The three key influencing factors concerning any translation are according to Nida

“(1) the nature of the message, (2) the purpose or purposes of the author and, by proxy, of the translator, and (3) the type of audience” (Nida 2012, p.142).

The distinguishing element between formal and dynamic approaches to translation is the *form* of the message and its relevance (Nida 2012, pp.142–144). In Nida’s “formal equivalence” the translator pays attention to both form and content of the message (Nida 2012, p.144). The structure of this approach shows most overlap with the Master’s Discourse, placing the source-text’s formal aspects (e.g., wording, sentence structure, etc.) in control over the translation process and target language. In dynamic equivalence, on the other hand, the translator focuses on creating a translation which engages the reader in an equivalent way as the source text affected its audience, thereby placing the focus on meaning and effect instead of linguistic framework (Nida 2012, p.144). This would require the translator to analyse and question the original beyond the surface level instead of following its exact wording. Here, one can see the overlap with the structure of the Hysteric’s Discourse, where the translator is in charge of accessing, examining, and interpreting the source text in order to learn about its intentions, in particular regarding the effect on the audience. Identifying its purpose and the relationship between the original and its reader would here be understood as a means to produce a desirable (perfect) translation.

Nida’s approach here also has the potential to relate to Lacan’s statement that desire is the desire of the other assuming the original’s intention and desire are the same. In this case, the translator examines the original to find out its desired effect on its audience and adopt the other’s desire as his/her own to

convey this in the translation. The second dimension Lacan ascribes to this tenet that the subject's desire is to be desired by the other may apply here as well. This could be understood to be similar to the translator's desire to complete or complement the original. The difference with Lacan would be that the hysterical subject is unaware of this dimension, whereas the translator would often consciously aim to produce a translation which renders the original according to his/her understanding of it.

While Nida's general theory of formal and dynamic equivalence relates to translation as general practice, he focused his theories strongly on Bible translation, particularly in collaboration with Charles R Taber. For example, the book *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, which Nida and Taber wrote together, made special reference to Bible translation (Nida and Taber 1982). Hence, his terminology has found its way into a plurality of Bible prefaces. As mentioned previously, in formal equivalence the translator focuses on both form and content of the message (Nida 2012, p.144). By this he means that poetry is translated by poetry, sentence by sentence, concept by concept (Nida 2012, p.144). Dynamic equivalence on the other hand focuses on evoking an equivalent effect on the reader (Nida 2012, p.144). The aim for the translator is in this case to produce a text which reads naturally and fluently, and aims to convey the dynamic relationship between the message and the receptor (Nida 2012, p.144).

According to Nida and Taber anything is translatable, unless form is essential to preserve the message of a text (Nida and Taber 1982, pp.4–5). This statement can be illustrated by the Qur'an which is generally considered untranslatable because it is considered to be restricted to one specific linguistic form (Abdul-Raof 2001, p.17). For translations of the Bible this may also be a challenge, especially in the context of views such as St. Jerome's, who emphasises that in the case of scripture even the word order is of importance (Jerome 2012, p.23). Based on Nida and Taber, however, readers and scholars must see the source languages of the Bible, Hebrew and Ancient Greek, as ordinary ancient languages and stop ascribing them a sacred position (Nida and Taber 1982, pp.6–7).



Possibly Nida and Taber's most important claim in this context is that the "writers of the Biblical books expected to be understood" (Nida and Taber 1982, p.7 original emphasis). For a translation to be faithful to the original would mean that it should be equally understandable to their readers. As such, this would imply a process which follows approximately that of the Hysteric's Discourse: the translator as agent analyses and questions the source text concerning its meaning and intentions.

Based on the adapted discourse pattern where  $t$  and TL cannot connect

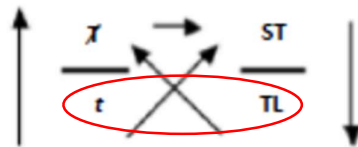


Figure 31: Adapted Hysteric's Discourse, missing connection between translation and translator

(Figure 31), the piece of information resulting from this analysis is not able to form a perfect translation, as represented by Lacan's object of desire. This is in line with Nida and Taber's statement that translators have to adjust the

original's form to convey its message in the target language. They also explain that there cannot be a perfect match between different languages and that often the meaning of many words cannot be carried over exhaustively by a single signifier in the target language. For example, the Greek term *logos* in John's Gospel is often translated into English as "word", which "cannot do justice to the variety and richness of meaning of this Greek term" (Nida and Taber 1982, p.5). The preface of the New Living Translation (NLT) acknowledges this inability of the target language to form a perfect translation as the writers of the preface "recognize that any translation of the Scripture is subject to limitations and imperfections. Anyone who has attempted to communicate the richness of God's Word into another language will realize it is impossible to make a perfect translation" (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.A20).

Here, I will focus in more detail on the NLT as an example of a the translations that makes explicit reference to formal and dynamic equivalence in respect to the applied translation approach (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, pp.A15-16). The translation committee states that this translation is intended to keep in mind both formal and dynamic equivalence while trying to convey the message of the original accessibly into contemporary English (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.A15). Overall, the preface highlights the

importance of impact on the reader, for example in describing the translation as “exegetically accurate and *idiomatically powerful*” and “excellent for public reading and [making] an immediate and *powerful impact on the listener*” (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, pp.A15–A15 my italics). Due to this emphasis on the impact on the reader, i.e., the dynamics between text and receiver, the NLT will be treated here as a primarily dynamic translation.

The preface of the NLT includes a section discussing the process and team of the translation. They outline that first they created a base translation in English (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.A16). This was checked against the interpretation of the original by a diverse group of biblical scholars (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.A16). Each book of the Bible and its base translation was reviewed by three scholars who were experts in the respective books (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.A46). The scholars submitted their proposed revisions to the senior translator who reviewed them and revised the base translation into a first draft of the NLT (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.A16). The draft was used as a basis for further exegetical and stylistic review by the committee (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.A16). Every verse of the final draft was reviewed and approved by the Bible Translation Committee before it was submitted for publication (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.A16).

This thorough and lengthy process could be argued to approximately follow a pattern of the Hysteric’s Discourse where the subject questions the master-signifier. The description of the translation process highlights the exegetical dimension of the work on the final product. This indicates an analysis that queries the source text’s meaning and intention to receive knowledge that goes beyond a word-for-word translation. In the adapted formula, this kind of analysis is symbolised in the top half of the formula as  $\mathcal{X} \rightarrow ST$ . The knowledge received as result of this analysis is found in the pattern as  $ST \rightarrow TL \rightarrow \mathcal{X}$ . In a primarily dynamic translation, the translators will prioritise information concerning the intentions of the original and the effect it is understood to have on the reader.

The emphasis on the impact of the text on the reader as highlighted in dynamic equivalence, as well as the NLT's aim to create a text that is easily accessible to the reader, arguably indicate that the translation should also be associated with a certain enjoyment. In the next section, I will examine the dimension of enjoyment and *jouissance* in relation to the target language, i.e., the product. While this is on the one hand connected to the reader's enjoyment of the target text, I will argue that the translator may also to some extent experience *jouissance* in connection to the target language as part of the translation process.

### *Enjoyment of the product/knowledge*

In his formulas Lacan associates the product, in the bottom right hand corner, with *jouissance*, a form of pleasure which coincides with or is experienced through pain (Fink 1997, p.133). For the hysterical subject this means that the subject enjoys the knowledge produced by the questioning of the master's authority, while he/she experiences a form of pain or suffering at the same time (Fink 1997, p.133). Similarly, the knowledge or target language produced in the translation may be enjoyed by the translator while he/she also experiences a form of displeasure or distress, for example in the struggle of choosing specific signifiers in the target language and prioritising certain pieces of information. Furthermore, arguably the translation could also be intended to be enjoyable for the reader, while the translator may find their work distressful.

The two translations I use to look at this dimension of the Hysteric's Discourse are the NLT and *The Voice*. Concerning the general enjoyment of the text it can be said both the NLT and *The Voice* appear to place a strong emphasis on the enjoyment of the target text and (contextual) knowledge. In the NLT's preface, it is emphasised that one of the aims of the project was to provide a translation which is clear and easily understood (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.A16). At the same time, the text should retain its powerful message and have an impact on the reader (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.A16). This translation is also intended to be read aloud in public and not only silently in private (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation*

2015, p.A16). By using contemporary language, clarifying passages which may be difficult to understand and providing additional information in the text, I would argue the NLT aims to promote the enjoyment of the biblical text and knowledge of it.

The NLT also supports acquisition and enjoyment of contextual knowledge in adding different peritexts. For example, every book begins with a brief introduction about the author of the text and the approximate date. The explanation of the book also includes some background information concerning the text itself, such as the style, agenda, and focus. In the case of the Gospel of John this looks as shown in Figure 32 (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.637):

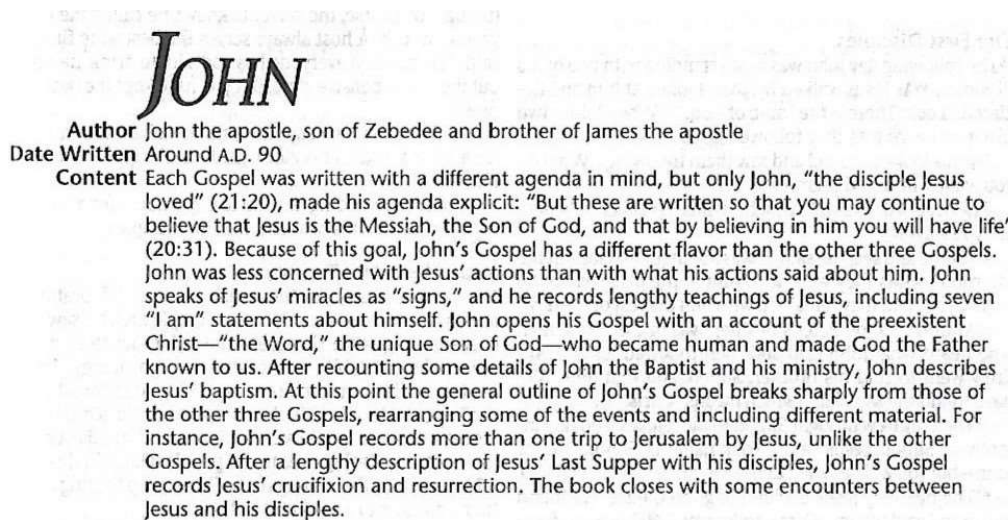


Figure 32: NLT’s introduction to John’s Gospel (*The Holy Bible. New Living Translation* 2015, p.637)

This introduction provides additional context for the reader. It explains who John himself is and distinguishes the author from other people with the same name such as John the Baptist. Adding the family relations of John would identify him as one of Jesus’ disciples who are part of the story themselves. The approximate date of the original text is also not mentioned in the text itself but is only known through research and secondary sources. Furthermore, in the description of the content of the book, the writers draw the reader’s attention to certain parts of the text itself and add context or weight to particular passages. For example, by referring to the seven “I am” statements Jesus makes about himself, it is inferred that these statements are important in

Christian religion. The addition of explanation and of contextualisation of the chapter may be an indicator of the translator enjoying his/her own knowledge about the text by sharing it with the reader. Furthermore, the translators (and/or editors) of the text may assume that the reader would also enjoy this knowledge as it introduces him/her to the text and raises expectations. Moreover, the additional introduction to the book may also be an indicator towards a form of *jouissance*, where the translator at the same time experiences the struggle of prioritising information and the inability to convey this information in the translation itself without altering it drastically. This would also be an instance, where the original may be perceived to be lacking and the translator may be presented with an opportunity to “complete” it by providing external information which may otherwise be missed. The additional introduction may be an attempt at mediating the enjoyment of knowledge, the background information, and the opportunity to complement the source text but the inability to include it in the main text. Here, the translator arguably comes near to the limits set on his/her work, i.e., not to alter the target text but inserting peritexts between the different books. This could be seen as a slight push against the master’s authority insofar as it suggests that these pieces of information are important but lacking in the original. Hence, the translators needed to intervene to fix this flaw.

The translator’s intervention via marginal notes, for example, may also indicate instances where the authority of the original is challenged. Looking at another translation of the Bible, *The Voice*, one can see a variety of occasions the translators include additional introductory sections, similar to the NLT, but also include smaller pieces of background information throughout the text. Furthermore, those who produced this translation made the decision to change the format of the text from a prosaic narrative to include direct speech in the layout of a drama script. Arguably, by changing the format and including this additional information, the translators could be seen to reject Gavronsky’s metaphoric prohibition against incest, i.e., “touching” the original and instead recreate the text in the target language (see Gavronsky 1977). It may be argued that in this instance one can see a similar “subversive” dimension to

that of the Hysteric's Discourse, in the way the translators add information and change the layout of the text.

Concerning the introductory section, it is noticeable that *The Voice* features a much longer section than the paragraph included in the NLT shown above. The initial part introduces the book itself and some of its historical context, e.g., the time of writing, its author, as well as some of its unique features compared to the other Gospels. The second part of the introduction expands on the translators' choice to use the English word "voice" as translation of the Greek term *logos* which differs from the traditional option of "word". Particularly the second part of the introduction, where the translators discuss their choice to use the unconventional translation "voice" may be seen as an insight into the *jouissance* associated with the excess of options in the target language to translate one word in the source language resulting from the analysis of the original. Here, the translators are pressured into deciding which information to include in the body of the text and which to omit or only include in annotations and marginal notes. Furthermore, the translation choice may be an indicator of a "rebellion" against the Christian traditions and conventions, which may be seen as a master-signifier in itself, of using the signifier "word" in the beginning of John.



Figure 33: Marginal notes in the Voice (Bell et al. 2012, p. 1289)

In addition to these introductory sections, there are more annotations found throughout the text of *The Voice* which explain the context and background of the respective passage (Figure 33). These insertions are in addition to the usual footnotes that accompany most Bible translations.

In these instances, the translators and editors appear to enjoy sharing the results of their research into the source text. Furthermore, these insertions may also be seen as attempts to circumnavigate the

inability to communicate this knowledge as part of the main text. The research and analysis themselves, as was repeated at different points in this chapter, would include implicit information, such as historical and social background of the first century and the different connotations and meanings of each word.

The preface to *The Voice* explains that “[the] goal is to create the finest Bible products to help believers experience the joy and wonder of God’s revelation” (Bell et al. 2012, p.xvi). Since for the translators this included the revision of the original’s structure and layout, the source text was potentially “imperfect” and needed the translators’ intervention for it to be enjoyable to the reader. As such, the authority of the original is arguably challenged in relation to its form and ability to communicate everything the reader needs to know.

#### *Layout of the text*

As it was already mentioned above, in the NLT as well as in *The Voice* the formatting of the source text is altered by the translator to some degree. In the following section, I will discuss this in more detail by looking at the layout of the beginning of John’s Gospel in the ESV, the NIV, the NLT and *The Voice* (John 1:1-5). The ESV was previously discussed as an example of a translation which shows similar structures to that of the Master’s Discourse. Hence, I include it here as reference point for the analysis of the translations which I associate with a pattern similar to the Hysteric’s Discourse. The NIV is situated in between the ESV and the NLT in terms of its literalness. While it is more dynamic than the ESV it also places more emphasis on formal equivalence than the NLT.<sup>102</sup> In my analysis I will pay particular attention to the different layouts of the text, also in comparison to the original manuscripts, and the number and type of footnotes.

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<sup>102</sup> It should be noted that the writers of the preface to the NIV do not make explicit reference to dynamic or formal equivalence. I used this categorisation based on the explanation of the translation approaches in favour of consistency of terminology. The preface explains that the NIV takes a mediating approach, where the translators aim to preserve the form wherever possible but if is there no appropriate parallel to the syntax of the original, the English syntax which adequately translates the meaning of the original is to be chosen (*The Holy Bible. New International Version* 2011, p.v).

Table 4: John 1:1-5 in NLT, ESV, NIV, and The Voice

	New Living Translation John 1:1-5 [original emphasis]	English Standard Version John 1:1-5 [original emphasis]
Main Text	<p><sup>1</sup>In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He existed in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. <sup>4</sup>The Word gave life to everything that was created,* and his life brought light to everyone. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.*</p>	<p>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life,<sup>1</sup> and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.</p>
Footnotes	<p>*1:3-4 Or and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything. *1:5 Or and the darkness has not understood it.</p>	<p><sup>1</sup> Or was not anything made. That which has been made was life in him.</p>
	New International Version John 1:1-5 [original emphasis]	The Voice John 1:1-5 [original emphasis]
Main Text	<p><sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome<sup>a</sup> it.</p>	<p>Before time itself was measured, the Voice was speaking.  The Voice was and is God. <sup>2</sup>This celestial Word remained ever present with the Creator; <sup>3</sup>His speech shaped the entire cosmos. Immersed in the practice of creating, all things that exist were birthed in Him. <sup>4</sup>His breath filled all things with a living, breathing light — <sup>5</sup>A light that thrives in the depths of darkness, blazes through murky bottoms. It cannot and will not be quenched</p>
Footnotes	<p><sup>a</sup> Or understood</p>	



The beginning of the book of John is an iconic passage, which is reminiscent of the start of Genesis and thus of the Bible itself. Instead of a factual retelling of Jesus' biography John begins his text in a more abstract passage as shown below, associating Jesus with *logos*, here translated as either “Word” or “Voice”.

These excerpts from the beginning of the Gospel of John show some differences between the approaches in their layout. The NLT highlights the poetic dimension of the way John begins his recount, whereas the ESV retains consistency within the overall prosaic layout of the Gospel. Furthermore, the overall language, both lexis and structure, is more contemporary and easily understood in the NLT, while the ESV may appear more “literal” in its style, as it possibly fits the reader's expectations of what the Bible looks and sounds like. Furthermore, the more contemporary and informal style leads the NLT translation to be longer, as it also includes an additional footnote. This bears traces of a refusal to commit as the text suggests one consistent translation but also gives the reader the option to choose an alternative rendering.<sup>103</sup> The ESV on the other hand commits to their translation without pointing towards the ambiguity and may portray the image of a more definitive source text.

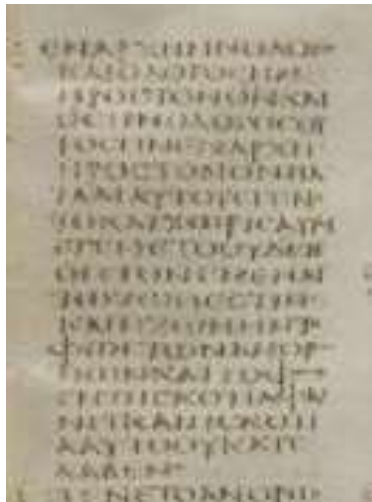


Figure 34: *Codex Sinaiticus*, John 1:1-5 (*Codex Sinaiticus* - See *The Manuscript | John* | [no date])

The NIV appears here more similar to the ESV in its approach, as its structure is generally prosaic and it includes little additional information in this passage. Using the *Codex Sinaiticus* as a reference for the text's original layout (Figure 34) both the ESV and the NIV stay closer to the general formatting of the original text which includes much fewer line breaks than the NLT or *The Voice* (*Codex Sinaiticus* - See the Manuscript | John | [no date]). *The Voice* translation follows a similar pattern to the NLT and shows a more poetic

<sup>103</sup> See also the section on footnotes and layout in the previous chapter. Footnotes may also be indicators of an imperfect source text due to differences between manuscripts and other ambiguities.

structure. Contrary to the other translations, it does not include any footnotes. However, the italics indicate pieces of information which were not explicitly included in the original but are intended to “bring out the nuance of the original, assist in completing ideas, and often provide readers with information that would have been obvious to the original audience” (Bell et al. 2012, p.xviii). As such, they are used to replace some of the footnotes and give the reader a better understanding of the text without interrupting the flow of reading (Bell et al. 2012, p.xviii). As can be seen in Figure 35 (NLT) and Figure 36 (*The Voice*), the formatting of both versions changes between verses five and six from a style that is reminiscent of poetry to a more prosaic alignment. Arguably, in this way the translators were able to establish a different relationship between text and reader while highlighting this passage as reminiscent of the story of creation told in Genesis. Furthermore, the reader of these translations is able to easily identify the poetic introduction and distinguish it from the main body of the text where the story of Jesus is told.

<b>Prologue: Christ, the Eternal Word</b>	T
<b>1</b> <sup>1</sup> In the beginning the Word already existed.	1:
The Word was with God,	p
and the Word was God.	"
<sup>2</sup> He existed in the beginning with God.	h
<sup>3</sup> God created everything through him,	
and nothing was created except through him.	
<sup>4</sup> The Word gave life to everything that was	
created,*	
and his life brought light to everyone.	
<sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness,	s
and the darkness can never extinguish it.*	
<sup>6</sup> God sent a man, John the Baptist,* <sup>7</sup> to tell about the light	
so that everyone might believe because of his testimony.	
<sup>8</sup> John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to	
tell about the light. <sup>9</sup> The one who is the true light, who gives	y
light to everyone, was coming into the world.	y
<sup>10</sup> He came into the very world he created, but the world	t
didn't recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to his own people, and	r
even they rejected him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who believed him and	a
accepted him, he gave the right to become children of	t
God. <sup>13</sup> They are reborn—not with a physical birth result-	
ing from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes	
from God.	

Figure 35: John 1:1-13 (NLT 2007: p.637)

### the beginning

before time itself was measured, the voice was speaking.

The Voice was and is God.  
is *celestial* Word remained ever present  
with the Creator;

<sup>3</sup>His speech shaped the entire cosmos.  
*mersed in the practice of creating,*  
all things that exist were birthed in  
Him.

His breath filled all things  
with a living, breathing light—  
light that thrives in the depths of  
darkness,  
*blazes through murky bottoms.*  
cannot and will not be quenched.

<sup>6</sup>A man named John, who was sent by God, *was the first to clearly articulate the source of this Light.* <sup>7</sup>This baptizer put in plain words the *elusive mystery of the Divine Light* so all might believe through him. *Some wondered whether he might be the Light,* <sup>8</sup>but John was not the Light. He merely pointed to the Light. <sup>9</sup>The true Light, who shines upon *the heart of everyone,* was coming into the cosmos.

**Jesus as the Light does not call out from a distant place but draws near by coming into the world.**

<sup>10</sup>He entered our world, a world He made; yet the world did not recognize Him. <sup>11</sup>Even though He came to His own people, they

Figure 36: John 1:1-10 (Bell et al. 20122012: p.1288)

As the manuscripts are not written in a particular format, this shift between verses five and six would be an intervention of the translators (and other people involved in the process), based on their analysis of the original. The presence of the Hysteric's Discourse would be reflected in the translators' analysis of the source text not only at the level of the word, but also of its style and context, as well as in the way it affects the reader. Arguably, changing the formatting of the text could also indicate an attempt at improving the original or fixing its perceived imperfections, as it was laid out in the previous section.

I began this section by discussing the “dynamic” approach to translation in the context of Bible Translation. This approach was argued to reflect the pattern of the Hysteric's Discourse in the way the source text is analysed beyond its linguistic material and interrogated in a similar way to how the hysterical subject questions the master by asking “what do you want?”. A translator using the dynamic approach to translation may approach the source text with such questions as “What is your intention?” or “What do you want to achieve regarding the reader?”.

It was further argued that the target language information, which are found in the position of product, are similarly connected to enjoyment and *jouissance* as in Lacan's original discourse. On the one hand the translators may aim to create a target text which is to be enjoyed by the readership in the same

manner as the original was by creating similar dynamics between text and reader. Furthermore, the translator may “enjoy” creating a translation which is less restricting towards him/her as the structure and exact wording are de-emphasised in relation to meaning and effect. On the other hand, one may identify an element of *jouissance* in the excess of information, as well as in the use of target language signifiers that are the result of an extensive analysis of the original and its context. Here, the translators may simultaneously enjoy the knowledge they gained but also “suffer”, since not everything can be included in the target text.

Finally, I discussed the layout of some Bible translations. For example, I argued that the frequent use of footnotes and marginal notes is an attempt to include some of the above-mentioned “excess of knowledge” gained in the analysis of the source text. This would also include instances where the available manuscripts differ from each other, which was previously argued to be largely omitted in translations I associate with the Master’s Discourse pattern. The final example I discussed was the formatting of the text in passages such as John chapter one. The NLT and *The Voice* highlighted the poetic dimension of the text by changing the layout of the beginning of the chapter into a more poetic style while the manuscripts do not distinguish them from the rest of the chapter.

In the following section of this chapter, I will focus on the feminist approach to Bible translation and discuss some of the issues of gender in this context.

### **4.3.2 Translation Research: The Feminist Approach**

Within Translation Studies, Bible translation has not only produced new target texts, but also a plethora of research in different areas which, for example, analyses existing translations or suggests how to translate scripture. The research approach chosen for this chapter is the feminist movement in Translation Studies, due to its strong and overt criticism towards the Bible and the distinct presence of features that can also be found in Lacan’s Discourse of the Hysteric.

It should be noted that some of the analyses and critiques of the Bible in this chapter are to be viewed critically because not all scholars mentioned here

refer exclusively to the original Hebrew and Old Greek text. Furthermore, it is not always evident whether scholars criticise a specific biblical manuscript itself, the Bible in general, or specifically its translations. Some scholars mentioned in this chapter (e.g., Elizabeth Cady Stanton), would possibly argue against both the source text itself and its translations while other scholars are likely to find fault with any translation of the Bible. An incessant dissatisfaction with translations of the Bible arguably correlates to a pattern of the Hysteric's Discourse, as the translator's desire is impossible to be fulfilled and the analysis of the source text cannot come to a satisfactory end. This impasse can prove particularly productive for research and analysis, when a translator continues to work to prove his/her point and find satisfaction, for example in the recognition of his/her standpoint or research.

### *The Bible and Feminism*

During the first wave of feminism, the Bible in general posed one of the great issues for feminist scholars, due to the dominating role of Christian religion in most of the Western world (Simon 2005, p.108). However, it appears voices of the early second wave of feminism (e.g., Simone de Beauvoir and Kate Millet) have strongly argued that contemporary feminism should no longer focus on the Bible (Simon 2005, p.105). Yet, because of its influence on society even today, it remains a point of concern for any interpretation, criticism, and ultimately translation (Simon 2005, p.105).

One possible starting point of the Discourse of the Hysteric is the revelation that the master is imperfect and lacking. A similar pattern in translation could be finding flaws in the source text, in this case the Bible. For example, one of these flaws could be the perceived androcentric layout of the stories and its language, the lack or negative portrayal of women, or failures to represent gender equality. Another issue could be the male bias of the target language; for example, in English, the common use of "man" or "men" for humans in general. In this particular instance some other languages like German have the advantage of including a gender-neutral term (e.g., *Mensch*), which does

not resonate with a male undertone, as arguably even “human” would.<sup>104</sup> This enables German Bible translations to use terms like *Menschenfischer* for “fishers of men” (*halieis anthrōpōn*) and *Menschensohn* instead of Jesus’ English title “son of man” (*ho huios tou anthropou*).<sup>105</sup>

However, regardless of language, most readers of the Bible are likely to have noticed an overall male bias in both language and contents of the text. Therefore, criticism of the text itself as well as its translations are presenting a reasonable concern for women’s liberation movements and feminist scholars. In this instance, the fallibility of language comes to the forefront, as it causes a perceived flaw in the source text’s male bias. For example, the text of the Bible alone fails to convey that it emerged from a notably patriarchal time and culture. While this can be inferred from context, it is not explicitly mentioned as this would have been commonly understood by the receiver.

Furthermore, with the writing of Judaic texts of the Talmud after the Old Testament, women’s position within society had moved closer to the centre of attention of the Jewish people of the first century. Looking at the Old Testament, women can be found to occupy high positions, and engage in worship and prayer etc. However, their roles in the New Testament were much more limited.<sup>106</sup> Since the texts of the Talmud are not included in the Bible, the teachings of the rabbis, which had most likely a strong influence on Jewish culture, may remain unknown to the readers of the Bible. Therefore, much of the progressive treatment of women by Jesus Christ in the New Testament is unfortunately lost in the unawareness of these cultural and religious specificities, as well as in the male-oriented translations. Many readers of the New Testament may be unaware that it was against Judaic customs for rabbis to teach women, as for example Judith Hauptman points out, partly because

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<sup>104</sup> However, the word *Mensch* is gendered insofar as it has a grammatical genus which is male: *ein/der Mensch* – a/the human.

<sup>105</sup> For example, the *Lutherbibel* from 1545 reads in Mark 1:17 “Vnd Jhesus sprach zu jnen / Folget mir nach / Jch wil euch zu Menschenfischer machen” (Luther 1545)

<sup>106</sup> For work on the role of women according to the Talmud see for example the entries on women during different time periods in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Judaism and Jewish Culture* (Baskin 2011, pp.646–651) and Judith Hauptman’s *A New View of Women and Torah Study in the Talmudic Period* (Hauptman 2010). Particularly R. Eliezer is reported to have had a strong view on women’s intellectual inferiority, which lead him to say, for example, that before teaching the Torah to a woman, he would rather burn it (Silver 1978, p. 76).

of the Talmudic view that women were intellectually less capable than men (Hauptman 2010, p.250). Therefore, when Jesus teaches Mary in the Gospel of Luke (10:38-42), he acts against the Rabbinic tradition of the Talmud.

A similar case is the story of the miracle of Jesus feeding the five thousand (e.g., Mt. 14:13-21), which ends with the line: "The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children" (Mt. 14:21, NIV). It could be criticised that the number did not include women and children, which would make this passage discriminatory against them. However, it is crucial to be aware that their very presence and mentioning was already progressive for that time. Because the writers of the New Testament did not explicitly include this piece of information, as presumed to be "common sense", scholars have had ample reason and opportunity to criticise Biblical texts and translations regarding its gendered language use or the lack of background information. Language here falls short, for example, in conveying the contextual connotations that many of the statements had at the time they were written. This is one of the many instances where the source text as master-signifier itself is revealed to be split in language and incomplete.

This issue of information is included in a text despite not being mentioned explicitly, is discussed, for example, by Norm Mundhenk in his paper "Implicit and Explicit Information" (Mundhenk 2018). He points out that speakers are unlikely to mention what the receiver already knows, as such information remain implicit in these cases (Mundhenk 2018, p.303). Therefore, the writers of the Bible would not include information the target audience were aware of, such as geographical explanations and possibly cultural norms and traditions (Mundhenk 2018, p.303). These cultural norms and traditions would include the role women occupied in society and their standing in comparison to men. Readers without the historical and cultural contextual knowledge are likely to need such information to be made explicit, as the implicit message is lost (Mundhenk 2018, p.306)

The pattern of the Hysteric's Discourse is here an important tool for translation scholars as it questions the source text beyond its linguistic structure. This pattern allows translators to take external information into account, such as

history and culture. Looking at the original in an isolated situation, detached from its environment, can enhance the risk of producing a translation which is inconsistent with the source text's meaning, particularly the meaning it had to its original audience at the time of writing.

### *Translating Gender in the Bible*

One famous issue in English Bible translations is the Hebrew word *adam* and its most common English equivalent *man*. However, the Hebrew Bible distinguishes between *adam* and *ish* – “human being” and “male human being” respectively. Mary Phil Korsak provides an analysis of the Genesis 2:22 – 23, where woman is created out of a rib from “man” (Korsak 2002, pp.138–139). She highlights the shift from *adam* as reference to a “groundling” (that is both male and female) to *ish* and *isha* – man and woman respectively (Korsak 2002, p.139). These two terms are tied together, as they refer to each sex in relation to the other, which would lead the general term *adam* to refer to the human in general or *ish* and *isha* as one. Korsak compares here two different translations of this particular passage (Korsak 2002, p.139). Her own translation *At the Start – Genesis Made New* renders *adam* into “groundling” in order keep the distinction and refer back to the creation of the human from the earth (Korsak 2002, p.139). The other translation Korsak mentions – the more popular *Revised Standard Version* (RSV) - distinguishes between *adam* and *ish* only by capitalising “man” when it refers to *ish* (Korsak 2002, p.139). Korsak's translation is based on the etymological relation of *adam* to the Hebrew term *'adamah*, meaning earth (Korsak 2002, p.138). Hence, she had to analyse the original beyond the surface level and look at the linguistic relations of the term *adam* to find a suitable equivalent in English. This analysis of the source text provided her with the target information regarding the linguistic connection to earth and the English word “groundling”. It may be assumed that the driving motive for this analysis was the desire for a translation which renders the Hebrew term in a gender-neutral way. This process would correspond to a pattern like that of the Hysteric's Discourse: prompted by the object of desire, the hysterical subject questions the master-signifier and received knowledge as a result.



A translator with a feminist background may focus particularly on those elements of the original which are perceived as patriarchal or include a male bias, for example, common tropes like “God the Father” or “son of man” and the generic use of the male pronoun for people in general. To give an example of a translation that attempts to rectify this, Luise von Flotow refers to the *Inclusive Language Lectionary* (ILL) (von Flotow 1997, p.45) and its authors’ use of titles such as God the “Father [*and Mother*]” and the God of “Abraham [*and Sarah*]” in their translation (*An Inclusive-Language Lectionary. Readings for Year A. Revised Edition* 1986, p.15 brackets and emphases in original). The ILL adds in these cases female references italicised in brackets to indicate that these could be left out in services if the preacher prefers to.

The Hysteric’s Discourse pattern applied to translation would show  $\mathcal{T}$  as

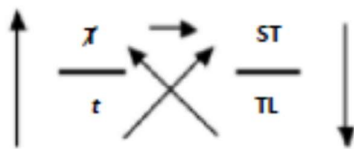


Figure 37: Adapted Hysteric’s Discourse

feminist translator or scholar who analyses the source text, undermined by his/her desire to find the perfect translation. Due to the translator’s or scholar’s bias, his/her reading of the source text is undermined by the same object of desire ( $t$ ). As

result, the translators of the ILL received the options to use “Father and Mother” in their translation or “the God of Abraham and Sarah”. Both products are “unconscious” to the source text in the sense that the latter does not explicitly say “Father and Mother” and “Abraham and Sarah” in its linguistic content as it refers to God. “Mother” is likely to be found simply in its presence as counterpart to “Father” and “and Sarah” is based on her motherhood of Isaac (Gen. 21), the promised son who fathered Jacob (Gen. 25:19-34) and through him the twelve tribes of Israel (Gen. 32:28, Gen. 49).<sup>107</sup>

The translation “God the Father and the Mother” bears other issues for readers. Luise von Flotow points out in this context that Nida argued (in an unpublished

<sup>107</sup> While this is less important for Judaic or Christian religion, it does make explicit that God’s covenant with Abraham does not include his son Ishmael, whom he had with Sarah’s handmaiden Hagar (Gen. 16). In Judaism and Christianity Ishmael is of lesser importance and all sons Abraham had with his concubines are sent to the east, away from his son Isaac (Gen. 25). However, in Islam Ishmael raises the foundations of the Ka’bah (the House of God) together with his father Abraham (Sūrah 2, 127). Abraham also had six other sons with his wife Keturah. Hence, the choice to include Sarah in the reference to God, dismisses the possibility of God’s covenant with Abraham including his sons with Hagar and Keturah.

manuscript) that this it could mislead readers to believe in a plurality of Gods or conflate God with the Virgin Mary (von Flotow 1997, p.55). In Christian faith, God is understood to be triune: The Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Adding the signifier “Mother” may cause difficulty for believers to see God as a *trinity*. Furthermore, referring to God as “Father and Mother”, would question of role of the Virgin Mary, particularly looking at Jesus’ claim that he has to return to the Father after his crucifixion and resurrection from the dead (e.g., Jn. 14:28). Returning to the “Father and Mother” could for example mean that Mary had gone to heaven and awaited him there, or that Jesus negated his family relation to her despite her presence in all four gospels (in comparison to her husband Joseph, who is only given a minor role in the New Testament).

These examples of issues that may arise in the ILL are reminiscent of what Lacan’s original discourse suggests concerning the failure of a relationship between product and truth, or in this discourse  $S_2$  and  $a$  respectively. In terms of translation a similar trend can be seen insofar as the target language (TL) is unable to coincide with the perfect translation ( $t$ ). In other words, the received target language signifiers cannot fully provide what the feminist translator desires. Luise von Flotow sums up the predicament feminist translation scholars find themselves in by stating:

Feminist revisions of the Bible do not seek to change the contents of the text; they are concerned with the language in which this content is expressed. Yet by revising the language, these versions change the tone and meaning of the stories considerably (von Flotow 1997, p.55),

Before von Flotow wrote this statement, the Bible scholar Joanna Dewey (cited in Simon 2005, p.122),<sup>108</sup> asked women to become authors themselves and embark upon the quest of writing translations that differ from the traditional patriarchal texts, whether this be in inclusive language, “affirmative action translations”, commentaries or any other way (Dewey in Simon 2005, p.122). It was mentioned previously in this chapter that the desire of a hysterical subject is split between wanting to challenge the other and to be desired by the same. Arguably, Dewey’s encouragement for women to become authors and write translations that rectify the patriarchal dimension of the Bible may be

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<sup>108</sup> Joanna Dewey is a specialist in feminist approaches to the New Testament (Joanna Dewey - Westar Fellow. [no date]).

a similar desire to overcome existing texts or even the original. This would be supported by Elizabeth A. Castelli's following statement: "she wishes, not to produce a version of the Bible, nor a mechanical reproduction (neither a photocopy nor a machine-assisted translation) of it but produce "the Bible" itself" (Castelli 1990, p.38).<sup>109</sup>

If we consider Simon's article, it appears that feminist responses to the Bible and its translation fall predominantly in the latter part of Dewey's call for action and provided mostly commentaries instead of creating new translations (Simon 2005, p.115). They seem to have been reluctant to provide translations, and focus more on critical readings to discuss feminist views of the Biblical text (Simon 2005, p.115). Simon states that the primary aim of many feminist critiques is not to create the need for an inclusive, gender-neutral translation of the Bible which remedies the position of women, but to "underscore the profoundly ideological nature of interpretation and translation" (Simon 2005, p.126). I suggest that this parallels the pattern of Lacan's discourse, where knowledge is in the position of the subject's desired product. Yet, this knowledge does not actually correspond with the unconscious object of desire that, in Lacan's algebra, occupies the position of the subject's truth. In other words, knowledge is unable to satisfy the subject. Similarly, it could be argued that knowledge produced in feminist critiques of the Bible and Bible translations, may not be able to fully satisfy the scholar or translator. For example, because the highlighted bias cannot be changed; or translations are unable to convey the full spectrum of implicit information contained in the text.

Arguably, the responses of feminist scholars to existing translation projects of the Bible support this claim. Attempts have been made to revise translations of the Bible to employ more gender-neutral and inclusive terminology where the original Hebrew or Greek does not include explicit male-female distinction, such as the *Inclusive New International Version* or the *Today's New International Version*. These efforts to array the provided target language signifiers into a favourable text are still considered inadequate by some

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<sup>109</sup> Castelli is currently Professor of Religion and the Director of the Centre for Research on Women at Barnard College of Columbia University in New York City. She specialises, among other topics, in Feminist studies in religion (Elizabeth A. Castelli | Barnard College - Academia.edu. [no date]).

feminist scholars, who argue that they euphemise and soften the patriarchal nature of the source text and its deprecation of women (Castelli 1990, p.32; Simon 2005, p.118).

In addition to these attempts at producing a gender-neutral and inclusive translation of the Bible, Aleksander Gomola mentions two projects that were inspired by feminist claims: the German translation called *Die Bibel in gerechter Sprache* (first published in 2006) and the English translation titled *Inclusive Bible. The first egalitarian translation* (first published in 2004) (Gomola 2010, p.199). The latter was authored by a Roman Catholic group called Priests for Equality, who attempted to address issues of classism and racism, but primarily sexism (Dewey 2011). Joanna Dewey writes in her review of the *Inclusive Bible* that she found this translation “incredibly exciting and at times infuriating” (Dewey 2011, p.437). While she does encourage the use of this translation for reading and public worship, she criticises the text for being too careful and not “daring” enough (Dewey 2011, pp.437–438). I suggest that this would be an indication of the inability of the produced target language to fully satisfy the subject and coincide with the perfect (impossible) translation. Similarly, the object of desire in Lacan’s theories is unattainable and thus no answer provided by the master as other can fulfil the subject’s desire.

Finally, I will discuss one of the earliest (English language) projects to address the role of women in the Bible, which is called *The Woman’s Bible* (Stanton 2011). Notably, this is not a translation, but rather, a feminist commentary and criticism of passages of the Bible with reference to women. Elizabeth Cady Stanton proposed the project in 1898 to a female committee and found support from a variety of women from England and America (Stanton 2011). However, her efforts to include scholars of Greek and Hebrew were unsuccessful, due to the female experts’ concern regarding their reputation if they were to engage in this project (Stanton 2011). Therefore, *The Woman’s Bible* should be seen as an indirect criticism of the Bible, as Stanton and her committee did not have access to the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts.

The main part of the book begins with an abstract from Genesis. As mentioned before, Stanton’s project set out to provide female commentaries on every part

of the Bible, which referred to women. Hence, the first passage chosen is the creation of mankind in the Bible (Gen. 1:26-28). The text quotes the English translation of the passage, followed by detailed commentaries by members of Stanton's committee. It includes every commentary in full, signed by the women's initials (Stanton 2011). Despite Stanton's admission to have been unable to find Hebrew and Greek scholars to engage in the project, there are references to the original Hebrew to some degree in the commentaries.

The second commentator (initials E.B.D.) on the first passage of Genesis in the text focuses on the inconsistencies within the source text (Stanton 2011). Similarly, a hysterical subject may be inclined to focus on the inconsistencies he/she found in the master. It is unclear whether E.B.D. makes actual use of the original Hebrew or received her knowledge exclusively from the secondary sources she refers to.<sup>110</sup> The commentator points out contradictions between the creation, as narrated in Genesis 1 to Genesis 2:4 and as it is elaborated on from the rest of Genesis 2 until the end of Genesis 3. She states that these accounts paint divergent images of man and woman (Stanton 2011). She contrasts the two records of creation, which she entitles "Elohistic" and "lahoistic", based on the dominating term used to refer to God: "Elohim" in the first account of creation and "lahveh" (or YHWH) in the second account (Stanton 2011). The Elohistic report describes man and woman as created equal with equal dominion over the earth, while the lahoistic account, she states, depicts women as second to man, inferior and "punished with subjection to man for breaking a prohibitory law" (Stanton 2011). E.B.D. writes "[my] own opinion is that the second story was manipulated by some Jew, in an endeavour to give "heavenly authority" for requiring a woman to obey the man she married" (Stanton 2011).

Like in the adapted Discourse of the Hysteric, E.B.D. as translator or commentator challenges the source text, driven by the desire for a perfect translation. This translation may be the correct rendition of the creation of man and woman by God as equal, and both together representing God. The source

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<sup>110</sup> Stanton stated explicitly that her objective was to offer commentaries by women on Bible passages concerning women. Hence, it appears proper to use the female pronoun despite their anonymity.

text she challenges (the original, as she perceives it) is equally undermined by her object of desire (a perfect translation), as it shapes her understanding of the text. In other words, both E.B.D and the original she challenges are unconsciously affected by her object of desire.

Earlier in the thesis it was established that Lacan understands desire as the desire of the other. It may be argued that by pointing out a flaw in the original, the translator attempts to create a desire for him-/herself as the one who would be able to complete the text. In this case, feminist criticism can be seen to draw attention to problematic passages in the original and existing translations in the context of gender and gender equality. The result of this would be the need for translations that rectify the neglect of female inclusion. The inevitable failure of language and the potential defectiveness of translations can sustain feminist approaches to Bible translation, as each translation or each new piece of information enables further responses. This inability to create a definitive solution which satisfies all readers and critics is likely to cause the discourse to continue.

This section highlighted some examples of feminist responses to the Bible and Bible translation, as well as issues in translating gender in the Bible. It was noted that the Biblical texts were originally written in a predominantly patriarchal and androcentric society which may cause misunderstanding in readers who are less aware of the historical context of some passages. Furthermore, some issues were mentioned to arise from biases in the target language based on its linguistic properties or existing traditions in translation, e.g., the translation of *adam* as “man”. In this context, the inability of the product to satisfy the subject as per the bottom half of Lacan’s formula was particularly emphasised. The discursive matrix indicates that product and truth are unable to connect or coincide (truth // product), which here would suggest that the target language is unable to relate to the perfect translation. This could be seen, for example in the way translation attempts were received by feminist scholars as inadequate, for example by not being daring enough (see Dewey 2011).

Furthermore, the feminist approach highlighted the desire for knowledge and in-depth analysis of the source text, including its meaning, connotations, and context, as opposed to fixation on the linguistic surface only. It should be noted, that in this part of the chapter the target language and knowledge were often used interchangeably, as the product was used both to translate the original but also to educate the reader about its context and implicit information.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to look at translation through the pattern of Lacan's Discourse of the Hysteric. I suggest that a large number of translations will display this type of discourse structure, for example when the translator critically assesses the source text, guided by the unconscious desire for a perfect yet impossible translation. The translator's analysis of the original will result in the production of corresponding target language signifiers which are used as an attempt to create a perfect translation qua object of desire.

The key aspects of the Hysteric's Discourse pattern for translation are the critical analysis of the source text beyond its linguistic structure, based on the awareness that it is not "perfect" but flawed, and the enjoyment and *jouissance* of the target language. Considering this awareness of the flawed source text, as well as the enjoyment and *jouissance* connected with the produced target language one can identify similarities with the subversive dimension of Lacan's Hysteric's Discourse. While the hysterical subject aims to overthrow the master, the translator may aim to overcome the original, for example, by saying what he/she believes the original was unable to convey the message or did so inadequately.<sup>111</sup> This translator does not blindly follow the source text as a divine stencil but analyses it concerning its intentions. A translation that is closer to the Master's Discourse on the other hand, would be more likely to focus on highlighting the original structure and wording of the original.

This chapter discussed some examples of instances where translation and its related research exhibit features and patterns that correspond with Lacan's

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<sup>111</sup> I would like to highlight that it is not my intention to imply that the presence of a Hysteric's Discourse structure suggests that the translator is subversive in nature and aims to overthrow or "undermine" the original.

Discourse of the Hysteric. The examples I used illustrate the Hysteric's Discourse pattern found in theoretical work on translation and in some final target texts. Deconstruction and the feminist criticism of the Bible, as well as its translation, relate to the Hysteric's Discourse in their critical analyses of the source text and its meaning. However, they do not suggest clear strategies for translators. The examples and approaches from translation practice were discussed to exhibit hysterical traits or critical analysis but also relate to the Discourse of the Hysteric in their intended use of the product, i.e., the target language, which Lacan connects closely to *jouissance*, a term which can be understood as a paradoxical satisfaction in dissatisfaction.

The critical analysis of the original in the approaches discussed here that go beyond the surface level of the source text are reminiscent of the hysterical subjects questioning of the master-signifier. The translator focuses on the meaning and intention over its form and exact wording. This was especially exemplified in relation to deconstruction, Gavronsky's cannibalistic translator and *les Belles Infidèles*, and Nida's dynamic equivalence in translation in general. In connection with Bible translation this was additionally illustrated in the New Living Translation and *The Voice*, as well as in the Feminist approach to the Bible and Bible translation.

The pattern of the Hysteric's Discourse in translation was often associated with a desire to challenge and subvert the original, while the target text was argued to almost become a new original itself. This notion related particularly to the idea of a cannibalistic translator and *les Belles Infidèles*, as the target texts produced in this context stood out as rewritings that were only loosely tailored after the original. Gavronsky highlighted the subversion of the author and his/her original by the translator. *Les Belles Infidèles* are highlighted as texts that take on the role of the original for the readers. Furthermore, the above-mentioned subversion of the original can be seen in these texts as well as the translations capture only loosely the essence of the source text.

Here, the translation as object of desire guides the translation process as it is the translator's motivation to analyse the original. In Lacan's original discourse, the hysterical subject is trapped between his/her conscious desire to challenge



the master's authority and the unconscious desire to be desired. In translation, this could mean that a translator desires to create a translation which is able to overcome or replace the original. This could be done, for example, by highlighting its inconsistencies and inadequacies while also satisfying the desire for a translation. For example, this subversive dimension could be seen in the feminist critiques of the Bible, where the text was challenged in display of women and gender roles.

One way for the translation to become desirable could be to be enjoyable. As another important factor in Lacan's Discourse of the Hysteric, *jouissance* can also be observed in translation as discussed here. The enjoyment and simultaneous displeasure associated with *jouissance* could arguably be experienced in the excess of information received as a result from the analysis of the original. For example, the translator may enjoy the variety of available signifiers in the target language and at the same time struggle to choose and convey everything he/she learned from the text in one coherent translation. Similarly, the additional knowledge gained from the analysis of the original and, for example, its sociological, cultural, and historical context may evoke a similar feeling of *jouissance* in the translator insofar as he/she may find both pain and pleasure in that knowledge. In terms of the Bible, it may be that the knowledge of gender roles in the socio-historical context of the original is enjoyed while also inadequately rendered in the target text.

In the following chapter, I will examine translation in the context of the Analyst's Discourse pattern. In particular, my analysis will focus on those instances where the translator encounters and engages with untranslatability within the original text.

## 5. The Analyst's Discourse

### 5.1 Introduction

#### 5.1.1 Overview

The previous chapter discussed the occurrence of the pattern of the Hysteric's Discourse in translation. In Lacan's original discourse, the subject is questioning the master to receive the answer as to what would fill his/her desire. In translation, this would be the translator analysing and overanalysing the original in order to gain complete knowledge of it for the translation. However, complete knowledge of a text is arguably impossible to attain and render in one consistent target text.

Following the Hysteric's Discourse according to Lacan's proposed quarter turn rotation, the Discourse of the Analyst aims to resolve the deadlock in the original Hysteric's Discourse through confrontation with the impossibility of fulfilled desire. In other words, the encounter with the impossibility of the object of desire is intended to enable the subject to take responsibility and ownership over his/her own desires and actions, including the unconscious symptoms. Concerning the outline of the Analyst's Discourse, one can see that the object of desire moves from the position of underlying truth into the position of agent and the subject from agent to other, while on the unconscious level, knowledge is found to occupy the position of truth and the master-signifier is the product.

It may be noted that the Discourse of the Analyst holds a very particular position in psychoanalysis as the analysand intentionally chooses to undergo analysis, of which this discourse is essentially a graphic representation. Hence, I would like to preface here that by using this discourse structure to analyse patterns in translation, I do not intend to imply that a translator does or should undergo analysis in order to successfully translate. Rather, I argue that a similar pattern to that of the analytic discourse can be found to underlie the translator's engagement with the untranslatable elements of a given source text. As such, the adapted discourse discussed in this chapter offers a new way of analysing the structures found in translation practice, in particular the instances where a translator is confronted with the impossibility of creating a

perfect translation. Following the logic of Lacan's discourse this confrontation may enable the translator to produce his/her own version of the source text by establishing a new guiding principle over the translation process.

In general, psychoanalytic therapy focuses enabling the subject to create efficient master-signifiers which anchor the subject in his/her personality. If the structure of this discourse is used as a lens to look at translation, it can be argued that a similar process is available to translators who are defined by their hysterical relationship to the source text.<sup>112</sup> Essentially, the Analyst's Discourse pattern allows us to appreciate how a new approach to translation can be developed out of the deadlocks of hystericized translations. This approach is characterised by the production of new master-signifiers, which means that translation processes following this discursive pattern will have a chance to be liberated from the potentially crippling attachments to a source text whose meanings are endlessly questioned.

Lacan states that "the analytic discourse completes the three others", i.e., the Discourses of the Master, the Hysteric, and the University (Lacan 2007, p.54). This can be seen in translation as well, as the present chapter will illustrate. I will aim to demonstrate that a pattern similar to that of the Discourse of the Analyst is present in most translations, whether the translation is associated closer with the structure of the Discourse of the Master or the Hysteric, as discussed in the preceding two chapters. Many of the approaches discussed previously are likely to include instances where the translator has to engage with ambiguity and untranslatability in the original and decide how to render them in the translation. In Lacan's original theories, the Discourse of the Analyst provides a way to engage with the blockages generated by the other discourses. Similarly, in translation this pattern can often be seen in instances where the translator encounters a deadlock which could be connected to the Discourse of the Master or the Hysteric. For example, this could be the impossibility to render the original exactly word for word as it tends to be the

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<sup>112</sup> Lacan states that anyone undergoing analysis has to be placed in the Hysteric's Discourse (Lacan 2007, p.33) and in translation the translator would need to be in a position of questioning the superiority, or at least complete translatability, of the original as in the Discourse of the Hysteric.

case in the Master's Discourse, or the excessive questioning of the source text's meaning as in the Hysteric's Discourse.

The close relation between the three discourses becomes clear if they are connected in form of a circle: Lacan states in his seminar that, in order to be analysed, i.e., enter the Analyst's Discourse, the analysand must pass through the Discourse of the Hysteric, "since this is the law, the rule of the game" (Lacan 2007, p.33). In other words, anyone entering therapy occupies the position of the hysteric. Hence, the Discourse of the Analyst is always connected to that of the Hysteric. Furthermore, Lacan also mentions that the Discourse of the Analyst results in a new Master's Discourse (Lacan 2007, p.176). If this new Master's Discourse becomes problematic and encounters a deadlock, the subject may start the process again. I propose that a similar process can be seen in translation: a translator may follow the source text as closely as possible, as in the pattern of the Master's Discourse. However, upon encountering instances of untranslatability or ambiguity, he/she questions the source text and gains knowledge in a manner that mirrors the pattern of the Hysteric's Discourse. Finally, one can see the emergence of a pattern which is similar to the Discourse of the Analyst, as the translator is confronted with the untranslatability of the source text and engages with this issue by creating a new master-signifier over the translation, thus beginning a new Master's Discourse.

The discussion of the Analyst's Discourse structure and its significance for translation will first focus on clarifying the general composition of Lacan's discourse, before highlighting how it relates to translation. I will then use the topic of agency in translation to draw on the enabling or liberating dimension of the Analyst's Discourse and where similar patterns could be seen in translation. Particularly, I will look at two particular examples from the research by Maria Tymoczko (Tymoczko 2014) and Mona Baker (Baker 2016) in the context of activist translation. In contrast to this, I will also look at the functionalist approach, as developed by Katharina Reiß, Hans Vermeer and Christiane Nord. Despite their different ideologies, I suggest that both activist translation and Functionalism display structures that are reminiscent of the Analyst's Discourse.

These final two approaches (activist and functionalist translation) will be referenced again in the final chapter of this thesis which looks at Lacan's fifth discourse, the Discourse of the Capitalist.

### 5.1.2 Theoretical Application

Lacan's Discourse of the Analyst (Figure 38) begins with the object of desire

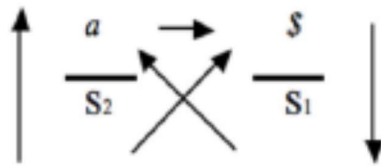


Figure 38: The Analyst's Discourse (Vanheule 2016, p.3)

in the position of agent, confronting the split subject with its own impossibility, i.e., the fact that complete fulfilment of desire cannot be achieved. In analysis, the analyst would assume the position of *objet a* and reveal that

he/she does not hold the answer to the analysand's questions. The underlying truth of both the object of desire and the subject is unconscious knowledge, that which Lacan often refers to as *savoir insu*, unknown knowledge (see Lacan 1998b, p.24). In an analytical setting, "the analyst puts himself in the position of representing, through being the agent, the cause of desire" (Lacan 2007, p.176). In other words, the analyst pretends to act as the object of the subject's desire, thus having the answer to the analysand's questions. However, it is essential that the cause of desire is exposed as empty, i.e., that the analyst shows that he/she does *not* have an answer or solution to the analysand's symptom, so that the subject is led to the realisation that there is no right or wrong answer to his/her questioning. The shock of this discovery should then lead the subject to produce his/her own master-signifier, which means that the subject is enabled to take responsibility for his/her own actions and desires, inclusive of the unconscious symptoms.

Using Lacan's discourse pattern to look at translation (Figure 39), the

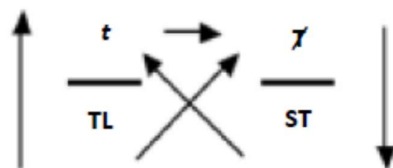


Figure 39: Adapted Analyst's Discourse

translation (*t*) is found in position of agent and the translator (*T*) in the position of the other. Underlying the translation in the position of truth is the target language (TL) where it influences and shapes the

translation. Finally, the product of the discourse is the source text (ST).

In the context of the present thesis, I argue that the translation in position of agent represents the instance where the *perfect* translation is revealed to be impossible to achieve. The reason for this impossibility is represented in the bottom half of the discourse by the missing link between source text and target language, i.e., the incompatibility between the two languages. In other words, in the situation described by this discourse, the translator is confronted with the radical ambiguity of language and the impossibility of creating one definitive, perfect version of the source text in the target language. As it was established in the previous chapter and as Lacan writes in his Seminar XVII, the hysterical subject's "truth is that she has to be the object *a* in order to be desired" (Lacan 2007, p.176). A hysterical translator would deconstruct and dissect the source text based on the unconscious desire to be desired, for example by someone the translator views as a person of authority or influence such as the author, the reader, or even God. This translator may attempt to achieve this by producing the perfect translation. However, since a perfect translation is impossible to produce, the translator may remain trapped in a deadlock where knowledge is produced but translation proper is prevented by the continued questioning regarding its meaning and legitimacy. The translator may instead find an excess of information in his/her research which should be included in a translation. In most cases it is likely to be impossible to include all information of the source text without adding anything new or radically changing the structure of the text. Hence, the more the translator investigates the original, the less likely it is that he/she is able to produce a translation he/she would perceive as perfect.

If this hysterical translator were to enter a pattern as that of the Discourse of the Analyst, he/she would be confronted with the revelation of the untranslatability inherent in the original text. This may enable the translator to accept the inevitable imperfection of the target text he/she produces and take responsibility for discrepancies between the original and the translation. The final translation would be a rendition of the source text according to the translator's understanding which, to some extent, constitutes a new version of the original ( $S_1$ ) in the target language.

In the pattern of the Analyst's Discourse the target language is found in the position of truth, which in this context means that it is underlying and also undermining the translation. The target language is simultaneously the reason the translation can exist and the reason for its imperfection. That is, the translation is only a translation because it is written in the target language but at the same time it is never perfect or definitive since, as Nida put it "no two languages are identical" (Nida 2012, p.141) or, more crucially from a Lacanian perspective, because of "the incessant sliding of the signified under the signifier" (Lacan 2006, p.419). This would imply that any text includes a certain level of untranslatability.

The topic of un/translatability has been much discussed and researched in many different contexts. Concerning the general understanding of the concept of un/translatability in Translation Studies, the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* suggests that translatability is the "capacity for some kind of meaning to be transferred from one language to another without undergoing radical change" (Pym and Turk 1998, p.273). Similarly, the linguist J.C. Catford defines untranslatability as a case in which no functionally relevant feature is available to convey the source text situation in the target language (Catford 1965, p.94). In other words, un/translatability is connected to the compatibility of different languages, for example in which information has to be transmitted and which is optional (see Jakobson 2012, p.129).

Because source and target language are (to a degree) incompatible, a translator will always have to compromise during the translation process and decide which elements of the source text to prioritise in the translation. This means that the final translation will differ to some degree from the source text, for example in its connotations and ambiguities. This may represent a key stage many translators have to pass through in their work – the realisation that the translation is never definitive and perfect. In the formula, the incompatibility of the target language and the source text can be seen on the bottom level (TL // ST), as the target language and source text are unable to connect.

Compared to the previous two discourse patterns, one distinct element of the Discourse of the Analyst is the shift of the object of desire from the level of

unconsciousness to consciousness. Hence, in the previous discourses the unattainability of fulfilled desire was either unknown or disavowed. However, the Analyst's Discourse confronts the subject with the impossibility of the object of desire. This means that in translation a translator would be confronted with the impossibility of his/her objective and the futility of his/her endeavour to create the perfect translation. This failure of translation has the potential to lead the translator to assume agency and render his/her subjective understanding of the original in the target language.

According to Lacan's theory, a successful encounter with the impossibility of fulfilled desire in the Discourse of the Analyst, the shock of the initial loss of the prospect of fulfilled desire, may trigger in the subject the need to provide their own partial answer and produce a new master-signifier which enables the subject to accept their symptom. Similarly, a translator has two options: to accept the absence of an objectively perfect solution for the lack of equivalence between the source and the target language, or to remain trapped in the search for the ideal translation. However, the latter would imply that the translator also remains unable to produce a final target text. As mentioned above, this could become the disillusioning reality translators have to face in their undertakings. However, this disillusionment can prove productive since it is the impossibility of the translation as object of desire that is highlighted as the determining and directing factor for the translator's activity. Translation here functions according to the same principle which Lacan ascribes to language in general: the constant metonymic slippage of meaning from one signifier to the next. In other words, the indeterminacy of language causes speakers to continue speaking until they reach a full stop, i.e., a master-signifier or *point de capiton*, where "the signified and the signifier are knotted together" (Lacan 1997, p.268). This inability of language to create fixed meanings produces the necessity of a master-signifier, or unary trait (to use Lacan's 1950s definition of the same idea) (see Theoretical Framework). Likewise, the impossibility of a perfect translation can cause an excess of meaning in translation, i.e., additional meaning, which was not part of the original but also, in some cases, an excess of translations. For example, in retranslations of canonical texts, or texts of particular value, e.g., the Bible.



Most importantly, if the Analyst's Discourse is applied to translation, it is only the effect of the meaninglessness of language which rises to the conscious level. That is, the translator would become aware of the impossibility of the translation but not necessarily of the underlying truth causing it, i.e., that knowledge is always partial and inconsistent. This unconscious truth of the target language would not only undermine the translation but also influence the translator. Similarly, as it was highlighted before, in Lacanian terms language is arbitrary and meaning is dependent on the dialectical dimension of an utterance. Regardless of the translator's view of language, he/she would, according to the Lacanian view of language, ultimately have to disavow the dimension of meaninglessness in languages in order to produce a functional text. This is not only a feature of translation since, notwithstanding its underlying true senselessness, language (in any form) is indispensable for human interaction, in particular for the promotion of one's ideas and beliefs. In translation, a similar trait can be observed as translators have to disavow the untranslatability of the original to some degree. As it was mentioned at different points in this thesis, due to the incompatibility of source and target language any translation is likely to be "imperfect". Hence, to create a functional translation, the translator is forced to prioritise certain aspects and "disavow" the element of untranslatability.

If language is rooted in unconscious knowledge, then the target culture's readership of any translation can only experience the translator's subjective understanding of the original. The source text that is produced as a result of a pattern such as the Analyst's Discourse would be "unconscious" to the translator (based on Lacan's formula), in so far as he/she is likely to be unaware of how much his/her reading differs from the source text's intended meaning. The translator's unconscious diversion from the source text affects the translation in the sense that he/she is still duty-bound to produce a text in the target language which is perceived as *the* translation for its readership. However, for the receiver of the target text, the translator's understanding of the original remains mostly unknown, as they would be unable to perceive the exact same text as the translator, since each of us will have an individual

understanding of language. This means that every reader's (including the translator's) understanding of the source text is different to some degree.

In summary, the pattern of Lacan's Discourse of the Analyst has the potential to illustrate the translator's encounter and engagement with untranslatability in the original. In the Analyst's Discourse pattern, a translator is confronted with the impossibility of a perfect solution. This encounter may compel the translator to prioritise certain aspects of the source text and produce a translation which conveys his/her understanding of the original.

The following section will illustrate this further by drawing on examples from translation studies, such as the notion of agency, the use of footnotes, the functionalist approach and activist translation.

## **5.2 The Analyst's Discourse Pattern in Translation**

When applied to translation, the pattern of the Analyst's Discourse can be seen to illustrate a crucial point of development from translation approaches that are overly focussed on their attachment to the source text. That is, in a hypothetical situation where a translator is placed in the Discourse of the Analyst, the outcome would be a radically different approach to the symptom, which can have significant consequences for translation, both in theory and in practice. In this psychoanalytical scenario, the translator is brought to realise that there is no definitive solution to the ambiguity of the source text. In other words, rather than believe that the perfect translation exists somewhere but it is constantly slipping away from his/her grasp, the translator assumes and identifies with the impossibility of (producing the perfect) translation which, following the psychoanalytic logic, can have a liberating effect. Hence, he/she is forced to decide which aspects of the Source Text (e.g., connotations, ambiguities etc.) to carry over into the target text.

It may be noted that this scenario is used only as an illustration, and I do not suggest that translators should become fluent in psychoanalytic theory in order to translate a text. This chapter is only looking at structures which can be argued to resemble the basic pattern of Lacan's Discourse of the Analyst.

### 5.2.1 Agency in Translation

I will start by discussing the translator's agency in the context of the discourse of the analyst. I would argue that in such discourse the translator is enabled to assume effective agency over the translation process and produce a target text by determining the original's meaning for the target culture, according to his/her own understanding of the original.

In this context, I understand agency as the ability of the translator to take ownership of the target text and the subjective choices that were made in the translation process. Agency in this sense would be the ability of the translator to accept his/her personal bias and the idea that the translation may in fact not be perfect. A hypothetical translation resulting from a Master's Discourse where the translator does not adopt agency would be entirely guided and controlled by the source text. For example, this can be seen in an interlinear translation, where the translation is still physically attached to the original and offers a word-for-word representation of the source text in the target language. Another case may be seen in the legend of the Septuagint, where the translators were said to have worked in a trance and the final translation was attributed to a higher being. In a Hysteric's Discourse the translator may not be able to achieve agency because he/she is too caught up in the (over)analysis of the source text. In other words, the translator may be continuously questioning the meaning of the original and not "draw the line" somewhere and translate to the best of his/her ability and understanding. In an Analyst's Discourse on the other hand the translator is enabled to accept the untranslatable dimension of the source text and create his/her own version of the source text. Thus, the translator is able to adopt agency according to my proposed understanding of the term.

A similar understanding of agency is proposed by Tuija Kinnunen and Kaisa Koskinen, developed in the closing session of their symposium *Translator's Agency* at the University of Tampere in 2008. Together with the presenters and their audience, they agreed on an understanding of agency as "willingness and ability to act" (Kinnunen and Koskinen 2010, p.6). Abdel Wahab Khalifa suggests this definition may be based on the sociologists Victor Kaptelinin and Bonnie A. Nardi's understanding of the term (Khalifa 2014, p.14). In their book

*Acting with Technology* they describe agency as “ability and need to act” (Kaptelinin and Nardi 2006, p.33; Khalifa 2014, p.14). Both definitions, I would suggest, are equally relevant for translation as discussed in this chapter, since the process of translation requires the ability, the need, and the willingness to act. That is, Lacan’s Analyst’s Discourse pattern suggests a *need* to act when the translator is confronted with the element of untranslatability if a target text is to be produced. The only other option for him/her would be to give up and not translate the original at all. Assuming the translator has sufficient knowledge of both source and target language, it would be reasonable to deduce that the translator also has the *ability* to act and decide within the particular context of translation. The *willingness* to act, or rather, the willingness to choose, manifests itself possibly most clearly when the translator has to decide how to engage with the element of untranslatability. In other words, when the translator accepts the responsibility to decide how to render the source text in a coherent target text and how to engage with its ambiguities. One way in which this willingness and ability to act may be visible is in the absence or presence of footnotes. An excessive number of footnotes in some translations may be an attempt to mediate between a reluctance to act and a strong “need” to act.

Footnotes were previously mentioned in relation to Bible translation, as subtle remainders of untranslatability based on the inherent ambiguity of language. Furthermore, the issue of (excessive) footnotes was raised in the discussion of the Discourse of the Hysteric, where it was argued that they can be used as an attempt to compromise between producing a translation and still retaining at least some of the excess information which is included in the original but cannot be conveyed within the main text. In both of these instances, footnotes arguably mark a moment of compromise in the translation. Put simply, this compromise would be navigating between the need to produce a coherent target text and desire to render all explicit and implicit information of the original in the target language. The idea of a compromise will, in this chapter, be illustrated by using the structure of the Analyst’s Discourse. Regardless of whether a translation predominantly follows the pattern of the Master’s or Hysteric’s Discourse, footnotes would point towards an interruption of the

discourse and thus a need to compromise. In these instances, the pattern would shift towards the structure of the Analyst's Discourse.

Footnotes may become a translator's way of embracing the untranslatability of the original and highlighting it to the reader. Similarly, the aim of Lacan's Discourse of the Analyst would be to enable the subject to confront and embrace their symptom (e.g., Fink 1997, pp.135–136; Lacan 2007). One translator who would be an example of someone who openly appreciated the opportunities brought by footnotes is the esteemed writer Vladimir Nabokov. He concluded his critique of different translations of Alexander Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* saying:

I want translations with copious footnotes, footnotes reaching up like skyscrapers to the top of this or that page so as to leave only the gleam of one textual line between commentary and eternity. I want such footnotes and the absolute literal sense, with no emasculation and no padding – I want such sense and such notes for all the poetry in other tongues that still languishes in “poetical” versions, begrimed and beslimed by rhyme. And when my *Onegin* is ready, it will either conform exactly to my vision or not appear at all (Nabokov 2012, p.125).

Nabokov is asking in this quotation that translations should be completely literal and include as many footnotes as possible. This case could be argued to display a structure like that of the Analyst's Discourse in so far as Nabokov may have initially been confronted with the impossibility of a completely literal translation. The compromise found in this encounter would be the inclusion of footnotes, which he came to embrace as the solution to the question how all implicit and explicit information of the original could be conveyed to readers of the translation. The use of footnotes would in this case be *symptomatic* of Nabokov's confrontation with untranslatability.

A different aspect from the quotation above is Nabokov's aim to produce a translation which would conform completely to his vision. Footnotes could be seen to be a new master-signifier which enables him to take agency and produce a translation which he can perceive as perfect and convey the original in a way that to him appears appropriate. A similar result would be the aim of Lacan's Discourse of the Analyst: by undergoing analysis, the subject would be enabled to produce a new master-signifier which allows him/her to express

themselves in a way they are content with and “make peace with” their symptom.

Through the medium of footnotes, Nabokov could be argued to take on agency, i.e., willingness and ability to act. Together with this agency he is also taking on “responsibility” over his translation of the source text by calling it “his *Onegin*” which will either be perfectly in line with his vision or discarded without being published. In Nabokov’s example, footnotes are highlighted as a means for the translator to engage with untranslatability and assume agency to compromise and prioritise in order to produce a final target text.

While this first part of the chapter focussed on footnotes mostly from the perspective of the translator, the Finnish translation scholar Outi Paloposki offers a different point of view and highlights footnotes as a way for a researcher or other reader to reconstruct the translator’s decisions (Paloposki 2010). Footnotes are here also called the translator’s “footprints” which allow the reader to follow his/her path (Paloposki 2010, p.87). A variety of information of the translation process is available in footnotes and becomes visible to the reader, e.g., freedom of choice, the control the translators have over their work, etc. (Paloposki 2010, pp.88–89). In other words, the reader is invited to take part in the translation process and encounter the work behind the target text. In the footnotes, it becomes visible if, when, and how the translator encountered an instance of untranslatability, similar to how it is visualised in my adaptation of Lacan’s *Discourse of the Analyst*. As Paloposki points out, the reader can follow the translator and relive the obstacles he/she encountered. Broadly speaking, footnotes could be seen as a transcript of the translator’s work, and arguably indicate where the translator encountered instances of untranslatability and thus engaged in a pattern similar to the adapted *Analyst’s Discourse* pattern.

To exemplify how footnotes can be used as “footprints” and retrace the translator’s decisions I will look here at a German translation of one of Lacan’s texts. Lacan’s texts include many passages which are difficult or impossible to translate completely due to his frequent use of puns and ambiguities. The German translator Hans-Dieter Gondek includes some endnotes to his

translation of Lacan's texts *Das Symbolische, das Imaginäre und das Reale* and *Einführung in die Namen-des-Vaters* which were published together in a book called *Namen-des-Vaters* (Lacan 2013).

In his translation Gondek annotates, for example, his German translation of "*sujet patient*" as "*Subjekt Patient*" [subject patient] with an endnote which explains:

Im Original *sujet patient*, was auch durch »geduldiges Subjekt« übersetzt werden kann. (A.d.Ü.) (Lacan 2013, p.61) [original emphasis]

*Sujet patient* in the original, which can also be translated as "patient subject." (Annotation of the translator) [my translation].

If translation was to be seen as a discussion or discourse between the translator and the source text, the natural question for the translator to ask the original might be "What is the right translation?" – a question to which the translator would not receive a conclusive answer, as it is his/her own decision to make.<sup>113</sup> Looking at the above quotation it is noticeable that contrary to French and English, "patient" (adjective) and "the patient" (noun) have no resemblance in German: "*der Patient*" (the patient) versus "*geduldig*" (to be patient). In addition to this the German word order would change depending on whether "*patient*" is translated as noun or adjective: "*das geduldige Subjekt*" (the patient subject) versus "*der Subjekt Patient*" (the subject patient), which leaves the original's ambiguity of this example untranslatable. As established earlier, the answer to the question concerning the "right" translation is that there is no answer and no right (or wrong) translation. In order for Gondek to produce a publishable target text, he had to decide which translation of "sujet patient" to prioritise, in this case Gondek decided to use "*Patient Subjekt*". However, at the same time he allowed the reader to be privy to the alternative option by way of the endnote. In addition to these annotations, Gondek includes some of the original French words in brackets in the narrative of the translation which provide the reader with an idea of the ambiguity of the source text.

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<sup>113</sup> Exceptions to this are specific text types, such as patents or certificates, where translations have been standardised and often follow a set template.

Above I discussed agency primarily in terms of the translator's decisions in translation in general, other scholars in translation studies have also discussed agency in translation with a stronger focus on the political and ideological dimension of translation. This view of agency focuses on translators who allow their biases, views, and agendas to influence their translation.

Two influential scholars who discuss this type of agency are Maria Tymoczko and Mona Baker. In particular, I will refer to their texts *Enlarging translation, empowering translators* (Tymoczko 2014) and "The prefigurative politics of translation in place-based movements of protest" (Baker 2016) where they focus on translation in the context of power relations and activism. Below, I will discuss some of their research in relation to agency and the Discourse of the Analyst. First, I will look at Tymoczko's above mentioned text, where she puts a strong emphasis on power relations. She states that the translators' agency has been a key concern within translation studies since World War II and has been discussed in most areas of the field (Tymoczko 2014, p.189). Discussions range from the potential of translation to determine the source text's meaning, to its impact on cultural systems, to translators as ideological and political agents and translation as a tool for ideological and activist agendas (Tymoczko 2014, p.189). Tymoczko further writes that:

In translating texts translators must make choices, and emphasis on the translator's choices and decision making was one of the first steps in exploring the agency of the translator, as we have seen (Tymoczko 2014, p.211).

In other words, to produce a target text, the translator has to decide what he/she wants the source text to look like in the target language. Looking at this issue through the lens of Analyst's Discourse pattern, I suggest this statement implies that the translator determines the source text's meaning to a degree because a perfect translation is impossible, which I propose is illustrated in my adapted version of the Analyst's Discourse.

Tymoczko explains further that this is

[...] partly because of anisomorphisms of language and asymmetries of culture, partly because meaning in a text is both open and overdetermined, partly because a text makes contradictory demands that cannot all be simultaneously satisfied (for example, the demands



of complex content and spare form), and partly because the information load associated with a source text is excessive (Tymoczko 2014, p.211).

The above excerpt from Tymoczko's text can be argued to relate to different elements of the adapted Lacan's Discourse of the Analyst. Notably, the position of underlying truth, which causes the impossibility of a translation that is equal in all elements to the original, is occupied by the target language. The first reason Tymoczko gives for the impossibility of perfect translation has to do with the "anisomorphisms of language and asymmetries of culture" (Tymoczko 2014, p.211). In other words, the target language and culture are unable to convey the same meanings, associations, and connotations of the source text due to the uniqueness of the respective linguistic structures of both target and source language and differing cultural conventions.

Tymoczko's second point is that "meaning in a text is both open and overdetermined" (Tymoczko 2014, p.211). Here, the problem is not necessarily the target language in particular but language in general, since, as discussed earlier in this thesis, there is no fixed connection between a signifier and signified. Meaning is always open to interpretation and each signifier conveys simultaneously a lack and an excess of e.g., meanings, associations, connotations. Because meaning is always moving along the chain of signifiers in both source and target language, it is impossible for the original to be reproduced exactly in the target language, and thus result in a definitive, final target text. Instead, there are always instances which can be improved or revised.

Thirdly, Tymoczko writes that "a text makes contradictory demands that cannot all be simultaneously satisfied (for example, the demands of complex content and spare form)" (Tymoczko 2014, p.211). In most (if not all) cases, translators will have to prioritise certain features of the source text over others, as it was discussed previously in this chapter. Similarly, the subject in Lacan's Discourse of the Analyst is put in a position where he/she has to take ownership of his/her symptom and provide his/her own answer to his/her questioning. In translation, such an instance of a demand for complex content and spare form, as mentioned by Tymoczko, can be seen in texts by Sigmund

Freud. Freud's texts include accessible terminology which even readers who are untrained in the medical field could understand. However, this is a common feature in many German texts since the language makes frequent use of descriptive compound nouns instead of Latin terminology or neologisms. Hence, in this example of translating Freud into a language such as English, the contradicting demand would be for a scientific text which is accessible to scientists and laypersons alike but complies with the standards of the scientific genre. Freud's first and most prominent translator James Strachey prioritised the scientific dimension of Freud's writing and translated the texts in ways which would allow them to fit in with the standards of the English genre (see Freud 2010). Therefore, Freudian psychoanalysis in the English language speaks of the "ego", "id", and "super-ego" for "*ich*", "*es*", and "*über-ich*" instead of "I", "it", and "over-I", as a more literal translation would suggest.<sup>114</sup>

Finally, Tymoczko states, "the information load associated with a source text is excessive" (Tymoczko 2014, p.211). For instance, this could be due to the implicit information a signifier in the source text refers to, e.g., such as cultural references, connotations, associations, or ambiguities. These implicit references often cannot be rendered by a single signifier in the target language and would require further explanations. This issue relates back to the incompatibility of the target language with the source text causing the impossibility of complete translation and thus forcing the translator to decide which information to prioritise.

The above discussion of Tymoczko's statement is similar to the view of agency I raised previously, i.e., the translator's need, willingness, and ability to act. However, in her book Tymoczko also draws attention to the translator's agency in an ideological context, i.e., which institutions and values a translator supports and, for example, how this affects the way translation issues are solved, for example the way cultural elements are rendered in translation (Tymoczko 2014, p.111). The approach to translating unique concepts indicates certain power relations between two different languages and cultures. Tymoczko speaks of "resistance" in situations where the translator is

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<sup>114</sup>For a different translation approach to Freud's *Traumdeutung*, see for example Joyce Crick's version *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Freud 1999).

confronted with the decision concerning which values to support, how to convey them, and which strategies to employ, e.g., whether to adapt the original to match the experiences and knowledge of the target text readers, or whether to retain the foreignness of the source text and culture (Tymoczko 2014, p.111). One example for a strategy in favour of preserving the cultural elements of the original mentioned by Tymoczko is Venuti's concept of foreignization (Venuti 2004; Tymoczko 2014, p.111). In Venuti's idea of foreignization translators are encouraged to confront the reader with the foreignness of the original and make the translation visible as a translation instead of attempting to give the reader a smooth reading experience.

Tymoczko names this type of translator who takes on agency an "engaged translator" (Tymoczko 2014, p.113). This "engaged" translator is an ethically, politically and ideologically active subject, who is visible in the translation and has a political agenda, while translation itself has the potential to aid achieving this agenda (Tymoczko 2014, p.113). Tymoczko is one of the most prominent scholars in Translation Studies who has focussed strongly on the topic of activism and translation. She points out the ideological dimension of translation, as translators must decide which institutions and values to support or oppose in their work, which strategies to employ, and which fights to take part in when they make their choices concerning their translations (Tymoczko 2010, p.9). In respect to the partiality of the translator she writes:

Such partiality is not a defect, a lack, or an absence in translation, it is a necessary element of the task of the translator to make choices and to decide which specific parts of a text and a culture to transpose, to represent, to construct in the target text. Partialities are what differentiate translations, enabling them to participate in the dialectic of power, the ongoing process of political discourse, and strategies for social change. This flexibility makes the act of translation inescapably engaged and committed, either implicitly or explicitly, even when translators do not set out to be activists (Tymoczko 2010, p.9).

Tymoczko's translator as described above could be compared to the result of the (adapted) Analyst's Discourse, where the translator is enabled to accept his/her partiality. The translator would thus be able to establish his/her own objective over the translation and render the original according to his/her own understanding or ideals.

An interesting and prominent case of translation and activism is discussed by Mona Baker in her article “The prefigurative politics of translation in place-based movements of protest”. Baker looks at two different activist groups *Mosireen* and *Words of Women* who are both collectives that were particularly active in the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 (Baker 2016). The most dominant medium for their work are videos on the social media platforms YouTube and Facebook (Baker 2016). In this section, I will focus mainly on the work of the subtitlers who were often not considered part of the collectives themselves but provided the subtitles on their own initiative. While Baker appears to place stronger emphasis in her discussion of agency on the way of translating, I will primarily look at the *act* of translating (or here subtitling) as an expression of agency.

The videos produced by the collectives are primarily subtitled in English in the case of *Mosireen* and Spanish in case of *Words of Women* (Baker 2016, p.4). While other subtitles do exist, these are not organised by the collectives themselves; furthermore, the founder of *Words of Women* Leil-Zahra Mortada said in an interview with Baker that he did not keep track of the subtitlers into other languages and was not always aware by whom they were produced (Baker 2016, p.4).<sup>115</sup> It is also noted that the subtitlers appear to see themselves not as key members of the collectives but instead as outsiders and for example refer to *Mosireen* as “they” (Baker 2016, p.17). Likewise, the core members of the collective refer to subtitlers as “they” and do not view them as an integral part of the group, which leads Baker to make a critical point that translation and subtitling is still not given enough attention and their importance remains underestimated (Baker 2016, p.17).

Regarding the “official” subtitles, Baker states that at some point every member of the collective (proper) was involved in producing them (Baker 2016, p.4). Any creativity within the subtitles, such as the de-gendering of words in

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<sup>115</sup> While they are not “activist” in nature, a similar area of translation may be the phenomenon of fan translations or fan subtitles. These are translations or subtitles created by fans of the respective show or book that are created (mostly) without financial remuneration and are accessible for free on the internet. For further information see for example the research by David Orrego-Carmona on non-professional subtitling (eg. Orrego-Carmona 2015; Orrego-Carmona 2019) and the research by Matteo Fabretti on fan translations (also called scanlations) of Japanese Manga (eg. Fabretti 2016; Fabretti 2017).

Spanish was also an intervention of the filmmakers instead of the initiative of the volunteer subtitlers (Baker 2016, p.15). An example of this is the use of the word “amigx” which is representative of a form of non-standard and non-gendered nouns originally introduced by activists of the LGBTQ+ community to be used instead of their traditional, gendered correspondents, e.g., “amigo” and “amiga” in this case (Baker 2016, p.15).

Although Baker’s argument is that translation and subtitling in this example are undervalued by the activists and too much of an afterthought, this may still be seen as a good example of translators taking agency. I suggest that simply the existence of subtitles that are not coordinated by the collectives themselves would be an expression of the volunteer subtitlers’ agency: the volunteers decided to take the initiative and to provide the translations for the benefit of other viewers, without financial remuneration or even acknowledgment of the collective. There is little to no external motivation for translation, as the translators have little to gain themselves and there is little external pressure by the collectives on them. If they do not see themselves as integral parts of the project and see no reward from the leaders, who keep no record of the subtitlers, it is likely that they are translating based on an internal motivation and a belief in the project instead of a search for capital.

Looking at Baker’s and Tymoczko’s research in the light of the Discourse of the Analyst, the individuals discussed in their texts would be examples of translators who have been enabled to create their own motivator which would arguably function as master-signifier. In these cases, this may be the cause they are supporting. These translators are working out of their own motivation, and translate according to their own ethical, political, and ideological conviction.

According to Lacan's theory, the result of the Discourse of the Analyst should be a new Master’s Discourse, which is more flexible and allows the subject to function without getting obsessively attached to one singular master-signifier (Fink 1997, p.135; Lacan 2007, p.176). Looking at translation, activist translators could be argued to be more flexible in their translation approaches as their agenda may allow them to prioritise certain aspects or highlight others.

This would be one way of resolving the deadlock of untranslatability as the translator is more likely to be able to detach him-/herself from the source text in these instances for the benefit of their activist objective.

However, there is always a risk for the subject to fall back into old patterns and become again trapped in a rigid Discourse of the Master. Similarly, a translator may eventually idealise the new motivation or aim for his/her work and become a “slave” to his/her cause. In the examples discussed above, this may be the political or ideological cause supported by the activist translator which he/she becomes overly attached to, to the degree where it may have adverse effects on his/her work and potentially even his/her life in general. For example, activist translation may not be paid work but be done by volunteers. If the translator becomes too attached to his/her work for the particular cause this could have implications on his/her financial situation and lead into bankruptcy for example.

A very different approach, which I want to discuss in this chapter, engages with translation in a more professional setting.<sup>116</sup> The following section will focus primarily on the approach called Functionalism which includes a more pragmatic view of translation. Translators’ agency in functionalist approaches could arguably be perceived as limited due to the emphasis on the commission and translation brief, as will be discussed in the following part of this chapter.

### **5.3.2 Functionalism**

In this section I want to discuss one example from Translation Studies, which aims to provide advice on how a translator should make his/her decision when confronted with translation issues. It could be argued that any decision between different possible translations presupposes the agency of the translator. Hence, I argue that the revelation that there is no perfect translation (or “meta-translation”) may be what triggers or highlights agency of the translator. In other (Lacan’s) words, it encourages the translator to “not give in

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<sup>116</sup> With “professional” translation I refer here to commissioned translation with financial remuneration as opposed to e.g., volunteer, fan, or activist translation, which are either produced by laypeople or pro bono by professionals.

on his/her desire".<sup>117</sup> The area of Translation Studies discussed here, Functionalism, engages with the development of approaches to translating. Its most prominent representatives include Katharina Reiß, Hans J. Vermeer, and Christiane Nord. As the name of the approach suggests, the focus lies here on the function of the source or the target text, and how this function can be translated. In most cases, the function will be established in the translation brief and can either be the same as the source text's original function or could be different depending on the commissioner's demands.

Functionalism suggests a more pragmatic view of translation, where one key question asked by a functionalist translator concerns the communicative form of the source text, (Reiß 2000, p.163). The three basic forms that Reiß suggests are:

- a. The communication of content—informative type
- b. The communication of artistically organized content—expressive type
- c. The communication of content with a persuasive character—operative type (Reiß 2000, p.163)

Oftentimes, texts will fall into more than just one of these categories, which can make the application of the functionalist approaches more complex. Here, the translator has to decide which he/she perceives to be the most important category and weigh the available options depending on the situation.

One influential theory developed by Reiß in collaboration with Hans J. Vermeer is called *skopos* theory. The term was adopted from Greek *skopós*, meaning "purpose" or "aim", and is often also used synonymously with "function" by the authors (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.86). According to this theory, the *skopos* of the translation should be regarded as the primary dimension of the translation process which, according to Christiane Nord, corresponds with the idea that action is by definition intentional, which in turn suggests the

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<sup>117</sup> Lacan's original quotation is "*ne pas céder sur son désir*" from: Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire, Livre VII, L'éthique de la psychanalyse*, leçon du 6 juillet 1960, Paris, Le Seuil, 1986.

presupposition of “the existence of free will and a choice between at least two possible forms of behaviour” (Nord 1997, p.27).<sup>118</sup>

This suggests that, in the functionalist view, translation is seen as an action, and as Reiß and Vermeer propose:

A theory of translational action begins with a situation that always includes a preceding action, i.e. the source text; here, the question is not whether and how somebody acts but whether, how and in what respect the previous action is continued (translated/interpreted). Seen in this light, a theory of translational action is a *complex* theory of action (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.85).

This complex theory of action has three key concerns that relate to whether something is transferred, what is transferred, and how it is transferred (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.85). The determining factor in answering these questions, in this theory, is the purpose of the action (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.89). However simple this may seem, it provides an answer to the quintessential problem of translation, i.e., the absence of a definitive translation of a text. In this approach, translations will vary according to their *skopoi* (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.90). The fundamental trend similar to the Analyst’s Discourse in this example is the impossibility of a perfect solution prompting the translator to act and develop a sustainable purpose that guides the translation process. This would result in a new version of the source text, i.e., a new original (S<sub>1</sub>/ST).

In this theory, the *skopos* of the translation would be prioritised over the source text which, in this application of Lacan’s discourses, was originally associated with the master-signifier. For example, if a translator who follows an approach which predominantly displays a structure similar to the Discourse of the Master encounters an element of untranslatability, he/she may be prompted to substitute the original’s exact wording as master(-signifier) with the *skopos*.

Reiß and Vermeer suggest that the “*skopos* rule” should be the highest determining rule in any translation action (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.90).

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<sup>118</sup> The idea of “translational action” encompasses all instances where a person acts as a mediator between two parties, who often come from different cultures. Her examples for this include a translator’s advice that a business letter to a Singapore based firm should be translated into Mandarin instead of English, or a mother translating a child’s speech attempts to their father (Nord 1997, pp.15–26).



Notably, the *skopos* of the target text does not have to be the same as the source text's *skopos* (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.92). The authors continue that they see three stages in translation. Firstly, the translator should establish and assess the addressee of the target text, since the *skopos* strongly depends on the target audience (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.91). In the second instance, the translator should consider and redefine the relevant aspects of the source text in accordance with the translation's *skopos* (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.91). The final step is to accomplish the *skopos* (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.92). Reiß and Vermeer highlight that only the third step requires competence in the target language (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.92).

The strong emphasis on the translation brief and commission in *skopos* theory can be argued to indicate some reluctance of the translator to take complete responsibility for the partiality of the translation. The translation brief would enable the translator to prioritise and at the same time share responsibility for the imperfection with the client. Nevertheless, similar to Lacan's Discourse of the Analyst, Functionalism and *skopos* theory offer a way for the translator to overcome untranslatability by producing a new "master(-signifier)" which appears to allow him/her more flexibility than, for example, following the exact wording of the original. However, if the translator were to become too attached to the *skopos*, the translation may be too different from the original or he/she may struggle with passages where the *skopos* cannot be rendered clearly. Similarly, in Lacan's theory every new master-signifier brings with it the potential danger of becoming too fixed in signification which may eventually result in his/her hystericization. In this respect, the lesson of psychoanalysis is that there is no stable and definitive solution to the elementary impossibility of signification, and therefore each approach is by definition tentative and amenable to change.

Compared to the adapted Master's Discourse as discussed in chapter 3, one key difference to this new Discourse of the Master centred around the *skopos* is that within *skopos* theory, the target text does not have to be an exact copy of the source text (Reiß and Vermeer 2013, p.113). Rather, the translation should be a representation of a set of source text values by a set of target text values, which could imply losses and as well as gains (Reiß and Vermeer 2013,

p.113). This would make the new Master's Discourse more flexible as it allows for more freedom to adapt the translation in accordance with the agreed purpose. Nord describes *skopos* theory as a mediator between the debate of literal versus free translation, as the *skopos* of a translation may require either, making each a valid approach to translation (Nord 1997, p.29). The strong reliance on the *skopos* and translation brief within this theory makes the commissioner of the translation the decisive factor in choosing the translation approach (Nord 1997, p.31). Hence, depending on the client's instructions, either a literal or free approach to translation could be the appropriate method of translating as Nord suggested (Nord 1997, p.29). Furthermore, the translation brief does not determine which translation strategy or type the translator should choose (Nord 1997, p.29). This would be decided by the translator based on their preference and competence (Nord 1997, p.29).

The aim of functionalist approaches does not convey (or attempt to convey) the absolute meaning of the source text (Nord 1997, p.32). Rather, on the basis of the translation brief, the translator chooses which parts of the original are likely to be meaningful for the audience of the target text and focusses on conveying these (Nord 1997, p.32). In this sense, as Nord suggests, within *skopos* theory the source text is "dethroned", as it becomes a resource for the translator which provides the material for the target text (Nord 1997, p.37).

The Discourse of the Analyst describes a similar process: as the object of desire is revealed and acknowledged as impossible or non-existent, the subject is compelled to produce a new master-signifier. This structure in translation would be the perfect translation revealed as impossible to the translator, who has to decide which meaning or connotation to prioritise in the target text. In the case of *skopos* theory, the process is aided by the translation brief which acts as a signpost for the translator's decision making. In Reiß and Vermeer's theory, the final product is one version of the source text for the target culture receiver. In other words, the translator creates a new original which would be congruent with the application of the Analyst's Discourse to translation.

Importantly however, the product (S<sub>1</sub>) constitutes the creation of a new master-signifier which leads to a new Master's Discourse. Similarly, as the perfect translation is revealed to be impossible based on the untranslatability of the source text, the translator has to create a new "master-signifier" (understood here as a leading principle or criteria. In the context of my analysis of Functionalism this would be the *skopos* or purpose of the translation. Hence, as the original is "dethroned", it is succeeded by the *skopos*. The new formula for the structure of the Analyst's Discourse in translation, as inspired by *skopos* theory, would look as seen in Figure 40, leading to a new Master's Discourse pattern as seen in Figure 41:

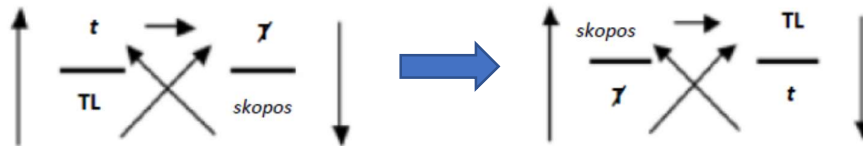


Figure 40 : Adapted Analyst's Discourse, *skopos* theory

Figure 41: Adapted Master's Discourse, *skopos* theory

As Lacan argues, the Discourse of the Analyst, if successful, always results in the creation of a new Master's Discourse (Lacan 2007, p.176). Here, this new "Master's Discourse" pattern would include the *skopos* as a master-signifier taking on the position of agent. However, similar to Lacan's pattern, the underlying truth remains to be the translator, as it is his/her understanding of the purpose and his/her responsibility to choose the strategy for the translation process. As "agent" the *skopos* is in control of the way the target language will be structured to create the translation.

While Tymoczko and Baker's discussions of agency and activism in translation introduced previously in this chapter may show little relation to the area of Functionalism, *skopos* theory may share some similarities with activist translation. For example, the purpose of a translation may take precedence over the intentions of the original. Activist translations may for example have the purpose of exposing the original's shortcomings or subliminal propaganda and emphasise its inconsistencies. Perhaps unintentionally, activist translators may make use of the tools theorised by *skopos* theory, in order to achieve their agenda. However, contrary to most functionalist translations, activist

translation as discussed in this chapter is often intrinsically motivated and not based on commission or other external instructions. Instead, activist translators may use their work to pursue and support their own agenda. In Functionalism, on the other hand, a strong emphasis is placed on the translation brief and the commission, i.e., the client. Hence, this approach is more pragmatic, as it focuses on the client's order or instructions.

### *Bible Translation and Functionalism*

Finally, in this section I want to illustrate the previously discussed theory regarding Functionalism and the Analyst's Discourse by discussing an example where Christiane Nord used *skopos* theory for one of her own translation projects. In her paper "Loyalty Revisited", Nord reflects on one of her own translation projects which she conducted together with her husband, the New Testament scholar Klaus Berger.<sup>119</sup> In their book *Das Neue Testament und frühchristliche Schriften* [The New Testament and Early Christian Writings], Berger and Nord translated the New Testament and early Christian texts into German. Most Biblical texts, she writes, are no longer used in their original function, which caused Berger and Nord to decide against a translation strategy based on text type or equivalence (Nord 2002, p.102). Instead they adopted a translation approach based on the *skopos* of the translation (Nord 2002, p.102). First, they established the targeted audience of the translation and the purpose they wanted the translation to achieve (Nord 2002, p.102). The target readership for Berger and Nord are not theologians who have some understanding of the source language, nor "fundamentalists" who believe the Bible should always be translated literally (Nord 2002, p.103). Instead, the target audience are laypeople interested in Christian faith, theological mediators like pastors, laypeople interested in the relations between source text and target text, or people who would like to get an insight into Christian religion (Nord 2002, p.103).

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<sup>119</sup> Another example of a Bible translation, which employs *skopos* theory is the recent Japanese translation *Bible, Japan Bible Society Interconfessional Version* which was started in 2010 and published in December 2018 (Watabe 2019, pp.4–5). This translation is the fifth Japanese translation since the first was published in 1887 (Watabe 2019, p.1). Rev. Makoto Watabe writes that the aim of this translation was to use sophisticated Japanese, which can be understood easily and sounds natural when read aloud (Watabe 2019, p.1).

Based on the identified target readership, Berger and Nord stipulated two communicative purposes: a referential function to “present a strange culture in a way that allows readers from a culture distant in time and space to understand and respect its otherness” (Nord 2002, p.103), as well as an indirect appellative intention “to show where these texts [...] have something to say to people living in a modern culture” (Nord 2002, p.103).

In this example, these two purposes can be argued to take on a function similar to master-signifiers that are placed in position of agent in a Master’s Discourse pattern. Instead of the source text being the dominant factor over the target language, as discussed in the first chapter, the purpose of the target text guides the discourse in this case. Hence, the target language is arranged to produce a translation which fulfils the established *skopoi*, i.e., convey and explain the original’s otherness to the modern German reader and to show its applicability to modern society.

Initially Nord and Berger had to accept that certain approaches would not be effective for their translation which can be seen as an initial encounter with untranslatability, i.e., the impossibility of a perfect translation along with the recognition that the purpose of the source text was outdated. The element of untranslatability is here comprised of different elements: for example, the fact that the original purpose cannot be carried over into the translation and carry the same weight or meaning for the target audience. Furthermore, a reader without knowledge of the original language and the historical and cultural context would not be able to understand the text in the same way as the original readership. Along with this, due to technological and societal advancement and changes, many situations described in the Bible have become increasingly metaphorical. Some of these metaphors may not be as obvious to today’s readers as they were to readers from previous centuries.

The underlying assumption here would be that the untranslatability embodied by *objet a* as absent cause (the evaporation of the fantasy of the full enjoyment of a perfect translation) may force the translators (Berger and Nord) in the position of *other* to look for a new functional master-signifier that might be able

to reproduce the source text. This would lead to a resumption of the Discourse of the Master, where the translation is found in the position of product.

### 5.3 Conclusion

Based on the above analysis of the Discourse of the Analyst in translation, I argue that its structure can be detected in most target texts as, fundamentally, this discourse pattern illustrates the confrontation between the translator and untranslatability. Every translation is to a degree a compromise between source text and target language, since, as Nida states, “there can be no absolute correspondence between languages. Hence there can be no fully exact translations” (Nida 2012, p.141). In a pattern which resembles that of the Analyst’s Discourse, this realisation (or reminders thereof) may be seen to occur throughout translation processes.

In this chapter, I related the pattern of the Analyst’s Discourse in translation processes to the notion of agency from two different viewpoints: activist and volunteer translation on the one hand, and functionalist translation on the other hand. These two approaches are noticeably different from each other, and it may even be argued that to a degree Functionalism takes away agency from the translator, due to its strong emphasis on the commission and the translation brief. Nevertheless, I suggest that both activist and functionalist translation have the potential to enable the translator to adopt agency and engage with the original’s untranslatable elements.

In the view of agency in translation as discussed by Tymoczko (Tymoczko 2014) and Baker (Baker 2016) the translator is able to embrace his/her own (political, ethical, ideological) bias and translate for a cause they support or in a way which corresponds with this bias. In Functionalism on the other hand, the translator is enabled to prioritise certain elements of the original over others based on the requirements stated in the translation brief. Although, it should be noted that this approach can be a double-edged sword as it can quickly fall prey to the final discourse to be discussed in this thesis which is Lacan’s Capitalist Discourse. As discussed in this chapter however, both views relate to different types of translation, the latter being potentially most appropriate for professional translation in a commercial setting with payment

involved, the former applying mostly to activist and volunteer translation with little to no financial motivation.

At different points in this chapter, it was mentioned that after going through analysis (and thus the Discourse of the Analyst), a subject will return to a new Master's Discourse. A similar pattern was discussed to take place in translation. For example, after establishing a new purpose over the translation, the translator returns to following a similar structure to the Master's Discourse with the new purpose serving as master-signifier in position of agent.

While the discourses discussed in these first three main chapters (Master's, Hysteric's, and Analyst's Discourse) relate to the theories Lacan developed in his Seminar XVII, Lacan introduced a new discourse at a later stage, although he never discussed it in any detail. The Capitalist Discourse presents another pattern which a translator may follow after accepting the inevitable discrepancy between source and target text.

Lacan's Capitalist Discourse may be "lying in wait" for the translator who was "liberated" from the constraints of the original, ready to lure him/her into its trap. It will become clear in the following chapter that this discourse is particularly captivating as it is based on the illusion of smoothness and efficiency. However, according to Lacan its constant acceleration will eventually cause it to collapse. The following chapter will illustrate how this pattern can be seen primarily in contemporary translation, particularly in the context of translation software and machine translation.

## 6. The Capitalist's Discourse

### 6.1 Introduction

#### 6.1.1 Overview

In the previous chapter it was stated, following Lacan, that the Analyst's Discourse may lead to a new Master's Discourse and a similar trend was identified in translation. However, there is one alternative discourse pattern, which may be the outcome of the translator's successful engagement with untranslatability which seems particularly applicable to contemporary translation (i.e., from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards). This discourse, about which Lacan stated it is "the cleverest discourse we have created" (Lacan 1978, p.11), is called the Capitalist Discourse.

As it was already mentioned in the Theoretical Framework, Lacan did not discuss this particular discourse in conjunction with his other four patterns in Seminar XVII and never fully developed it. He nevertheless referenced it in different works and talks from the late 1960s to early 1970s, most notably his 1972 lecture at the University of Milan and in "Radiophonie" (Lacan 1970; Lacan 1978). The Discourse of the Capitalist is particularly captivating as it is based on the illusion of a smooth and efficient process. Yet, Lacan highlights that its constant acceleration will ultimately cause it to collapse. This chapter will illustrate how a similar pattern can be seen in translation, particularly in the context of translation software and Machine Translation.

Previous chapters have discussed translation from different periods of history in relation to Lacan's discourse structures. However, the pattern of the Capitalist's Discourse arguably relates best to translation in contemporary society. For different reasons, such as the availability of technology or the literacy of the public, this discourse is arguably most applicable to the translation industry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which puts a distinct emphasis on financial gain, efficiency, and consumerism. In today's society, participation in the Capitalist Discourse may be unavoidable. However, rather than attempting to avoid this discourse altogether, it seems crucial to be aware that it only



*appears* to be running perfectly on the surface, and that it comes with its own downsides.

In this section of the thesis, I will initially discuss the theoretical background of the Capitalist Discourse and its potential relation to translation in general. After this I will look at specific characteristics of the discourse and where similar tendencies can be found in translation or how they would apply to it. The main aspects to be discussed in this chapter are, firstly, the Capitalist Discourse as new Discourse of the Master, in connection with the illusion of control it creates through an apparently smooth process which bypasses the unconscious. The example I will use for this pattern in translation is *skopos* theory as it creates the illusion of the translator being in full control over the source text as well as the translation. Secondly, I will discuss how the Capitalist Discourse camouflages desire as demand, which will lead me to address the Capitalist's exploitation of feelings of discontent and dissatisfaction in order to keep the discourse running. In translation, a similar trend will be highlighted, in so far as the untranslatability of the original is foreclosed and the partiality of target texts resulting from, e.g., the functionalist approach may require further translation, if the *skopos* of the translation were to change. Thirdly, I will highlight the self-destructiveness that haunts this discourse by exploring the use of Machine Translation or other translation software which may threaten the translator's profession. Lastly, I will consider the tendency toward commodification in translation as a side-effect of the main feature of the adapted Capitalist Discourse, for example in translation shifting from a skills-based profession to an asset-based one.

### **6.1.2 Theoretical Background**

The Capitalist Discourse is based on the Discourse of the Master, as the left-hand side of the discourse is the inverted pattern of the Master's Discourse and the direction of movement follows the same order, i.e.,  $\$-S_1-S_2-a$  (Lacan 1978, p.10; Vighi 2015, p.13; Vanheule 2016, p.2). Furthermore, it shares a strong connection with that of the University (Lacan 1978, p.10; Vighi 2015, p.13; Vanheule 2016, p.2). The product of the University Discourse is the split subject which is marked by its feeling of discontent and lack. This split subject

is placed in position of agent in the Capitalist Discourse with free access to master-signifiers that would supposedly fulfil the subject's desire. In the Theoretical Framework it was argued that the structure of the University Discourse can be seen to illustrate the making of the translator as split between two languages, therefore struggling to produce a satisfying translation. In this chapter it will be argued that the feeling of discontent and dissatisfaction is utilised in the Capitalist Discourse as a driving force to keep the process running, as the discourse pledges to provide a (temporary) solution to subjective dissatisfaction. Translation approaches such as Functionalism or the *skopos*, which will be particularly relevant for this chapter, could be offered as a form of "compensation" and a way out of the deadlock of untranslatability and the dissatisfaction it causes. It should be noted that Functionalism and *skopos* theory have already been discussed in the chapter on the Analyst's Discourse where I argued that they offer a possible way for the translator to engage with untranslatability. This chapter will build on this theory by suggesting that these approaches may lead into the Capitalist Discourse pattern as opposed to a traditional Master's Discourse, as Lacan indicated in Seminar XVII.

Figure 42 illustrates the Capitalist's Discourse as it was developed by Lacan.

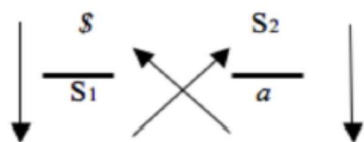


Figure 42: The Capitalist Discourse (Vanheule 2016, p.7)

In this structure, the product of the University Discourse, the split subject, can be seen to occupy the position of agent. In the four original discourses discussed in Lacan's Seminar XVII, the entities occupying the four

discursive positions change places following the same logic of a quarter turn rotation. In this rotation, only the four elements \$, S<sub>1</sub>, S<sub>2</sub>, a swapped places while the relations between the single positions remain the same. Following this pattern and therefore rotating the positions of the University Discourse, the result would be a return to the Discourse of the Master, of which the Capitalist Discourse is an amended version.

However, contrary to the previous four formulas, the Discourse of the Capitalist adjusts the relations between the different positions by inverting the first half of the Master's formula (Tomšič 2015, p.215). This means that the subject is

in position of agent, the master-signifier in position of truth, and the arrow indicating movement points *downwards* instead of upwards, thus making “the subject appear as an autonomous agent and the initiator of an infinite circulation, from which there is no breakout” (Tomšič 2015, p.215).

Based on this inversion, the subject is under the impression of having free access to master-signifiers that lead to the satisfaction of his/her desires. It should be highlighted here that this discourse is founded on the *impression* of fulfilment and not actually fulfilled desires. Hence, the motor of this discourse is the belief that the master-signifier is able to (temporarily) fulfil desire and eliminate the feeling of discontent or lack. However, since the satisfaction is only temporary the subject is prompted to repeat the cycle without perceivable end.

In Figure 42, it can be seen that the subject (\$) as agent accesses the master-signifier (S<sub>1</sub>) in position of truth. This master-signifier leads to the other, here S<sub>2</sub>, or knowledge, which then connects with the object of desire (a). For example, the subject could be seen as a consumer, S<sub>1</sub> as a brand or product name, S<sub>2</sub> as the market, and a would be the object of desire as commodity. Looking at the movement of the discourse one can see that it appears as if it can continue to run smoothly in an endless loop. The consumer (\$) accepts a particular brand or product name (S<sub>1</sub>) to fulfil his/her desire, accesses the market (S<sub>2</sub>), and purchases what he/she assumes to be the desired object (a).

If this discourse is used to illustrate the process of translation (Figure 43), the

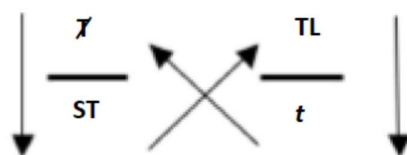


Figure 43: Adapted Capitalist Discourse

translator is found in position of agent, the source text in position of truth, the target language in position of other, and the translation in position of product. Figuratively speaking, the translator would take the

original into the target language to receive the translation. This process may appear to be the smoothest, most natural way of viewing translation. However, as I will discuss in this chapter, this discursive structure is built on an illusion and is predestined to fail eventually, as it attempts to circumnavigate the ambiguity and arbitrariness of language, which usually functions as a

metaphorical “speed bump” in translation. For example, in the pattern of the Master’s Discourse the translator was argued to “undermine” the source text due to his/her biased understanding of language and the inability to fully convey the text he/she intended to write.

Expanding further on the shift from Master’s to Capitalist’s Discourse, Stijn Vanheule identifies three key mutations from the Master’s (Figure 44) to the Capitalist’s (Figure 45) Discourse (Vanheule 2016, p.6):

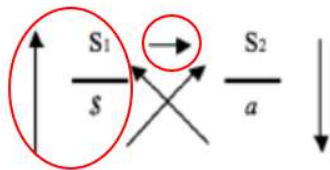


Figure 44: Master’s Discourse, mirrored elements (Vanheule 2016, p.3)

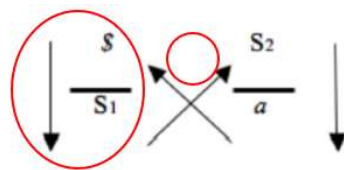


Figure 45: Capitalist Discourse, mirrored elements (Vanheule 2016, p.7)

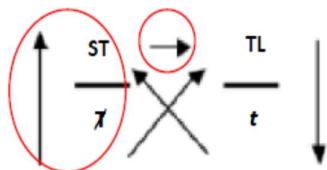


Figure 46: Adapted Master’s Discourse, mirrored elements

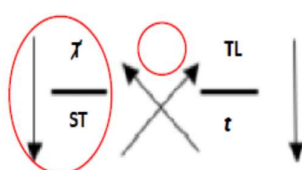


Figure 47: Adapted Capitalist Discourse, mirrored elements

Firstly, in the transition from Master’s to Capitalist’s Discourse  $S_1$  and \$ exchange places, meaning that the master-signifier is now placed underneath the subject (Vanheule 2016, p.6). This means that if this structure is applied to translation (Figure 47), the translator is placed above the source text. This placement is unique to the Capitalist Discourse as in the previous patterns the subject in position of agent would mean that the object of desire was in position of the undermining truth, or in translation the translator is undermined by the translation (see, e.g., Hysteric’s Discourse). In the Capitalist’s Discourse, Lacan broke with his original pattern and allowed the subject to sit above the master-signifier which, along with the other two mutations, creates the *illusion* that that subject is able to freely access master-signifiers and use them to achieve the object of desire. A similar pattern in

translation would suggest for the translator to have full access to the original and create his/her desired translation via the target language.

The second mutation is the shift from an upwards arrow from truth towards agent to a downwards arrow from agent towards truth (Vanheule 2016, p.6).



Figure 48: The direction of movement of the Capitalist Discourse

Originally, in the Master's Discourse the upwards arrow indicated an undermining action of the subject as truth which is affecting the master(-

signifier) in position of agent. In the Capitalist Discourse, the change to a downwards arrow from the subject as agent to the master-signifier as truth indicates that the subject believes he/she exerts control over the unconscious master-signifier (Vanheule 2016, p.6). In a hypothetical example from translation, the illusion that the translator would be able to have full access to the original's meaning is completed by this downwards arrow. It appears here as though the translator can fully control how to render the source text without unintended lack or excess.

The final difference between Master's and Capitalist Discourse, is the missing arrow from agent to other, here from \$ to  $S_2$  (Vanheule 2016, p.6). In the example of economy, this would imply that the consumer (\$) does not perceive the entire market ( $S_2$ ) including all available products but only sees it through the lens of the relevant capitalist command, i.e., "consume" ( $S_1$ ). For example, if  $S_1$  was the signifier "organic" the consumer would come to the market in the belief that products matching this description are superior to the other available options. Based on this bias the subject may ignore products that are not labelled "organic" or not even consciously notice them. Shops may assist this selective process further by clearly labelling their isles, which would help the consumer to have a clear understanding of which products will correspond to the command and are assumed to fulfil his/her desire. Similarly, a translator may follow a similar structure when a particular master-signifier (or command) is established over the translation. This translation "command" causes the foreclosure of untranslatability, leading the translator to perceive a fully translatable text. For example, in the case of translating patents, which is an important area of specialised translation, a translator would already have a

clear understanding of the kind of information to be translated or which template to use for the target text. Furthermore, the translator would read the original with the bias of what he/she believes a “patent” to look like in the source culture. Since texts of this type often follow a particular format, the translator may already have templates set up in which he/she only needs to fill in the information unique to this particular text to accelerate the process.

Because in the Capitalist Discourse the first half of the Master’s Discourse is inverted, the general sequence between the different entities appears to remain the same as in Master’s Discourse: \$ - S<sub>1</sub> - S<sub>2</sub> - a, or  $\mathcal{X}$  - ST - TL - t. However, it is crucial to observe that in this pattern the positions of translator and source text are inverted, and the translator is *not* in position of unconscious truth as in the Master’s Discourse. Instead, he/she is found in the place of conscious agent and thus appears to be fully aware of the way in which he/she affects the original. As it will be argued in this chapter, a pattern as this could mean that the original becomes a *resource* text instead of a source text, and is used primarily as linguistic supply for the translator to pick up relevant elements (e.g., information, formal structures, effects etc.) for a target text.

The key difference between the Master’s and the Capitalist Discourse becomes visible at the end of the initial sequence. Here, a is relayed to the subject of the Capitalist Discourse, whereas the subject of the Master’s Discourse is unable to relate to the object of desire as indicated by the missing arrow from a to \$.

These three mutations remove the deadlock caused by the unconscious in the other four discourses. The Capitalist Discourse tends to reject the subject of the unconscious thereby allowing the subject to “circulate within the capitalist discourse like go-carts on a racetrack” (Vanheule 2016, p.6). As will be discussed in this chapter, the functionalist “*skopos* theory” shares strong similarities with the pattern of the Capitalist Discourse due to the tendency to commodify translation through both the translation brief, and by stifling a broad “desire” for translation into a concrete demand via the *skopos*, or purpose.

## 6.2 The Capitalist Discourse Pattern in Translation

### 6.2.1 The Capitalist Master

As it was established earlier, the Capitalist Discourse is founded on the illusion that it is able to run smoothly, and the subject has free, unrestricted access to master-signifiers which will enable him/her to fulfil his/her desire. The functionalist approach to translation can be argued to present a similar tendency via its emphasis on the translation brief and the established *skopos* of the translation, as they narrow down the meaning of both the source text and the target language to a quantifiable purpose. This arguably creates the illusion that the translator is in complete control of the translation, has full access to the meaning of the original, and is able to freely use the target language to portray all relevant aspects of the source text. However, despite the apparent agency of the translator, the translation brief indicates that there may be another master (e.g., financial gain, reputation, or important connections) who is represented by the commissioner. The translator in a discourse structure such as this one may become just another “cog” in the machine and satisfy the client’s demands for financial gain similar to the subject in the Capitalist Discourse, who is arguably only a pawn, which is strategically manipulated by the capitalist master.

While the real master of this discourse, which Lacan argues is the discourse itself, remains hidden, the subject believes him-/herself to have control over the unconscious and thus believes to be able to fulfil his/her desire via the capitalist command (i.e., master-signifier). Similarly, in *skopos* theory it may appear as if the translator has complete understanding of the source text and language, as well as of the target language. It appears as if the translator is able to circumnavigate the original’s untranslatability via the purpose or *skopos* of the translation. In other words, the translation brief and the *skopos* have the potential of giving the translator and the client the impression of being in complete control and possessing agency. However, through the lens of the Capitalist Discourse, it would seem that, regardless of the brief and the *skopos*, neither the client nor the translator is the “master” over the overarching discourse. Rather, the true master in the discourse is not a person or an object

but the mechanism or discourse itself. The capitalist mechanism could be seen to function similarly to a paternoster which continues running with or without people using it. Like the paternoster, people enter the Capitalist Discourse and exit it (often by being replaced by machines) but the mechanism itself continues to run.

If the translator were to be viewed as a worker in the Capitalist Discourse who uses the material of the original to create a product according to the translation brief, the source text would arguably turn into a “resource” text which is used and exploited to suit the *skopos* confirmed in the translation brief. Thus, the original becomes a supply and translation is a good or service. The new master, capitalism, entraps the translator without him/her noticing it as he/she believes to be the master over the discourse and to be in complete control. Fabio Vighi explains in his paper “The Ontology of Crisis and Lacan’s Discourse of the Capitalist” that in the Capitalist Discourse the worker (who is also the consumer) is in position of command and believes him-/herself to be supreme and unrestricted (Vighi 2015, p.14). Similarly, as stated above, a translator may believe to be in control over his/her own work and to be able to overcome or bypass the unconscious and untranslatability. However, in reality the subject is bound-up in capitalist relations and only promotes the capitalist mechanism which controls this discourse. Another similarity can be seen in translation where capitalist relations and financial gain may be the underlying master and take priority over the translator’s personal ideals. For example, a translator who personally disagrees with the use of nuclear power may translate texts regarding their use which contradict his/her personal convictions because he/she depends on the commission. Figuratively speaking, in the Capitalist Discourse translation could be likened to work at a production line or conveyor belt where each participant (client, translator, receiver etc.) believes to be the agent in control of the process while the true master is the mechanism behind the discourse, i.e., the motor moving the conveyer belt.

An important element of the Capitalist Discourse is the exploitation of desire. Comparing the Capitalist Discourse to Lacan’s initial four discourse patterns, the subject as agent is only affected by the product (the object of desire), while



previously the agent was influenced by the product and the truth (Vanheule 2016, p.9). This change of the movement pattern adds to the illusion of a functioning, smoothly running discourse. To briefly reiterate what has been established previously in this thesis about desire, according to Lacan, it is an obscure longing for something that would mend the split caused by the subject's introduction to language, i.e., the signifier. Lacan understands the signifier to originate with the Other and thus, the desire for something that would fill the lack caused by the signifier would also derive from the Other, or as Lacan states "man's desire is the desire of the Other" (Lacan 1998, p.38; Lacan 2006, pp.688–689). Vanheule writes that this is reflected within the Capitalist Discourse in so far as "merchandise will not so much be preferred for its intrinsic qualities, but in terms of how it is evaluated by the other. Indeed, this is often how marketing proceeds, products are presented as highly desired by celebrities, which directs the consumer's desire" (Vanheule 2016, p.8).

For translation and *skopos* theory a similar trend of "desire is the desire of the Other" (Lacan 1998a, p.38; Lacan 2006, pp.688–689) may be seen in three areas. The first area would be the translation brief, which could be seen to introduce the translator to the primary master-signifier over the translation. By doing so, it urges the translator (as subject) to make the commissioner's (as other) request for a translation, which matches the master-signifier, the translator's own desire. The second area of (professional, paid) translation where this tendency can be seen is the financial reward connected to the target text. The other, whose desire the translator may accept for their own, could in this case be represented by the commissioner or even society in general. Since the exchange of goods and services is generally centred around money as currency it could be argued that the financial reward associated with the commissioner and the translation may lead the translator to accept the commissioner's request for a translation as his/her own desire. Hence, the image is often portrayed that in order to live a "good life" one has to become rich or at least have a "good income".<sup>120</sup> The final area to be

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<sup>120</sup> The definition of a "good life" and a "good income" is, of course, highly subjective. However, based on the concepts of surplus *jouissance* and surplus value, which will be discussed later in this chapter, it is likely that either notion should be understood as a desired level of satisfaction that is by definition always perceived as missing. This suggests that, in capitalism,

mentioned here are the types of texts which are translated. For example, translators may often be asked to translate texts which are desirable in another language, such as bestselling or award-winning literary texts, patents, scientific developments, contracts, or certificates. These types of texts benefit the commissioner and possibly others often financially but also in other aspects of life such as education or health. There is arguably a strong possibility that texts are not translated and offered based on their intrinsic values but on their perceived value to another, e.g., society, governments or companies.

One key feature of Lacan's definition of desire is that it cannot be fulfilled just as the split in the subject cannot be mended. However, in the Capitalist Discourse the division in and of the subject is treated as "accidental and corrigible" (Vanheule 2016, p.10). For example, desire is assumed to be fulfilled with the right product provided by the market. Similarly, in translation there is a potential within translation approaches such as *skopos* theory, to treat the gap between languages and the inherent untranslatability as a feature of language which can be corrected with the right *skopos*. According to Lacanian theory, in capitalism desire is treated as a demand for a new product. If the Capitalist Discourse were applied to translation this could mean that desire is broken down to a demand by establishing a tangible purpose over the translation which allows for the untranslatable dimension of the source text to be disavowed more easily. This way untranslatability as hindrance in translation practice is removed or disavowed, thus enabling the translation to appear as a smooth process. The circumnavigation of untranslatability may lead to a commodification of translation, i.e., a shift of the focus towards the consumption of translation as a service or product. Since translation occupies the position of *objet a* in my proposed view of translation through the lens of Lacan's discourses, this would correlate to a commodification of desire itself.

In the commodification of desire and in limiting it to a demand, desire is arguably exploited "by treating it as a specific question to be answered by means of practical solutions" (Vanheule 2016, p.7). Similarly, the translation

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the "good life" is by definition a "not good enough life", or at least a "could be better life". In other words, a constant sense of dissatisfaction is crucial for consumer capitalism.

brief attempts to quantify translation by reducing it to its objective and thus almost explicitly turning an ambiguous desire for “translation” into a *specific* demand for a *specific* aspect of the source text to be rendered for a *specific* purpose. Vanheule writes that the main target of the Capitalist Discourse is to “satisfy [the] customer’s demands”, while in the other discourses desire can be neither specified nor fulfilled (Vanheule 2016, p.7).

The result of this disambiguation of desire into a particular demand may be the fetishization of the product. The philosopher Samo Tomšič writes that the fetishization of the object in the Capitalist Discourse is an attempt to heal the subjective split and to enable a relationship between the subject and *jouissance* (Tomšič 2015, p.221). However, the discourse can only provide the illusion of the split being mended and complete fulfilment of desire is in fact not accessible: “On the contrary, the foreclosure radicalises the deadlock of *jouissance* and turns the superego into an insatiable demand for *jouissance*” (Tomšič 2015, p.221). Because this illusion of fulfilled desire is temporary and causes the subject to crave more, the Capitalist Discourse will continue to function instead of ending with a completely satisfied subject.

In his paper “Homology: Marx and Lacan” Tomšič further discusses the fetishization of language, which he states can be traced back to early linguistics where it was revealed and rejected by Ferdinand de Saussure (Tomšič 2012, p.102). The examples discussed in this context include Plato’s argument that signifiers have an intrinsic, “natural” meaning, as well as Aristotle’s suggestion that “the signifier, in itself, supports a relation between words and things, between the symbolic and the real” (Tomšič 2012, pp.102–103). Tomšič argues that this view of language, as it was suggested by Plato and Aristotle, promotes it as a means for *jouissance* and thereby removes it from its “communicative and relational function” (Tomšič 2012, p.103). *Skopos* theory could be argued to do the opposite of what de Saussure criticised about Plato and Aristotle: instead of fetishizing language as containing natural and intrinsic meaning, *skopos* may fetishize the above mentioned “communicative and relational function” as it focuses primarily on the purpose of a text. Hypothetically, this could lead to the source text being reduced entirely to the function of the translation and all elements which could be considered

irrelevant for the commission would be left untranslated. Arguably, Plato and Aristotle's view of language, as well as Functionalism equally ignore the inherent ambiguity of language. Functionalism in particular appears to actively ignore or disavow this by focussing only on the purpose of an utterance or a text thereby making it possible for the translation to answer to a concrete demand, i.e. the untranslatability of the original is foreclosed in this approach to translation.

### **6.2.2 Discontent and Surplus Jouissance**

The above-mentioned exploitation of desire implies that the Capitalist Discourse also strongly utilises the feeling of discontentment or dissatisfaction. Discontent may often be assumed by an individual to be a sign that one is missing a particular object, which will lead to satisfaction (Vanheule 2016, p.7). The Capitalist Discourse uses this assumption and fosters a *semblance* of dissatisfaction while also offering an illusion of wholeness and fulfilment (Tomšič 2015; Vanheule 2016, p.7). For example, TV advertisements may evoke a feeling of discontent or lack by showing a celebrity telling the viewer about their dissatisfaction with a particular aspect of their life or body. Immediately after evoking this image of discontent, they will offer the solution, i.e., their product. Alternatively, adverts may, for example, show a group of happy people consuming or using the advertised product with the aim of evoking a feeling of lack in the viewer concerning their own situation and entice them to try rectifying this feeling by way of the product. In the Capitalist Discourse, these advertised products can be seen as master-signifiers which the consumers assume to be the solution to their discontent (Vanheule 2016, p.7). In other words, capitalism suggests that there is a "cure" for the feeling of discontent and that there is a product for every possible desire which would rid the subject of the feeling of dissatisfaction. Lacan introduces in this context the idea of a *plus-de-jouir* (surplus enjoyment), using Marx's idea of *Mehrwert* or surplus value (Lacan 1970; Lacan 1978).

Concerning enjoyment and *jouissance*, Tomšič points out that in the Discourse of the Capitalist "everyone is 'supposed to enjoy,' when in fact no one actually does: no one is in possession of *jouissance* because the production of surplus

jouissance is the same as the production of lack-of-jouissance” (Tomšič 2012, pp.108–109). Lacan says in “Radiophonie” that it is this simultaneous excess and lack of enjoyment (*manque-à-jouir* and *plus-de-jouir*) which drives the Capitalist Discourse and leads to increased production and continued consumption (Lacan 1970, p.87). Production depends strongly on the extension of consumption and the inability of achieving a *jouissance* which would end the discourse or at least hinder it (Lacan 1970, p.87). Instead, consumption must result in surplus *jouissance*. Surplus *jouissance* is coterminous with lack, it is the “not enough”, or “more”, which drives the capitalist to continue in the same pattern illustrated earlier by this discourse. Furthermore, it is the motivator behind the constant improvement and acceleration of the production process which, arguably, will eventually lead to its collapse. Lacan understands this surplus *jouissance* to correspond to the idea of surplus value as a hypothetical value which is always higher than the currently achieved one, e.g., the constant aim for higher value at lower cost (see Lacan 1970, pp.86–87). Thus, surplus value functions as a lack or missing value that is yet to be achieved.

The functionalist approach to translation can be seen to relate to this process, as it appears to be based on the premise that translation is imperfect and some aspects have to be prioritised, and conversely some elements may be deselected. Hence, the product is structured to include the information (as well as textual effects and formal aspects) highlighted as essential in the brief but may lack other elements of the original. Vanheule highlights that in any exchange something is always lost (Vanheule 2016, p.4). A similar exchange in translation would take place between source and target language – the translator takes a signifier from the source text and exchanges it for an equivalent from the target language. As has been stated previously in this thesis as well as in translation studies in general, in this process of exchange, some pieces of information (e.g., connotations, ambiguities etc.) are always lost (see Nida 2012). In this sense, the translation can be argued to relate to Lacan’s surplus *jouissance*, as it represents a lack or loss in the information that was sacrificed in the translation process. Hence, this type of translation is likely to invite further translations if other aspects of the source text are or

become relevant. For example, canonical or political texts may be retranslated multiple times to highlight different aspects, such as the content, the rhetoric, or other stylistic devices.

Looking at the Bible as an example outside of Functionalism, it was previously noted that there is a wide variety of translations of the Bible, particularly into English. It could be argued that this is an area where the persistent feeling of discontent which characterises the Capitalist Discourse becomes visible and maintains the discourse. For example, areas of dissatisfaction may be the representation of women or the general use of gendered language as it was discussed in the chapter on the Hysteric's Discourse or the level of literalness in modern translation, as it was highlighted in the preface of the ESV (see *The Holy Bible. English Standard Version 2016*, pp.ix–xi). Particularly the area of English Bible Translation appears to be an example of how utilisation of the feeling of discontent could be seen in translation, resulting in hundreds of English versions of the same source text. While it is not my intention to draw conclusions about the motives of the people engaged in this translation, I would like to point out that the basic pattern of the Capitalist Discourse seems to be clearly visible in this area of translation. As the Bible is a text which is particularly prominent but also open to different ways of interpretation due to the way it is written but also based on the differences between the language and culture of the original and contemporary English-speaking society, any translation is likely to include passages which will be dissatisfactory to the reader. This dissatisfaction with the target texts opens the opportunity for further translations which address some of the issues but in turn will be likely to have to sacrifice or neglect other elements.

A different aspect of the functionalist approach to translation which is reminiscent of the Capitalist Discourse is the general environment in which this approach is most likely to occur, i.e., professional, paid translation. This would relate to the Capitalist Discourse more directly as the financial gain which is included in the translation as product may be seen as the driving force behind the process. Since money is the most common currency for exchange of goods and services, it can be said to be most defining in its absence. For example, a translator will have expenses for which he/she needs the financial

compensation for his/her time and work spent on a translation. This could be seen to prompt a cycle (like that of the Capitalist Discourse) to continue and motivate translators to find ways to make translation easier and quicker to increase their output, for example by using templates for specific types of translation (e.g., certificates), or Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools. These aids for the translator enable him/her to increase the production of translation while decreasing the time spent, i.e., the cost of labour. However, this increased productivity and thus the increased available supply simultaneously decrease the value of each product and force the translator to further increase production in order to cover his/her costs and other expenses. This cycle will be discussed further in the below as it relates to Lacan's notion that the Capitalist Discourse will eventually destroy itself.

### **6.2.3 Self-destructive Tendencies**

It was mentioned previously that the free circulation of the Capitalist Discourse is the result of the inversion of the first half of the formula as it removes all deadlocks or metaphorical speedbumps caused by the unconscious. This circulation is constantly increasing in speed as the Capitalist Discourse by definition strives for increased productivity with minimal expenditure. This allows the discourse to run faster and faster until it eventually burns itself out or consumes itself (Lacan 1978, p.48; Vanheule 2016, pp.6–7). This may be caused by the automation of labour which would ultimately lead to increased unemployment as wage labour is replaced by machines with increasingly fewer chances of getting reabsorbed within the “work society” (the term *Arbeitsgesellschaft* was coined by Hannah Arendt).<sup>121</sup> In other words, the worker is replaced by a machine, in order to increase productivity while decreasing costs. However, because the worker is replaced, he/she has no longer the financial means to purchase the product. Similarly, in translation the use and development of CAT tools and Machine Translation may ultimately

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<sup>121</sup> Hannah Arendt states in her *Vita Activa* that the *Arbeitsgesellschaft* and the *Konsumgesellschaft* [consume society] are two sides of the same process (Arendt 1971, p.115). As such, modern society, which is often said to be consumer society, is also a work society (Arendt 1971, p.115). Furthermore, it is crucial for modern economy that products are produced and consumed at an increasing speed (Arendt 1971, p.115). However, this is at risk in the Capitalist Discourse as labour is increasingly automated and workers are made redundant and hence, lose their financial means to also consume.

lead to the translators becoming increasingly obsolete depending on the text type. As translation becomes quicker and more productive, the prices for translation services are likely to drop which would mean for the translator to aim to further increase his/her productivity, for example through developing better Machine Translation software. As translation is increasingly automated, translators themselves will be needed less and companies may instead invest into Machine Translation.

In referring back to the proposed adaption of the formula developed by Lacan

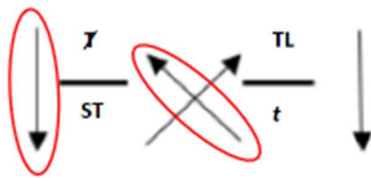


Figure 49: Adapted Capitalist Discourse, translator accesses the unconscious and receives product

(Figure 49), one can see that contrary to other discourse patterns, the agent appears to be only affected by the product since the left-hand arrow is now pointing downwards instead of upwards. This may partly cause the uninhibited search for increased productivity which will

ultimately cause the collapse of the discourse. The fact that the agent is only affected by the product may support the impression that this is the solution to the agent's desire. Furthermore, in order to gain satisfaction, the agent aims to access the product faster and more often as he/she becomes more used to the product and its effect lessens, similar to the way drugs lose their effect and the user consequently increases the dosage and frequency.

A similar structure in translation would suggest that only the translation can affect the translator, for example in the satisfaction of completing it or the monetary gain from it. Nevertheless, similar to the product in Lacan's original Capitalist Discourse pattern, a translation in the Capitalist Discourse would have only a temporary effect over the translator and thus lead him/her to repeat the process. In the Capitalist Discourse, profit is always perceived as "not enough" and thus lacking, causing the discourse to repeat and reproduce itself as the product simultaneously fills *and* causes the feeling of lack. Similarly, in order to increase productivity, the translator is likely to search for new ways to work more efficiently, for example by using CAT tools or developing templates where he/she only needs to insert individual pieces of information such as names and dates. However, as the turnaround per translation and the general supply increase, the prices for translation would be



simultaneously decreasing as translators are competing for commissions. This would again drive further increase in productivity and efficiency in order to be able to make more profit. With the improvement of CAT tools and the development of Machine Translations translators would be at risk to become redundant as many text types can potentially be produced by the commissioners themselves by using software or simply developing or purchasing one template in which data is inserted.<sup>122</sup>

The main threat to the Capitalist Discourse is its search for constant technological improvement and the automation of labour to increase production and profit. If labour was completely automated to reduce costs, workers would lose their jobs and income and thus their spending power. Ergo, the complete replacement of human labour by machines would leave the capitalist with a large quantity of cheap product but without potential buyers. The Discourse of the Capitalist does not consider its reliance on the subject to be able to *purchase* the product because it is not driven by a person or even an organisation but instead an impersonal mechanism which is programmed for maximal efficiency. Hence, the elimination of human labour appears to be desirable as it increases productivity while it decreases costs. However, if the subject as worker is substituted by a machine this also eliminates his/her spending capacity. For the Discourse of the Capitalist to function the subject must take on the position of both worker and consumer which is easily neglected in an attempt to reduce costs and increase production.

Scholars such as Fabio Vighi highlight that technological development has been a blessing and a curse for the capitalist economy (Vighi 2015, p.16).<sup>123</sup> On the one hand, it enables an increase in production at lower costs but on the other hand it makes human labour increasingly redundant (Vighi 2015, p.16). The latter becomes a problem in capitalism as, according to Marx' theory, the Capitalist Discourse is reliant on human labour since machines cannot produce new value (Vighi 2015, p.17). Even though paid work is a

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<sup>122</sup> Certain types of translation (e.g., literary translation) may, at least currently, be less at risk of this development.

<sup>123</sup> Other authors that discussed the implications of the capitalist tendency to constantly increase productivity via the automation of labour are, for example, André Gorz (eg. Gorz 1980), Jeremy Rifkin (eg. Rifkin 1995), and Robert Kurz (eg. Kurz 2002).

foundational form of social mediation it is increasingly threatened by the automation of production processes (Vighi 2015, p.17).

Similar tendencies of automation can be observed in translation due to the increasing popularity and quality of CAT tools and Machine Translation.<sup>124</sup> While CAT tools still require a human translator as their name suggests, Machine Translation can often provide cheaper and quicker results. Furthermore, even if the quality of a Machine Translation was lacking, the key message of the text itself may still be decipherable for many language pairs, especially for communicative texts with fewer expressive elements and in the case of well-developed machine translation software. This could lead clients to opt for this cheaper option and take the cutbacks in quality into account or do some post-editing, which might be done by the commissioner themselves or is often available to be done by translators for lower rates.<sup>125</sup> For example, when searching for “professional translation” on Google.com one of the top results is the online platform translated.com. This platform offers three different types of translation: “Premium”, “Professional” and “Economy” (Figure 50). For a general 1,000-word translation from English into German the cost varies more than £100 between Premium (done by a translator and a specialised reviser and quality controlled) and Economy (Machine Translation with a light review) translation and slightly more than £67 between Professional (done by a translator and with quality control) and Economy.<sup>126</sup> As shown below in Figure 50, the cheapest option still includes a light review, leaving the impression that the text will still be accessible since a human translator or editor will check the product and approve it to be passed on to the client. Concerning the time needed for the translation, there is only a small difference between a “Professional” translation and an “Economy” translation which may be an indicator of how time intensive even a light review of a Machine

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<sup>124</sup> Jeremy Rifkin discusses in his book *The Zero Margin Society* the implications of modern technologies, such as AI, for many different professions (Rifkin 2014). One of his examples is the work of translators, or rather, interpreters that he predicts to become redundant in time due to the development of software such as GeoFluent by the company Lionbridge. Rifkin admits that at the time of writing this software are yet to be en par with professional interpreters but they are good enough for its purposes at near zero marginal cost. (Rifkin 2014, p.169).

<sup>125</sup> It should be noted that post-editing services often refer back to the source text and as such require knowledge of the source language.

<sup>126</sup> As of Friday 06/03/2020: <https://translated.com/translation-rates#quote-code=051ff56d61>.

Translation can be, but also points towards the time pressure which is put on translators to produce a target text according to tight deadlines. Based on these deadlines, translators have arguably little choice but to use CAT tools to meet the requirements. It is also reminiscent of the Capitalist Discourse's constant acceleration as translators are likely to be urged to work faster and cheaper, which would also cause translators to try and produce more target texts in less time due to the decreasing remuneration.

The screenshot shows the translated.com interface. At the top, the logo and a hamburger menu are visible. Below, there are input fields for source language (English (GB)), target language (German), and word count (1000). There are also dropdowns for 'Subject' (General) and 'Delivery date' (Auto (Best Price)), along with an 'Update prices' button. A green banner states 'Pay after delivery' with a note: 'We trust you: feel free to pay within 5 days from delivery via bank transfer, credit card, or PayPal. [Learn more](#)'. The main section is titled 'Choose your solution' and contains three columns representing different service levels:

Premium	Professional (Best Seller)	Economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Translator</li> <li>Specialized Reviser</li> <li>Quality control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Translator</li> <li>Quality control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Machine translation</li> <li>Light review</li> </ul>
delivery guaranteed by <b>Tue 10 Mar 11:30 AM WET</b> <a href="#">Need it faster?</a>	delivery guaranteed by <b>Mon 9 Mar 03:00 PM WET</b> <a href="#">Need it faster?</a>	delivery guaranteed by <b>Mon 9 Mar 01:00 PM WET</b> <a href="#">Need it faster?</a>
<b>£135.02</b> about £0.135 / word	<b>£101.84</b> about £0.102 / word	<b>£34.67</b> about £0.035 / word
<b>Order</b>	<b>Order</b>	<b>Order</b>
<a href="#">More details</a>	<a href="#">More details</a>	<a href="#">More details</a>

Figure 50: Quote from translated.com [Accessed Friday 06/03/2020 at <https://translated.com/translation-rates#quote-code=051ff56d61>].

Looking at the above Figure 50, the person of the translator is still sold as an advantage which warrants a higher price and (slightly) slower turnover. However, considering the discrepancy in prices even between “Professional”

and “Economy”, Machine Translations may become more attractive for clients, particularly as the software used is further improved and becomes more reliable.<sup>127</sup> Furthermore, even the Machine Translation still includes a light review by a human.

As mentioned previously, the true “master” of the Capitalist Discourse is not the subject, the capitalist, or an object; instead, the discourse is mastered by the capitalist mechanism. If translation were to follow this trend, the human translator will become less important as the quality of Machine Translation increases and the expenditure of time, labour, and money involved decrease. Tomšič points out that Marx highlighted that “capitalists are merely administrators (or personifications) of capital” (Tomšič 2012, p.108). If this is also true for translation, agencies will increasingly encourage their translators to use CAT tools and transition into Machine Translation until human labour is kept to a minimum. Returning to the example of translated.com, it can be read on their website that they promote their efficiency by stating they “work hard to make translation services more effective by enhancing [their] production processes with great technologies and talented people” (Professional Language Solutions for Your Business - Translated. [no date]). Furthermore, they use a system which “instantly matches [the customer’s] content with the most qualified translator for the job” (Professional Language Solutions for Your Business - Translated. [no date]). The key message on their website is: “We open up language to everyone. Professional translation services made easy. Crafted by expert humans, powered by technology, efficiently delivered” (Professional Language Solutions for Your Business - Translated. [no date]). While the human worker is here used as a selling point, the efficiency of the provided services and their use of technology is equally advertised. If the translation agency qua capitalist is only an administrator in this discourse, efficiency and technology will eventually replace the human aspect of translation, as software does not require breaks, does not get tired or distracted, and in general can work faster than the average human. The

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<sup>127</sup> The area of Machine Translation includes different types of software which are constantly developing. For further reference, see for example Castilho et al.’s article on Neural Machine Translation (Castilho et al. 2017) or Grundkiewicz and Junczys-Dowmunt’s paper on the performance of Hybrid Machine Translation (Grundkiewicz and Junczys-Dowmunt 2018).

website indicates further that commissions are already categorised and allocated automatically by a program and thereby eliminating this aspect of labour. As such, part of the administrative side of project management has been automated, making it likely that a request for a Machine Translation of a text may be processed as soon as it is placed and could be passed on to the reviewer within a minimal timescale. To summarise, I suggest that translated.com is one example of how human labour beyond the upper management level is becoming increasingly automated in the business of translation.

#### **6.2.4 Commodification**

In this section, I will look in particular at the tendency of commodification which can be argued to be found in professional translation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and which is similarly associated with the Capitalist Discourse. In their article “The Ethics of Volunteerism in Translation. Translators Without Borders and the Platform Economy”, Mona Baker and Attila Piróth discuss one example where the platform TM Town (which is part of ProZ.com) encourages translators to upload their resources such as translation memories to promote their assets and gain new customers (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.3).<sup>128</sup> Thus, they write, the platform shifts “the focus from skills to assets, and from value creation to value extraction” (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.3) which supports the suggestion made earlier that the source text is turned into a resource text if translation is looked at from the perspective of the Capitalist Discourse. Furthermore, Baker and Piróth point out that the commonly practised word-based pricing scheme instead of an hour- or project-based pricing scheme adds to the commodification of translation. Tomšič writes that capitalist economy relies on the illusion of a “contract” between the capitalist and the labourer based on the “fair” price, which is different from the “true” price (Tomšič 2012, p.108). Similarly, the “just” price stipulated by the website for the client may not be the same as the “true” price, reflecting the time and effort spent on the target text

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<sup>128</sup> ProZ.com is one of the most known and used translation platforms. On their website they advertise themselves as “Online Community and Workplace for Language Professionals”, as such they offer the options for translators and interpreters to search for work or for individuals to hire translators and interpreters (Freelance translators & Translation companies | ProZ.com. [no date])

by the translator. Additionally, the price a company or website suggests may not reflect the wage the translator receives as they are likely to add a surcharge to make profit or charge the translator a percentage of the final remuneration.

Baker and Piróth highlight further that the importance placed on the translation memory marks a clear shift away from skill towards asset, thus, away from human labour and towards automation, productivity, and efficiency. Translation memory is a database which stores text segments, usually sentences or parts of sentences, that have previously been translated by a human translator and is usually part of CAT tools. The above example of translated.com shows a similar tendency as the website advertises their use of technology. The problem with this is that the target texts lose value as their production becomes quicker, easier, and increasingly automated to the point where companies may ultimately no longer need to employ translation services and instead use translation software themselves. Hence, in search of maximum efficiency and profit, translation agencies may ultimately make human translators increasingly redundant or at least their services less valuable. As Piróth and Baker state: “while translation may be doing fine, translators apparently are not” (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.9).

This tendency would illustrate Lacan’s argument that the Capitalist Discourse will ultimately burn itself out. Vanheule translates from Lacan’s talk in Milan that the “very small inversion between the  $S_1$  and the \$, which is the subject, is enough for it to run as if it were on wheels, it can’t run better, but it actually runs too fast, it runs out, it runs out such that it burns itself out” (Lacan in Vanheule 2016, pp.6–7). In other words, capitalism is ultimately on a course of self-destruction. The search for efficiency and optimisation of production leaves it running off the rails and into a metaphorical wall as Vighi’s allegory suggests: the Capitalist Discourse is like a race car which continues to accelerate against a wall despite falling apart (Vighi 2018, p.677).

I want to reiterate here that the master of this discourse is not a person or an object but a mechanism which means it is ruthless and does not (or cannot) stop in order to second guess itself or evaluate its ethicalness. The mechanism

is programmed to chase after maximum production at minimal cost, which facilitates the elimination of human labour and supports complete automation. The Capitalist Discourse does not hesitate to consume its participants as the mechanism will continue past the moment it derails.<sup>129</sup> Lacan states that “[after] all, it is the cleverest discourse that we have made. It is no less headed for a blowout. This is because it is untenable” (Lacan 1978, p.11). The Capitalist Discourse could be compared to a treadmill which is programmed to constantly accelerate in speed. Until it is switched off or breaks, the machine will continue accelerating. Even if the runner falls off with broken legs or torn ligaments, the belt continues to run and accelerate because it cannot tell whether its user can keep up.

An analogy with translation would be that the automation of translation may ultimately lead to the complete redundancy of human translators, as translation software is developed and improved leaving translators with constantly decreasing commissions. Returning to the functionalist approach to translation, it could be argued that this type of approach would be susceptible to a discourse pattern such as the Capitalist’s as it fosters a translation approach which appears particularly pragmatic and efficient. This is likely to encourage the increased use of CAT tools and eventually Machine Translation. For example, *skopos* theory may result in a one-sided translation which focuses on certain aspects of the source text and transmitting only key information with less focus on style. I would argue this is a feature of *skopos* theory which may lead to the prioritisation of quantity over quality; and the less important quality becomes, the more likely clients are to use machine instead of human translation. Rather, they may use post-editing services until technology is advanced enough to produce adequate target texts which do not need to be reviewed.

One example of the commodification of translation was discussed by Piróth and Baker in their previously mentioned paper (Baker and Piróth 2019). The authors discuss practices of the organisation Translators Without Borders

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<sup>129</sup> See Lacan: “[...] but that goes too fast, that consumes itself, that consumes itself so that is consumed (*ça se consomme, ça se consomme si bien que ça se consume*) (Lacan 1978, p.11).

(TWB) which is particularly interesting in the context of the Capitalist Discourse, as I would argue that it illustrates what was mentioned in the beginning of this chapter: the translator who believes him-/herself to be liberated but steps into the trap of the Capitalist Discourse. Piróth and Baker examine how the organisation used the unpaid work of their volunteers to produce language assets used by Microsoft for commercial purposes (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.5).

TWB is a non-profit organisation which provides “linguistic support to humanitarian and other organisations” (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.8). The organisation mainly uses a crowdsourcing approach to which thousands of freelance translators have contributed without receiving payment (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.8). At the time Baker and Piróth wrote their article (October 2019) the organisation had “donated” over 82.5 million words (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.8) and by the time of writing this chapter (March 2020) the number had risen to over 83.1 million (Figure 51), i.e., in approximately four to five months, the number of words translated had increased by over 600,000.

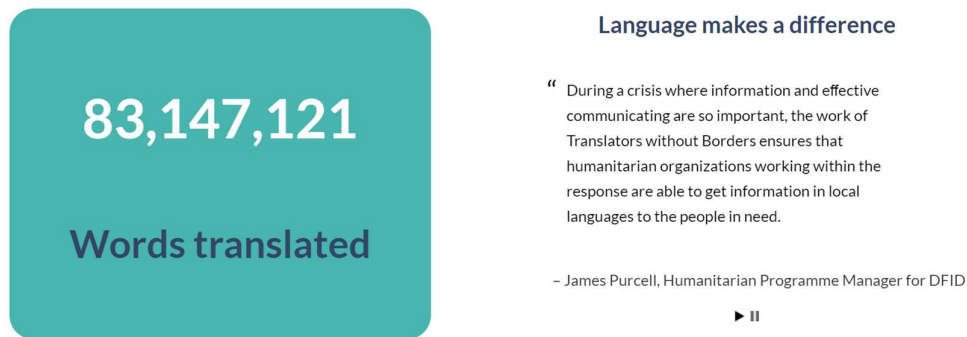


Figure 51: Words translated on TWB website [accessed 07/03/2020, 14:30 at <https://translatorswithoutborders.org/>]

As Piróth and Baker write, TWB has contributed to the increasing recognition of the importance of translation (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.9). However, the importance of translators is arguably neglected, as translators are not compensated for their help and the subscription fees collected from partners are used for managing and overseeing the organisation’s work (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.9). It was quoted earlier that, according to Piróth and Baker, it



appears as if translation may be doing well but the translators are not (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.9). Piróth and Baker write that

Demonitization, commoditization and deprofessionalization are unlikely to boost the net worth of society's cognitive capital, whether in the field of translation or in other areas of economy (Baker and Piróth 2019, pp.9–10).

Similar to what Baker and Piróth suggest in this statement, the Capitalist Discourse, if applied to translation, would threaten the viability of the translators' profession in the increasing automation of human labour. Under the heading of "volunteering", and the implication of good work and charity, translators are asked by TWB to provide their services without financial compensation and little to no recognition. Their donated words are then used as assets and function almost as currency, as the donated word counter on the organisation's website might suggest. Furthermore, because TWB has no conflict of interest policy it is possible for partners to pursue their own interests, as it took place when the work of translators after Hurricane Matthew hit Haiti in 2015 was used by Microsoft to improve their Machine Translation software for Haitian Creole (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.13). Previously, in 2014, Microsoft had funded TWB for a crowdsourcing application to aid communication in Swahili and Somali which was then also used for their own translation software (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.13). Baker and Piróth point out that

[over] the years, major users of machine translation and crowdsourcing [...], some of the largest translation companies [...], as well as agenda-setters of the bulk translation market [...] have all been represented on TWB's board of directors or advisory board, making TWB look like the philanthropic arm of a massive business consortium" (Baker and Piróth 2019, pp.13–14).

This situation can be seen as an extension of the basic dynamic of surplus-value extraction as defined by Marx. According to Marx, surplus-value which is turned into profit once the product is sold, corresponds to a quantity of surplus labour-time, which the capitalist does not pay for (i.e., a quantity of "added labour" that is not included in the wage). The work provided by the volunteer translators, without financial compensation, is used by Microsoft, who turn it into profit by using it for their software.

The above quotation from Baker and Piróth suggests further that this may not only have implications on the availability of work for human translators and the value of their work but also on cognitive capital in general. Piróth and Baker appear to indicate that, following the current trend, knowledge and skills are losing their worth in the economy. This is, for example, illustrated by the exploitation of the work provided by volunteers for TWB, as it emphasises the appropriation of assets which will enable further reduction of human labour. If this trend continues and assets produced by volunteer work are appropriated by large companies to replace paid human labour, this may be a step further towards the “blow out” which Lacan warned against: the worker loses his/her job to a machine, at the same time the loss of income makes it impossible for the worker to purchase the product. Naturally, this trend could not be sustained by society long term and would lead to a situation where the Capitalist Discourse consumes itself which Lacan saw as the result of this discourse (Lacan 1978, p.11).

### 6.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, modern translation can often appear to be a smooth process similar to the Discourse of the Capitalist. For example, in Functionalism and *skopos* theory the untranslatability of the source text is circumnavigated by way of the translation brief and by establishing a specific purpose for the translation. In this situation, the source text functions as a resource text for the translator, who uses what is needed from it to produce an adequate translation.

The more the original and its content are narrowed down to one specific purpose or *skopos*, the easier the translation becomes and the more likely it is that a machine could pick up the main work of translating. This would be where translators are likely to make use of CAT tools, and ultimately Machine Translation software might take over. As mentioned previously, CAT tools still require a human translator; however, their work is likely to be increasingly limited to post-editing as they improve the translation memory of the software. While this may increase their productivity, the value of target texts decreases as CAT tools become a common asset for translators. Ultimately, it may cause the prices of translation to drop so low that they are no longer a profitable

product for translators. Moreover, as the quality of Machine Translation improves, translators may be less commissioned overall, until this profession becomes obsolete.<sup>130</sup>

The appearance of a smoothly running process may also leave the translator under the impression of being in control over his/her work, as was suggested in the beginning of the chapter. After finding a way of engaging with the untranslatability of the source text, the translator may believe to be freed from the constraints of the original and own their work. However, in reality the translation is often governed by the translation brief and the commission as part of a larger governing discourse, i.e., capitalism.

The Discourse of the Capitalist appears attractive because it leaves the subject under the impression of being independent and functioning well. Nevertheless, because the true master of the discourse is not a person or an organisation but instead an anonymous mechanism which is programmed for optimal efficiency while remaining blind to the consequences of eliminating human labour, the discourse will eventually break down when all work has been automated and the workers (i.e., consumers) have lost their income and thereby their spending power.

Concerning translation, this discourse structure would not only affect professional translators who are subscribed to the functionalist approach to translation. Even volunteer translators may fall into the capitalist trap as profit driven companies may exploit their work for their own purposes, as in the case Translators Without Borders and Microsoft discussed by Baker and Piróth (Baker and Piróth 2019). The volunteers may be under the impression of helping society and working for a good cause, while they are simultaneously (unknowingly) providing free assets which are turned into profit.

The discussion within this chapter may lead to question whether one can avoid the Discourse of the Capitalist at all. While the answer is that it is impossible to do so in today's world, it is nevertheless important to retain critical

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<sup>130</sup> In how far this would apply to (e.g.) literary translation may remain debatable at this point but may change in the future if the development of A.I. could aid the development of Machine Translation and CAT tools.

awareness of the downfalls and potential failure of the Capitalist Discourse, especially as the automation of labour inevitably causes a spike in unemployment. With the constant development and improvement of translation technology as with freely available software such as Google Translation unemployment (including underemployment) will inevitably affect translators as they are forced to compete with lean of technology.

## 7. Conclusion

The aim of this final chapter is to review and conclude the research presented in this thesis. In doing so I will discuss each of the three research questions presented in the Introduction after briefly summarising the overall content and structure of the research. Finally, I will situate the research in relation to other psychoanalytic approaches to translation, address some of its limitations, and point towards opportunities for future research.

The objective of the present thesis is to analyse and discuss the applicability of Lacanian Discourse Analysis to translation and the related research. One specific area I focused on in detail is the topic of Bible translation, as it has historically been central to the work of many scholars and theorists. The materials used for this thesis come from different time periods and differ in their approaches so as to provide a comprehensive overview of the relevance of Lacan's theories for translation. The Lacanian discourses I focused on primarily are three of the discourse patterns (Master, Hysteric, Analyst) developed by Lacan in Seminar XVII as well his Capitalist Discourse, whose algebra he introduced subsequently in his 1972 talk at the University of Milan and in his 1970 radio interview published under the title "Radiophonie". In order to examine the pertinence of Lacan's discourses, I used suitable terminology from translation in place of the original terms and concepts. It should be noted that the purpose of this exercise was not to draw conclusions concerning the translator's psychic condition, but rather, to offer an original analysis of patterns found in translation practice.

The key guiding research questions laid out in the Introduction of the thesis are:

1. To what extent can translation terminology be used in place of Lacan's original concepts to illustrate similar discourse patterns within translation?
2. To what extent is Lacanian Discourse Analysis able to illustrate the structures governing translation practice?

3. To what extent do particular approaches and views of translation display similar tendencies to specific discourses and how can the similarities enrich our understanding of translation?

These questions were addressed by, firstly, identifying key concepts from Translation Studies, applying them to the original Lacanian structures, and proposing potential discourse patterns pertaining to translation practice.

In the second step, I identified translation theories and approaches, as well as selected target texts, in order to determine if similar patterns can be argued to structure translation. The translations I used for my research are six Bible versions that I found to be representative of the different approaches. Due to the large corpus of available Bible translations and the limitations of space, time and financial resources, I narrowed the materials down to these six texts based on the publicly available statistics of the ECPA for the best-selling Bible versions (Christian Book Expo: ECPA Bible Bestsellers. [no date]), as well as on which translations were available to me.

Finally, based on my initial proposition of the discourse patterns in translation, I discussed which specific areas of Translation Studies would relate better to individual discourse patterns. I suggested that translations which place their primary emphasis on the linguistic framework and material of the original display similar structures to the Master's Discourse. Translations focusing primarily on conveying meaning and intention, on the other hand, show stronger parallels with the Hysteric's Discourse. I also found that instances where the translator is forced to engage with untranslatable elements of the source text show pattern similarity with the Analyst's Discourse. Additionally, I argued that this discourse pattern is able to illustrate the translator's agency, as well as relating to volunteer and activist translation. Lastly, I identified a connection between the contemporary translator and the Capitalist Discourse, especially due to development of machine and computer assisted translation (CAT) tools, as well as a general trend of commodification. To test my hypotheses, I chose translations and theories from each of the mentioned areas to explore both their priorities and how the translators or scholars engaged with the source text, the target language, and translation as such.

## 7.1 Discussion of Results

In the below Discussion of Results, I will answer each of the research questions by discussing my results in their specific context.

*To what extent can translation terminology be used in place of Lacan's original concepts to illustrate similar discourse patterns within translation?*

In order to address this initial question, I identified four key concepts from translation and examined to what extent they serve a similar purpose to Lacan's original concepts. These four translation elements are the translator, the source text, the target language, and the translation. Upon examining these in relation to Lacanian theory, I found the translator to relate best to the split subject as he/she is "divided" between two languages, i.e., between the source- and target language, or between the source and the target text. Similar to the split subject who can never fully express in language what he/she intends to say, the translator can never fully express in the target language what he/she understands the source text to say or mean.

The source text was argued to hold a similar function to the master-signifier. While the master-signifier represents the identity of the subject, the source text arguably dictates the identity of the translation. In that sense, it lays down the "law" for the translation process as it defines the overall meaning and structure of the target text. In other words, it sets the boundaries for the translator as to what he/she can and cannot write.

The target language was identified as best suited to replace knowledge in Lacan's discourse structures, as it represents the entire network of signifiers at the translator's disposal, while Lacan's original concept represents knowledge or language as a whole, i.e., the entire network of signifiers.

Finally, I understood the object of desire to be represented by the translation. However, since the object of desire in Lacan's theory is unobtainable and unmeasurable, I proposed to connect it with the idea of a *perfect* translation for the adapted discourse structures, which is also strictly speaking "impossible". Since this perfect translation is impossible to achieve, it also

includes to some degree the dimension of untranslatability, which was relevant particularly in the context of the Analyst's Discourse, where such impossibility is revealed to the translator.

*To what extent is Lacanian Discourse Analysis able to illustrate structures governing translation practice?*

My second research question was addressed in the four main chapters, where it was demonstrated that patterns similar to the discourses developed by Lacan can be found in translation. By substituting Lacan's original concepts as suggested in response to the first question, I was able to outline underlying discourse patterns in the translation process and point towards instances where the unconscious is likely to interfere.

In the adapted Master's Discourse pattern the source text is found in position

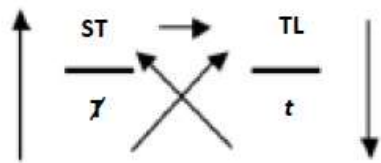


Figure 52: Adapted Master's Discourse

of agent, the target language in position of other, the translation in position of product, and the translator in position of truth. Here, one can see an approximate outline of a translation process which is centred around

the original's linguistic framework and material. In other words, this approach would suggest that the original is in control of the target language and the way it is structured in the target text. The translator in position of truth was argued to represent the fact that it is the translator's biased understanding of the source text that is applied to the target language and conveyed in the translation. Interestingly, the translator and the translation are unable to relate in the formula, which was suggested to illustrate that the exact bias of the translation as well as its imperfections are not clearly visible to the translator. This does not mean that the translator would perceive their work as perfect, rather, he/she is unable to identify the exact instances and way in which the translation is biased or flawed.

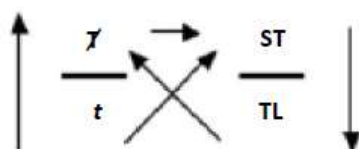


Figure 53: Adapted Hysteric's Discourse

In the adapted Hysteric's Discourse, the translator is found in position of agent, the source text in position of other, the target language in position of product, and the



translation in position of truth. This structure was discussed to illustrate the translator questioning and analysing the source text in order to find the most suitable target language signifiers. The translation as truth here symbolises the translator's motivation but also the bias through which he/she may perceive and approach the original. This means that the translator may analyse and question the source text in such a way that he/she believes to make the translation possible, or how he/she would like a perfect translation to look like. However, the missing arrow between product and truth on the bottom half of the formula indicates the target language's inability to produce a perfect translation. This impossibility was discussed to be based on the inherent ambiguity of language as understood by Lacan and the constant slippage of meaning along the chain of signification. In other words, since meaning cannot be exactly pinned down in neither the source, nor the target language, it is impossible for a translation to be perfect. Hence, the target language and the perfect translation are incompatible and cannot form a functioning relationship.

In my version of the Analyst's Discourse pattern, following the proposed

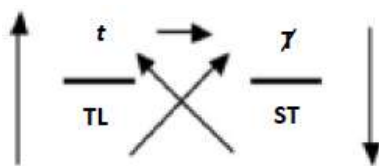


Figure 54: Adapted Analyst's Discourse

quarter turn rotation, the translation takes on the role of agent, while the translator is placed in position of other, the source text in position of product, and the target language in position of truth. In this pattern, it was argued, one can see

a structure which resembles the translator's encounter with untranslatability. The (perfect) translation as agent is here revealed to the translator as other in its impossibility, resulting in the translator's creation of a new version of the source text. The target language in position of truth represents the reason for the impossibility of the perfect translation, similarly to the impotent relationship between these two concepts in the Hysteric's Discourse. Here, it becomes clear that the cause for the impossibility of the perfect translation lies with the inherent ambiguity of the target language. The issue of un/translatability has been discussed extensively in Translation Studies. It is generally accepted that no translation is objectively "perfect". Translation scholar Eugene Nida famously stated that since "no two languages are identical [...] it stands to

reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages” (Nida 2012, p.141). I suggest that this means it is impossible to perfectly transfer an original into a target language without any loss or gain of meaning. In this thesis, I argued that the adapted Analyst’s Discourse outlines a pattern where the translator is confronted with the above impossibility, and thanks to this encounter is able to create his/her own version of the source text.

Finally, I tracked Lacan’s original Capitalist Discourse, where the direction of

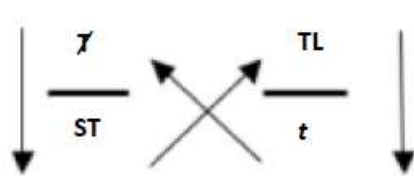


Figure 55: Adapted Capitalist Discourse

movement changes if compared to the original four discourses discussed in Seminar XVII. In this structure, the translator takes on the position of agent, the source text the position of truth, the target language

the position of other, and the translation the position of product. The general movement between the different entities appears similar to the Master’s Discourse, i.e., the translator accesses the source text, takes it to the target language and creates the translation. The crucial difference is that in the Capitalist Discourse the translator is the agent, while the source text occupies the position of truth, leaving the impression that the agent of the Capitalist Discourse can freely access or colonise the unconscious. This would represent the idea that the translator believes that he/she has access to all the elements of the source text needed to create a (perfect) translation via the target language. Another interesting difference in this discourse, especially compared to the Master’s Discourse, is that the translation is attributed to the translator instead of the source text, thus creating a potentially uninterrupted loop.

In summary, I believe the discourse patterns examined in my research can illustrate and explain some of the common structures found in translation. These are the creation of a translation (i.e., the translation as product), as in the adapted Master’s and Capitalist’s Discourse pattern; the translator’s analysis of the original aimed at identifying the correct target language signifiers, as in the adapted Hysteric’s Discourse pattern; and the way the translator engages with instances of untranslatability, as displayed in the adapted Analyst’s Discourse pattern.

*To what extent do particular approaches and views of translation display similar tendencies to specific discourses and how can the similarities enrich our understanding of translation?*

As with my second question, my third research question was addressed across the four main chapters of the thesis. After discussing the overall structure and theoretical background of the adapted discourse patterns, I explored their applicability and validity by using examples from Translation Studies, including theoretical discussions, and existing target texts.

My hypothesis for this part of the thesis was that the Master's Discourse would be particularly relevant for literal or word-for-word translations which place particular emphasis on the linguistic structure and material of the original. I expected the Hysteric's Discourse to resonate well with translations which are associated with the sense-for-sense approach or are considered free translations. Furthermore, I expected this discourse structure to be found in research and discussions which question the meaning and authority of the original, such as the deconstructionist view of translation. The Analyst's Discourse was expected to relate best to discussions of untranslatability, as well as approaches which focus on how to engage with these instances and agency. Finally, I expected the Capitalist Discourse to be particularly relevant to contemporary translation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and the increasing focus on productivity and automation through CAT tools and other software.

In my chapter discussing the Master's Discourse, I found similar discursive patterns in translation approaches which placed a strong emphasis on the structure and the wording of the original. Some of the theories I looked at were Serge Gavronsky's idea of the pious translator, Antoine Berman's analytic of translation, and Lawrence Venuti's idea of foreignization. These three approaches all had in common their prioritisation of the linguistic material of the source text over the structure and conventions of the target language regardless of whether the target text would sound natural to a reader or not. The second part of this chapter focused on Bible Translation. I discussed the legend of the Septuagint in which the translators were said to have written the translation in a trance as if they were possessed. I argued that this legend is

similar to the structure of the Master's Discourse in so far as there is a strong master who commands the actions of the other to produce his/her object of desire. In other words, in this legend the source text could be argued to have taken control over the target language to create the Septuagint, i.e., the translation. A particularly interesting element of Bible translation I highlighted is the idea that in the Master's Discourse the hidden truth of the master is that he/she is a split subject, i.e., lacking or imperfect. In this respect, I pointed out that the Biblical source text may be believed to be one consistent original translated into a target language, since the reader generally receives one consistent target text when purchasing a Bible. However, particularly the source text for New Testament, which is used by most translators (i.e., the *UBS Greek New Testament* and the NA28) is composed of multiple manuscripts. When the NA28 was published, there were between 5,500 and 6,000 manuscripts with texts from the New Testament known to scholars, which often display a number of deviances from each other. I highlighted some particular passages where this is most noticeable such as the longer ending of the Gospel of Mark which is only found in later manuscripts but is missing in older ones. Furthermore, I discussed that these inconsistencies between the manuscripts are only tangentially visible in footnotes, where translators for instance point out that other manuscripts may use a different wording.

Finally, in looking at common language translations such as German and English, I noted that many of the early translators of the Bible were persecuted by the church. I argued that this shows similarities with the Master's Discourse as the modern translations may have been perceived to challenge the authority of the existing translations as "perfect" renditions of the original and point towards the ambiguity of language as more than one way of expressing the original is possible. Moreover, the Church in Germany in the 16<sup>th</sup> century stated that the Bible could only be expressed in Hebrew (OT), Greek, and Latin. Hence, Luther's German translation would be taking away from the meaning of the scripture. I related this to the structure of the Master's Discourse in so far as the new translations threatened the current Discourse of the Master by exposing the idea that the source text could be rendered in different ways or that it was in any way affected by its translators. Furthermore, it opened the

possibility of common believers to read the scriptures for themselves and understand the text in a way which is different from the teachings of the Church.

In the chapter discussing the Hysteric's Discourse, I suggested that this structure relates well to "free" or sense-for-sense translation, as well as research which focuses on questioning the meaning and coherence of the source text. As such, these approaches were argued to place their emphasis on the target language and the general enjoyment of the text. I discussed that in Translation Studies, a similar pattern to the Hysteric's Discourse can be seen in deconstructionist views of translation, Serge Gavronsky's idea of the cannibalist translator, the *Belles Infidèles*, as well as Eugene Nida and Charles R Taber's theory of dynamic equivalence. While Nida's theories apply to translation in general, his and Taber's theories were discussed here in relation to Bible Translation, as this is an area they paid particular attention to. In their work, they state that it was their opinion that the Bible is meant to be understood and accessible (Nida and Taber 1982), which is contrary to, for example, the previously discussed idea of the medieval Church that the Bible should not even be available in the language of the people but only in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Hence, in dynamic translation, the focus lies on the meaning and the effect of the text, i.e., the dynamics between text and reader, rather than its exact structure and wording. This would mean for the translator to actively investigate the original, including its meaning and background, and question and analyse it, similar to the approach seen in the Hysteric's Discourse pattern.

The translations I used in this context included the New Living Translation and *The Voice* which were both noted to also include more footnotes, marginal notes, and other annotations or commentaries than translations discussed in the preceding chapter (e.g., the ESV). In these footnotes and marginal notes as well as their other commentary, the translations offer additional background information to provide context for the book or passage. Notably, in contrast to the Discourse of the Master these translations did not aim to produce a consistent translation and uphold the illusion of one consistent original. This, to some degree, is reminiscent of the Hysteric's Discourse, where the subject attacks the master to reveal its inconsistencies. While it is not my intention to

imply that the translators of the NLT and *The Voice* intend to attack the original and expose it as flawed, they nevertheless do not attempt to hide that some of the meaning of the source text may be difficult to understand for a contemporary audience, nor that there are multiple manuscripts.

Furthermore, I discussed some of the feminist views on translations of the Bible, as they often challenged the source text's message as well as the way of rendering it. The views and research I discussed looked critically at the source text, including its historical, sociological, and linguistic context in order to find the most appropriate way to render the original or point towards inconsistencies of the original and existing translations. These approaches were discussed to resemble the basic structure of the adapted Hysteric's Discourse in so far as the translator (or scholar) questions and analyses the source text in order to receive corresponding target language signifiers and knowledge. The translation in this context functions as a motivator behind this sort of analysis. Regardless of whether an individual is translating the text or criticising existing translation, I suggest that the driving motor for this discourse would be a desire for a perfect, or at least better, translation.

When I discussed the Discourse of the Analyst in the third main chapter, I noted that it can be used to illuminate the translator's engagement with untranslatability as well as aspects of activist translation and translations carried out in line with the functionalist approaches. The original discourse displays the liberation of the subject from his/her symptom in analysis. While a translator would, of course, not have to enter therapy in order to translate, the adapted pattern was argued to illustrate the way in which activist translation may be seen to liberate the translator from the constraints of the professional working world. Concerning Functionalism, I suggested that this approach shows a similar structure to the Analyst's Discourse as the translator is confronted with untranslatability and engages with this by referring to the purpose or function of the target text to create a new version of the source text. However, as the Analyst's Discourse pattern (as discussed in this application) is used to illustrate the translator's encounter with untranslatability, it can arguably be found, to some degree, in most translations. As translators are likely to encounter instances of untranslatability every time they work on a text

and have to decide which particular notion of the source text to prioritise in the target language.

Lastly, in my discussion of the Capitalist Discourse, I argued that the latter is particularly relevant for contemporary translation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In particular, I argued that it correlates well with Machine Translation, CAT tools and other translation software. Furthermore, I proposed that this discourse could work as another possible illustration of functionalist approaches such as *skopos* theory.

Arguably, in both the above-mentioned areas a shift away from the skill of translating can be noticed, replaced by the push towards productivity and capital gain. For example, Machine Translation and CAT tools are intended to improve the speed of production by doing the majority of the translation work so that the translator needs to “only” edit and finalise the suggested target text. In the chapter, I suggested that the constant development of these types of software may eventually make human translators redundant. This parallels the self-destructive tendency which Lacan highlighted as an important feature of the Capitalist Discourse, as it is destined to “consume itself” (Lacan 1978, p.11). The image I associated with this tendency was that of a treadmill which continues to accelerate to the point where the runner cannot keep up and falls off. Even after this point, the machine continues to run until it eventually breaks down. The original Capitalist Discourse pattern describes the tendency of capitalism to automate labour, thereby making human workers redundant in order to limit costs while increasing productivity. The downfall of this tendency, as hinted by Lacan, is that as human labour is eliminated, workers no longer have the financial resources to purchase the products they make, and capitalism itself is increasingly unable to create a new economic value (Lacan 1970; Lacan 1978).

In the context of CAT tools, I pointed out that the commodification of translation could relate to the tendency of the Capitalist Discourse to eliminate human labour and self-destruct eventually, as the intended consumers are unable to afford the created products. The example I used to discuss this point was Mona Baker and Attila Piróth’s analysis of the organisation Translators without

Borders who used the translation memory collected by their volunteer translators to improve the Microsoft Machine Translation tool for Haitian Creole (Baker and Piróth 2019). Other examples from Baker and Piróth were the use of translated words as donations similar to money, indicated by the counter of “Words translated” on the organisation’s website (see Translators without Borders. [no date]). This, as well as platforms such as TM Town who encourage their translators to upload their translation memory in order to promote their assets, led Baker and Piróth to conclude that Translation is shifting away from a skill-based profession towards an asset-based profession (Baker and Piróth 2019).

In addition to Machine Translation and CAT tools, in this chapter I also discussed *skopos* theory. One of the features of the Analyst’s Discourse is that it results in a new Master’s Discourse. I pointed out that a similar tendency could be seen in translation. However, in the context of Functionalism and *skopos* theory, I suggested that the Capitalist Discourse could be a potential alternative to a new Master’s Discourse pattern. The strong focus on the translation brief and the commission could be an indicator of a similar illusion of control as seen in the Capitalist Discourse. Since the purpose and the scope of the translation are often defined by the commissioner, the translator is able to approach the translation and prioritise specific elements of the original, should he/she encounter any translation issues. Thus, this approach can be seen to foster a view of the translator being in complete control over the translation process and thus the target text, while the actual master of the discourse is the commissioner, or rather, the financial remuneration and the capitalist mechanism behind this. Additionally, I proposed that in *skopos* theory a similar tendency to convert desire into demand as in the Capitalist Discourse takes place. By making it explicit which elements of the original are to be prioritised and how the target text is to look like, the translation is narrowed down into a specific, achievable target text.

In conclusion, my hypothesis for this research question was confirmed, as I identified specific areas of Translation Studies correlating particularly well with individual discourse structures. The more stringent literal, or word-for-word, translations displayed patterns resembling the adapted Master’s Discourse.



Translations which were considered to be free or employ a sense-for-sense based approach related strongly to the adapted Hysteric's Discourse. The Analyst's Discourse structure was shown to illustrate well the way translators engage with untranslatability and approaches focusing on the ambiguity of the original, as well as activist translation as essentially self-motivated. Finally, translation software and approaches placing a high emphasis on productivity and assets were discussed as strongly correlating with the Capitalist Discourse.

As discussed in the above, in this thesis I have pointed out translation structures displaying a similar pattern to those in Lacan's Discourses. In addition, I pointed out similarities in the overall tendencies as well as in the relationships between the concepts used in place of the original ones. Due to Lacan's strong emphasis on language, his theories lend themselves well as a means to understand linguistic practices such as translation.

Using Lacan's discourses and concepts allowed me to view the processes involved in translation from what I believe is an original point of view, while also appreciating how four of the elements involved in translation may influence the process. Furthermore, I was able to point out certain tendencies that may occur depending on which dominant agent oversees the translation process. This also allowed me to highlight that, regardless of which element is prioritised, there is always an underlying truth that interferes with the translation process. In the case of the Capitalist Discourse, it was also pointed out that the impression of complete control over the translation process is only an illusion and that this particular structure is destined to eventually fail. While it may not be a new discovery that the profession of translators is potentially threatened by the constant improvement of technology, I argue that it is nevertheless an important factor to be aware of and to draw attention to. Although, the Capitalist Discourse may seem unavoidable as in today's society most individuals participate in it, the knowledge of its weaknesses remains important for its participants.

## 7.2 Psychoanalytic Approaches to Translation Revisited

Many of the translation scholars I introduced in the Literature Review approached psychoanalysis from the angle of the translator's unconscious and the concept of transference. The aim of the present thesis is to move away from these concepts and instead point out how translation and, particularly Lacanian, psychoanalysis display and discuss similar tendencies and structures. Instead of proposing ways how translators could potentially overcome their unconscious and translate in a "better" or more "faithful" way, my aim has been to draw out some of the ways in which translation is always subject to unconscious influences which cannot be overcome or eliminated.

Scholars like Dennis Porter, Susan Ingram, and Lawrence Venuti have previously made references to Lacan's theories and concepts. Porter discussed a Lacanian view on un/translatability in his discussion of Walter Benjamin's text "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers". Ingram points towards parallels between psychoanalysis and translation. She discusses concepts such as the subject supposed to know which she relates to the original's author (Ingram 2001, p.101). Furthermore, she suggested that translation may reveal the unconscious of the source text (Ingram 2001, p.101). Venuti discussed the idea of desire caused by the lack which originates with the subject's introduction to language (Venuti 2013, p.40). In the case of translation, Venuti suggests it is the original which introduces a feeling of lack in the translator (Venuti 2013, p.40). This discussion leads Venuti to the suggestion that the original and its author function as the Name-of-the-Father for the translator (Venuti 2013, p.50). The present thesis may fit in best with Ingram's and Venuti's discussion of translation in the context of Lacanian concepts and theories. However, instead of focussing on one particular concept, I highlighted the overarching tendencies and similarities between psychoanalytic theories and translation practice.

Since I covered a relatively broad field and due restrictions of time and space, I was unable to cover, for example, Lacan's Discourse of the University in much detail. As I suggested previously in this thesis, this discourse would

possibly relate well to the training of translators and Translation Studies as an academic field to be studied in university or other institutions.

Furthermore, as I am unable to know the unconscious of the translators and had no communications with any of the discussed translators and scholars, I am unable to fully evaluate and appreciate the reasons behind the choices made by them, to what extent they were conscious or unconscious, and in how far they were influenced by publishers and editors. In the same vein, it should be noted that there are more elements involved in translation than those used in the present thesis, such as the author, source language, editors, and publishers. However, I suggest that the original, the translator, the target language, and the translation are four of the most important elements and enabled me to look at structures and tendencies in translation in the most comprehensive way.

While I acknowledge the shortcomings and limitations of this thesis, I would also suggest that there are opportunities for future research to delve deeper into the relation between psychoanalysis and translation. Anne Quinney's case study of her own work with Pontalis provided an interesting insight of how even experienced scholars will be influenced by their unconscious in their work without them being aware, since it is, by definition, unknown to them. Similarly, Lawrence Venuti highlighted in his discussion of the "remainder" instances where translations showed traces of some unconscious desires of the translators. However, I would argue that most scholars discussed in the Literature Review, such as Serge Gavrinsky, Antoine Berman, Lawrence Venuti, and Anne Quinney, have at the forefront of their mind the aim to overcome the unconscious to translate in a "better" or more "truthful" way. In my research, it has been my aim to present some potential unconscious structures without judgment or aim to "neutralise" the unconscious influences. It is my hope that this thesis is opening up more possibilities of investigating how psychoanalytic theories can offer new ways of looking at translation beyond psychoanalysing the translator's unconscious desires and how to conquer them.

In future research, the limitations of the present thesis could be addressed by, for example, using a different set of entities, which includes other elements which play a role in translation such as the source text's author and the source language. It would also be interesting to look in more detail at similarities between the University Discourse and translator training or other structures from translation.

Furthermore, in particular the Capitalist Discourse offers room for more research in the context of recent developments in translation, such as the use of translation technology and the overall commodification of translation. In today's era of globalisation, international business and the exchange of culture appear to become more and more common; however, it is interesting to see that, in the words of Baker and Piróth, "while translation may be doing fine, translators apparently are not" (Baker and Piróth 2019, p.9).

### 7.3 Concluding Remarks

Overall, the present thesis has offered a new way of looking at one of the ways in which Translation Studies could incorporate Lacanian psychoanalysis and use its discoveries to explore and analyse the practice and study of translation. Many of the concepts developed by Lacan are anchored in language or at least share a strong connection with language, such as the divided subject, desire, and the unconscious.

In this thesis I selected some of the theories and concepts developed by Lacan and used them to discuss structures in translation. However, this is admittedly only a snapshot of the many ways in which psychoanalytic theories can be beneficial for the analysis of translation and Translation Studies. The discourse structures introduced by me offer a new way of examining on how unconscious influences can play a part in translation practice. Moreover, the discussed concepts and theories show interesting similarities between Lacanian psychoanalysis and translation. Naturally, there are shortcomings and limitations to this research, and it is impossible to say how much of a translation is affected by its translator's unconscious and in what way exactly.

Finally, I propose that psychoanalytic approaches to translation should perhaps move away from an approach of attempting to “neutralise” the unconscious or to try to use psychoanalysis to “overcome” our unconscious biases in order to create a better translation. As it was mentioned many times, the perfect translation is an impossibility, based on the simple fact that the original is already imperfect, just as both source and target language are. Some elements will always escape language, and every individual has their own understanding of language based on their own experiences and biases. Rather, psychoanalysis could be a tool for us to observe how the unconscious plays a part in translation affects our work. Whether a translation is “word-for-word” or “sense-for-sense”, neither of the target texts will be void of unconscious influences. In fact, even the choice of approach is likely to be already influenced by the unconscious.

Perhaps, rather than focussing on the shortcomings of translations, we should consider that an imperfect rendition of an imperfect source text is actually a

“perfect” solution. The writer of the book of Ecclesiastes concluded that since life is meaningless, it is best to enjoy it. I would suggest, if language is meaningless, we should equally enjoy it; and if translation is “flawed” due to unconscious influences, we might as well enjoy that we have the opportunity to experience a new version of a text.

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