

# TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING ORALITY

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## Abstract

The concept of orality is introduced in a broad sense, and then discussed in relation with translation, a relatively recent field. The first part of the paper analyses the role of orality in audiovisual translation (with the fundamental concept of prefabricated orality) and in written translation (especially for literature, theatre and comics), as well as the importance of certain linguistic elements (discourse markers, interjections and onomatopoeias) in reproducing orality. The second part of the paper, on the other hand, analyses the presence of the oral element in interpreting, where it obviously covers a pivotal role. Some of the many aspects that could be taken into account, and that are presented here, are prosody (intonation and voice, fluency and disfluency) and speech rate.

## Resumen

Se introduce el concepto de oralidad en un sentido amplio, para pasar a continuación a su relación con la traducción, un campo relativamente reciente. En primer lugar se estudia el papel de la oralidad en la traducción audiovisual (donde es esencial el concepto de oralidad prefabricada) y en la traducción escrita (en particular en la literaria, la teatral y la de cómics), así como la importancia que ciertos elementos lingüísticos (marcadores del discurso, interjecciones y onomatopeyas) tienen en la reproducción de la oralidad. En segundo lugar se analiza la presencia del elemento oral en la interpretación, en la que lógicamente juega un papel esencial. Entre los numerosos aspectos que podrían estudiarse se examinan los relacionados con la prosodia (entonación y voz, fluidez y disfluencias) y la velocidad de elocución.

**Key words:** Orality. Translation. Interpreting.

**Palabras clave:** Oralidad. Traducción. Interpretación.

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## 1. Introduction

The contraposition between orality and writing logically originated at the time when human beings started to invent ways of capturing – on a wall, on a board, etc.– what previously used to only have an oral form. Such a process, that lasted centuries, or even millennia, allowed humans to leave a vivid and explicit footprint of themselves. Despite orality existing earlier than writing (and being essential: a language can exist without writing), Linguistics –with only a few exceptions–, has focused mainly on written language, a phenomenon which was then mirrored by Translation Studies, as we will see further on in this paper.

The concept of orality has been approached in a variety of ways by various disciplines. Abascal (2004) lists three possible approaches to the oral-written contraposition: a) as diffusion channels, one phonic, the other visual; b) as two registers, being the oral one typical of informality and the written one typical of formality; and c) as two different grammar models where, according to some, the oral one would have a chaotic form and would be subject to different rules: nobody, nowadays, maintains this theory anymore thanks to the progress of Pragmatics, which provided detailed descriptions of the mechanisms regulating orality (such as Briz 1998 or Bazzanella 1994, for Spanish and Italian respectively). This would therefore leave two possible approaches to such a dichotomy; however, the exclusive application of only one of them seems to be reductive, and even more so if our aim is that of establishing a contraposition contemplating only two exclusionary types. It is actually a gradual contraposition (in a *continuum*) within whose extremes (the “very oral” and the “very written”) we find numerous linguistic manifestations that cannot be qualified as completely oral, nor as completely written: a speech read at the European Parliament is often the execution of a previously written text, an SMS or Whatsapp message written to a friend is often the written transposition of a merely oral text. This would lead us to the conclusion that the *pure* written and the *pure* oral are less frequent than we might think and that, on the other hand, *hybrid* forms are extremely frequent. With such premises in mind, Koch & Oesterreicher (2007) postulated that what really

matters in a linguistic realisation is not its material support (written or oral) but rather its *conception*, that would produce a *continuum* on the extremes of which we would find *immediacy* and *communicative distance*. Each text would be positioned on a point of this *continuum* based on its conception, and close to the poles we would find both oral and written texts

The early Translation Studies, in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century (Hurtado 2001: 123), did not show special interest for orality, and mainly focused on written translation. Only later did they turn their attention to oral translation or interpreting (with Seleskovitch's studies in the '60s see Hurtado 2001: 80-81). The interest towards the translation of typically oral elements in written translation (especially literary) or in audiovisual translation (AVT) came even later, well into the '90s. Most studies on the topic came with descriptive translation studies, with a few exceptions, such as Bandia (2011, 2015) who, in Postcolonial Studies, analysed the manifestations of orality in primitive societies with no writing and the translation phenomena occurring when coming into contact with Western colonising cultures.

The current interest for the translation of orality is reflected in a growing number of publications, such as Ballard (2001a), Brumme (2008a, 2008b, 2012), Gambier & Lautenbacher (2010), Brumme & Espunya (2012), San Vicente & Morillas (2014), Bandia (2015), cited here by way of example<sup>1</sup>.

Orality is not presented in the same way, nor has it the same weight in all modes (in the sense expressed by Hurtado 2001: 69 and following) of translation, and more specifically in written translation and AVT on the one hand and oral translation (i.e. interpreting) on the other. Such a contraposition is based, apparently, on interpreting being a translation of *spontaneous* orality, while written and audiovisual translation deal with *non-spontaneous* orality. Despite being aware that such a distinction is misleading since, as we have seen above, such a biunivocal relation between type of orality and translation mode does not always exist, we will build on that, as it will prove useful to delve into the issue of the translation of orality.

## 2. Written and audiovisual translation: non-spontaneous orality

Many written or audiovisual texts contain sentences, words, etc. or other elements aiming at imitating spontaneous orality. They are, for instance, novels or other narrative works where characters are meant to speak in a credible

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1. The existing bibliographical references on the topic are so rich that they cannot be fully included in this paper; when a topic has been dealt with in multiple language combinations, we will give preference to the Italian-Spanish one.

way. In the case of theatre, as in the rest of audiovisual texts, we find a complete emulation of orality, since we listen to the voice of characters who, to be credible, need to use mechanisms typical of spontaneous orality. In Koch & Oesterreicher's (2007) view, this kind of orality would be placed either in an intermediate position or, on other occasions, closer to one of the two extremes, since it does not constitute, *per se*, a fully recognisable and established orality mode but rather, it varies from one text to another, and from one genre and author to another. As a matter of fact, general studies with a broader scope reaching beyond case-studies, are generally lacking<sup>2</sup>.

The terminology used to express this changes (Brumme 2008a: 8) does not only depend on the various authors who dealt with it, but also on each national and language tradition. In Spanish, we find a variety of terms: “oralidad *figida*” (Brumme 2008a, 2008b), “oralidad *prefabricada*” (Chaume 2001), as well as others, less used in Translation Studies, such as “oralidad *literaria*”, “oralidad *simulada*”, etc.

Chaume (2001; Baños-Piñero & Chaume 2009) was a pioneer in the study of such an important aspect in AVT, especially in dubbing, where texts should sound natural and credible, which does not mean mimicking real orality, but rather carrying out a selection of phonetic, morphological, syntactic and lexical-semantic traits of spoken language to favour such credibility: the difference lies in the fact that such traits are less frequent in AVT than in spontaneous spoken language.

From the field of literary translation, Schneider-Mizony (2010) starts from the same premises and calls this kind of orality “oralité de fiction”. The literary translator has two options: using, for the translation, either a mimesis of oral language or conventional orality. The choice fell upon one strategy or the other depending on the period, the text type, the author's intention, the recipient, etc. The author lists three oralisation strategies, that will combine with the previous options: a) the inclusion of pragmatic information (gesture in theatre, deictics, phatic markers, etc.); b) the inclusion of metalinguistic markers (typographic elements such as dashes, inverted commas, etc.; of introductory verbs in communicative interaction, etc.); and c) the adaptation of the cultural elements of orality.<sup>3</sup>

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2. Maybe with the exception of Romero-Fresco (2012), mentioned below.

3. Due to space limitations, we will refer to the most widely studied text types although we are aware that they are not the only ones containing elements of orality. Other text types include, but are not limited to: historic documents or texts, declarations in court, advertisement, other genres of narrative for adults, youth and children, documentaries, video clips and television shows.

### 2.1. *Audiovisual translation*

Romero Fresco (2012) analyses an issue that relates directly to the presence of prefabricated orality in AVT, the (impression) of *naturalness* (meant as “nativelike selection of expression in a given context”, 2012: 199). The author compares three Spanish corpora (one of authentic oral language, one of prefabricated oral language and one of translated prefabricated oral language). Although the study focuses on a specific set of discourse markers, it is of great methodological interest for the assessment of the adaptation (or non-adaptation) of the translation of oral elements in an audiovisual product.

As Chaume (2004a) points out, AVT is not a type of specialized translation, as it shares the same problems with other types of translation modes and requires similar strategies, and this includes orality: problems related with diatopic, diastratic or diaphasic varieties, with interjections and onomatopoeias, where cultural elements, humour, intertextual references, etc. are therefore common (Zabalbeaskoa 2008, 2011; Bernal Merino 2002). The difference –as stated above– comes from its lower frequency in AVT and also from the existence of two specific factors pointed out by Zabalbeaskoa (2011): the chronic lack of time for translators and the constrictions due to the different types of synchrony (especially labial synchrony and isochrony). Such observations are made on dubbing, as subtitling involves different problems, connected with the disappearance of most of the phonic part of discourse (although the original one can still be heard) and the constraint of a limited available space for the translation, which entails a few –and not always painless– modifications.

Although theory advises audiovisual translators to preserve, whenever possible, many elements of orality, the results are often drastic transformations which eventually lead to a lack of credibility (in dubbing) due to the elimination of such elements (e.g. discourse markers), to a decrease in linguistic variety, as compared to the source text, in favour of one single neutral and standard variety in the target text (Zabalbeaskoa 2008; Dolç & Santamaria 1998), and of voices that do not modulate suitably.

### 2.2. *Literary translation*

Among literary genres, prefabricated orality is especially frequent in the narrative ones, both for adults (novels, short stories) and for youth and children, although the issue of orality has been studied mainly in novels. As Cadera (2001: 35) points out, many contemporary novels are characterised precisely by the fundamental role they confer to orality, built with two kinds of resources: a) literary (narrative techniques, graphic elements such as inverted commas, etc.); and b) linguistic (use of linguistic varieties and other specific

elements of orality). Cadera states that both are essential and must therefore be translated; thus, paying attention exclusively to language resources, to pure content, is a mistake. Along a similar line, Rosa (2015) maintains that, when translating a novel with many dialogues and different diaphasic and diastratic varieties, a translator should not lose sight of the parameter of *prestige*, as it is not unusual to find a contraposition between the prestigious variety used in narration and another, less prestigious, one used in dialogues. Unfortunately, many translators tend to eliminate this important difference, which is actually fundamental for the portrayal of characters.

There are a great many studies on the translation of orality of authors and literary works in numerous language combinations, but staying within the field of translation from Italian into Spanish or Catalan, we can mention the following Italian authors: Gadda (Briguglia 2009), Pasolini (Briguglia 2009), Camilleri (Briguglia 2009; Caprara 2007).

### 2.3. *Theatre translation*

Theatre translation has often been studied as a sub-genre of literary translation; there are, however, obvious differences due to which they should be treated separately. Although there is a long tradition of theatre texts written to be read (for which the observations made in §2.2. should hold true), most of them are written to become oral language on stage, once again in the mode of fictive orality.

The translation of orality in dramatic texts has been addressed from two different perspectives in Cebrián Alberola (2011): a) as the issue on which the representation is based; b) as imitation of spontaneous oral speech. Both generate two different types of analysis, although the second is undoubtedly the one concerning Translation Studies. The study of classic works –which still raise interest in contemporary times, such as Shakespeare’s plays and poetry– involves specific problems determined by chronological distance, as shown by Pujol (2011).

### 2.4. *The translation of comics*

In this genre (which includes numerous types, among which some recent ones, such as graphic novels), as it was the case for AVT, there exists a close dependence between the visual and the linguistic codes: hence, it is a *constrained translation* (Hurtado 2001: 72). Comics usually have the form of dialogues which, to be credible, need to include marks of orality (Delesse 2001: 321).

Orality is, again, prefabricated, although in this case the goal is not always to imitate spontaneous speech, as often characters use a high register or a stereotyped one: Corto Maltese, Capitán Trueno, Asterix, etc. The text is contained in a limited space (in balloons or bubbles) and the translator cannot breach those limits. Outside of the balloons, we often find onomatopoeias or ideophones (Muñoz-Calvo 2013, Zanettin 1998; Delesse 2001) integrated in the drawing, which the translator can rarely modify, and which can lead to incongruities, given that such elements are not necessarily universal. Carreras, Flores & Provezza (2008: 17-18) point out various elements of comics that should be taken into account when translating, among which we find the derivatives of the imitation of orality: idioms, colloquialisms, youth slang, etc., and even a peculiar use of punctuation, of the type and size of fonts or of capital and lower cases, which are used to express the moods, feelings or intentions of characters.

### *2.5. The translation of traits of orality in written and audiovisual translation*

Another frequent approach is that of studying certain word classes instead of studying works, authors or genres as a whole. One of such classes stands out from the rest: discourse markers. This is quite logical, if we think that they are one of the fundamental elements that build up conversation. The issue has been dealt with in two ways: case studies and contrastive analysis that do not focus on specific works (such as Solsona in this volume).

A problem that has been pointed out in all the studies on the translation of discourse markers (Biagini 2010; Calvo Rigual 2015; González 2012; Zamora & Alessandro 2013) is their frequent omission, as they are believed to be superfluous, although in some cases the phenomenon might be due to the constraints determined by the channel, such as in the case of subtitling (or dubbing for lip synchrony). According to Chaume (2004b: 854), their omission in dubbing and in the subtitling of films might be partly justified by the fact that images often make up for it by providing the inferences conveyed by markers, that is, they might be redundant with respect to images (Biagini 2010: 21). It is not, however, rare to find that their omission might be due to the inexperience of the translator, who might not understand the sense of a marker (Calvo Rigual 2015). Various authors who studied the translation of such elements (Aijmer, Foolen & Simon-Vandenberg 2006; Borreguero Zuloaga & López Serena 2010) have previously defined their characteristics, which are basically three: their polyfunctionality, their dependence on context and the elusiveness of their meaning. All these make it very difficult to establish fixed or univocal equivalences between markers of different languages



(Bazzanella & Morra 2000: 149-150; Portolés Lázaro 2002), even in cases of cognate languages –as is the case for Spanish and Italian–. Even markers having an identical form in two languages always turn out to have a divergent behaviour, at least in a part of their functions (Portolés Lázaro 2002: 152-156). Actually, to translate markers, the translator needs to understand their pragmatic meaning in the source language, and then look for an equivalent that produces the same effect (Chaume 2004b: 844).

Another category that has been studied extensively is that of interjections, to which onomatopoeias are associated. Ballard (2001b), who has studied all of them, believes that they are not simple sounds imitating reality but, rather, that they possess a meaning, which turns them into elements that might also need to be translated. Other studies on interjections might be those of Aja Sánchez (2011), Matamala (2007, 2008) or Zamora & Alessandro in this volume.

### 3. Orality and interpreting

Defining orality as a typical and fundamental feature of interpreting, provided that interpreting can be defined precisely as a form of oral translation (Riccardi 1999), is definitely true although it might be somewhat reductive. In the case of interpreting, in fact, orality acquires a multiplicity of forms and representations which are determining factors in the characterisation of the source speech on the one hand and of the interpreted speech, on the other. In the words of Stenzl (1983:40):

While in translation the message is conveyed entirely by graphic means, interpretation involves not only linguistic elements and what they convey, but also intonation, voice quality, changes in pitch and loudness, pauses and non-linguistic elements [...], which can all contribute to the message and may have to be verbalized by the interpreter.

Orality, however, is not only a feature of the original text, it is the medium through which the interpreter's performance is conveyed, it is the interpreter's working tool. It will therefore be easy to understand that an interpreter should necessarily have a deep and full understanding of the properties of orality, both to understand the features of the source text and to produce an adequate and accessible target text: intonation (Collados Aís 1998, 2001, 2007), fluency (Pradas Macías 2007), use of pauses (Viaggio 1992), hesitations, speech rate, articulation, voice quality (Iglesias Fernández 2007a, 2007b, 2013).

Starting from these premises, it will be easy to understand the difficulty of carrying out an overview of the studies on the topic. Thus, what we will present here, will be by no means an exhaustive general outlook on the main

topics dealt with by Interpreting Studies in the fields that are more closely related with orality (voice, prosody, fluency, speech rate, etc.); for reasons of space, we will have to leave aside the studies on linguistic aspects (content, grammar, syntax, style, etc.), without forgetting, though, that these are always, indissolubly and primarily linked to the features of oral language and, as a consequence, with interpreting and depend, in many cases, on variables related with such a mode of expression. Such a restriction in the field of analysis, due to reasons of space, also imposes a restriction of the interpreting modes analysed by such studies: most of the authors presented, as a matter of fact, focus mainly on the analysis of conference interpreting, while very few of them analyse dialogue interpreting from this perspective.

A fundamental contribution for the study of orality in interpreting was, at the end of the '90s, the birth of *Corpus-based Interpreting Studies* (see, among others, Shlesinger 1998; Russo, Bendazzoli, Sandrelli & Spinolo 2012), which opened a new stage of rigorous empiric study of real interpreted materials, duly transcribed and annotated. Another fundamental contribution to the study of orality in interpreting was that of Collados, Pradas, Stévaux & García (2007), who contributed to ratify and define the importance of the features and use of the voice in evaluating the quality of simultaneous interpreting including, among the parameters to be measured for quality analysis, voice pleasantness (Iglesias Fernández), fluency (Pradas Macías), intonation (Collados Aís) and pronunciation (Blasco Mayor & García Becerra).

Among the various corpus-based studies carried out on orality, an interesting contribution is that of Russo (2014), who, working with the Spanish-Italian combination, studies the effect that some critical traits of orality in the source text have on the target text, concluding that the interpreter's production is necessarily and significantly influenced and guided by phenomena such as speech rate, the presence of disfluencies, the lack of syntactic cohesion, syntactic parallelisms and the use of verbs and expressions indicating the speaker's position with respect to the audience. Russo observes, in the interpreter's production, phenomena of syntactic simplification and omission of most strongly pragmatic elements, as well as numerous operations of synthesis of the original message and of functional use of prosody and emphasis, with the result of a more synthetic, but consistent and cohesive, target text.

Another original study, in this case a qualitative one and with a holistic approach to the study of orality, is that of Anfusio & Morelli (2014), who analyse a corpus of Spanish-Italian consecutive interpreting with the goal of identifying and analysing some typical traits of orality, as well as studying the strategies employed by interpreters (students) to preserve, eliminate or

reproduce such traits. Results show that, in most cases, subjects omit the traits of orality found in the source text and, when they do maintain them, they often modify them. Authors do not find, on the other hand, specific strategies used by interpreters for the management of such elements, and attribute this to their lack of experience.

## 2. Prosody in interpreting

As Ahrens (2005: 1) states, prosody is a fundamental component of an oral text, since it is used to structure the acoustic *continuum* produced by the speaker to give more or less prominence to the parts of text they believe are more or less important. Prosodic elements, thus, play a fundamental role in determining the receiver's comprehension of an oral text and to transmit the speaker's communicative intentions. This is true both for spontaneous speech and for interpreting (Alexieva 1990; Ahrens 2005).

Most authors who worked on the prosodic features of conference interpreting agree that this aspect has not received the necessary attention for a long time, since Interpreting Studies have focused mainly on other aspects (interpreting techniques, neurolinguistic processes, transmission of content). Although many interpreting scholars (among others, Herbert 1952; Gerver, Longley, Long & Lambert 1989) mention voice and prosody as fundamental aspects of an interpreter's performance and as specific elements in the production of an interpreted text (Shlesinger 1994), only recently have prosodic features been analysed and assessed as specific parameters. Collados Aís (2001: 105) underlines

la importancia que para la IS [interpretación simultánea] tiene la comunicación no verbal, teniendo en cuenta que la voz del intérprete de simultánea es el único vehículo que éste tiene a su disposición para la transmisión verbal y no verbal del discurso, y siendo la voz, por tanto, la que asume toda la responsabilidad de una interpretación de "calidad" y/o de "éxito".

### 2.1. Intonation and voice

As Pérez, Iglesias, Jiménez & Blasco (2005) claim when defining some parameters for assessing the quality of simultaneous interpreting (2005: 1134), voice is a fundamental working tool for the interpreter to clearly and effectively transmit the contents of the original text; Collados Aís (2001) even underlines that the interpreter, as a communication professional, should – when needed– improve the presentation of the original text, without however losing sight of its content and communicative goals.

One of the first studies on intonation and voice was that of Darò (1990), who analysed the fundamental frequency of a professional interpreter's vocal production in five different languages, hypothesising (and confirming in her results) a possible correlation between variation in voice frequency and more or less confidence of the interpreter in one language or another.

In 1994, Shlesinger studied the effects of a simultaneous interpreter's intonation on the audience: the author analysed the production of eight professional interpreters, administering to two audience groups a read-aloud and an interpreted text respectively, and measuring their content comprehension and retention. Results point at a higher comprehension level for the group with the original speech as compared with the target speech.

In the same direction, Collados Aís (1998) examines the incidence of monotonous intonation in assessing the quality of simultaneous interpreting, and concludes that a monotonous intonation does have a negative impact on the audience's quality evaluation. In 2001, she carries out an experimental study on the effect of monotonous intonation in the recovery of information of the audience of a simultaneously interpreted speech. The main conclusion is that, as a matter of fact, a monotonous intonation seems to negatively influence the user's recovery of information.

In 2005, Ahrens proposes a possible approach to the study of prosody in simultaneous interpreting, analysing a corpus of original and professionally interpreted speeches, and annotating pauses, information units, stress patterns and tone variations as building elements of the prosodic features of an interpreted text.

Iglesias Fernández studies the voice from many different points of view; with her 2007 study (2007b), she finds out that a precise interpreting performance is rated as lower quality by the audience if it is presented with an unpleasant voice, and that high pitch and nasal timbre seem to point at an interpreter's insecurity and inexperience, while a lower tone and higher resonance are associated with more credibility and experience. The author also finds that an unpleasant voice influences the audience's judgement on other prosodic features, such as intonation and fluency. Such results are further reinforced by a 2013 study by the same author, the goal of which was studying the listeners' concept of "pleasant voice". Results show that, as a matter of fact, listeners tend to extend the concept of "high quality voice" to prosodic traits such as tone, intonation and fluency.

Barbato (2014) studies the influence of the interpreter's voice in a juridical setting, and namely on the perception of credibility of the interpreter him/herself and of the defendant and shows, with her pilot study, that the most

irritating factor for users is monotonous intonation, which is associated with an insecure and not credible personality; on the other hand, moderate speech rate and volume are appreciated.

## 2.2. *Fluencies and disfluencies*

Fluency is one of the aspects of orality that received the most attention from Interpreting Scholars. With an empirical study, Pradas Macías (2007) shows that, in simultaneous interpreting, fluency in the target text can influence the audience's perception of other parameters, such as correct transmission of meaning and precision (in line with the results of Collados Aís 1998 and Iglesias Fernández 2007a). A study by Rennert (2010) also indicates a possible relation between fluency of an interpreted text and the perception of precision received by its users.

A necessary distinction, in studying fluency in interpreting, needs to be made between the consecutive and the simultaneous mode:

Fluency in simultaneous is more subject to the quality of source speech delivery; in consecutive, the interpreter must achieve a good balance of careful listening and judicious use of notes, with ability to read notes at a glance and speaking skills coming to the fore during reformulation (Mead 2005: 59).

The works of Mead (2000, 2002 and 2005) and Cardoen (2012), among others, focus on consecutive interpreting. Mead (2000) analyses the control of pauses of interpreting students, and finds significant differences in the performances of students working towards their A language (Italian) as compared to the same students working into their B language (English); he then studies hesitations through an empirical study of texts interpreted in consecutive by a sample of interpreters with different levels of experience (Mead 2002) and, finally, proposes a possible methodological approach for the study of fluency in consecutive interpreting (Mead 2005). Cardoen (2012), instead, with a pilot study carried out on the Spanish-Dutch combination, analyses the impact of note composition on the interpreter's fluency, comparing notes and target text.

The scenario of studies on fluency and disfluencies in simultaneous interpreting is definitely wider; and in fact, we will only be able to provide but a few examples, due to reasons of space. Pöchhacker compares "slips and shifts" (1995: 74) in spontaneous and interpreted speech, and only partially confirms his initial hypothesis according to which interpreted speeches would present a higher number of disfluencies.

Two possible taxonomies of disfluencies are the ones proposed by Tissi (2000) and Gósy (2007). Tissi (2000), in the German-Italian combination,

carries out a descriptive analysis of the disfluencies in the source and target texts of her corpus, and divides them into empty pauses, vocal and consonant lengthening, interruptions, repetitions, repairs and false starts. Gósy (2007), on the other hand, distinguishes in the first place between uncertainty-related and error-type disfluencies; the first category includes phenomena such as hesitations, fillers, repetitions, false starts, vocal lengthening and pauses within words; the second category would include Freudian slips, grammatical errors, contaminations, false word activations, tips of the tongue and ordering problems.

Cecot (2001) focuses on the study of pauses by analysing the performances of eleven interpreters in the English-Italian combination, comparing them with the subjective perception of professionals on their performance, and highlighting numerous incongruences. Petite (2003, 2005), on the other hand, focuses on repairs, studying a trilingual corpus (English/French/German) and identifying various categories of repairs in the interpreter's self-monitoring process. Working on the Spanish-Italian language pair, Bertozzi (2014) finds that the most frequent disfluencies in spontaneous speech, such as filled and empty pauses, vocal lengthening, repairs, false starts, are also the most frequent in interpreted speech. Plevoets & Defrancq (in press), with a study based on a corpus of simultaneously interpreted speeches, study a specific type of disfluency, filled pauses, with a view to measuring an interpreter's cognitive and informative load and correlating a higher density of filled pauses in the target text with a higher lexical density in the source text.

### 2.3. *Speech rate*

Speech rate is a feature of the original text which can understandably influence a professional's performance in all interpreting modes. It is, indeed, a variable that many scholars (among others, Seleskovitch 1965, Alexieva 1990, Gile 1995 and Vuorikoski 2004) highlighted as problematical for the interpreting process, as it causes cognitive overload and, therefore, a lower quality in the interpreting performance. However, many authors have observed that, actually, a high speech rate does not necessarily involve, *per se*, a lower quality in the target text, since such quality depends on a variety of concomitant factors (contents, lexical density, expressiveness, fluency, etc.; Iglesias Fernández 2010).

Working on medical conferences, also Galli (1990) observes that a higher speed does cause a higher number of omissions and wrong interpretations of ambiguous segments but it does not influence overall precision. Pio (2003), on the other hand, does not only analyse content equivalence between

source and target text, but also examines fluency observing, like Galli, that an increased speech rate leads mainly to an increase in mistakes, especially omissions. Shlesinger (2003), on her side, studies the effect of a high speech rate on the working memory, observing its effect on long strings of adjectives. In this specific case, speed seems to have a positive impact on the interpreter's performance, since such strings are reproduced fully, especially for faster source speech. Iglesias Fernández (2010) studies a sample of original and interpreted speeches in the ECIS quadrilingual corpus, submitting them to a commission of six evaluators. Iglesias Fernández, like Shlesinger, also observes that a high speech rate does not necessarily lead to a lower quality in interpreting.

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## NOTAS BIOGRÁFICAS / BIONOTES

CESÁREO CALVO RIGUAL es catedrático de Filología Italiana en la Universitat de València. Ha publicado estudios en los siguientes campos: lexicografía monolingüe (italiana) y bilingüe (italiano-español), lingüística contrastiva italiano-español, traducción audiovisual e historia de la traducción de obras italianas al español y al catalán. En este último campo ha contribuido a la creación y mantenimiento del Proyecto Boscán (Catálogo de las Traducciones Españolas de Obras Italianas (hasta 1939). Ha traducido al español obras de Pietro Aretino y de Giovanni della Casa además de “La veneciana” de anónimo veneciano del siglo XVI. Es autor, junto a Anna Giordano, del Diccionario italiano Herder (1995, 2005 y 2011).

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