GREGORY RABASSA'S VIEWS ON TRANSLATION*

PERSPECTIVAS DE GREGORY RABASSA SOBRE LA TRADUCCIÓN

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Abstract

Gregory Rabassa is noted for his translations of famous Latin American authors (García Márquez, Vargas Llosa, Clarice Lispector, Jorge Amado, etc.). Less known are his views on translating. In this paper I aim at presenting and discussing his viewpoints as to the definition of translation (with a key discussion of the concept of *equivalence*), the role of the translator (a model *speaker-listener* of the target text), and some of the translation strategies he applies in his translational work (original's pre-eminence, problem solving, foreignizing, fictionalizing, and semantic networking). I argue that most of Rabassa's stances towards translating can be explained and are still valid within the framework of a modern translation approach. Examples from the English, French, German, Portuguese and Russian translations of García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* are taken from a multilingual parallel corpus collected by the author of this paper.

Key words: *Gregory Rabassa, translation equivalence, translational problem solving, fictionalizing, semantic networking.*

PERSPECTIVAS DE GREGORY RABASSA
SOBRE LA TRADUCCIÓN

Resumen

Gregory Rabassa se destaca por sus traducciones de escritores famosos latinoamericanos (García Márquez, Vargas Llosa, Clarice Lispector, Jorge Amado, etc.) Menos conocidas son sus opiniones sobre la traducción. En este artículo me propongo presentar y discutir sus puntos de vista respecto de la definición de la traducción (prestando atención al concepto de *equivalencia*), el papel del traductor (un modelo *hablante-oyente* del texto meta) y algunas de las estrategias de traducción que utiliza en su labor traductora (predominio del original, resolución de problemas, extranjerización, ficcionalización y redes semánticas). Sostengo que la mayoría de las posiciones de Rabassa sobre la traducción pueden explicarse y tienen vigencia en el marco de un enfoque moderno de la traducción. Estos aspectos se ilustran a partir de un corpus paralelo multilingüe de la traducción de *Cien años de soledad* de Gabriel García Márquez a las lenguas inglesa, francesa, alemana, portuguesa y rusa.

Palabras clave: *Gregory Rabassa, equivalencia traductora, resolución de problemas de traducción, ficcionalización, redes semánticas.*
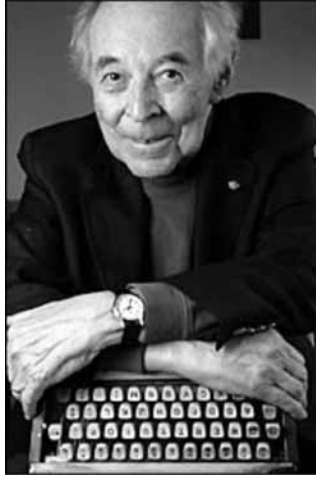
Introduction

Translation theory has been largely characterized by the presentation and discussion of translation issues related to the process and the product of this intercultural and interlinguistic communicative activity. Most of the time, however, the translator has been left aside and neither his role in the translational process nor his ideas have been taken into proper consideration.

It is important to include the translator's insights and views on translation because in this way they can be contrasted and weighed against the principles derived from theories that are devised by theoreticians but not necessarily by practitioners. Translation theory, as I see it, should try to verify any theoretical assumptions by contrasting them against the translator's own assumptions and his professional practice. There is much to be gained in this endeavour. More practice-oriented theories can be devised and, as a result, this can help to bridge the gap between mostly non-empirical based, speculative statements about the nature of translation and the reality of translators' actual performance.

Another important issue does not have simply theoretical impact but carries itself the recognition of the role of translators in society. Issues related to the role of translators in their activity have been recently discussed by such authors as Venuti (1995), Spivak (2000), and Niranjana (1992). These authors express their concerns as to the social role played by translators in society. Are translators cooperating in postcolonial and imperialistic agendas of the dominating social actors that happen to commission translations? This intriguing issue deserves a paper of its own and I

have dealt with it elsewhere[1]. For the time being and for the purposes of this paper it suffices to say that I would entertain the hypothesis that translators do play an active role in their professional activity to the extent that they apply, conscientiously or otherwise, their views on *1. What translation is/ should be, 2. What their role as translators is, and 3. How a translation should be done (translation strategies).*

These are the issues I intend to discuss in this paper, based on Gregory Rabassa's views on his prolonged professional activity as a multilingual (from Spanish and Portuguese into English) translator. Rabassa is unique not only because of the famous writers he translated (Gabriel García Márquez, Julio Cortázar, Miguel Angel Asturias, Clarice Lispector, Mario Vargas Llosa, Jorge Amado, etc.), but also because he wrote in several occasions about his translation experience and finally he collected his views on translation in his 2005 book *If this be treason. Translation and its dyscontents. A Memoir*. Rabassa's viewpoints will be illustrated whenever possible by using examples taken from his 1970 translation of *Cien años de soledad*, and other translations of this novel into French, German, Portuguese, and Russian.

The first part of this paper will focus on Rabassa's conception about the nature of translation; next his appraisal of the role of the translator will be discussed, and finally some of the stated translation strategies used by him will be illustrated. At the end of the paper some conclusions will be drawn.

Translation Definition

Unlike other translators of famous authors around the world, Gregory Rabassa did write about his views on translating. This is a unique opportunity to understand the translational ideas of one of the most outstanding contemporary English translators and to contrast them against the way they were put into practice in his English translation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude.* Some of the key aspects of Rabassa's translational views are already expressed in *The World of Translation,* published by the PEN American Center in 1971 (reprinted in 1987). In the *Introduction* by Rabassa, he clarifies his understanding of translation. He defines translation by resorting to the crucial translational concept of equivalence. For Rabassa, equivalence in translation is not to be confused with equivalence in mathematics:

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1   Readers interested in the ethical issues related to postcolonial and poststructuralist translations theories may read "Sobre la ética en la comunicación intercultural: el caso de la traducción" (Bolaños, 2009).

There seems to be a demand on the part of critics and readers for the version in another tongue to be the absolute equivalent of what it had been in the original language. This is patently impossible, no snowflakes are ever alike, nor does 2 ever equal 2 outside of a mathematical formula because the second 2 is, among other things, younger than its predecessor. Sticking with mathematical notions, what translation aims at is not the *equals* sign but, rather, the more useful one of approaches. So our criterion must state that the best translation is the closest approach. (ibid., p. ix)

Rabassa reiterates this same idea in his 1989 article "No Two Snowflakes Are Alike: Translation as Metaphor":

Wishful thinking and early training in arithmetic have convinced a majority of people that there are such things as equals in the world […] In this sense, then, a translation can never equal the original; it can approach it, and its quality can only be judged as to accuracy by how close it gets. (p. 1)

It is quite clear in Rabassa's statements that translational equivalence cannot be regarded in mathematical terms, a view I also share. Rabassa's stance is still valid and coincides with the linguistically oriented approaches to translation. Within this framework, a first aspect to bear in mind is that translation is a *linguistic* operation, as George Mounin and John C. Catford used to put it. This fact has also been highlighted by Russian translation scholars such as Federov, Shveitser, and Komissarov, among others, and by German authors from the Leipzig school, such as Kade and Jäger, as well as other modern representatives of this approach such as House, and Koller. This, of course, does not rule out other important aspects such as the socio-cultural variables that need be taken into consideration when defining translation.

Now, let's review some of the reasons why equivalence in translation is not a mathematical term. First and foremost, language is intrinsically linked to thought processes, seen from the perspective of the individual, and to social processes from a community viewpoint. There are some universals and some peculiarities in both processes. A linguistic universal would say that languages around the world serve their purpose very well in helping humans to apprehend reality through several thought categories. What part of reality is apprehended i.e. verbalized and categorized through language will depend on the surrounding reality itself and on

aspects of it which turn out to be essential to satisfy certain survival needs such as food and shelter and to perform social-cultural activities.

Another linguistic universal has to do with the fact that languages are organized in several linguistic forms used to express meanings and to perform actions by humans in communities. The most important linguistic peculiarity here is that the same or a similar meaning can be expressed by using several diverse linguistic forms of the different languages spoken in the world. Think, for instance, of a simple expression such as English 'I am cold'. In Spanish you ARE not cold, you HAVE cold: 'TENGO frío', as well as in French 'J'AI froid' and in Italian 'Io HO freddo', whereas in other languages such as German and Russian one IS neither cold nor HAS cold. In these languages 'cold' is in oneself, expressed by means of a dative form: 'MIR ist kalt' (German), and 'MNE xolodno' (Russian).

Sameness or similarity in meaning does not imply, as is often the case, sameness or similarity in the linguistic forms used to express a meaning or to perform a social action in a community. As is clear in the above examples, the meaning 'feeling of low temperature (cold) by speaker (first person singular)' can be expressed equivalently in different languages by keeping the core meaning and using the corresponding expressions, which are pragmatically (for the same/ similar communicative purpose) and eventually also semantically/ grammatically (same/ similar, meaning/ structure) equivalent.

Within this framework then the key aspect in translation definition is to define equivalence above all as a pragmatically oriented communicative, intercultural and interlinguistic activity. In other words, as long as the communicative purpose of the original is maintained equivalently in the target text, there is proper room for variation at the semantic and grammatical levels. This pre-eminence of the pragmatic nature of translation equivalence helps to understand the limitations of wrongly oriented theoretical approaches that still maintain, rather naively, that semantic meanings and grammatical structures should be kept identical in the translation process, thereby ignoring the complex relationship between thought and language, on the one hand, and the richness and diversity of expression means of the different languages of the world, on the other hand.

Let's finish this section by presenting a modern definition of translation according to recent developments in translation studies. I would say that translation can be defined as an intercultural and interlinguistic communicative activity that aims at *re-creating* (*re-writing*) the communicative purpose of the sender of the Source Language Text (SLT), by taking into account the instructions by the translation

commissioner and the intended effect on the audience of the Target Language Text (TLT), and by paying due attention to the contextual socio-cultural aspects surrounding the translation communicative event. When I say that translation is a *re-creation* of an original message expressed in SLT, it does not mean that this recreation is totally free and arbitrary. On the contrary, there are some guiding parameters to be respected in this intercultural and interlinguistic process if it is recognized and aptly labelled as a *translation.* They are the communicative purpose of the sender of SLT, the instructions by the translation commissioner, and the intended effect on the audience of TLT. One additional aspect that has a direct bearing on the translation process are the prevailing translation norms in the target community, which tell the translator how a translation should be performed e.g. foreignizing (maintaining words of the original to produce a flavour of foreignness in the translated text), or domesticating (adapting any foreign aspect of the original to words and expressions of the target language); including or excluding scatological or religious forms with a potential to offend the target audience, etc.[2]

The Role of the Translator

As far as the role of the translator is concerned, Rabassa (1971/1987) considers that the translator should possess some subjective knowledge he calls 'the ear in translating':

> These few items out of many possibilities give an indication of the importance of the ear in translating. There is argument for the fact that it may be even more important here than in original writing, for in translation the one doing the writing must be both listener and speaker, and he could go astray in either direction. He must have a good ear for what his author is saying and he must have a good ear for what he is saying himself. (ibid., p. 85)

Critical here is that Rabassa recognizes the importance of what the original author is saying. In our terms, this means that Rabassa focuses on the relevance of the communicative purpose expressed by the author of SLT. But this does not suffice. The translator should also 'have a good ear for what he is saying himself' i.e. he is not only speaker but also listener of the translated text. In this respect,

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2   I have discussed elsewhere examples of how translation norms were applied in the translation of Gabriel García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* (Bolaños 2010).

the translator emulates the intended effect the translation is likely to have on the target audience.

As to the instructions by the translation commissioner, they can vary from none to very specific e.g. domesticate any foreign proper name in the original (instead of using Mark in the Spanish translation, use Marcos). In the translation of *Cien años de soledad* into English, Rabassa seems to have received almost no instructions as to how he should translate. The only occasion when he had to interfere in the original text, was when the publisher had him concoct a family tree of the Buendía family that was to be added at the beginning of the English translation of the novel. At first Rabassa thought it was a good idea, but then he changed his mind:

> Later on, after the book had come out, I had second thoughts. If García Márquez had wanted such a table he would have put one in the first Spanish edition. I came to think that perhaps confusion (and fusion) was meant to be part of the novel, showing how all members of our species look to apes or horses, who would have trouble distinguishing among yahoos. (Rabassa 2005, p. 100)

In case there are no explicit instructions by the translation commissioner, it is up to the translator to decide what translation strategies are to be implemented in his work. This is a huge responsibility that is reflected on the different translation choices made by the translator throughout the target text. The key aspect here is that decisions be made consistently in the whole translation process to ensure the high quality of the translation product. An opposite view to this is held by representatives of the so called 'skopos theory' (e.g. Vermeer 2000), who consider that the key factor in translation is not the communicative purpose of the author of STL, but the commissioner's instructions as to how the translation is to be performed and what textual transformation is called for. Obviously, within this perspective the textual transformation may be a translation or any other textual product such as an adaptation or a parody. The end justifies the means. I am not concerned here with any possible textual transformation of an original text as representatives of the skopos theory would like translation studies to be involved with, but only with what can be called translation proper.

This critical issue of the translator's stance towards the original author is also discussed by Rabassa (1971/1987). The translator is not free to do whatever he likes. He is a prisoner:

And in keeping with the image, he must always be aware that in a very deep sense he is the prisoner of his author, convicted on any number of counts. But at the same time he must be a model prisoner, a trusty, willingly at the mercy of the text he is rendering and of all the turns it might take. If not, he had best return to the original urge of writing something of his own inspiration and bust out. (ibid., p. 81)

Two things are to be noted here. First, the translator's task is to re-create the original in the target language within the boundaries of what the original text actually says. In this sense, as Rabassa points out, the translator should re-write faithfully what is in SLT. Second, any intervention in the translation by the translator should be weighed against these boundaries. In other words, the translator should refrain from modifying *arbitrarily* the contents of the original, its message i.e. its communicative purpose because he is dealing with a *translation*, and not with the writing of an *original work* of his own.

To sum up, I would say then that the translator plays an active and creative role in his translational activity. However, he also has to abide by some boundaries given by 1) what is said in the original, 2) the intended effect on the target audience, 3) the instructions of the translation commissioner and 4) the translation norms in effect in the target community.

Translation Strategies

Rabassa's first work for a commercial publisher was the translation of *Rayuela* (*Hopscotch*) by Argentinian author Julio Cortázar: "When the translation came out it got a positive review on the front page of *The New York Times Book Review* by Donald Keene" (Rabassa 2005:28). It was then that Rabassa put into practice his translation method: "I translated the book as I read it for the first time […] This would become my usual technique with subsequent books" (ibid., p. 27).

'Surgical' reading

As can be seen in the above quotation, the first translation strategy Rabassa mentions is to translate as one reads for the first time. This strategy would seem to contradict initial indications that appear in translation manuals for beginners. It is generally assumed that translation should have some kind of preparatory stage where the totality or at least the first paragraphs of the original are read. This is done in order to get a 'feeling' of the text to be translated or to pinpoint any technical, unknown or difficult words to translate. How can then Rabassa's strategy

be explained? This has to do with the specifics of reading a text for translation purposes. Whenever one reads a text it is done mainly for informative or aesthetic purposes, whereas when one reads a text for translational purposes a special type of reading is performed where an additional purpose is added: the translator attempts to find out how the text has been constructed. He is interested in finding out what lexical and syntactic choices have been made by the author of the original text and what specific communicative intention he had in mind at the time of writing. I have called this special type of reading approach for translation purposes 'surgical reading' (Bolaños, 2003).

Pragmatic Approach: Original's Pre-eminence

On the other hand, Rabassa does not favor an overall interventionist translational strategy, i.e. the translator is to respect what the original author has said in the original. In case the translator wants to express his own view, he should write his own text. However, respect of the original author's ideas does not mean literalness. Rabassa (1989) expresses a view I would call 'pragmatic' which intends to respect the original author's intention. For instance, commenting on the translation of Shakespeare's works, he claims that:

> It is obvious that the translator will have to take liberties with the text in order to preserve the spirit of what Shakespeare 'wants to say' […] Therefore, when we translate a curse, we must look to the feelings behind it and not the word that go to make it up. (ibid., p. 3)

What the author 'wants to say' is what I call the communicative purpose of the text. The guiding parameter to decode the original is a good understanding of its pragmatic dimension. Any required textual adjustments must be made at the lexical and syntactic levels taking into account the expressive means of the target language. The decoding of the communicative purpose of the original is twofold. On the one hand, an overall communicative purpose can be identified according to the text type. For instance, in the case of literary texts one tends to assume that they fulfil an aesthetic communicative purpose that intends to move the target audience and make it experience the world depicted in SLT. On the other hand, this overall communicative purpose can be achieved only as the translator advances in his work of decoding the sequence of communicative purposes embedded in the original text.

Problem solving

Problem solving is a general translation strategy that needs to be developed by translators as they advance in their professional activity. The competence to solve problems ensures that a translator can do his work as efficiently and as accurately as possible. A series of steps can be identified in translational problem solving.

The first step is to be able to state what the problem is about. As far as the translation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is concerned, Rabassa (2005, p. 96) mentions some of the problems he faced and how he solved them. One of the first problems Rabassa identified had to do with the translation of the novel's title: "A simple declarative title like *Cien años de soledad* should offer no trouble whatever […]"

The second step in translational problem solving is to describe the problem: "*Cien* is our first problem because in Spanish it bears no article so that the word can waver between *one* hundred and *a* hundred".

The third step consists in analyzing the different possible translational choices:

> There is no hint in the title as to which it should be in English. We are faced with the same interpretive dilemma as the translator of the *Aeneid* as he starts off with *Arma virumque cano. A* man or *the* man? By Latin standards it could be (and is) both. Virgil didn't have to decide but his translator must. In my case I viewed the extent of time involved as something quite specific, as in a prophecy, something definite, a countdown, not just any old hundred years. What is troublesome, of course, is that both interpretations are conjoined subconsciously for the reader of the Spanish, just as in the Latin example they are for the Romans. But an English speaker reading Spanish will have to decide subconsciously which meaning is there. They cannot be melded in his mind.

The final step is the present a solution: "I was convinced and I still am that Gabo meant it in the sense of *one* as this meaning is closer to the feel of the novel. Also, there was no cavil on his part over the title in English" (ibid., p. 96).

It is clear that Rabassa, in discussing the translational problem posed by the title, weighed up not only the original author's intent but also the TL readers' effect. This can also be seen in his analysis of another word of the title that turned out to be troublesome: 'soledad':

The word in Spanish has the meaning of its English cognate but it also carries that of *loneliness*, bearing both the positive and the negative feelings associated with being alone. I went for *solitude* because it's a touch more inclusive and can also carry the germ of *loneliness* if pushed along those lines, as Billie Holiday so eloquently demonstrated. (ibid.)

As regards the translation of the novel's opening line, which plays such a crucial role in the development of the narrative, Rabassa also reflects on how he translated some key words: *"Había de* could have been *would* (How much wood can a wood-chuck chuck?), but I think *was to* has a better feeling to it. I chose *remember* over *recall* because I feel that it conveys a deeper memory. *Remote* might have aroused thoughts of such inappropriate things as remote control and robots. Also I liked *distant* when used with time" (ibid., p. 97). Finally, as to the translation of the original term 'conocer el hielo', Rabassa does a semantic analysis:

García Márquez has used the Spanish word ['conocer'] here with all its connotations. But *to know ice* just won't do in English. It implies, 'How do you do ice?' It could be 'to experience ice.' The first is foolish, the second is silly. When you get to know something for the first time, you've discovered it. Only after that can you come to come to know it in the full sense. (ibid., p. 98)

Foreignizing

An immediate consequence of Rabassa's stance towards respecting the original and its comprehensibility for the TL readership is his advocacy of using what we would call a foreignizing strategy when translating apparently 'untranslatable' terms, i.e. terms which are clearly rooted in the SL socio-cultural context. For instance, in discussing the translation of Portuguese words 'jeito' and 'saudade', Rabassa considers that

These words are really only impossible when the concept behind them is hard to find in the second language and this is really what the translator is up against most of the time. Such words can be left in the original, thus giving the translation a deliciously exotic flavor which it should not have; or a footnote can be added. (Rabassa 1971/ 1987, p. 84)

As regards the translation of names in general, Rabassa (2005) thinks that:

> By not translating names we can at least maintain a certain aura of the original tongue and its culture […] In my own translations I prefer keeping names in the original while sometimes translating nicknames if they carry some descriptive value and can be translated without much mischief to the tone of the story. (ibid, p. 14)

Let's see an example of this foreignizing strategy applied to the translation of the proper name ***Carnicero*** (in italics and in bold type for comparison reasons) in the novel *Cien años de soledad*:

(1) **S.** p. 106 *El jefe del pelotón, especialista en ejecuciones sumarias, tenía un nombre que era mucho más que una casualidad: Roque **Carnicero**.*

E. p. 130 The leader of the squad, a specialist in summary executions, had a name that had more about than chance: Captain Roque ***Carnicero***, which meant butcher.

F. p. 131 Le chef du détachement, specialisé dans des exécutions sommaires, portait un nom qui était bien plus qu'un simple hasard: capitaine Roque ***Carnicero.***

G. p. 140 Der auf Blitzerschießungen spezialisierte Chef des Kommandos hatte einen Namen, der nicht zufällig war: er hieß Hauptmann Roque ***Fleischer***.

P. p. 118 O chefe do pelotão, especialista em execuções sumárias, tinha um nome que era muito mais do que uma coincidência: Capitão Roque ***Carnicero.***

R. p. 130 Командовать расстрелом назначили капитана, которого отнюдь не случайно звали Роке ***Мясник*** – он был специалистом по массовым казням.

In this case Rabassa applied a foreignizing strategy by keeping the term *Carnicero* in English, but added an explanation 'which meant butcher', intended for readers not familiar with the Spanish language. In French the captain's last name was not translated and, as its meaning is not transparent, an explanatory footnote was added (*carnicero: boucher*). Meyer-Clason solved the problem in the German translation by translating the captain's last name into its German equivalent *Fleischer*. A similar solution was also provided by the Russian translators by translating the captain's last name *Мясник.* The Portuguese translator had no inconvenience in leaving the captain's last name in Spanish as it is phonetically and graphemically very close to the Portuguese word for 'butcher' (*carniceiro*).

Another interesting case of the application of the foreignizing strategy has to do with the conservation of the names of the novel's main characters in the

original spelling /albeit with minor adaptations/ in all the translations. This use of the original names by the translators allows for a clear evocation of the novel's Spanish origin:

(2) **S**. p. 8 *Cuando **José Arcadio Buendía** y los cuatro hombres de su expedición lograron desarticular la armadura, encontraron dentro un esqueleto calcificado que llevaba colgado en el cuello un relicario de cobre con un rizo de mujer.*

E. p. 2 When ***José Arcadio Buendía*** and the four men of his expedition managed to take the armor apart, they found inside a calcified skeleton with a copper locket containing a woman's hair around its neck.

G. p. 8 Als es ***José Arcadio Buendia*** und den vier Männern seiner Expedition gelang, die Rüstung auseinanderzunehmen, fanden sie darin ein verkalktes Gerippe, das ein kupfernes Medaillon mit der Haarlocke einer Frau darin um den Hals trug.

F. p. 10 Quand ***José Arcadio Buendia*** et les quatre hommes de son expédition parvinrent à désarticuler l'armure, ils trouvèrent à l'intérieur un squelette calcifié qui portait à son cou un médaillon en cuivre contenant une mèche de cheveux de femme.

P. p. 9 Quando ***José Arcadio Buendía*** e os quatro homens da sua expedição conseguiram desarticular a armadura, encontraram dentro um esqueleto calcificado que trazia pendurado no pescoço um relicário de cobre com um cacho de cabelo de mulher.

R. p. 8 Когда ***Хосе Аркадио Буэндиа*** и четыре односельчанина, сопровождавшие его в походах, разобрали доспехи на части, они нашли внутри обызвествленный скелет, на шее у него был медный медальон с прядкой женских волос.

In the next example, Rabassa and Mayer-Clason, the German translator, maintained the original word *reales*, which evokes the Spanish historical heritage depicted in some parts of the novel. The other translators adapted the word to the corresponding grammatical plural forms in their languages:

(3) **S.** p. 8 *Mediante el pago de cinco **reales**, la gente se asomaba al catalejo y veía a la gitana al alcance de su mano.*

E. p. 2 For the price of five ***reales***, people could look into the telescope and see the gypsy woman an arm's length away.

G. p. 8 Gegen Zahlung von fünf ***Reales*** preßten die Leute das Auge an das Fernrohr und sahen die Zigeunerin zum Greifen nahe.

F. p. 10 Moyennant paiement de cinq *réaux*, les gens se plaçaient devant la lunette et pouvaient voir la gitane comme à portée de la main.

P. p. 9 Mediante o pagamento de cinco *reais*, o povo se aproximava do óculo e via a cigana ao alcance da mão.

R. p. 9 Уплатив пять **реалов**, вы заглядывали в трубу и видели эту цыганку так близко, словно до нее было рукой подать.

This foreignizing strategy is more difficult to maintain at the syntactic stylistic level. In Rabassa's words:

> Unfortunately, there is no way we can preserve the grammatical structure of the original in a translation to show that this book was really written in Spanish or in Portuguese or whatever. To do so would be to produce some kind of gibberish that would be unintelligible to both sides. At the same time, however, there ought to be some kind of under-current, some background hum that lets the English speaking reader feel that this is not an English book. (Rabassa, 1991, p. 42)

Fictionalizing

This strategy has to do with the extent to which the stylistic peculiarities of the original have been respected and reproduced by the translators using the different stylistic resources available in their target languages. The most important stylistic phenomena that could be perceived in the comparison between the original and the target languages texts is the use of what I have called 'fictionalizing strategy' i.e. stylistic resources thought to be typical of a 'literary' text and therefore recreated by the translators even if they did not appear in the original.

In other words, the fictionalizing strategy consists in the use of a more 'literary or 'colorful expression' in the Target Language Text that does not appear with that stylistic mark in the original. This may correspond to a translational norm, according to which translators consider that the translation of a literary text should result in an 'actual' literary text.

As Rabassa (2005, p. 5) puts it, "In translation as in writing, which it is as we have said, the proper word is better than a less proper but standard one", or:

> We are faced, then, still with the intangibles of translation; what makes one version better than another after the accuracy of both has been established? It can only

be a felicitous choice of words and structure which not only conveys the meaning in English but enhances it by preserving the tone of the original. (Rabassa 1971/ 1987, p. 85)

In fact, Rabassa did 'enhance' the Spanish original of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by using an overall stylistic strategy. Whenever it was possible to render a Spanish word by two choices, either a word of Anglo-Saxon origin or another one from a Latin root, Rabassa tended to choose always the lexical entry from Latin origin, and in case there is another choice also from Latin origin that is not similar to the Spanish original, he would generally prefer the similar one. The immediate effect of these lexical choices by Rabassa is that the English text reads with a higher stylistic register when compared with the original Spanish because, generally speaking, when a word from Latin origin is used in English it automatically evokes a high register of language use, different from the original 'plain' Spanish used by García Márquez' style that is characterized by the choice of words of general Spanish with only a few instances of typical Colombian lexical entries. This confirms the view we expressed above that Rabassa's overall translation strategy approached him very closely to a translation that respects the original's content at all times, but that when it comes to stylistic matters, it displays a clear foreignizing strategy, by using *calques*, that attempts to show English readers that the original was written in Spanish. Let's see some examples:

(4) **S.** p. 9 *Cuando se hizo experto en el uso y manejo de sus instrumentos, tuvo una **noción** del espacio que le permitió **navegar** por mares incógnitos, visitar **territorios** deshabitados y trabar relación con seres **espléndidos**, sin necesidad de abandonar su gabinete.*
E. p. 4 When he became an expert in the use and manipulation of his instruments, he conceived a **notion** of space that allowed him to **navigate** across unknown seas, to visit uninhabited **territories**, and to establish relations with **splendid** beings without having to leave his study.
G. p. 10 Als er mit seinen Instrumenten leidlich umzugehen verstand, kannte er sich so weit im Weltall aus, daß er imstande war, unbekannte Meere zu durchschiffen, unbewohnte Gebiete zu besuchen und Beziehungen zu herrlichen Wesen anzuknüpfen, ohne dafür sein Arbeitszimmer verlassen zu müssen.
F. p. 12 Quand il se fut rompu à l'usage et au maniement de ses instruments, il acquit une certaine connaissance de l'espace qui lui permit de naviguer sur des mers inconnues, d'explorer des territoires vierges, de rencontrer des créatures extraordinaires, sans même avoir besoin de quitter son cabinet de travail.

P. p. 10 Quando se tornou perito no uso e manejo dos seus instrumentos, passou a ter uma noção do espaço que lhe permitiu navegar por mares incógnitos, visitar territórios desabitados e travar relações com seres esplêndidos, sem necessidade de abandonar o seu gabinete.

R. p. 10 Когда он в совершенстве освоил свои приборы, ему удалось составить себе такое точное понятие о пространстве, что отныне он мог плавать по незнакомым морям, исследовать необитаемые земли и завязывать отношения с чудесными существами, не выходя из стен своего кабинета.

(5) **S.** p. 9 *Estuvo varios días como hechizado, repitiéndose a sí mismo en voz baja un sartal de asombrosas **conjeturas**, sin **dar crédito a** su propio entendimiento.*

E. p. 4 He spent several days as if he were bewitched, softly repeating to himself a string of fearful ***conjectures*** without ***giving credit to*** his own understanding.

G. p. 11 Einige Tage war er wie verhext und murmelte unablässig eine Litanei erstaunlicher Mutmaßungen vor sich hin, ohne der eigenen Einsicht Glauben zu schenken.

F. p. 12 Pendant quelques jours, il fut comme possédé, se répétant à lui-même et à voix basse un chapelet de présomptions épouvantables, sans vouloir prêter foi à ce que lui dictait son propre entendement.

P. p. 10 Esteve vários dias como que enfeitiçado, repetindo para si mesmo em voz baixa um rosário de assombrosas conjeturas, sem dar crédito ao próprio entendimento.

R. p. 11 Несколько дней он был словно околдованный, все бубнил что-то вполголоса, перебирая разные предположения, удивляясь и сам себе не веря.

These two examples clearly illustrate the overall stylistic strategy used by Rabassa that consists in calquing the original Spanish term whenever it was possible: 'notion' ('noción'), 'navigate' ('navegar'), 'territories' ('territorios'), 'splendid' ('espléndido') (p. 81); 'conjectures' ('conjeturas'), 'giving credit to' ('dar crédito a'), instead of using alternative possibilities: 'idea', 'sail', 'regions', 'wonderful', and 'speculations' and 'believing', respectively.

Semantic Networking

At the semantic level, it is crucial to maintain the same and/or culturally equivalent meaning relationships in the translated texts. This is achieved basically at the lexical level in as far as semantically related terms belonging to one single

semantic network or field are recreated in the Target Language Text. Rabassa paid special attention to this translational aspect. For instance, in the following example he maintains the religious allusion related to the origin of man by God, metaphorically transferred to the building of the houses in Macondo:

(6) **S.** p. 13 *Puesto que su casa fue desde el primer momento la mejor de la aldea, las otras fueron arregladas **a su imagen y semejanza**.*

E. p. 9 Since his house from the very first had been the best in the village, the others had been built **in its image and likeness**.

G. p. 15 Da sein Haus von Anfang an das beste des Orts war, wurden die anderen **nach seinem Vorbild** gebaut.

F. p. 16 Comme, depuis le premier jour, sa maison était la plus belle du village, on fit les autres **à son image**.

P. p. 14 Posto que a sua casa fosse desde o primeiro momento a melhor da aldeia, as outras foram arranjadas **à sua imagem e semelhança**.

R. p. 15 Дом семьи Буэндиа был самым лучшим в деревне, и другие старались устроить свое жилье **по его образу и подобию**.

Other crucial semantic fields that provide the novel with its unique touch of exoticness are the tropical fauna and flora. The fauna used in the original and recreated in the translation into English and into the other languages help to portray a place inhabited by typical birds of Colombian rain forest regions:

(7) **S.** p. 13 *José Arcadio Buendía construyó trampas y jaulas. En poco tiempo llenó de **turpiales, canarios, azulejos y petirrojos** no sólo la propia casa, sino todas las de la aldea.*

E. p. 10 José Arcadio Buendía had built traps and cages. In a short time he filled not only his own house but all of those in the village with **troupials, canaries, bee eaters, and redbreasts**.

G. p. 16 (...) baute José Arcadio Buendia Fallen und Käfige. In kurzer Zeit füllte er nicht nur sein eigenes Haus, sondern auch alle anderen des Dorfes mit **Turpialen, Kanarienvögeln, Meisen und Rotkehlchen**.

F. p. 17 José Arcadio Buendia avait construit des pièges et des cages, et en peu de temps il remplit de **troupiales, de canaris, de mésanges bleues et de rouges-gorges** non seulement sa propre maison, mais toutes celles du village.

P. p. 15 José Arcadio Buendía construíra alçapões e gaiolas. Em pouco tempo, encheu de *corrupiões, canários, azulões e pintassilgos* não só a própria casa, mas todas as da aldeia.

R. p. 16 Хосе Аркадио Буэндиа начал мастерить силки и клетки. Вскоре он наполнил *иволгами, канарейками, пчелоядами и малиновками* не только свой собственный, но и все остальные дома селения.

The Colombian flora used in the novel helps to depict some of the common plants used for feeding purposes in the Caribbean region where most of the novel's plot takes place:

(8) **S.** p. 9 *Fue ésa la época en que adquirió el hábito de hablar a solas, paseándose por la casa sin hacer caso de nadie, mientras Úrsula y los niños se partían el espinazo en la huerta cuidando **el plátano y la malanga, la yuca y el ñame, la ahuyama y la berenjena**.*

E. p. 4 That was the period in which he acquired the habit of talking to himself, of walking through the house without paying attention to anyone, as Ursula and the children broke their backs in the garden, growing ***banana and caladium, cassava and yams, ahuyama roots and eggplants***.

G. p. 10 In dieser Zeit gewöhnte er sich daran, Selbstgespräche zu führen, und, niemandes achtend, durchs Haus zu streifen, während Ursula und die Kinder sich im Gemüsegarten bei der Pflege der ***Bananenstauden und der Malanga, der jukka- und Yamswurzel, der Ahuyama und Auberginen*** fast das Kreuz brachen.

F. p. 12 Ce fut vers cette époque qu'il prit l'habitude de parler tout seul, arpentant la maison sans prêter attention à personne, tandis qu'Ursula et les enfants courbaient l'échine, dans le potager, à faire pousser ***les bananes et la malanga, le manioc et l'igname, la citrouille et l'aubergine***.

P. p. 10 Foi por essa ocasião que adquiriu o hábito de falar sozinho, passeando pela casa sem se incomodar com ninguém, enquanto Úrsula e as crianças suavam em bicas na horta cuidando da ***banana e da taioba, do aipim e do inhame, do cará e da berinjela***.

R. p. 11 Именно в эту пору у него появилась привычка говорить с самим собой, разгуливая по дому и ни на кого не обращая внимания, в то время как Урсула и дети гнули спины в поле, ухаживая за ***бананами и малангой, маниокой и ямсом, ауйямой и баклажанами***.

Conclusions

In this paper I have shown that Rabassa's views on the nature and definition of translation are still valid. The concept of equivalence as the defining feature of translation cannot be approached in mathematical terms. I would say that it should be regarded from a modern translational/scientific approach. This means that it should be recognized that linguistic universals help to relate language to thought processes by verbalizing and categorizing the surrounding reality. In this same sense, it should also be recognized that the same or similar meanings can be expressed by using different linguistic means available in typologically different languages around the world.

The key aspect to bear in mind here is that translation is an equivalent i.e. pragmatically oriented communicative and interlinguistic activity that aims at recreating the communicative purpose of the author of the Source Language Text by taking into account the instructions by the translation commissioner and the intended effect on the audience of the Target Language Text and by paying attention to the translational norms valid in the sociocultural sorrounding of the target community.

As to the role of the translator, in Rabassa's approach the translator should 'have an ear in translating' that I understand as his competence to emulate the intended effect the translation is likely to have on the target audience. Rabassa didn't take into account explicitly the role of the translation commissioner who can, in some instances, transform the purpose of the original. This is a notion representatives of the skopos theory would support but which I consider leads to the production of other texts not to be recognized as translations proper because the communicative purpose of the original has been completely obliterated and the original is not a source text but simply becomes a motif to produce a brand new text. Special recognition should be given to Rabassa's stance that the translator has to always respect the original and in case he is interested in expressing his own views, he should write a text of his own. Many poststructuralist and postcolonial authors would disagree with Rabassa on this idea, as they would like the translator to intervene and interfere in the translated text as much as possible.

As regards the translation strategies, Rabassa is able to perform a careful and thorough reading of the part of the original is going to translate to the extent that he can start translating immediately. This thick reading I label 'surgical' as it goes beyond traditional and superficial readings and attempts to dismantle the original to see how it has been built. Likewise, the original's communicative purpose, what the author wants to say, should always be the key translating parameter.

Translating is also undertaken by Rabassa as a problem solving activity. He illustrated the application of this strategy in some translation problems of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Rabassa also resorted to foreignizing not as a general but as a punctual translation strategy to be used whenever the original's transparency may help to reproduce a specific effect on the target language audience. Fictionalizing also turned out to be a special strategy Rabassa used in the translation of *Cien años de soledad*. It helps to 'latinize' the English translation, thereby raising its stylistic level compared to the original. This I consider an interventionist strategy by Rabassa as he intended to make the translation even more 'literary' than the original. Finally, semantic networking was used extensively and successfully by Rabassa and the other translators to ensure the coherence and consistency of the overall translation.

All in all, I can say that although Gregory Rabassa is not a translation scholar, his views, once 'translated' into technical jargon, are valuable, valid and relevant in modern translation studies. They also help to better understand how he translated so many Latin American authors and why his translations are appraised as successful model translations.

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