

De gustibus non est disputandum: Translating a Multilingual Novel

Arja Nurmi

Abstract: This study explores how two eighteenth-century German translations and a French one deal with the foreign-language passages of Laurence Sterne's novel *Tristram Shandy*. The results show that the German translations generally preserve Latin, French, Greek and Italian passages and do not add intratextual translations to support the readers' understanding. The French translation maintains most of the Latin but does not add another type of multilingualism to replace the disappearing French, Greek or Italian.

Keywords: Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, translation, German, French, multilingualism

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1. Introduction

The focus of translation studies has often been on translation itself as a multilingual activity (Meylaerts 2011). There is, however, a narrower field within this multilingual activity, the translation of multilingual texts, which has received less attention, although there are some exceptions, such as Şerban and Meylaerts (2014), which discusses drama and audio-visual translation, or Pym (2004) which focuses on translating institutional texts. Another main focus for translating multilingual practices has been prose fiction, where there are some overviews (Meylaerts 2006; 2010) and several case studies, such as Toda (2005), Ladouceur (2006), Stratford (2008), Franco Arcia (2012), Enell-Nilsson and Hjort (2013) and Ekberg (2020). The focus of these case studies is often on contemporary fiction and the multilingual practices of linguistic minorities.

Dembeck and Parr (2017, 10–11), in their discussion of the nature of multilingualism in fiction, mention a variety of potential types, ranging from the use of regional language and implicit multilingualism (of the type “he said in Spanish”), including foreign-language idioms as word-for-word translations and using translated familiar quotes (“the die is cast”). Some of the types they include in multilingualism in fiction can be regarded as implicit multilingualism, while others are more explicit, resulting in texts where more than one language is in evidence. In this study, I look at a type of multilingual text showing explicit multilingualism, Laurence Sterne's novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, published 1759–1767, and its eighteenth-century translations, two into German and one into French. For the sake of comparison, the modern Finnish translation of the novel is also discussed, based on Nurmi (2019). In the source text as well as the target texts, the multilingualism is evidence of languages

learned through education, not that of a linguistic minority, making this case study different from those mentioned above. Written multilingualism has been a long-standing practice in English texts from the earliest surviving manuscripts (Pahta and Nurmi 2006), while the choice of languages to include has depended and still depends on the linguistic skills of both writers and intended readers (Nurmi et al. 2018).

Pym (2004) suggests three strategies for translating multilingualism: creating a multilingual text out of a monolingual one, maintaining the flavour of the source language in the translation or creating a monolingual text out of a multilingual one. In a case study of translating a multilingual text, translators similarly had the choice of three options: they could turn the text into a monolingual one, the multilingual practices could be kept as they were or the number of multilingual elements could be reduced or increased (Nurmi 2016). In Nurmi (2016), most translators opted to maintain the multilingualism, but many reduced the level of it. These kinds of decision are made within the technical constraints of publishing and the target culture, but they are also guided by estimations of a readership's linguistic skills, as well as ethical choices in maintaining the text's multilingual nature and the author's authentic voice.

When a writer does not know what languages their readers understand, or knows they will probably not understand one of the languages, it is possible to insert intratextual translations into a text as a means of supporting readers (Nurmi and Skaffari 2021). Intratextual translations can be overt, in for example footnotes, as well as covert insertions of corresponding content in the target language (see Nurmi and Skaffari 2021 for a more detailed discussion). In a similar fashion, translators must decide how to deal with any support strategies employed by the author and whether to add any intratextual translations of their own. Laurence Sterne's novel *Tristram Shandy* is a prime example of the educated multilingualism of eighteenth-century British authors (Nurmi et al. 2018). Sterne could expect many of his readers to understand even the extended French and Latin passages he included in his text, and he typically did not offer support for understanding them. In the case of the eighteenth-century German and French translations, the readers could also be expected to be reasonably educated and fluent in the inserted languages of the European high society of their time.

This study begins by discussing what is known about translating multilingual novels, and then describes the source and target texts. This is followed by an exploration of the translation practices of the foreign-language elements in the three translations, including the intratextual translation practices for reader support. This is followed by a brief summary of the modern Finnish translation's multilingualism for the purposes of comparison and a summary of results.

2. Translating multilingual fiction

When discussing the practices of translating multilingual fiction, it is useful to consider the role the other-language passages play in any given text. An analysis of this kind can also help translators in their work, allowing them to reproduce the effects of multilingualism in their source text. Eriksson and Haapamäki (2011) suggest a framework for analysing explicit multilingualism in fiction; they do not specify the type of fictive texts they analyse, but most of their examples are drawn from prose fiction, particularly novels. Their framework has three main components as the basis of analysis: the communicative context (i.e. sender, recipient and the culture portrayed); the form the literary work takes; and the literary functions of multilingual communicative strategies. When multilingual practices are brought into the limelight in any work of fiction, this tends to influence the ways in which the work is structured, on the one hand, and how it is perceived, on the other (Eriksson and Haapamäki 2011, 45–46). In this study, I focus on the communicative context particularly from the perspective of potential readers and to some extent the literary functions of multilingual strategies.

When we discuss the communicative context of a work of fiction, different perspectives are offered through considering the author's multilingualism, the potential multilingualism of readers and the ways in which multilingualism is thematised in the text (Eriksson and Haapamäki 2011, 49–50). Typically, when writers produce a multilingual text, they draw on their own multilingual resources. If we take the broad view of multilingualism, that is, we do not assume the “balanced bilingual” model, even very slight ability in a language can be sufficient; at times an author may also use reference works such as dictionaries to create a multilingual text.

Readers' mono- or multilingualism can be regarded, for example, in terms of identity, since presenting a multilingual text to a primarily monolingual readership can hinder communication while it will at the same time create a connection with multilingual readers capable of understanding the whole text. Eriksson and Haapamäki suggest that multilingualism in a literary text always has a function, which can be, for example, creating a sense of authenticity with regard to the world portrayed in the text or to signal the group identity of a specific character. Readers who are in-group members of the author's and characters' linguistic communities will perceive the text in a very different way to out-group readers, since understanding the whole text and all its inferences gives the in-group greater access while the out-group may feel excluded. On the other hand, the latter group may also simply enjoy the text in a different way, as they are introduced to a mysterious text and given a view into a world different from their own (Eriksson and Haapamäki 2011, 51).

When it comes to translating multilingual texts, the main choice is obviously between turning the text into a monolingual one or preserving its multilingual nature (Grutman 2006). The general considerations for this choice come from aesthetic and ethical questions, on the one hand, and from the language attitudes and linguistic realities of both source and target cultures on the other. A multilingual source text can even be discussed in terms of translatability: is it possible – and how is it possible – to translate a multilingual text in a way that preserves the meanings of the multilingual practices in it and yet offers understandability (Meylaerts 2010, 227)? There are several reasons for preserving multilingualism in a literary text, as a “normalisation” into a monolingual text will result in the loss of much of the purpose of the text both in terms of aesthetics and in a cultural and political sense (Stratford 2008, 468).

One suggestion for preserving multilingualism in a translation is the mirror-effect translation discussed by Franco Arcia (2012, 79–80). In his case study of a short story by a Chilean-Canadian author evidencing both English and Spanish, Franco Arcia explores the potential for mirroring the roles of the two languages in a Spanish translation, translating the English of the source text into Spanish and the Spanish into English, thus reversing the major and minor languages of the text. This is a somewhat unusual potential situation, but merits consideration for my case study of the French translation of *Tristram Shandy*. A different strategy is employed in the French Canadian drama texts translated into English studied by Ladouceur (2006). In the French language plays written outside Quebec, in an environment with English as the majority language, the texts have many English expressions inserted among the French (Ladouceur 2006, 57). Even if the plays are translated into English with some French expressions remaining, the meaning of the multilingualism in the French-speaking context will escape anglophone audiences, as the plays travel from an in-group audience to an out-group audience and perspective (64–65).

Whether writing or translating multilingual texts, writers and translators have a resource for maintaining multilingualism and at the same time keeping the texts approachable in the target culture: intratextual translation (Nurmi 2019; Nurmi and Skaffari 2021). The most familiar forms of this are peritextual elements such as glossaries of foreign expressions or footnotes offering translations. There is also the possibility to insert the translation into the linear text itself, including two versions of the same message in different languages. Meylaerts (2010, 227) notes that this is a common practice in translating multilingual texts so that a monolingual reader will have the opportunity to understand the text and yet the multivoiced nature is preserved. In the field of fiction, prose would seem more forgiving for this form of double presentation (as Pym 2010, 80 calls it), as plays are more dependent on the affordances of time, actors’ memory and audiences’ patience.

3. *Tristram Shandy* and its translations

In Late Modern English texts, it was quite common for educated authors to insert passages in other languages to their texts. The multilingual individual chosen as the focus of this study is clergyman and novelist Laurence Sterne (1713–1768). Initially, Sterne stood out as a potential target for a case study in an earlier study mapping multilingual practices in published Late Modern English texts (Nurmi et al. 2018). Sterne was one of the authors who included a high number of foreign-language passages in his published writings. He wrote his novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* between 1759 and 1767; the work was published in nine volumes. From the point of view of multilingual practices, it presents an interesting opportunity for a case study. The novel is playful with literary conventions, and includes for example a black page, direct address of the reader and other unconventional literary means. In many ways it reads as a very modern – or even post-modern – novel, as it does not have a linear plot, but rather the whole point of it is in pursuing various side tracks, always with the intention of entertaining the reader.

Laurence Sterne was born in Ireland, educated at Cambridge, and became a clergyman after graduation. His university education and chosen career gave Sterne fluency in Latin, and also some familiarity with Greek. For three decades he worked in several parishes before feeling the need to take a different turn. He published two notable works of fiction, *Tristram Shandy* and *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (1768). The latter was informed by Sterne's travels in France and Italy for health reasons. Sterne comments on his French skills in a letter: "I speak it fast and fluent, but incorrect both in accent and phrase; but the French tell me I speak it surprising well for the time" (Melville 1912, 304).

For the purposes of this study, I use the first two volumes of the eighteenth-century original English text (Sterne 1759–1767), accessed in pdf form through the Eighteenth-Century Collections Online (ECCO) database, as my source text. My reading of the text is supported by a critical modern edition (Anderson 1980), and I have relied on the editor's notes for many of the interpretations of, particularly, Greek and Latin passages. The translations studied are the two German translations of the eighteenth century, Sterne (1763) and Sterne (1774), as well as apparently the only eighteenth-century French translation, Sterne (1777). Some comparisons of results are also made with the modern Finnish translation (Sterne 1998); the discussion of the Finnish translation is based on Nurmi (2019).

Searches in the *Gemeinsame Bundkatalog* provide information about two German translations of *Tristram Shandy* from the eighteenth century. The first one, *Das Leben und die Meynungen des Herrn Tristram Shandy: Aus dem Englischen*, appeared between 1763 and 1767 and was translated by Johann Friedrich Zückert. A second edition with the

same title, claiming a new translation, was released by the same publisher, Gottlieb August Langen in Berlin, between 1767 and 1771, and this was only a slightly modified version of Zückert's translation (Thayer 1905, 14). The publisher continued to release new editions with minimal changes, one "on the advice of Hofrat Wieland", as a way of making use of the influential name of Wieland, apparently against his permission (Thayer 1905, 14). The translator of the first German version, Johann Friedrich Zückert, is not identified as the translator in the volumes studied. He is, however, mentioned as such in Thayer (1905) and in the *Gemeinsame Bundkatalog*. Thayer (1905, 12–13) gives some background information on Zückert, who was a physician by training, but did not practice medicine because of ill health. Instead, he focused on publishing on medical topics. Thayer (1905, 12) notes that Zückert's translation is "weak and inaccurate", and this seems to have been the view of a contemporary newspaper critic as well (Thayer 1905, 15). Zückert himself notes the difficulties of translating the novel in a preface to volumes VII and VIII (Thayer 1905, 13). I have perused Zückert's translation in book form at the Finnish National Library.

In 1774, a new German translation of all nine volumes appeared, called *Tristram Schandis Leben und Meynungen*, translated by Johann Joachim Christoph Bode in Hamburg. Bode had already translated Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, and his work was held in high regard (Thayer 1905, 14). This translation also saw many reprints over the years. The volumes studied were available as scanned pdf files at the Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt. Raven (2002, 716) points out that earlier research on the German translations of English novels has been riddled with misdatings. This problem has hopefully been avoided in my study through the use of both online library catalogues and through the dates printed in the volumes studied.

An explanation for the appearance of two translations so close together is perhaps in what Thayer (1905, 1) calls "Anglomania" in the latter half of the eighteenth century in Germany, replacing the admiration of all things French, which was seen as too overpowering. According to Thayer (2), this interest in English literary and cultural matters showed in German journals as reports of new volumes, new thoughts and new literary movements. Many novels seem to have been translated into German very swiftly, even in the same year (Raven 2002, 718–719). Thayer (1905, 2–3) also notes that English literature was read both in the original and in translations, and that the mention of a work being a translation from English was such a good advertising slogan there were even books originally written in German claiming to be translations from English. In the early eighteenth century, English works were translated into German from French or Italian translations, as English was not a widely known language in German-speaking areas (Guthrie 2013, 67).

According to the catalogue of the French National Library (*Bibliothèque nationale de France Catalogue Général*), there seems to have been only one French translation of *Tristram Shandy* in the eighteenth century, in four volumes (1776–1785), translated by Joseph-Pierre Frénais, Charles-François Bonnay and Antoine-Gilbert Griffet de Labaume. In the first volume, Frénais (Sterne 1777, xiv) writes in his preface that Sterne's work is one of the most difficult works ever written in English and that the translator also feels like a man of letters. He also notes that he has felt the need to modify the text as he translated, to leave some parts out and to write something else instead. He did not find all of Sterne's jokes funny either, and has therefore deleted some of them and made his own. He feels this is appropriate, as the book is meant to entertain before all else. Finally, he adds that he hopes he has done everything necessary to keep the translatorial from standing out from the rest of the text.¹ The French translation was accessed in scanned pdf form through Eighteenth-Century Collections Online. It should be noted that as the German translations studied pre-date the French one, it is likely both German translators worked from the original English version.

The context of the eighteenth-century English text is very different from a modern situation. The German and French translators can presumably also have assumed a literate readership not unlike that of Sterne's English readers in terms of education and linguistic ability. The most frequent foreign languages in the volume, Latin and French, were widely known lingua francas of the European elites in the eighteenth century, and a little Italian and some Greek could also be assumed to be familiar to those who would take up the volume. Many assumptions about readers in Sterne's text are probably true of the readers of translations during the eighteenth century. In eighteenth-century Britain, literacy was not available to most of the population and the price of books was a hindrance to the reading habits of poorer folk. Sterne could therefore make certain assumptions about his readers and their linguistic skills. Gentlemen were still trained in classical languages, Latin and Greek, and the shared language of the upper classes all over Europe was French. Women often had more limited opportunities to learn languages, but at least the upper class women in England knew French and possibly also other European languages (Nurmi and Pahta 2012).

4. Translating multilingual passages in *Tristram Shandy*

The foreign-language passages in the source text were identified through the appearance of typographical flagging (Nurmi and Skaffari 2021). In the eighteenth-century English text, italics were used to indicate proper nouns as well as words and phrases in other languages. The foreign-language passages in italics were gathered

¹ I am grateful to Dr. Soili Hakulinen at Tampere University for her help with the French translator's preface.

into a database. The corresponding passages were then gathered from the English modern critical edition, the two eighteenth-century German translations and the eighteenth-century French translation. In addition, attention was paid to the typographical flagging in the translations. The German translations were printed in Fraktur, and the flagged words or passages in Roman font. In the French translation, flagging appeared as italicised words, as in the English original, although proper nouns were not written in italics, only foreign-language words and passages. Greek words and expressions were mainly printed in the Greek alphabet in all versions. There were also cases where a word seems to have been an established loan word in English but is flagged as foreign in one or more of the translations, indicating its status as more of a code-switch than a loan.

In what follows, I will discuss the multilingual practices in the novel language by language and compare the German and French translators' strategies. The studied part of the original novel had altogether 69 words or passages in a language other than English. The languages used were French, Greek, Italian and Latin. Latin was the most common (44 instances), French was second (17 instances) and Greek third (five instances, four written in the Greek alphabet and one in the Roman). Italian only appeared three times in the source text. As to the function of the foreign-language phrases in the text, they can be seen as features of characterisation. The first-person narrator, Tristram Shandy, switches frequently into other languages, but so do other male characters in the story, particularly Shandy's father and uncle. They are gentlemen of leisure, free to pursue their own interests, and these interests are mirrored in the variety of foreign-language passages appearing in the text, from popular quotations to technical terms. The types of passage in each language are discussed in more detail in the relevant sections below.

4.1. Latin passages in the original

As mentioned above, Latin is the most common second language in Sterne's novel. In the first two volumes under study here, the Latin passages are only 1–6 words long, although later in the book Sterne uses long stretches of Latin reaching to hundreds of words. According to Dembeck (2017: 200), the longest Latin quotation is the Latin excommunication at 531 words, although the electronic form of the text included in the Corpus of Late Modern English shows a 616-word Latin story. The Latin phrases in the volumes studied here are probably familiar to the reader, as they are frequently used in different contexts in contemporary English texts (see for example Nurmi et al. 2018). The function of the Latin passages seems to align with the overall purpose of the text: to entertain by finding a humorous turn of phrase. It can be argued that they are also

used in characterisation, as they appear in either the first-person narrator's or the other gentlemen's voices, but not in those of servants, for example.

One interesting group of Latin expressions, illustrating Sterne's ludic approach to writing, is terms of classical logic, such as *argumentum ad hominem* or *argumentum ad crumenam*. In addition to these real terms, Sterne created his own, *argumentum tripodium* ('argument to the third leg') and *argumentum fistulatorium* ('argument to the whistle'). These might seem credible to someone unfamiliar with logical terms, but will be amusing to anyone familiar with the terminology and/or Latin. Sterne does not provide any intratextual translations for these, as is his habit, so understanding the joke depends entirely on the reader's Latin skills. This is a way of creating an in-group between Sterne and his more educated readers, but as the book is rich in many kinds of jokes, even those who miss this particular type of play will find other things to amuse them.

In the older German translation (Sterne 1763), this passage has been abbreviated (1b), although one of Sterne's own inventions has been preserved. It can also be noted that the Latin terms appear in a different grammatical case than in Sterne's text, as can be expected, as they are linguistically fitted into a German text. In the second German translation (Sterne 1774), all terms are preserved, and the passage as a whole is more faithful to the source text (1c). The French translation (Sterne 1777) has abbreviated the passage and left out some of the rhetorical terms, but interestingly preserved the same invented one as the first German translation, *argumentum fistulatorium* (1d). It may be that both translators felt that this argument might be more understandable to their readers or that its humour was less ribald and therefore more suited to a varied readership of both genders. None of the translators resort to intratextual translation when dealing with these terms.

(1) (a) [---] That it be known and distinguished by the name and title of the *Argumentum Fistulatorium*, and no other; – and that it rank hereafter with the *Argumentum Baculinum*, and the *Argumentum ad Crumenam*, and for ever hereafter be treated of in the same chapter. As for the *Argumentum Tripodium*, which is never used but by the woman against the man; – and the *Argumentum ad Rem*, which, contrarywise, is made use of by the man only against the woman [---]. (Sterne 1759–1767, 51)

(b) [---] dass dieses Argument soll erkannt und unterschieden werden durch den Namen und Titel des *Argumenti Fistulatorii*, und dass es inskünftige einerley Rang mit dem *Argumento Baculino* und dem *Argumento ad Crumenam* haben [---]. (Sterne 1763, 91)

(c) [---] dass besagtes Argument hinführn bey dem Titel *Argumentum Fistulatorium* erkannt und distinguirt werde, welchen und keinen andern ich ihm hiermit beylege; – und dass es hinkünftig einerley Rang

mit dem *Argumentum Baculinum* und *Argumentum ad Crumenam* haben, un allemal in einem und eben dem Kapitel mit diesen abgehandelt werden soll. Was das *Argumentum Tripodium*, welches niemals von einer Frau gegen ihren Mann gebraucht wird, und das *Argumentum ad Rem*, anbetrifft, dessen sich hingegen der Mann nur gegen seine Frau bedient [---]. (Sterne 1774, 164)

(d) J'ordonne donc par ces préferents, à toute la société pédantesque qui professe l'art de la logique, de distinguer l'argument de mon oncle par le titre d'*Argumentum Fistulatorium*, & non par aucun autre. – Je veux de même qu'il soit placé au rang d'*Argumentum Baculinum*, & *Argumentum ad Crumenam*, & qu'il en soit traité au même Chapitre. (Sterne 1777, 98)

A similar linguistic playfulness in Sterne's writing can be seen in the citation from Horace "tracing every thing in it, as Horace says, *ab Ovo*" (Sterne 1759–1767, 10), which is probably making fun of the fact that Horace is a very typical source of Latin quotations in eighteenth-century English texts (Tyrkkö and Nurmi 2017). According to Dembeck (2017, 201), Horace is also the most quoted author in mottos appearing in German literature during the same century. This is probably due to the fact that Horace's texts were commonly used at schools for teaching purposes, and so anyone who had studied even a little Latin could quote him. Sterne presents his very short quotation as if he were any fool boasting with limited skills, even though in reality Sterne's Latin skills were considerable. Both German translations preserve this Latin quote, as does the French. Interestingly, while German readers are left without an intratextual translation, the French translator felt the need to provide his readers with one: "comme dit Horace, *ab ovo*, depuis l'œuf" (Sterne 1777, 8). One would have assumed a familiarity with Horace among French readers, but here the translator clearly felt the need to explain even this short expression, perhaps losing some of the playfulness in doing so.

Sterne himself explains the meaning of one Latin expression in English, although not because he assumes his readers are unfamiliar with the expression: "De gustibus non est disputandum; – that is, there is no disputing against HOBBY-HORSES; and for my part, I seldom do" (Sterne 1759–1767, 24). Here, Sterne's intratextual translation is in fact once again part of his playful approach, as he is playing with the dual meaning of hobby-horse. On the one hand, it is a children's toy, on the other it is a point a person insists on making at every opportunity. Sterne continues with the same theme later and notes "All which, from the words, *De gustibus non est disputandum*, and whatever else in this book relates to Hobby-Horses, but no more, shall stand dedicated to your Lordship" (Sterne 1759–1767, 32), where he continues with his joke and also plays with one of the contemporary conventions of dedicating a volume to a patron whose financial support the writer either has enjoyed or hopes to enjoy.

Here the first German translator keeps the Latin and the joke with the hobby-horse (*Steckenpferd*), which has a similar dual meaning in German as well. For the latter passage Zückert resorts to a slightly abbreviated form: “Alles, was von den Worten: *De gustibus non est disputandum*, angerechnet, die Steckenpferde betrifft, soll Ihnen dedicirt seyn” (Sterne 1763, 23). In Bode’s German translation, the same joke obviously works: “*De gustibus non est disputandum*; – das ist, man lasse eines andern Mannes sein Steckenpferd ungeschoren” (Sterne 1744, 26), and he also repeats the dedication-related joke faithfully. In the French translation, a similar double meaning is not as easily arrived at, but Frénais offers an alternative play on the word *tic*, as either a physical symptom or a persistent mannerism: “*De gustibus non est disputandum*. Cela veut dire, Monsieur, dans toutes les langues du monde, que l’on perd son temps à raisonner contre un *tic décidé*” (Sterne 1777, 18–19). As for the latter passage, the image of sitting astride is presented together with another term for an obsession, *marotte*, bringing the thought back to hobby-horses: “Je les placerai au-dessous de la légende: *De gustibus non est disputandum*; & tout ce que vous trouverez dans mon livre qui aura quelque rapport aux caulifourchons, à la marotte en vogue, vous appartiendra” (23–24).

There are some Latin passages left out of the translations. Zückert has not included several short two-word phrases (for example *communibus annis, toties quoties, et cætera*), and these are points where he seems to have abbreviated and simplified the original in other ways. Similarly in Bode’s translation, some short phrases (for example *communibus annis, Foro sciæntiæ, cum grano salis*) are simply translated into German. As for the French translation, there is a similar pattern, although the passages left out are again partly different (for example *vice versâ, communibus annis, rerum naturâ, ad populum*). Some words in all three translations are typographically flagged as foreign although they were not so in the English source text, such as *Organa* or *cerebellum* in Zückert, *glandula pinealis* in Bode, and *medulla oblongata* in Frénais. These are all clearly words related to medicine, and the use of medical terminology in the three languages had probably not been equally Latin-based in each instance. It should be noted that here, too, Sterne is joking by inserting such technical terminology into his text, as it provides yet another way of circumventing the narrative the first-person narrator is purportedly telling, portraying him at the same time as a man of education keen on displaying it to others.

Finally, it should be noted that Sterne only offers intratextual translations of the Latin passages in the original quite rarely, and only when he is making a joke, as in the example with the hobby-horse above. The German translations seem to follow this pattern, providing intratextual translations where Sterne does. Bode’s translation flags one of these typographically in bold: “**Tam citus erat, quam erat ventus**; welches, oder ich müsste denn alle mein Latein vergessen haben, heißt: er war so geschwind, wie der

Wind” (Sterne 1774, 93). Here the German intratextual translation rhymes, which might be considered a way of introducing further humour into the text. The French translation, as mentioned above, resorts to intratextual translation of Latin passages more often, although by no means in all cases. Even fairly common phrases, such as “*O diem præclarum!*” receive French support: “*Que ce jour sera heureux!*” (Sterne 1777, 14). This may be an indication of the different kinds of reader each translator envisions, the German translators trusting their readers to be educated in Latin and the French translator making no such assumptions.

4.2. French passages in the original

French is the second most common foreign language in the English source text. There are several sayings and common phrases probably very familiar to Sterne’s English readers, such as *tout ensemble*, *gaité de coeur* or *bon mot*. Once again, Sterne does not explain these but rather assumes that his readers will understand them. In Zückert’s translation (Sterne 1763), some of the French phrases are left out. So, *tout ensemble* is only given in German (*das ganze Stück*), but most of them, such as *bon mot*, have been kept. Bode’s translation (Sterne 1774) follows a similar pattern, and generally made a similar selection as Zückert, suggesting that perhaps some of these phrases are more familiar to English readers than German. The French translation (Sterne 1777) has not always kept Sterne’s French phrases, but rather replaced them with something else expressing the same meaning. Sterne’s “there is an air of originality in the *tout ensemble*” (Sterne 1759–1767, 32) has become “D’ailleurs il regne dans l’ensemble un air original” (Sterne 1777, 23) and “with as much life and whim, and *gaité de cœur* about him” (Sterne 1759–1767, 55) is translated as “il avoit tant de vivacité; il avoit le cœur si gai” (Sterne 1777, 38–39). This could be interpreted to mean that the French phrases favoured by Sterne and other English authors of the era are perhaps not quite as proper French as they are imagined to be. On the other hand, they might just have been too much of a cliché in French and needed replacing because of that.

There is also one longer French passage, interspersed with Latin, in the volumes studied (Sterne 1759–1767, 134–139). It is 118 words long and purports to be a letter to doctors at the Sorbonne, explaining how a child may be baptised in the mother’s womb. Both German translations preserve the French and Latin passage. In the accompanying footnote (also found in Sterne’s original text), some explication of the passage is obliquely offered, English in the original, German in the translations. The French translation has an easy solution for this lengthy and somewhat challenging passage, as the French text can be included as is, with perhaps some slight polishing of the language.

As with Latin, the German translator has on one occasion changed the inflection of a word. Sterne has given *chateau* the English plural ending *-s*, but both German translators have rather given the word the proper French plural *chateaux*. The French translation has omitted this passage. There is one French expression neither of the German translations keep in their translations but rather just translate into their target language. This phrase, *poudré d'or*, is part of a complex description of a horse's outfit, together with brass stirrups and black lace. As the French phrase is part of this description of a luxury item, it being in French brings very little extra, although there is an association with the upper-class way of life and French (see for example Nurmi and Pahta 2012). This particular extravagant piece of horse gear can be suitably described without resorting to French while maintaining the idea of wealth. The French translation has also seen fit to give this a different expression, "mélée de fils d'or" (Sterne 1777, 28). Unlike with Latin, neither German translation has typographically flagged extra French words in the text. This may be due to the fact that no specific terms are treated as loan words in one language and as code-switching in the other. Even French military terms seem to have received the same treatment in both English and German, as either code-switching or not.

Sterne's original text has the same playful attitude towards intratextual translation of French as with Latin. When there is a joke to be made, he takes the opportunity, having one of the characters call Dr Slop "the man-midwife" and the doctor correcting that to a masculine term "*Accoucheur*" (Sterne 1759–1767, 77). There are also some instances of more straightforward intratextual translation, where an English term is introduced ("horn-works") and then the French term is given: "they are called by the French engineers, *Ouvrage à corne*" (Sterne 1759–1767, 76). The German translators make no effort to offer intratextual translations to the French passages, which seems to signify that they are assured the ones they have kept will be understood by their readers.

The role of French in the English source text and the German translations seems to be directly related to its role as the European lingua franca of the upper strata of society. By displaying skills in French, the characters are able to identify themselves as proper gentlemen. At the same time, French is also used for the purposes of showing learning, both in the case of military terminology and in the above-mentioned long discourse of baptism in the womb. This role is clearly lost in the French translation, and there appears to be no attempt to replace it through any other means. As English was not a well-known language in continental Europe in the eighteenth century, the mirroring strategy discussed by Franco Arcia (2012) would not have been available to the translator. While the French inserts in the English source text were an indication of the social status and a way of characterisation of the characters, it can be argued that it would have been difficult to use any other language to create this same style of

educated privilege in the French translation. So the French version is left with one fewer layer of linguistic complexity, but as the translator has taken many liberties with the text, he has probably also inserted his own view of the characters and the narrative in his own words.

4.3. Greek and Italian in the original

The modern English edition of *Tristram Shandy* opens with a quote from Epictetus's *Handbook* (2). In the eighteenth-century volume, this is on the title page, without acknowledgement of the author or an intratextual translation. The German translations, as they follow the same eighteenth-century pattern of book publishing, have the quotation on the title page as well, similarly without any mention of the source or a translation. This same practice is seen in the French translation.

(2) Ταράσσει τούς Ἀνθρώπους οὐ τὰ Πράγματα, Ἀλλὰ τὰ περί των Πραγμάτων Δόγματα.

There are some individual Greek words in the text, such as “he was born an orator; – θεοδίδακτος” (Sterne 1759–1767, 119). Zückert's German translation mostly transliterates the words into the Roman alphabet, as in: “Er war ein geborner Orator; – ein Theodidaxtos” (Sterne 1763, 68), while Bode's keeps the Greek alphabet and all Greek passages: “Er war zum Redner geboren – θεοδίδακτος” (Sterne 1774, 123). One of the Greek words, Ἀκμη ‘peak’ is left out of Zückert's translation, and the passage is rendered in German (“zu der grössten Höhe”). The French translation does not give any of the Greek words in the text itself, and has in fact cut some of the entire passages where they appear. None of the translations add any Greek, suggesting that either the translators do not share Sterne's erudition or they do not share his confidence in their readers' willingness to struggle with this less known language. The Greek words in the text can be seen as a further way of characterising the narrator as well-read, but the role of the Greek quote on the title page could even be seen as a warning: this is going to be a book that expects educated readers. Given that such choices would not have been the author's alone, it is hard to estimate the role of the title page in the complete novel.

There are only a few instances of Italian in the studied volumes. The word *piano* appears twice, the word *forte* once, both as musical terms. One passage has the expressions *poco piu* and *poco meno* (3). These seem familiar to German readers, as both translations preserve them (3b–3c). This is yet another passage the French translator has chosen to cut from his translation. It could be assumed that he has made further assumptions of either the linguistic skills of readers or their willingness to read a highly multilingual text.

(3) (a) Just heaven! how does the *poco piu* and the *Poco meno* of the Italian artists; – the insensible MORE or LESS, determine the precise line of beauty in the sentence. (Sterne 1759–1767, 48)

(b) Gerechter Himmel! wo bleibt denn das *poco piu* und *poco meno* der Italianischen Künstler; – das unmerkliche mehr oder weniger bestimmt die Schönheit so gut in einer Sentenz, als in einer Statue! (Sterne 1763, 133)

(c) Hilf Himmel! wie genau kommt es nicht auf das *Poco più* und das *Poco meno* der italiänischen Artisten; – auf das unmerkliche Mehr oder Weniger an, die wahre Schönheitslinie. (Sterne 1774, 51)

4.4. Modern Finnish translation

As a point of comparison, I will here offer a few words concerning the modern Finnish translation of *Tristram Shandy*, based on Nurmi (2019). The novel was translated into Finnish in 1998, by the highly esteemed translator Kersti Juva. The readers of Juva’s translation, while educated, have a very different set of linguistic skills than Sterne’s original audience. Latin is only taught at a few schools in contemporary Finland, and even French can be considered a little-known language. Classical Greek is only offered at universities, and few people learn it. Given that nearly everyone in the country is literate and able to obtain the novel free from their local library, this creates yet another difference to the type of reader who might start reading the volume. As an accomplished translator, Juva will have been able to take these factors into account when planning her translation strategies.

Juva has chosen to keep almost all the foreign-language passages in the text, no matter how long they are. Only in some minor cases has she opted to just translate into Finnish. One such case is the French expression *poudré d’or*, where Juva has chosen to do as the German eighteenth-century translators and give the meaning in the target language (“pitkät kullalla silatut silkkihapsut”, Sterne 1998, 26), probably agreeing with them that the complex description is luxurious enough with the mention of gold. While preserving most foreign-language passages, Juva has also inserted intratextual translations to accompany them. In her foreword she mentions (Juva 1998, 9) that she has used modern scholarly editions to help her understanding of these parts of the text. An example of the space requirements of this is the long French memo to the “Docteurs de Sorbonne”, which receives two pages of complicated French as well as another two pages of Finnish translation. This allows the readers a variety of strategies in reading: if they know French, they can read the French passage and then the Finnish translation to verify that they have understood everything. The other option is to skip the French and just read the Finnish version of the passage. Finally, a reader may also

decide that this particular part of the text is not amusing and therefore move on to the next part. As Juva (1998, 8) points out in her introduction, thus agreeing with the eighteenth-century French translator Frénais, the text is meant to entertain.

5. Conclusion

The complex multilingual practices in Sterne's novel have received in many ways a varied handling in the three translations studied. Both German translations (Sterne 1763; 1774), contemporary to Sterne's source text, have kept much of the original multilingualism but provided very little intratextual translation. This is probably due to the cultural similarity of the readers of both texts. They would have been educated people who would have known at least some Latin and French, as these were the shared languages of the European elites. The German translators' choices seem to make sense in this context. The French translation (Sterne 1777) has a diminished level of multilingualism, partly due to the fact that the French in the source text has simply melded into the French of the target text. The French translator has, however, also made choices in leaving out for example the Greek and Italian passages. He was also the only translator who felt the need to provide at least some French support for the Latin passages. This may be in line with his overall stated strategy of very free translation, with the goal of preserving the entertaining nature of the text rather than being maximally faithful. When compared to the modern Finnish translation (Nurmi 2019), translated for a very different readership over two centuries after the publication of the source text, the need to negotiate this difference in culture, and particularly this difference in linguistic skill becomes even more obvious. The analysis shows that such decisions are made in the context of the temporal and spatial setting, taking into account the readers, the accepted styles of publication in each area and period, as well as the main purpose of the text to be translated, in this case the intent to amuse the reader.

The intent to entertain is something mentioned in their translator's foreword by both Frénais, the eighteenth-century French translator and Juva, the late twentieth-century Finnish translator, and they seem to have made their linguistic choices accordingly. Juva appears to have come to the conclusion that the complex multilingual patterns and the flaunting of higher education are part of the fun of the book. At the same time, she has provided Finnish intratextual translations for all passages, allowing readers access to them. Coming from the same understanding of the text but making completely different choices, Frénais has decided that the readers of his translation would not welcome too much multilingual posturing but would rather be able to follow all parts of the text without the need for intratextual translation. While we have no such statements of intent from either of the German translators, they seem to have taken a middle-of-the-road approach in this regard: they have preserved much of the

multilingualism, but have not shied away from making cuts either. Neither felt the need to support their readers with intratextual translations, which suggests that they trusted their readers to understand the text as such.

On the whole, Sterne seems to have been writing to a reader like himself, one who is fluent in several languages, and so only offers intratextual translations when they can be used for humour. At the same time, as the Finnish translator, Kersti Juva, notes in her translator's preface, one of the central themes of the novel is the difficulty of communication. People talk past each other and misunderstand one another (Juva 1998, 8). Sterne's strategy of not translating his Latin and French suits this theme, as also communication between writer and reader can be difficult. The translators who were Sterne's contemporaries accepted this varyingly: while Bode (Sterne 1774) and to some extent Zückert (Sterne 1763) preserve most of the multilingualism with very little explanation, Frénais has chosen to strip some of these layers and perhaps make the communication between text and reader, and between characters, simpler.

For modern readers of the English text, there is again a challenge in understanding everything through the layers of different languages. Therefore footnotes are added by modern editors (such as Anderson 1980), since English-speaking modern readers also struggle with French, and certainly Latin and Greek. As there is often a wish to preserve the author's text as it is in the source language, the necessary intratextual translations have ended up in footnotes, giving readers the possibility to understand these passages, if they so wish. At the same time, modern readers will probably still recognise the functions of this particular type of multilingualism, both to illustrate that the characters are educated or even erudite people, as well as to show that they are willing to show off their learning to the detriment of communication.

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Arja Nurmi received her PhD from the University of Helsinki and is currently a senior lecturer at Tampere University. She holds the Title of Docent of English Corpus Linguistics at the University of Jyväskylä. Her research interests include historical sociolinguistics, corpus linguistics, multilingual practices and translating multilingual texts. She has recently co-edited volumes on *Challenging the Myth of Monolingual Corpora* (Brill), *Exploring Future Paths for Historical Sociolinguistics* (Benjamins), *Corpora and the Changing Society: Studies in the Evolution of English* (Benjamins), *Legal Translation: Ethical Values, Quality, Competence Training* (Frank & Timme) and *Social and Regional Variation in World Englishes: Local and Global Perspectives* (Routledge).
e-mail: arja.nurmi[at]tuni.fi

***De gustibus non est disputandum*: mitmekeelse romaani tõlkimine**

Arja Nurmi

Võtmesõnad: Laurence Sterne, Tristram Shandy, tõlge, saksa keel, prantsuse keel, mitmekeelsus

Uurimuses vaadeldakse strateegiaid, mida on Laurence Sterne'i romaani „Tristram Shandy“ (1759–1767) mitmekeelsete lõikude tõlkimisel kasutanud tema kaasaegsed tõlkijad: kaks saksa tõlkijat ning üks prantsuse tõlkija. Sterne'i romaan on paljutöötav uurimisobjekt, sest selle autori kirjutistes esineb eriti rikkalikult mitmekeelsuspraktikaid. Tõenäoliselt on selle põhjuseks tema haridus ning sellega kaasnev keeleoskus, mis lubas tal kaasata mitmesuguseid tolleaegse ühiskonna haritud kihtidele tuntud keeli: ladina, prantsuse, kreeka ja itaalia keelt. Sterne kasutab tekstis võõrkeelseid lõikusid mitmesugustel eesmärkidel, näiteks selleks, et luua oma haritud tegelastele sobivat häält. Mitmekeelsust käivitav jõud näib aga olevat seotud romaani peamise iseloomuliku joonega: kõiki võimalikke vahendeid, sh keelt kasutava mängulisusega. Pikkade raskesti loetavate ladina- ja prantsuskeelsete lõikude olemasolu võib pädada ka osutuseks Sterne'i eeldatavale lugejaskonnale, ent tema narratiivi sihilikult seosetu olemuse tõttu ei ole lugejal vaja teose nautimiseks kõigest aru saada. Sterne ei paku võõrkeelsetele lõikudele tekstisiseseid tõlkeid, kuid lisab neid vahetevahel, kui suudab prantsus- või ladinakeelse lõigu ning selle tõlke vahelise sobimatuse üle nalja heita.

Sterne'i romaani kolm 18. sajandi tõlkijat võisid tõenäoliselt ette näha lugejaskonda, kes sarnanes lähteteksti omaga ning kellest suurema osa moodustasid haritud jõukad lugejad. Uurimustulemustest nähtub, et erisuguste keelekontekstide tõttu ja ka seepärast, et tõlkijate vaated romaanile erinesid, on saksa ja prantsuse tõlkijad valinud mõneti erinevad lähenemised. Mõlemad saksa tõlkijad on suuremalt osalt säilitanud ladina-, prantsus-, kreeka- ja itaaliakeelsed lõigud, lisamata tekstisiseseid tõlkeid, mis aitaksid lugejaid teksti mõistmisel. Kuigi esimese saksa tõlkija Johann Friedrich Zückerti inglise keele oskuses on küsitavusi, oli ta ilmselgelt tuttav tolle aja Euroopa kõrghariduses ja kultuuris üldlevinud keeltega. Teine saksa tõlkija Johann Joachim Christoph Bode näib lisaks muudele keeltele olevat olnud tuttavam ka inglise keelega ning oli pärvinud tunnustust Sterne'i varasema loomingu tõlkimise eest. Prantsuse tõlkija Joseph-Pierre Frénais on otsustanud tõlkimise käigus teksti mitmeid mugandusi teha ning põhjendab neid sissejuhatuses vajadusega teha naljakamat nalja kui Sterne. Frénais on suuremalt osalt säilitanud ladina keele, kuid jätnud ära suure osa kreeka ning itaalia keelest, pakkudes vahetevahel ladinakeelsetele lõikudele tekstisiseseid tõlkeid. Prantsuskeelsete lõikude esinemine lähtetekstis seadis prantsuse tõlkija veel ühe dilemma ette, mille ta lahendas neist mitmeid oma sõnadega ümber kirjutades. Kaotsiläinud prantsuse keele asendamiseks ta mitmekeelsust sisse ei toonud ning on seeläbi loonud tunduvalt vähem mitmekeelse sihtteksti.

Kõige kolme tõlkija langetatud otsuseid on tõenäoliselt mõjutanud nii potentsiaalsete lugejate eeldatav keeleoskus kui ka avaldamiskoha publitseerimiskultuur. Ent ingliskeelses originaalis oli mitmekeelsete lõikude rolliks osalt teksti huumorifunktsiooni toetamine ja osalt tegelaste iseloomustamine, võib järeldada, et vähemalt prantsuse tõlkes võib selles osas olla midagi kaotsi läinud.

Arja Nurmi kaitses doktorikraadi Helsingi ülikoolis ning on praegu Tampere ülikooli vanemlektor. Tal on inglise korpuslingvistika dotsendi tiitel Jyväskylä ülikoolis. Tema uurimishuvide hulka kuuluvad ajalooline sotsiolingvistika, korpuslingvistika, mitmekeelsuspraktikad ning mitmekeelsete tekstide tõlkimine. Viimasel ajal on ta olnud järgmiste kogumike kaastoimetaja: „Challenging the Myth of Monolingual Corpora“ (Brill), „Exploring Future Paths for Historical Sociolinguistics“ (Benjamins), „Corpora and the Changing Society: Studies in the Evolution of English“ (Benjamins), „Legal Translation: Ethical Values, Quality, Competence Training“ (Frank & Timme) and „Social and Regional Variation in World Englishes: Local and Global Perspectives“ (Routledge).
e-post: arja.nurmi[at]tuni.fi