

- **NEW VOICES IN TRANSLATION STUDIES II (14.fev.2019)**

Good afternoon to you all, thank you for being here.

The study I am about to present is part of my PhD thesis in news translation. Therefore, it is an ongoing research and I am open for suggestions or remarks that you might have. I apologize in advance for presenting the parameters of the content analysis in Portuguese. I do so to prevent getting mistaken when adding further case studies.

- The fundamental aim of this research was to identify forms of representation of cultural, ideological changes in the Portuguese press, in articles produced by translation procedures – specifically, in news pieces about the speeches delivered by the Popes before the United Nations General Assembly, between 1965 to 2015.
- More precisely, I wanted to see in what sense, throughout the last fifty years (approximately), the **titles, names and expressions** that have been presented in such articles in reference to the Popes manifested (or not) a **tendency to lose formality**.
- I would argue that such a tendency would express:
  - 1. a **decrease** in the **importance** of the Church as one of the traditional institutions, and on its **authority** in terms of guiding, orienting social life
  - AND 2. an **increase** in the devotional and emotional **distance** from the part of the social agents towards the pontiffs, as well as in the **individualization** of the discourse.
- In what concerns the theoretical background, the main references will be **Esperança Bielsa and Susan Bassnett**, who consider that, in news translation, foreign events which occurred in foreign countries and languages are globally transmitted by processes of localisation to each target context.
- This means that – and I quote – “[t]he end product that is read or seen has been **shaped** for its receivers, **mediated** through several sets of filters that are determined by time or space constraints, editorial policy, cultural acceptability” (2009: 117) – that is, by **ideological** issues.
- **Using such a statement as basis...**
- (1<sup>st</sup>) *Translation* will be understood as a process of **rewriting** – since shaping implies that contents are necessarily different once translated and delivered in the target context;
- (2<sup>nd</sup>) We will need to consider the **agenda-setting** function of the media (McCombs and Shaw, 1972), for the rewriting derives from choices made in the newsroom (the filters).
- (3<sup>rd</sup>) In the end, the **semiotic framework** produced by the media will determine what readers learn and get to know about the events, as well as how much importance they should attach to the issues – thus, the editorial options will be considered as an exercise of **agency** from the part of news translators
- (4<sup>th</sup>) AND given that such a framework result from specific **worldviews**, the understanding of **ideology** as a set of moral values that are assimilated and shared by all members of a sociocultural community and materialised in social practices (as, for example, in news pieces) will be crucial – and, at this respect, I will follow Louis Althusser’s (1970) definition of ideology.
- In what concerns methodology, José Lambert and Hendrik van Gorp’s systemic and systematic model proved very useful for this project, mainly because it allows looking to translation processes in a broader spectrum, crossing different (sub)systems – as it often happens in news translation.
- In this case, I was interested in analysing how the Popes once in the United Nations headquarters (the source system) were represented in news articles published by two Portuguese newspapers (in the target system): *Diário de Notícias* (which, from now on, will be referred to as DN) and *Jornal de Notícias* (as JN). Therefore, the direction of the analysis will be **T2 (and T2’) – A1**, CONSIDERING DN as the main

target agent (in the upper line) AND THEN replicating the analysis to JN (in the bottom line), according to the systematic principle of this model.

- (Due to time constraints, in this paper, this principle will be restricted to the target system)
- (attention also to the fact that both newspapers will accumulate play the role of **receivers in the source system** and of **authors in the target one**)
  
- **Before presenting the results of my investigation, I shall explain how I organized the study:**
- Focusing on the first article published in each newspaper, about each of the official papal speeches, I divided all the references to the Popes in a scale, varying from more formal titles to more informal names and expressions.
- The **first category** is composed by **religious official conventions** – such as:
  - **Santo Padre** (Holy Father)/ **Sumo Pontífice** (Supreme Pontiff – of the Catholic Church)/ **Soberano Pontífice** (Sovereign Pontiff)/ **Sua Santidade** (His Holiness)
  - **AND Biblical references**
- In terms of use, they are all associated to a more formal register and manifest high respect and esteem for the pontiffs, in an allusion to the *holiness* of their role – that is, the fact that they are servants of God and the representatives of Christ on Earth (so it is implicit a sense of devotion).
  
- In the **second category**, we also find official titles, but not solemn as the former – for instance:
  - **Papa** (Pope)/ **Pontífice** (Pontiff)/ **Pontifical name (abbreviated/ complete):** Paulo VI, Bento XVI.../ Papa Paulo VI, Papa Bento XVI...**AND - Specific references to the Popes**
- All of them represent titles which are commonly used by people in general to refer to the pontiffs
- MANIFESTING respect for religious terminology, AS WELL AS an emotional proximity with the pontiffs, portraying them not as much as “divine” successors of St. Peter, but as *spiritual guides* – a notion which is best represented by the word “Papa”, meaning “father”
  
- The **third and fourth categories** are considered informal, mainly because they essentially represent common ways of using the Portuguese language to refer to the Popes:
- In the **third category** we find an identification of the pontiffs by their religious or political role as in
  - **Chefe da Igreja Católica** (Head of the Catholic Church)/ **Líder dos católicos** (leader of the Catholics)/ OR **Chefe do Estado do Vaticano** (Head of the Vatican State);
- WHILE the **fourth** corresponds to most informal references, such as the Popes’ **secular (civil) names** and/or their **nationalities**.
- In both, the names and the expressions belong to common register AND NOT EVEN those of category 3 respect the terminological conventions, since they are missing an adjective that would allude to the religious, spiritual character of the subjects – as in “Sumo Pontífice da Igreja Universal”/ “Soberano do Estado da Cidade do Vaticano” OR “Bispo de Roma”, as determined by the Holy See in the Pontifical Yearbook (2013).
- These names also suggest an emotional distance towards the Popes, prevailing a notion of them as *persons* – either with a *higher religious/ political status* in the society (as in category 3) or treated as *common citizens* (in category 4).

**With these criteria in mind, we may now move on to the content analysis:**

- We see that, in **1965**, in the process of translating **Pope Paul VI's messages** as delivered before the United Nations General Assembly, both DN and JN mainly presented him to readers as “Papa” (“Pope”), as well as by the abbreviated form of his pontifical name (“Paulo VI” – “Paul VI”) – two editorial options that belong to the second category (that is: official, yet -solemn titles).
- The other forms of treatment most used belonged to the first category (conventional, highly formal titles), while no informal name or expression was used in the journalists’ texts.
  
- We find a very similar scenario in **1979**, during **Pope John Paul II's** first visit to the UN: the prevalence of “Papa”, followed by the abbreviated pontifical name “João Paulo II”, and still any of the informal options.
- In what concerns the most formal titles, it is already perceivable a different use of them, with not so marked preferences as in 1965.
- YET, they did not cause any relevant changes AND SO we may say that during the post-Second World War II period and the Cold War, the Popes were portrayed in the Portuguese press as respectful, esteemed members of the society, which could be associated to a strong importance of the Church as a sociocultural institution.
  
- By the end of the millennium, HOWEVER, when Pope John Paul II returned to the UN, in 1995, there are some changes which deserve attention:
- Not only we notice less diversity in the editorial options in the whole,
- But also an inversion in the preferences of both newspapers: “João Paulo II” became more prevalent than “Papa” – which in a way, moves from an institutional portrayal to a more personal, individual representation of the Pope, attributing the translated quotations to his own worldviews and not exactly to the Holy See.
- INDEED, even though the terms from category two continue to be the most used,
- the tendency for disregarding the more formal titles (of category 1) – which had only slightly starting to show in 1979 – is ACCENTUATED, with the loss of several official titles, such as:
  - Santo Padre (“Holy Father”)
  - Soberano Pontífice (“Sovereign Pontiff”)
  - Sua Santidade (“His Holiness”)
  - AND Biblical references and expressions specific to the Popes (as “Papa peregrino”, very particular to Paul VI)
  
- NONETHELESS, informal references were only found in...
  
- 2008, in the translated news pieces about **Pope Benedict XVI's** speech, when both expressions referring to his religious and political role, and his secular name were used as much as (and, in some cases, even more than) the formal titles – mainly those from category one, which were practically inexistent.
- This tendency added to the preference for the abbreviated form of the pontifical name (“Bento XVI”) rather than “Papa”, reinforces the idea of a turn towards a more individualized representation of the pontiff.
  
- This is all the more inferable in 2015, regarding **Pope Francis' speech**, when the informal options were even more taken by the editors, including naming the Pope by its nationality (as did DN, by “o argentino”).
- In the whole, we notice a great contrast with the first pontificates, not being found any reference to the holy character of the source agent.
- AND there is also another aspect in this pontificate that, in my opinion, needs to be taken into account, for it may change the results of this analysis: “Francis” is the only pontifical name that does not have a Roman number. That makes me wonder: has it actually been considered as an official title OR could it be that it was taken by the editors as a civil name – and, actually, a very common one in Portugal?

- In that case, the majority of the terms used in the newspapers would be informal – and so the idea of a progressive informalization in the treatment of the Popes throughout the years would be reinforced.
  - **Looking back to the initial question and hypothesis, these results lead me to infer that:**
  - 1. In the last fifty years, there was a progressive decrease in the representation of the Popes as source agents by formal, conventional terms, WHICH lead to a loss of the divine, holy character of the pontiffs;
  - 2. From 1995 on, editors manifested a preference for more personal, less institutional titles;
  - AND 3. Since the beginning of this millennium, common expressions and civil names became part of the lexical options.
  - ALL THIS SUGGESTS (CONFIRMS):
  - A progressive emotional distance from the target agents’ part towards the Popes;
  - TOGETHER with a sense of vulnerability of the pontiffs, given that the translated contents became more and more attributed to their own voice, turning them more exposed and easily criticized;
  - ALSO, and especially because of the ordinary nature of the name “Francis”, it is worth considering whether the familiarity associated to the pontifical non-solemn titles is ACTUALLY being used in the journalistic discourse in a **semiotic framework** that no longer intends to portray the Popes as people divinely chosen and to whom it was attributed a holy role, but almost as “common” members of the society – even though having a higher status.
  - Now: does this tendency towards non-institutional and emotionally distant representation mean that our society is becoming more informal?
  - I believe that **it is not possible to make such a statement based on this study only**, since many other analysis would have to be pursued for one to arrive to such a conclusion.
  - **HOWEVER, I believe that:**
  - ALTHOUGH it is unquestionable that the media CONSTRUCT the reality by their agenda, given that WHAT they choose to present readers and HOW they present it definitely determines WHAT people, in the target context, will know about foreign events AND the persons involved as well (as in this case);
  - IT IS ALSO TRUE that the **proximity law** IS one of the main guiding principles of journalistic practices – and that is related, among other factors, with a need to present CURRENT FACTS in CURRENT DISCOURSES.
- Therefore, I consider that the rewriting processes pursued in the press **DO MIRROR** the reality – and that is why we may consider that these results serve, at least, to show that the Catholic leaders are no longer treated as holy (therefore, special) members of the society as they were in the past AND that the authoritarian, devotional character of the Church has been showing some signs of change towards a more “mundane” portrayal throughout the last fifty years.
- Thank you for your attention.