

Translating as a socially-
regulated game a
sociological approach

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In this regard, Inguilleri (2005: 125) states that “the increased attention to sociological approach in the last two decades is indicative of a paradigmatic shift within the discipline, toward more sociologically–and anthropologically–informed approaches to the study of translation processes and products”.

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Viewing translation as a socially regulated activity has therefore opened up broader contexts, explicitly giving ample room for studying the socio-cultural factors which not only influence the selection, representation, production and consumption of the foreign materials, but also cast some light on the specific role of individual agents involved in the translation process at its macro level (be they translators, ST authors, TT readers, editors, proof-readers, revisers, translation project managers, translation quality controllers and so on).

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According to sociological approaches, the process of translation is seen as a social game referring to a collective belief shared by the members of any social game that indicates the game is “worth playing and that the stakes created in and through the fact of playing are worth pursuing” (see also Hanna 2006: 87–88; Almann 2013b: 46–51).

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As such, in order to be part of a game or accept to be invested in a game, people need to agree with the current members to be in the field and get involved in its conflicts on the one hand, and accept the terms and conditions of the social game on the other. Such acceptance of the terms and conditions of the game and the familiarization with the current members are termed by Bourdieu (1990): '*habitus*'.

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In this regard, Yannakopoulou (2008: 7) comments that habitus

gives the agents a 'feel for the game', a prism through which to perceive reality, a guideline on how to act and react in a way that is considered proper in each circumstance. It should be noted here that the habitus does not determine one's actions, but merely guides them. All this is not done in a conscious and deliberate manner. Rather, it is moulded through a long process of inculcation according to the agents' personal trajectories through institutions, such as their family and school, their class, as well as the position they hold within the particular field.

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Accepting the terms and conditions of the social game, in the case of translation, and familiarizing themselves with the current members of such a game at times require translators to adopt global and/or local strategies that they are not quite happy with or reluctantly accept the amendments and modifications made by editors, revisers, translation project managers, translation quality controllers or publishers to their translations.

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On the other hand, translators, translation project managers, or translation quality controllers sometimes remove some parts of the text or manipulate the text, i.e. changing the direction of the ST in order to be in line with their target readers' expectations (expectancy norm and/or translatorial *habitus*) and/or their own accumulated value system, beliefs and assumptions (ideological moves and/or translatorial *habitus*).

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A good, individual example is Nawal El-Saadawi's novel 'الوجه العاري للمرأة العربية' A Hidden Face of Eve' in which two chapters, namely 'Women's Work at Home' and 'Arab Women and Socialism' have been completely omitted (Amerieh 2000: 224). El-Saadawi in these two omitted chapters criticizes capitalism in favour of socialism, thereby annoying the publisher or translation project manager who has decided to omit the two chapters entirely.

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Further, a whole passage in which El-Saadawi encourages Arab women to stop thinking that Arab traditions, culture and society are more oppressive, and to start thinking that they are in an equal position to their Western counterparts, has been deleted completely. Both the author and the translator, Sherif Hetata, have accepted the deletion of these two chapters and the passage most likely because of their desire to stay in the social game and acquire, maintain, or redistribute some sort of capital, be it cultural, social or economic

Thank You

